
Nelson Mandela
CHILDREN'S FUND
CHANGING THE WAY SOCIETY TREATS ITS CHILDREN AND YOUTH
30 years
of impacting children's lives
Annual Report
2025-2026
Honouring The Legacy
Shaping The Future

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Abbreviations

Department of Social Development	DSD
Regional Psychosocial Support Initiative	REPSSI
South African National Childs Rights Coalition	SANCRC
Standard Operating Procedure	SOPs
United Nations Convention on Rights of the Child	UNCRC
Air Traffic Navigation Services Company	ATNS
Ante-Natal Care	ANC
International Canadian Child Rights Partnership	ICCRP
Child Safety and Protection Programme	CSP
Child Survival, Development and Thriving Programme	CSDT
Community Healthcare Workers	CHWs
Development Assistance Committee	DAC
Early Childhood Development	ECD
Gender-Based Violence	GBV
Human Centred Design Thinking	HCDT
Implementing Partners	IP
Income-Generating Activities	IGAs
Legacy Academy	LA
Local Economic Development	LED
Management Trustee Committee	MTC
National Youth Coalition	NYC
Nelson Mandela Children's Parliament	NMCP
Post-Natal Care	PNC
Prevention of Mother-to-child transmission	PMTCT
Request For Proposals	RFP
Savings Mobilisation Programmes	SMP
Self-Help Group	SHG
South Africa Civil Aviation Authority	SACAA
Sustainable Livelihoods Programme	SLP
The Electoral Institute for Sustainable Democracy in Africa	EISA
The Nelson Mandela Children's Fund The Fund	NMCF
The Nelson Mandela Children's Hospital	NMCH
The World Science Academy	TWAS
Theory of Change	TOC
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation	UNESCO
World Science Forum	WSF
Youth Leadership Programme	YLP

Chairperson's Foreword



Thirty years is both a milestone and a moment of accountability.

The last financial year has been one of reflection on the journey travelled over the past three decades of advancing the rights, dignity and wellbeing of children across South Africa and the African continent, as well as pondering on what the next generation of children requires of us.

The legacy entrusted to the Fund by our Founder, uTata Nelson R Mandela, carries with it a profound responsibility. It is a responsibility to remain relevant to the realities facing children, to listen to their voices, to act with integrity and to ensure that the work of the Fund continues to translate into meaningful and sustainable impact.

Closing a Strategic Chapter

The 2025/26 financial year brings to a close the Fund's Legacy in Action 2022–2026 strategy. This has been an important period in strengthening the organisation, advancing our programmes and positioning the Fund for its next chapter.
As a Board, we recognise the progress made under this strategy and the foundation it has established for the future. We also recognise that the conclusion of a strategy is not simply an opportunity to record what has been achieved. It is a time to reflect honestly on what we have learned, where we have made a difference and where more work remains to be done.

The needs of children continue to evolve. South Africa and the continent face a complex social and economic environment, and children remain among those most affected by inequality, vulnerability and limited access to opportunity. Our response therefore has to be equally dynamic, while remaining firmly grounded in the values that have defined the Fund since its establishment.

During the year, the Board remained focused on strengthening the organisation's governance, sustainability and strategic direction. Good governance remains fundamental to the credibility and effectiveness of the Fund. We adopted an updated Trust Deed that positions the organisation for future while strengthening our oversight and succession planning processes. Among the important enhancements is the establishment of a dedicated Nominations and Governance Committee, which will oversee Board succession, renewal and the recruitment of Trustees whose diversity, expertise and experience are aligned with the evolving strategic priorities of the organisation. This is important in ensuring that the Fund remains responsive, accountable and equipped to meet the demands of its future while aligning with best practice governance practices.

Our commitment to sound financial stewardship remains a board imperative. I am pleased that the Fund has once again achieved an unqualified audit outcome. This reflects the continued commitment of the Board, management and employees in ensuring that the resources entrusted to us are managed responsibly and with the highest level of integrity.

Organisational sustainability remains a priority. In an increasingly competitive funding environment, the long-term financial resilience of the Fund and its flagship project, the Nelson Mandela Children's Hospital, is critical to our ability to fulfil our mandate. We will therefore continue to pursue diversified funding opportunities locally and internationally, including exploring the establishment of affiliate offices in territories where such expansion is feasible and aligned with our strategic objectives.

Thirty Years of Legacy and Impact

The closing of our Legacy in Action strategy coincides with another significant moment: the celebration of the Fund's 30th anniversary.

The anniversary provided an opportunity to reflect on three decades of work, partnerships and impact. More importantly, it reminded us that the Fund's legacy is not defined only by its history. It is defined by our continued willingness to respond to the circumstances and aspirations of children today.
The Nelson Mandela Children's Fund 30th Anniversary Gala dinner brought together partners, supporters and friends who contributed to this journey. We were honoured to host former President Thabo Mbeki as our Guest Speaker, whose reflections reinforced the enduring responsibility we share to advance the rights and wellbeing of children. This celebration would not have been possible without the support of our partners.

We extend our sincere appreciation to Nedbank, whose underwriting of the anniversary event enabled us to mark this important milestone with dignity and purpose. Our relationship with Nedbank represents one of the clearest examples of sustained partnership in support of children. Since the launch of the Nedbank Children's Affinity Programme in 2005, more than R160 million has been channeled towards programmes supporting child survival, child safety youth leadership and sustainable livelihoods.
This is more than financial support. It demonstrates what can be achieved when partnerships are sustained, purposeful and aligned around a shared commitment to improving the lives of children.
We similarly acknowledge Ford Motor Company for its continued commitment to children and communities. Their generous donation of a Ford Wildtrak enabled us to raise much needed resources through an auction which formed part of the evening's exhibitions. In July 2025, Ford donated a fleet of 19 vehicles, including Ford Transits, Tourneos and locally assembled Rangers, specifically configured to strengthen the Fund's programmes.
Three specially adapted Transit vehicles now support our work as a mobile child health clinic, a child protection outreach unit and a sustainable delivery vehicle, extending our reach to communities where services are needed most.

These partnerships demonstrate the importance of collaboration in achieving sustainable impact. No organisation can address the challenges facing children alone. The scale and complexity of these challenges require partnerships that bring together resources, expertise, innovation and a shared sense of responsibility.

Preserving the Legacy, Strengthening the Future

As we reflect on the Fund's 30-year journey, we must also acknowledge the people who helped build it.
The Board has prioritised reconnecting with former Trustees who laid important foundations for the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund. Their institutional knowledge, experience and commitment to the Fund represent an important part of our organisational memory.

To preserve this knowledge and strengthen intergenerational leadership, we have initiated the establishment of the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund Ambassadors Network. The Network will create meaningful opportunities for former Trustees and long-standing champions of the Fund to continue contributing their experience, wisdom, mentorship and advocacy to the Board and management.
For us, legacy is not about looking backwards. It is about ensuring that the principles, experience and lessons of the past continue to inform the decisions we make today and the organisation we build for tomorrow.

We are deeply grateful to the Fund's former Trustees; former Deputy Chief Justice Dikgang Moseneke, Advocate Michael Katz, Judge Johann Kriegler, Dr Warren Clewlow, Mr Geoff Rothschild, Mme Shirley Mabusela and Ms Barbara Nell, for their continued support and their willingness to contribute their expertise and guidance whenever needed.

We are equally indebted to our former CEOs, Dr Sibongile Mkhabela and Mrs Kone Gugushe, who continue to make themselves available to the Fund, generously sharing their institutional knowledge, experience and insights as we chart the way forward.

Looking ahead, it is our intention to deepen and strengthen our engagement with stakeholders who share our vision and mission and who can contribute meaningfully to our work. Through their resources, expertise, networks and technical capabilities, these partnerships will enable us to advance our collective commitment to changing how society treats its children and youth and to creating an environment in which every child can thrive.

A New Strategic Chapter

As one strategic chapter closes, another begins.
Following an extensive consultative process, the Board approved the Fund's new organisational strategy, Legacy 2:0; *Khuluma Mntwana Sikuzwe (speak child, we are listening).*
This strategy represents an important evolution in the Fund's journey. It builds on the foundations established through Legacy in Action 2022–2026 strategy, while responding to the changing realities facing children and young people.

At the centre of this next chapter is a simple but powerful proposition: **children must be heard.**

Legacy 2:0; Khuluma Mntwana Sikuzwe (speak, child, we are listening), reinforces our commitment to creating spaces for children and young people to express their experiences, aspirations and concerns, and for those voices to inform the decisions and actions that affect their lives.

Listening, however, must lead to action.
Our responsibility is therefore to translate what we hear into programmes, partnerships, advocacy and interventions that respond meaningfully to the realities of children and young people.

The new strategy also requires us to remain disciplined about sustainability, governance and impact. We must continue strengthening the institution, diversifying our partnerships and funding base, investing in our people and ensuring that the Fund remains capable of delivering meaningful impact well into the future.

We enter this next chapter with confidence, but also with humility. The challenges facing children are significant, and our responsibility is to ensure that the Fund remains relevant, credible and effective in responding to them.

Looking Forward

Thirty years of the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund is therefore not the conclusion of a journey. It is a point from which we look forward with renewed purpose.
Our Founder understood that the wellbeing of children is inseparable from the wellbeing of society. He challenged us to imagine a better future and, importantly, to take responsibility for making that future possible. The task before us now is to ensure that this legacy continues to live through action. As we move from Legacy in Action into Legacy 2:0; Khuluma Mntwana Sikuzwe, we do so with a clear understanding that the future cannot simply be inherited. It must be shaped through listening, through action and through a willingness to do what is necessary to create better possibilities for every child.

In a world that is in poly-crises, the wellbeing of children is rapidly being undermined. More now than before, organisations like the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund need the financial support of like-minded individuals who are prepared to fund the work that we do to ensure that every child can reach their full potential without the traumatic experiences of war, hunger and displacement.

Over the past thirty years, we have been able to impact over 2.5 million children across South Africa and have gained invaluable expertise in advocating for the issues that affect child wellbeing, identifying funding and building the capacity of community-based organisations. Our financial systems and governance oversight have provided a solid foundation for the impeccable management of the funds that have been entrusted to us.

The next 30 years will require the same courage of conviction that has brought the Fund this far.

I would like to extend my appreciation to my fellow Trustees, our Executive team and staff, donors, partners and volunteers for their continued commitment to the Fund. Most importantly, I thank the children and young people whose courage, resilience and aspirations remain the reason for our work.

As Nelson Mandela wrote in Long Walk to Freedom:
"It always seems impossible until it's done."

May we continue to believe in what is possible and have the courage and determination to make it happen.

Mpho Makwana
Chairperson

Chief Executive Officer's Foreword



It is my great honour to share the CEO foreword for the year ended 31 March 2026. As we reflect on the 2025/26 financial year, we do so at a pivotal moment in the journey of the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund. This year marks not only the culmination of an important chapter in our strategic journey for the last strategic period, but also the beginning of a new one. Over the past three years, guided by our Legacy in Action strategy, we have remained steadfast in our commitment to advancing the rights, well-being and voices of children and young people, even in the face of significant social, economic and funding challenges. This foreword is a reflection of the "Legacy in Action" out of which we will be transitioning in the next financial period.

The period under review tested our resilience as an organisation. Like many institutions in the development sector, we experienced a constrained funding environment and increasing competition for resources. These realities compelled us to critically review our strategy in 2023 and sharpen our focus on financial sustainability, organisational effectiveness and advocacy leadership. What emerged from that process was a more agile, focused and determined organisation, one that responded to adversity not by retreating, but by innovating and adapting.

Despite these challenges, I am proud of what we have achieved together. Through the dedication of our staff, trustees, partners and supporters, we achieved 74% of our revised strategic targets and reached more than 160,000 children across South Africa through programmes focused on health, safety, livelihoods, leadership and child participation. These achievements demonstrate that meaningful impact is possible even when resources are constrained, provided there is clarity of purpose and commitment to our mission.

Over the last three years, we strengthened families and communities by supporting economic resilience initiatives, improving maternal and child health outcomes, expanding child protection interventions and creating opportunities for young people to develop leadership, entrepreneurial and advocacy skills. Our work continued to demonstrate that sustainable change occurs when children are supported within strong families and empowered communities.

We also deepened our role as an advocate for children. Through research, dialogue, public engagement and strategic partnerships, we elevated child rights issues onto national, regional and international platforms. The publication of key advocacy resources, participation in policy reform processes, contributions to the National Strategy for Accelerated Action for Children, and leadership in initiatives such as the African Children's Summit and the Children20 process under South Africa's G20 Presidency reinforced our position as a trusted and influential voice for children.

Importantly, this strategic period reaffirmed one of the most enduring principles of Nelson Mandela's legacy: that children must not only be protected and cared for, but must also be heard. Our efforts to create platforms for meaningful child participation have demonstrated the power of young voices in shaping policies, programmes and societal conversations.

Their insights continue to inform our thinking and inspire our work. We are proud of having been granted observer status at the African Union's African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, a platform in which we will advocate for active child participation.

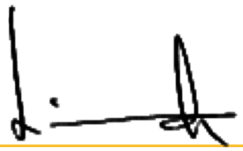
We have also made significant strides internally. Focused investments in culture, staff engagement and capability development resulted in significant improvements in the engagement levels of our workforce. These improvements have strengthened our ability to deliver impact and positioned us to meet future challenges with confidence. Resource mobilisation efforts, cost optimisation measures and new fundraising approaches have similarly contributed to improving the Fund's financial position and long-term sustainability.

As with every journey of transformation, this period has yielded valuable lessons. We learned the importance of agility in responding to changing circumstances, the need to institutionalise strategic priorities to withstand organisational transitions, and the power of collaboration across programmes and partnerships. We also recognised the critical importance of robust monitoring, evaluation and knowledge management systems to strengthen accountability, demonstrate impact and influence systemic change.

These lessons have informed the development of our new strategy, Legacy 2.0: Khuluma Mntwana Sikuzwe. Building on the foundations established over the past three years, we are shifting towards a more integrated and evidence-driven approach focused on advocacy, violence against children and poverty. Our ambition is not only to deliver programmes, but to develop and scale models that address the systemic issues affecting children and families across South Africa.

As we close this chapter, I extend my sincere gratitude to our trustees, employees, implementing partners, donors, volunteers and the children and communities we serve. Your trust, commitment and partnership have enabled us to navigate difficult circumstances while remaining true to our mission. Together, we have demonstrated that the legacy of Nelson Mandela is not simply something we honour, but something we actively live through our work every day.

The future presents both challenges and opportunities. We enter this next phase with optimism, clarity and renewed determination to ensure that every child is heard, protected and empowered to thrive.



Dr Linda Ncube-Nkomo CA(SA), PHD
Chief Executive Officer



"Our children are our greatest treasure. They are our future. Those who abuse them tear at the fabric of our society and weaken our nation."

Nelson Mandela



Financials at a Glance

30 years of impacting children's lives

Chief Financial Officer's Overview



I am pleased to present an overview of the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund's financial performance for the year ended 31 March 2026.

The Fund closed the year in a sound and strengthened financial position, recording a surplus of R105.8 million, up from R98.5 million in the prior year. This result was driven primarily by the strong performance of our endowment portfolio, which delivered fair value gains of R101.4 million. This was achieved notwithstanding volatility in global markets linked to the economic effects of the Middle East geopolitical impasses, which tested the resilience of our investments during the year. In line with our long-term stewardship approach, 100% of interest and dividend income was reinvested during the year, growing our financial assets to R1.22 billion and total trust funds to R1.34 billion.

Encouragingly, donations and fundraising income also grew, with total revenue rising to R25.9 million and fundraising income increasing to R11.3 million, reflecting the generosity of our donors and partners even as the broader fundraising environment remained constrained. Cash outflows from operations improved markedly, narrowing from R54.9 million to R37.4 million, even as we drew down R47.9 million from investment income to fund programmes and operations during the year.

If there is one issue that keeps me up at night as CFO, it is the sustainability of our fundraising base. The Fund continues to rely heavily on the performance of our endowment and investments to fund operations, and this over-reliance is a vulnerability the trustees and I take seriously, particularly given the market volatility experienced during the year. In response, the Fund has embarked on a deliberate drive to diversify our fundraising resources, including strengthening our fundraising capability through the recruitment of a Chief Marketing Officer and grant writer, and reviewing our organisational strategy to broaden our funding base. The intent is clear: to ease the burden on the endowment and build a more diversified, resilient funding model over time.

On the expenditure side, programme development spend increased to R61.4 million, including R30.7 million in grants disbursed to partners and beneficiaries, reflecting our continued investment in the reach and depth of our programmes. We remain custodians of responsible spending, and I am satisfied that our administrative and operating costs continued to be managed within accepted non-profit sector benchmarks during the year, even as we invested in the organisational capacity, systems and governance needed to support the Fund's next phase of growth.

I am also pleased to report that the Fund achieved a clean audit outcome for the year, extending our unbroken record to 30 consecutive clean audits since the Fund's inception in 1995. This record reflects the strength of our governance, controls and financial discipline, and remains a source of real pride for the trustees, management and staff.

Ultimately, these figures are more than a set of results — they represent the Fund's capacity to change the way society treats its children and youth. I want to extend my sincere appreciation to the finance team, management and the Board of Trustees for their diligence, sound stewardship and unwavering support throughout the year, as well as to our donors and partners whose generosity makes this work possible. I look forward to building further on this solid financial foundation in the year ahead.

Sibusiso Zwane
Chief Financial Officer

NMCF Results at a glance

As at March 2026

INCOME	1996–2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2023	2024	2025	2026	Cumulative
Grants	772 350	23 714	37 605	39 315	17 336	20 220	20 466	13 841	102 642	60 413	33 660	33 319	1 113 906
Donations / Hospital Programmes Income	50 300	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	50 300
Merit Foundation "Modernate"	10 082	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	10 082
Investment Income / (Loss)	549 904	56 917	113 921	-39 868	49 564	54 201	42 174	-168 431	86 251	37 391	121 469	145 919	1 416 078
Total Income	**1 371 354**	**80 631**	**151 526**	**-39 868**	**66 900**	**74 521**	**62 640**	**-154 590**	**188 893**	**108 737**	**155 621**	**179 238**	**2 557 504**
LESS													
Programme Development (operational)	-1 077 594	-22 643	-10 368	-6 969	-7 688	-21 616	-9 563	-4 898	-22 723	-109 799	-21 203	-19 205	-1 302 470
Programme Development (Human Resources)	-229 284	-17 314	-11 992	-8 690	-7 688	-16 943	-16 063	-11 330	-24 748	-28 106	-27 488	-14 601	-224 245
Operational & Admin (Governance, Non-Designated Funds)	-22 864	-541	-1 620	-1 052	-1 123	-1 448	-1 626	-	-	-	-	-	-30 495
Special Projects	-3 060	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-3 060
Annual Collaborative (Humanitarian) Projects	-50	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-50
Advocacy and Marketing	-3 900	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-621	-	-4 521
Disaster Relief Fund	-3 006	-820	-	-	-	-	-443	-	-	-	-	-	-4 269
Board Staff Recruitment	-6 873	-350	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-7 223
Total Expenditure	**-1 405 651**	**-40 668**	**-23 980**	**-16 711**	**-16 499**	**-39 007**	**-27 695**	**-16 228**	**-47 471**	**-137 905**	**-49 312**	**-33 806**	**-1 816 032**
Net Funds Received	**-34 297**	**39 963**	**127 546**	**-56 579**	**50 401**	**35 514**	**34 945**	**-170 818**	**141 422**	**-29 168**	**106 309**	**145 432**	**741 472**

Grants Approved	1996–2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2023	2024	2025	2026	Total
Grants to Programme Expenses as % of Donations Income	82%	78%	89%	60%	68%	65%	72%	62%	59%	56%	58%	55%	100%
Grants to Programme Expenses as % of Donations Income	**78%**	**78%**	**89%**	**60%**	**68%**	**65%**	**72%**	**62%**	**59%**	**56%**	**58%**	**55%**	**100%**

Nelson Mandela
CHILDREN'S FUND

CHANGING THE WAY SOCIETY TREATS ITS CHILDREN AND YOUTH



Strategic Overview

30 years
of impacting children's lives

Mission

Changing the way society treats its children and youth.

Vision

Give voice and dignity to the child by building a rights-based movement.



Strategic Objectives

- **Empower families and communities** to adequate care (health, safety, nutrition, education, economic, basic services) for their children and the youth
- **Create platforms** to amplify the voices of children and the youth.
- **Address and influence government shortfalls** in relation to children and youth through advocacy and lobbying.
- **Create a collaborative environment** to amplify the impact of the NMCF on children and the youth through strategic partnerships.
- **Diversify and augment sources of income** to ensure that the NMCF is financially sustainable and continues to grow its endowment.
- I**mprove organisational culture**, staff engagement, and capability.
- **Be the leader in advocating child-related issues** in South Africa.

Organisational Values

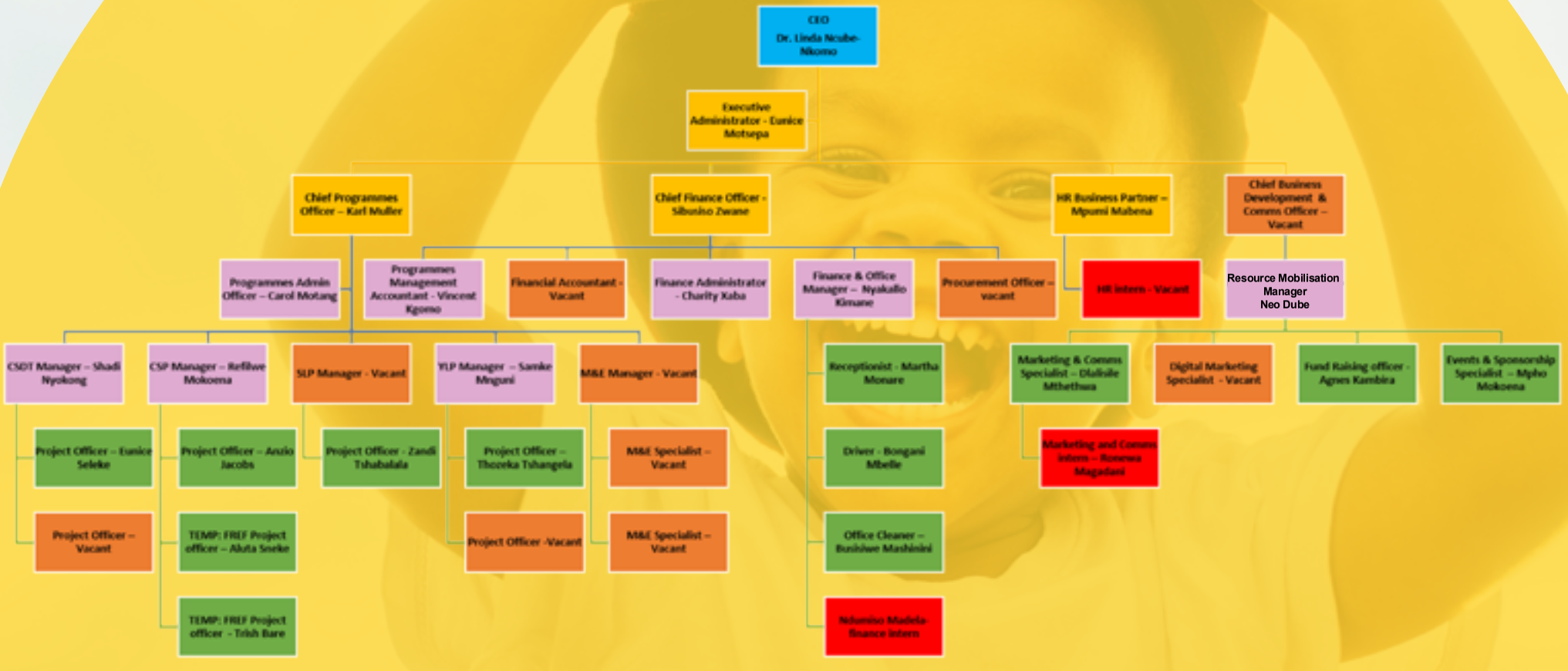
- **Integrity -** Ethics * Honesty * Trustworthy * Transparency * Reliability
- **Excellence -** Efficiency * Innovation * Work Ethic * Striving for the Best * Thought Leadership
- **Inclusivity -** Diversity * Equity * Leaving no one behind
- **Accountability -** Effectiveness * Ownership * Responsibility * Intentional
- **Ubuntu -** Respect * Humanity for all * Compassion * Empathy * Equal Treatment * Selflessness * Service * Courtesy * Kindness

Nelson Mandela CHILDREN'S FUND

CHANGING THE WAY SOCIETY TREATS ITS CHILDREN AND YOUTH

30 years of impacting children's lives

Organisational Structure





Overview of HR Matters

During the 2025/2026 financial year, the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund continued to strengthen its People and Culture agenda, recognising that its people remain central to achieving its mission of changing the way society treats its children and youth. The Fund remained committed to fostering a high-performing, inclusive, and values-driven workplace culture that supports employee wellbeing, professional growth, and organisational effectiveness.

Key focus areas included employee wellness, performance management, learning and development, leadership capability, and diversity, equity and inclusion. These efforts contributed to a positive organisational culture while supporting employee retention, productivity, and job satisfaction. The Fund also maintained sound human resource governance and compliance, ensuring that policies, procedures, and people management practices align with legislative requirements and best practice standards.
As the organisation continues to evolve, the People and Culture function will play a critical role in building organisational resilience, attracting and retaining talent, and enabling the Fund to deliver sustainable impact for children and communities across South Africa.

Organisational Culture Change Programme

In October 2024, the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund (NMCF), in partnership with THCE, embarked on a 16-month organisational culture change programme, running until February 2026. The programme focused on three strategic objectives:

- Defining the organisation's desired culture.
- Building leadership capability to drive and sustain the desired culture.
- Empowering employees to actively contribute to positive cultural change.

Defining the Desired Culture

Culture change workshops involving the Executive Leadership Team and employees provided an opportunity to reflect on the existing culture, identify shared values and behaviours, and collectively define the culture required to support the Fund's strategic objectives and mission.

Strengthening Leadership Capability

A tailored leadership development programme was implemented for EXCO, combining individual and group coaching. The programme strengthened self-awareness, shared goal alignment, interpersonal accountability, communication, working relationships, and collaboration, while equipping leaders to drive cultural transformation.

Empowering Employees

Employee development interventions focused on communication, accountability, relationships, and personal effectiveness. These included:

- Empowering Communication workshops (May 2025).
- Head and Heart sessions focused on personal responsibility (June 2025).
- Staff cognition workshops (September 2025 and February 2026).

- Relationship-building and team contracting sessions (September and October 2025).

These interventions equipped employees with the skills, mindset, and confidence to contribute to a positive, values-driven culture. The programme has laid a strong foundation for continued organisational growth by fostering greater collaboration, accountability, trust, and shared ownership across the Fund.

