

+SECTION27
catalysts for social justice

Barriers

AND BREAK THROUGHS Upholding rights in crises

ANNUAL
REPORT
2025

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You can also consult with our paralegals via WhatsApp or telephonically on 060 754 0751 or 067 419 6841.



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We extend our special thanks to the following individuals for their valuable contributions to this Annual Review: Patience Phiri, Gillian Pillay, Pearl Nicodemus, Lehlohonolo Manare, Julie Staples, Khanyisa Mapipa, Khuselwa Dyantyi, Kuda Chimone, Marcus Low, Sasha Stevenson, Violet Kaseke-Palmer and Zeenat Sujee.



Message from **Board Chair & Executive Director**

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We write this message having worked together as SECTION27 Board Chair and Executive Director since August 2025. SECTION27 bid farewell to longstanding chair, Alice Brown and board member, Brian Brink in 2025, and welcomed Nasreen Rajab-Budlender as a new member of our Board. Alice and Brian are missed, but their dedication to SECTION27 has stood the organisation in good stead for 2025 and the years to come, including through the R60,000 that Alice raised for SECTION27 in her departure fundraiser!

In a year of US funding withdrawals and global uncertainty, SECTION27 has excelled. Through court action, we secured access to healthcare services for migrants and access to reading material for learners who are blind and visually impaired.

Through monitoring the implementation of court orders, we have secured proper sanitation in 559 Priority 1 schools in Limpopo, with only five Priority 1 schools still lacking safe toilets in the province.

Through our rights literacy work on civic education and sexual and reproductive health rights in schools, we conducted 38 workshops and reached nearly 1400 learners across multiple provinces in 2025. We held eight workshops with community forums on School Governing Body roles, whistleblowing and budget literacy.

In 2025, our Advice Office responded to a total of 567 matters, 273 of which were health related, with access to migrant health as the most common matter, along with persistent barriers in accessing abortion services.

We have made 30 written and oral submissions to Parliament and other institutional bodies, and released six publications.

We are incredibly grateful to our donors and supporters for making this work possible; to the counsel who work with us to represent our clients in court; to our partners for their solidarity and contributions to the work of social justice; and to SECTION27's small team of lawyers, researchers, paralegals, community mobilisers, communicators, fundraisers, accountants, monitoring and evaluation experts, and administrators who allow the organisation to continue to punch well above its weight.

Nyeleti & Sasha

By **Nyeleti Magadze**, Board Chair, and **Sasha Stevenson**, Executive Director.

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Zeenat Sujee
Head of Education

SECTION27 Board



Nyeleti Magadze

NEW BOARD CHAIR

Nyeleti Magadze has been Chair of the SECTION27 board since 1 August 2025. She is an admitted attorney with a B.Proc from the University of Limpopo. She also holds a Higher Diploma in Tax Law from the University of Johannesburg and completed the Senior Executive Programme – Africa through the Gordon Institute of Business Science and Harvard Business School. She has served as a Legal Advisor and Group Company Secretary for Spescom Limited and the Airports Company South Africa (ACSA), Governance Executive for the Hollard Group, Director of Strategy at Business Leadership South Africa (BLSA) and as the Head of Programmes at Constitution Hill Trust.

She currently works as a consultant for the GIBS Anti-Corruption Coalition (an initiative of the Centre for Business Ethics) and The Human Bridge Movement which works on racial healing in South Africa. She is also the Chairperson of Allan and Gill Gray Philanthropy South Africa and is a Non-Executive Director of the Abacus Group.



Alice Brown

OUTGOING BOARD CHAIR

Alice Brown retired from the board of SECTION27 in August 2025, after 13 years of service, including four as Chair. She is the head of Sojourner, Tubman, Wells & Co. Consulting and an attorney with extensive experience in social justice philanthropy and public interest litigation and advocacy. Early in her career as a litigator and advocate at the NAACP Legal Defence and Educational Fund, her work and publications addressed the legal aspects of housing conditions and environmental degradation in African American communities. Later she served in leadership positions at the Ford Foundation, as a programme officer, Deputy Representative and then as the Foundation's Representative for the Office for Southern Africa

based in Johannesburg. Ms Brown has been a Visiting Adjunct Professor at the University of the Witwatersrand School of Law, a Visiting Fellow at the Harvard Law School Human Rights Program, and a Visiting Fellow at the Princeton School of Public and International Affairs. Ms Brown is a trustee of the Nelson Mandela Foundation and an independent expert and member of the Constitutionalism Fund Committee, a South African philanthropic fund that supports social justice organisations and their sustainability.



