



transformation
WORKING TOGETHER FOR EXCELLENCE



SAMRC TRANSFORMATION REPORT 2022-2025

CONTENTS

Message of Endorsement from the SAMRC President and CEO.....	4
1. Introduction.....	5
2. Approach to Transformation.....	7
3. Transformation Goals.....	8
4. The Architecture of Transformation at the SAMRC.....	8
5. Conversations and Consultations.....	9
6. Advancing Diversity & Equity.....	10
6.1. Our Demographic Profile.....	11
6.2. Awarding of Extramural Units.....	11
6.3. Research Capacity Development.....	12
7. Leadership Development.....	13
7.1. Learning from SAMRC Leaders.....	14
8. Promoting Inclusion & Belonging.....	14
8.1. The Practice of Greeting.....	14
8.2. Appreciation.....	14
8.3. Implicit Bias.....	15
8.4. Learning Sign Language.....	15
8.5. Tips for Making Meetings More Accessible.....	15
9. Self-Awareness & Self-Discovery.....	16
9.1. The Role of Personality in Career Success.....	16
9.2. Giving & Receiving Feedback and Tools for Reflection.....	17
9.3. Lunch and Learn Webinars.....	17
9.4. Life/Leadership Coaching.....	17
10. Campus Environments.....	17
10.1. Environmental Enhancements.....	17
10.2. Climate Change, Heat and the Protection of Exposed Workers.....	18
10.3. Lactation Rooms.....	18
11. Other Initiatives.....	18
11.1. The Sunset Crew.....	18
11.2. Creating the Foundation for Self-Directed and Life-Long Learning.....	18
11.3. Promoting Employee Wellness.....	19
11.4. Doing Good, Giving Back.....	19
11.5. Building Bridges.....	19
11.6. Sharing the Lessons Learned.....	20
12. Discussion.....	20

ACRONYMS

CFO	Chief Financial Officer
CROO	Chief Research Operations Officer
ED: GIPD	Executive Director: Grants, Innovation & Product Development
ED: HR	Executive Director: Human Resources
ED: Transformation	Executive Director: Transformation
EMU	Extramural Unit
HDI	Historically Disadvantaged Institution
HR	Human Resources
KIMS	Knowledge and Information Management System
PLWD	People Living With Disabilities
Pres/CEO	President/Chief Executive Officer
RCD	Research Capacity Development
SAMRC	South African Medical Research Council
TF	Transformation Forum
TO	Transformation Office
TP	Transformation Plan
UD	Unit Director

MESSAGE OF ENDORSEMENT FROM THE PRESIDENT & CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



It is with deep pride and steadfast commitment that I endorse the SAMRC Transformation Report 2022 – 2025. This report reflects our unwavering dedication to building a more inclusive, equitable and representative scientific community – one that truly embodies the spirit of South Africa's democratic values – and to the promotion of a sense of inclusion, belonging and personal flourishing for all our employees.

Transformation is a protracted journey, rather than a destination; one that demands intentionality, courage, dynamism and accountability, and I wish to commend the role of Professor Glenda Gray, former President and CEO of the SAMRC, for her role in this regard. At the SAMRC, we recognise that excellence (which is one of our core values) in science cannot be separated from equity. Our strength, and our untapped potential, lie in the diversity of perspectives, experiences, talents and

capacities across the research landscape. Through this report, we have outlined our steady progress toward equity and justice through fair recruitment practices, investment in the development of emerging health scientists and the mainstreaming of transformation within our institutional culture and systems. However, much remains to be done, and we are highly motivated to continue on this journey. A forthcoming SAMRC Transformation Plan 2025 – 2028 will set out clear pathways for further change and action.

As President and CEO of the SAMRC, I remain resolute in my commitment to championing transformation as a pillar of scientific excellence and social justice. Together, I hope that we can continue to push boundaries, including our own, toward reaching our full potential, challenging inequities and continuously reimagining how health research can benefit all of humanity.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "M. B. A. Ntusi". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Professor Ntobeko Ntusi

President and CEO,
South African Medical Research Council

1. Introduction

All organisations need to prepare and adapt to a world that appears to be increasingly volatile, complex and conflicted. Amongst the key global challenges are our changing climate, shifts in geopolitical power, technical acceleration and demographic variations. Nationally, there are concerns around widespread poverty, high inequality, a stagnant economy, wastage through corruption and mismanagement, high levels of crime and violence, declining basic infrastructure for health (including water security and quality, access to electricity and the functionality of wastewater systems), an ailing public health system, a poorly performing education system and political uncertainty. In response to social, political, environmental, cultural and other forms of adversity, the SAMRC needs to perpetually evolve to ensure flourishing of both its people and the institution. Simultaneously, South Africa's prejudicial history

has left a legacy of ongoing inequities (for example in terms of health status, institutional demographic profiles and access to health training), and bestowed on organisations an obligation to ensure redress and demographic equity.

For years the SAMRC has had a Transformation Programme in place. In 2022, the programme was expanded to include foci on both promoting demographic equity and the flourishing of the organisation and its people. The objectives of the latter goal are primarily to enhance the physical environments of our campuses and advance self-awareness. Over the past few years, aligned with our organizational vision, mission and strategic objectives, a range of initiatives have been implemented in response to these goals. This report describes the key Transformation achievements during the 2022 – 2025 period, and outlines the future directions of the Transformation programme at the SAMRC.

SAMRC Strategic Objectives

1

Administer health research effectively and efficiently

2

Lead the generation of new knowledge

3

Support, through funding and other mechanisms, technology development and implementation, translation of research into policy and practice, and innovations in health and technology delivery to improve health

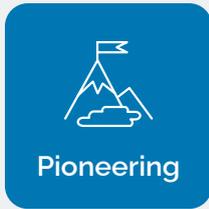
4

Build human capacity for the long-term sustainability of South African health research

5

Translate new knowledge into policies and practices to improve health

SAMRC Values



We push the boundaries between the known and the unknown to further our knowledge of human health within the prescripts of responsible ethical conduct of research.



We commit to transparency, accountability, communication and ethical conduct.



We celebrate the capacity of collective minds towards a common goal. We build partnerships with many stakeholders at local, national, regional and international levels to exchange ideas, advances, shared goals, optimize use of resources to minimize duplication, and leverage funding.



We value and respect our communities, participants, researchers and funders.



We strive for distinction in everything we do by developing highly skilled personnel, capacity building and transformation, and conducting research of high quality.