Employee Performance Management Framework

The Nelson Mandela Children's Fund successfully introduced its Employee Performance Management System, eCaps. All employees complied with performance agreements linked to strategic objectives. Mid-year reviews supported regular monitoring, with support and remedial measures implemented where needed. The framework continues to support a culture of accountability and ongoing development across the Fund.

Employee Wellness Programme

The Nelson Mandela Children's Fund remains committed to the holistic wellbeing of its employees, recognising that a healthy and supported workforce is essential to organisational success and sustainability.

During the 2025/2026 financial year, the Fund continued to implement wellness initiatives supporting the physical, mental, emotional, and social wellbeing of staff. Through the Employee Wellness Programme, employees had access to confidential counselling and support services for personal, family, and work-related challenges.

Wellness awareness activities, communications, and engagement initiatives throughout the year promoted healthy lifestyles, stress management, mental health awareness, resilience, and work-life balance. These initiatives contributed to a supportive workplace culture where employees feel valued and equipped to manage their personal and professional responsibilities.

The Fund remains committed to enhancing its wellness offerings to ensure that employees are supported in achieving their full potential while contributing to the Fund's mission and strategic objectives.

Mpumi Mabena
HR Business Practitioner



Nelson Mandela
CHILDREN'S FUND

CHANGING THE WAY SOCIETY TREATS ITS CHILDREN AND YOUTH



Governance Overview

30 years
of impacting
children's lives

The Role of the Board

The Trust Board is responsible to all stakeholders in general, and the Trustees, donors and beneficiaries in particular, for the performance and therefore the overall management of the Fund. The major responsibilities include ensuring that the Fund:

- Works towards achieving the goals and ideals set down in the founding document and agreed by the Board of Trustees, which include managing the affairs of the Fund in such a manner so as to ensure the greatest possible benefits for the beneficiaries and protection of the assets of the Fund.
- Operates within the Fund's Trust Deed
- Operates within the confines of the Non-profit Organisation Act, Property Control Act, the merchandising Marks Act and the Common Law
- Operates within the resolutions passed at meetings of the Trust Board in discharging its duties and is responsible for:
  - The overall strategy and structure of the Fund
  - The Fund's assets and distributions and therefore the Fund's operations

Trustees Board Committees

- The Board is supported by six (6) committees, each mandated to provide focused oversight and guidance in line with the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund's governance responsibilities. These committees are established to strengthen fiduciary stewardship, accountability, and effective oversight in advancing the Fund's mandate of protecting and advancing children's rights and wellbeing.
- Each committee operates under a formal Terms of Reference that outlines its purpose, composition, scope of work, and reporting obligations. These Terms of Reference are reviewed regularly to ensure continued relevance, alignment with best practice, and responsiveness to the evolving needs of the organisation and the children it serves.

Audit & Risk Committee.

The Committee is responsible for monitoring the adequacy of the financial controls, accounting policies and financial reporting. It provides a forum though which the external auditors report to the Board. The Committee meets three times a year.

Investment Committee.

The Investment Committee determines, approved investment advisors, the overall investment strategy and structure, with the limits of the prudent guidelines as set by the Registrar of Financial institutions from time to time.
It receives reports from Fund's advisors and fund managers, and monitors performance on a regular basis. It has the delegated power to reduce or increase the quantum of funds under each investment advisor's control. The Committee meets three times a year.

Human Resources & Remuneration Committee.

The Committee considers and approves remuneration for the management of the Fund in line with the relevant market indicators. It is further responsible for determining the remuneration policy and employee benefits applicable to staff. It also considers and approves senior management appointments. The Committee meets twice a year.

Development Committee.

The mandate of this Committee is to identify strategic and long term partners for the strategy, to approve funding to identified partners and monitor impact made upon the lives of children within communities.

The Committee continually reviews the status development funding philosophy, policy and criteria in terms of appropriateness and ensures the Fund operates within restricted budget. The Committee meets at least three times a year.

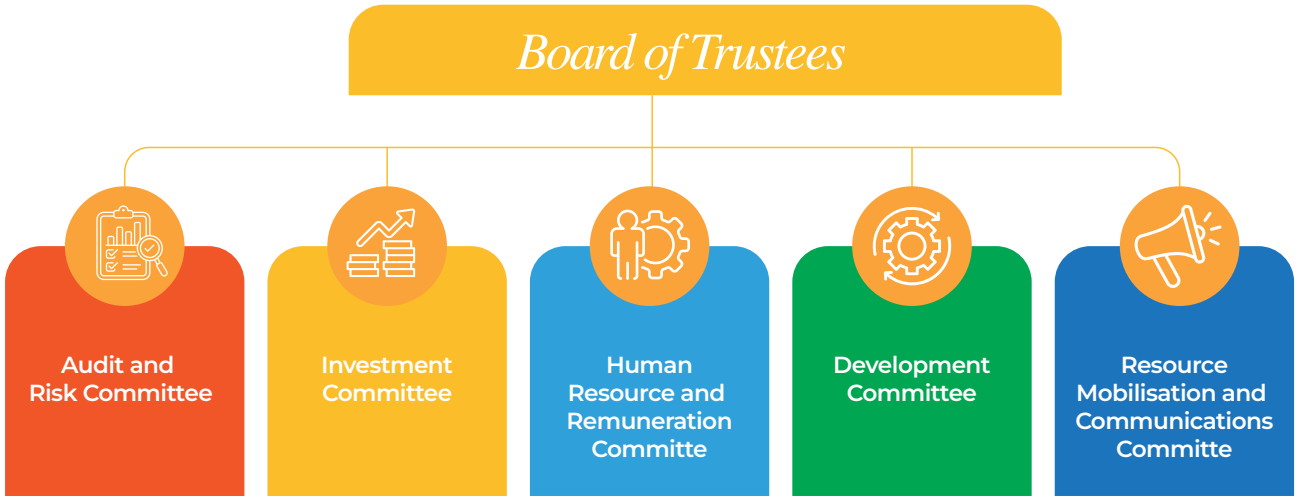
Resource Mobilisation & Communications Committee.

The mandate of the Committee is to advise management on all aspects of business development, monitor management of the brand and monitor the implementation of the fundraising and communication strategies as well as the performance and compliance of affiliate offices in line with the signed Licensing Agreements. The committee meets at least three times a year.

Nominations & Governance Committee.

The Nominations and Governance Committee was constituted towards the end of the reporting period and, as a result, did not convene any meetings during the year under review. The Committee is a formal subcommittee of the Board of Trustees. Its purpose is to:

- Ensure the Board is appropriately constituted to discharge its fiduciary and strategic responsibilities.
- Oversee governance frameworks, policies, and practices
- Lead the identification, nomination, and succession planning of Trustees and Committee members.
- Promote ethical leadership, accountability, and compliance in line with King IV principles. The committee meets at least twice a year.





Trustees Board Meetings

Schedule and highlights of key decisions from 1 April 2025 – 31 March 2026.

The Board meets quarterly and holds special meetings when needed. The AGM was held in October 2025 to reinforce the Trustees' knowledge of their legal duties, responsibilities and strategic role. The table below shows the number of committee meetings held and Trustee attendance. Their consistent participation reflects a strong commitment to their roles and the Fund's long-term responsibilities.

The Board of Trustees approved amendments to the Trust Deed, which resulted in the dissolution of the MTC. The amended Trust Deed was subsequently lodged with the Master's Office for registration in December 2025. Following the registration process, the MTC was dissolved, and its responsibilities were assumed by the full Board of Trustees, which now serves as the governing body of the Trust.

TRUSTEES	MANAGEMENT TRUSTEE COMMITTEE	AGM	DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE	INVESTMENT COMMITTEE	AUDIT & RISK COMMITTEE	HUMAN RESOURCES & REMUNERATIONS COMMITTEE	RESOURCE MOBILISATION AND COMMUNICATION COMMITTEE
	Meetings: 3	Meetings: 1	Meetings: 3	Meetings: 3	Meetings: 3	Meetings: 3	Meetings: 4
Board of Trustees							
Mr PM Makwana	Chairperson: 3	Chairperson: 1	Invitee	Invitee: 2	Invitee	1	3
Mr R Tshabalala	3	D/Chairperson: 1	Chairperson: 3	Not a member	Not a member	Not a member	Not a member
Mr S Masuku	3	1	Not a member	Chairperson: 3	3	Not a member	Not a member
Mr M Mashishi	3	1	Not a member	3	Not a member	Not a member	Chairperson: 3
Ms MJ Morifi	3	1	Not a member	Not a member	Not a member	Chairperson: 3	3
Ms Z Manase	2	1	Not a member	Not a member	Chairperson: 3	Not a member	Not a member
Ms R Motlana	Not a member	1	2	Not a member	Not a member	Not a member	Not a member
Ms O Amponsah	Not a member		2	Not a member	Not a member	Not a member	Not a member
Ms N Vundla	Not a member	1	3	Not a member	Not a member	Not a member	Not a member
Mr M Ratshikuni	Not a member	1	Not a member	3	Not a member	Not a member	4
Ms Z Ngwepe	Not a member	1	Not a member	3	3	Not a member	Not a member
Mr J Seoloane	3	1	Not a member	Not a member	Not a member	3	Not a member
Adv. K Moroka	Not a member	1	Not a member	Not a member	Not a member	3	Not a member
Mr I Moroke	Not a member	1	Not a member	Not a member	Not a member	Not a member	3
Mr S Nzimande	Not a member	1	Not a member	Not a member	Not a member	Not a member	2
Prof Z Vilakazi	1		Not a member	Not a member	Not a member	Not a member	Not a member
Dr L Ncube-Nkomo	Invitee: 3	1	Invitee: 3	Invitee: 3	Invitee: 3	Invitee: 3	Invitee: 3

Mrs Moipone Nana Magomola resigned as the Board Chair on the 26th of June 2026. Mr MP Makwana was appointed as the Trust Board Chairperson and Mr R. Tshabalala as Deputy Chairperson on the 3rd of October 2025.

Mr. Owen R. Maubane, Ms. Onkgodisitse P. Mokonyane, and Ms. Nonzukiso Siyotula served as members of the Investment Committee. Adv. M. Moerane served as a member of the MTC.

Ms. O. P. Mokonyane tendered her resignation on 15 July 2025, followed by Mr. O. Maubane on 29 July 2025. Ms. Nonzukiso Siyotula resigned on 1 August 2025, and Adv. M. Moerane also tendered his resignation thereafter on the 25th of August 2025.

Ms Z Ngwepe, Mr M Ratshikuni and Mr Mashishi became members of the Investment Committee on 26 March 2026.



Mr. Mpho Makwana
Chairperson

Human Resources and Remuneration Committee
Resource Mobilisation and Communication Committee

Mr. Rorisang Tshabalala
Deputy Chairperson

Development committee

Dr. Linda Ncube-Nkomo
Chief Executive Officer

Ms. Zodwa Manase
Chairperson: Audit & Risk Committee

Mr. Moss Mashishi
Chairperson: Resource Mobilisation and Communication Committee

Investment Committee

Mr. Sakhile Masuku
Chairperson: Investment Committee

Audit and Risk Committee



Ms. Mary-Jane Morifi
Chairperson: Human Resources & Remuneration Committee

Resource Mobilisation and Communication Committee

Ms. Rita Motlana
Chairperson: Development Committee.

Mr. Maseda Ratshikuni
Resource Mobilisation and Communication Committee

Investment Committee

Mr. Ivan Moroke
Resource Mobilisation and Communication Committee

Development Committee

Ms. Zanele Ngwepe
Audit & Risk Committee

Investment Committee

Mr. Sizwe Nzimande
Resource Mobilisation and Communication Committee

Development Committee



Ms. Nozizwe Vundla
Development Committee

Audit and Risk Committee
Resource Mobilisation and Communication Committee

Ms. Obenewa Amponsah
Human Resources and Remuneration Committee

Development Committee, Resource Mobilisation and Communication Committee

Adv. Kgomotso Moroka
Human Resources & Remuneration Committee

Audit and Risk Committee

Prof. Zeblon Vilakazi
Development Committee

Investment Committee

Mr. Joe Seoloane
Human Resources & Renumeration Committee

Audit and Risk Committee

NMCF SDG Impact Alignment



1. No Poverty
2. Zero Hunger
3. Good health and Well-being
4. Quality Education
5. Gender Equality
6. Decent Work and Economic growth
7. Reduced Inequality
8. Partnerships for the goals



Nelson Mandela
CHILDREN'S FUND
CHANGING THE WAY SOCIETY TREATS ITS CHILDREN AND YOUTH



Programme Overview & Highlights

30 years
of impacting
children's lives



Overview of the year

Guided by Madiba's enduring legacy as well as the leadership of the children themselves, our work this year strengthened child-led advocacy, expanded regional influence, and cemented critical partnerships with civil society and continental bodies.

Programme Highlights

The 2025/26 year marked a period of significant progress for the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund as we continued to deepen our commitment to advancing the rights, voices, and well being of children. We set a target to reach the lives of at least 50 000 beneficiaries. Through the year our work impacted the lives of 68 961 beneficiaries, 38% above target. Each programme contributes to

	Beneficiaries
CSDT	3 957
CSP	59 068
SLP	5 209
YLP	727

Please do read through the individual programme sections to get deeper insight into the work being done with children and families and celebrate with me the hard work of our team.

The year started with a proverbial 'bang' with the successful hosting of the second African Children's Summit, which took place from 4th to 7th April in Johannesburg. The Summit brought together **175 children** from **14 African countries,** creating a truly continental, child led platform where children could debate, collaborate, and craft solutions to issues that affect them. NMCF was honoured to facilitate this space, but the real leadership emerged from the children themselves. Their voices, priorities, and collective vision shaped every aspect of the Summit's outcomes.

Our advocacy efforts were further strengthened when NMCF secured Observer Status at the African Union's African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACERWC). This milestone provides NMCF with a formal channel for engagement with Africa's highest child rights mechanism, allowing us to elevate child led insights and to contribute to continental policy discussions more systematically. The impact of this new status was evident when we accompanied the Child Chair of the African Children's Summit to the 44th Ordinary Session of the ACERWC. She delivered the Summit's outcome statement to representatives of Member States and civil society organisations. This is an important moment of recognition for children's agency in shaping the continent's childrights agenda. The Chair's presence and message signalled a shift toward meaningful inclusion of children in governance processes that influence their lives.

On the local front, we saw the election of the 13th Nelson Mandela Children's Parliament (NMCP). The NMCP is an important vehicle for children's voices to be heard in South Africa. I congratulate the new President and Executive of the Nelson Mandela Parliament and wish them well on their two-year journey to promote children's rights in South Africa. They can count on our support for the entire journey! Here I would also like to thank our partner organisations: The South African Parliament, the Department of Social Development, and Save the Children South Africa for their continued support of this process.

This year also saw the expansion of our work within global policy spaces. As part of the South African National Child Rights Coalition, NMCF played a leading role in supporting the formation and participation of a Children 20 (CH20) group during South Africa's G20 presidency. We were privileged to partner with fellow civil society organisations to ensure that children had a recognised platform under the G20 engagement structures. NMCF led the Sherpa Track, contributing to child-centred priorities being heard and acknowledged in the broader G20 policy dialogues. This culminated in children presenting their demands to the President at he conclusion of the G20 Civils Summit on 20 November 2026. These demands emanated from a child-led engagement process, ensuring true child participation and not tokenism.

Through these collective efforts, the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund continued to advocate for a continent and a world where children are safe, nurtured, and empowered to shape their own futures. Our achievements this year reflect not only the dedication of our staff and partners but, importantly, the leadership and courage of the children who continue to inspire our mission. I am incredibly grateful to my team, our partners and supporters, but above all, the children who trusted us to walk alongside them in this journey.

Looking ahead

Together, we take meaningful steps toward realising Madiba's vision: that every child lives with dignity, care, and opportunity. While the year under review was one of significant challenges as well as notable achievements, it also laid the foundation for a significant programme evolution for NMCF. The implementation of our new strategy, Legacy 2.0: Khuluma Mntwana Sikhuzwe, marks a strategic shift that will shape NMCF's priorities, deepen its impact and guide its future direction.

There are two strategic pillars underlying Legacy 2.0: Khuluma Mntwana Sikhuzwe. First, we will continue to build on our legacy and leverage our 30 years of working with children to adopt a research-focused approach to tackling the challenges of violence against children and poverty. We understand that these are BIG problems in our society. We intend to continue working with our partners within selected communities to develop evidence-based models of intervention, which we will share widely. Second, we will redouble our efforts to allow children to speak, and we will listen! We will utilise the power of NMCF's brand to further child-empowered advocacy work, making sure that we continue to find ways for children to raise their voices and make changes in our society.

Karl Muller
Chief Programmes Officer

> *There can be no keener revelation of a society's soul than the way in which it treats its children*
>
> Nelson Mandela

Our Programmes

Child Survival Development And Thriving Programme

The Child Survival Development and Thriving Programme (CSDT) focuses on improving the health of children in their first 1 000 days (including pregnancy) with interventions ranging from treating severe acute malnutrition to vaccination and fortification drives.

The Nelson Mandela Children's Hospital

The Nelson Mandela Children's Hospital (NMCH), one of only two hospitals dedicated to children's health in South Africa, provides world-class paediatric care to all families, regardless of their financial means.

Child Safety & Protection

The Child Safety and Protection Programme ensures that children are protected in all aspects of their lives, enabling them to learn, thrive, and to reach their full potential. While much attention is given to the risks children face in physical spaces such as schools and homes, the programme is increasingly expanding its efforts into the critical and rapidly evolving domain of digital safety.

Youth Leadership

The Youth Leadership Programme promotes youth leadership and entrepreneurial skills through initiatives such as the Nelson Mandela Children's Parliament and STEM bootcamps, as well as guiding young people to become changemakers in their communities through the Legacy Academy.

Sustainable Livelihoods

The Sustainable Livelihoods Programme is transforming communities by helping families build lasting economic resilience. Through initiatives like Self-Help Groups and youth-led enterprises, the Programme creates tangible income-generating opportunities that empower people to break the poverty cycle.



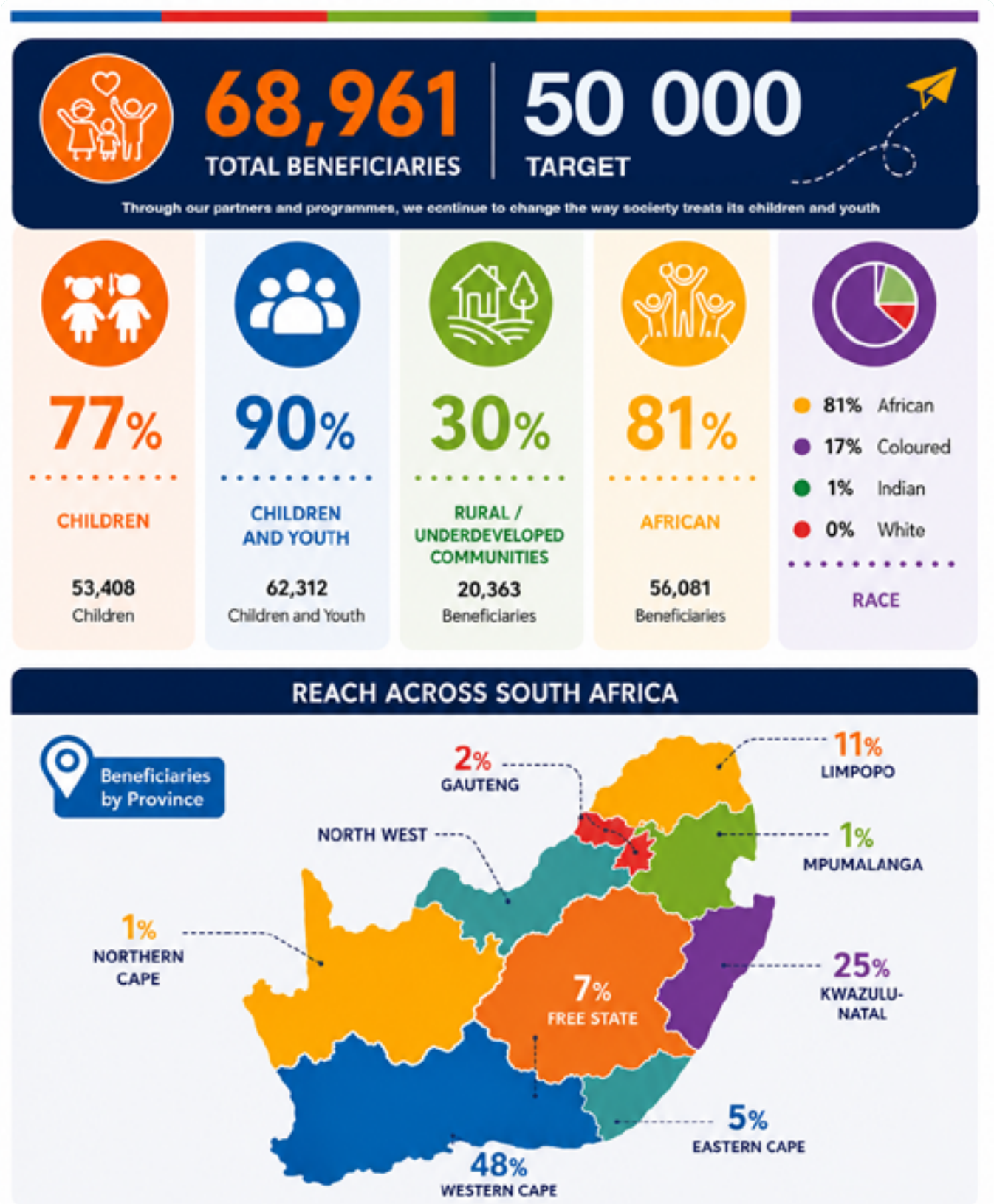
Our Programmes



Health	Safety	Sustainable Livelihoods	Youth Leadership & empowerment

Impact in numbers

Changing the way society treat its children and youth



Nelson Mandela CHILDREN'S FUND
CHANGING THE WAY SOCIETY TREATS ITS CHILDREN AND YOUTH



Child Survival, Development and Thriving Programme (CSDT)

Introduction

The 2025/2026 financial year marked the final phase of the implementation of the 2022-2027 strategy. Core work included initiatives such as community engagement sessions, which involved revisiting communities where Child Survival Development and Thriving (CSDT) projects have been implemented. Investing in strengthening the health system, such as training of community health workers, clinic committees, and professional nurses, was another major activity during this reporting period. Other activities focused on aligning community-based health responses to add value to the district's plans for child and maternal health.

The purpose of implementing the CSDT in this manner was to ensure that in all areas where Nelson Mandela Children's Fund (the Fund) was present, a care system was left in a state that responds to the needs of children under five, thereby supporting their survival and development. With the primary objective of reducing child mortality and providing support to pregnant mothers and children under the age of five, the focus, at this phase, remained on the provision of quality primary health care services through Community Healthcare Workers (CHWs) and the Clinic Committees (CC). The programme contributed to improvement in the management of malnutrition and has strengthened families and community initiatives aimed at enhancing the quality of health services for children. In terms of coverage, CSDT continued to focus its implementation on sites with high mortality rates; they are the Zululand district in KwaZulu-Natal, Ehlanzeni in Mpumalanga, Mopani in Limpopo, and John Taolo Gaetsewe in the Northern Cape.

Approach

To achieve the mandate of the CSDT programme, grants were awarded to five implementing partners across five provinces, reaching children under five years of age. Guided by targeted implementation sites, alignment of health responses was central to how the CSDT programme was executed. Emphasis was placed on the following core components:

- Home visits were conducted by Community Healthcare Workers (CHWs) to educate families about pre- and post-natal care, immunisation, nutrition, early learning and stimulation.
- Community dialogues and campaigns were used to promote child and maternal health knowledge.
- Community health workers and Clinic Committees were trained to better understand their role in primary health care. This activity also helped with the strengthening of the link between CHWs and their local clinics to better promote access and demand for primary health services.
- Underpinning the above was the engagement and strengthening of different stakeholders. Partnerships were strategically engaged for the purpose of better and more coordinated partnerships to provide access and quality services to pregnant women and mothers with children under five.

Impact

The following outcomes marked the progress for implemented activities:

Empowerment of families and communities to adequately care (healthcare, safety, nutrition, education, economic position, basic services) for their children and youth

The Programme provided child and maternal services to 13 616 children under the age of five. Beneficiaries also included 602 pregnant women, 490 fathers and men, 141 ECD centres with 2 000 children, and 6 703 family visits were conducted. Services included child vaccinations, screening and assessment of childhood illnesses, ante- and post-natal care services, nutrition support, health education and early learning and stimulation, Vitamin A, deworming and MUAC (Mid-Upper Arm Circumference).

To enhance the capacity of implementing partners to effectively deliver the CSDT Programme, the following training activities were undertaken

- 34 Community Health Workers (CHWs) were trained in exclusive breastfeeding.
- 107 Community members, including 10 CHWs, were trained in the prevention of stunted growth for children under the age of five.
- 24 Clinic Committees trained in the function and management of clinic committees.
- 36 CHWs were trained in preventive care, skilled birth attendance, childhood illnesses management, evidence-based practice, communication, and counselling, and patient-centred approaches.
- Training in basic bookkeeping to support effective grant management.
- Two induction workshops were conducted to



- Training in basic bookkeeping to support effective grant management.
- Two induction workshops were conducted to assist implementing partners to understand grant expectations, ensure consistency in Programme implementation and delivery of quality results and, most importantly, emphasise compliance throughout the grant period.
- A reflection session was also held with the implementing partners to exchange knowledge, reflect on achievements and challenges and to use the learnings to improve future programming.

The activities undertaken have positively impacted maternal and child health by increasing access to quality care and promoting preventive interventions. This work has empowered pregnant women and new mothers to care for themselves and their babies, and for babies to live. CHWs, community dialogues, and clinic committees are all important systems that can mediate and ensure that mothers and babies access health care, and that they remain in care and complete immunisation and treatments.

