



# Cape Town Refugee Centre

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## NEW EMPLOYEES / INTERNS

## INFORMATION MANUAL

ORIENTATION MANUAL FOR INCOMING NEW EMPLOYEES / INTERNS / VOLUNTEERS AT THE CAPE TOWN REFUGEE CENTRE

# Welcome!

We are honoured to be chosen by you to share your skills and knowledge with us at CTRC.

## BRIEF HISTORY AND STRUCTURAL OVERVIEW

The Cape Town Refugee Centre was established in 1994. In light of Nelson Mandela's release from prison, many of the South African exiles whom had gone to Angola and Zimbabwe during Apartheid began to return "home." A large number of Angolans flooded into South Africa during this same period of time (1992-1996) in order to escape the Angolan Civil War. Both displaced groups were assisted by the Cape Town Refugee Centre, though aid then was primarily material: food, rent, and clothing. The continued occurrence of political conflicts across sub-Saharan Africa (such as those of the DRC, Rwanda, Burundi, and Somalia) has displaced yet more individuals into South Africa, and resultantly the Cape Town Refugee Centre has extended assistance over the past 1.5 decades to an entire range of asylum populations

The Cape Town Refugee Centre is a humanitarian organization established with the aim of devising ways to address problems facing the growing number of refugees and asylum seekers in the Western Cape. Organisations such as the Red Cross Society of South Africa, the Trauma Centre, Catholic Welfare and Development, Catholic Justice and Peace, the Salesians and others, as well as representatives of refugees and asylum seekers and a number of concerned local individuals also played an important role in the development of the Centre.

It must be emphasized that refugees/asylum seekers are not illegal immigrants, but are people who have legal rights to international protection in terms of the United Nations Refugee Convention, to which South Africa is a signatory. They are people who have been forced to flee from war or persecution in their own countries. Many arrive in South Africa with nothing, as they have to flee leaving all their possessions behind.

Although there are other organizations in the Western Cape which assist refugees and asylum seekers, the Centre is the only one that has a comprehensive approach to service provision. The organization's main funder is the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Funding comes from the South African Department of Social Services, the UNHCR, as well as from private donors. As the most substantive donor, the UNHCR also exerts the most influence over the Centre. Quarterly audits assure that contributed money is being allocated and spent according to the strict rules and guidelines of the UNHCR programmes, while internationally established standards related to refugee issues must also govern the Center's theoretical and executive norms.

Refugees and asylum seekers coming to the CTRC thereby fall within the jurisdiction of two complementary legal frameworks: that of the UNHCR and that of the Republic of South Africa. Both accept the following definition, taken from UNHCR \*\*statute\*\*:

### **A person who,**

"(a) owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted by reason of his or her race, tribe, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership of a particular social group, is outside the country of his or her nationality and is unable or unwilling to avail himself or herself of the protection of that country, or, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his or her former habitual residence is unable or, owing to such fear, unwilling to return to it; or

(b) Owing to external aggression, occupation, foreign domination or events seriously disturbing or disrupting public order in either a part or the whole of his or her country of origin or nationality, is compelled to leave his or her place of habitual residence in order to seek refuge elsewhere:

### **Or**

(c) is a dependant of a person contemplated in paragraph (a) or (b).

The Cape Town Refugee Centre complies with these international guidelines; however, it is not their job to determine who is eligible for refugee status. That is the responsibility of the South African Department of Home Affairs (located in Maitland for the Western Cape). It is only after individuals apply for asylum or are formally recognized as refugees that the CTRC is able to provide them with any sort of assistance.

The South African Refugee Act, No. 30 of 1998, invokes the primary domestic guidelines for the determination of refugee status, as well as the rights and obligations granted to those individuals who qualify. A person who



wants to be recognized as a refugee must first apply for a temporary 'asylum seeker' status (Section 22 permit) while his/her application for refugee status (Section 24 permit) is being assessed:

The Centre is registered as a not-for-profit organization and an affiliate of the National Consortium on Refugee Affairs.

## **VISION**

The Cape Town Refugee Centre strives to improve the quality of life of refugees/asylum seekers by meeting their basic needs on short-term basis and enable them to become self-reliant and self sufficient through capacity building.

## **MISSION**

We aim to engage refugees/asylum seekers in the improvement of quality of their lives through capacity building, networking, lobbying, advocacy and integration into their host communities.