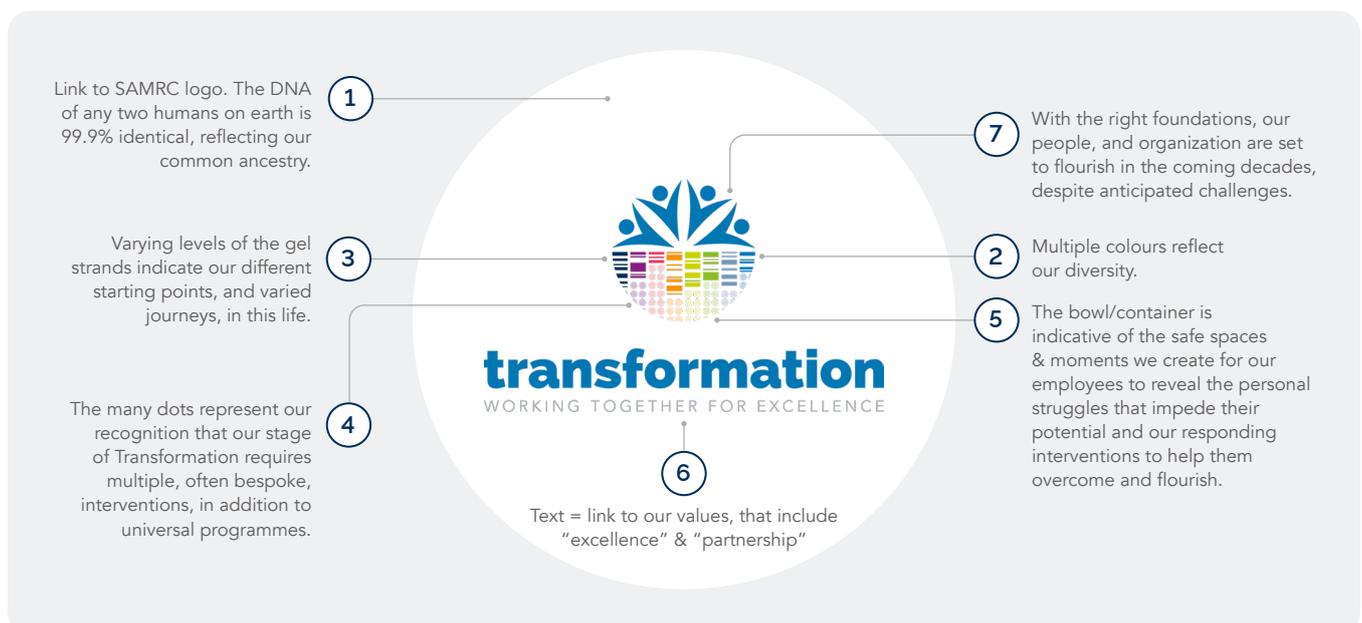
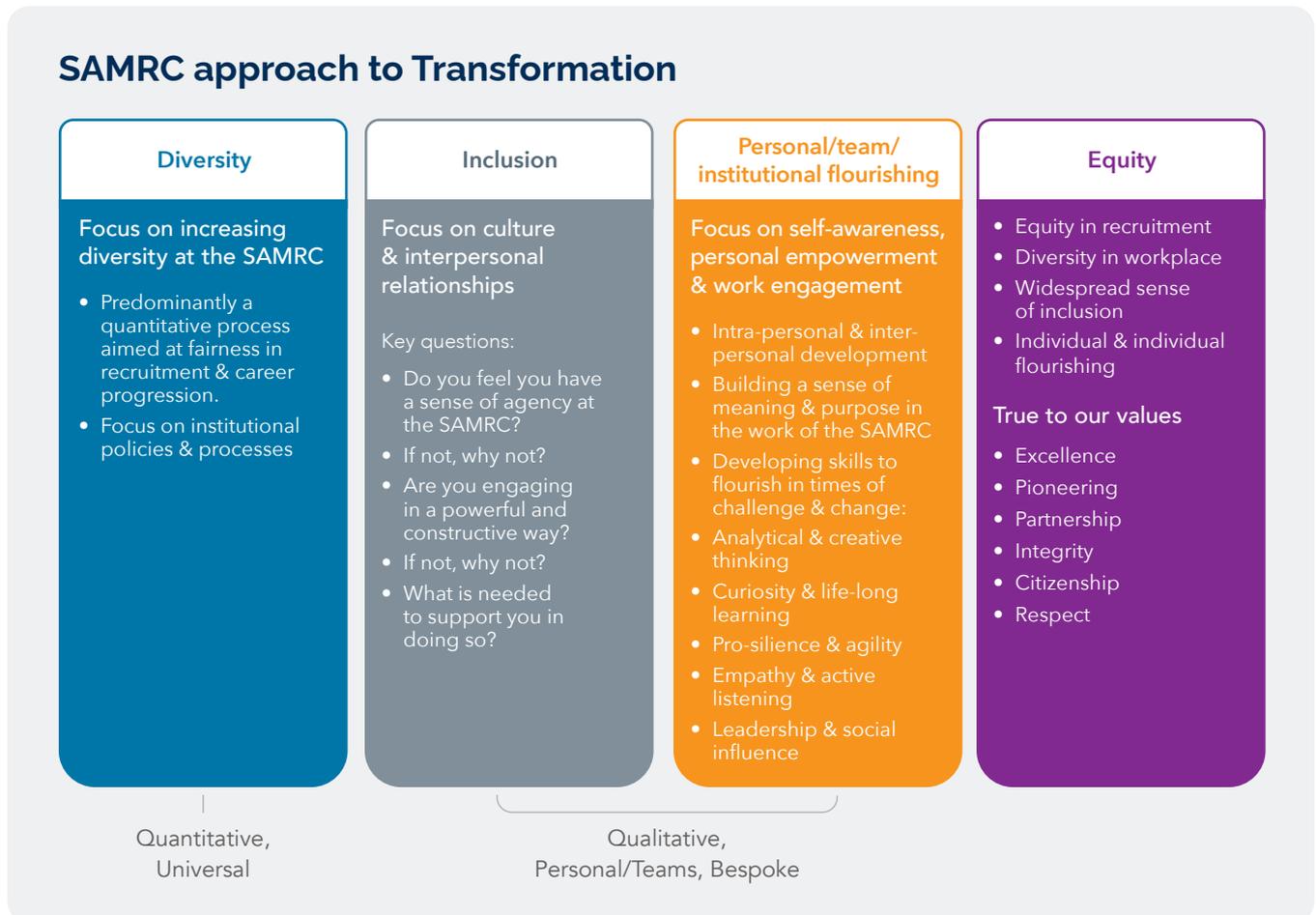


We strive for distinction in everything we do by developing highly skilled personnel, capacity building and transformation, and conducting research of high value.



