

# REPORT OF THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON WOMEN, YOUTH, CHILDREN AND PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES HELD 11 OCTOBER 2017

(DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT)

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The Mpumalanga Legislature is duly vested with a mandate to maintain oversight of provincial executive authority and any organ of state and all provincial executive authority including provincial organs of state are accountable to it in compliance with section 114 of the constitution. The legislature is independent and performs its functions impartially without prejudice enshrining the rule of law.

In terms of Standing Rules and Orders of the Mpumalanga Provincial Legislature 2013, the **Select Committee on Women, Youth, Children, and People with Disabilities** (the committee), is established in terms of Rule 135 (h) and has powers to conduct oversight on transversal issues affecting designated groups. The Committee is composed of a multiparty representation and is empowered to develop mechanisms to conduct oversight over provincial departments and public institutions.

The select committee is vested with the power to monitor, investigate and enquire into and make recommendations concerning any organ of state or constitutional body regarding transversal and transformation matters to ensure a province free from gender discrimination and inequalities in promotion of the Bill Of Rights.

The committee in accordance with Rule 119 may summon any person to appear before it to give evidence on oath/ affirmation, or to produce documents and permit oral evidence. The committee may compel an institution or a person to comply with summon subject to the rules and orders of a provincial legislation.

The Legislature seeks to establish whether provincial government delivers services effectively and efficiently within the respective local municipality areas.

## 2. PURPOSE OF THE OVERSIGHT VISIT

- To assess the efficient utilization of government funding and resources.
- To determine the impact made by the department on the improvement of quality of life to vulnerable groups in the province.

- To assess the implementation of policies by the department that seeks to improve quality of life.

### **3. METHOD OF WORK**

The Committee invited the Department of Social Development as per the programme of the Legislature and quarterly target of the committee to an oversight visit, held 11&12 October 2017, to Thushanag Stimulation Centre and KwaGuqa Advice Centre

### **4. OVERSIGHT VIIST TO THUSHANANG STIMULATION CENTRE**

#### **4.1 Background of Thushanag Stimulation Centre**

The committee visited Thushanag Stimulation Centre, a non-profit organisation situated in Nasaret extension 24 in Middelburg in the Steve Tshwete Local Municipality. The Centre was established in 2002 by Mrs. Johanna Lubisi. It provides stimulation services for children with disabilities and has an enrolment of 28 beneficiaries with an average daily attendance of 15.

The committee welcomed the initiative of Mrs. Johanna Lubisi the founder and indicates that her involvement in this Centre business should only be of a ward councilor as she has been appointed as a member of the municipality council and that the current runners take full responsibility of the Centre.

The committee noted that the Centre comprises of people from different ethnic backgrounds. The majority of the members from this community are from previously disadvantaged backgrounds. In 2016 the Steve Tshwete Local Municipality donated a stand for the Centre and registered with the Department of Social Development in December 2016.

The committee noted that the Centre provides stimulation for kids with disabilities and a crèche for normal kids and seek to know in terms of the norms and standards or the policy of the department if it does allows clustering of the two in one ground. In responding, the department indicated that there is no policy in place but it is allowed as they only use a common ground but separate classes as per their need.

The committee further noted that care givers educate the children, as per the individual needs of each child and also provide nutritious meals as approved by a dietician. The committee further noted that Middelburg Provincial Hospital provides services related to different kinds of disabilities. Physiotherapists from the Hospital visit the Centre on the monthly basis to provide support and therapy for the children.

### **Funding**

The committee welcomed the subsidy of R150 000.00 for the 2017/2018 financial year received by the center from the Department of Social Development. The subsidy is paid out in 4 quarters to the amount of R37 500-00 per quarter. The Centre further receives donations from the local Pick 'n Pay Supermarket in the form of fruit and vegetables and a local organization called CORTUS CRYP also provides food parcels as some children who are from needy homes are given to take home.

The committee further noted that SAMANCO is in negotiations with the Centre to donate a structure, since they are currently operating from an iron shack but the issue of a stand is dragging the processes as there is someone who is selling coal on the stand yard.

Furthermore, personnel receive a monthly stipend from the subsidy provided by Department of Social Development and a fee of R250-00 is expected to be paid on monthly basis by parents.

### **Networking with other service providers**

The committee noted that the Centre is affiliated to other similar organisations in the Steve Tshwete Local Municipality as it shares resources and ideas with Bonginhlaha Stimulation Centre, Middelburg Provincial Hospital to render services to children with disabilities and also has a good working relationship with the Department of Social Development as well as members Nasareth Local Clinic.

The Centre is also affiliated to the Steve Tshwete ECD Association. The Association assists them with providing different activities to stimulate the children neurologically and staff members also participate in the Local Disability Forum.

A Social Worker from the Department monitors the Centre on a monthly basis. This is to ensure that the Centre is functioning according to the Departmental Guidelines and the Social Auxiliary Worker also facilitates support groups for the children and the parents of the children at the Centre.

### **Challenges**

The committee noted that although the Centre is able to provide services efficiently from time-to-time though faced with the major challenge of proper structure. The structure that they are operating from is not conducive, but the need for the service is huge.

