

**DIKELETSONG
CITIZENS' ADVICE BUREAU
Pretoria**

ANNUAL REPORT

April 2022 - March 2023

Dikeletsong Citizens' Advice Bureau

Reg No 001-556 NPO, 18/11/13/838 PBO

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REPORT FOR PERIOD 1 APRIL 2022 - 31 MARCH 2023

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Chair Louisa Thomo
Secretary Lynn Jurriaanse
Treasurer Brian Collett

Members Jean Richter

Honorary Auditor Charl Crouse from the firm Stachan and Crouse

OFFICE ADMINISTRATORS Kgothatso Motsogi Jan 2020 – December 2022
Mandisi Magula January 2023 – July 2023

VOLUNTARY WORKERS

Chair Louisa Thomo
Secretary Gill Collett

Voluntary Workers Kgothatso Motsogi 09/04/2019 – 31/12/2023
Phenyo Mochusi 09/04/2019 – to date
Mandisi Magula 04/06/2019 – August 2023
Itumeleng Mokoena 19/02/2021 – to date
Oupa Bhenny Mokwana 08/11/2022 – to date
Nobesuthu Mahlangu 22/11/2022 – 12/12/2023
Smangele Maahlo 10/01/2023 – 12/06/2023
Lesego Mogodi 10/01/2023 – to date
Nelisiwe Simelane 02/02/2023 – to date
Lerato Kheswa 01/03/2023 – to date
Nomfundo Mahlangu 04/07/2023 – 13/07/2023
Errolt Mashiloane 17/07/2023 – to date
Mpho Matlhokwane 03/11/2023 – to date

Statistics Lynn Jurriaanse

Checking Jean Richter

ANALYSIS OF ENQUIRIES APRIL 2022 - MARCH 2023

EMPLOYMENT	2863	New	Repeat	APPEALS	5	New	Repeat
Situations		4	5	Destitute		2	0
Wages		108	929	Transport		3	0
UIF		20	183	Nursing/Baby sit		0	0
Pensions		127	1229	Befriending		0	0
Compensation		14	114	MISCELLANEOUS	33		
Unfair Dismissals		12	118	Information		31	2
HOUSING	41			LEISURE	0		
Accommodation		6	5	Hobbies/Sport			
Eviction		1	5	Social			
Rent/Lease		4	8	Travel/holidays			
Purchase/Sale/Transfer		0	4	MEDICAL	5		
Neighbours		1	3	Services		0	3
Administration		2	2	Disability Pensions		0	2
FAMILY	67			Mental Health		0	0
Marriage/Divorce		7	26	Sex		0	0
Welfare		2	5	Medical Aid/Accounts			
Maintenance		1	7	Physical Abuse			
Children		2	17	MUNICIPAL	0		
Addictions		0	0	Rates/Accounts			
Missing Persons		0	0	Pollution/Noise			
FINANCIAL	428			Services/Problems			
Loans/Banks		4	54	Traffic Dept			
Debt		3	39	Regulations			
Fraud		7	17	CONSUMER	41		
Insurance/Tax		7	54	Advice/Information		1	0
Death/Wills/Estates		10	217	Complaints		2	36
Accident Claims		2	14	Legislation		0	0
REGISTRATION	14			Repairs		1	0
Birth/Death/Marriage		1	9	Business		0	1
ID/Passport		0	4	OFFERS OF HELP	0		
Trade Licence		0	0	Volunteers			
Residence/Asylum		0	0	Disposal of Goods			
AGED	4			Services			
Accommodation		1	1				
Pensions		0	2				
Employment		0	0				
Concessions/Assistance							
LEGAL	126						
Action/Advice		10	57				
Court Cases		0	22				
Lawyer Complaints		4	30				
Police		0	3	NEW CASES		398	
Prison		0	0	REPEAT CASES		3232	
Constitution		0	0	TOTAL CASE COUNT		3630	
EDUCATION	3						
Education/Training		0	1	Daily Case Average		15	
Funding		1	0				
Vocational Guidance		0	0	Money recovered for clients		R1 576 997	
Adult Education		0	1				
Educational Enterprises		0	0				

DCAB CHAIR REPORT

I am pleased to be writing an Annual Report for the year ended 31 March 2023. It is my duty to report that this has been another solid year in our commitment to assist our socially disadvantaged community with their problems. Once again it is a great honour and a privilege to have served as Dikeletsong Citizens' Advice Bureau (DCAB) chairperson for the fourth term, and I sincerely thank the Board members for the opportunity to serve.

On behalf of DCAB executive members, I would like to offer a sincere thank you to every volunteer at DCAB for their dedication and the hard work they put in for the continued operation of DCAB. They have with their commitment and dedicated efforts, steered the organization through another year.

The complexity of our economy is placing a greater burden on our community. Many people have lost their jobs and many businesses have closed doors. Most of our clients' problems or issues are work related and municipality matters. People cannot access their UIF, pension and provident funds and other work-related benefits that they are entitled to. As DCAB, we can assist and mediate on their behalf to recover their benefits. We are pleased to announce that a total amount of **R1 576 997** was recovered on behalf of our clients between April 2022 – March 2023. This cannot be achieved without our volunteers' hard work and dedication.

