

# Human Rights Management Plan

## South Africa



### OVERVIEW

#### **Company Mission**

Our mission is to encourage young people to volunteer for worthwhile work in developing countries. We expect that doing this kind of voluntary work will in time become the norm. As more and more people join us, we aim to create a multi-national community with a passion to serve, to learn, to understand, to teach, to inspire and to be inspired.

#### **Human Rights programme Mission**

Our Human Rights programme mission is to promote and protect the fundamental human rights of vulnerable and disadvantaged groups in society, through the provision of pro-bono legal services, education, training, research, and abuse resolution.

#### **Background information**

The Projects Abroad Human Rights office in South Africa was established as an NGO in 2008 and is registered as a legal clinic with the Law Society of the Cape of Good Hope.

The office is structured into two departments, Legal Services Department and Social Justice Department.

Both departments rely on volunteers as the manpower to effect research with respect to legal services, preparation and presentation of workshops.

#### **Partners**

We partner with a number of local organisations whom we have done workshops with:

#### **Bonnytoun**

Bonnytoun is a place of safety for male juvenile offenders located in Kraaifontein. The boys, aged between 14 and 17 years, have been charged with committing a crime, have been assessed by a probation officer and have been found to need restrictive placement while they await trial and finalisation of their court case.

Volunteers and interns visit Bonnytoun once a week to meet with the boys, during which time they aim to educate and empower them. The workshops are structured to apply to issues which affect their lives, and have included discussions on topics such as drug and alcohol abuse, gangsterism, violence and the court procedure.

We have found that the boys respond to information which is relevant to them and to their situation, but it must be communicated in a light-hearted and interesting way so as to keep them engaged. This is not always easy and the boys can get easily distracted, but when volunteers/interns find a way to get through to them there is a great feeling of satisfaction. It is one of our most popular projects, and is the longest running – volunteers and interns are always keen to get involved and assist with the planning of workshops.

## **Free Gender**

Free Gender is a black lesbian organisation based in Khayelitsha. We speak out against 'corrective rape' and defend the rights of women and lesbians, as stated in the South African Bill of Rights, especially the rights to:

- Freedom and security of the person.
- Equality and non-discrimination on the ground of sexual orientation.
- Human dignity and life.
- Freedom of conscience, religion, thought, belief and opinion.

Free Gender is a member of the National Interim task team that has been proposed by the Minister of Justice to look at the issue of corrective rape and how it affects the LGBTI community. Free Gender is also a member of the Gender Based Violence task team in the Khayelitsha district.

## **Ottery Youth Care Centre**

Ottery Youth Care Centre houses boys between the ages of 12 and 18 years old who have committed crimes that range from theft and burglary to assault and rape.

Ottery is one of two remaining youth care centres in the Western Cape that fill a gap between mainstream school and prison by providing specialised care and education to boys who have been sentenced under the Child Justice Act. Many of the boys who pass through the Ottery centre progress from being child gangsters, often addicted to several drugs, to wanting a different life.

The centre also has an in-house Narcotics Anonymous programme and has opened its doors to numerous non-governmental organisations that run workshops with the boys, such as Young in Prison.

Volunteers and interns visit Ottery three days a week, providing life skills workshops.

The workshops we do at Ottery are similar to the workshops done at Bonnytoun and Vredelus, where we use information which is relevant to the boys and their situations.

## **Philisa Abafazi Bethu**

Philisa Abafazi Bethu is Xhosa for Heal our Women.

The organization was established in 2008 with one goal in mind: healing the women that walk in the door. PABs is growing rapidly and has expanded to include a variety of programs that reach young women, elderly, children, and even men. These programs range from skills development workshops to trauma support groups and afterschool programs. Programs are developed on the basis of the need felt by women in the community.

## **Pollsmoor Prison**

Pollsmoor is a maximum security prison with little means in the way of escape. Some of South Africa's most dangerous criminals are held in Pollsmoor Prison. The prison has a staff of 1,278 and the capacity to accommodate 4,336 offenders, but the current inmate population is over 7,000 (a figure which fluctuates daily).

## **Sisters Incorporated**

Sisters Incorporated is a private welfare organisation, founded in 1959. It was originally established as a refuge for single, pregnant women at a time when tremendous stigma was attached to being unmarried and pregnant.

Following the legalisation of abortion, the number of unmarried mothers in need of care decreased considerably, but at the same time the extent of domestic violence within S.A. became increasingly apparent.

Responding to the changing needs within society we amended our constitution, built an annex on the grounds of the home and are now able to offer care to growing numbers of abused women and their children of all races and religions.