Sasha Stevenson

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Sasha Stevenson is a human rights lawyer and the Executive Director of SECTION27. She joined SECTION27 on 1 October 2012. She has been working for over a decade to secure health system change that realises rights. She has represented bereaved families in the Life Esidimeni arbitration and inquest following the deaths of 144 mental healthcare users, and the applicants in litigation to re-start the school feeding programme to mitigate child hunger during the COVID-19 lockdown. Her work also includes litigation and advocacy on migrant health, access to abortion and access to medicine, among others. Before joining SECTION27, Sasha worked at Bowmans, as a Law Clerk to former Chief Justice Pius Langa at the

Constitutional Court of South Africa, and for the Trial Chamber of the International Criminal Court in the Hague. Sasha holds bachelors, honours and law degrees from Rhodes University and an LLM from the University of Cambridge.



Brent Botha

BOARD MEMBER

Brent Botha is a corporate and commercial litigation lawyer, and the CEO of the South African practice. He joined Norton Rose Fulbright in January 2005 as a candidate attorney and was retained as an associate in the firm's corporate and commercial litigation team in 2007. After three years, he was promoted to director. He was a member of the South African Supervisory Board from September 2013 until August 2019 when, promoted to Disputes Practice Group Leader, he became a member of the South African office's Management

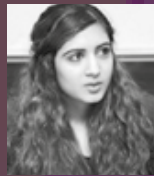
Committee. On secondment to FirstRand Bank, Brent was the Acting Head of Group Legal from August 2016 until February 2017, while continuing to manage his litigation practice.



Elouise Kelly

BOARD MEMBER

Elouise has made a career at prominent companies locally, on the African continent and in the Middle East. With a focus on Branding, Communication and Business Strategy, she has launched brands, revamped content for providers and managed budgets of up to R250 million. She has successfully led diverse teams to help companies meet their objectives through business and marketing strategies, including Viacom/Paramount, MTN, SABC, and M-Net. A few years ago, Elouise transitioned from advertising, media, and marketing to the music industry. In her role as COO at Universal Music Group – Africa, she focused on driving a successful operation to disrupt and maximise all the touch points where artists and fans connect. Currently, Elouise holds the position of Country Head at Viu South Africa. Not one to let a good crisis go to waste, Elouise took advantage of the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown to complete her MBA in Business Analytics. Elouise believes health is real wealth and emphasises mental and physical well-being. She loves books, music, people, life, and laughter.



Shaeera Kalla

BOARD MEMBER

Shaeera Kalla is a filmmaker, activist and scholar. She has been selected as one of 18 emerging filmmakers for the Atelier Ludwigsburg-Paris programme 2023/24. Shaeera served as the President of the Wits Student Representative Council (SRC) and was one of the many students at the forefront of the #FeesMustFall protests in 2015/16 for free, decolonised and quality higher education. She was recognised in 2016 as one of the Top 200 Young South Africans by the Mail & Guardian. She holds an MSc in African Studies from Oxford University, and a Bachelor of Commerce in Philosophy, Politics and Economics and BA Honours from the University of the Witwatersrand. She has also been involved in the #PayTheGrants campaign for social protection and Universal Basic Incomes.



Nompumelelo Seme

BOARD MEMBER

Nompumelelo Seme is an Advocate at the Johannesburg Bar with the Victoria Mxenge Group of Advocates. She holds a BA LLB (cum laude) and an LLM (Tax Law) from the University of the Witwatersrand. She has a passion for human rights and law as a tool for social justice. She co-founded KwaZulu-IsiHawu Initiative, an organisation working with orphans and vulnerable children and became involved with the Aids Law Project as a student activist in the fight for access to medicines. Her legal experience traverses a wide terrain – general commercial litigation experience at Werksmans Attorneys, contract, delict and dispute resolution experience from Eskom, including Construction Agreements, FIDIC, JBCC and NEC. She has academic and research experience from lecturing Property Law, Tax Law and Customary Law at the University of the Witwatersrand and Environmental Law at the University of Virginia, US. She also writes and publishes in these areas of law. Her practice focuses on tax law, general commercial litigation, constitutional and administrative law, property law, land reform and land law. She sits on the Advisory Board of the Centre for Applied Legal Studies and owing to her passion for rural women's access to land, was advisor to the Rural Women's Movement.



