

**DISABLED PEOPLE SOUTH AFRICA  
KWAZULU-NATAL PROVINCE**

**PDC PROGRESS REPORT  
1 APRIL – 30 SEPTEMBER 2009**

**1 Introduction**

The period under review has seen some improvement in the office and also with the CBR project. The challenge continues to be that of fundraising as government departments have made it clear that they have been asked to cut their budgets. This has made it difficult to write proposals aimed at raising money from the government. There is however hope that one of the DSD regions will fund our work as they asked the organisation to submit a proposal.

**2 Organisational Development**

**2.1 Staffing**

Bulelwa Mbolekwa re-joined the organisation as a Field Officer on a seven month contract that expires on the 31<sup>st</sup> of March 2010. She will be having Magdeline as a personal assistant. However Magdelene will also double up as a Provincial Admin Assistant for the same period. This has helped relieve pressure on the PDC as tasks are now being shared.

**2.2 Equipment and Assets**

The current assets of the organisation are in good shape. The challenge being faced at the moment is on computers as they are old and unreliable.

### **2.3 Office Space**

The province has no challenges when it comes to office space. The office being used at the moment can accommodate the staff employed at present.

There is need to look at improving the security of the office as people can come in and go as and when they please. The fence on the front side of the office is about a metre tall allowing people to enter willingly at night especially.

### **2.4 Governance**

The PEC held a meeting in preparation for the Council on the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> of June 2009. The meeting among other issues discussed the need to reduce membership and the response to issues that they had raised with the national chair. Critical also on the agenda was the issue of how to sustain the office

There were also two telcons and the first was dealing with issues that the chairperson was going to raise at the chairpersons meetings. The second was discussing the issue around membership. The province feels it needs to have its own membership card and account. HO will be given only money that is due to it. A decision was taken that this will take place and a form to that effect has been designed and what remains is the opening of a bank account.

## **3 Membership Development**

Since the resolution was taken at Council to reduce membership fees from R140 to R20, membership has slightly risen from 44 to 53 as of end of September

2009. Complaints have been received as to why the funeral scheme was stopped. It would appear we did not do enough consultations before we made this decision. What will not encourage disabled people to join the organisation now is the actual development of those that are members in terms of advocacy. However at the moment the organisation is going through a period of financial crisis.

It would appear for most disabled people, it is about direct benefits to people and not just being a member. Funds permitting, it will be important to develop programmes with the aim of equipping members to be able to benefit. The province is currently focusing on identifying funders that focus on advocacy and lobbying issues.

#### **4 Community Based Rehabilitation**

The PDC attended a meeting called by the DoH to try and monitor the performance of the programmes they are funding. The Department made it clear that it was not happy with the way CBR consultants were operating. The department wants them to report also to District Therapists in their districts. They are expected to produce a monthly plan of action so that it is known how they are operating. It has through the budget also made provision for site visits by the office in a bid to improve the impact of the project.

As a way of improving the capacity of the CBR consultants, a feedback meeting was organised in Sept to try and address some of the concerns of the

department and those of the consultants. The department attended the workshop and addressed the consultants.

It would seem the expectations are too high judging by the level of the consultants and also the resources for operations at their disposal. As a strategy to address the concerns, it was agreed that the consultants do their work ward by ward so that their impact can be felt. Spreading far and wide meant their impact would not be felt on the ground by beneficiaries of their services.

The recruitment of the Field Officer is expected to improve the supervision as she will be directly responsible for the project.

## **5 Awareness Raising, Advocacy, Lobbying and Networking**

Although there are no funds to have DPSA driven programmes, the PDC has been able to use other platforms to carry out this programme. Platforms such as the gender machinery and the disability forum on which there is a good representation of government departments and NGOs have been used for disability awareness-raising lobbying for disability mainstreaming. The month of Oct. has seen the office being invited through its networking with the gender machinery to make a presentation on disability to the Portfolio Committee on Quality of Life consultative meeting.

## **6 Economic Empowerment**

The office has since the arrival of the Field Officer increased its engagement with employers with a view to securing employment for disabled people. An economic expo solely aimed at educating disabled people on opportunities available is being organised for the month of October by the Department of Economic Development and Tourism.

## **7 Disabled Women's' Development Programme [DWDP]**

The committee has not met at all during the reporting period. Efforts are being made to fundraise for the project. This has not yielded any results yet.

## **8 Disabled Youth South Africa [DYSA]**

There are no funds for programmes at the moment.

## **9 Self Representation**

The PDC attended the following meetings/workshops:

- OSPD strategic planning workshop
- Provincial Disability Forum meetings
- Disabled students' motivational day
- Provincial Gender Machinery meetings
- Federal Council revival meeting
- uThungulu Municipality meeting on disability awareness
- eThekweni Municipality disability forum meeting
- Workshop on understanding Local Government
- uMzinyathi Disability Summit
- Education Summit

## **9 Leadership capacity building**

There was no leadership workshop or training held during this period.

## **10 Fund Development**

With the arrival of a Field Officer and Provincial Admin Assistant, it will create time and space for the PDC to put more effort on fund development. As part of a strategy to enable government departments to work on disability, we have agreed to get them to develop into their plans for the new financial year, programmes to address disability is in their development strategies. The office of the Premier has also agreed to address heads of departments on disability mainstreaming.

The proposal submitted to DSD in the Midlands though taking a long time will finally be funded. Plans are underway for three members of the PEC to initial the document and we hope this will be done before the end of October 2009. The PDC will continue to explore other avenues of funding in order to broaden the base.

## **11 Key Challenges**

The following are some of the challenges experienced during this reporting period:

- Security at the office remains a major challenge. There is need to erect a pallicade fence at the front.
- The office has no reliable computers and a personal laptop is being used at the moment

to email and for office work. This means in the absence of the PDC, no emails can be received or sent.

## **12 Key Activities for the Next Reporting Period**

What is critical for the next reporting period is getting the strategy approved by the government and then lobbying for government departments buy-in. It will also be critical to finally secure funding for the pilot project in the Midlands Region. This project if successful will see an increase in membership and the visibility of the organisation in that region. A sub-office will be opened for the region as is the requirement.

## **13 Conclusion**

This has been a difficult period for the provincial office due to the uncertainty of funding. It should be appreciated that the National office ensured that the provincial office remained open for another year. It is the hope of the office that funding for the province will be secured as more effort is now being put towards securing funding.