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This month we reopened our three legal clinics which we suspended for the month of September. We were able to successfully close over 60 cases and in turn received over 67 new ones varying from walk-in to legal clinic clients. This makes our current open case status 827 and our closed case status 2578. Our client numbers still continue to grow on a daily basis and since we have less than two months left before we close for the holiday season, we have decided our last day for client intake will be on 15 December 2016.

## SOCIAL JUSTICE PROJECT UPDATES

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### ■ Siyakhathala – Khayelitsha Township

#### Report: Daniel de Jongh

We have been enlisted to assist a single mother of three in obtaining a disability grant on the basis of being terminally ill with cancer. As a result of having cancer the client is unable to work and therefore not able to financially provide for her family. We advised her to consult with a doctor so that she can obtain a medical report, which is needed to apply for a disability grant. The client therefore obtained the medical report and was successful in her application for the disability grant, which she will start receiving this November.

As the client has cancer, and needs more than just financial support, we have been in contact with CANSA (Cancer Association of South Africa) in order to see what else can be done to assist the client.

### ■ Vredelus

#### Report: Lasse Nitschmann

Various anti-bullying campaigns have been launched in South Africa due to a cyber-bullying video that went viral. This particular cyber-bullying video had social media buzzing and according to various psychologists one of the reasons for bullying stems from a low self-image. Thus it was important for us to talk to the inmates about how they perceived themselves and how they think the 'outside world' perceives them. We talked about what a good self-image is, how to think positively about one self, how to deal with insecurities in a positive manner, and not bullying people in order to feel good. This particular workshop promoted open discussion and allowed the volunteers and inmates to connect on a personal level by relating personal experiences to what was learned.

### ■ Lindelani

#### Report: Emma Hagle

October has been declared Mental Health Awareness Month and as such we took the opportunity to educate the inmates about various mental health problems, the stigmas thereof and the discrimination people with mental illnesses face. Most of the inmates associated their mental health with being 'crazy' and were surprised to discover anxiety, depression, stress and substance abuse are all part of mental health problems, which they have all suffered from. This workshop allowed the volunteers and inmates to share their personal experiences with mental health issues, as well as gave them the opportunity to give each other advice on how to deal with certain situations.

### ■ Bonnytoun

#### Report: Lasse Nitschmann

We did a workshop on 'What to do when you get out'. Many of the boys have become despondent due to being incarcerated and no longer having the freedom to do as they please. The workshop entailed hyping the boys up about their future dreams, goals and getting them to reflect on their past decisions and how making better decisions will affect what they want to achieve. During the workshop we could see the physical changes in the boys as they became chatty and shared what they envisioned for their future. Some of the boys stated that they regret making decisions which have led to them being incarcerated. Some stated that they were lucky not to be in prison and that being incarcerated has changed them, and made them want to better themselves.

## LEGAL SERVICES

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This month we received 45 new cases from all the legal clinics.

### ■ Maria Mulindi

#### Refugee Matter

Our client visited our office in 2012 seeking assistance with resettlement. Our client's husband, also a refugee, had been murdered following a robbery on the train a few years prior to her coming to our office. Our client since then had struggled to provide for their family of five children. She was raped in front of her children and subsequently robbed and raped at gun point one evening on her way home from work. Due to the trauma experienced she became fearful of going to work and their living conditions deteriorated. We assisted her in obtaining free trauma counselling, but she could not afford travel expenses to the centre. We lodged an application for a protection assessment ergo resettlement in 2013 with the UNHCR. We persistently followed up on the case, and several volunteers have assisted since 2012.

The client is now being resettled in the USA in November. The client came in to thank us personally and encouraged us to keep assisting refugees.

### ■ Sherwin Daniels

#### Annelies Blondé – Criminal Case

I attended court with the legal services coordinator where we represented our client in a murder trial. Our client is one of five accused that are being charged with aggravated murder – allegedly being part of a gang and killing someone in a gang related activity in 2013.

The state called two witnesses that testified; one being an eye witness, who had previously been charged for the same murder that the others are accused of. He however, entered into an agreement with the State and gave evidence against his fellow gang members. Upon giving testimony, the eye witness' version of events differed from what he had previously told the police on the day in question. The attorneys cross examined him on these discrepancies to a point where he was no longer deemed a credible witness. The second witness placed only our client and one other accused on the scene of the crime - but again the attorneys for the aforementioned accused manage to discredit his version of events. At the close of the State's case, all the defence attorneys made an application to the court in terms of Section 174 of the Criminal Procedure Act. The arguments placed by the attorneys resulted in the court agreeing that the value of the evidence by the State was not sufficient. Our client was then acquitted of all charges. The Court made an order that the eye witness will not be indemnified from prosecution in terms of Section 204 of the Criminal Procedure Act, due to him not being a credible witness.

### ■ Miriam MacDonald

#### Hugo Parnell - Property Matter

Our client rented out his property to tenants for over eight years, however they have now vacated the premises without our client's knowledge and other people have taken occupation. Our client does not know who these people are and has asked them to vacate, however a protection order was obtained against him. We do not currently know the allegations that were contained therein. We are currently doing research into the Prevention of Illegal Eviction Act in the hopes of finding information that could benefit the client. We are also currently drafting the necessary eviction documentation.

## CONCLUSION

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The end of the year is quickly approaching, and our volunteer numbers have dropped significantly - we currently have ten volunteers.

As fate would have it, our client numbers are ever increasing and the cases we are handling are seemingly more complex. Be that as it may, we take our cue from the Angolan freedom fights of old 'aluta continua'. The fight for human rights rages on.