Creating platforms to amplify the voices of children and youths

- A breastfeeding awareness campaign was held in August 2025 in Bushbuckridge, Mpumalanga. The Breastfeeding awareness campaign August 2025 in Bushbuckridge, began with a 2.5-kilometre walk and was attended by 440 community members, beneficiaries, and strategic partners. Breastfeeding awareness materials, including pamphlets and banners, were distributed. The walk ended with a community gathering at a local clinic, where information about the importance and benefits of breastfeeding was given. The information sharing session also included topics and testimonies on child and maternal care for children under five.
- A breastfeeding dialogue was held in September 2025 in Mpumalanga. The dialogue focused on mothers' infant-feeding experiences from birth until their children reached six months of age. This included the support they received as well as the type of support they felt would have been most beneficial.
- The men's dialogue in KwaZulu-Natal was held on the 5th and 6th of November 2025 in eDumbe, North of KwaZulu-Natal. It highlighted the need to strengthen understanding of the roles of both mothers and fathers as legal protectors and natural caregivers. The sessions recorded 55 attendees.
- The fifth session was held in Limpopo, and it addressed the issue of food insecurity at the family level. The session gave the community a safe platform to collectively address local

issues, specifically child health, food security and economic strengthening of families. 287 and 10 strategic partners attended the two-day session

Drive advocacy and lobbying engagement efforts to identify and influence government shortfalls affecting children and youth

Two Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) were signed at the district level and through the implementing partner in Zululand and Ehlanzeni. Working closely with government departments has enabled NMCF to align its work more effectively with national priorities, including the First 1 000 Days programme. This arrangement has assisted with smoother approvals of activities and has provided a platform for systematic change.

Lessons learned: community engagement

The community-based engagement sessions play a vital role in promoting understanding of the importance of care and support during the first five years of a child. Caregivers, families, and community members were brought together to learn about correct nutrition, healthcare. and responsive parenting.

It was observed that these participatory discussions make information culturally relevant and easier to understand. They build practical knowledge and motivate families to adopt behaviours that improve maternal and child health outcomes during the critical developmental period.





Highlights

In KZN, the CSDT programme supported the rehabilitation of 118 malnourished children under the age of five and got them back on track (health, growth, development, and learning). Through the implementing partner, parents received training on nutrition, healthy food choices, complementary feeding and exclusive breastfeeding. For treatment, parents were encouraged to attend the clinic regularly. 115 local early childhood centres (ECD)collaborated with clinics to conduct screening, growth monitoring, and nutrition campaigns. Parents were supported to access social and health services, and grants and were trained to start door-sized gardens. Information on malnutrition was shared through community radio and social media. The project has made the following impact and changes:

Children's nutrition and learning

- Children gained weight, with improvements in biometric results and nutrition.
- More affordable and healthy food choices are available at home.
- There is greater bonding between parents and their children.
- Children are now playing and learning at home, and parents are reading storybooks to them.
- Children received health services at ECD centres.

Families empowered

- Parents now understand children's changing nutritional needs.
- Parents now ask clinic staff for more information about the RtHB's (Road to Health Booklet) measurements and results.
- Parents have started to use organic methods to grow vegetables at home.

Beneficiaries' Impact Stories

The programme's story of change – "Thabo" (not his real name)

- Born premature: 1.72kg at birth.
- Interventions: Kangaroo Mother Care, exclusive breastfeeding, and regular growth monitoring.

Progress:

- Weight increased to 8.2kg.
- MUAC improved from 136mm to 147mm.
- Head circumference grew from 17cm to 19cm.
- Family involvement: Grandmother actively participated in sessions, and mother returned to school.
- Support services: Birth certificate and child grant access facilitated.

The programme contributed to the following changes:

- Deployment of the mobile clinic to bridge service delivery gaps.
- Active involvement of a professional nurse for screening, diagnosis, and treatment.
- Dedicated health ambassadors conducting home visits and providing nutrition counselling.
- Partnerships with other key stakeholders and engagement in broader maternal health initiatives.

A list of implementing partners

Name of IP	Province and District	Municipality
Humana People to People South Africa (HPPSA)	KwaZulu-Natal, Zululand District	eDumbe
Lulamaphiko	KwaZulu-Natal, Zululand District	Pongola
Hoedspruit Training Trust (HTT)	Limpopo, Mopani	Hoedspruit
Wellbeing Africa (WBA)	Mpumalanga, Ehlanzeni	Bushbuckridge
Kopano Ke Matla (KK)	Northern Cape, John Taolo Gaetsewe	Heuningvlei



Nelson Mandela CHILDREN'S FUND

CHANGING THE WAY SOCIETY TREATS ITS CHILDREN AND YOUTH

30 years of impacting children's lives

Child Safety And Protection Programme (CSP)

This Annual Report documents the work of the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund (NMCF) Child Safety and Protection (CSP) Programme for the period February 2025 to March 2026. It is produced at a critical juncture: as South Africa concludes its G20 Presidency, as the continent reflects on the momentum generated by the Africa Children's Summit 2025, and as NMCF closes out a five-year strategic cycle that has tested, refined, and ultimately affirmed our conviction that children are not passive beneficiaries of social change; they are its architects.

This report covers an unusually rich period of work. It spans the concluding phase of the Girl Power Against Violence Project, supported by the FirstRand Empowerment Foundation (FREF), which has reached over 75,000 children and over 5,000 adults across all nine provinces over its two-year grant cycle. It documents the completion of a long-term grant to the Goedgedacht Trust through the KAAP Agri agreement, the closure of our partnership with Lifeline Northern Cape, and the renewal of our partnership with Midlands Community College. It traces NMCF's leadership of the Africa Children's Summit 2025 (the most expansive iteration of the continental child participation platform to date) and our convening of the Digital Justice Summit at Stellenbosch University, which produced a substantive child-generated framework on digital rights and AI governance in South Africa. It also reflects on NMCF's role as secretariat of the Children20 process under South Africa's G20 Presidency, through which children's voices were formally embedded in the world's most consequential economic governance forum.

Each strand of this work reflects a shared theory of change: that safety, dignity, and justice for children require both grassroots intervention and systemic advocacy; that the lived realities of children in townships, rural communities, and marginalised spaces must inform the policies debated in continental and global arenas; and that authentic child participation is not a concession from adults, but a democratic and ethical imperative.

As this strategy cycle concludes, we do so with a clear understanding of our achievements, the challenges that remain, and the priorities voiced by the children we serve. Their calls for change are clear, courageous, and compelling.

Programme Overview

The Child Safety and Protection Programme is placed at the heart of NMCF's 2022–2027 strategy, Legacy in Action. It responds to the reality that South Africa remains one of the most dangerous countries in the world for children, defined by some of the highest rates of gender-based violence, femicide, child sexual abuse, corporal punishment, and online exploitation on the continent. These are not aberrations. They are the structural outcomes of poverty, patriarchy, inequality, and the chronic underfunding of child protection systems.

The CSP Programme operates across two interconnected levels. At the community level, it funds and supports implementing partners to deliver evidence-based interventions that prevent violence, strengthen reporting pathways, build the capacity of duty-bearers, and support children's psychosocial wellbeing. At the systems level, it engages government departments, multilateral bodies, the private sector, and civil society to shift the policies, norms, and structures that enable violence to persist.

During the reporting period, this dual mandate was expressed through several concurrent workstreams:

- The Girl Power Against Violence Project
- Implemented with FREF funding across twelve partner organisations in nine provinces
- Focused grants to the Goedgedacht Trust, Lifeline Northern Cape, and Midlands Community College
- The Africa Children's Summit 2025, which convened over 300 children and 180 adult allies from 16 African countries
- The Digital Justice Summit, which brought together just under 100 children from five provinces to co-author the most substantive child-generated digital rights framework in South Africa
- The Children20 process, through which children's voices were embedded in South Africa's G20 Social Summit.

Together, these workstreams constitute a coherent and ambitious programme, one that insists on the inseparability of direct service and advocacy, of local action, and global solidarity.

Girl Power Against Violence Project

Funded by the FirstRand Empowerment Foundation (FREF)



2.1 Background and Theory of Change

The Girl Power Against Violence Project is a three-year initiative running from June 2023 to July 2026, funded through a R23,500,000 grant agreement between NMCF and the FirstRand Empowerment Foundation Trust. It represents the most significant investment in NMCF's child safety and protection portfolio to date, and one of the most comprehensive multi-provincial GBV-prevention and child-protection programmes operating in South Africa.

The project targets 20,000 girls aged 10 to 17 and 1,000 women aged 18 to 50 in poverty-marginalised districts across six provinces: the Eastern Cape, the Free State, Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal, Limpopo, and the Western Cape. Twelve implementing partners operate within this ecosystem, each bringing distinct methodological approaches — from arts-based programming and trauma-informed care to community-based advocacy, psychosocial support, and economic empowerment.

The project's Theory of Change is embedded within NMCF's overarching organisation ToC, which positions NMCF's work at the intersection of service delivery and systemic change. The CSP ToC holds that sustainable improvement in children's safety and protection requires changes at multiple levels simultaneously: individual knowledge and skills must shift; community norms must be interrogated; institutional accountability must be strengthened; and economic vulnerabilities, which drive so much exposure to violence, must be addressed.

The six outcomes that structure the project are:

- decreased acceptance of violence against children and women in target schools and communities
- increased reporting of violence and corporal punishment
- improved access to social and statutory protective services
- increased capacity and accountability of duty-bearers to appropriately respond to violence
- increased economic security of women and girls
- men and boys perceiving women and girls as equal and respected members of the community and schools.

These outcomes do not occur in isolation; they are interconnected and mutually reinforcing. Shifts in attitudes create an environment that encourages increased reporting, while strengthened capacity among duty-bearers improves access to essential services. Economic empowerment helps reduce underlying vulnerabilities, and engaging men and boys tackles the root causes of inequality and violence rather than merely addressing their symptoms.

The programme employs a robust Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) framework that includes baseline and endline evaluations, quarterly reporting, site visits, and a knowledge-sharing architecture that enables cross-partner learning and continuous adaptive management. Promising interventions and good-practice models are in development and will be published in the final quarter.

Summary of Implementation Progress: June to November 2025

The Girl Power Project has matured with intention during the fifth reporting period, one that has absorbed the lessons of its first year. Furthermore, the Project has expanded its reach, deepened its relationships with schools and communities, and demonstrated measurable progress towards its six outcomes. Twelve implementing partners operated across all nine provinces of South Africa during the period, with 20 216 children reached directly through evidence-based, targeted interventions.

This period also marked the programme's first complete cycle of site visits under the current contracting phase (April 2025 to March 2026). These visits, conducted by NMCF's staff across partner implementation sites, enabled direct observation of programme delivery, engagement with beneficiaries and community stakeholders, and assessment of Child Protection Forum (CPF) functioning. Highlights included strong community participation, active learner engagement, and visible momentum in CPF structures, particularly in Limpopo, Eastern Cape, and the Western Cape.

Since the project's inception in 2023, and as at the end of February 2026, a cumulative total of 81,361 children has been reached directly and indirectly across all three years of implementation, comprising 9,565 in 2023/24, 42,177 in 2024/25, and 29,619 in the current 2025/26 period to date. Partners conducted 5,178 sessions with children during the period under review, against a target of 2,644, nearly double the target, and 417 sessions with duty-bearers against a target of 625.

Progress Against Outcomes

Outcome 1: Decreased Acceptance of Violence

Across all implementing partners, the reporting period saw consistent progress in shifting harmful norms and reducing acceptance of violence among children, adolescents, and community members. School-based interventions, including life-skills programmes, created safe spaces for learners to explore topics such as gender-based violence, consent, healthy relationships, and personal boundaries. These interventions help learners challenge normalised violence in their homes, schools, and communities.

Childline Western Cape, Khululeka, Connect Network, and Molo Songololo focused interventions on foundational knowledge and skills-building in violence prevention and GBV, employing trauma-informed approaches that acknowledge the systemic and intergenerational nature of violence. In Limpopo and KwaZulu-Natal, Far North Community Care and TruLife delivered targeted awareness programmes on cyberbullying, online exploitation, and community violence. Autism SA's "My Safety Plan" and "Be a Buddy, Not a Bully" sessions strengthened the capacity of autistic learners across seven provinces to recognise unsafe behaviour.

A particularly powerful example of the programme's impact on child agency emerged from the Far North, where learners at a secondary school initiated their own outreach after identifying unsafe use of tablets distributed by the Department of Education among their peers. These learner-driven cyber-safety engagements demonstrate that children are not only absorbing the programme's messages but acting on them, becoming active architects of safer school environments. Community dialogues led by Boikhuco, Molo Songololo, FASFacts, and Childline enabled parents, traditional leaders, and caregivers to interrogate entrenched gender norms and explore alternatives for safer childrearing.

Outcome 2: Increased Reporting of Violence

Building on the endline findings from Year 1, which demonstrated that children were more likely to use reporting channels at the programme's close than at baseline, Year 2 deepened this trajectory. In Delft, Western Cape, Childline WC, Molo Songololo, and Connect Network continued to refine school-level reporting systems aligned with the Western Cape Education Department's Abuse-No-More policy. Far North introduced an innovative WhatsApp-based anonymous reporting channel, supported by QR codes placed in schools to make

-based anonymous reporting channel, supported by QR codes placed in schools to make reporting accessible and discreet. Peer-supporter models were launched in several schools, with ten schools now operating child-led CPFs composed of ten learners each. Far North further reported that community-based dialogues and parent sessions surfaced almost 60 additional cases during the period, ranging from mental health concerns and substance abuse to sexual violence and statutory rape, demonstrating that community awareness functions as a powerful reporting trigger, not only school-based systems.

Outcome 3: Improved Access to Social and Statutory Protective Services

Access to psychosocial and statutory services strengthened significantly across sites. In the Free State, Gauteng, Limpopo, and the Western Cape, several partners facilitated referrals to school social workers, SAPS Family Violence, Child Protection and Sexual Offences (FCS) units, psychologists, and community safety officers. Autism SA supported autistic learners with specialised referrals and used simplified communication tools to help children articulate distress or risk. Far North reported 109 referrals of violence against children to statutory and social services during the period, and the Thuthuzela Care Centre in Thohoyandou publicly commended them for the quality of their collaboration.

Two cases stand out as emblematic of the programme's contribution to emergency response capacity. In Lusikisiki, Eastern Cape, a spate of gang rapes at schools where FASFacts operates triggered an immediate response from the Girl Power-initiated CPF. The Forum supported the school principal in securing rapid access to police, Thuthuzela services, and psychosocial support, and enabled children and families to formally open cases. In Delft, Western Cape, the multi-sector CPF convened by Childline, Molo Songololo, and Connect Network, bringing together WCED, SAPS, DSD, NGOs, and schools, functioned as a model coordinated response architecture.

Outcome 4: Increased Capacity of Duty-Bearers

The programme conducted 417 duty-bearer sessions during the period against a target of 625. While this reflects improvement from Year 1, partners experienced challenges convening parents and caregivers in particular, and mitigation strategies, including outreach through churches, community structures, and schools, remain ongoing.

A landmark achievement under this outcome is TruLife's development of a safeguarding training course that has been accredited by the South African Council of Educators (SACE), awarding educators five Continuing Professional Teacher Development (CPTD) points. Currently being piloted as a ten-part series, this course equips teachers to identify abuse and risk indicators, understand policy and legal frameworks, respond to disclosures appropriately, avoid retraumatising learners, and strengthen school duty-bearer competence. The course is a direct response to feedback from over 700 learner GBV-awareness surveys conducted by TruLife, which revealed that 38–42% of learners identified teachers or schools as their first point of help, while 8–10% explicitly requested that teachers receive more training and demonstrate higher levels of compassion. This accreditation represents a shift from programme-level to sector-level change, precisely the kind of systemic leverage that a funder like FREF expects to see.

Connect Network expanded its Trauma-Informed Train-the-Trainer programme to 16 organisations, equipping ECD practitioners, youth workers, and NGO staff to adopt trauma-responsive practices. Khululeka hosted a Principal's Symposium involving SAPS, DSD, NGOs, and WCED, where the Pathfinder Model, a coordinated school-safety approach, was introduced to principals. An important emerging trend across the programme is the intentional involvement of parents and caregivers as duty-bearers. Far North noted strong interest from parents, especially grandmothers, in understanding child online safety, highlighting significant gaps in knowledge and confidence that the programme is beginning to address.

knowledge and confidence that the programme is beginning to address.

Outcome 5: Increased Economic Security of Women and Girls

This outcome underperformed in Year 1, and partners made deliberate and measurable efforts to address this during the current period. In the Free State, Boikhuco expanded its Self-Help Group (SHG) initiative, a model from the Sustainable Livelihood Programme, training women in seven groups on record-keeping, savings management, financial literacy, partnership building, and income-generation strategies. In August 2025, Boikhuco commemorated Women's Day with a community event at which women identified marketable skills, including sewing and upholstery, which are being positioned for future skills-transfer opportunities. Accredited agricultural training also broadened economic options for rural women, and peer-initiated training in upholstery has begun supporting income generation and reducing long-term dependency among unemployed youth. ASSITEJ SA facilitated a specialised Financial Empowerment Workshop, demonstrating creative methods for generating income through theatre and arts-based skills.

Outcome 6: Men and Boys as Agents of Change

Positive masculinity and gender-equity work strengthened meaningfully across the programme, with more partners initiating targeted interventions for men and boys. Connect Network's boys' programmes, Dare Day, Take a Minute, and after-school mentorship supported emotional regulation, empathy, respectful communication, and non-violent conflict resolution, incorporating positive male role models as facilitators.

Phola continued implementing its evidence-based O.U.T.T.R.A.G.E.D intervention, offering a safe healing space for boys and young men to reflect on trauma, challenge harmful norms, and build new relational skills. One participant's testimony is instructive: through the sessions, a young man who had been involved in bullying traced the roots of his behaviour to unresolved grief and violence in his home. He reported gaining self-awareness and choosing non-violent methods of expression, a microcosm of the transformation the programme seeks to catalyse at scale. TruLife framed healthy masculinity discussions as "The Weight of Masculinity," helping boys unpack pressure, expectations, and gender roles. Far North launched five Male Advocate Clubs integrated into local soccer clubs, trusted spaces that have already begun receiving community GBV concerns directly, representing a shift from NGO-delivered programming to community-owned advocacy.

Child Participation and Leadership Spotlight

In its second year, the Girl Power Project has consciously deepened its investment in children's leadership and agency, ensuring that children are not merely beneficiaries of the programme but active contributors to the solutions it is building.

In July 2025, NMCF hosted its annual Children's Celebration. Girl Power beneficiaries from Autism SA and Phola attended, including an autistic child for whom the event provided a meaningful opportunity to build relationships outside of his family and community environment. His participation highlighted the importance of ensuring that children with disabilities are recognised, included, and given equal access to national platforms of celebration and social connection.

In September 2025, NMCF partnered with the Faculty of Law at Stellenbosch University for the 2nd International Conference on Children's Rights, focused on child rights in the Fourth Industrial Revolution and the digital age. Children from the Girl Power Project moderated a panel on AI, cyberbullying, and child trafficking, having prepared through a Moot Court simulation exploring cyberbullying and mental health. In October 2025, child beneficiaries from Far North and Molo Songololo represented the Girl Power Project at the REPSSI Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Forum in Lusaka, Zambia, leading a session on the relationship between mental health, violence, and digital safety.

online safety initiatives, demonstrating the leadership the programme has cultivated.

Outlook

The Girl Power Against Violence Project enters its final phase with a clear close-out plan. The programme remains on track to meet its contractual obligations with FREF. A Knowledge and Learning Event was held at the end of March 2026, bringing together children, implementing partners, and NMCF staff to consolidate and share learnings. NMCF will commission a final independent evaluation of the project, which will provide a summative assessment of outcomes, impact, and recommendations for the next grant cycle. Strategic opportunities exist to align the project's learnings with FREF's broader GBVF and Quality Education portfolios, and to position Girl Power findings within the policy advocacy work generated by the Digital Justice Summit and Children20 processes.



2nd International Conference on Children's Rights

Goedgedacht Trust: Grant Close-Out



Goedgedacht Trust Beneficiaries

Background

The NMCF Child Safety and Protection Programme administered a R100 000 expedited grant to the Goedgedacht Roman Catholic Trust, formalised in August 2025. The grant was processed to disburse funds held by NMCF on behalf of the KAL Group, following an agreement between KAL Group and NMCF that no further disbursement would occur beyond this amount. The grant supported Goedgedacht's POP (Providing Options for People) Centres in Riebeek Kasteel and Riebeek West, in the Swartland region of the Western Cape.

The Goedgedacht Trust is a long-standing community-based organisation with deep roots in the Swartland. Its POP Centres provide structured after-school programming, nutritional support, tutoring, and safe holiday spaces for children from low-income households in two small rural towns characterised by significant socio-economic vulnerability, seasonal agricultural employment patterns, and limited access to formal social services.

The grant closed in March 2026, following the receipt and review of the organisation's final narrative and financial reports. A wrap-up process with the Goedgedacht team, including the review of their final report and a knowledge-sharing session, formed part of the close-out.

Programme Delivery

The grant funded four focused activity areas across the two POP Centres. In the area of educational support, funding enabled the provision of stationery, workbooks, textbooks, and the Answer Series, a resource that enabled learners to revise content independently, check their own work, and build confidence in their academic abilities. Learners at both sites spoke positively about having access to structured materials that supported homework, guided learning, and independent practice.

The provision of nutritious meals formed a central part of the support to learners in the after-school programme. Funding covered food, gas, and cook stipends at both sites. At Riebeek West, Wilma Esterhuizen, Adoonicia Gys, and Maria Swartz provided cooking support across the reporting period. At Riebeek Kasteel, cooking support enabled children to receive meals and refreshments after school. This meal support contributed to dignity, created a stronger sense of belonging, and helped ensure that learners were better able to concentrate and participate in educational activities.

The tutoring component made it possible to provide focused academic support in core subjects. At Riebeek West, the programme was supported by a dedicated team of qualified and retired educators: Alfred Blaauw, former principal and qualified Natural Science, Geography, and History teacher; Martin Appollis, a retired Afrikaans and Mathematics teacher; and Vyonne Appollis, a qualified commerce teacher who supported learners in Business Economics and Economics. Sessions took place three times per week, with approximately 30 children attending regularly. At Riebeek Kasteel, tutoring in Mathematics and Afrikaans provided additional support to learners who needed assistance with homework, subject comprehension, and revision.

Holiday programmes provided safe spaces for children during school closure periods. At Riebeek West, four holiday programmes were hosted during the reporting period, each providing children with supervised activities and two meals per day. At Riebeek Kasteel, a December holiday programme reached 25 primary school children, offering structured activity, adult supervision, and support during a time when many families face additional pressure.

Financial records submitted as part of the close-out confirm that expenditures were aligned with the approved budget. Procurement was managed responsibly and processed through Goedgedacht's internal financial systems with appropriate authorisation. Purchases were made at local suppliers, including Pick 'n Pay Riebeek, Malmesbury SuperSpar, Raimondi's Trading, Agrimark Mechanisation, and Die Visfabriek, contributing to local economic circulation within the Swartland region.

Impact and Reflection

The Goedgedacht grant, while modest in scale, was significant in its impact. It enabled a trusted, long-standing community organisation to deliver tangible, consistent support to children who have limited access to formal services. The provision of meals, tutoring, and safe spaces addresses some of the most immediate and material barriers to children's wellbeing and educational participation, including hunger, unsafe home environments during school holidays, and the absence of academic support outside school hours.

Learner feedback collected by Goedgedacht during the reporting period reflected gratitude, comfort, and growing confidence. Children spoke about the educational materials as tools for independence, the meals as expressions of care, and the holiday programmes as spaces of safety and belonging. These reflections remind us that the work of child protection is not only about preventing harm, but it is also about creating environments in which children can flourish.

NMCF acknowledges Goedgedacht Trust as a principled and effective implementing partner. While the formal grant relationship has concluded, the organisation's work remains aligned with NMCF's values, and we anticipate continued engagement in appropriate future contexts.



Goedgedacht Trust Beneficiaries

The Midlands Community College Continued Partnership



Background and Grant Renewal

Midlands Community College (MCC), based in Nottingham Road, KwaZulu-Natal, and managed by Candy Goodland, has been an implementing partner of NMCF's CSP Programme since 2025. The organisation works with children and youth in the Midlands region, providing structured programming that addresses educational vulnerability, safety, and community development in an area characterised by persistent rural poverty and limited access to services.

Following a positive assessment of MCC's first grant year, which confirmed sound financial management, commitment to programme delivery, and strong community relationships, the NMCF approved a renewed grant agreement in February 2026. The renewed grant provides a total of R900,000 for the period 1 February 2026 to 31 January 2027, disbursed in two tranches of R450,000 each, subject to satisfactory midterm reporting and a monitoring visit.

The renewal reflects NMCF's confidence in MCC's capacity and commitment, and our view that the Midlands region represents an important and underserved geography within the CSP Programme's footprint. KwaZulu-Natal is a province characterised by high rates of gender-based violence, child poverty, and social vulnerability, and community-level organisations with deep local relationships are essential infrastructure for child protection work.

The contracting was completed in March 2026, and the first tranche of the grant is in process. Implementation is on schedule. NMCF will conduct a monitoring visit during the grant period and will review the midterm report ahead of the second tranche disbursement. The focus of MCC's programming aligns with the CSP Programme's broader mandate around child safety and protection, psychosocial support, and community-based prevention, and NMCF anticipates that MCC's work will contribute to the learning and evidence base of the Programme as it transitions into a new strategic cycle.

Africa Children's Summit 2025



Seen, Heard, and Engaged in Education

Overview

The Africa Children's Summit (ACS) 2025, held at Roedean School in Parktown, Johannesburg from 4th to 7th April 2025, was the most expansive and inclusive iteration of the continental child participation platform to date. Convened under the banner "Seen, Heard and Engaged in Education," the Summit brought together 275 children and 180 adult allies from 16 African countries and all nine provinces of South Africa.

Organised by NMCF in collaboration with the Department of Social Development, the African Union Commission, UNICEF, and a broad coalition of civil society partners, the Summit served as a policy and advocacy forum to foreground children's lived realities, particularly around education, digital access, violence prevention, and climate justice. It was the second iteration of a continental platform born in Nairobi, Kenya, in 2023, and its realisation in Johannesburg marked a significant advance in the institutionalisation of child participation in African governance. The ACS 2025 programme aligned with the theme of the 2024/2025 Day of the African Child, reinforcing the urgent call for educational reform across the continent. With almost half of Africa's population under the age of 18, ACS 2025 underscored that transforming education systems is not simply a policy priority; it is a generational imperative.

Programme Methodology

The Summit's methodology was grounded in a commitment to authentic, age-appropriate, and trauma-informed child participation. Several design features distinguished ACS 2025 from conventional policy convenings. Children drafted the Outcome Statement in a child-only Writers' Room, crafting succinct and accessible language without adult filtering. Compared to the 2023 Outcome Statement, which was policy-rich and technically dense, the 2025 statement was more accessible in voice and more unambiguous in its demands, reflecting the evolving sophistication of child-led processes and the younger demographic of delegates. Remote participants from Ethiopia, the DRC, and Sierra Leone contributed via WhatsApp groups and Zoom breakout sessions, ensuring geographic and resource barriers did not exclude children from the continent's margins. The "Tastes of Africa" closing ceremony fused policy discussion with cultural expression, and children engaged in an NBA Africa sports clinic during scheduled playtime, a feature that reinforced the programme's recognition that play is not supplementary to child participation but integral to it.

