



ORGANISATIONAL PROFILE





1

KWAZULU-NATAL SOCIETY FOR THE BLIND (KZN-SB)

The Kwazulu-Natal Society for the Blind (KZN - SB) was established in 1919 has evolved into a dynamic organization offering multi-disciplinary approach to access to human rights related services for blind and partial sighted people of KwaZulu-Natal Province. It prides itself for successful service delivery focusing on the following services:

- a. Early Childhood Development,
- b. Skills development - computer training, Braille training and cane weaving training,
- c. Orientation and mobility (navigation skills using a white cane),
- d. Providing Optometric clinic, in partnership with Brian Holden,
- e. Providing residential facility for the blind and partial sighted people,
- f. Ensuring access to quality rehabilitation services for the blind and partial sighted people,
- g. Economic Empowerment and business development skills.

In 2013, the organization was awarded 'Proudly South African' status and its BBBEEE rating is Level 2.



The organisation received a certificate of appreciation from the eThekweni Municipality during the Municipality's Living Legends Award of August 2016.

Vision

To enhance the quality of life of blind or partial sighted people, their families and other types of disabilities of KwaZulu-Natal Province.

Mission

To become a pro-active, vibrant, strategically focused in terms of operations, sustainable and inclusive learning organization which brings together key decision makers in government and private sector to work closely with blind and partial sighted community to effectively improve the standard of living for all.

Principles

The overarching principles underlining the work of KZN - SB are:

- » **Disability** - The KZN - SB was formed to facilitate the inclusion of blind and partial sighted rights at various levels in Kwazulu - Natal. Its mandate is premised on the human rights and social model of disability, which is an inclusive and comprehensive approach to disability rights where the focus is no longer just on the individual but on the environment and the interaction thereof. This is supported by various (international) instruments on disability that promote equal opportunities for persons with disabilities in society.
- » **Development** - Recognising that persons with disabilities are among the most marginalised in society and considering that many institutions and systems in society have not factored in their needs, KZN-SB finds it imperative to work towards more sustainable solutions that alleviate the situations of persons with disabilities.
- » **Human Rights** - A third pillar to the work of KZN-SB is human rights – the basic rights and freedoms to which all humans are entitled. KZN-SB was founded upon the National and Provincial response to efforts related to inclusive development and mainstreaming of disability work in all sector



strategies. This approach is well enshrined in various international, regional and National human rights instruments including the UN Convention on the Rights for Persons with Disability, Sustainable Development Goals, the National Constitution of the Republic of South Africa and Vision 2030 National Development Plan of the government of the Republic of South Africa. KZN-SB's work is about promoting realisation of specific disability rights and ensuring effective enjoyment of all human rights without discrimination of people with disabilities in Kwazulu-Natal.

Objectives of the Organisation

- a. Improve Health and Reduce the Impact of HIV&AIDS amongst the blind and partial sighted people.
- b. Improve livelihoods for blind and partial sighted through providing business development skills and exposing them to economic empowerment opportunities.
- c. Improve access to quality rehabilitation services for the blind and partial sighted.
- d. Improve community and organizational capacity to advocate for human rights for blind and partially sighted.
- e. Improve Organizational Effectiveness and sustainability



2

KWAZULU-NATAL SOCIETY FOR THE BLIND PROGRAMS

The KZN-SB's programmes are designed to contribute to the organisation's strategic objectives. Current programmes that could form the basis for partnership with the KZN-SB are:

a) Inclusive Education

There is an increasing assertion that if the right to education is to be realized for all children, education systems need to be designed in such a way that they are able to respond to the diverse learning needs that exist among all children. This is recognized as a call for the building of inclusive education and training systems – education systems designed to create learning environments that enable every child to develop and learn to their full potential. The emphasis on inclusive education is very important for offering a rights-based and learner-centred education which also takes into account the educational needs of every child including those with a disability.

