

*Mandela Month 2022*

**Reimagining Mandela  
Day as a Catalyst for  
Sustainable Change**

*Pre-Release Report*

In honour of Mandela Day 2023,  
this is a pre-release of our 2022  
Mandela Month Report as we wrap  
up the final version, featuring the  
contents and foreword.



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# Foreword

The Nelson Mandela Foundation has journeyed with Nelson Mandela University since the University's name-change in 2017 reaffirmed our commitment to embodying the legacy of the great figure of Madiba. On 3 February 2020 that relationship was formalised in a Memorandum of Understanding that concretised our shared interest in exploring what it means – intellectually and practically – to serve and lead like Nelson Mandela. Our collaboration around Mandela Day 2022 – which transformed into Mandela Month – has generated rich learning from various stakeholder-communities on what it means to be in service of society. This learning was generated layer by layer, through reflecting on the multiple stages of work involved in this process, from conceptualisation to implementation. It is captured in our documenting of the cyclic, iterative nature of this process, which in turn suggests how the NMF and Mandela University can deepen and broaden their relationship to respond to growing inequality and related challenges emerging from this inequality. Our approach to Nelson Mandela Month 2022 demonstrates how Mandela Day can be used as a catalytic moment for initiating sustainable change in the service of society. The rich discourses across several events and spaces, coupled with the input of the Chairperson of the NMF Board, Professor Njabulo Ndebele, provide a valuable lens for synthesising the thinking that underpins Mandela Day as a catalytic moment for sustainable change.

Prof Ndebele asserts that institutions like ours should work with communities in a way which unlocks their agency to co-construct solutions to their daily challenges. This critical participatory approach to unlocking local community agency further presents an opportunity for the mobilisation of a variety of resources from a wide range of stakeholder-communities, including the United Nations, community-based organisations, the South African government, private sector corporations and most importantly, citizens of our country. The convergence of these various stakeholder-communities, in pursuit of a more socially just world, invites people worldwide to interpret Madiba's legacy in a way which honours him by engaging in purposeful work, which has personal and collective meaning and drives sustainability. In demonstrating solidarity through social action, we must be able to support and direct public policy interventions.

Solidaristic forms of engagement compel us to engage with and respond to growing inequality in society in a way which brings back hope to our communities. It requires organic intellectualism, which makes a case for the generation of socially-useful scholarship that is owned, understood, critiqued, and further developed by those involved in these engagements. This scholarship should advocate for a form of reciprocity from which we all benefit, mindful that those who have more should give more. Multiple forms of output generated through these hybrid praxes of engagement must be the core outcome of the solidaristic form of engagement.

The broad appeal and the inclusiveness of Mandela Day must remain – people everywhere continue to make a case to do work they consider crucial for their communities under the Mandela Day umbrella. However, the Nelson Mandela Foundation and its partners must begin the process of understanding how the day can be reimagined to catalyse sustainable programmes in our communities. This report provides rich insights for reimagination through an instructional framework to facilitate complex processes, including resource mobilisation for various projects. These emerging lessons, coupled with the critical participatory multi-stakeholder voice, will strengthen the development of an architecture for future sustainable programmes under the banner of Mandela Day. At its core, the architecture must continue to respond to the findings of the multi-stakeholder research-driven project conducted between 2015 and 2018. The research project identified critical areas for intervention if, as Ndebele points out, the “intergenerational transfer of South Africa’s deep patterns of poverty and inequality” is to be disrupted.

This report should be embraced as celebratory output and intervention. Mandela Month 2022 celebrates the mobilisation of community voice and agency in a way which recognises communities doing what they can, with what they have, where they are.

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# NELSON MANDELA DAY

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ACT  
LEARN  
SPEAK  
TRUTH  
FREEDOM  
UNITY  
JUSTICE  
TRUTH  
FREEDOM  
EQUALITY  
MEMORY AND DIALOGUE  
JUSTICE  
FREEDOM  
RECONCILIATION  
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