2. Approach to Transformation

The SAMRC's Transformation Programme stands on four key pillars: 1) increasing diversity, 2) fostering a sense of inclusion throughout the organization, 3) interventions to promote intrapersonal development and flourishing, and ultimately equity. Our Transformation logo illustrates the perspectives that underly our approach and beliefs regarding Transformation at the SAMRC.



3. Transformation Goals

Our Transformation activities over the past three years stem from the SAMRC Transformation Plan 2022 – 2025, and two overarching goals:

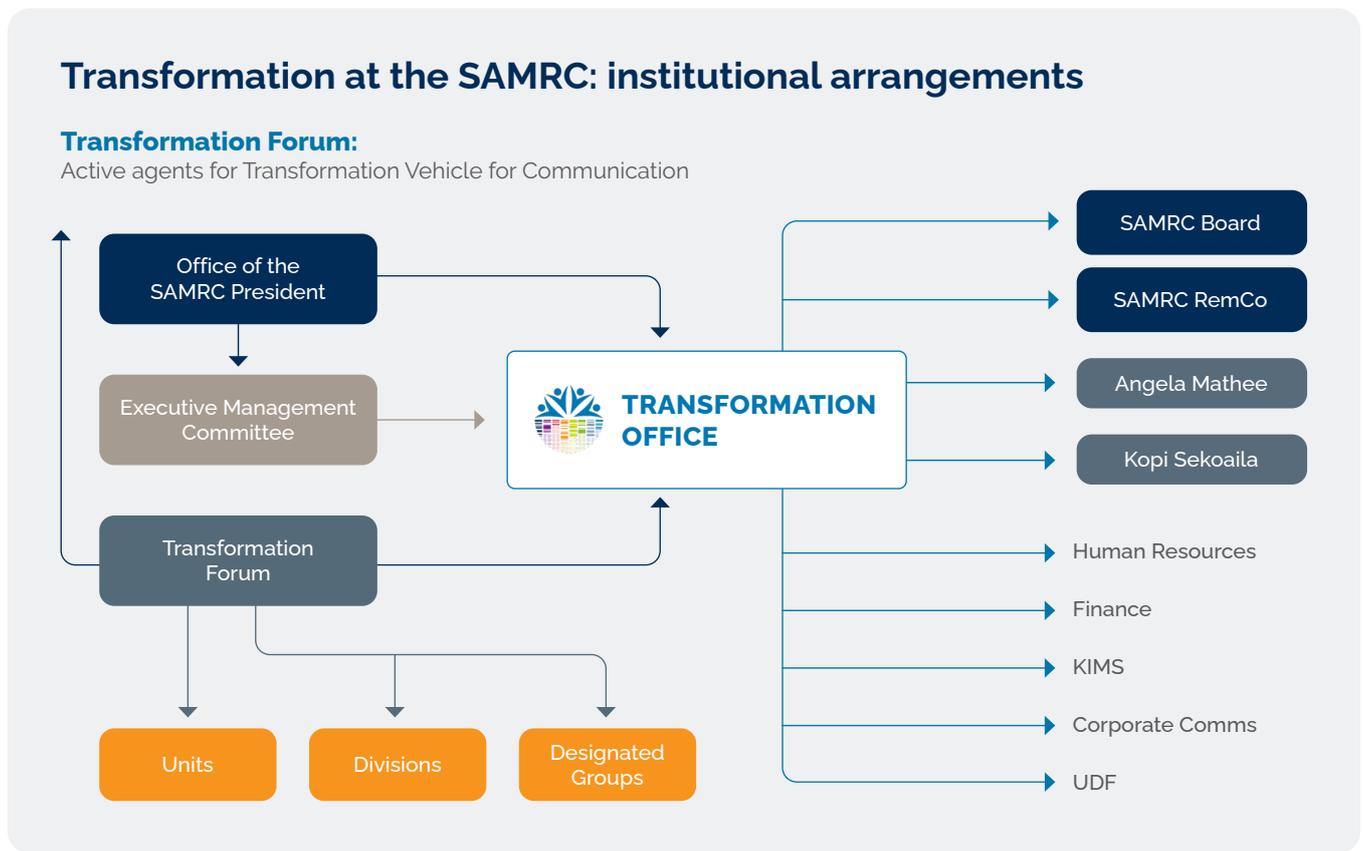
1. To continue advancing diversity within the organization, especially at senior management levels within the SAMRC, as well as among recipients of scholarships and research grants and extramural research units.
2. To promote inclusion and flourishing in all employees.

4. The Architecture of Transformation at the SAMRC

Our Transformation agenda is laced throughout the institutional fabric of the SAMRC. A Transformation Office (TO) was established in 2022 to support and expand on the existing Transformation agenda at the SAMRC. An Executive Director: Transformation (ED: Transformation) reports directly to the SAMRC President/Chief Executive Officer (Pres/CEO) and is a member of the SAMRC Executive Management Committee (EMC). She

also chairs the Transformation Forum. Transformation is a standing item on the meeting agendas of the SAMRC Board and its HR/Remuneration Committee (RemCo), as well as the EMC. The SAMRC Pres/CEO and the Vice-President are actively engaged in the SAMRC Transformation agenda, as are the Executive Director of Human Resources (ED:HR), the Chief Finance Officer (CFO), the Chief Research Officer (CROO), the Legal Counsel, and the Executive Director: Transformation.

The SAMRC Transformation Forum (TF) is an important anchor for Transformation at the SAMRC. TF members are drawn from across all quarters of the SAMRC through a nomination process, and their perspectives across both horizontal and vertical planes of the organization are vital in conveying news of, and receiving responses to, emerging Transformation initiatives. The TF also serves a critical role in bringing to our attention emerging Transformation concerns and shedding light on our blind spots through sharing perspectives from the full range of SAMRC Units and Divisions. Particularly helpful were the debates and ideas generated during a 3-day strategic planning and ideas generation meeting of the Transformation Forum held during the early days of its tenure.



“It is not the strongest or the most intelligent who will survive but those who can best manage change.”