## **Siyakathala**

Siyakathala was founded by a registered Social Worker named Notsasa Nyovane in 2008, who saw a need within the Township community to educate children and people in need.

Siyakathala works in partnership with eight schools, identifying children and communities at risk.

The focus of the project is to assist children with school work, identifying child led households, providing life orientations skills workshops, food drives and also having a holiday program, in order to keep the children busy during the school break and ensuring that they having daily meals.

## **St. Anne's**

St. Anne's Homes is a non-government organization under the patronage of the Archbishop of the Church of the Province of South Africa.

There are nine staff members and a Management Committee elected because of their ability, involvement and positive contribution.

We are situated in Woodstock near Cape Town. We offer our services to destitute, abused, rejected and disadvantaged women and their children from throughout South Africa.

## **Vredelus**

Vredelus House is a secure care centre for young female offenders located in Elsie's River, which hosts young female offenders aged between 13 and 18.

Workshops are presented by our volunteers/interns once a week, focusing on issues such as healthcare, employment or life skills, which are designed to educate the girls and which will have an impact on them once they leave Vredelus. Teenage pregnancy is a huge problem in Cape Town, and as such workshops may focus on issues such as sex education and the risk of contracting infections and diseases. Other workshops focus on areas including exercises to boost their self-esteem, or to minimise discriminatory behaviour towards each other.

The girls love to show off their talents, both creatively and on the netball court, and in particular when they have the opportunity to strut their stuff on the catwalk!

# GOALS

## 1. Legal Service

### 1.1 Develop new legal clinics

Currently we have a legal clinic at Philsa Abafazi Bethu, which caters for women only and which only female interns may attend.

We have established a stream of clients and our name has become well known within the community. However, in order to expand our client base we would like to set up another legal clinic, this clinic not only being limited to ladies only, but being open to all.

### 1.2 Re-establish relationships

We plan to re-establish our relationship with the South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC).

We previously received referral cases from the SAHRC for us to investigate, research, provide reports and recommendations based on our findings.

This relationship ceased to exist in 2012; however we would like to re-establish this connection in the light of the improved quality of volunteers we have begun to receive.

### 1.3 Form new partnerships

We would like to establish a partnership with the Public Protector's office. This is still in the incubation stages, however we have now obtained a contact within the Public Protector's offices and we are hoping to enter into discussion regarding a partnership with them, similar to what we had with the SAHRC.

## 2. Social Justice

2.1 We are currently providing life orientation skills workshops at Ottery Youth Care and Education Centre, three mornings a week; however we have now entered into discussion regarding afternoon life orientation skills workshops as well as the morning workshops.

The purpose of this is to cater for volunteers who are not in a position to participate in legal services. In this way they are able to fully participate in the project every single day.

### 2.2 Women's Shelters

We will be supervising and assisting two women's shelters (Sisters Incorporated and St. Anne's). This will mainly include running workshops for the women.

### 2.3 Community Outreach Project

We will be starting a community outreach project, whereby we will be working in partnership with a local Pastor, Pastor James, who is well known in the townships.

We will be identifying hotspots for homeless people in the township and work in conjunction with Pastor James to provide food and legal assistance to the homeless people.

We will start this project on a trial basis, once a month; however we would like to provide food and assistance once a week depending on the success thereof.

### **3. Raise awareness on Human Rights**

We seek to raise awareness on Human Rights through the workshops we provide at the women's shelters and detention facilities.

In these areas we educate them on their legal rights, as well as provide life orientation skills workshops.

## **RESOURCES**

- a. Five PAHRO staff members, 2 x qualified Attorneys, 1 Paralegal, 1 Social Justice Co-ordinator (born and raised in the Township) and 1 Executive Assistant.
- b. Properly functioning internet for research
- c. Budget for quarterly meetings.
- d. Weekly workshops/discussion sessions conducted by staff
- e. Volunteer-led workshops
- f. Books, stationery, games, PCs and internet access in the Human Rights Office
- g. Financial capacity for community work, volunteer support, etc
- h. Support and partnership with various organisations
- i. Community outreach events four or more per year
- j. Law students, International Relation students, Political students and students with at least one year of University studies.

## **MONITORING & EVALUATION**

- a. Quarterly meetings with project partners
- b. Regular feedback from interns during the IRM (Internal Review Meeting)
- c. Weekly staff meetings
- d. Monthly reports, highlighting major events.
- e. Onsite visits by Head Office staff
- f. Daily Social Justice debriefs done on the Social Justice website
- g. Volunteer Debriefing forms and End of Placement feedback forms.