Furthermore, the Centre currently has 3 young people older than 18 years in its care, one is 19 years and 2 are 22 years old. The reason is that there is very limited service available for adults with special needs in the community. The matter of the three older young people is currently receiving attention. There is a need of materials like musical instruments, fabrics for sewing, painting material etc. and assistance in accessing funding from Lottery and National Art Council.

## **4.2 FINDINGS**

After the deliberations, the Committee made the following findings:

1. The land problem between the person selling coal and the centre is delaying SAMACCO in donating a proper structure to the centre.
2. There is no proper guideline which allows clustering of stimulation centre and the crèche in line with the norms and standards of the department or policy.
3. The continuous involvement of the founder though working somewhere else.

#### **4.3 RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. The department must engage the municipality in assisting the centre to acquire the land from the coal seller or get alternative land as a matter of urgency to allow SMACCO the donors to build a proper structure for the centre.
2. There department must ensure that it is in line with policy, norms and standards when clustering the stimulation centre and the crèche in one ground.
3. The department must ensure that current members of the centre take full responsibility in managing the centre in line with the requirement and policy of board members.

A Progress report and action plan should be provided on the 15 February 2018.

### **5. KWAGUQA ADVISORY CENTRE**

#### **5.1 Background of Kwaguqa Advisory Center**

The committee noted that KwaGuqa Advice Centre was established July 1998 by community members, who were assisted by the Roman Catholic Church, with a view to address the growing challenges of domestic, violence, orphan-hood as a result of HIV/AIDS, sexual abuse and poverty in their community. The organisation provides prevention and early intervention services in the Families Programme situated at Extension 4, KwaGuqa and operate five days a week from Monday to Friday.

#### **Funding**

The committee noted that the organisation was approved for a subsidy of R243 209.00 for the 2017/2018 financial year by the Department of Social Development. This amount is made up of programme funding of R159 708.00 and a stipend for the care worker and social auxiliary worker (R83, 501.00). The subsidy is paid out in 4 quarters.

The committee welcomed with appreciation the annual donation of R30, 000.00 from the Aulai Trust which is used for the running costs of the office, as well as for the payment of stipends.

#### **Services rendered by the organisation**

The committee noted that the organization renders marriage counselling and marriage enrichment services. The organisation also advocates on behalf of clients in cases such as applications for life documents, social grants and inquiries regarding estates and provident funds. The advice office also links and refers cases to relevant stakeholders such as the Legal Aid Office, Department of Social Development, Home Affairs, SASSA and the Department of Labour.

The committee noted that the organisation also provides food parcels and clothing to the needy; they provide the community with educational programmes on parenting, sex education, the effect of HIV/AIDS and the adherence to treatment. The KwaGuqa Advice Office also provides rehabilitation services for substance abusers through the ploughing of the vegetable garden. In addressing the spread of the HIV/AIDS infection, the organisation provides social behaviour change programmes in the form of Families Matters. In this programme volunteers educate parents on parenting.

Furthermore the committee noted that substances abuse is anomalous in this area hence the centre do provide rehabilitation programmes and seeks to know how the centre is known to the community and what campaigns programme are in place in reducing this challenge.

In responding, the department indicated that there are campaigns in place like Umoja programmes whereby they visit school and the most abusers of alcohol are the youth working in the surroundings mines. The committee noted the response but was not convinced as the level of impact should indicate by showing a different result.

### **Networking with other service providers**

The organisation is represented by staff members on various committees relevant to its field of service. Staff members participate in the eMalahleni Local Families' Forum, the Nkangala District Forum, as well as the Provincial Forum of Families. The organisation maintains good working relationships with the Department of Social Development, South African Police Services, Department of Health, Love Life, Legal Resource Centre and Human Rights.

### **Challenges**

The organisation encounters different challenges from time-to-time as they strive to provide an effective and quality service to the community. Crime is one of the serious problems that have affected the organisation, since computers and food parcels were stolen from the offices.

A KwaGuqa Advice Satellite Office was started at Spring Valley, but due to financial constraints the service had to be discontinued. The organisation also has a high backlog, but the subsidy from the Department of Social Development has not increased.

## **5.2 FINDINGS**

After the deliberations, the Committee made the following findings:

1. Substance abuse amongst the youth is abnormally high in the area and there is inadequate educational awareness campaign to address the situation.
2. Crime is a serious problem that has affected the organisation, since computers and food parcels were stolen from their offices.
3. There is a high backlog on cases due to the increased number of clients after the closure of the satellite in Spring Valley.

### 5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The department must strengthen its educational and awareness campaign on substance abuse.
2. The Centre must partner with SAPS and CPF and DSD to combat crime.
3. The department must assist the centre with technical and financial resources to fast-track the processing of backlog cases.

Progress report should be provided to the committee by 15 February 2018.

### 6. CONCLUSION

The Chairperson extended his appreciation to Members of the Committee, the centres and the support staff of the Legislature for their participation during the deliberations. The Committee tables this report to the House for adoption with its recommendations and progress to be provided to the committee by 15 February 2018.

**HON AM GAMEDE (MPL)**

**CHAIRPERSON: SELECT COMMITTEE ON WOMEN,  
YOUTH, CHILDREN, AND PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES**

25/10/2017

**DATE**