The program aims to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for blind and partial sighted learners from Kwazulu Natal Province. The program will mainly focus on the following:

- » Ensuring free, equal access to education for all children, from early learning to secondary level.
- » Overcoming barriers to access to education for girls, children with disability and marginalised groups

- » *Delivering quality education in safe and supportive child-friendly learning environments*
- » *Working to ensure communities and their young people are more involved in how education is run*

The program will further ensure contribution towards the implementation of the following instruments:

- » *Article 24 of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*
- » *Goal 4 of the Sustainable Development goals*
- » *National Development Plan – 2030 of the government of the Republic of South Africa*
- » *The five year strategic plan of the 2015 – 2020 for the Department of Basic Education of the Republic of South Africa.*

b) Health and HIV/AIDS

The relationship between HIV and disability has not received due attention, although persons with disabilities are found among all key populations at higher risk of exposure to HIV. People living with HIV may develop impairments as the disease progresses, and may be considered to have a disability when social, economic, political or other barriers hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.

Persons with disabilities may be at risk of HIV infection for the following reasons:

- » *HIV risk behaviour,*
- » *Sexual violence,*
- » *Access to HIV education, information and prevention services,*
- » *Access to Treatment, Care and Support*

The program will engage on the following strategies to eradicate the above challenges:

- » *Advocate and lobby for the incorporation of the human rights and needs of blind and partial sighted people into Provincial HIV and Health strategic plans, policies and legislation.*
- » *Prohibit all forms of discrimination against blind and partial sighted people which may hinder access to:*
 - *social security, health and life insurance,; and*
 - *Health services such as sexual or reproductive health education and services, measures for the prevention of mother-to-child transmission, and post-exposure prophylaxis for victims of sexual assault.*
- » *Establish age-, gender-, culture- and language-appropriate HIV prevention programmes and provide HIV information in tailored formats for people from different disability groups.*
- » *Develop appropriate projects and mechanisms to prevent sexual assault or abuse of blind and partial sighted people focusing on those settings which place blind and partial sighted people at greatest risk e.g. specialized institutions, schools or hospitals.*
- » *Provide and advocate for comprehensive HIV testing, treatment, care and support services*
- » *Provide and advocate for adequate training and support for personal assistants or people who support persons with disabilities in households affected by HIV.*

c) Training and Skills Development

The program strives to contribute towards the implementation of the Skills Development Act of 1998 which established Sectoral Education and Training Authorities (SETA's) which provide an institutional framework to devise and implement workplace strategies to develop and improve the skills of the South African workforce.

The KZN-BS is registered with the Health and Welfare Sector Education and Training Authority (HWSETA). HWSETA strives to create an awareness of disability and how employing persons with disability can enrich the working environment, as well as the lives of those living with disability as part of their development mission.

The KZN-SB's interaction with blind and partial sighted people has identified a critical need for skills development to bring about economic empowerment which include running own cooperatives, businesses or be employed.

The objectives and priorities for the training and skills development program are:

- » *Improve daily living skills;*
- » *Impart technical capabilities and capacities;*
- » *Develop entrepreneurial skills;*
- » *Establish a network and strategic partnerships.*

The organisation currently provides trainings for skills development on the following:

- » *Computer Training*
- » *Braille training*
- » *Music Training*
- » *Cane Production and Weaving*
- » *Basic Business Management skills.*

d) Advocacy, Awareness-raising and civic participation

The Advocacy, Awareness-raising and civic participation program is aimed at building and strengthening partnerships that promote advocacy on human rights protection in Kwazulu-Natal. The objectives of the programme are to promote the rights of Blind and partial sighted people at Provincial level and to contribute towards the progressive realization of effective participation and enjoyment of human rights enshrined under the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).

The program ensures the promotion of rights of blind and partial sighted people and contributes towards the progressive realization of effective participation and enjoyment of human rights.

e) Economic Empowerment

The goal of the program is to contribute to efforts by government departments and other partners to improve the quality of life of blind and partial sighted people through the design and implementation of sector-wide.