## **VALUES**

To render its services the Centre adheres to the following values:-

- ❖ All our clients are equal.
- ❖ Our services are rendered in such a manner that the dignity of a client is honoured.
- ❖ Our services are made accessible to all those who qualify for them
- ❖ Our services are people-centered as services are based on their needs.

## **OBJECTIVES**

- ❖ To provide destitute refugees and asylum seekers with basic and fundamental needs.
- ❖ To network with other stakeholders regarding refugee issues.
- ❖ To assist in the development of training and capacity-building programmes for refugees and asylum seekers.
- ❖ To give moral support to refugees and asylum seekers.
- ❖ To employ qualified workers to carry out duties of the organization.
- ❖ To ensure that refugees and asylum seekers are self-supportive by involving them in income-generating programmes.
- ❖ To ensure the effectiveness and efficiency of the programme, the Centre has solicited the expertise of relevant partners in this field.



**THE CAPE TOWN REFUGEE CENTRE (CTRC)** As an implementing partner of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the CTRC's prime directive is to allocate the funding it receives from this international body and execute necessary assistance programmes at the grassroots, community, and domestic levels. Our organisation consists of three distinct programmes, each covering a number of pertinent re-integration issues.

**THE PSYCHO SOCIAL INTERVENTION (PSIT)** team, Anell Olivier (Snr Social worker), Thembele Lena (Social Worker) and Social Counselor Fwamba Mukole, normally provides the first interaction with incoming clients. They are in charge of collecting basic information, evaluating cases, distributing food and rent assistance, as well as a number of other case-specific tasks. Since this department sees the bulk of refugee clients, many interns spend their time assisting within this particular programme division.

**THE EDUCATION PROGRAMME**, was established to assist clients with primary and secondary educational needs. The burden of school fees and uniform costs often leads refugee parents not to enrol their children in South African schools, so the education programme can help cover these expenses given the necessary documentation. Assistance can also be provided for crèche (nursery school). Unfortunately, the CTRC is currently unable to assist with tertiary / higher education.

**THE SELF-RELIANCE PROGRAMME**, lead by Phaladi Kotsie, empowers refugees and asylum seekers to transcend aid dependency and reconstruct their own sustainable livelihoods. Often incoming clients possess an entrepreneurial spirit, wanting to operate a small business within the informal economy, but they merely lack the necessary capital to launch such a venture. Others want to acquire technical skills (welding, domestic work, sewing, etc.) in order to make themselves more competitive in the South African job market. This programme assists a limited number of applicants with business capital and skills training for those reasons.

**Depending on your academic and professional background, it is largely up to you to decide where you best fit within the organisation's various programme structures.**

- ❖ **The PSYCHO-SOCIAL INTERVENTION team** often accepts a number of interns at one time who assist with interviewing and managing a number of clients. Appropriate disciplinary backgrounds have recently included: social work; psychology; political science; anthropology; international development; linguistics; and law.
- ❖ Interns with a business, or marketing, International relations background or interested in advocacy might be keen to work within the **SELF-RELIANCE PROGRAMME**. Here they will gain information on cultural environments and its effects on business as well as the relationship between locals and refugees. Due to the fact that xenophobia are in most cases directly related to work or small businesses (both in the formal and informal sector), the intern will be exposed to workshops and advocacy programmes covering these issues.
- ❖ **EDUCATION PROGRAMME** welcome's Interns who are interested in gaining experience with children of school going age will benefit from joining this program. In addition to the screening for vulnerability of clients to assess their education financial needs, this program also cover various forms of group work, and training or educating students both local and refugees on human rights and rights of refugee and asylum-seekers through social dialogues, cultural festivals, sports activities for refugee/asylum-seeker as well as the local children in schools. Group sessions to educate parents on the importance of sending their children to school and the benefits of education, especially where religion and culture are prescribing girls to be reared with the only role as wife, mother and home maker and therefore education are not recognised as important to girls.
- ❖ Some interns prefer to rotate between the 3 programmes in order to get a holistic experience of the challenges the refugees experience in South Africa.
- ❖ Should you commit to start off in one department and decide at a later stage to move to a different department or would like to be exposed to all the different programmes in the organisation you are welcome to do so.



