



July 2021



Nearly half (46%) of adult South Africans surveyed in late 2020 said they often had to go to bed hungry during the COVID-19 pandemic, as they did not have enough money for food. This month, we celebrated Mandela Day—and as we ignited the embers of Ubuntu, we focused strongly on the 2021 theme of "One hand can feed another."

It is heart-breaking, therefore, to witness quite the opposite with the unprecedented looting, violence and damage to property across KwaZulu Natal and Gauteng in recent weeks.

This has indeed been a very tragic and sad time for our country, particularly as the biggest victims will be members of the black working class majority—many of whom have suffered unprecedented job losses and income and have been plunged deeper into poverty. It is a sad reality that every business looted or destroyed will add to the sea of unemployment that is swelling across our country.

As proud South Africans, there has never been a more important time to stand together and remember what Mandela stood for. We need to find a way to unite and tackle the massive problems caused by poverty and hunger.

I pray that we can find the strength as a nation to get through this devastating time. I would like to end with a quote and remind all of us that:

"People are still good mostly" she said.

"Not from what I'm hearing," he replied.

"Love is quieter than gunshots. But there's more of it."

My prayer for South Africa is that we find that love again and always remember to celebrate the incredible work so many of our people are doing.

*Unathi Sihlahla  
Director, INMED South Africa*

## **Feeding Bodies and Spirits on Nelson Mandela Day with Our Friends at Mondelēz**



COVID-19 has highlighted the urgent need for vulnerable families to have a more sustainable food security plan,” says Dr Sandra Pretorius, Health in Action Programme Manager for INMED South Africa. “Food insecurity and malnutrition are unfortunately a growing reality for an increasing number of children and adults in many communities across South Africa.” Health in Action is a school-based programme of INMED South Africa and the Mondelēz International Foundation.

To celebrate Mandela Day 2021 and expand on the theme of “One hand can feed another,” INMED South Africa and volunteers from Mondelēz personally delivered food donations and volunteered at soup kitchens in Johannesburg and Port Elizabeth. The Meals on Wheels feeding scheme in Orange Farm typically feeds 750 beneficiaries daily from Monday through Thursday. During the pandemic, however, the soup kitchen has been forced to focus on only the 450 beneficiaries who are in the most desperate need.

Patrick Maphoto from Meals on Wheels Community Services in Orange Farm says his wish this Mandela Day was to be able to bring back a smile on the faces of hungry people with a nice hot meal. “We were so thankful to be able to provide a nutritious meal of chicken stew, rice and vegetables on the day for community members, as well as to provide nutrition packs comprising maize meal, rice, soya mince, tea, sugar, cooking oil and vegetables donated by Mondelēz staff members for 220 households,” says Navisha Bechan-Sewkuran, Corporate & Government Affairs Southern, Central & Eastern Africa Lead at Mondelēz International.



*INMED & Mondelēz donated enough food parcels to feed 220 households in Orange Farm*



*Volunteers in Joburg cooked & served 450 meals of chicken stew, yellow rice, cabbage & beet salad*



*The Lovers' Lane soup kitchen was able to distribute 50 nutrition packs in Seyisi*



*KwaNonzame Homebased Care was grateful for the food donations from INMED and Mondelēz. Due to lockdown regulations and lack of funds, it hasn't been able to run its soup kitchen daily.*

Health in Action Break Time Buddy Ntombekaya Ngindana, who was on hand to help, says the Lovers Lane soup kitchen project not only focuses on feeding the community, but also helps the netball girls from families that have little food at the moment.

“Support for this community is so critical. Many of the people come from families where there is no one working,” says Zandile Bokwana, a Health in Action Break Time Buddy assisting at the soup kitchen. “Some people are sick, and the centre even serves children who come after school to take food home so their families can have at least have one meal a day.”



*Many of the hungry people served on Mandela Day were children*

“The Nelson Mandela Day event means a lot to our people, particularly with the kind of challenges that they are facing right now,” notes netball team head coach Heshu. “We hope it will bring more people on board to sponsor us and help provide food every week.” In addition to supporting the soup kitchens on Mandela Day, INMED South Africa regularly donates fresh, chemical-free vegetables from its aquaponics system at Nelson Mandela University in Missionvale.