A multi-tiered safeguarding architecture, including a Child Protection Unit, standardised escalation protocols, 24/7 medical coverage, multilingual interpretation services across English, French, and Portuguese, and real-time digital dashboards set new standards for safe child participation at regional convenings. Roedean School's Parktown campus underwent a joint accessibility audit, and all plenary and breakout spaces were made physically accessible. Children with disabilities were actively engaged in the drafting processes.

Key Outcomes and Impact

The 2025 Outcome Statement, crafted by children in their own words, with minimal adult mediation, articulated precise demands for education justice, digital equity, safety, climate action, and respect for children's rights. It has since been dispatched to the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACERWC), UN mechanisms on child rights, and national ministries of education, social development, and youth across participating states.

Beyond the Outcome Statement, ACS 2025 advanced conversations around embedding child participation in continental mechanisms, including the African Union, and called for the formalisation of a permanent child participation track in AU governance structures. It built on the ACS's emerging relationship with the G20, catalysing the Children20 process documented in Section 7 of this report. It demonstrated that African indigenous knowledge, creative expression, and modern advocacy techniques can combine to produce policy-relevant outputs rooted in children's lived realities. And it exposed persistent systemic gaps, including the fragility of funding for child participation and the slow translation of governmental commitments into sustained financial support, that NMCF will carry into its next strategic cycle.

The decision by child delegates to award the next ACS to Sierra Leone for 2027 marks an important transition to another region in the continent. NMCF is committed to providing knowledge transfer, technical support, and institutional continuity to the incoming host, ensuring that the lessons of Johannesburg, both its achievements and its struggles, inform and strengthen the next iteration.



Africa Children's Summit 2025

Digital Justice Summit 2025



Building a Digital Future in Justice, Dignity and Rights

Overview

The Digital Justice Summit, held at Stellenbosch University from 6 to 8 December 2025, represented a landmark moment in NMCF's child safety and protection work. Convened by NMCF in partnership with Save the Children South Africa, the CyberCulture Foundation, UNICEF South Africa, and the Children20 Secretariat, the Summit brought together 82 children from five provinces to engage meaningfully with questions of digital rights, AI governance, and online safety.

The Summit was the culmination of a year-long process of knowledge development. A series of Brown Bag dialogues held across 2025, involving UNICEF South Africa, Save the Children, the CyberCulture Foundation, the MTN Group, and other leading digital safety experts, surfaced the key issues in children's digital safety that subsequently shaped the Summit's agenda. An Academic Symposium at Stellenbosch University in September 2025, co-hosted with the Faculty of Law, had already established an important intellectual foundation through engagement with children, scholars, and practitioners on children's rights in the digital age.

Children's Findings and Recommendations

The children who participated in the Digital Justice Summit produced findings and recommendations that were empirically grounded, analytically sophisticated, and politically astute. On digital safety and AI governance, children emphasised that safe and ethical artificial intelligence requires clear rules, transparency, and corporate accountability. They urged the Government to integrate AI and digital safety into school curricula, train all duty-bearers, and develop child-friendly reporting and support systems. They articulated a set of digital rights they expect to be guaranteed, including safe, accessible, and inclusive internet use, privacy protection, and access to reliable information online. On corporate accountability, children highlighted concerns about data privacy violations, unethical use of personal information, and biased AI systems, and proposed stronger monitoring and transparent reporting of companies' social and governance practices. Their recommendations on devices and technology use included regulating data prices, implementing age-appropriate controls, improving management of device use in schools, and strengthening safeguards for children's well-being online.

These recommendations were formally presented to the Chief Director for Gender, Disability, Youth and Children in the Department of Communications and Digital Technologies, who expressed commitment to advance and incorporate the Summit's outcomes into a White Paper on online content safety. This formal policy uptake represents a significant advocacy win and a direct translation of child-led participation into government action.

Girl Power Knowledge Sharing Session

On 9 December 2025, immediately following the Digital Justice Summit, the Girl Power Project hosted a Knowledge Sharing Session that brought together children, facilitators, and implementing partners for the first time to collectively reflect on how child protection work is happening in practice. This session, the first of its kind under the project, created a rare and important space for children to speak openly about their experiences and for practitioners to learn directly from them, reinforcing the programme's commitment to genuinely participatory evaluation and continuous learning.

Children20: Child Participation in the G20



Overview

The Children20 (C20) process under South Africa's 2025 G20 Presidency represents the most significant formal embedding of child voices in global economic governance that the African continent has yet seen. NMCF served as a key partner and secretariat for this process, building on the precedent set by Brazil's Children in G20 initiative in 2024 and advancing it under the South African Presidency's five Social Summit themes.
Children20 is grounded in a foundational premise: that children represent nearly one-third of the global population, with more than half living in G20 countries, yet their perspectives remain structurally absent from decisions that shape economic stability, digital governance, climate action, and social protection. The Children20 advances five interconnected strategic objectives: strengthening child participation within existing G20 structures; co-creating a Declaration ensuring children's contributions directly inform policy; promoting intergenerational collaboration across all thematic areas; building capacity for children to participate safely and effectively; and mobilising sustainable financing for child-centred development.

Pre-Summit and Policy Pack Development

The Children20 Pre-Summit was held on the 15th and 16th of November 2025 at the Kopanong Hotel, convened jointly by NMCF, the South African National Child Rights Coalition (SANCRC), Save the Children South Africa, UNICEF, World Vision, and Plan International. Children participated alongside adult allies, civil society leaders, and G20 Sherpa representatives across two intensive days of structured work.

Day 1 focused on grounding delegates in the lessons from Brazil's 2024 experience and developing children's inputs into the Draft G20 Social Summit Declaration across five thematic pillars: Digital Justice, Safeguarding, Mental Health, Early Childhood Development, and Climate Justice. Day 2 shifted to the development of the Children20 Policy Pack, a substantive document that accompanied the Declaration during the G20 Social Summit. The Policy Pack integrates South Africa's five Social Summit themes with Brazil's six priority pillars to form an eleven-theme framework. Its core message is unambiguous: investment in children and their families and caregivers is essential to inclusive development, resilience, and long-term economic transformation.

On 16 November 2025, in a formal ceremony, child delegates handed over the Children20 Declaration to South Africa's G20 Presidency through the Minister in the Office of the President. This handover was not merely symbolic. It was the culmination of a structured participatory process through which children had co-designed the policy content, reviewed its implications, and stood behind its asks with confidence and conviction.

Strategic Significance

The Children20 process carries significance beyond the 2025 cycle. It establishes a precedent, building on Brazil and laying the foundation for the United States Presidency in 2026, for the institutionalisation of child participation as a permanent feature of G20 governance. NMCF's role in this architecture, supported by a broad coalition of child rights organisations, positions NMCF as a leading voice in both African and global conversations about child-centred governance. Each of the five C20 strategic objectives aligns directly with NMCF's own theory of change, making the C20 process a natural and strategic extension of NMCF's core mandate.

Child Gauge with the Children's Institute

CSP further strengthened its sector engagement and thought leadership through collaboration with the Children's Institute in the development of the 2025 Children's Gauge, one of South Africa's pre-eminent child-focused annual research reports. This partnership reflects CSP's commitment to contributing to evidence-based advocacy and strengthening national discourse on child wellbeing and protection. By supporting the production of the Children's Gauge, the CSP team played a role in advancing research, policy dialogue, and informed decision-making aimed at improving outcomes for children across the country.



Children handing over the Children20 Declaration

Cross-Cutting Themes and Programme Reflections



Child Participation as Programme Architecture

Across every strand of work documented in this report, child participation is not a feature of the programme; it is its architecture. From the peer-led CPFs in Far North's schools to the child-drafted Outcome Statement at ACS 2025; from the Moot Court simulations at the Digital Justice Summit to the Declaration handed over to the G20 Presidency; the programmes are consistently organised around the principle that children are not objects of protection but subjects of their own liberation.

Child participation is labour-intensive, context-specific, and requires sustained investment in capacity, safeguarding, and trust. It cannot be extracted from programmes as a spotlight or afterthought. Where it works best, as demonstrated by Far North's child-led forums, Phola's O.U.T.T.R.A.G.E.D model, and the ACS Writers' Room, is because organisations and facilitators have invested in the conditions that make it possible.

Digital Safety as a Child Protection Frontier

The reporting period has confirmed what NMCF has long argued: digital safety is not a specialist subfield of child protection. It is a central and urgent dimension of it. Children's experiences of violence, abuse, exploitation, and exclusion are increasingly mediated by digital environments, and our responses must evolve accordingly. The Digital Justice Summit, the Brown Bag dialogue series, the Stellenbosch Academic Symposium, and Far North's WhatsApp-based anonymous reporting channels all point in the same direction: child protection in the 21st century requires digital literacy, platform accountability, and rights-based governance of AI and data. The formal uptake of the Digital Justice Summit's recommendations by the Department of Communications and Digital Technologies is a significant marker of impact that NMCF will build upon in the next strategic cycle.

The Economics of Child Safety

This report documents, with some persistence, how poverty and economic insecurity drive vulnerability to violence. The Girl Power Project's Outcome 5 struggle in Year 1, and the deliberate effort to address it in Year 2, is emblematic of a broader challenge: child protection programmes that do not engage with the material conditions of poverty are incomplete. Self-Help Groups, financial literacy training, agricultural skills development, and arts-based income generation are not peripheral activities. They are protective factors, and they deserve the same rigour of design, monitoring, and investment as any other programme component.

Safeguarding as a Standard, Not a Compliance Exercise

The ACS 2025 safeguarding architecture, with its Child Protection Unit, standardised escalation protocols, multilingual interpretation, accessibility audits, and real-time M&E dashboards, sets a standard that NMCF will seek to institutionalise across all future convenings and partner programmes. Safeguarding is a commitment to the dignity and safety of every child who enters our spaces, and it must be designed before the first delegate arrives, not improvised when an incident occurs.

Innovations in Child Safety and Protection (CSP) 2025/26

During the 2025/26 reporting period, Child Safety and Protection (CSP) introduced several innovative approaches aimed at strengthening child participation, improving reporting mechanisms, and enhancing safeguarding systems across programme sites.

A key milestone was the implementation of the first Child-Inclusive Knowledge Sharing Session in Stellenbosch, the Western Cape, conducted with Girl Power partners. This platform elevated children's voices by enabling them to actively reflect on and influence programme design and delivery. The session institutionalised meaningful child participation within the programming cycle, moving beyond tokenistic engagement toward child-led evaluation and planning. It further facilitated shared learning among implementing partners, practitioners, and children, contributing to the development of a Child Participation Integration Framework to guide future programming.

CSP also strengthened school-based safeguarding systems through the Delft Child Protection Forum, which proposed a layered and structured reporting model within existing Department of Basic Education systems. This innovation should improve documentation, ensure appropriate escalation of cases and create a clearer referral pathway. While challenges such as teacher capacity and inconsistent implementation remain, the model presents strong potential for digitisation and integration with external services such as Childline and community policing forums, enhancing sustainability and accountability.

In addition, a colour-coded peer reporting system supported by Child Protection Ambassadors is now being explored by the Western Cape Department of Education (WCED). This model leverages peer-to-peer trust, enabling learners to report concerns more comfortably while fostering leadership and participation. The simplified, offline reporting mechanism strengthens whole-school safety culture, although it requires careful management of confidentiality, training, and alignment with safeguarding protocols.

CSP further promoted child-led advocacy through Child Protection Forums, where learners actively participated in awareness initiatives. These included creative arts, public speaking, and performances addressing gender-based violence (GBV) and online safety. Such initiatives not only raised awareness but also empowered children to model safe, respectful, and responsible behaviours, demonstrating the effectiveness of child-led approaches in driving social change within schools and communities.

To strengthen adult response systems, CSP introduced self-paced online safeguarding training for teachers, equipping them with skills to respond empathetically and appropriately to disclosures of abuse. This was complemented by the integration of clear referral pathways and the promotion of visible support resources such as helplines and GBV support services. The training also emphasised emotional literacy, responding to learners' expressed need for supportive and understanding adults.

Finally, CSP expanded its reach to early childhood settings through the training of ECD centre staff on violence against children, including identification, assessment, and reporting pathways. This work aligns with the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund's Child Survival, Development, and Thriving programme, ensuring that safeguarding begins in the earliest years and strengthens protection systems across the continuum of care.

Collectively, these innovations demonstrate CSP's commitment to building child-centred, participatory, and system-strengthening approaches that enhance the safety, agency, and well-being of children.

Target vs Actual: Child Safety and Protection Programme

Target vs Actual — Beneficiaries

Workstream	Target	Actual (R)	Variance (R)
Girl Power Against Violence Project (3-year direct target)	21,000 (20,000 girls 10–17 + 1,000 women 18–50)	81,361 cumulative reach since 2023 inception (9,565 in 2023/24; 42,177 in 2024/25; 29,619 in 2025/26 to date)	+287%
Africa Children's Summit 2025	300 children	318 children (275 in-person, 43 remote) + 180 adult allies (not counted against target)	+6%
Digital Justice Summit 2025	100 children	82 children	-18% (one delegation unable to travel timeously)
Children20	50 child delegates	74 child delegates	+48%

Target vs Actual - Thought Leadership Activities

The Programme does not hold its own numeric target for thought leadership output. The only quantified figure available is NMCF's organisation-wide KPI — 5 policy briefs contributing to legislative change — which sits at Fund level, not CSP level.

Metric	Target	Actual
Policy briefs contributing to legislative change (org-wide KPI, CSP contribution)	**5**	1 in development (AI, child protection, and digital rights brief); 0 completed and

Activities delivered during the reporting period:

- Brown Bag dialogue series (2025) with UNICEF South Africa, Save the Children, the CyberCulture Foundation, and the MTN Group, surfacing key digital child-safety issues
- Academic Symposium, Stellenbosch University Faculty of Law (September 2025), on children's rights in the digital age
- Digital Justice Summit (December 2025), producing a child-authored framework on digital rights and AI governance, formally presented to the DCDT's Chief Director for Gender, Disability, Youth and Children, with committed uptake into a forthcoming White Paper on online content safety
- Africa Children's Summit 2025 Outcome Statement, dispatched to ACERWC, UN child rights mechanisms, and national ministries of education, social development, and youth
- Children20 Pre-Summit and Policy Pack (November 2025), an 11-theme framework integrating South Africa's five Social Summit themes with Brazil's six 2024 pillars
- Children20 Declaration, handed to South Africa's G20 Presidency via the Minister in the Office of the President; a segment subsequently read by the President of South Africa during the Social Summit's closing remarks
- TruLife's SACE-accredited safeguarding course (5 CPTD points), a sector-level practice shift arising from Girl Power's GBV-awareness survey findings
- Planned: roundtable with the Children's Institute (UCT), feeding into the CSP's AI/child protection/ digital rights policy brief

Other Targets vs Actual Relevant to the CSP Programme

Metric	Target	Actual
Girl Power sessions with children	**2,644**	5,178
Girl Power sessions with duty-bearers	**625**	417
Girl Power budget expenditure (Year 2+3 combined, 1 Jun–31 Oct 2025)	**R3,372,067.41**	R667,680.47 (44% exp. rate)
MCC grant	**R900,000 (two tranches)**	20 beneficiaries confirmed to date



Nelson Mandela
CHILDREN'S FUND

CHANGING THE WAY SOCIETY TREATS ITS CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Youth Leadership Progrmme (YLP)

Introduction

The Youth Leadership Programme (YLP) sits at the heart of the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund's commitment to ensuring that South African children and youth are active participants and not passive recipients in the decisions that shape their lives. The programme is guided by NMCF's overarching vision of "Changing the way society treats its children and youth", and its mission of giving "voice and dignity to the child by building a rights-based movement".

The YLP empowers children and youth through the development of participation platforms and through leadership, entrepreneurship, and advocacy initiatives. It supports a lifetime of development approach, nurturing young people into empowered individuals who can drive socio-economic change in their own

Programme Outcomes

- Increased participation of young people in decision-making processes and spaces.
- Government and other key stakeholders hear the views of young people.
- Increased leadership and advocacy skills for social change among young people.
- Improved skills for young people to participate meaningfully in civic and leadership spaces.

Programme Components

The YLP delivers its mandate through two core initiatives and two implementing partner programmes:

Nelson Mandela Children's Parliament (NMCP)

The Nelson Mandela Children's Parliament (NMCP) is the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund's flagship programme. It provides a structured national platform for children aged 13–18 to engage directly with government, duty bearers, and policymakers on issues affecting their lives. Now in its 12th sitting, the NMCP remains the only organised platform in South Africa through which children formally engage with duty bearers on policy matters. A significant milestone during the year under review was the election of Amogelang Mashele as the first girl child to serve as President of the Nelson Mandela Children's Parliament, marking a historic moment for child leadership and gender representation within the programme.

Legacy Academy (LA)

A yearlong leadership and advocacy programme that empowers youth between Grades 9 and 11 to become agents of change in their communities. Inspired by the life and values of President Nelson Mandela, the programme builds the skills, vision, and agency to design and implement community-level initiatives.

PeacePlayers South Africa (PPSA) – Implementing Partner

A nonprofit organisation using basketball as a catalyst to facilitate life skills, peace-building, and leadership development among young people across diverse communities in eThekwini, KwaZulu-Natal.

Mamelani Projects – Implementing Partner

A nonprofit organisation focused on building resilience and advocating for systemic change through advocating for and providing care-leaving preparation, post-care support, peer mentorship, and educational assistance to young people in the Western Cape.



Children's Parliament 2025

Approach

The YLP employs a multi-pronged, rights-based approach rooted in the belief that children and youth must be central actors in shaping their own lives and communities. The programme's strategies are guided by its Theory of Change and aligned with NMCF's 2022–2027 Strategic Plan.

Lifetime of Development

The YLP supports young people through a continuum of development. from building foundational leadership and civic literacy skills in the Legacy Academy to national policy engagement through the NMCP, to economic self-sufficiency through Efeng Bacha (which is currently paused in the reporting period as the programme realigns its strategy). This lifecycle approach ensures young people are supported at multiple stages of their growth journey.

Participatory and Child-Centred Design

All programme activities are co-designed with children and youth to ensure relevance, ownership, and meaningful participation. Child delegates determine the issues they wish to raise in the NMCP; Legacy Academy participants set their own advocacy project goals; and Efeng Bacha participants identify community problems they seek to solve. This approach is consistent with the UNCRC's provisions on child participation.

Strategic Partnerships

The YLP's theory of change is operationalised through a carefully curated ecosystem of strategic partnerships spanning government, civil society, academia, and international bodies. In 2025, key partnership focus areas included:

- Skills development in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) for youth employability, through the UNISA Science Engagement Centre (USEC), where YLP participants engaged in coding and tinkering.
- Budget literacy and fiscal governance, in partnership with UNICEF South Africa, are empowering children to understand and engage with national and provincial budgets.
- Child rights monitoring and continental advocacy, through the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACERWC), an organ of the African Union.
- Digital safety and AI policy, in collaboration with the Cyberculture Foundation and the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund's Child Safety Programme.
- Regional child rights and psychosocial support, through REPSSI (Regional Psychosocial Support Initiative).



Evidence-Based, Adaptive Programming

The YLP applies an evidence-informed approach to programme management, drawing on monitoring data, participant reflections, and formal evaluations to continuously adapt delivery. Trip reports, post-event evaluations, and beneficiary reflections are systematically captured and used to improve future programming. Where challenges emerge (such as hybrid delivery limitations), the team makes deliberate, documented decisions to adjust.

Cross-Programme Integration

In 2025, the YLP deepened cross-programme collaboration within NMCF, notably co-delivering the AI and Digital Safety Pre-Engagement Dialogue with the Child Safety Programme, and jointly representing NMCF at the REPSSI Forum in Zambia. This integrated approach strengthens NMCF's overall impact and coherence.

Impact

48	9	30	5+
Legacy Academy Participants	Provinces Represented at NMCP	Children at AI & Digital Safety Dialogue	International & Continental Platforms



Nelson Mandela Children's Parliament (NMCP)



The 12th National Sitting of the Nelson Mandela Children's Parliament took place on 9 October 2025 at the Parliament of the Republic of South Africa at the Good Hope Chamber under the theme "Amplifying the Voices of Children in Planning and Budgeting." Hosting the sitting at the national Parliament was both symbolically and practically significant: it placed children's voices at the centre of one of South Africa's most important democratic institutions and built directly on the Budget Roundtable work facilitated with UNICEF in 2024.

The process began two days earlier, with child delegates attending pre-engagement sessions at the Western Cape Provincial Legislature on 7–8 October 2025. These sessions provided structured preparation time for delegates to review progress since the previous sitting, develop their speeches, and align on the issues they wished to raise with duty bearers. This preparation is fundamental to the NMCP's model: children arrive at the national sitting not as observers, but as informed, prepared advocates.

The national sitting opened with the singing of the National Anthem and a moment of silence. Key presentations were delivered by UNICEF South Africa, the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund, and Save the Children South Africa, each reaffirming their commitment to advancing the rights and well-being of children. The Minister of Social Development, Ms Sisisi Tolashe, delivered the keynote address — a demonstration of high-level government commitment to child participation.

Child delegates from all nine provinces then addressed duty bearers directly, speaking to the socio-economic challenges children face daily: teenage pregnancy, substance abuse, mental health, meaningful child participation, and the growing impact of climate-related natural disasters. Critically, delegates did not only present problems — they presented concrete solutions, demonstrating their capacity to engage constructively with policymakers on complex issues.

The sitting concluded with the inauguration of new NMCP child ambassadors, ensuring continuity of child-led advocacy into the year ahead.

> *"The national sitting served as a meaningful platform for young voices to be heard on matters affecting their lives — children speaking not only for themselves, but for millions of South African children who could not be in that chamber."*
>
> **12th NMCP National Sitting, Good Hope Chamber, October 2025**

Legacy Academy



In 2025, the YLP hosted the Legacy Academy for 48 participants, consisting of young people in Grades 9 to 11 across a year-long programme cycle. Participants engaged in research and learning, leadership development, and values-based advocacy training, building the skills, vision, and agency to design and implement community-level initiatives inspired by the legacy of President Nelson Mandela.

The Legacy Academy was the programme with the broadest footprint of activity in 2025. Participants were not merely recipients of development; they became active contributors on platforms spanning the local, national, regional, and continental. Across the year, Legacy Academy participants:

- Served as panellists and Moot Court advocates at the Children's Pre-Engagement Dialogue on AI and Digital Safety (Delft, Cape Town, September 2025), with one participant subsequently serving as a panellist at the Stellenbosch Conference on Child Rights and Digital Safety.
- Joined the joint NMCF delegation to the REPSSI Forum in Lusaka, Zambia (October 2025), co-delivering a film, individual presentations, and an art advocacy exhibition across a 7-country children's forum.
- Represented NMCF at the 46th Ordinary Session of the ACERWC in Maseru, Lesotho (November 2025), presenting on Child-Friendly Cities and co-moderating an Intergenerational Dialogue at a continental African Union body.
- Participated in the 12th Nelson Mandela Children's Parliament sitting at the Good Hope Chamber, Cape Town (October 2025).

The programme also achieved a significant funding milestone: a charitable donation of $25,000 was secured from Visa International Services Association Inc. to support the implementation of the second Legacy Academy cohort, reflecting growing external interest in the programme and opening a new philanthropic partnership relationship for NMCF.

> *"I want to sincerely thank the facilitators for the wonderful enriching experience. This camp has not only broadened our horizons but also strengthened our bonds."*
>
> **Legacy Academy 2025 Participant**

African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACERWC)

At the 46th Ordinary Session and the 35th Anniversary of the ACERWC, held in Maseru, Lesotho, from 27th to 30th November 2025, NMCF child delegates Sibongile and Tumisho, presented on Child-Friendly Cities and co-facilitated an Intergenerational Dialogue under the theme "Shaping the Future: Recommitting to Child Rights in a Changing Africa." This marked the first time NMCF child delegates co-moderated a session of an African Union body.

The delegates' presentation was grounded in their lived experience and their own community action. They drew on community clean-ups they had personally led in the inner city of Johannesburg and the Hammanskraal area, using their own stories to carry the voices of millions of South African children who could not be in that room. They emphasised the critical role of municipalities in creating child-friendly environments and issued a formal call to action for governments, stakeholders, and experts to commit to safer, more inclusive cities and townships.

The Intergenerational Dialogue was co-moderated by one of the NMCF child representatives and a child delegate from the Kingdom of Lesotho, which demonstrated peer-to-peer continental leadership that the programme continues to build.

> *"They reminded us that creating safe, inclusive, and responsive spaces for every child is not optional — it is essential."*
>
> **ACERWC Trip Report, November 2025**

Children's Pre-Engagement Dialogue: AI and Digital Safety

In September 2025, the Child Safety Programme (CSP), in collaboration with the Cyberculture Foundation, hosted a Children's Pre-Engagement Dialogue on Artificial Intelligence and Digital Safety with 30 children at The Nex, Ndawo Yethu in Delft, Cape Town. The YLP team chaperoned three Legacy Academy participants from Johannesburg, alongside participants from the African Children's Summit and Save the Children.

The session provided young people with an opportunity to reflect on, interrogate, and shape policy debates on AI and digital safety. As part of the programme, the Cyberculture Foundation facilitated a Moot Court exercise: one group argued a cyberbullying case, while another tackled a human trafficking case. Participants stepped into the roles of legal professionals — preparing and presenting arguments on complex hypothetical scenarios — sharpening their public speaking, critical thinking, and legal reasoning skills in the process.

The pre-engagement concluded with participants developing and presenting collective recommendations on how private companies and governments should safeguard the online space. These recommendations were fed forward into the Stellenbosch Conference on Child Rights and Digital Safety, which followed shortly after. Notably, one Legacy Academy participant was selected to serve as a panellist at the Stellenbosch Conference itself — meaning Legacy Academy youth contributed to the pre-engagement dialogue and to the high-level international conference it fed into.

REPSSI Forum, Zambia

The YLP participated in the REPSSI Children's Forum in Lusaka, Zambia, from 24th to 29th October 2025. The Forum was themed 'See Us'. The joint NMCF delegation brought together children from the Youth Leadership Programme and the Child Safety and Protection Programme. These young people travelled from the Western Cape, Gauteng and Limpopo, many of them meeting face-to-face for the first time after spending nearly a month preparing together online. The forum convened child delegates from seven countries: Zambia, South Africa, Zimbabwe, Malawi, Eswatini, Mozambique, and Botswana.

The NMCF delegation's contribution stood out across the forum. As part of their presentation, the children produced and screened a short film on mental health and digital safety, creatively scripted and narrated by the children themselves. Each child also delivered an individual presentation reflecting their personal understanding of mental health and digital safety, and the responsibilities of duty-bearers, including parents, teachers, and social workers. The children highlighted both the risks of digital spaces and their potential, echoing calls for access to safe digital environments.

