



# UBUNTU PEDAGOGY MASTERCLASS 2026

## LIVED EXPERIENCES OF HARAMBEE



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# Examples and Experiences



# Modern and Institutionalised Applications

## SA Examples

- 1. Youth Employment Accelerators (SA Youth Platform)**  
Connect young, unemployed people with formal jobs. This involves over 500 businesses, government, and civil society.
- 2. Local Entrepreneurship Support:** Young people create informal, local businesses, such as selling goods to neighbors - move from dependence on grants to financial self-reliance.
- 3. Digital Skills Training (Solar/Tech):** Train unemployed youth for "green jobs" (e.g., solar panel installation)
- 4. Support for Informal Economy Workers:** E.g. using personal Wi-Fi routers to provide paid, shared internet connectivity in township communities.
- 5. Mentorship and Networking:** Peer-driven recruitment in hospitality and retail. Leveraging community networks to find work - A supportive, peer-led hiring approach.



# Gaps, barriers and facilitators



# Barriers and gaps challenging Harambee

- **Socio-economic Pressures:** High inequality, unemployment, and the "swim or sink" mentality of modern economic life have disrupted traditional, communal living.
- **Modernisation and Urbanisation:** The shift from communal rural life to individualistic urban settings has weakened social cohesion.
- **Colonialism and Post-Apartheid Challenges:** Historical impacts, along with rising crime, corruption, and political fragmentation, have tested the strength of communal values.
- **Generational Gaps:** The younger generation is perceived by some as less connected to these traditional values compared to their elders



# What can researchers do?



# Social Work Research Opportunities – Harambee

**Harambee** demonstrates how community solidarity and collective action address social, economic, and educational challenges. Social work scholars can explore:

## Key Research Themes



### Community Development

▶ Infrastructure projects, ownership & sustainability.



### Mutual Aid & Resilience

▶ Emergency support, social networks, coping strategies.



### Education & Youth

▶ Community-funded schooling, youth aspirations & outcomes.



### Employment & Economy

▶ Youth employment platforms, informal business, digital/green skills.



### Indigenous Knowledge

▶ African philosophies (e.g., Ubuntu) in social work practice.

## Research Approaches



### Participatory & Community-Based

▶ PAR, Photovoice, Community Mapping.



### Mixed Methods

▶ Surveys, Interviews, Evaluation Studies.



### Analytical Focus

▶ Social Networks, Comparative & Policy Analysis.

**Core Insight:** Harambee shows how collective action strengthens communities, offering rich avenues for research, practice, and policy in social work.



“**Harambee** reminds us that when communities pull together, no challenge is too great – *collective action transforms lives and strengthens social bonds.*”





# Thank You

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