

ONLINE

08 JUL 2026 - 31 DEC 2026

The Nelson Mandela Online Learning Path for Social Change

Climate and Environment
Sustainable development and the SDGs
Sustaining Peace

**LANGUAGE**
English**DURATION**
12 hours**ENROLL BY**
31 Dec 2026**PRICE**
Free**LOCATION**
ONLINE**TARGET**
Everyone **CONTACT** f.deute@unssc.org

The Nelson Mandela Online Learning Path for Social Change is a free-of-charge, open-enrollment, self-paced course. It aims to democratize access to key knowledge and skills pertinent to realizing social change – here understood as combatting political polarization, reducing social inequalities and realizing the goals and principles agreed upon under the auspices of the United Nations (e.g., the peaceful resolution of conflicts, human rights and sustainable development).

Introduction

Increased inequalities and polarization are significant threats to hard-earned gains on peace and development ([2023/2024 UNDP Human Development Report](#)). In such a context, more than ever, it is necessary to empower the broadest possible group of social changemakers, with knowledge and skills, to combat polarization, reduce societal inequalities and realize the goals and principles agreed upon under the auspices of the United Nations (UN).

In the context above, UNSSC offers the Nelson Mandela Online Learning Path for Social Change. By making it a free-of-charge, open-enrollment, self-paced course, the learning path is expected to democratize, by reaching the broadest audience possible, the knowledge and skills needed to realize positive social change.

This Nelson Mandela Online Learning Path for Social Change is a collaborative initiative between UNSSC, its academic partners and the Nelson Mandela Foundation.

A certificate of completion will be issued to participants who successfully complete the learning path's mandatory components.

Objectives

Upon the completion of the Nelson Mandela Online Learning Path for Social Change, participants will be able to:

- Outline, with the aid of structuring frameworks, the main contemporary socioenvironmental concerns:
 - Combatting polarization;
 - Reducing inequalities;
 - The pursuit of environmental sustainability;
- Identify, using systems thinking tools and approaches, the dynamics in the interplay of the socioenvironmental issues mentioned above;
- Critically describe the sociopolitical processes and fora where social change is shaped (at the local, national and multilateral levels; by governments, civil society, individuals and the private sector);
- Refer to conflict intelligence tools and approaches to mitigate polarization on topics pertinent to social change;
- Draw reflections on the applicability, nowadays and across geographies, of Nelson Mandela's leadership attributes – especially how his consensus-oriented politics contributed to the end of the apartheid regime and nation-building in South Africa.

Course methodology

The Nelson Mandela Online Learning Path for Social Change is an open-enrollment, self-paced course. It is expected that participants will need to spend up to 12 hours to successfully complete all mandatory course components – which qualifies them to receive a certificate of completion.

Course contents

The learning path is composed of the following modules, with respective knowledge checks:

1. Nelson Mandela: life, legacy and leadership;
2. Social change: what, how, where, who;
3. Understanding contexts: identity, power and the path beyond biases;
4. Bridging divides in a polarized world;
5. Working with complexity: practical systems thinking tools for changemakers;
6. Sustainability 101: global challenges, sensemaking and ways forward;
7. Conflict intelligence: working in and through disagreement.

Target audience

Everyone.

Cost of participation

Free-of-charge.