



Association for Rural Advancement – AFRA

Advancing the rights of rural dwellers in KwaZulu-Natal

AFRA was established in 1999 for the purpose of fighting forced removals in KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) and was extremely successful in fulfilling their mandate despite the limited resources that were available. AFRA is an independent NGO and its main focus is on land rights and agrarian reform. This focus evolved into one of addressing concerns regarding the living conditions of black rural dwellers and there is now even greater focus on the needs of farm dwellers due to the fact that farm dwellers are not regarded as employees or labour tenants and do not have the same rights as urban workers. Unions are unable to represent them and they are fairly isolated due to the distance that exists between farms. If they lose their jobs, this results in them losing their homes as the two are directly linked, and in some instances farmers unfortunately have been known to use access to services to manipulate them. Their rights to land have been undermined, their tenure is not secured and they are unable to access sufficient land in order to meet their basic needs or fulfill their development aspirations.

Assistance is provided to communities in the KZN midlands, Dukuduku, Vryheid, Gongola and Amajuba. AFRA clients are usually between the ages of 30 and 70 and they have four main programmes namely:

- Rural Land and Citizenship Rights (RLCR)
- Agrarian Reform and Development (ARD)
- The Land Rights Legal Unit (LRLU) and
- Food Security

Their clients are obtained in various ways through referrals from ward councilors, other organisations and agencies that are unable to assist rural people, as well as walk-ins off the street. AFRA uses committees to fight poverty, discrimination, racism and oppression. In some cases, where a clear legal issue exists, they will follow up with litigation or a response through the courts. During the past year or two they have settled and won some of their cases and have been involved in examining the Traditional Courts Bill in an attempt to provide suitable alternatives.

In addition to the above, AFRA also runs the Child Sponsorship Programme and the ten-NGO national project called Tshintsha Amakhaya. A truly inspiring organisation working within vulnerable rural communities.



ASSOCIATION FOR RURAL ADVANCEMENT

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