The objective of the program is to improve the capacity of the blind and partial sighted people to actively participate in broad-based sustainable economic activities.

The program components comprise of: Functional literacy, Basic Business Management, Vocational and Skills Development Training, Institutional Strengthening, cane weaving and other economic empowerment components.



f) Gender Equality

KZN-SB recognises Gender equality as both a crosscutting concern and a core issue in all different programmes. Gender mainstreaming and an approach on gender are integrated at all levels of the organisation. This is in line with internationally agreed Action Plans and Declarations such as the Beijing Platform for Action, Millennium Declaration, and the Monterrey Consensus.

The goal of Gender equity programme is to ensure mainstreaming of issues of women and girls with disabilities in policies and programmes of government and civil society organisations. This is in recognition of the fact that for decades, women in Africa have actively organized and advocated for equality and realization of their political, socio-economic and human rights. The outcome of this very difficult but necessary struggle is that more women are represented and actively participating

in political and economic life and more women are economically and socially independent. In addition, more women are engaged in previously traditional male dominated professions and careers such as engineering, owners of business, construction, and the science and technology fields. By and large, however, women with disabilities have not been included in campaigns to promote the rights of women, and as a result their particular issues have neither been highlighted nor mainstreamed.

The program is therefore aimed at ensuring an inclusive society where the rights of blind and partial sighted women and girls are protected, promoted and realised while staying committed, through advocacy, mainstreaming, and partnership building at all levels, to achieve equality, social / legal justice, inclusive development and the elimination of all forms of discrimination for all blind and partial sighted women.

g) Youth and Children

The main objective of the program is to create an enabling environment for blind and partial sighted youth and children of Kwazulu-Natal so that they can be self - dependent, contribute to the development and be active participants in development effort of the Province.

The program inculcates entrepreneurial skills in the youth, to make them self-employed, and initiate them to be engaged in sporting activities, small business (micro-credit revolving fund), vocational skills training, ICT enterprises, music, arts, culture and other similar innovative and creative projects.

The project further aims to empower both in and out of school blind and partial sighted youths with



Skills and keeping them out of current dangers (HIV/AIDS, Early pregnancy), Breaking the York of vulnerability and having good working conducive environment to enable them obtain a successfully/ desirable life so as to eradicate poverty in Kwazulu-Natal.

h) Community Based Rehabilitation

Community-based rehabilitation (CBR) was initiated by WHO following the Declaration of Alma-Ata in 1978 in an effort to enhance the quality of life for people with disabilities and their families; meet their basic needs; and ensure their inclusion and participation. While initially a strategy to increase access to rehabilitation services in resource-constrained settings, CBR is now a multisectoral approach working to improve the equalization of opportunities and social inclusion of people with disabilities while combating the perpetual cycle of poverty and disability. CBR is implemented through the combined efforts of people with disabilities, their families and communities, and relevant government and non-government health, education, vocational, social and other services.

The Republic of South Africa Policy Framework and Strategy for Disability and Rehabilitation services in outlines comprehensive and integrated disability and rehabilitation services within the broader health and developmental context to facilitate improved access at all levels of health care.

The program focuses on providing community services to blind and partial sighted people through guidance from the CBR overarching strategy five core components; health, education, livelihoods, social life and empowerment, and their key elements.



CONTACT DETAILS

Mr Bhekie Jele
Finance - General Manager
194 Umbilo Road, Umbilo, Durban – 4000
P. O. Box 18702, Dalbridge, 4001

Phone: +27 31 202 7277
Cell: +27 788 781 922 / 061 414 8397
Fax: +27 31 202 2830
web: <http://www.kznblind.org.za>
E-mail: bhekijele@kznblind.org.za

Together Building Hope and Excellence
KwaZulu-Natal
SOCIETY FOR THE BLIND
Established 1919

97
years
1919-2016