“As proud South Africans it is up to all of us to take action, inspire change and make every day a Mandela Day and tackle food insecurity by working together,” says Pretorius. “We were so proud to join hands with our partners at Mondelēz to support these charities that do so much for their communities.”

## Pella Food Garden to Join the INMED ASE



Thriving in spite of all the odds, a stalwart group of women of the Pella Food Garden Cooperative in the drought-ravaged town of Pella in the Northern Cape, continue to make a significant contribution to their small impoverished community, thanks to INMED Aquaponics® and forward-thinking corporate investors.

Farming in Pella is fraught with challenges. Located on the edge of the Kalahari Desert, Pella's climate parches crops during the day and freezes them at night. Add to that the high salt content of the soil, and it is not an equation for successful food production. But it was the perfect location to demonstrate the climate resilience of INMED Aquaponics® and adaptive agriculture techniques when INMED South Africa and Old Mutual partnered to work with the Pella Food Garden in 2017.

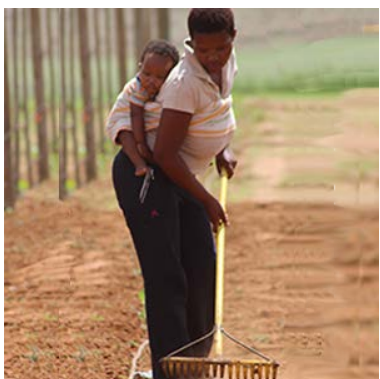
Since that time, the group has increased its capacity exponentially with the addition of aquaponics, along with a production and cold storage facility funded by Biotherm to turn excess produce into a branded line of pickled vegetables and preserves. The improvements have led to job creation and food security for the community, which has been particularly hard hit by the COVID-19 pandemic.

### **Scaling for greater impact**

Today, with an investment from Biotherm, the Pella Food Garden is scaling up its operations with additional drip irrigation, mist sprayers in the seedling nursery and a new printer/scanner for their administrative office to prepare them to become a satellite production and training facility for the INMED Aquaponics® Social Enterprise. The INMED ASE is a sustainable agro-enterprise with a social mission of transitioning historically marginalized populations from subsistence to self-reliance via aquaponics. The venture was launched last year with seed funding from Mondelēz International under its Sustainable Futures programme.

[\*\*READ MORE\*\*](#)

## Turning a Family Project into a Sustainable Enterprise



*Before learning adaptive agriculture techniques*



*Now the farmers can afford equipment & inputs*



*And their crops are more bountiful than ever*

The Itshokolele farm in Bultfontein, a family project aimed at producing different vegetables to generate income and provide food security in the community, is a lesson of persistence, resilience and the power of adaptive agriculture.

Around 2013, the family was granted 6ha of land by the government but only 1ha of shade netting and drip irrigation, so they were only able to produce vegetables on a small portion of the land. Without working capital to buy seeds, compost and fertilizers to expand the project, the family only managed to plant around 4 or 5 rows of crops. On several occasions, the family used its grocery money to buy seeds, with family members, including children, going without food for up to three days at a time. They also could not afford school uniforms, so the children could not attend school.

To compound the problem, the only family member who received training died unexpectedly, leaving the rest of the family bewildered and a little hopeless. Learning of the family's plight, INMED South Africa stepped in to support the project.

Under the watchful eye of Mantombi Madona, INMED's coordinator in the Free State, the INMED adaptive agriculture team helped the family build a reservoir, chicken house and seedling nursery, as well as install a 1ha shade net tunnel with drip irrigation. INMED also provided intensive training in adaptive agriculture for climate resilience as well as clever ways to make the most of their land. The farmers now use the entire area with shade netting and irrigation to generate produce solely for sale and they have innovatively created a family garden by using the old feed bags as a windbreak for their own crops and to protect them from animals.

The project began to thrive with these improvements, but it was short-lived. Wracked by one of the worst drought's in decades, the farm's borehole dried up. [CLICK HERE](#) to read how they're doing now.

## INMED South Africa in the News

INMED South Africa has been hard at work making news around the country. Click the titles below to read what we've been up to in the last month.

[Seeds for Life will benefit food insecure communities](#) Oudtshoorn Courant, 16 July 2021

[Seeds for Life will benefit community](#) Graaf-Reinet Advertiser & Karoonuus, 8 July 2021

[African Bank and INMED South Africa launch Seeds for Life Stokvel](#) Social TV, 1 July 2021

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