Beyond their formal presentations, the delegation created an art exhibition on promoting mental well-being, inviting other children to leave sticky note reflections and words of encouragement as part of a mental health awareness activity. The energy and creativity of the NMCF delegation drew attention from both peers and adult participants, resulting in several media interviews, including television and radio coverage.



Implementing Partner Impact
PeacePlayers South Africa (eThekwini, KwaZulu-Natal)

- **62 Peace League games delivered**, reaching **409 participants (August–October 2025)**.
- **30 Leadership Development Programme (LDP)** participants (14 new, 16 continuing) engaged across in-person, virtual, and match-day sessions throughout the year.
- **21 youth coaches onboarded** and trained through the Coaches Development Programme.
- **96 players, 75 volunteers, 18 coaches, and 8 staff** participated in the 7th Annual Girls' Basketball Festival (August 2025).
- Two new school partnerships formalised: Ganges Secondary School in Wentworth (supporting PPSA's goal to increase participation from Coloured and Indian communities) and Imisebe Primary School in Umlazi (maintaining community continuity following a partner school closure).
- Fathima Fall, an LDP participant, attended the G20 as a Children20 delegate, representing children's rights at the highest international policy table — a direct outcome of skills built through PPSA.

Mamelani Projects (Western Cape)

- **31 new ProSEED youth enrolled in 2025**, with 29 alumni receiving ongoing post-care support.
- **90% of Mamelani alumni are in education or economic activity**; 80% reported increased hope for the future.
- **Collaboration with 16 Child and Youth Care Centres (CYCCs) and 5 transitional housing partners** to build sector capacity around care-leaving transitions.
- Cross-cultural exchange with Northern Ireland culminated in co-produced research papers and a forthcoming documentary on care-leaving experiences — bridging international models with local lived realities.
- An alumnus published a personal memoir about their life in care, underscoring the power of storytelling as a tool for healing, advocacy, and leadership.

Lessons Learned

The 2025 reporting period generated rich learning across all programme components. The following key lessons will inform planning and delivery in the year ahead.

Preparation Deepens Impact

Across multiple platforms, from the NMCP to ACERWC to the AI and Digital Safety Dialogue, child participants who received structured preparation demonstrated significantly greater confidence and impact. The experience of co-moderating the ACERWC Intergenerational Dialogue, in particular, affirmed that young people rise to the level of what is expected of them when adequately supported. Pre-engagement orientation and mentorship are not optional extras; they are core to the programme's quality.

Mentorship and Relational Support Drive Transformational Outcomes

Beneficiary reflections consistently highlighted the quality of adult mentorship — from programme staff to facilitators — as a defining factor in their growth. Young people distinguished between organisations that "show up for the big moments" and those that are present in the small, everyday moments of challenge and encouragement. The YLP's relational model of support is a genuine competitive strength and must be explicitly resourced and protected as the programme scales.



ACRWC November 2025 Girl Parliamentarian, Chad

In-Person Delivery Yields Deeper Participant Engagement

Following the hybrid Legacy Academy format in 2023, the programme moved to fully in-person delivery in 2025. Participant feedback affirmed this decision: bonds formed, horizons broadened, and community was built in ways that hybrid models could not replicate. Going forward, in-person delivery should remain the default, with hybrid used only where access barriers make it unavoidable.

Inclusion Requires Active and Intentional Effort

Participant reflections surfaced a recurring insight: genuine inclusivity is not achieved by discussing diversity, but by actively creating access for those who would otherwise be excluded. Youth from disadvantaged communities, young people with lower confidence, and those from communities where children are often overlooked require targeted outreach and scaffolded support to access the programme's benefits. The YLP should continue to deepen its community diversity strategy, ensuring that programme participants reflect the full range of South Africa's social contexts.

Youth Advocacy Must Connect to Policy Frameworks

Youth participants at ACERWC and other continental platforms noted the importance of linking community-level issues to formal policy frameworks such as the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child. This requires policy literacy training to be embedded across all YLP initiatives, not only in NMCP preparation. Youth who understand the legal and policy architecture are more effective advocates.

Cross-Programme Integration Creates Amplified Impact

The collaboration between the YLP and the Child Safety Programme at the AI and Digital Safety Dialogue and the REPSSI Forum demonstrated that integrated delivery strengthens both NMCF's external profile and the depth of impact on participating children. Structural mechanisms for cross-programme collaboration should be formalised in planning cycles to make this the norm rather than the exception.

Highlights for the year

Historic First: NMCF Child Delegates Co-Moderate African Union Session

For the first time in NMCF's history, child delegates co-moderated a session of an African Union body — the ACERWC Intergenerational Dialogue at its 46th Ordinary Session in Maseru, Lesotho. This milestone represents a tangible demonstration of NMCF's growing continental stature and the depth of its child leadership development work.





The 12th NMCP Held at the Parliament of the Republic of South Africa

The decision to host the 12th Nelson Mandela Children's Parliament at the national Parliament building was both symbolically and practically significant. Children from all nine provinces addressed duty bearers in one of South Africa's most important democratic spaces, under the theme of planning and budgeting — a deliberate deepening of children's engagement with fiscal governance.

NMCF at the REPSSI Forum, Zambia – A 7-Country Regional Platform

NMCF led a joint cross-programme delegation to the REPSSI Forum in Lusaka — the first time NMCF participated in a joint YLP–CSP delegation at a regional forum spanning seven countries. Children screened a self-produced film on mental health and digital safety, received television and radio media coverage, and contributed recommendations that were tabled at the REPSSI Board.





YLP Participants Shape National AI and Digital Safety Policy

Legacy Academy participants served as panellists and legal advocates at the AI and Digital Safety Pre-Engagement Dialogue in Stellenbosch. Their recommendations were fed into the international Academic Symposium, positioning NMCF children as contributors to an emerging policy frontier on children's digital rights.

PeacePlayers Participant Attends G20 as Children20 Delegate

Fathima Fall, a 2025 PeacePlayers Leadership Development Programme participant, was selected as a KwaZulu-Natal representative in the South African Children's Rights Coalition and attended the G20 as a Children20 delegate. This outcome directly demonstrates the programme's impact in developing young people capable of representing South Africa's children on the world stage.





Legacy Academy: 48 Young Leaders Developed

Legacy Academy participants served as The 2025 Legacy Academy cohort of 48 participants completed an eight-month programme cycle and went on to represent NMCF at continental, regional, and national platforms. Several cohort members are now serving as alumni mentors, continuing to build a culture of leadership and service within their communities.

$25,000 Visa International Grant Secured for Legacy Academy

The Legacy Academy attracted a charitable donation of $25,000 from Visa International Services Association Inc. — the first philanthropic contribution of this kind to the programme. NMCF will directly support the second Legacy Academy cohort and marks a meaningful step in building the programme's external funding base beyond NMCF's core resources.



> *We the Children's Parliament are not the next generation, we are this generation*
>
> *Amogelang*

Youth Leadership Programme – Beneficiary Reflections



Sicelo Shalton Maphosa

Legacy Academy & ACERWC Delegate

A Reflection on My 2025 Experience with the NMCF

In April 2025, I took a risk — a risk that changed the way I think, act, and see the world. I stepped out of my comfort zone and joined the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund (NMCF). It is an organisation that not only exposed me to meaningful opportunities but, most importantly, helped me discover my inner leadership potential.

Before joining the NMCF, if someone had asked me to address a room full of people, I would have found an excuse not to do it, or I would not have spoken with the confidence the moment deserved. However, the NMCF taught me how to stand tall and be the light in the room. It taught me that if people are not willing to listen, you must speak in a way that encourages them to listen; not only because of the words you say, but because your presence is felt and recognised when you stand confidently and share your perspective.

One of the things I appreciate most is that our voices, as leaders and child representatives of the NMCF, were truly heard by adults — even by the President. This was something I once believed was very difficult, if not impossible. I used to think that when young people spoke to adults, their words might be doubted or taken for granted. However, my experience showed me that our voices do matter and that adults can and do listen when we speak with purpose and confidence.

The NMCF fostered an environment of learning where we all felt safe and free to be ourselves. No one felt too shy or too confident; we were all treated as equals and coached in the same way to become the leaders we are today. I have learned many things that I did not know in the

past, and I credit NMCF for that. Through this experience, I have also learned the importance of involving myself in current issues that affect our lives instead of waiting for someone else to solve them for us.

A moment that reflects this growth was when I moderated the Intergenerational Dialogue at ACERWC. Before this experience, I had never moderated a dialogue before, and I was extremely nervous. I remember Ma'am Thoz speaking to us and reminding my fellow leaders and me that feeling nervous shows that you understand the seriousness and importance of the moment. She also shared that she sometimes feels nervous, too. Her words encouraged us not to let our nerves stand in the way of what we had to say.
I would also like to acknowledge Ma'am Samke, who was not only there for us during serious situations but also in the smaller moments. Despite her busy schedule, she always made time for us; whether it was sitting down to listen, offering guidance, or writing recommendation letters that allowed us to pursue more leadership opportunities and ensure that our voices are heard far and beyond our communities. She did all of this not because we were troubling her, but because she genuinely wants to see us succeed in our leadership journeys. She believes in our potential to grow, to lead beyond our communities and cities, and to make a meaningful impact.

So, if you ask me what I learned from the NMCF, I will say that I learned this: the world of tomorrow is shaped by what we do today. Tomorrow we will reap the rewards of the seeds we sow now. No one will do it for us; it is up to us to stand up and take charge of the issues that affect our daily lives. I also learned that, as children and young people, we will always have a seat in decisions that affect us. The only question is how we choose to claim that seat — whether we ask for it or whether we boldly take it.

So, Ma'am Thoz and Ma'am Samke, my overall experience was not only about the opportunities that the NMCF offered, but also about the chance to test and apply the progress we built with your guidance. The most meaningful part of the experience was your mentorship and supervision — being there for us and teaching us how to turn our stumbling blocks into stepping stones.
I would like to sincerely thank both of you, as well as the entire NMCF team, for shaping us into the leaders we are today. Please continue coaching and guiding others, because the world truly needs leaders created by mentors like you.

Key Lessons: · Learning how to co-exist with people of different backgrounds · How to lead alongside others and also teach other people how to lead confidently · Effectively work as a team · Adaptability — to adapt to different places and to new people and also in places that require me to step out of my comfort zone · Communication — learning how to communicate with other people and learning how to articulate my vision · Delegation — learning how to trust others to handle tasks correctly without wanting to do everything myself, because leadership is also built over trust and teamwork · I also learned that it is only impossible until it is done — then you realise that it was possible to do all along.

What I would recommend is that the NMCF should not only speak about inclusivity but actively practise it. It should encourage the involvement of those who may feel excluded or disinclined within the community. Most importantly, it should involve more school children, as many of them are often limited by a lack of confidence. Children from disadvantaged communities, such as Alexandra, often face significant challenges, and it is important to ensure that leaders from diverse communities have the opportunity to share insights that are most meaningful to them. After all — NOTHING FOR US WITHOUT US!



Sibongile Chitha
Legacy Academy & ACERWC Delegate

Representation at the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child

I am deeply grateful to the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund and the Legacy Academy for the opportunity to represent young people at the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACERWC). This experience was not only an honour but a defining moment in my advocacy and leadership journey.

1. My Experience

Attending ACERWC exposed me to continental child rights discussions at the highest level. I witnessed how policies affecting millions of children across Africa are debated, reviewed, and strengthened. Being in a space where government representatives, child rights experts, and young people engage on issues of protection, education, health, and participation broadened my understanding of advocacy beyond the local level.

What stood out most was the seriousness with which children's rights are treated within African governance structures. It reinforced the idea that young people are not merely beneficiaries of policy but key stakeholders whose voices matter.

Representing Legacy Academy in that space required confidence, preparation, and clarity. I carried with me not only my personal story, but the experiences of young people from my community and from South Africa as a whole.

2. Key Lessons Learned

Advocacy requires preparation and evidence. Effective advocacy is not only about passion — it is about facts, policy understanding, and clear recommendations. I learned the importance of aligning youth voices with legal frameworks such as the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child.

Youth participation must be intentional. Meaningful child participation does not happen by chance. It must be structured, protected, and respected. ACERWC demonstrated how systems can create formal spaces for young people to contribute to decision-making.

Leadership is a responsibility. Being in a continental space reminded me that leadership is not about titles. It is about accountability. I felt a strong responsibility to return to my community better informed and more equipped to advocate effectively.

African solutions for African challenges. It was inspiring to see African countries addressing issues unique to our context, including access to education, child protection systems, and social welfare. This strengthened my belief in African-led change.

3. Highlights

· Engaging with policymakers and experts in child rights. · Observing how state reports are reviewed and how accountability mechanisms function. · Representing South African youth in a continental setting. · Connecting with other young leaders who are equally passionate about child rights. · Gaining confidence in formal policy spaces.

The experience deepened my interest in governance, law, and social justice, and strengthened my long-term aspiration to work in spaces where policy and community impact

intersect.

4. Impact on My Advocacy Journey

Since attending ACERWC, I approach advocacy more strategically. I now understand the importance of linking community issues to policy frameworks, the power of structured reporting and documentation, and the need for sustainability in advocacy projects. This experience has influenced how I approach my youth empowerment and sports advocacy work. I am more intentional about ensuring that young people are informed about their rights and empowered to participate in decision-making processes.

5. Recommendations

· Continue prioritising youth representation in continental and international spaces. · Provide preparatory workshops for youth delegates to deepen policy literacy. · Create structured post-engagement platforms where alumni can cascade knowledge to their communities.

Conclusion

Attending ACERWC was more than a trip — it was a transformation. It affirmed that young African leaders have a place in governance spaces and that our voices are necessary in shaping policies that affect us. I remain committed to carrying forward the values of the Legacy Academy: leadership, service, and excellence. I am proud to have represented the programme and grateful for the trust placed in me.

Mamelani Projects – Beneficiary Reflection



Sheila Nyamukapa
Mamelani ProSEED Programme

Finding My Feet: My Journey Leaving Care

I was 17 when I realised it was my last year at Lawrence House. I'd been watching other young people leave before me, so I knew what was coming, but knowing didn't make it easier. It was in Grade 10 when I found out my documentation didn't allow me to qualify for bursaries available to foreigners. This created so much confusion and uncertainty about what my future would look like. Grade 12 should have been about studying, but that became the least of my worries when I realised it was my last year at the Children's Home, which meant I had to find a place to stay and a job. Writing exams felt heavy because all I could think about was "Where am I going to go?"

I had applied for transitional accommodation at Isibindi and didn't know if I'd get a place because there are so many young people who apply. Only near the end of my final exams did I hear I'd been accepted, and I can't explain the relief. Then reality hit again: I still needed a job, and it wasn't as easy as I expected it to

be. I learnt that not everyone has a nice way of communicating. I was discouraged for a bit, but that did not stop me. It wasn't long after that when I got a job, and it was then that I realised that I needed to grow a thick skin to survive in the work industry and in life.

I first heard about Mamelani when Youth Transitions Facilitators visited our Home to share the programme. Honestly, at the beginning, I was drawn to the fun camps, the Amazing Race, the energy of it all. But once I joined, I discovered something deeper: the people were genuine. It wasn't just about group sessions or an individual session with "your mentor." When I would visit the office, everyone was friendly, even the facilitators I didn't know really well, who weren't my mentors. We would sit, have conversations, and share experiences, which I really enjoyed and made me feel understood. What really helped me as I transitioned to independent living was my church friends, who supported me emotionally, spiritually, and financially by paying my rent before I got a job. Mamelani also played a huge role in supporting me with food vouchers. The budgeting exercise we did, going into a store and deciding needs vs wants, changed how I shop, and that taught me to make wiser decisions when it came to grocery shopping and finances after I started working. I still ask myself, "Do I need this, or do I just want it?" I also learned to stretch basics: flour becomes rotis, pancakes, bread. You can make a lot from a little.

The hardest part of transitioning for me wasn't being unable to handle my freedom; it was routine. In the Children's Home, the routine was created for us, and now I had to create one for myself. Once I started shift work, I was constantly exhausted, home at seven, eight, sometimes nine. Cooking became a big challenge for me. Some nights I ate biscuits for dinner. On off-days, I'd do wash, clean, try to cook, and before I knew it, I'd be back at work again. It took me a while to stabilise. Now I plan better: in bed by 10 pm, cook every three days, and I count on Thursday dinners at Isibindi, so I don't have to cook as often. I have also managed to separate breakfast from meal prep, so I don't eat dinner food in the morning!

The workplace brought new challenges. I was often the youngest on the team. Some colleagues questioned why a young person "needed" a job, as if I were taking work from someone with kids. I didn't feel safe sharing my story; people talk, and not always to help. In some industries, the after-hours lifestyle can pull you in. I chose differently. My faith grounded me. It helped me draw boundaries and keep my focus on where I wanted to go. I changed my circles when I needed to, even from high school. That's how I kept myself.

Was I overwhelmed by freedom? Not really. I was excited to make my own decisions, but I also knew who I wanted to be. My faith helped me choose that every day.

Now, looking back from where I am, I see how much relationships matter. At Mamelani, staff show up. They come to your workplaces, awards, your matric ball, the moments that say, "You're seen." That stays with you. It certainly stayed with me. And yes, there's practical learning, like making pasta from scratch! But what I carry most is the sense that I wasn't doing this alone.

If I could speak to someone about to leave care, I would say: build a routine early, even if it's simple. Budget honestly, needs before wants. Find your people — a mentor, a church, a community — and let them anchor you. Guard your goals; you don't have to fit in to belong. And hold onto hope. Even when it feels tough, you can turn your story into something good.

I'm still growing. My hours are steadier. I'm clearer about what I want. The journey hasn't been easy, but I'm proud of the person I'm becoming and grateful for the community that believed in me while I was still finding my feet.

PeacePlayers South Africa – Beneficiary Reflection



Fathima Fall
Leadership Development Programme Participant

From Social Anxiety to the G20: A PeacePlayers Story

I am honoured to have attended the G20 as a Children20 delegate, serving as a voice for children in my community and across South Africa. This opportunity was made possible through my role as the KwaZulu-Natal Representative in the South African Children's Rights Coalition, a position I earned through dedication, personal growth, and the communication skills I developed through the PeacePlayers Leadership Development Programme in 2025.

The PeacePlayers programme was transformative for me. At the start, I struggled with social anxiety and found it difficult to greet others or speak confidently. Through the programme's guidance, I developed strong communication skills that now enable me to speak on public platforms — not only for myself, but also on behalf of children whose voices are often unheard or overlooked.

In addition to communication, the programme helped me build critical thinking, teamwork, and leadership skills. I learned how to work collaboratively with diverse groups of people across differences in age, gender, and culture, how to listen and respond thoughtfully, and how to embody the values of a responsible leader.

I am deeply grateful for the mentorship, training, and encouragement I received. It equipped me with the tools to overcome personal challenges and empowered me to step into leadership roles where I can make a meaningful difference. I carry these lessons forward as I continue to advocate for children in South Africa and beyond.

Implementing Partners

The YLP works through a network of strategic implementing partners and organisational allies whose work is aligned with NMCF's strategic objectives. In 2024, the YLP formalised grant partnerships with two implementing partners in KwaZulu-Natal and the Western Cape.

Grant-Funded Implementing Partners

PeacePlayers South Africa (PPSA) – eThekwini, KwaZulu-Natal
Established in 2001, PeacePlayers South Africa uses basketball as a catalyst to facilitate life skills, leadership development, and peace-building among youth from diverse races, socioeconomic backgrounds, and communities. Through long-term basketball programmes, PPSA provides safe spaces for collaboration, friendship, and leadership development across 21 schools and NPO partners in nine communities across eThekwini.

Mamelani Projects – Western Cape

Mamelani Projects is a South African nonprofit organisation that focuses on building resilience, transforming communities, and advocating for systemic change through their Youth Development Programme. Mamelani provides comprehensive support to young people transitioning out of the care system, including accommodation guidance, reintegration, educational assistance, bursaries, job readiness training, and internship and learnership placement.

Strategic Programme Partners

Government and Multilateral Partners

- UNICEF South Africa – Child participation in budget processes; co-presenter at the 12th NMCP; longstanding partner in Legacy Academy.
- Department of Social Development – Keynote participation at the 12th NMCP; partner on child rights and welfare policy.
- African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACERWC) African Union – Continental child rights monitoring and advocacy; 46th Ordinary Session host, Maseru 2025.

Civil Society and Academic Partners

- Save the Children South Africa – Co-presenter at the 12th NMCP; partner in child participation frameworks and NMCP support.
- REPSSI (Regional Psychosocial Support Initiative) – Regional mental health and psychosocial support; Lusaka Forum 2025.
- Cyberculture Foundation – Co-host of the AI and Digital Safety Pre-Engagement Dialogue, Stellenbosch 2025.
- UNISA Science Engagement Centre (USEC) – STEM skills development through coding and tinkering programmes for YLP participants.



Performance Against Targets

Target vs Actual Beneficiaries

KPI / Programme	Target (YTD)	Actual (YTD)
Advocacy initiatives led by children (PPSA – Peace League cross-community games)	100 cross-community games	99 Peace League games held
Child and youth leaders produced (PPSA – Peace League participation)	200 participants over 12-month grant	409 participants across all programmes; several identified by school scouts for sports scholarships
Youth leaders produced (PPSA – Leadership Development Programme enrolment)	20 participants FY25	26 registered; 23 active; 12 completed the two-year programme; 1 dropout; 14 continuing into 2026
Youth leaders produced (PPSA – Coaches Development: stipends/ mentoring)	21 coaches supported and mentored	21 coaches supported and mentored; 70% retention of returning coaches
Youth leaders produced (Mamelani – Shadow Monarchs cohort, care-leaver transition prep)	31 young people equipped for independent living	Qualitative data only available at this point
Youth leaders produced (Mamelani – Post Care Groups A & B)	29 post-care young people supported	Work-readiness and education support delivered; 5 identified for extended mentoring
50 Youth recruited and equipped through Legacy Academy's leadership curriculum	Target of 50 accepted applicants	115 applications; 65 accepted (56.5%); 39 attended onboarding; one camp cohort delivered 13–15 July
GSP scholarships / Legacy Academy leadership pipeline	No target	4 African Leadership Academy scholarships awarded, all 4 to Legacy Academy alumni; strong early conduct/leadership feedback
% of children actively participating in decision-making (Mamelani)	100% of child participants engaged	Young people involved in programme design; alumni co-facilitating and leading initiatives

Thought Leadership Activities

Note: The YLP target document does not include a formal 'Thought Leadership' KPI or target. The activities below are drawn from the annual report narrative.

KPI / Programme	Actual (YTD)
12th Nelson Mandela Children's Parliament – National Sitting, Good Hope Chamber, Cape Town (9 October 2025). Theme: 'Amplifying the voices of children in planning and budgeting.' Delegates from all 9 provinces addressed duty bearers and the Minister of Social Development.	*1 parliamentary sitting every 2 years*
NMCP Pre-Engagement Sessions – Western Cape Provincial Legislature, Cape Town (7–8 October 2025). Structured preparation for NMCP child delegates.	*No formal target*
ACERWC 46th Ordinary Session – Maseru, Lesotho (27–30 November 2025). NMCF child delegates presented on Child-Friendly Cities and co-moderated the Intergenerational Dialogue – the first time at an African Union body.	*No formal target*
Children's Pre-Engagement Dialogue on AI and Digital Safety – The Nex, Ndawo Yethu, Delft, Cape Town (September 2025). 30 children including 3 Legacy Academy participants as Moot Court advocates and panellists.	*No formal target*
Stellenbosch Conference on Child Rights and Digital Safety (September 2025). One Legacy Academy participant served as panellist; recommendations from the Pre-Engagement Dialogue tabled here.	*No formal target*
REPSSI Children's Forum – Lusaka, Zambia (24–29 October 2025). NMCF delegation of YLP and CSP children across 7 countries. Self-produced film, individual presentations, art exhibition, formal recommendations tabled at the REPSSI Board.	*No formal target*
Mamelani – ILP Post-18 Pilot (launched January 2026). 6 partner organisations; attended by Western Cape Children's Commissioner. Mamelani also requested by the Department of Social Development to lead ILP Guidelines development; 2 sector meetings held.	*No formal target;*
PPSA – Learn Fresh (United States) partnership: NBA Math Hoops programme delivered to all 21 PPSA coaches (17 November 2025).	*1 new partnership formalised*
Ghent University lecture partnership – concept note developed for a partnership timed to NMCF's 30th anniversary and the 30th anniversary of the South African Constitution.	*No defined target*

KPI / Programme	Target (YTD)	Actual (YTD)
PPSA Coaches Development: advocacy initiatives (clinics/ trainings/camp)	8 clinics; 39 area trainings; 2 onboarding workshops; 1 camp	2 clinics; 18 trainings; 75 skills audits (informing 2026 curriculum); onboarding complete; camp not yet held
Platforms for meaningful child/youth engagement with decision-makers (Mamelani)	No defined target	ILP Post-18 Pilot launched January 2026 with 6 partner organisations; Western Cape Children's Commissioner attended
Policies influenced by youth / platforms created (Mamelani – ILP Guidelines)	No defined target	Mamelani requested by the Department of Social Development to lead ILP Guidelines development; 2 sector meetings held
New partnership established (PPSA – Learn Fresh, United States)	1 new partnership formalised	Learn Fresh visited PPSA Durban site 17 November 2025; trained all 21 coaches on NBA Math Hoops programme
Research and international partnerships (Mamelani – Amplifying Voices collaboration)	No defined target	Active links with Henley Business School (UK), Queen's University Belfast/VOYPIC (Northern Ireland), Children's Institute (UCT), Scalabrini Institute
Institutional partnership in development (NMCF – Ghent University lecture)	No defined target	Concept note developed for a lecture partnership timed to NMCF's 30th anniversary and the 30th anniversary of the South African Constitution
Prospective partnership (Connectivity Coalition, led by DG Murray Trust and Kagiso	No NMCF commitment made yet	Terms of Reference and Pillars Overview reviewed; DGMT already a named prospective partner elsewhere in NMCF's pipeline





Nelson Mandela
CHILDREN'S FUND

CHANGING THE WAY SOCIETY TREATS ITS CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Sustainable Livelihoods Programme (SLP)

Introduction

NMCF's Sustainable Livelihoods Programme (SLP) is designed to strengthen families economically, assist them in dealing with situations of vulnerability, and create a good and healthy environment for their children to live in. The Sustainable Livelihoods Programme is also crafted in such a way that it brings communities together in a form of its Self Help Groups' programme activities, where these are allowed to unlock their potential on how to deal with issues of poverty, creating opportunities to establish income-generating activities, addressing their own challenges and coming up with their own solutions. The programme has created an opportunity whereby the poor are well-armed with all the necessary equipment to deal with poverty, restore their dignity, and do away with dependency syndrome.