– Charles Darwin

SAMRC Transformation Forum: 2023 – 2024



Angela Mathee



Felicia Mpiti



Gabriel Mashabela



Natasha Swart



Kopi Sekoaila



Lebalang Makgoba



Marlon Cerf



Seeiso Koali



Kholiswa Dube



Lee-Anne Maclean



Nontuthuzelo Somdyala



Samira Ghoor



Nina Barnes



Nwabisa Shai



Perpetua Modjadji



Pinky Mahlangu



Takalani Mukhithi



Wanga Zembe



Sivuyisiwe Bebeza



Lindokuhle Tunyiswa

5. Conversations and Consultations

Multiple streams of data and information (both quantitative and qualitative) were sourced to gain a deeper understanding of Transformation challenges within the organization, and guide decisions on potential interventions. Apart from the analysis of quantitative data, we issued invitations to all members of the SAMRC community to join us for non-specific conversations about Transformation at the SAMRC (What is working well in our organization? What needs attention?), and also held focus group discussions on specific themes,

such as the challenges of women in the workplace, how we could improve access for people with disabilities, the challenges of those recently recruited, the concerns of imminent retirees, needs around enhancement of campus environments and so forth. HR also regularly conducts Listening Tours to pro-actively gain a deeper understanding of emerging concerns across the SAMRC. The information gleaned from these consultations and conversations is reflected in many of the initiatives falling under the Transformation umbrella, and served as a foundation for SAMRC Transformation Plan for the period 2022 – 2025; a similar consultative process will precede the SAMRC Transformation Plan 2025 – 2028.

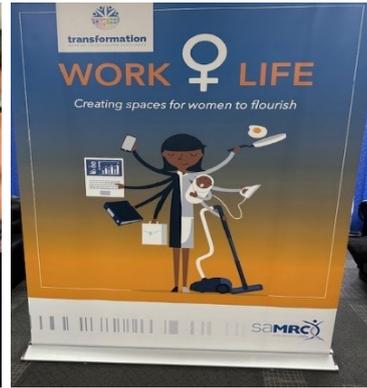
Transformation Conversations

HIDDEN BARRIERS TO PROGRESS

The Transformation Office invites you to join us for a conversation that delves into the challenges encountered as we navigate through work and life

30 January 2024
09:00 – 12:00
Pretoria Lecture Hall

[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER](#)



6. Advancing Diversity & Equity

We crafted a statement of recognition of the role of South Africa's discriminatory past on inequities evident in the present, the SAMRC's silence on health inequalities during the apartheid era and the commitment of the SAMRC to the use of its resources to advance equity, and for the purposes of redress and justice. The statement is included in science and other presentations to external audiences, both nationally and internationally.

The South African Medical Research Council recognizes the catastrophic and persisting consequences of colonialism and apartheid, including land dispossession and the intentional imposition of educational and health inequities.

Acknowledging the SAMRC's historical role and silence during apartheid, we commit our capacities and resources to the continued promotion of justice and dignity in health research in South Africa.



6.1. Our Demographic Profile

Under the umbrella of its Integrated Talent Management strategy, the SAMRC's Human Resources Department has been implementing a multi-faceted programme to advance employment equity. The SAMRC also has an Employment Equity Plan in place, which stipulates

the goals, targets and time frames in this regard. Over the past five years these interventions have resulted in an overall increase by 9% in the proportion of Black African employees. While, over the next few years, we expect this trend toward equity to be sustained through current and new interventions (see examples below),

our analyses underscore the need to pay particular attention to equity at the levels of senior management and professionals.

- All Units and Divisions are appraised of population profile statistics, and alerted to demographic targets in advance of recruitment processes.
- The Executive Management Committee plays a direct, oversight role in respect of all senior management appointments.
- Members of the Union and Transformation Forum are invited to join recruitment panels.

Albeit from a low base, we have increased the number of people living with disabilities (PLWD) in our employ, including at senior management level. We also participate in a special internship programme for PLWD administered by the Human Sciences Research Council. The number of PLWD that we employ is likely an undercount of the true figure, since it is established that some people choose not to declare a disability. Nevertheless it is certain that we have much to do to reach our target for the proportion of PLWD in the SAMRC community.

6.2. Awarding of Extramural Units

Over the past three years the SAMRC has funded between 26 and 28 Extramural Units (EMU's) at 13 tertiary institutions across seven of South Africa's provinces. These have included the funding of EMU's at 5 – 6 Historically Disadvantage Institutions (HDI's).

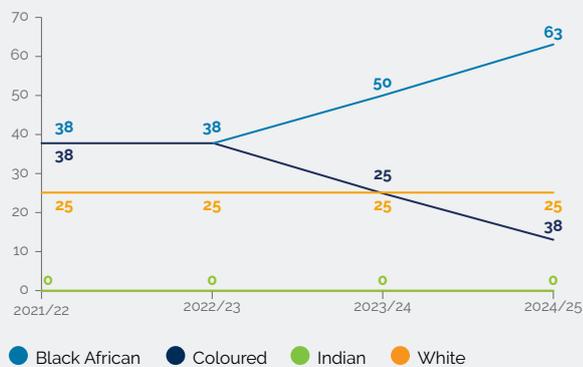
Number of Extramural Units: 2014 – 2025



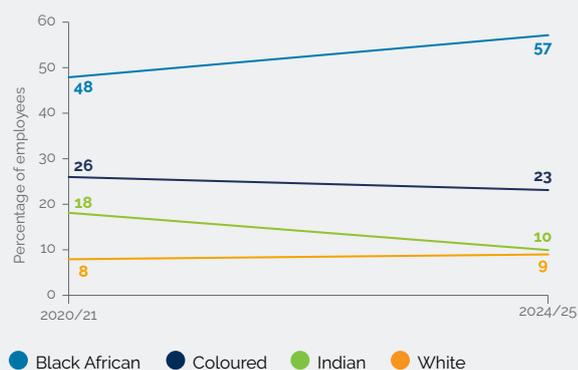
Provinces with SAMRC EMU's



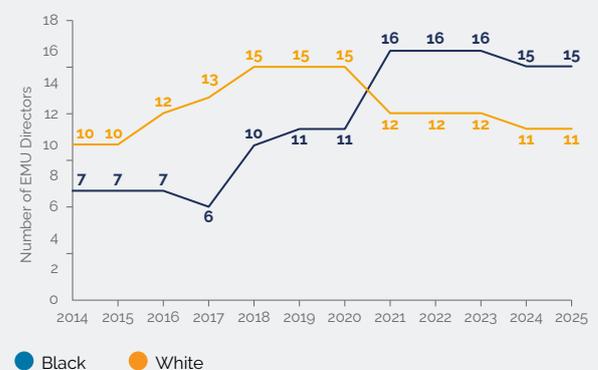
Top Management Breakdown by race: 2021 – 2025