In December, DCAB said goodbye to our Office Administrator, Kgothatso Matsogi, who had served DCAB faithfully in that position since January 2020. Mpho Matlhokwane also left us in January, we appreciate and are grateful for his contribution to DCAB during his time with us. Both Kgothatso and Mpho found jobs as Candidate Legal Practitioners. Saying goodbye to these students was a guarantee that the work experience they gained at DCAB helped them to be employable with good reference. In January 2023 we welcomed Mandisi Magula as our new office administrator; he had been a volunteer since June 2019.

We try to give our student voluntary workers, mostly law students, an opportunity to work as an office administrator, to gain knowledge and understanding in running the office. The student volunteers are on duty once or twice a week, whereas the administrator receives a stipend because he/she is in the office every day of the week, ensuring the smooth running of the office.

Our voluntary workers energy, commitment, and consistency in driving our organization forward, are sometimes confronted with difficult cases. Included in this Annual Report, are some of the interesting cases they have dealt with. They are also assisted by Legal Aid South Africa, and an in-house attorney to deal with difficult cases. They receive training and attend workshops from different government departments, and organisations such as FAMSA to equip them with the knowledge of how to deal with challenging cases making sure that their mental state is sound and clear. They give of their time and talent without any compensation other than the transport allowance that they receive. The compassion they show to the people we serve, is an inspiration for us all.

We also express our sincere appreciation to our auditor, Charl Crouse of Strachan and Crouse, who audits our books pro-bono. On behalf of DCAB, I wish to express my sincere thanks to your firm for supporting our organisation with the pro-bono auditing and financial statements you have provided us with, over the past many years. This saves us considerable expense and gives the assurance that our finances are sound and above board. We sincerely thank your firm for your continued support.

We are also very indebted to our donors and sponsors for their monthly support and pledges. We thank every single individual who has over the years contributed in a small or big way, making sure that DCAB continues to strive and serve our vulnerable community. We are very humbled by your generosity and support, and we assure you that we will continue to help our vulnerable community to restore their dignity. It is due to your generosity and contributions that we can continue to make a difference, by assisting this community with their different problems.

DCAB Board would also like to thank the Rhodes Scholars for the Funding they have provided once again. We thank Justice Edwin Cameron, for again putting in a good word for DCAB. Your donations make it possible to keep DCAB doors open for our clients. Because of your generosity and support, DCAB can further its mission to help the vulnerable members of our community. We are extremely grateful.

Finally, I would like to commend the entire family of DCAB, volunteers and Board members on an excellent year. I wish you health and safety. Thank you.

Louisa Thomo *Chair - Dikeletsong Citizens' Advice Bureau*

DCAB VOLUNTARY WORKERS REPORT

Mandisi Magula was appointed as the office administrator in January 2023, which meant that he came into the office on a daily basis and earned a small salary. It was his job to deal with all the office administration tasks. However, in addition to the office duties, Mandisi automatically took on the responsibility of organising the Volunteer Workers (VWs) as we no longer had anyone in this role. We therefore asked him to write the following report:

It is an honour to have been asked to write a report on our Voluntary Workers for this annual report. I grew into the job as I saw various needs and found the experience fulfilling and I greatly valued the experience I gained in the position. I saw it as my role as a former senior VW in the organization to instill in the newer VWs, the same values that were instilled in me by the organization's executive management. At the commencement of a VWs association, they would not initially be aware of the importance of being involved in an organization such as DCAB. I think I was able to change this gradually by imparting knowledge, communication skills, interview skills, people skills, diligent and honest accountability in the administration of the work and the files in the office, amongst many other things.

DCAB provides students with an immersive experience as it pertains to the exposure gained from handling and dealing with actual clients who have real matters that need to be resolved. This provides VWs with a one-of-a-kind exposure into the plight of the general public who may not have the easiest access to justice. This produces empathy and compassion within the students that makes them want to do whatever it takes to ensure that justice is indeed delivered to each of our clients, who would normally not be able to find this dedicated support; especially at no cost.

DCAB provides plenty of checks and balances and there are continuous assessments of the standard of the work being done in the office in order to maintain and improve the reputation that the organization has built for more than half a century. I cannot over emphasize the importance to the newer VWs, of keeping up this standard in order for the organization and the work being done here to be held in the highest regard because of the impact that the organization has within the greater society/community.

The longer the time spent by VWs at DCAB, the more passionate we become until I and other senior VWs really give our all to the organization only to receive back ten-fold. DCAB is a trailblazer in the NGO space and deserves to be recognized as a beacon of hope for the concept of access to justice in the South African landscape.

Finally, I would like to thank the wonderful group of VWs for their hard work, their support and enthusiasm, and their comradeship. We made a great team.

