



**The Chief Executive Officer
Mrs. Sibongile (Bongi) Mkhabela**

With an honors degree in Social Work and several graduate diplomas, Bongi has immense experience in development issues nationally and internationally, gained from working in senior positions at the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Education Programme in South Africa and the South African Council of Churches. Bongi served in the office of the then Deputy President Mbeki as programs director responsible for overall programming, with specific responsibility for NGO/Government partnerships and children's programs.

The CEO's Corner

CHILDREN'S CELEBRATION – 2008

In celebrating the 90th Birthday of our Founder, Mr Nelson Mandela, the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund, hereinafter referred to as the Fund, has chosen the theme "Celebrating the Children's Champion and deepening democracy" in line with the overall theme for the year: "Celebrating Ideas".

To ensure that this prestigious year is seen as a platform to highlight issues facing children as well as provide youth with an opportunity to reflect on issues of democratic leadership, the Fund is organising a programme called "Youth in Conversation" to promote active civic participation and inter-generational dialogue throughout the country and the SADC region.

The programme is meant to encourage young people to engage and actively participate in democratic governance institutions.

"Youth in Conversation" has already started with other countries who need to deepen the conversation on democracy and will culminate at a National Youth in Conversation gathering on 9th July 2008 in Johannesburg where we will celebrate the 90th birthday of our Founder, Mr Nelson Mandela.

One or two delegated youths from the SADC partners will have an opportunity to share with the young people of South Africa how institutions work and how they strengthen democracy in their respective countries.

**SIBONGILE MKHABELA (MS)
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**