



Black Sash **Making Human Rights Real**

A champion of human rights

Founded 59 years ago with its roots in constitutional issues, it later expanded its focus to include moral, legal and socio-economic matters relating to racial discrimination. The Black Sash has a wide reach supporting 270 Community Based Organisations (CBOs) and 3 000 individuals through its head office in Cape Town and 4 regional offices that service all nine provinces. The organisation works with a range of civil society formations and less structured alliances at local, provincial and national levels and they believe that building partnerships contributes to successful advocacy.

The Black Sash has identified 3 major goals namely:

1. Doubling the number of beneficiaries to 540
2. Increasing the number of CBOs that have their own community monitoring practices to 180 and
3. Establishing relationships with 50 CBOs to identify social justice objectives

Their programmes are based on rights education, monitoring of service delivery and advocacy work. They have trained paralegals who are manning a national hotline where people can call in for advice. They host rights education workshops and paralegal training courses designed to inform members of CBOs. In order to support the promotion of rights education, they publish training manuals, information sheets and brochures and flyers for distribution amongst the public.

Through their advocacy work they have been involved in various campaigns including the extension of child support grants to 18 year olds; lowering the pensionable age of men to 60; including refugees in the country's social assistance programmes and facilitating the clearance of 59 000 social assistance appeal cases. The organisation has also successfully negotiated access to the child social grant (CSG) on behalf of refugees. Access to specific documents has created huge obstacles in obtaining child support grants particularly in the Eastern Cape but the Black Sash has intervened, and SASSA is now accepting various forms of documentation that allow one to qualify for the CSG. Many more children are now benefitting from the funds supplied through the grant and thereby experience an improved quality of life.



BLACK SASH

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