Mandisi Magula *Office administrator*

INTERESTING CASES

Case 1

Client came into our offices in the first quarter of 2023 as a referral from Future Families. This referral is part of promoting social cohesion between the various organizations, within the Khutlwanong Democracy Centre, that assists members of society. This lady had lost her husband in December 2022 and had to deal with the winding up of her late husband's estate.

Standard Bank had been appointed as the Executor of the deceased estate. Our client had been informed that the deceased had an overwhelming number of debts as a result of personal loans, outstanding levies and municipal rates, estimated to be around R100 000. As a result, she was faced with the reality that the apartment in which she currently lives with the deceased's children would have to be sold by the Executor of the estate in order to pay off the deceased's debts as well as the fee that would be due to the executor of the estate.

The DCAB voluntary worker who handled this case encouraged our client to search diligently for any information, in the form of any unclaimed funds that would assist her in financing the debts so as to avoid having to auction the apartment she lives in with her children. Fortunately, and one could almost say incredulously, she discovered a retirement annuity with Standard Bank's investment division, STANLIB.

The retirement annuity had been invested by the deceased upon retirement from his job as a Firefighter at Tshwane Emergency Services. The value of the retirement annuity was around R1 400 000. Following the advice of our Voluntary Worker, our client immediately began the process of submitting the claim. This resulted in an amount of R970 000 being paid into the beneficiary's account (the registered beneficiary being one of the deceased's children) with the balance being the tax that is due to SARS.

Thereafter, we advised our client to approach Standard Bank in order to finalise the winding up of the deceased's estate; this process is still underway.

Our Voluntary Worker also cautioned her saying that although this appears to be a very large sum of money, she should seek reputable advice as to the best way to invest it in order to get the maximum benefit from an investment for her future.

Case 2 *This was one of the first cases worked on by the VW who joined us most recently.*

This case report outlines the circumstances surrounding a client who sought assistance regarding a Summons received from his employer, Trinity Protection Services (Pty) Ltd. The client had been

employed by the company from 29 September 2018 to 25 May 2021, during which time an incident involving a company vehicle led to his dismissal. The company claimed that the client owed them an amount of R29,064.66 for damages to the vehicle and had the client sign an acknowledgement of debt. Subsequently, R11 000 was debited from the client's account, and he received a court's summons to pay the remaining amount along with 24% interest per annum.

The Client, facing financing difficulties, approached our offices seeking assistance in negotiating the debt. He expressed his willingness to pay R4 000 per month to settle the outstanding amount. In response to this, we sent an email proposal to Tucker Inc, the law firm representing Trinity Protection services, to propose a repayment plan for the client.

After a week, having had no response, we contacted Tuckers Inc and were informed that Trinity Protection Services had accepted the client's proposal. In August the client made the first payment of R4 000 and presented proof of payment to our offices, which we sent to Tucker Inc. Trinity Protection Services has not taken further legal action against the client, indicating their acceptance of the repayment arrangement.

This Client, who faced financial difficulties and a legal Summons for a substantial debt, made a proactive effort to address the issue and has started the agreed plan. We will continue to provide support and guidance to the client.

Case 3

This case report concerns a client who sought assistance in claiming her unpaid salary from her employer, the University of Pretoria Health Campaign. The client misrepresented herself by applying for a fieldworker position for the campaign as the position required applicants to be in possession of a matric certificate. Subsequently, after sending in her application, our client was told that she had been accepted to fill the position as a fieldworker even though she had by then informed her supervisor that she had not completed her matric and was therefore not in possession of a matric certificate. However, her supervisor instructed her to proceed despite the fact that she did not have the necessary requirements.

Our client worked as a fieldworker from the 2 June 2023 until 11 July 2023 without receiving any remuneration. On the 11 July 2023 she received an email from her supervisor informing her that she will not be remunerated because her appointment as a fieldworker did not meet the set requirements. On the 19 July she approached our office seeking assistance in claiming money for the unpaid days worked. We sent a letter to her supervisor outlining the days that she worked as well as the amount they owe her.

On the 25 July 2023 we received an excited call from the client informing us that she received payment from the UP-Health Campaign to the amount of R3 512.33 that morning.

This was an interesting case that our organisation worked on and we are filled with pride to have been of such great assistance to our client. Truly our office does fill the gap between the impoverished individuals and accessing justice. We therefore look forward to assisting more clients, helping them access justice despite their economic status.

MEMBERS

Honorary Members

Rose McGillivray
Don Narraway
Judy Rubin
Amalia Snyman

Life Members

Lorna Chalmers
Ronald Ingle
Klaus Nürnberger
Jean Richter
Marlise Richter
Margaret Rodseth

Donors & Annual Members

(a donor being anyone who donates their time or resources in support of DCAB)

Edwin Cameron
André Coetzee
Charl Crouse (of Strachan and Crouse)
Brian Collett
Gill Collett
Spencer Fleischer
Tania Henkel
Lynn Jurriaanse
Peter Lor
David Pitman
Jean Richter
Louisa Thomo
Giles White