SAMRC Employees: Race Breakdown



EMU Directors by Race



Institutions with SAMRC EMU's: 2025/6

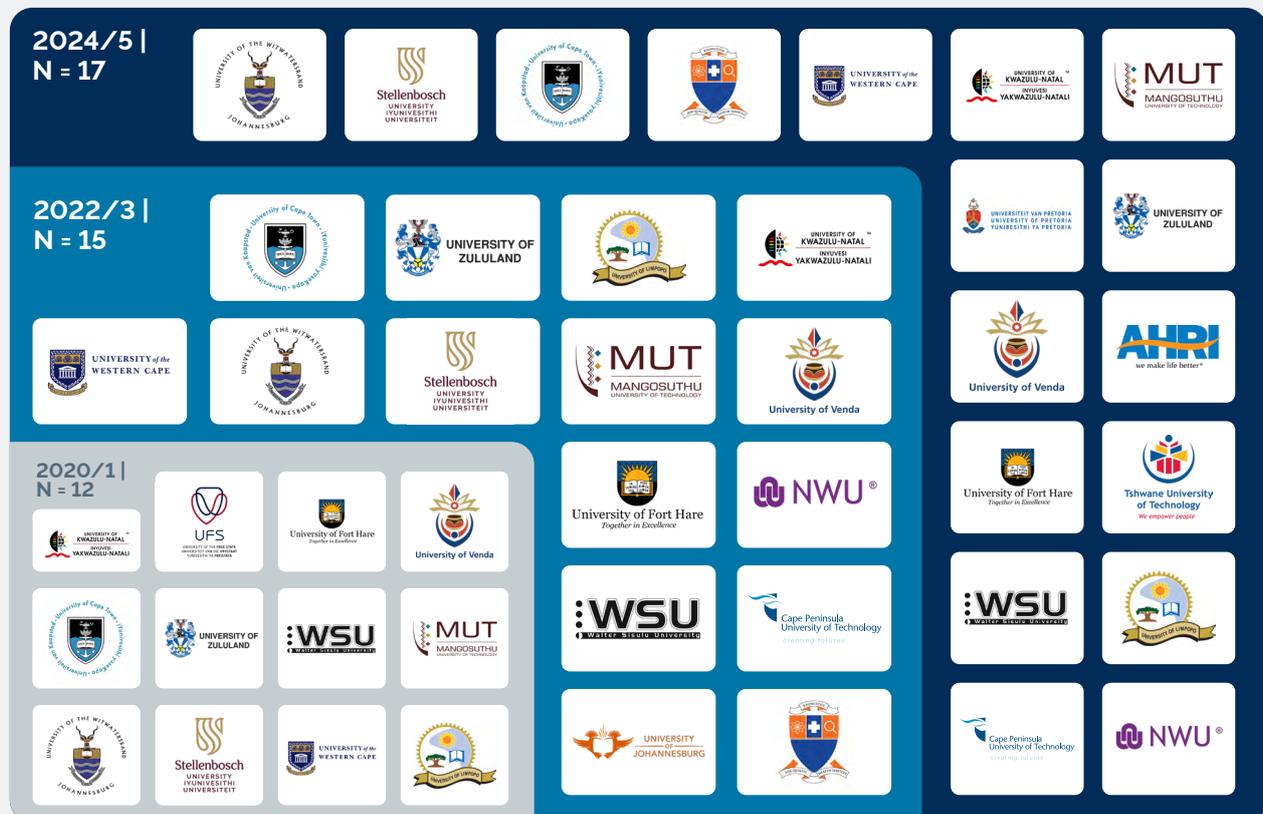


6.3. Research Capacity Development (RCD) Grants and Scholarships

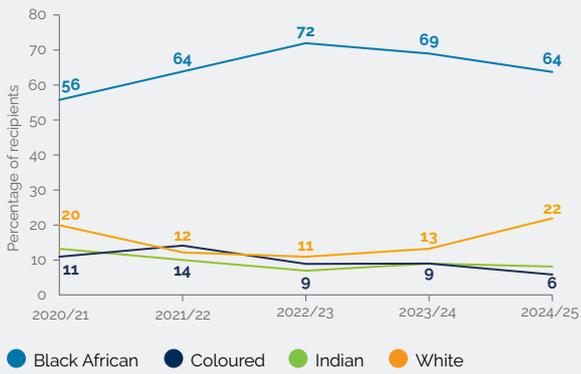
Over the past five years, the SAMRC awarded RCD grants or scholarships to institutions in seven of South Africa's nine provinces. During this period the number

of institutions in receipt of RCD research grants increased from 12 to 17, while institutional recipients of scholarships increased from 11 to 19. The vast majority of both scholarships and grants were awarded to Black African students and scientists.

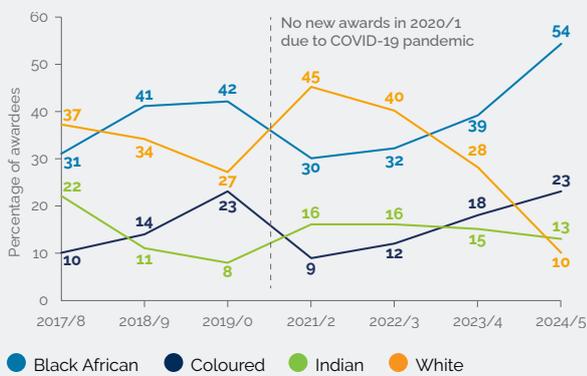
Institutional recipients of SAMRC research grants



Recipients of SAMRC RCD Scholarships



Trends by race in self-initiated research (SIR) awards



7. Leadership Development

Our HR Department provides a range of opportunities for leadership development (“growing our own timber”), including financial support for undergraduate and postgraduate degrees and other qualifications, as well as specialist training in management and leadership. Within Units and Divisions there may also be opportunities for support to attend short courses and workshops. Our Deputy Directors Programme provides experiential learning opportunities for emerging leaders to give strategic and other support to Unit Directors (UDs). Over the past two years HR has also steered the development and initiation of a bespoke two-year learning programme for emerging leaders (the STAR Programme), which supplements traditional elements of leadership training (finance, budgeting, people management etc) with intrapersonal development initiatives, such as self-awareness, as well as in-depth and personal career reviews. The STAR programme was launched in May 2025.



7.1. Learning from SAMRC Leaders

We have been inviting SAMRC leaders who are retiring, to present a webinar in which they give a personal account of their careers, and in particular, respond to the questions:

- Which three achievements are you most proud of?
- Which three personal skills (innate or cultivated) have been most helpful in your career?
- What three pieces of advice do you have for emerging leaders?

