

HOPE Cape Town Community Outreach Centre – Blikkiesdorp

A Holistic Approach

HOPE Cape Town has operated the community outreach centre in Blikkiesdorp for ten years and has the reputation of being community-centric in the delivery of services and programmes. The objective is to increase and improve the contribution to the empowerment of marginalized communities where the activities focus on:

- First 1 000 Days programme for new mothers, babies and toddlers
- Early learning and school preparedness for pre-school children
- Literacy and Numeracy assistance and school retention for primary school learners
- Improving Maths and English and information technology and school retention for high school learners
- Dual Vocational Training and Education for Youth
- Social services, community health services, sport & recreation and food security for all

Community empowerment and influence can happen when groups are equipped with a spectrum of tools and tactics for influencing their future and quality of life. To achieve this, we need to fill the gap between the current situation and the desired situation according to the needs of the communities through the following objectives and interventions:

1. Engage with the Department of Health, Department of Social Development, Department of Basic Education to identify and address the needs of the community at community level
2. Equip children with the necessary skills and opportunities to reach their full potential
3. Accompany communities on their journey to identify and access opportunities to effect sustainable improvement of their living standards and quality of life

1. Engage with Department of Health to identify needs and ways to address them at community level:

- Occupational Therapist sessions
- Visits from municipal clinic healthcare officers to conduct medical examinations for babies, children and adults
- Psychosocial consultations substance abuse, sexual abuse and domestic violence
- HIV and TB testing and counselling

2. Equip children with the skills and opportunities to reach their full potential:

- School preparation for children of school going age not attending school
- Social Worker assistance for parents/guardians to enrol children in a public school
- After-School academic assistance in numeracy and literacy
- School holiday programme entertainment, sports and games
- School uniforms, stationery, books and supplies distribution project

3. Community Outreach:

- Community garden
- Soup kitchen
- Emergency response
- Wellness days
- Venue for other organisations – NGOs/government
- Participating in civil society forums
- Social clubs

Conclusion

Since its inception the centre has become a safe space for the community, especially for the children. The HOPE Cape Town staff and volunteers are seen as role models as they enable people to develop their skills and knowledge. For most of the children who attend the different programmes at the centre it is often the only time that they receive a nutritious meal and supervised but carefree play, hence the centre is a beacon of hope as well as a “home from home” since many of them identify their own families with words such as neglect, violence and abuse.

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