



Alliance for Children's Entitlement to Social Security

ACCESS

NEWS LETTER - MAY 2015

Greetings to everyone from the ACCESS Board!

ACCESS is still active because many of its members are still active!

The Secretariat of ACCESS, just like many NGOs, also experienced financial difficulties which left us with no choice but to downsize the operations in order to save the Alliance. As a result, this enabled us to keep a very low profile as a Secretariat and the focus became ensuring the Alliance continues using the limited resources we had. As a result the Secretariat of ACCESS is housed at CINDI, a member of ACCESS and a network of organisations working with children in distress. This transfer occurred in the New Year and Rekha Nathoo, Director of CINDI is now the contact person for ACCESS.

Please feel free to contact Rekha at CINDI on Tel # 033 357994. In this arrangement, ACCESS retains its identity and its legal status as a Non-Profit organisation, while the day to day operations of ACCESS are managed by CINDI. As Trustees we are excited by this partnership with CINDI which is providing ACCESS with an opportunity revitalise itself in strengthening social security access and rights for children in South Africa.

The ACCESS database needs to be updated so that we can ensure our members continue to receive regular communication from us. We would like to request that you kindly to work with CINDI via email or post or telephone to update these. We are excited that this very vital Alliance is surviving and is continuing to take forward the struggles of social security for children together.

Yours, together in Children's Rights!

Policy issues: Minister for the sake of orphans and grandmothers please fix the foster care crisis urgently!

According to orphan statistics from the General Household Survey, 2011, if paternal orphans are included we reach a staggering 3, 9 million orphans in South Africa. More than two thirds of these orphans are living in poverty and are therefore in need of an adequate social grant. The foster care system is not coping - there is a backlog of about 300 000 cases which means children are not receiving the support they need. The Children's Institute, Black Sash, CINDI, ACCESS and others are working with the Department of Social Development to find a better solution for kinship carers such as through a simple administrative, rather than a social worker and court based system. We will continue to keep you updated on this development and how to get involved.

Policy issues: The White Paper for Social Welfare is under review

The Minister of Social Development appointed a 15 member Ministerial Committee to review the White Paper for Social Welfare (1997) and the ACCESS and CINDI Secretariat will use this space to share with you the planned processes of engagements with civil society. The first meeting with civil society takes place in Johannesburg on 23-24 June 2014. Contact Ms I M Sekawana and Ms G Rapoo at (012) 3127430 or email Isobella.Sekawana@dsd.gov.za or Galeboer@dsd.gov.za for further information.

**The ACCESS Secretariat
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Children go hungry but may get a social grant without documents.

Since 2008, anyone is allowed to use alternative documents to apply for a grant if they don't have an Identity Document or a birth certificate. The amended Regulations to the Social Assistance Act 2004 came about as a result of litigation brought by ACESS.

After 5 years ACESS did research to understand how well the Alternative Documents Regulations are being implemented and what the challenges are in the field for communities and SASSA.

The study found that after 5 years of the Regulations, the lack of documents continues to be a common barrier to accessing grants.

There is still widespread lack of knowledge from community up to government level in departments about the Regulations. In every community visited in the ACESS study there were substantial numbers of community members that were not accessing the CSG or other grants because they lacked documents.

While there has been an improvement generally in the rate of access to identity documents and birth certificates, there are still many poor and vulnerable families and children who do not have documents such as identity documents and birth certificates. These groups of people need to be made aware that it is possible to be helped

To get a copy of the full reports, email access@cindi.org.za.



SASSA invites civil society to local stakeholder forums

ACCESS closed with a bang in December 2014 after a meeting with SASSA in the East London. Many members in the EC attended the meeting which focussed on the implementation of Regulation 11 and which allows people to apply for a social grant without an ID or birth certificate. Delegates at the meeting agreed that community organisations and local decision-makers must close the communication gap and find solutions together. SASSA is reviving their local stakeholders forums nationally and are committed to ensure access for ACCESS and community members to this space.

Phone the ACESS Secretariat, Rekha at 033 345 7994 OR email Suzanne at access@cindi.org.za to find out how your organisation may join stakeholder forums in your local community or watch this space for further details.

ACCESS members meeting in Umtata, OR Tambo district.

The workshop was attended by participants from various sub-districts and local towns including Bizana, Port St Johns, Flagstaf, Lusikisiki, Qumbu, King Williams Town, Ngcobo, Jersey Farm, Elliot dale, Mqanduli and Umthatha

Nomzamo Ndubeki from UCARC (speaking) Her organisation also assisted in the arrangement of the local logistics for the workshop.