The Sustainable Livelihoods Programme objectives

- Strengthening families to cope with vulnerability.
- Strengthen families economically to bring stability to their households.
- Building socio-economic environments in which children will live in good health, peace, security, and comfort.
- Creating an environment where families and communities unlock their potential to be able to work out their way out of poverty.
- Strengthen families to build their own financial reserves out of the “little monies” they have and accumulate assets in their households to create a better living environment.
- To do away with dependency syndrome.
- To restore the dignity of the poor in the interest of their families and children.

The Sustainable Livelihoods Programme (SLP) outputs:

The Sustainable Livelihoods Programme (SLP) within NMCF has been using the Self-Help Group approach to implement its program in the targeted communities. The Self-Help Group approach has proven to work in many communities as a structure that gives the latter an opportunity to deal with socio-economic issues effectively and in an organised manner.

SLP’s Self-Help Groups (SHGs) are composed of community members in their targeted areas and are encouraged to conduct a self-picking exercise to form this structure. A Self-Help Group consists of five (5) to ten (10) members to enable it to be administered well without any difficulties. The implementation of the Sustainable Livelihoods Programme in the provinces has been managed on the ground by the SLP Coordinators and Community Facilitators who were appointed by NMCF’s Implementing Partners (IPs)



Sustainable Livelihoods Programme outcomes:

During the implementation of this program in the field, it was clear that the majority of South Africans have been waiting to be exposed to such a program where they will get an opportunity to deal with their socio-economic challenges and other related matters. It was clear that the SLP provided an opportunity to unlock their potential to rise out of poverty and to utilise the skills they have to better their lives and their children's lives. As a result, the SLP has delivered a range of positive outcomes during this strategy period:

(a) Improved economic stability in families.
(b) Increased income for vulnerable families.
(c) Accumulation of necessary assets at the household level and the creation of a healthy environment for children to live in peace, security, and comfort.
(d) Adequate food available for families and children to sleep without hunger.
(e) More children have access to economic support, improved health, and maximum retention in schools.
(f) Opportunities and improved skills to operate income-generating activities.
(g) Youth create their own employment to deal with situations of high rate of unemployment among young people in South Africa.
(h) Well-established Self-Help Groups graduated to Cooperatives.
(i) Existence and maintenance of well-organised Cooperatives to deal with issues of poverty and unemployment.

Sustainable Livelihoods Programme interventions in the targeted communities:

Identified communities were asked to form Self-Help Groups to give NMCF fluid interventions in dealing with their socio-economic issues. Once the Self-Help Groups were formed, they were trained in the following disciplines:

(a) Introductions on group formation and how to maintain group cohesion.
(b) The importance of maintaining a good quality Group.
(c) The Group structure and responsibilities of group members.
(d) The savings mobilisation program, the importance of the group's contributions in the Groups' "Savings Pot".
(e) The running of a Rotating Savings and Credit Association (ROSCA's) to increase the group's savings.
(f) Record-keeping.
(g) How to run Self-Help Group meetings.
(h) Initiation of the Groups' income-generating activities.
(I) Different methods of budgeting.
(j) How to maintain good relations with the SLP Coordinators and Community Facilitators as their ground managers.
(k) How to graduate Self-Help Groups to become Community Registered Cooperatives.

The supervision of the Groups on the ground is managed by community facilitators. Community facilitators are managed by coordinators who liaise with the SLP Manager at NMCF for the Groups' monthly activities.

The Sustainable Livelihoods Program Impact on NMCF's targeted communities:

(a) The SLP has been implemented in 5 provinces: KwaZulu-Natal, the North-West, Limpopo, Mpumalanga and the Free State.
(b) There are 519 active self-help groups.
(c) The programme has been able to reach 4 962 families and 16 330 children.
(d) The programme has 48 registered cooperatives as graduates from the Self-Help Groups programme.
(e) Parents who are Self-Help Group members were able to pay for their children's education at the primary, secondary, and tertiary levels.
(f) Income is available to pay for the health services of children and families, improving the families' overall health status.
(g) Parents can purchase groceries and feed their children and families.
(h) 201 new homes were built, and more than 150 were renovated.
(i) 58 latrines were built in rural Eshowe to deal with issues of sanitation.
(j) Self-Help Groups operate different income-generating activities (IGA) such as block making, poultry, video making, sewing clothes, production of school uniforms in large quantities, catering services, and production of artefacts, and many more.

Highlights

Acknowledgement event:

A successful acknowledgement event was held in Thohoyandou on 27 November 2025, in partnership with NMCF's implementing partner, Far North Community Care and Development. The event recognised and honoured the best-performing Self-Help Groups (SHGs). The ceremony also provided an opportunity for NMCF to showcase its work in hard-to-reach communities, while enabling SHGs to demonstrate their contribution to strengthening local economies. Groups exhibited products developed through their income-generating activities, with proceeds contributing to improved household livelihoods.



NMCF's CEO, Dr Linda Ncube-Nkomo giving a congratulatory message to the celebrants





SHG members receiving gifts and certificates



Some of the SHG members who attended the event

Ukonga Book:

The Ukonga book has been published. 50 copies have been printed and shared with NMCF. The book is about showcasing how women's Self Help Groups in Eshowe within the uMlalazi local municipality in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa, have risen as driving forces of change, transforming lives, strengthening families, fostering financial independence, and building resilience in rural South African communities.

The book combines rigorous qualitative and quantitative research from scholars at the University of Zululand, telling the stories of the lived experiences of these women in rural KwaZulu-Natal, offering real world evidence of the positive socioeconomic impact. It is a vital resource for policymakers, practitioners, researchers, and all who are committed to supporting women's empowerment, sustainable community development, and reducing dependency on state grants. Above all, the book tells a story of the power of collaboration between communities, civil society, and academia, creating lasting change for women, children, and families living in rural South African communities.







Below are the implementing partners for the period under review.

Name of Implementing Partner	Province and Area where SLP is implemented	Intervention Implemented by SLP	No. of Children benefited from this programme	No. of Families benefited from th programme
Ebenezer Welfare Supporting and Caring Organisation	Mpumalanga Province: Operating in the Bushbuckridge area.	24 Self Help Groups in place; IGA's in place. Computer lab in place for youth.	595	480
Far North Community Care and Development:	Limpopo Province. Thulamela municipal District.	19 Self Help Groups in place, A Bakery in place and IGA's.	348	246
KwaNgcolosi Child and Family Care	Kwa Zulu Natal Province: Ilembe district in Kranskop.	35 Self Help Groups in place, IGA's in place and 7 registered Cooperatives.	1440	528
Makobetsa Youth Poultry Project	Free State Province: Mangaung Metro programme implemented in Thaba Nchu	1 Youth Self-help Group. Assisted in the provision of protein in the community through the egg and chicken selling project.	2380	645
Ithuso	North-West Province: operating in Moruleng and Ramokokastad.	Assisted people living with disabilities to establish income-generating activities in upholstery, sewing, and the production of artefacts	57 people living with disability	57
TOTAL			**4820**	**1956**

Lessons Learned

(a) Communities know what they want and need to be motivated with different programmes to deal with their own situations.
(b) Communities have natural skills that need to be enhanced to work their way out of poverty.
(c) Communities can manage their own formed structure if they understand its role very well.
(d) Communities have discipline when working together in groups to deal with different socio-economic issues.
(e) Communities can save the “little monies” they have and build on financial reserves to improve the quality of their lives.
(f) Traditional/Tribal authorities in NMCF’s targeted areas support the work of NMCF without expecting any favours.
(g) Good communication between the SLP and its implementing partners has had a positive impact in the targeted communities in terms of improving the lives of children and families.
(h) SLP targeted communities were able to establish and operate viable income-generating activities.



SLP Beneficiary Story

Youth-Led Agricultural Initiative: CAMP Group Background

The CAMP Group is a youth-led agricultural initiative formed by five young people (four males and one female) from different villages who came together in response to the challenges of unemployment. This was after Far North recruited young people to join the Self-Help Groups training that was offered by NMCF. This was to encourage them to be part of a savings group to enable them to be independent and financially stable. Individually, some members had business ideas but lacked the financial means and support to implement them. Recognising the strength in collaboration, they decided to pool their limited resources to establish a farming business.

Establishment and Operations

The group operates from a plot of land located in Maungani, where access to a reliable water source enables them to irrigate their crops effectively. Although the members reside in different villages, Maungani serves as their central point of operation and coordination. The group meets every two weeks to review progress, plan activities, and allocate responsibilities. Farm duties are shared among members on a rotational basis, with the frequency of visits depending on the workload. During peak periods such as harvesting, members increase their presence at the farm, sometimes attending twice per week to ensure all tasks are completed on time.

Core Activities and Market Access

The CAMP Group focuses on agricultural crop production. Their main produce includes green peppers, tomatoes, mielies, spinach, green beans, and serrano chillies. Through persistence and consistent quality, the group has secured supply relationships with established buyers such as Nando's, Spar, Tshwane Market, Roots Butchery, as well as local market stalls and shisanyamas. These partnerships have provided the group with stable market access and a reliable source of income.

Financial Discipline and Growth Plans

To expand their operations, each member contributes R800 per month towards group savings. This collective saving strategy is aimed at enabling the group to acquire a larger piece of land and increase production capacity in the future. Their commitment to regular savings reflects strong financial discipline and long-term planning.

Employment Creation and Community Impact

The group treats their farming activities with the same level of seriousness as formal employment. Punctuality, accountability, and shared responsibility have been key to their success. As their operations grew, the CAMP Group was able to create two permanent employment opportunities for women from the Maungani community, thereby extending the benefits of the project beyond its founding members.

In addition to job creation, the group maintains strong relationships with surrounding communities. Residents support the initiative by purchasing produce directly from the farm. The group also contributes to social welfare by donating surplus or non-retail grade produce to disadvantaged households and local drop-in centres, helping to reduce food waste while supporting vulnerable community members.

Conclusion

The CAMP Group demonstrates how youth collaboration, resourcefulness, and commitment can transform unemployment into sustainable livelihood opportunities. Their initiative has not only generated income for its members but has also contributed to local employment, improved food access, and strengthened community ties. The group continues to work towards expanding its operations and increasing its positive impact within the region.



The picture shows green peppers and mustard seedlings from CAMP group



Special Projects: Nelson Mandela Children's Hospital (NMCH)

30 years
of impacting children's lives

The Nelson Mandela Children's Fund's Flagship Project

The Nelson Mandela Children's Hospital (NMCH) remains at the heart of the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund's enduring commitment to improving the lives of children.

Established from Nelson Mandela's vision of a dedicated specialist children's hospital serving Southern Africa, NMCH provides highly specialised paediatric care to children whose conditions cannot be managed at primary or secondary levels of care. The Hospital serves children from across South Africa and beyond its borders, working with referring healthcare professionals and multidisciplinary clinical teams to provide complex tertiary and quaternary care.

As the Fund's flagship project and principal beneficiary, NMCH represents the practical expression of Madiba's belief that society can be judged by how it treats its children. The relationship between the Fund and the Hospital extends beyond the Hospital's establishment. Through continued operational support, donor mobilisation and investment in priority programmes, the Fund helps NMCH sustain the people, systems and services required to care for some of the region's most vulnerable children.

A Partnership That Sustains Specialised Paediatric Care

NMCH is a state-aided, independent non-profit institution. Approximately 65% of the Hospital's operational requirements are funded through the National Tertiary Services Grant (NTSG). The remaining funding must be secured through a combination of support from the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund, external donors, private-patient income and other funding sources.

Government funding supports a significant portion of the Hospital's clinical activity but does not cover every requirement associated with operating a highly specialised paediatric facility. Continued support from the Fund therefore helps the Hospital bridge critical funding gaps and maintain essential operational functions that enable safe, sustainable patient care.

During FY2025/26, operational support from the Fund contributed to several important areas, including employee wellness, information technology, hospital insurance, repairs and maintenance of specialised equipment, and the training of a paediatric specialist. Although many of these functions operate behind the scenes, each contributes to the Hospital's ability to provide reliable, high-quality care. Clinical teams depend on wellmaintained medical equipment, secure and effective information systems, an appropriately supported workforce and a safe operating environment to diagnose, treat and care for children with complex health needs.

Reach And Patient Activity

Throughout FY2025/26, NMCH continued to provide inpatient, outpatient and day-patient services to children requiring specialised care.

Between April 2025 and March 2026, the Hospital recorded:

- 20 324 day-patient separations
- 28 128 inpatient days
- 3 938 inpatients separations
- 9 419 first outpatient attendances
- 8 646 outpatient follow-up attendances

These service indicators reflect the scale and diversity of activity across the Hospital. They include children receiving treatment without an overnight stay, children admitted for inpatient care, and patients attending specialist outpatient consultations and followup appointments.

NMCH exceeded its annual NTSG target for day-patient separations, achieving 104% of the annual target. Outpatient follow-up attendances reached 125% of the annual target. The other three reported indicators achieved at least 90% of their respective annual targets. These results demonstrate the Hospital's continued reach and its commitment to providing children with access to specialist services, ongoing treatment and appropriate clinical followup.

Building Paediatric Specialist Capacity

During FY2025/26, a registrar supported through the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund successfully completed a paediatric specialist training programme and has since been permanently employed by the Hospital. This investment has strengthened NMCH's specialist workforce and expanded its capacity to care for children requiring highly specialised services. Additional donor support towards the training of further registrars would enable NMCH to train more paediatric specialists and increase the Hospital's capacity to serve patients.

Supporting The People Who Care For Children

Caring for seriously ill children can be physically and emotionally demanding. Supporting employee wellbeing is therefore an important part of sustaining compassionate, safe and high-quality paediatric care. During FY2025/26, support from the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund contributed to NMCH's employee wellness programme, delivered through INCON Health. In addition toproviding formal employee assistance support, INCON played an active role in making wellness resources practical and accessible to employees.

During 2025, an INCON social worker presented an stress-management and self-care session as part of Pharmacy Day. INCON's social workers also participated in NMCH's Wellness Day on 24 October, engaging employees and raising awareness of the support available through the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP).

INCON arranged massage therapists from Office Angels, whose services were so well received that the team returned the following Monday to accommodate additional employees. INCON also helped coordinate the participation of external wellness partners, including the South African National Blood Service, FNB and an optometrist who has continued to offer preferential rates to NMCH employees. Wellness Day formed part of NMCH's broader Wellness Week, which included talks on financial wellness, mental resilience, early detection and physical wellbeing. Employees from across the Hospital participated in health screenings and activities such as yoga, Zumba and painting.

Through the formal EAP offering and broader wellness initiatives, INCON helped NMCHcreate meaningful opportunities for employees to access support, prioritise their wellbeing and connect with colleagues.

Strengthening The Hospital's Operational Foundation

Providing highly specialised care requires a strong operational foundation. Support from the Fund during FY2025/26 contributed to essential areas that are not fully covered by government funding.

Information technology

Reliable information technology supports clinical communication, administration and the secure management of patient information. The Fund's operational contribution helped NMCH meet a portion of its information technology and maintenance costs during the year. As systems and infrastructure installed during the Hospital's establishment reach the end of their supported lifecycles, structured replacement and modernisation will become increasingly important. Continued investment in fit-for-purpose digital systems will help NMCH protect patient information, improve efficiency and support the Hospital's future service requirements.

Equipment maintenance

Specialised paediatric care depends on complex medical equipment that must be maintained to appropriate safety and performance standards. The Fund's support contributed to the maintenance and repair of hospital equipment during FY2025/26. NMCH is also strengthening its long-term asset-management and replacement planning to identify ageing equipment, assess future requirements and prioritise investment. This forward planning is important to ensuring that clinical teams continue to have access to the equipment they need to diagnose and treat children safely.

Protecting continuity of care

The Fund's support for essential insurance requirements also helped protect the Hospital's assets and clinical operations. Together with investment in systems, equipment and people, this contribution strengthened the operational environment in which patient care is delivered.

These areas may be less visible than a medical procedure or a patient interaction, but they are integral to every aspect of the Hospital's work.

A shared commitment to children

The partnership between the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund and the Nelson Mandela Children's Hospital demonstrates what can be achieved when a shared vision is supported through sustained, practical action.

Through its support during FY2025/26, the Fund helped NMCH:

- Sustain essential operational requirements that are not fully covered by government funding
- Maintain systems and specialised equipment that support patient care
- Provide psychological and wellness support to Hospital employees
- Promote physical, mental and financial wellbeing across the workforce
- Support the training and permanent appointment of a paediatric surgeon
- Strengthen the Hospital's ability to deliver specialist inpatient, outpatient and daypatient Services

Each of these contributions forms part of a connected system of care. Investment in a specialist strengthens clinical capacity. Investment in employee wellbeing supports the people delivering care. Investment in technology and equipment helps those professionals work safely and effectively. Together, these investments help create an environment in which children can receive the specialised treatment they need.

Looking Ahead

As NMCH continues to mature, the Hospital must plan for the replacement of ageing technology and medical equipment, strengthen specialist clinical capacity and ensure that its services remain sustainable and responsive to the needs of children.

The coming period will require continued collaboration among government, the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund, donors, academic partners, healthcare professionals and other stakeholders. Priority areas will include strengthening the Hospital's operational resilience, modernising essential systems, maintaining and replacing specialised equipment, developing paediatric healthcare professionals and expanding access to highly specialised services.

The Nelson Mandela Children's Hospital extends its sincere appreciation to the Trustees, leadership, employees, donors and partners of the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund for their continued commitment and support.

Together, the Fund and the Hospital are carrying Nelson Mandela's vision forward—helping ensure that children can access the specialist care they need and have the opportunity to live and thrive.



Nelson Mandela
CHILDREN'S FUND
CHANGING THE WAY SOCIETY TREATS ITS CHILDREN AND YOUTH



Annual Financial Statements

For the year ended 31 March 2026

30 years
of impacting
children's lives

NELSON MANDELA CHILDREN'S FUND

(Registration Number IT2801/95)
Audited Annual Financial Statements
for the year ended 31 March 2026

NELSON MANDELA CHILDREN'S FUND

(Registration Number IT2801/95)
Annual Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2026

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NELSON MANDELA CHILDREN'S FUND

(Registration Number IT2801/95)
Annual Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2026

General Information

Country of Incorporation and Domicile	South Africa
Type of Trust	Inter Vivos trust.
Registration Number	IT2801/95
Nature of Business and Principal Activities	The Nelson Mandela Children's Fund (the Fund) is a discretionary intervivos trust and is registered in terms of the Non-Profit Organisations Act, 1997 (Act 71 of 1997). The primary aim of the Fund is to change the way society treats its children and youth.
Trustees	Mr Mpho Makwana (Chairperson) Mr Rorisang Tshabalala (Deputy Chairperson) Dr Linda Ncube-Nkomo (Chief Executive Officer) Ms. Nana Moipone Magomola - Chairperson (Resigned: 26 June 2025) Ms Obenewa Amponsah Ms Zodwa Manase Mr Moses Mashishi Mr Sakhile Masuku Mr Owen Maubane (Resigned: 29 July 2025) Adv. Marumo Moerane (Resigned: 26 August 2025) Ms Onkgodisitse Mokonyane (Resigned: 15 July 2025) Ms Mary-Jane Morifi Adv. Kgomotso Moroka Mr Ivan Moroke Ms Rita Motlana Ms Zanele Ngwepe Mr Sizwe Nzimande Mr Johannes Seoloane Mr Maseda Ratshikuni Ms Nonzukiso Siyotula (Resigned: 01 August 2025) Prof Zebulon Vilakazi Ms Nozizwe Vundla
Registered Office	21 Eastwood Way Saxonworld Johannesburg 2196
Business Address	21 Eastwood Way Saxonworld Johannesburg 2196

NELSON MANDELA CHILDREN'S FUND

(Registration Number IT2801/95)
Annual Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2026

General Information

Postal Address	PO Box 797 Highlands North 2037
Banker	Standard Bank Nedbank
Tax Number	0720/090/84/4
Value Added Tax Number	4110179175
Auditor	PricewaterhouseCoopers Inc. Johannesburg

NELSON MANDELA CHILDREN'S FUND

(Registration Number IT2801/95)
Annual Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2026

Trustees' Responsibilities and Approval

The trustees are required to maintain adequate accounting records and are responsible for the content and integrity of the annual financial statements and related financial information included in this report. These annual financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the IFRS for SMEs® Accounting Standard as issued by the International Accounting Standards Board (IASB®) and it is their responsibility to ensure that the annual financial statements satisfy the financial reporting standards with regards to form and content and present fairly the statement of financial position, results of operations and business of the trust, and explain the transactions and financial position of the business of the trust at the end of the financial year. The annual financial statements are based upon appropriate accounting policies consistently applied throughout the trust and supported by reasonable and prudent judgements and estimates.

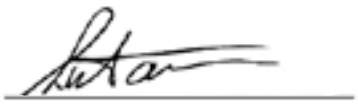
The trustees acknowledge that they are ultimately responsible for the system of internal financial control established by the trust and place considerable importance on maintaining a strong control environment. To enable the trustees to meet these responsibilities, the trustees set standards for internal control aimed at reducing the risk of error or loss in a cost effective manner. The standards include the proper delegation of responsibilities within a clearly defined framework, effective accounting procedures and adequate segregation of duties to ensure an acceptable level of risk. These controls are monitored throughout the trust and all employees are required to maintain the highest ethical standards in ensuring the trust's business is conducted in a manner that in all reasonable circumstances is above reproach.

The focus of risk management in the trust is on identifying, assessing, managing and monitoring all known forms of risk across the trust. While operating risk cannot be fully eliminated, the trust endeavours to minimise it by ensuring that appropriate infrastructure, controls, systems and ethical behaviour are applied and managed within predetermined procedures and constraints.

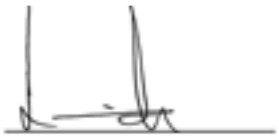
The trustees are of the opinion, based on the information and explanations given by management, that the system of internal control provides reasonable assurance that the financial records may be relied on for the preparation of the annual financial statements. However, any system of internal financial control can provide only reasonable, and not absolute, assurance against material misstatement or loss. The going-concern basis has been adopted in preparing the financial statements. Based on forecasts and available cash resources the trustees have no reason to believe that the trust will not be a going concern in the foreseeable future. The annual financial statements support the viability of the trust.

The annual financial statements have been audited by the independent auditing firm, PricewaterhouseCoopers Inc., who has been given unrestricted access to all financial records and related data, including minutes of all meetings of the beneficiary, the trustees and committees of the trustees. The trustees believe that all representations made to the independent auditor during the audit were valid and appropriate. The external auditor's unqualified audit report is presented on pages 7 to 9.

The annual financial statements set out on pages 10 to 27 which have been prepared on the going concern basis, were approved by the trustees and were signed on 2 October 2026 on their behalf by:



Mr Mpho Makwana (Chairperson)



Dr Linda Ncube-Nkomo
(Chief Executive Officer)

NELSON MANDELA CHILDREN'S FUND

(Registration Number IT2801/95)
Annual Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2026

Trustees' Report

The trustees present their report for the year ended 31 March 2026.

1. Review of financial results and activities

Main business and operations

The Nelson Mandela Children's Fund (the Fund) is a discretionary intervivos trust and is registered in terms of the Non-Profit Organisations Act, 1997 (Act 71 of 1997), The primary aim of the Fund is to change the way society treats children and youth. There were no major changes herein during the year.

The trust generated a surplus after tax for the year ended 31 March 2026 of R105,787,752 (2025: R98,477,975), mainly as a result of the good performance of the endowment, with 100% returns on interest and dividends reinvested for FY26. During this financial period R47,895,000 was drawn down from the investment income to fund NMCF's operations.

The trust's revenue increased from R15,260,977 (Donations in kind amounted to FY2025 R1,045,497) in the prior year to R25,935,765 (Donations in kind R7,513,434) for the year ended 31 March 2026.

The trust's cash flows from operating activities changed from an outflow of R54,941,001 in the prior year to an outflow of R37,402,939 for the year ended 31 March 2026.

2. Going concern

The annual financial statements have been prepared on the basis of accounting policies applicable to a going concern. This basis presumes that funds will be available to finance future operations and that the realisation of assets and settlement of liabilities, contingent obligations and commitments will occur in the ordinary course of business.

The NMCF trustees are cognizant of the drastic changes in the fundraising environment in which the Fund is operating and the limited short-term funding prospects in the pipeline. The trustees therefore acknowledge the need to intensify and diversify our fundraising efforts. To capacitate the fundraising unit, the recruitment of a chief marketing executive and grant writer is underway together with the review of the organizational strategy to help identify our fundraising focus areas.

The trustees believe that the non-profit organisation has adequate financial resources to continue in operation for the foreseeable future and accordingly the annual financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis.

The trustees have satisfied themselves that the non-profit organisation is in a sound financial position.

The trustees are not aware of any new material changes that may adversely impact the non-profit organisation. The trustees are also not aware of any material non-compliance with statutory or regulatory requirements or of any pending changes to legislation which may affect the non-profit organisation.

3. Events after reporting date

The trustees have approved a new strategy and organisation design process since the end of the financial year to the date of this report, and the strategy will not have a material effect on the financial position of the trust.

Estimate of the financial effect or a statement that such estimate cannot be made.

NELSON MANDELA CHILDREN'S FUND

(Registration Number IT2801/95)
Annual Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2026

Trustees' Report

4. Trustees

The trustees of the trust during the year and up to the date of this report are as follows:
Mr Mpho Makwana (Chairperson)
Mr Rorisang Tshabalala (Deputy Chairperson)
Dr Linda Ncube-Nkomo (Chief Executive Officer)
Ms. Nana Moipone Magomola - Chairperson (Resigned: 26 June 2025)
Ms Obenewa Amponsah
Ms Zodwa Manase
Mr Moses Mashishi
Mr Sakhile Masuku
Mr Owen Maubane (Resigned: 29 July 2025)
Adv. Marumo Moerane (Resigned: 26 August 2025)
Ms Onkgodisitse Mokonyane (Resigned: 15 July 2025)
Ms Mary-Jane Morifi
Adv. Kgomotso Moroka
Mr Ivan Moroke
Ms Rita Motlana
Ms Zanele Ngwepe
Mr Sizwe Nzimande
Mr Johannes Seoloane
Mr Maseda Ratshikuni
Ms Nonzukiso Siyotula (Resigned: 01 August 2025)
Prof Zebulon Vilakazi
Ms Nozizwe Vundla

5. Independent Auditor

PricewaterhouseCoopers Inc. was the independent auditor for the year under review.

Independent auditor's report

To the Trustees of Nelson Mandela Children's Fund

Our opinion

In our opinion, the financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Nelson Mandela Children's Fund (the Trust) as at 31 March 2026, and its financial performance and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with the IFRS for SMEs Accounting Standard.