The Learning from Leaders webinars are popular, and the feedback positive. This initiative will be continued in the 2025 – 2028 period.



8. Promoting Inclusion & Belonging

8.1. The Practice of Greeting

Our Transformation consultations revealed employees' desire for strengthened greeting practices. We designed and implemented a greeting campaign that involved encouragement of daily greetings. Posters giving basic greetings in all of South Africa's official languages (including sign language) were produced and distributed electronically and also placed throughout our buildings. Feedback on this initiative was highly positive.



8.2. Appreciation

Recognising the role of expressions of appreciation (especially "in the moment") in increased workplace engagement, reduced conflict and improved performance amongst other outcomes, we conducted a campaign in which the practice of writing notes of appreciation was widely encouraged. Thank You cards were designed and distributed throughout the organization. Our evaluation exercises have indicated opportunities for strengthening the campaign, which will be carried through to the 2025 – 2028 period.



8.3. Implicit Bias

We have begun to offer narrative coaching workshops on implicit bias. The workshop programme includes, after securing assurances of confidentiality, trust-building activities, definitions of explicit versus implicit bias and their consequences, sharing of personal stories of being victims or perpetrators of prejudice, an opportunity to take tests to reveal personal biases, models for managing negative emotions and resources for further learning. Evaluations show high degrees of appreciation and benefit in respect of the implicit bias workshops, as the graphic below illustrates.

Quotations from the evaluations of the implicit bias workshop (SAMRC Pretoria Campus, May 2025)

What did you like most about the workshop?

"The workshop was an incredible experience."

"The fact that this conversation on biases is happening is a major shift that can cause a ripple effect for our society."

What was your biggest learning (or ah haaa!) moment in the workshop?

"Gaining new skills that I can apply in personal life and in the workplace."

Please give examples of what you plan to do differently as a result of the workshop.

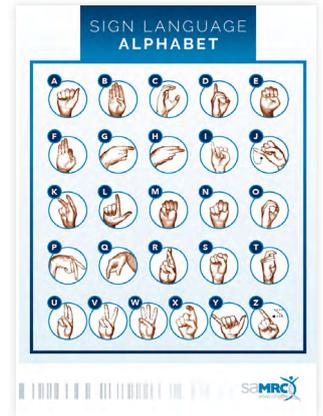
(To be) "more introspective about my biases, and more intentional about responding and not reacting."

Any other suggestions or comments?

"One of the participants today suggested that we make this compulsory – I agree."

8.4. Learning Sign Language

In advance of the inclusion of sign language among South Africa's official languages, an institution-wide campaign was undertaken to promote its use. Everyone was encouraged to learn to spell their names and basic greetings in sign language.



8.5. Tips for Making Meetings More Accessible

A leaflet on the measures to make meetings more accessible to people with disabilities was prepared and distributed to all in the organization. This work will continue through distribution of the "Tips for Making Meetings more Accessible to Everyone" in additional formats.



9. Self-Awareness & Self-Discovery

9.1. The Role of Personality in Career Success

Personality influences how individuals interact, collaborate and approach tasks. It has also been shown to play a role in communication styles, approaches to problem-solving, capacity to adapt to challenges and ultimately in productivity, job satisfaction and overall team and institutional success.

At the SAMRC we have been using the Enneagram as a tool to identify individual personality type and lead teams through workshop experiences to understand the strengths and challenges associated with particular group Enneagram profiles. The TO has provided opportunities to take an Enneagram test to 128 individual employees in 11 teams. This is apart from a significant number also facilitated by our HR Department. The Enneagram workshops are very well received and rated, as indicated by the perspectives below.



Participant perspectives of the SAMRC enneagram workshops

"The information into our personality types was enlightening, giving us valuable perspectives on the behaviours and dynamics within our team. It has not only enhanced our understanding of one another but also empowered me to refine my management approach – leading to stronger collaboration and synergy. The impact has been significant, and RCD are eager to continue this journey. We look forward to engaging further in the follow-up process and exploring even more ways to leverage these insights for continued growth and success!"

**Abeda Dawood, Division Manager,
Research Capacity Development (RCD)**

(The) "Enneagram helped me to approach challenges that I struggled with in more strategic ways according to different personalities and I developed skills to communicate according to different personalities. My confidence is on a different level than before. My working environment is more enjoyable and I am happy to come to work."

Ruth Maake, Assets Management (Finance)

I have received positive feedback from staff about how it has changed their perspective and perception of coworkers. [It has also been] noted that the dynamic has changed [within] the team. They also reported that there was a greater degree of consideration and empathy from some [...] that had previously been abrupt and dismissive.

**Richard Matzopoulos, Director,
Burden of Disease Research Unit**



9.2. Giving & Receiving Feedback and Tools for Reflection

Many find the acts of giving and receiving feedback highly uncomfortable and challenging, sometimes leading to negative emotions and strained interpersonal relationships. We have developed the content for a workshop aimed at increasing awareness of the emotions that may be triggered by feedback, tools for managing negative emotions and frameworks to promote a leaning mindset in feedback, whether given or received. The workshop also includes a focus on the importance of reflection, and provides models for reflective processes.

“Without deep personal transformation, collective transformation is not possible.”

– Chris Corrigan

9.3. Lunch and Learn Webinars

On approximately a monthly basis, our HR Department offers Lunch & Learn webinars, related to a wide range of self-awareness topics, for example stress management, work-life balance, trust, kindness, compassion, respect, lifelong and self-directed learning, curiosity, presence and active listening, emotional intelligence, constructive feedback, agility and adaptability, resilience, reflection and self-awareness. The Lunch & Learn webinars are highly popular and requests for webinars on additional topics are often received.

9.4. Life/Leadership Coaching

In the light of growing recognition of the value of coaching programmes in workplace success, for the past several years, the SAMRC has offered life and executive coaching to existing and emerging leaders, as well as in some instances, to teams. Coaching opportunities will continue to be offered, especially at the team or systemic level, for the foreseeable future.

10. Campus Environments

10.1. Environmental Enhancements

We have facilitated the refurbishment of selected locations on SAMRC campuses. For example, the garden at the Ridge Road campus has been landscaped, which now has a water fountain, new seating and outdoor

exercise equipment. The Ridge Road verandah has been provided with casual seating and dining spaces, and now provides a location for meetings and celebrations.

We paid particular attention to increasing accessibility on campuses for people with disabilities, including interventions such as dedicated parking bays for people using wheelchairs, adjustment of doors and toilets, providing easier access to emergency gathering points, and fixing of ramps. In this regard we have been greatly assisted by a Diversity and Inclusion Working Group that meets annually to generate ideas and propose a programme of action for the coming year.