# PSYCHO-SOCIAL PROGRAMME

The psycho-social department provides basic assistance to new arrivals and vulnerable refugees and asylum seekers. Individual and family support is provided for food, shelter, referrals for counselling or training, medical assistance for glasses as well as assistance with funerals.

## DIFFERENT TYPE'S OF ASSISTANCE

- ❖ The psycho-social intervention department works has two different types of assistance, long term and short term. A list of the assistance for the psycho-social department can be found in your **working procedure manual**. Budget lines 312, 410, and 416 assistances are short term (once off or maximum of three months), and 419 assistances are long term.
- ❖ Long term assistance includes unaccompanied minor grants, chronically ill / disabled grants, and elderly grants.
- ❖ Short term assistance includes assistance with food and rent. The majority of new arrivals seek short term assistance with food and rent. If they fall under the category of 'vulnerable' which is not definitely defined, but more broadly interpreted by situation, they may be eligible for assistance. It is preferable to refer people to the business department, for business is a sustainable form of assistance, but many people struggle with more immediate needs.
- ❖ For those who struggle with the most immediate of needs, people who are homeless can be set up in a shelter. List of shelters that people can be referred to can be found in the **Resources booklet / List**.
- ❖ The most useful and most common referrals are to **Scalabrini** and **Aresta**, which offer an array of services for refugees including but not limited to assistance in finding employment, English classes and sewing programs. Maps with directions to these places are available for the refugees who are not familiar with these organisations. Another common referral is to St. Joseph Marists College, 21 Belmont Street in Rondebosch for free English classes on Saturday mornings at 8:30.
- ❖ Some people obviously need assistance, but many people fall into a vague category of 'could use assistance, but not immediately vulnerable'. For these people, referrals are very good, as well as possible home visits to gain more information. You can also call the person back for another interview. If they came by themselves the first time, you can ask them to come back with their spouse to get a fuller view of the family and their situation. Call backs are also helpful when the person doesn't bring all of their information the first time. It is important, when seeing a new refugee, to see their permit and make a copy of it, as well as the permits of their spouses and children. It is also helpful to get copies of the kids' clinic cards, and medical forms, if they have them, as well as school papers. If the person claims that they have a medical condition, you can give them a medical form to get filled out by their doctor, to confirm that they can't work because of their medical condition.
- ❖ For new arrivals in the country/western cape immediate assistance in the form of food vouchers or cash to purchase food or find accommodation/work can be provided as "**emergency assistance**".
- ❖ For the "**non emergency**" vulnerable clients rent will be paid into the landlord's bank account once a home visit has been performed and vulnerability confirmed. Food vouchers (only issued on Thursdays to clients previously allocated with voucher slips) can be allocated to clients in need of food. Should you have a client in need of food, consult with one of the Psycho social intervention team members and they will issue a voucher slip to the client to collect the vouchers on the following Thursday.
- ❖ Clients should not be assisted from more than one form of assistance available under the Psycho social budget, but rather the more urgent of the forms of assistance needed. (**e.g.** Clients can only receive assistance toward rent or food. )
- ❖ . Should both be extremely urgent one of his form of assistance **e.g.** rent have to be reduced in order to make sure that his total assistance do not exceed the assistance allowed by the organisations guidelines. (**see implementing procedures**)
- ❖ The only time the above rule will not apply is for a new arrival who would be assisted with all basic requirements to enable him/her to integrate into society and become self-reliant.
- ❖ In addition to the above clients (not new arrivals) should only benefit from either psycho-social programme or the Self-reliance programme.



- ❖ Education programme assistance can be given in addition to the above programs when a client who have benefited from the psychosocial program is vulnerable and without employment, or when a client has been newly assisted in the Self –reliance programme and therefore are still working towards becoming self-reliant and be able to support himself and his family.
- ❖ The reason for the organization to limit clients assistance in the above manner is to provide as many vulnerable refugees as possible with some type of assistance, as funding is limited and the number of refugees are constantly increasing in South Africa
- ❖ Should you interview a client and he/she meet the standards for a long term grant (Elderly / Disabled / chronically ill / UAM) client should be referred to a social worker. In the case of Disabled / chronically ill adults of Children a **Medical Form** can be given to them to take to their doctor to verify their medical condition, before referring them to a social worker.

