



DSCAC Profile

1. NPO Information

NPO Name:	Durban South Community Advice Centre
Contact Person:	David Pieters
Designation:	Coordinator
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Board of Directors:	Allan Moolman Basil Canham Gladys Ryan David Curtis Wayne Jean-Pierre Baron Ryan
NPO Registration No:	270 – 509 NPO

2. Background

During the 1930s, the South Durban Basin was planned as an industrial centre. It includes the residential areas of Bluff, Clairwood, Wentworth, Merebank, Isipingo, and Lamontville and the Industrial areas of Jacobs and Prospecton. In the 1950s, through the enforcement of the Group Areas Act, Coloureds, Indians and African communities were often relocated adjacent to heavy industries. This resulted in a historically tense relationship between residents, big business and environmentalists.

Poor conditions and neglect by the state led to the political activism and militancy that developed within these areas. There are various other historical as well as political concerns that still shape the present politics and activism of the area. Issues such as: drug abuse, lack of recreation for young people; high levels of unemployment; pollution and housing are factors that affect the quality of life of those who live in the area. Other problems that people face in the course of their daily lives are land and housing disputes, sexual assault, divorce, domestic violence and breach of contract.

In many communities of the Durban South Basin, people struggle with legal issues related to housing, family, debt, crime, property, and other matters that affect their well-being. Those who are poor, geographically isolated, or otherwise vulnerable often cannot obtain assistance in solving their justice problems. They may suffer under discriminatory laws or lack the legal means to enforce norms that should protect them. Community-based programme initiatives, like DSCAC, contribute to helping communities that lack access to the legal system to resolve their justice and community-based issues.

3. Introduction

Towards the end of 2020, a group of friends and concerned individuals got together, through a series of formal and informal meetings, to have discussions, centred around 'community upliftment'. The idea of a common space to house projects and services that provide solutions to community needs was suggested. This space would operate as a legal entity with the ability to raise funds for projects and services that would benefit those in need. These services would focus on information, advice and referrals that would promote consciousness and the ability for people to contribute to resolving

their own issues. The Durban South Community Advice Centre was born out of these discussions and was registered and established in January 2022

4. Vision Statement

DSCAC facilitates capacity towards social and economic justice aspirations, for improved quality of life

5. Mission Statement

To play role in the sustenance of a human rights and justice culture through its multi-pronged service of research, information provision, facilitation, project support and referrals.

6. Values

- Transparency
- Accountability
- Consistency
- Resilience
- Hope
- Loyalty

7. Beneficiaries

- Vulnerable women and men
- Youth
- Persons with disabilities
- Vulnerable children

8. Our Focus

- Research, information provision, facilitation and referrals
- Civic responsibility
- Project support services for community-based initiatives

9. Membership/Partnership

DSCAC recognises that it cannot operate in isolation and is fostering partnership/membership with the following structures:

- Community Advice Offices SA (CAOSA)
- Foundation for Human Rights (FHR)
- eThekweni municipality
- Ward committees in the Durban South Basin
- KwaMakhutha Community Resources Centre
- ProBono
- NGOs based in the Durban South Basin
- Legal Resources Centre
- Civic Academy
- ACT Ubumbano

10. Projects/Programmes and Services

10.1 Information and Referrals

The Advice Centre provides general information and referrals to people in the community, visiting the centre. Some of the issues the centre is dealing with include:

- Company (CIPC) and NPO registrations
- Assistance with job applications and learnerships
- Information on applications for clearing of criminal records
- Challenges related to tenant rentals and housing issues
- People also walk in just to talk about their issues and also to find out more about the Advice Centre offerings

Community members are either assisted directly by the Advice Centre if it has the capacity or referred to other institutions which may be in a better position to serve their needs

10.2 Community projects support

DSCAC provides support to community-based initiatives that seek to improve community conditions. Some of the community initiatives supported by the Advice Centre include:

- Fundraising events for young athletes in the community to visit academies of excellence
- Community clean-up and recycling campaigns
- Family movie screenings
- Celebrating Wentworth community festival
- Summer/Winter holiday programmes for kids and youngsters
- Entrepreneurship development initiatives
- Career exhibitions

10.3 Civic responsibility/activism

Together with partners (including ACT Ubumbano and DDP) the Advice Centre developed an Active Citizenship Programme. The programme promotes active participation of community members in the public life of the community; in an informed, committed, and constructive manner, with a focus on the common good. The programme:

- Encourages voter education
- Encourages volunteering and participating in community development initiatives
- Promotes the understanding of local government and how it works
- Promotes citizen-based monitoring of local government services and holding public servants accountable
- Contributes to participating in and defending democratic processes
- Encourages people to reach varying degrees of political awareness and advocacy, ranging from basic knowledge (e.g., knowing the local mayor's name) to developing a voice and making oneself heard.