At each of our three main campuses non-binary toilets have been designated for use by employees and visitors.

“One of the things I learnt when I was negotiating was that until I changed myself, I could not change others”

– Nelson Mandela



10.2. Climate Change, Heat and the Protection of Exposed Workers

Mindful of our changing climate, and the evidence that our country is located in a region that has been experiencing temperature increases exceeding global averages in recent decades, we commenced training for those working in sun-exposed conditions. Workshops were conducted to share accounts of symptoms experienced during hot weather, coping measures and promoting awareness of signs and symptoms of various stages of heat illness. Amongst other measures, workers were provided with water bottles and hats with broad brims and neck coverings for greater heat protection.

“The illiterate of the 21st century are not those who cannot read and write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn and relearn.”

– Alvin Toffler

10.3. Lactation Rooms

A lactation room (quiet, lockable spaces for expressing breast milk or for baby feeding) has been set up at our Cape Town campus, and moves are afoot for similar facilities at our Ridge Road and Pretoria campuses.

11. Other Initiatives

11.1. The Sunset Crew

Imminent retirees have reported anxiety in respect of two key concerns: 1) financial management, and 2) finding meaning and purpose during retirement. To respond to this, twice or thrice annually we invite employees with around one year to go before retirement to a meeting to address these concerns. On some occasions an expert is invited to present a perspective on finance, for example, or a member of the group or recent retiree shares their experiences on finding a sense of purpose once their full-time working life ended.

“It may be hard for an egg to turn into a bird: it would be a jolly sight harder for it to learn to fly while remaining an egg.”

– C.S. Lewis

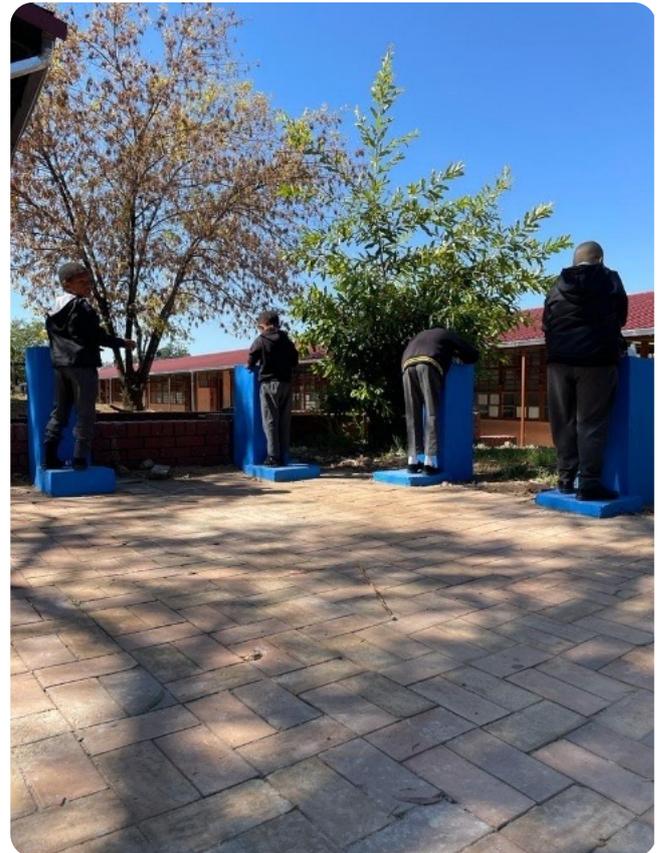
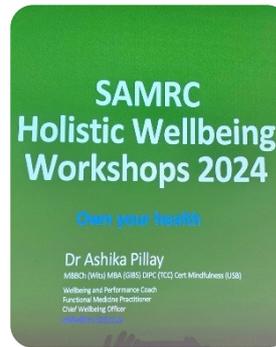


11.2. Creating the Foundation for Self-Directed and Life-Long Learning

In recognition of the increasing emphasis on self-directed and life-long learning as a response to navigating an increasingly digital world, we are putting in place an ecosystem for employees across the organization to embark on personal learning journeys. Building on the range of traditional learning and development opportunities offered by HR, such as financial support to obtain tertiary qualifications, employees now have access to learning opportunities through the LinkedIn Learning, the Harvard Business Review and Viva Learning platforms. These platforms cover a very wide range of topics, for example from statistical analyses to emotional intelligence, and are available in various formats, such as books, short articles and videos. Most are available on personal devices such as smart phones, and may be viewed at any time. In addition, we are expanding the collection of books on intrapersonal development in the KIMS library.

11.3. Promoting Employee Wellness

All employees and their immediate families have access to the SAMRC's Wellness Programme, which includes counselling on mental health concerns, finance and legal matters. This service is supplemented from time to time with in-person Holistic Wellbeing Workshops, which focus on physical, mental, social and spiritual well-being, and have been very highly rated by participants.



11.4. Doing Good, Giving Back

The SAMRC does good, and gives back to communities in many ways. One example was a corporate social intervention to increase our B-BBEE ranking through helping schools to adapt to rising temperatures associated with our changing climate. The project involved inviting selected schools in close proximity to our study sites to select proven heat adaptive interventions from a menu of options, such as the installation of foot-operated water fountain in playgrounds, fitting of curtains or blinds to windows, installation of ceilings or the construction of shade areas in playgrounds. Other good works of the SAMRC are to be written up separately.

11.5. Building Bridges

For most of the past three years the Knowledge and Information Management Services (KIMS) department has produced a newsletter which, in simple terms, outlines the main research projects, key publications, media engagements and other activities of SAMRC research units, as well as corporate teams. The newsletters were a response to several employees in the corporate professional streams asking for mechanisms for greater understanding of the work of our organization. They were distributed electronically to all employees, and Units and other teams have also been able to use the newsletters for marketing and promotional purposes.

February 2023 / Vol 4

ELEVATE RESEARCH

Celebrating SAMRC Research

Articles of the Month

By Knowledge and Information Management Services

The Knowledge and Information Management Services in collaboration with the Transformation Office is pleased to present a new monthly newsletter to highlight the research publications from within our SAMRC Intra-mural research units. Our research newsletter is one way in which we highlight the great research published by researchers and students. Departmental newsletters share research environment updates with SAMRC's internal community. To showcase for each month, units will recommend between one and five articles of their choosing. In each issue you will find information about the featured unit's latest research, news about our researchers, and unit events. The focus this month will be on our Intra-mural Unit, Burden of Disease Research Unit (BDORU).