## THE INTERVIEW

- ❖ When a refugee comes to the centre for the first time, after waiting in the waiting room, they will be called in by either a social worker or an intern in the psycho-social development program.
- ❖ The refugee will be initially assessed within the framework of the Initial assessment form (a copy can be found in the master handbook of forms). Basic information of name, address, telephone number, email, will be taken down as well as information about the persons living situation, the job situation, and plans for the future.

**Check the permit for expiry date, where the date has expired checks the back of the paper for extension stamps. None with an expired permit will be assisted, send them to Home affairs.**

### Summary of Vulnerable People

- ❖ People who have entered the country in the last 6 months.
- ❖ Single woman who have recently entered the country.
- ❖ Single women with minor children.
- ❖ Pregnant women
- ❖ Unaccompanied minors
- ❖ Elderly
- ❖ Sick / disabled / chronically ill persons.

**Please note that this list is not complete each case will determine the vulnerability of the person.**

- ❖ The client must always give you a complete address that would suffice a home visit. No one will be assisted without a complete address.
- ❖ Where they are not together, ask about the spouse, where they are and why they were unable to come together.
- ❖ With single women who claim the husband ran away/left/refused to take responsibility for the child probe to find out; the husband's full names, when the husband left, why he left and the last time he had contact with the family. This is not to embarrass the woman but to make sure that the story checks out.
- ❖ In the case where the client has children always obtain the **child's permits / baby clinic card**. Again no assistance will be given without correct documentation.
- ❖ One thing that is helpful to assess the living situation is ask the monthly rent cost. For the job situation it is helpful to ask, if the person is not employed, as is often the case, when the persons' last job was, and what it was.
- ❖ Ask how they have been paying for the rent for where they are staying, and how they will be paying should you assist them with rent for a month. If they cannot give you a indication of how they will be able to pay the future rent you might have to guide them into alternatives **e.g.** finding cheaper accommodation, try and refer them for possible small business assistance, or if no way out help to place them in a shelter or other cheap accommodation until they will be able to support themselves financially.
- ❖ Should you feel the client is vulnerable and a candidate for assistance inform the client that a home visit will be performed at his residence within the following 2 weeks to verify his vulnerability and information.
- ❖ After the assessment, it is good to reflect on the vulnerability of the person. Several factors make the person vulnerable and more applicable for assistance.



# SELF RELIANCE PROGRAMME

The self reliance program is designed to equip refugees and Asylum seekers with practical and technical skills for employment; as well as facilitate a process of initiating income generation ventures to achieve self reliance and economic independence. Refugee and Asylum seekers can apply for financial assistance to the following programmes.

## MICRO-GRANTS FOR THEIR ENTREPRENEURIAL ACTIVITIES

- ❖ This component focus mainly on unemployed refugees/asylum-seekers who seek to be self reliant through a small business venture in order to support themselves and their families.
- ❖ All Clients are requested to submit a one page business proposal together with a quotation from the supplier for their business stock / products.
- ❖ Assessment Interview is performed to ascertain the commitment of the applicant as well as the vulnerability and needs in order to decide if the client meet the criteria to benefit from the programme
- ❖ Thereafter business site/home visits are conducted to assess feasibility and verify venue details of business plan or proposal as well as vulnerability claims.
- ❖ Business stock or equipment are purchased and delivered to the client by a CTRC finance staff member accompanied by the client.
- ❖ Clients who receive business assistance in the form of equipment or machinery are required to sign a “use of equipment” agreement with CTRC.
- ❖ This agreement stipulates that in the case of business closure of the client leaving the country the equipment have to be returned to CTRC and will then be transferred to a suitable applicant or candidate who have applied for assistance from the self-reliance programme.
- ❖ Monitoring visits take place after the recipients of assistance from the self-reliance programme have started operating their business.
- ❖ Continuous monitoring will be performed from time to time to review the success of the programme.

## FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR VOCATIONAL SKILLS TRAINING

- ❖ The Program aim at exposing women and men into skills training to equip them with professional and technical skills, that after completion of the training the trainees are able to find employment and become self reliant.
- ❖ The identification of training programs is based on job trends. For the first quarter the focus is mainly on the following courses: Bricklaying, plastering, plumbing, home care, cooking etc.
- ❖ All applicants are assessed to see if they have Basic English skills, successful applicants are invited for an assessment interview. The unsuccessful clients who do not have basic English skills are referred to **Aresta** or **Scalabrini** for basic English training
- ❖ Prospective trainees are invited to attend information sessions to inform them about application process and procedures and issuing of application forms. Applicants are advised to complete their application forms and return it with a quotation or Invoice of the training institution providing the training course they wish to follow.
- ❖ Suitable clients are called back for Interviews to assess the client’s vulnerability and commitments to successful complete the course.
- ❖ Institutions and training courses of the applicants are reviewed and verified as reputable and recognised by employers.
- ❖ All clients can only be assisted for skills training once in order to allow more vulnerable refugees to benefit from the program.
- ❖ Follow up calls are made to one the clients have completed their training in order to gain information of the success rate of finding employment and to identify the trend of the industries and the need of certain skills.



## **FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE AND FACILITATION IN TRANSLATING, EVALUATING AND CERTIFYING OF QUALIFICATIONS.**

- ❖ This Program only assists refugee and asylum seekers that hold a Tertiary foreign qualification from a University or National Diploma from a college to:
- ❖ Payment to translate their qualifications by a sworn translator into English.
- ❖ Evaluation of qualifications by SAQA (South African Qualification Authority). In order to join a industry in South Africa that the refugee holds a degree or diploma in his qualifications has to be verified by SAQA as a recognised qualification and at which level it is recognised.
- ❖ Registration to professional Councils (e.g. Nursing, HPCSA, Pharmacy etc.). All Medical professionals has to write examinations from the different medical councils to verify and evaluate their knowledge in relation to the standard of the South African Medical Professional councils before they are allowed to practise their profession..
- ❖ These examinations are costly and expensive and most refugees are unable to pay these fees in order to be recognised as a medical professional in South Africa.

**In addition to the financial assistance the Self Reliance department  
Advocates and Lobbies with relevant Government Departments,  
Network with relevant stakeholders  
to support activities that support refugee programmes in the Western Cape.**



# EDUCATION PROGRAMME

The Education department implements measures to increase enrolment and retention rate for girls and boys into schools through providing of financial assistance for- School fees, School transport fees, books/stationery and School Uniform.

## THE EDUCATION PROGRAMME PROVIDES THE FOLLOWING SERVICES:

- ❖ Facilitate and guide refugee learners for their enrolment in primary and secondary schools.
- ❖ Guide less affluent refugee parents in getting fee exemptions available from the government school.
- ❖ Organize workshops on the importance and value of formal education with Somali community
- ❖ Primary and secondary students are assisted with school fees, text books, uniforms and transport allowance
- ❖ Children with special needs attend special educational programs in school
- ❖ Parent Program established with Parent Centre for clients with 4 or more children to attend program.
- ❖ Assistance is provided to these parents on parenting skills
- ❖ Assist in referral to CTRC teacher employed to teach French language to refugees who's second language is French

## The Education Department also has Advocacy Campaigns and workshop to:

- ❖ Educate educators / students on the rights of refugees/asylum-seekers through social dialogues, cultural festivals, sports activities.
- ❖ Student life skills workshops
- ❖ Social dialogues for refugee/asylum-seeker children in schools.
- ❖ Sport events organized in the schools.

## ASSESSMENT INTERVIEWS:-

- ❖ are performed to assist the vulnerability of the client in order to decide the extend and type of assistance.
- ❖ Most vulnerable clients / students are given school books and stationery as well as uniforms in addition to school fees when needed
- ❖ However uniforms assistance should not be given every year but only when student change schools or at least 3-4 years apart for students who have outgrown their uniform.
- ❖ School stationery and books as well as school transport will be given to the same students annually however assessments should be done annually before extending the assistance to assess vulnerability.
- ❖ Students / clients cannot receive assistance with school fees as well as assistance with school transport. Clients are advised that they can only be assisted with either school fees or school transport to allow us to assist a greater number of vulnerable refugees / asylum keepers.
- ❖ Due to the Budget constraint parents are requested to apply for exemption for school or send their children to the nearest school in order to keep the costs as low as possible.
- ❖ Exceptions apply to special cases of **new arrivals or children of vulnerable single mothers** should they not be successful in receiving a full exemption or due to language difficulties should their children be forced to travel to schools in a different suburb. In these cases assistance with both school fees and transport fees can be provided should the funds are still available in the budget.
- ❖ However home visits should be performed to confirm the place of residence in order to verify the distance to the school and therefore the need of transport fees.