What we have audited

Nelson Mandela Children's Fund's financial statements set out on pages 10 to 27 comprise:

- the statement of financial position as at 31 March 2026;
- the statement of comprehensive income for the year then ended;
- the statement of changes in trust funds for the year then ended;
- the statement of cash flows for the year then ended; and
- the notes to the financial statements, which include a summary of significant accounting policies.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (ISAs). Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements* section of our report.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

PricewaterhouseCoopers Inc.
4 Lisbon Lane, Waterfall City, Jukskei View, 2090
Private Bag X36, Sunninghill, 2157
T: +27 (0) 11 797 4000
Chief Executive Officer: M A Tshesane
The Company's principal place of business is at 4 Lisbon Lane, Waterfall City, Jukskei View, where a list of directors' names is available for inspection.
Reg. no. 1998/012055/21, VAT reg.no. 4950174682

www.pwc.co.za

Independence

We are independent of the Trust in accordance with the Independent Regulatory Board for Auditors' *Code of Professional Conduct for Registered Auditors* (IRBA Code) and other independence requirements applicable to performing audits of financial statements in South Africa. We have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the IRBA Code and in accordance with other ethical requirements applicable to performing audits in South Africa. The IRBA Code is consistent with the corresponding sections of the International Ethics Standards Board for Accountants' *International Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (including International Independence Standards)*.

Other information

The Trustees are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the document(s) titled "Nelson Mandela Children's Fund Annual Report 2025/2026". The other information does not include the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon.

Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and we do not express an audit opinion or any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information identified above and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.

If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.

Responsibilities of the Trustees for the financial statements

The Trustees are responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with the IFRS for SMEs Accounting Standard and for such internal control as the Trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the Trustees are responsible for assessing the Trust's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Trustees either intend to liquidate the Trust or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate,

they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with ISAs, we exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Trust's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the Trustees.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the Trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Trust's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Trust to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with the Trustees regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

PricewaterhouseCoopers Inc.

PricewaterhouseCoopers Inc.
Director: M Mokone
Registered Auditor
Johannesburg, South Africa
7 October 2026

NELSON MANDELA CHILDREN'S FUND

(Registration Number IT2801/95)
Annual Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2026

Statement of Financial Position

Figures in R	Notes	2026	2025
Assets			
Non-current assets			
Property, plant and equipment	4	6,959,967	7,054,026
Financial Assets	5	1,223,020,564	1,118,903,110
Total non-current assets		**1,229,980,531**	**1,125,957,136**
Current assets			
Inventories	6	468,789	390,153
Trade and other receivables	7	1,358,724	21,697,639
Other loans and receivables	8	1,071,500	-
Cash and cash equivalents	9	128,639,590	118,555,094
Total current assets		**131,538,603**	**140,642,886**
Total assets		**1,361,519,134**	**1,266,600,022**
Trust funds and liabilities			
Trust funds			
Accumulated surplus	10	1,323,858,060	1,218,070,307
Other non-distributable reserves	11	17,055,005	17,055,005
Total trust funds		**1,340,913,065**	**1,235,125,312**
Liabilities			
Current liabilities			
Trade and other payables	12	5,037,826	4,917,730
Conditional grants payable	13	3,014,600	7,294,913
Deferred income	14	12,553,643	19,262,067
Total current liabilities		**20,606,069**	**31,474,710**
Total trust funds and liabilities		**1,361,519,134**	**1,266,600,022**

NELSON MANDELA CHILDREN'S FUND

(Registration Number IT2801/95)

Annual Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2026

Statement of Comprehensive Income

Figures in R	Notes	2026	2025
Revenue	16	25,935,765	15,260,977
Fundraising income	17	11,278,795	7,807,860
Administrative expenses	18	(29,570,512)	(22,267,937)
Programme development expenses	19	(61,375,712)	(48,244,358)
Fair value gains	20	101,390,280	87,539,793
Surplus from operating activities		**47,658,616**	**40,096,335**
Finance income	21	58,129,136	58,381,640
Surplus for the year		**105,787,752**	**98,477,975**

NELSON MANDELA CHILDREN'S FUND

(Registration Number IT2801/95)
Annual Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2026

Statement of Changes in Trust Funds

Figures in R		Fair Value Reserve fund	Accumulated surplus	Total
Balance at 1 April 2024				
	11	34,104,697	1,102,542,635	1,136,647,332
Changes in trust funds				
Surplus for the year			98,477,975	98,477,975
Other comprehensive income			-	-
Total comprehensive income for the year		-	98,477,975	98,477,975
Transfers between trust funds		(17,049,697)	17,049,697	-
Balance at 31 March 2025		**17,055,005**	**1,218,070,307**	**1,235,125,308**
Balance at 1 April 2025		17,055,005	1,218,070,307	1,235,125,308
Changes in trust funds				
Surplus for the year		-	105,787,752	105,787,752
Total comprehensive income for the year		-	105,787,752	105,787,752
Balance at 31 March 2026		**17,055,005**	**1,323,858,059**	**1,340,913,060**

NELSON MANDELA CHILDREN'S FUND

(Registration Number IT2801/95)
Annual Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2026

Statement of Cash Flows

Figures in R	Note	2026	2025
Cash flows used in operations			
Surplus for the year		**105,787,752**	**98,477,975**
Adjustments to reconcile surplus			
Adjustments for Finance income		(57,451,202)	(58,381,640)
Adjustments for increase in inventories		(78,636)	(52,789)
Adjustments for decrease / (increase) in trade accounts receivable		582,582	(1,196,990)
Adjustments for decrease / (increase) in other operating receivables		18,684,833	(20,412,942)
Adjustments for decrease in trade accounts payable		(5,740,903)	(1,665,113)
Adjustments for increase / (decrease) in other operating payables		1,580,675	(243,565)
Adjustments for (decrease) / increase in deferred income		(6,708,424)	5,274,221
Adjustments for provisions		(502,550)	-
Adjustment for depreciation		686,022	849,933
Adjustments for revaluation surplus		-	1,089,890
Adjustments for Fair value gains on financial assets		(101,390,280)	(87,539,793)
Total adjustments to reconcile surplus		**(150,337,883)**	**(162,278,788)**
Net cash flows used in operations		**(44,550,131)**	**(63,800,813)**
Interest received		7,147,192	8,859,812
Net cash flows used in operating activities		**(37,402,939)**	**(54,941,001)**
Cash flows from investing activities			
Proceeds from sale of property, plant and equipment		218,120	-
Purchase of property, plant and equipment		(625,685)	(95,800)
Withdrawal of financial assets		47,895,000	49,521,833
Proceeds from disposal of other financial assets		-	(102,179)
Cash flows from investing activities		**47,487,435**	**49,323,854**
Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents		**10,084,496**	**(5,617,147)**
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year		118,555,094	124,172,241
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year	**9**	**128,639,590**	**118,555,094**

NELSON MANDELA CHILDREN'S FUND

(Registration Number IT2801/95)
Annual Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2026

Accounting Policies

1. General information

Nelson Mandela Children's Fund (the Fund') is a discretionary intervivos trust and is registered in terms of the Non-Profit Organisations Act, 1997 (Act 71 of 1997). The primary aim of the Fund is to change the way society treats its children and youth.

2. Basis of preparation and summary of significant accounting policies

The financial statements of NELSON MANDELA CHILDREN'S FUND have been prepared in accordance with IFRS for SME's and also complies with the IFRS for SME's standard. The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, as modified by the revaluation of certain property, plant and equipment and financial instruments at fair value. They are presented in South African Rand (R).

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with IFRS for SME's requires the use of certain critical accounting estimates. It also requires management to exercise its judgement in the process of applying the non-profit organisation's accounting policies. The areas involving a higher degree of judgement or complexity, or areas where assumptions and estimates are significant to the financial statements are disclosed in note 3.

The principal accounting policies applied in the preparation of these annual financial statements are set out below. These policies have been consistently applied to all the years presented, unless otherwise stated.

2.1 Property, plant and equipment

Property, plant and equipment is stated at historical cost less accumulated depreciation and any accumulated impairment losses. Historical cost includes expenditure that is directly attributable to bringing the asset to the location and condition necessary for it to be capable of operating in the manner intended by the trustees.

The trust adds to the carrying amount of an item of property, plant and equipment the cost of replacing parts of such an item when that cost is incurred if the replacement part is expected to provide incremental future benefits to the trust. The carrying amount of the replaced part is derecognised. All other repairs and maintenance are charged to surplus or deficit during the period in which they are incurred.

Land is not depreciated. Depreciation on other assets is charged so as to allocate the cost of assets less their residual value over their estimated useful lives, using the straight-line method. The estimated useful lives range as follows:

Asset class	Useful life / depreciation rate
Land	Indefinite
Buildings	50 years
Machinery	6 years
Motor vehicles	5 years
Fixtures and fittings	4 years
Office equipment	5 years
Artworks	Indefinite
Motor Vehicle - Right of Use	3 years

Work in progress

Work in progress relates to provision of assets ordered but not yet paid by the organisation at year end. The assets will be transferred to the respective asset categories once delivered and paid for in full.

NELSON MANDELA CHILDREN'S FUND

(Registration Number IT2801/95)
Annual Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2026

Accounting Policies

Basis of preparation and summary of significant accounting policies continued...

Artworks
After initial recognition, the trust measures artworks using the revaluation model. Artworks measured in accordance with the revaluation model is shown at fair value at the date of revaluation less any subsequent accumulated impairment losses.

Right of Use
Right of Use assets relates to the right of use of assets donated to the fund by Ford Motor Company of South Africa (Manufacturing) (Pty) Ltd. The initial recognition of the asset is calculated at the recommended rental value as set out by the donation agreement over the usefull life of the donation agreement. After initial recognition the asset is depreciated over the usefull life of the agreement.

Revaluations are made with sufficient regularity to ensure that the carrying amount does not differ materially from that which would be determined using fair value at the end of the reporting period. Increases in the carrying amount are recognised in statement of profit or loss. Decreases in the carrying amount are recognised in surplus or deficit.

The assets' residual values, useful lives and depreciation methods are reviewed, and adjusted prospectively if appropriate, if there is an indication of a significant change since the last reporting date.

An asset's carrying amount is written down immediately to its recoverable amount if the asset's carrying amount is greater than its estimated recoverable amount.

Gains and losses on disposals are determined by comparing the proceeds with the carrying amount and are recognised within 'other gains / (losses)' in the statement of comprehensive income.

2.2 Financial instruments

Trade and other receivables
Trade receivables are recognised initially at the transaction price. They are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method, less provision for impairment. A provision for impairment of trade receivables is established when there is objective evidence that the trust will not be able to collect all amounts due according to the original terms of the receivables.

Trade and other receivables are classified as debt instruments and loan commitments at amortised cost.

Trade and other receivables are subsequently stated at amortised cost.

Other financial assets
Other financial assets are recognised initially at the transaction price, including transaction costs except where the asset will subsequently be measured at fair value.

Where other financial assets relate to shares that are publicly traded, or where fair values can be measured reliably without undue cost or effort, these assets are subsequently measured at fair value with the changes in fair value being recognised in profit or loss.

Other investments are subsequently measured at cost less impairment.

Debt instruments are subsequently stated at amortised cost. Interest income is recognised on the basis of the effective interest method and is included in finance income.

NELSON MANDELA CHILDREN'S FUND

(Registration Number IT2801/95)
Annual Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2026

Accounting Policies

Basis of preparation and summary of significant accounting policies continued...

Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents includes cash on hand, demand deposits and other short-term highly liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less. Bank overdrafts are shown in current liabilities on the statement of financial position.

Cash include notes and coins on hand and cash held with banks rated by Moody's as Ba2, B1 and Baa3. Cash equivalents are highly liquid financial assets with original maturities three months or less, which are subject to insignificant risk of changes in their fair value and are used by the fund in the management of its short-term commitments. These include short-term deposits.

Trade and other payables

Trade payables are recognised initially at the transaction price and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

Trade payables are obligations on the basis of normal credit terms and do not bear interest.

Trade payables are subsequently stated at amortised cost.

Trust capital and accumulated surplus

The Fund's objective when managing capital are to safeguard the Fund's ability to continue as a going concern in order to provide returns to beneficiaries and to maintain an optimal reserve structure. The Fund's capital consists of income reserves, fair value reserves and the Mott endowment reserve. In order to maintain or adjust this reserve structure, the Fund constantly monitors this structure. Currently, the required reserves are funded by the operational and investing activities of the Fund.

Retained earnings consist of all revenues, capital gains and losses retained by the trust after the payment of all expenses, taxes and distributions of income and capital gains to beneficiaries.

Other financial asset

These financial assets are initially measured at fair value. When a financial asset or financial liability is recognised initially, an entity shall measure it at the transaction price (including transaction costs except in the initial measurement of financial assets and liabilities that are subsequently measured at fair value through profit or loss)

At subsequent reporting dates these are measured at fair value through profit and loss. An impairment loss is recognised in surplus or deficit when there is objective evidence that the asset is impaired, and is measured as the difference between the investment's carrying amount and the present value of estimated future cash flows discounted at the effective interest rate computed at initial recognition. Impairment losses are reversed in subsequent periods when an increase in the investment's recoverable amount can be related objectively to an event occurring after the impairment was recognised, subject to the restriction that the carrying amount of the investment at the date the impairment is reversed shall not exceed what the amortised cost would have been had the impairment not been recognised.

Financial assets that the trust has the positive intention and ability to hold to maturity are classified as held to maturity.

2.3 Inventories

Inventories are stated at the lower of cost and estimated selling price less costs to complete and sell. Cost is determined using the first-in, first-out (FIFO) method. At each reporting date, inventories are assessed for impairment. If inventory is impaired, the carrying amount is reduced to its selling price less costs to complete and sell; the impairment loss is recognised immediately in profit or loss.

NELSON MANDELA CHILDREN'S FUND

(Registration Number IT2801/95)
Annual Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2026

Accounting Policies

Basis of preparation and summary of significant accounting policies continued...

2.4 Revenue

Revenue is measured at the fair value of the consideration received or receivable.

The revenue is made of Income from restricted and non-restricted donations, donations in kind, programme designated funding.

2.5 Investment Income

The investment income is made up of interest and dividends from NMCF Endowment.

Dividend income is recognised when the trust's right to receive payment has been established and is shown as 'finance income'.

2.6 Grants

Grants received where the Fund has yet to comply with all attached conditions are recognised as a liability and released to income when all attached conditions have been complied with.

2.7 Related parties

A related party is a person or entity with the ability to control or jointly control the other party, or exercise significant influence over the other party, or vice versa, or an entity that is subject to common control, or joint control. As a minimum, the following are regarded as related parties of the reporting entity:

- A person or a close member of that person's family is related to a reporting entity if that person:
  - has control or joint control of the reporting entity;
  - has significant influence over the reporting entity; or
  - is a member of the key management personnel of the reporting entity or of a parent of the reporting entity.
- An entity is related to the reporting entity if any of the following conditions apply:
  - The entity and the reporting entity are members of the same group (which means that each parent, subsidiary and fellow subsidiary is related to the others);
  - One entity is an associate or joint venture of the other entity (or an associate or joint venture of a member of a group of which the other entity is a member);
  - Both entities are joint ventures of the same third party;
  - One entity is a joint venture of a third entity and the other entity is an associate of the third entity;
  - The entity is a post-employment benefit plan for the benefit of employees of either the reporting entity or an entity related to the reporting entity. If the reporting entity is itself such a plan, the sponsoring employers are also related to the reporting entity;
  - The entity is controlled or jointly controlled by a person identified as a related party;
  - A person identified as having control or joint control over the reporting entity has significant influence over the entity or is a member of the key management personnel (Trustee, CEO and CFO) of the entity (or of a parent of the entity);
  - The entity, or any member of a group of which it is a part, provides key management personnel services to the reporting entity or to the parent of the reporting entity.

A related party transaction is a transfer of resources, services or obligations between a reporting entity and a related party, regardless of whether a price is charged.

NELSON MANDELA CHILDREN'S FUND

(Registration Number IT2801/95)
Annual Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2026

Accounting Policies

Basis of preparation and summary of significant accounting policies continued...

2.8 Impairment of non-financial assets other than inventories

Other non-financial assets consist of various payments that have been made in advance for goods and services to be received in future. Other non-financial assets are measured at amortised cost, and are derecognised when the goods and services to which the prepayment relate have been received.

Assets that are subject to depreciation or amortisation are assessed at each reporting date to determine whether there is any indication that the assets are impaired. Where there is any indication that an asset may be impaired, the carrying value of the asset (or cash-generating unit to which the asset has been allocated) is tested for impairment. An impairment loss is recognised for the amount by which the asset's carrying amount exceeds its recoverable amount. The recoverable amount is the higher of an asset's (or CGU's) fair value less costs to sell and value in use. For the purposes of assessing impairment, assets are grouped at the lowest levels for which there are separately identifiable cash flows (CGUs). Non-financial assets other than goodwill that suffered an impairment are reviewed for possible reversal of the impairment at each reporting date.

3. Critical accounting estimates and judgements

Estimates and judgements are continually evaluated and are based on historical experience and other factors, including expectations of future events that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances.

No significant estimates and adjustments have been applied in the preparation of these annual financial statements.

NELSON MANDELA CHILDREN'S FUND

(Registration Number IT2801/95)
Annual Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2026

Material notes to the Financial Statements

Figures in R	2026	2025

4. Property, plant and equipment

Balances at year end and movements for the year

	Land	Buildings	Machinery	Motor vehicles	Fixtures and fittings	Office equipment	Artworks	Motor Vehicle - Right of Use	Total
Reconciliation for the year ended 31 March 2026									
Balance at 1 April 2025									
At cost	881,000	4,912,971	200,874	576,881	1,500,026	1,774,265	2,534,300	-	**12,380,317**
Accumulated depreciation	-	(2,063,448)	(200,874)	(519,071)	(1,027,024)	(1,515,874)	-	-	**(5,326,291)**
Carrying amount	**881,000**	**2,849,523**	**-**	**57,810**	**473,002**	**258,391**	**2,534,300**	**-**	**7,054,026**
Movements for the year ended 31 March 2026									
Additions from acquisitions	-	-	-	-	-	85,728	-	539,957	**625,685**
Depreciation	-	(98,260)	-	(24,088)	(317,534)	(186,145)	-	(59,995)	**(686,022)**
Disposals	-	-	-	(33,723)	-	-	-	-	**(33,723)**
Property, plant and equipment at the end of the year	**881,000**	**2,751,263**	**-**	**0**	**155,468**	**157,974**	**2,534,300**	**479,962**	**6,959,967**
Closing balance at 31 March 2026									
At cost	881,000	4,912,971	200,874	345,640	1,500,026	1,859,993	2,534,300	539,957	**12,774,761**
Accumulated depreciation	-	(2,161,708)	(200,874)	(345,640)	(1,344,558)	(1,702,019)	-	(59,995)	**(5,814,794)**
Carrying amount	**881,000**	**2,751,263**	**-**	**-**	**155,468**	**157,974**	**2,534,300**	**479,962**	**6,959,967**
Reconciliation for the year ended 31 March 2025									
Balance at 1 April 2024									
At cost	881,000	4,912,971	200,874	576,881	1,500,026	1,691,796	2,534,300	-	**12,297,848**
Accumulated depreciation	-	(1,965,189)	(200,874)	(381,010)	(708,044)	(1,234,572)	-	-	**(4,489,689)**
Carrying amount	**881,000**	**2,947,782**	**-**	**195,871**	**791,982**	**457,224**	**2,534,300**	**-**	**7,808,159**

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Figures in R								2026	2025
Property, plant and equipment continued...									
Movements for the year ended 31 March 2025									
Additions from acquisitions	-	-	-	-	-	95,800	-	-	**95,800**
Depreciation	-	(98,259)	-	(138,061)	(318,580)	(294,633)	-	-	**(849,933)**
Property, plant and equipment at the end of the year	**881,000**	**2,849,523**	**-**	**57,810**	**473,002**	**258,391**	**2,534,300**	**-**	**7,054,026**
Closing balance at 31 March 2025									
At cost	881,000	4,912,971	200,874	576,881	1,500,026	1,774,265	2,534,300	-	**12,380,317**
Accumulated depreciation	-	(2,063,448)	(200,874)	(519,071)	(1,027,024)	(1,515,874)	-	-	**(5,326,291)**
Carrying amount	**881,000**	**2,849,523**	**-**	**57,810**	**473,002**	**258,391**	**2,534,300**	**-**	**7,054,026**

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Figures in R	2026	2025
5. Financial Assets		
Financial assets at fair value through profit and loss comprise the following balances:		
CORONATION MAIN		
Opening Balance	731,078,900	689,850,310
Drawings	(47,895,000)	(49,521,833)
Dividends	9,456,762	6,807,643
Witholding tax	(214,750)	(155,401)
Interest	20,239,094	24,329,962
Expenses	(134,252)	(3,785)
Realised profit	16,074	41,490,342
Unrealised interest earned	-	1,665,161
Unrealised gain	65,482,691	16,616,501
Closing balance	**778,029,518**	**731,078,900**
CORONATION MOTT		
Opening Balance	56,558,862	50,373,172
Dividends	255,261	659,581
Witholding tax	(8,118)	(8,368)
Interest	1,591,250	1,177,593
Rebates	600,148	698,996
Unrealised profit	3,640,619	3,657,888
Additional charges	213,985	-
Closing balance	**62,852,007**	**56,558,862**
MELLVILLE DOUGLAS		
Opening Balance	331,197,848	292,060,050
Drawings		
Dividends	7,363,734	5,336,639
Witholding tax	(44,233)	
Interest	11,483,885	9,716,160
Expenses	(36,716)	(24,906)
Realised profit	69,107,534	55,893,314
Unrealised (Loss)	(37,000,513)	(31,783,409)
Closing balance	**382,071,539**	**331,197,848**
INVESTEC		
Opening Balance	67,500	67,500
Closing balance	**67,500**	**67,500**
	1,223,020,564	**1,118,903,110**

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Figures in R	2026	2025
6. Inventories		
Inventories comprise:		
Marketing merchandise	468,789	390,153
7. Trade and other receivables		
Trade and other receivables comprise:		
Trade receivables	643,792	1,226,374
Deposits	45,131	45,131
Value added tax	669,801	411,499
Bridging Finance - NMCH	-	20,014,635
Total trade and other receivables	**1,358,724**	**21,697,639**

*Bridging Finance: The funds were repaid following the government grant to the NMCH. These funds are payable once funds are received from Treasury.

8. Other loans and receivables		
Other loans and receivables comprise the following balances		
Donations held for sale This was a donation in kind made by the Ford Motor company of South Africa. The motor vehicle is to be sold at auction as part of a fundraising initiative.	1,071,500	-
	1,071,500	-
9. Cash and cash equivalents		
9.1 Cash and cash equivalents included in current assets:		
Cash		
Balances with banks	128,639,590	118,555,094

9.2 Cash and cash equivalents where availability is restricted

Cash held on behalf of the Nelson Mandela Children's Hospital amounting to R50 million (2025: R 50 million) comprises funds which may only be utilised for purposes of the Nelson Mandela Children's Hospital after proceedings of winding up the Trust have been finalised.

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Figures in R	2026	2025

10. Accumulated surplus

Accumulated surplus

Accumulated surplus at the beginning of the year	1,218,070,307	1,102,542,635
Surplus for the year	105,787,752	98,477,975
Transfers between trust funds	-	17,049,697
Accumulated surplus at the end of the year	**1,323,858,059**	**1,218,070,307**

11. Non-distributable reserve

11.1 Nature and purpose of reserves

In 2002 a grant amounting to US$2 million was received from the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation. This grant was recorded in accordance with the grant agreement as a permanent endowment and shown as a separate reserve. The amount has been invested in a separate portfolio with Coronation Fund Managers. If, at any time, the principal amount of this grant is not maintained in a segregated fund or should the Fund cease to exist, the Fund will be obliged to return the capital portion of this endowment to the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation forthwith. The Fund may only utilise the income earned on the endowment to fund its charitable activities.

The agreement with Charles Stewart Mott Foundation was renegotiated in 2017. The principal amount was changed from US$2 million to a Rand denominated amount of R17,055,000.

Refer to note 5 for details of the transfers between trust funds

11.2 Reconciliation for the year ended 31 March 2026

Major investment items	Opening balance	Closing Balance
MOTT Endowment	17,055,000	17,055,000

11.3 Reconciliation for the year ended 31 March 2025

Major investment items	Opening balance	Other changes	Closing balance
MOTT Endowment	34,104,697	(17,049,697)	17,055,000

12. Trade and other payables

Trade and other payables comprise:

Trade creditors	16,962	1,477,541
Accrued liabilities	5,020,864	3,440,189
Total trade and other payables	**5,037,826**	**4,917,730**

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Figures in R	2026	2025
13. Conditional grants payable		
Conditional grants payable comprise:		
Opening Balance	7,294,913	8,422,889
Grants paid	(35,388,391)	(27,770,366)
Grants approved during the year	31,108,078	26,642,390
Closing Balance	**3,014,600**	**7,294,913**
14. Deferred income		
Deferred income comprise:		
Balance at the beginning of the year	19,262,067	13,987,845
Funds received during the year	1,449,820	11,997,322
Funds recognised to income during the year	(8,158,244)	(6,723,100)
	12,553,643	**19,262,067**
15. Related-party transactions		
The following transactions were carried out with the related parties:		
Key management includes the Board of Directors (Executive and non-executive), all members of group management and the company secretary. The compensation paid or payable to key management for employee services is shown below:		
Total key management compensation	9,240,782	8,650,688
	9,240,782	**8,650,688**

* There were no payments made to Trustees during the year.

16. Revenue		
Revenue comprises:		
Donations (Monetary) received	17,371,508	13,630,688
Programme designated funds	1,050,283	584,792
Donations in kind	7,513,434	1,045,497
Total revenue	**25,935,765**	**15,260,977**

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Figures in R	2026	2025
17. Fundraising income		
Fundraising income comprises:		
Fundraising income	11,278,795	7,807,860
Fundraising income is unrestricted revenue from fundraising activities.		
18. Administrative expenses		
Administrative expenses comprise:		
Administration Travel & Transport Costs	37,464	73,398
Administrative expense	498,230	701,848
Audit fees	518,599	502,550
Depreciation	686,022	849,922
Equipment & Services	49,496	99,661
Fundraising expenses	1,374,302	875,731
Governance Expenses	943,646	-
Insurance	195,970	231,673
Investment expenses	811,597	566,876
IT Costs	954,409	473,108
Legal fees	144,977	218,793
Office operational costs	2,199,466	1,197,864
Organisational development	3,179,018	3,753,836
Personnel costs	13,279,736	11,633,327
Publicity & Communications	4,697,580	1,089,350
Total administrative expenses	**29,570,512**	**22,267,937**
19. Programme Development Expenses		
Programme Development Expenses comprise:		
Grants	30,689,670	26,642,390
* Programme development expenses	30,024,202	21,168,917
Social projects	401,678	433,051
Story of the fund	260,162	-
Total other expenses	**61,375,712**	**48,244,358**

*Programme development expenses are inclusive of programme salaries included in note 16.