What's New

BDORU's Recent Publications
Burden of Disease Research Unit is the focus of this issue.

Second Comparative Risk Assessment study for South Africa (SACRA2)
The study describes the risk factors associated with morbidity and mortality in SA in 2020, 2026 and 2032.

Skills development for coding Cause of Death
Building a skilled workforce for the African continent.

Conference and Workshops
Presented at ICOPAC 2023 in Johannesburg in 2023.

February Book Talk
Monthly list of new e-books from our Harvest collection.

Research Conferences and Funding Opportunities

ADVERTORIAL SAMRC

A DECADE OF ACTION

ANGELA MATHEE, MONOZEI MDLILU, KOPI SEKOAILA and GLENDA GRAY discuss transformation at the South African Medical Research Council

REMAINING AWARE OF DIVERSITY WHILE EMBRACING INCLUSION
In pursuing diversity at the SAMRC, our commitment has been to build robust systems, processes and practices, ensuring inclusion is embedded in our systems. As we are increasingly required to identify targets, for example, to meet the needs of accessible and under-served communities, we must ensure that our diversity and inclusion efforts are not just a means to an end, but a way of life. We must ensure that our diversity and inclusion efforts are not just a means to an end, but a way of life. We must ensure that our diversity and inclusion efforts are not just a means to an end, but a way of life.

PROGRESSING CUTTING-EDGE MEDICAL INNOVATIONS
The South African Medical Research Council (SAMRC) is committed to improving the health of people in South Africa through research, innovation, leadership and technological transfer. The scope of research includes infectious diseases, public health, and health systems. We focus on the health of South African people, with a particular emphasis on the health of the most vulnerable and underserved communities. We are committed to improving the health of people in South Africa through research, innovation, leadership and technological transfer.

THE SAMRC TRANSFORMATION PLAN: 2014-2024
The SAMRC Transformation Plan (2014-2024) was developed to guide the SAMRC's operations and its health research funding mechanisms under Professor Gonda Gray (former president) and CEO in 2015. At the start of her term, a transformation plan was developed with the focus, particularly on increasing diversity within the organisation and the expansion of its research portfolio. Subsequent and subsequent research calls to ensure equal opportunities for everyone to have a fair chance to take a role at the SAMRC. The transformation plan, which was developed to guide the SAMRC's operations and its health research funding mechanisms under Professor Gonda Gray (former president) and CEO in 2015. At the start of her term, a transformation plan was developed with the focus, particularly on increasing diversity within the organisation and the expansion of its research portfolio. Subsequent and subsequent research calls to ensure equal opportunities for everyone to have a fair chance to take a role at the SAMRC.

RETAINING AWARE OF DIVERSITY WHILE EMBRACING INCLUSION
In pursuing diversity at the SAMRC, our commitment has been to build robust systems, processes and practices, ensuring inclusion is embedded in our systems. As we are increasingly required to identify targets, for example, to meet the needs of accessible and under-served communities, we must ensure that our diversity and inclusion efforts are not just a means to an end, but a way of life. We must ensure that our diversity and inclusion efforts are not just a means to an end, but a way of life. We must ensure that our diversity and inclusion efforts are not just a means to an end, but a way of life.

PROGRESSING CUTTING-EDGE MEDICAL INNOVATIONS
The South African Medical Research Council (SAMRC) is committed to improving the health of people in South Africa through research, innovation, leadership and technological transfer. The scope of research includes infectious diseases, public health, and health systems. We focus on the health of South African people, with a particular emphasis on the health of the most vulnerable and underserved communities. We are committed to improving the health of people in South Africa through research, innovation, leadership and technological transfer.

THE SAMRC TRANSFORMATION PLAN: 2014-2024
The SAMRC Transformation Plan (2014-2024) was developed to guide the SAMRC's operations and its health research funding mechanisms under Professor Gonda Gray (former president) and CEO in 2015. At the start of her term, a transformation plan was developed with the focus, particularly on increasing diversity within the organisation and the expansion of its research portfolio. Subsequent and subsequent research calls to ensure equal opportunities for everyone to have a fair chance to take a role at the SAMRC.

20 | EMPLOYMENT | APRIL 2024

11.6. Sharing the Lessons Learned

Following numerous requests to share our approach, experiences and lessons learned with regard to the expanded SAMRC approach to Transformation, we have begun to accept invitations to meetings, workshops and conferences, and have also started writing articles for publication.

12. Discussion

Over the past three years, the SAMRC has implemented a multi-departmental, dynamic programme of activities under the umbrella of our expanded Transformation agenda. The programme has focused on employment equity, including emphases on fairness in recruitment and building a leadership pipeline, as well as promoting a sense of inclusion and flourishing in our employees and the organization. Over this period we have sustained steady traction toward employment equity overall; however we continue to be challenged in our efforts toward demographic equity at senior and professional levels. In this regard, alongside long-standing and proven interventions, we are shaping new initiatives aimed at escalating progress toward our equity targets.

The development and implementation of new initiatives to advance inclusion and belonging, and to promote flourishing and employee engagement in the work of the SAMRC, have been well received and highly rated by beneficiaries and participants. These have included enhancements of our campus environments (landscaping, refurbishments and increasing environmental accessibility for all), our culture (for example the promotion of greeting practices and acts

of appreciation, implicit bias workshops), promoting inclusion (developing tips for inclusive meetings, encouraging employees to learn sign language), and self-awareness (identification and understanding of personality, learning about the constructive receipt and giving of feedback, life and leadership coaching).

During the coming years, we will sustain the interventions that have worked well, and develop new initiatives to build the strengths needed for all our employees and our organisation to navigate an increasingly digital world, that is strongly associated by rapid change sparked by, for example, climate change, dramatic geopolitical shifts and technical change. Amongst the capacities that are increasingly needed are self-awareness, agility and flexibility, creative and analytical thinking, digital literacy and artificial intelligence. From an environmental perspective we need to reduce our carbon footprint, including campaigns to reduce energy and water consumption. A Transformation Barometer will be a high priority to enable evaluation of our interventions and monitoring of progress toward our overarching goals of diversity, inclusion, flourishing and equity. These and other initiatives will be set out in the forthcoming SAMRC Transformation Plan 2025 – 2028.

“Change will not come if we wait for some other person or some other time. We are the ones we’ve been waiting for. We are the change that we seek.”

– Barack Obama

For further information on the SAMRC's Transformation Programme, please contact:

- Professor Angela Mathee: amathee@mrc.ac.za | 082 464 7038
- Kopi Sekoaila: kopi.sekoaila@mrc.ac.za | 083 618 3684