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Figures in R	2026	2025

20. Fair value gains

Fair value gains comprise:

Fair value gain on financial assets measured at fair value through profit or loss	101,390,280	87,539,793

Realised gains on the performance of the NMCF Investments as a result of the favourable economy and 100% reinvestment of dividends and interest.

21. Finance income

Finance income comprises:

Interest received	41,260,177	45,733,178
Local dividends	16,868,959	12,648,462
Total finance income	**58,129,136**	**58,381,640**

22. Employee benefits expense

Employee benefits expense comprises:

Staff salaries	17,305,928	15,622,721
Executives and management	9,240,782	8,650,688
Total employee benefits expense	**26,546,710**	**24,273,409**

Executive and management refers to the Chief Executive Officer, Chief Financial Officer, Chief Programs Officer, Human Resources Business Manager and Fundraising Manager.

23. Taxation

In terms of section 10(1)(cN) of the Income Tax Act 1962, as amended, the Fund has been approved by the Commissioner for the South African Revenue Service as a public benefit organisation. Accordingly, the Fund is exempt from income taxation.

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Figures in R	2026	2025

24. Events after the reporting date

Strategic detail

The trustees have approved a new strategy and organisation design process since the end of the financial year to the date of this report, and the strategy will not have a material effect on the financial position of the trust.

Estimate of the financial effect or a statement that such estimate cannot be made.

25 Going concern

The annual financial statements have been prepared on the basis of accounting policies applicable to a going concern. This basis presumes that funds will be available to finance future operations and that the realisation of assets and settlement of liabilities, contingent obligations and commitments will occur in the ordinary course of business.

The trustees believe that the trust has adequate financial resources to continue in operation for the foreseeable future and accordingly the annual financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis.

The trustees have satisfied themselves that the trust is in a sound financial position and that it has access to sufficient borrowing facilities to meet its foreseeable cash requirements.

The trustees are not aware of any new material changes that may adversely impact the trust. The trustees are also not aware of any material non-compliance with statutory or regulatory requirements or of any pending changes to legislation which may affect the trust.

26 Statutory Compliance and Governance

The Trustees confirm that no current trustee or officer of the Trust is subject to any disqualification, nor have any compliance investigations been initiated or threatened against the management of the Trust under Section 189 of the Companies Act (or equivalent statutory governance frameworks).



Resource Mobilisation Highlights

30 years
of impacting
children's lives

NMCF Cannes Gala



The Nelson Mandela Children's Fund hosted its 3rd Annual Cannes Gala Dinner, bringing together an influential gathering of philanthropists, business leaders, artists, and advocates from around the world in support of children. The event formed part of the Fund's landmark 30th anniversary celebrations and showcased the growing international reach of Nelson Mandela's enduring legacy.

The evening was a celebration of compassion, leadership, and collective action for children. A special highlight was the presentation of two prestigious humanitarian awards to individuals whose work embodies the values and vision of the Fund. Rodrigo Basilicati-Cardin, Chief Executive Officer of the Pierre Cardin Group and a valued supporter of the Fund, received the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund Humanitarian Legacy Award in recognition of his commitment to empowering young people through mentorship, education, and the creative arts. The Champion for Children's Rights Award was presented to Ruchelle Rutherford, Chief Executive Officer of Kids on the Move, honouring her lifelong dedication to advocating for vulnerable children and creating opportunities for those with developmental and cognitive challenges.

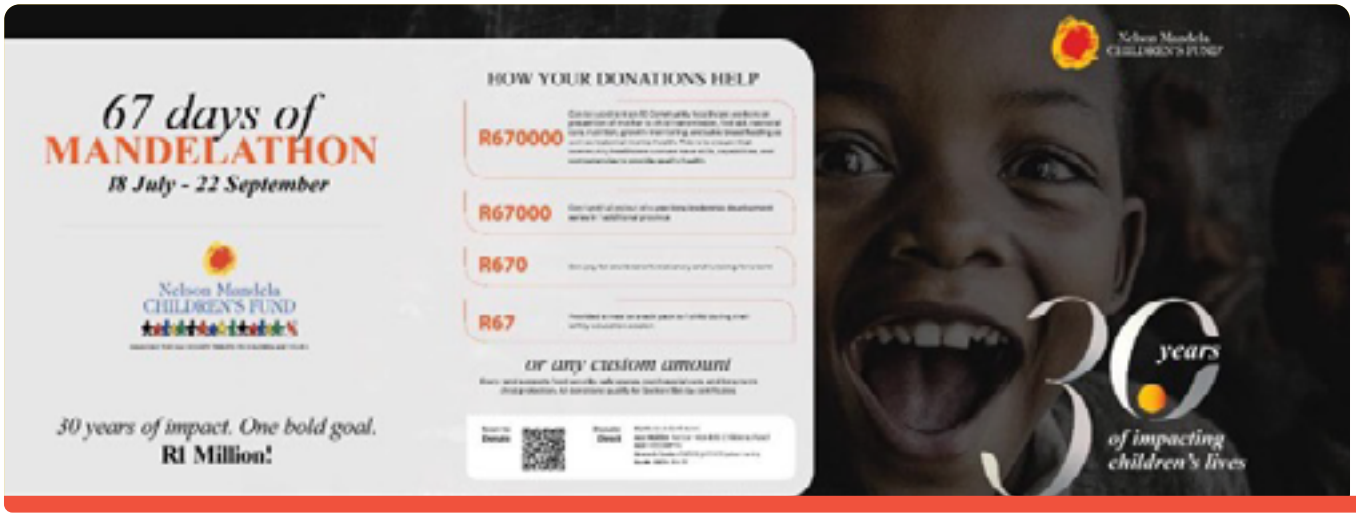
With 278 distinguished guests in attendance, the gala delivered an unforgettable evening of entertainment, philanthropy, and purpose. Guests enjoyed live performances, inspiring stories of impact, and a charity auction featuring unique artworks and limited-edition memorabilia. The event raised approximately R598,000 in support of the Fund's programmes, while in-kind contributions valued at more than R8.4 million underscored the strength of the partnerships and international goodwill supporting the Fund's mission.

Mandelathon

Mandelathon continued to be one of the Fund's flagship public fundraising campaigns, mobilising individuals, communities, corporates, and media partners around the spirit of giving inspired by the legacy of Nelson Mandela. Now in its third year, the campaign continues to encourage giving through various donation tiers linked to the 67 minutes and spirit of Mandela Day, including contributions of R67, R670, R6,700 and other custom amounts. This approach reinforces the message that every contribution, regardless of size, has the power to make a meaningful difference in the lives of children and communities.

A key milestone was the introduction of the "67 Days of Mandelathon", which extended the fundraising and awareness drive from 18 July 2025 to 22 September 2025. The extended campaign period created greater opportunities for public participation, donor engagement, storytelling, and community mobilisation, further strengthening the culture of active citizenship inspired by Nelson Mandela's legacy.

The campaign generated both financial and in-kind support for programmes benefiting children and communities across South Africa. Through strong media visibility, compelling storytelling, and active public participation, Mandelathon continued to amplify awareness of the Fund's work while fostering a culture of active citizenship, generosity, and collective action.



Volunteer Programme

The Volunteer Programme continued to play a vital role in strengthening community engagement and supporting the Fund's mission throughout the year. The Fund's work would not be possible without the dedication, compassion, and commitment of volunteers who generously gave their time, energy, and expertise in support of children and communities. Their contribution enhanced the success of multiple campaigns, outreach initiatives, and events, helping to extend the Fund's impact and strengthen stakeholder participation.

A notable highlight was the support received during the Annual Children's Celebration, where dedicated teams from Little Ashford played a meaningful role in supporting beneficiaries. Beyond volunteering their time at the event, the teams actively mobilised their broader school communities to collect toys, stationery, and toiletries that contributed towards beneficiary goodie bags. This collective effort reflected the spirit of generosity, active citizenship, and community involvement that continues to inspire and strengthen the Fund's work.

The Volunteer Programme also created opportunities for individuals and corporate teams

to meaningfully contribute their skills and resources while fostering a deeper connection to the Fund's work. Through these efforts, volunteers continued to demonstrate the powerful impact of collective action in improving the lives of children.

Face-to-Face (F2F) Fundraising

The F2F Fundraising Programme remained a key driver of sustainable income generation through the acquisition of recurring monthly donors. The programme focused on building meaningful relationships with donors while increasing public awareness of the Fund's impact. Through direct public engagement, the initiative contributed to strengthening the Fund's donor base and establishing a more sustainable funding pipeline.



The programme currently operates with two dedicated teams of "Facers" across Gauteng. Although still in its early stages, the initiative has shown encouraging growth and positive momentum. To date, the teams have successfully engaged more than 1,500 once-off donors, as well as close to 200 recurring donors whose ongoing contributions provide consistent and sustainable support for the Fund's work.

programme was the partnership established with Talent Development Institute (TDI), which resulted in the successful onboarding of three our Facers onto their system. This partnership represents an important investment in capacity building, professional development, and the long-term sustainability of the F2F fundraising model. Strategic collaborations of this nature continue to strengthen the programme by enhancing staff development, operational effectiveness, and future growth opportunities.

Corporate Sponsorships and Partnerships

The Fund continues to strengthen relationships with corporate partners who share a common commitment to improving the lives of children and communities across South Africa. These strategic partnerships provided vital financial and in-kind support, enabling the Fund to expand its reach, strengthen programme delivery, and respond more effectively to the needs of vulnerable children and families. Beyond financial contributions, these collaborations created opportunities for shared value, innovation, employee engagement, and long-term social impact.



A significant highlight is the partnership with Ford Motor Company which donated a fleet of 19 vehicles to support the Fund's work and broader community outreach initiatives. The donation significantly enhanced operational capacity, mobility, and the ability to deliver services more efficiently across various communities and programme areas. Importantly, several of the vehicles were converted into mobile clinics, extending access to healthcare and essential support services for children and underserved communities, particularly in areas where access to facilities remains limited.

Ford Hand Over Event

The Nelson Mandela Children's Fund and Ford South Africa celebrated a significant milestone in their shared commitment to improving the lives of children with the official handover of 30 vehicles donated by Ford to the Fund. The event marked the beginning of a strategic and impactful partnership aimed at strengthening the Fund's ability to reach and support children and communities across South Africa.

The donated vehicles will play a critical role in enhancing the Fund's operations and community outreach programmes, enabling staff and partners to access vulnerable communities more efficiently and effectively. Through improved mobility, the Fund will be better positioned to advance its mission of changing the way society treats its children and ensuring that children have access to the support and opportunities they need to thrive.
The ceremony brought together leadership from Ford South Africa, the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund, and the Nelson Mandela Children's Hospital, highlighting the shared vision of creating positive and lasting change in communities.

Representing Ford South Africa was Chief Executive Officer, Mr Neale Hill, who reaffirmed the company's commitment to making a meaningful contribution to the communities in which it operates. He highlighted the importance of partnerships that create sustainable social impact and improve the lives of future generations.

The Nelson Mandela Children's Fund was represented by its Chairperson, Mr Mpho Makwana, who expressed appreciation for Ford's generous contribution and commitment to the Fund's mission. He emphasised that the donation represents more than just vehicles; it is an investment in children, families, and communities across the country.

The fleet of 30 vehicles will significantly enhance the Fund's ability to implement programmes, engage with communities, monitor projects, and provide support to children in various regions where the organisation operates. Reliable transportation is essential in ensuring that services reach those who need them most, particularly in underserved and remote communities.

The donation demonstrates Ford's commitment to supporting initiatives that contribute to social development and community empowerment. By partnering with the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund, Ford is helping to strengthen the infrastructure required to deliver meaningful and sustainable interventions for children and their families.

Beyond the handover itself, the event symbolised the beginning of what promises to be a long-lasting and impactful relationship between Ford South Africa and the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund. Both organisations share a commitment to creating opportunities, addressing social challenges, and investing in the well-being of future generations.

The partnership reflects a collective understanding that meaningful change requires collaboration, innovation, and sustained commitment from all sectors of society.



Children's Celebration

Children thrive in environments that stimulate creativity, excitement, and social interaction. Fun-filled and educational experiences play an important role in their overall development, helping to build confidence, foster meaningful connections, and create lasting memories.
As part of its commitment to enriching the lives of children, the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund hosted a special Children's Celebration Day at Gold Reef City Theme Park. With its unique blend of South African heritage, educational attractions, and world-class entertainment facilities, Gold Reef City provided the ideal setting for a day dedicated to fun, learning, and celebration.

For many of the beneficiaries, some of whom grew up only a short distance from the theme park, this was their very first visit to Gold Reef City. For others, it represented a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to experience one of Gauteng's premier family attractions. The venue offered a safe and engaging environment with entertainment suitable for children of all ages.
The Fund invited 300 children, aged between 5 and 18 years, from various communities across Gauteng to participate in the day's activities and celebrations.

The event commenced with a warm welcome from Nelson Mandela Children's Fund CEO, Dr Linda Ncube-Nkomo, who addressed the children and shared the Fund's vision and ongoing commitment to supporting their growth, development, and future aspirations. Her message encouraged the children to dream big and make the most of every opportunity presented to them.
This was followed by remarks from a representative of Nedbank, the event sponsor, who highlighted the longstanding partnership between the Fund and the bank. The address emphasised how collaborative efforts between the corporate and non-profit sectors create meaningful and lasting positive impacts in the lives of children and their communities.
The excitement quickly shifted into high gear with a lively performance by the popular Rastafarian entertainer known affectionately as Don Dada. His energetic and interactive performance brought enthusiasm and laughter to the audience, immediately setting a vibrant tone for the day.



Guests were then treated to a captivating performance by Biko's Manna, a talented sibling trio whose musical repertoire resonated with both children and adults. Their dynamic performance added to the festive atmosphere and was warmly received by all in attendance.
Both acts delivered memorable performances that kept the audience entertained and engaged throughout the programme.

The children enjoyed a delicious lunch generously sponsored by Gold Reef City, providing an opportunity for them to relax, connect with one another, and recharge before continuing with the day's activities.
Following lunch, the children spent the afternoon exploring the many attractions and rides that Gold Reef City has to offer. From thrilling rollercoasters and adventure rides to family-friendly attractions and interactive experiences, there was something for everyone to enjoy.

The excitement, laughter, and joy displayed throughout the park reflected the significance of the experience for many of the children, particularly those visiting the venue for the first time.

The Children's Celebration Day was a tremendous success, creating a memorable and enriching experience for all who attended. Beyond the entertainment and excitement, the event reinforced the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund's commitment to ensuring that children have access to opportunities that inspire joy, learning, and personal growth.

The support of valued partners such as Nedbank and Gold Reef City made it possible to provide an unforgettable day for 300 children from communities across Gauteng. The event served as a powerful reminder of the positive impact that collective action can have in creating meaningful experiences and brighter futures for South Africa's children.
As the day came to a close, the smiles, laughter, and cherished memories carried home by the children stood as the greatest measure of the event's success.



Media Engagement

The Nelson Mandela Children's Fund hosted a successful Media Engagement Event at its offices, bringing together more than 40 influential media professionals from across South Africa. The gathering included editors, journalists, media executives, and communication leaders representing a diverse range of print, broadcast, digital, and online media platforms.

The primary objective of the event was to strengthen relationships between the Fund and the media fraternity while fostering greater collaboration in advancing children's rights and ensuring that issues affecting children receive the attention and coverage they deserve across various media channels.

The event provided an opportunity for the Fund to engage directly with key media stakeholders and share its vision of creating a society that places children at the centre of development and decision-making. Through open dialogue and meaningful engagement, participants explored the critical role that the media plays in shaping public discourse, raising awareness, and amplifying the voices of children and young people.

Representatives from the Fund highlighted the importance of responsible and consistent reporting on matters affecting children, including education, health, child protection, youth development, and social justice. Discussions also focused on the need to create platforms that allow children and young people to participate in conversations that directly impact their lives and future.

The event was exceptionally well attended, reflecting the media sector's continued interest in supporting initiatives that promote the well-being of children. Guests had the opportunity to connect with Fund leadership, programme representatives, and fellow media professionals in an informal and engaging environment.

The networking session created valuable opportunities for relationship-building, knowledge-sharing, and the exploration of future collaborations. Participants exchanged ideas on how the media and civil society can work together more effectively to elevate children's issues and drive meaningful social change.

The overwhelmingly positive response from attendees demonstrated the value of creating dedicated spaces for engagement between the media and organisations working in the children's sector. Many participants expressed their appreciation for the opportunity to gain deeper insight into the work of the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund and the challenges facing children in South Africa today.

The event also served as a platform to reinforce the Fund's commitment to working closely with media partners to ensure that children's stories, achievements, challenges, and aspirations continue to receive the visibility they deserve.

By bringing together some of the country's leading media professionals, the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund reaffirmed its belief that meaningful partnerships are essential in driving awareness, influencing public discourse, and promoting the rights and well-being of children.

The event laid a strong foundation for ongoing collaboration and engagement, creating new opportunities to ensure that children's voices remain visible, heard, and prioritised within the national conversation.

The partnership demonstrated the transformative impact that can be achieved when the private sector and civil society work together towards a common purpose. Such collaborations continue to play a critical role in advancing sustainable development, strengthening community resilience, and ensuring that children and families are able to access the care and support they need.

Hi-Tec Shared Purpose Partnership

As part of the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund's 30th anniversary celebrations, Hi-Tec partnered with the Fund to create 30 exclusive limited-edition Freedom Shared Purpose Shoes. Inspired by Nelson Mandela's enduring legacy of freedom, hope, and social impact, the bespoke collection was designed not only as a commemorative tribute but also as a powerful fundraising vehicle.

The limited-edition shoes became highly sought-after collector's items and featured prominently in the Fund's flagship fundraising events, including the Cannes Gala Dinner in France and the 30th Anniversary Gala Celebration in Johannesburg. Through live auctions and donor engagement activities, the shoes generated significant interest among supporters and contributed to the Fund's fundraising efforts.

Beyond the financial contribution, the partnership demonstrated the power of purpose-driven collaboration between the private sector and civil society. By aligning a globally recognised South African brand with the Fund's mission, the initiative helped raise awareness of the challenges facing children while inspiring supporters to invest in a future where every child has the opportunity to thrive.



30th Gala Dinner Celebration

In March 2026 the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund celebrated a significant milestone. 30 years of championing the rights, wellbeing, and development of children across South Africa and the African continent. To commemorate this landmark achievement, the Fund hosted a prestigious 30th Anniversary Gala Dinner at the elegant Forum in Bryanston, bringing together more than 300 distinguished guests, including current and former trustees, donors, beneficiaries, implementing partners, corporate leaders, government representatives, philanthropists, business leaders, staff, and long-standing supporters of the Fund.

The evening was made possible through the generous sponsorship of Nedbank and served as a powerful celebration of three decades of impact, while also providing an opportunity to reflect on the enduring vision of Nelson Mandela. The gala was attended by several high-profile guests and dignitaries, including former Minister Dr Naledi Pandor, the Queens of the Bapedi, Batswana, and AmaNdebele nations, as well as numerous leaders from the public and private sectors who joined in honouring the Fund's remarkable legacy.

The evening was expertly hosted by renowned broadcasters Dan Moyane and Hulisani Ravele, whose professionalism, warmth, and engaging presence ensured the programme ran seamlessly from start to finish. Guests were welcomed with a moving rendition of the South African National Anthem performed by acclaimed songstress Judith Sephuma, setting a dignified and inspirational tone for the evening.

Adding vibrant energy to the celebration, StageWorx delivered a proudly South African medley performance that showcased the country's rich cultural heritage and diversity. Later in the evening, Biko's Manna captivated guests with a selection of timeless classics, creating a relaxed and memorable atmosphere.

Through moving stories, shared memories, and inspiring messages, guests were reminded of the Fund's unwavering commitment to ensuring that every child is seen, heard, protected, and empowered to reach their full potential.

A highlight of the evening was the keynote address delivered by former President Thabo Mbeki, who challenged guests to continue investing in the future of South Africa by prioritising the wellbeing, development, and protection of children. He reflected on the importance of investing in children as the foundation for building a prosperous and equitable society. His address underscored the importance of collective action in building a society that places children at the centre of its development agenda and reinforced the values and vision that have guided the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund over the past three decades.



Amogelang Mashele, Kamohelo Malikane with Dr Linda

The programme also featured inspiring contributions from young leaders, including the Junior Mayor of Johannesburg, Kahleho Selikane, and the President of the Nelson Mandela Children's Parliament, Amogelang Mashele. Their speeches provided powerful reminders of the importance of youth leadership, participation, and empowerment in shaping South Africa's future.

Beyond celebrating the Fund's legacy, the gala served as an important fundraising platform, generating just under R1.8 million in support of programmes that continue to transform the lives of children and youth. The generosity displayed throughout the evening reflected the deep commitment of supporters and partners who share the Fund's vision of creating lasting change for future generations.

One of the most anticipated moments of the evening was the live and silent auction, which featured an extraordinary collection of exclusive items and experiences generously donated by corporate partners and individual supporters. Guests enthusiastically

participated in bidding for a range of exclusive items, including a speech personally signed by former President Thabo Mbeki, exclusive artworks and paintings, and a vehicle generously sponsored by Ford.

Among the standout auction items was a specially branded Ford Ranger Wildtrak, donated by Ford Motor Company, featuring Nelson Mandela's printed signature—a unique collector's item that symbolised Madiba's enduring legacy and attracted significant interest from guests. Other sought-after auction items included limited-edition Freedom Shoes bearing Nelson Mandela's printed signature, luxury holiday experiences with flights sponsored by South African Airways, signed sports memorabilia from renowned athletes, and a range of exclusive lifestyle experiences. The success of the auction was further enhanced through the support of NightWing SA, which facilitated the international couriering and delivery of selected auction items.

The auction generated significant support for the Fund's programmes and initiatives, further strengthening its ability to positively impact the lives of vulnerable children and communities.

The 30th Anniversary Gala Dinner was a resounding success, celebrating not only the remarkable achievements of the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund over the past three decades but also its enduring commitment to creating a society that truly values, protects, and empowers its children. The evening served as a fitting tribute to the vision of Nelson Mandela and highlighted the collective responsibility of all sectors of society to continue investing in the future of South Africa's children.

As the Fund looks ahead to the next chapter of its journey, the 30th Anniversary Gala Dinner stood as a testament to the power of partnership, generosity, and shared purpose. Through meaningful partnerships, inspiring leadership, and unwavering support from stakeholders and donors, the Fund remains well-positioned to continue transforming lives for generations to come.

As guests departed, there was a shared sense of pride, reflection, and optimism, making the event a memorable celebration of 30 years of impact, hope, and service to the nation's children. More than a celebration of the past, it was a reaffirmation of the collective commitment to ensuring that every child has the opportunity to thrive, dream, and realise their full potential. The event not only honoured 30 years of impact but also laid a strong foundation for the future, demonstrating that when individuals, communities, and organisations unite behind a common cause, extraordinary change is possible.









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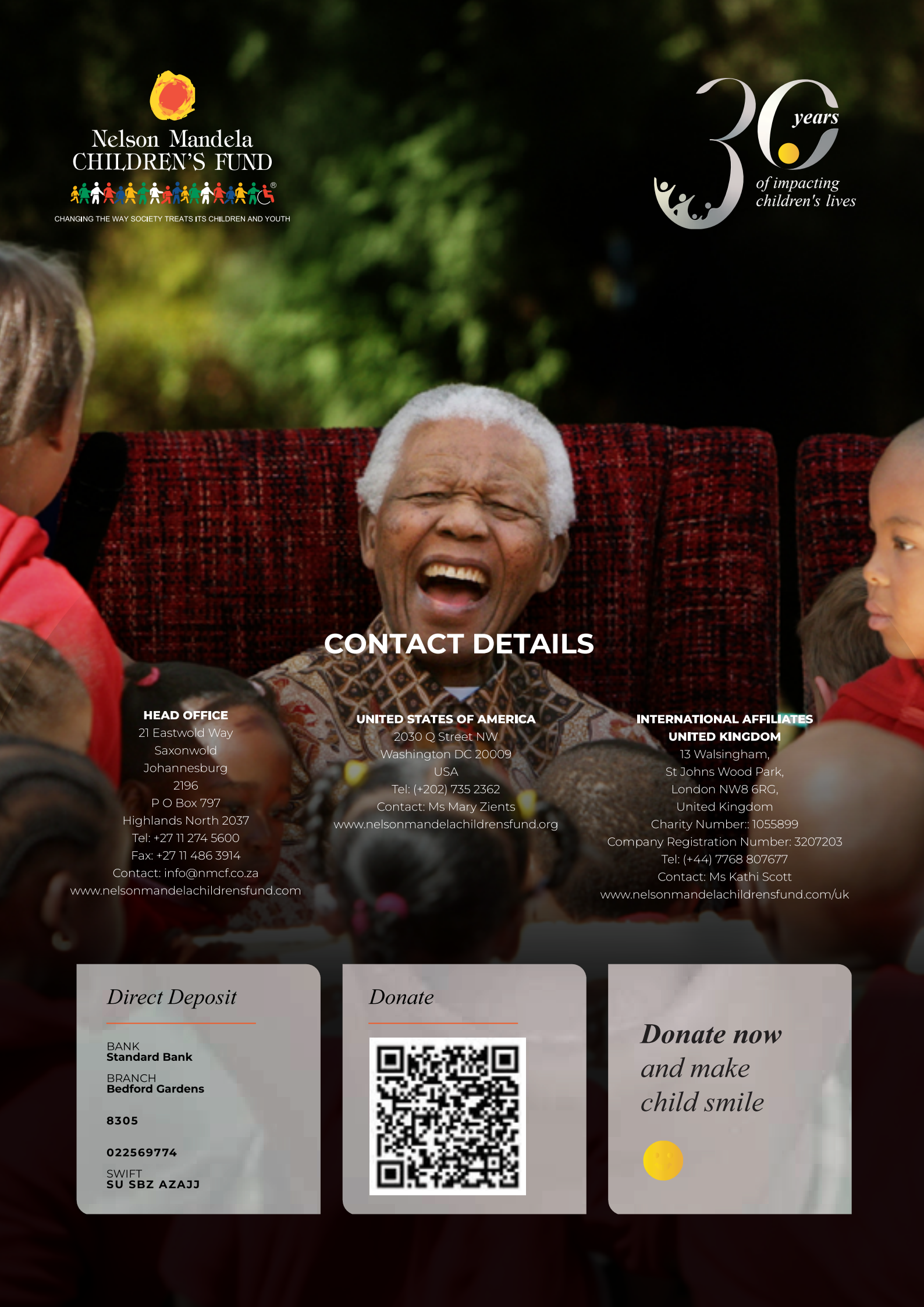
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30 years
of impacting children's lives



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