Mary - Ann Boakye

BOARD MEMBER

Mary-Ann Boakye is a registered Chartered Accountant with the South African Institute of Chartered Accountants and holds a Bachelor of Business Science degree in Finance and Accounting, as well as a Postgraduate Diploma in Accounting from the University of Cape Town (UCT). She also holds a Master's in Development Finance from the UCT Graduate School of Business, graduating summa cum laude. Mary-Ann has extensive experience in finance, risk management, process improvement, higher education, training programme development and accreditation, having worked in academia and as the Chief Operating Officer of a mortgage finance institution. Currently, Mary-Ann provides independent consulting services to SMMEs.



Dr Brian Brink

BOARD MEMBER

Dr Brian Brink retired from the SECTION27 board in 2025 after serving as a member for 17 years. He worked for the Anglo-American Group for 33 years and retired as Chief Medical Officer at the end of 2014. During his tenure he advised group companies on a broad range of health issues, including occupational health; employee health and wellbeing; disease management (particularly HIV and AIDS); employee and family health benefits; as well as health systems strengthening in disadvantaged communities. He has served on the boards of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria and the South African National AIDS Council Trust as a representative of the private sector. He is currently co-chair of the MOSASWA Regional Coordinating Mechanism, which assists in the goal of eliminating malaria in Mozambique, South Africa and Eswatini. Dr Brink is a director of Right to Care, an NGO which focuses on innovation in the delivery of HIV and TB prevention and treatment services as well as health systems strengthening and pandemic preparedness. He is also on the Global Board of Grassroot Soccer, an organisation focusing on the health and wellbeing of adolescents. Dr Brink served on the board of the International Women's Health Coalition for 16 years and was a past Chair of the organisation. Dr Brink was awarded an honorary doctorate in Medicine by the University of the Witwatersrand in December 2014.



Justice Johan Froneman

BOARD MEMBER

Justice Johan Froneman was appointed as a Justice of the Constitutional Court in 2009. He retired from the Apex Court in June 2020. Outside of legal practice and his judicial responsibilities, Justice Froneman taught at several universities. For five years, he was Professor Extraordinaire at Stellenbosch University where he gave lectures in Human Rights at LLM level. He attended Harvard and Oxford Universities in 1999 and 2008, respectively, in a visiting capacity. At present he is also an extraordinary professor at the

University of Free State.



Nasreen Rajab-Budlender SC

BOARD MEMBER

Nasreen Rajab-Budlender SC has been a practising advocate since 2005 and was conferred the status of Senior Counsel in 2021. Prior to joining the Bar, she worked at a large Johannesburg law firm. She also served as a law clerk to Chief Justice Arthur Chaskalson at the Constitutional Court and a researcher for the Judicial Services Commission between 2001-2003. Her primary areas of practice include Administrative Law, Constitutional Law, Employment Law and Environmental Law. Nasreen has frequently acted as a judge

of the High Court and has acted as a judge of the Land Claims Court. Nasreen is the Chairperson of the Appeals Committee of the Advertising Regulatory Board. She is also a panellist with the Arbitration Foundation of South Africa (AFSA), and she regularly acts as an arbitrator in private arbitrations. Nasreen has served as a director of various non-profits, educational and commercial boards.



Prof Ann Skelton

BOARD MEMBER

Professor Ann Skelton is a Law Professor at the University of Pretoria, where she holds the UNESCO Chair: Education Law in Africa. She is also a Law Professor at the University of Leiden where she holds the Chair: Children's Rights in a Sustainable World. She has appeared as counsel in many landmark child law cases in the South African superior courts, including 12 cases in the Constitutional Court. Ann is an internationally recognised expert in children's rights, and she has been a member of the United Nations Committee on the

Rights of the Child since 2017, and in May 2023 was appointed as Chairperson of the Committee for a period of two years.



Dr Nic Spaul

BOARD MEMBER

Nic Spaul is a Senior Programme Officer at the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation within the Global Education team. His work centres on improving foundational literacy and numeracy at scale in sub-Saharan Africa. Before that Nic was an Associate Professor of Economics at Stellenbosch University and published widely on topics related to educational inequality, literacy, numeracy and assessment. He also founded Funda Wandé, an influential non-profit organisation.



Prof Matthew Chersich

BOARD MEMBER

Professor Matthew Chersich is Research Professor in the Climate and Health Directorate at Wits RHI, University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa. He has worked on public health research across Africa for around 20 years, and with WHO and other international organisations. After medical school at the University of the Witwatersrand, he studied public health at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, and doctoral studies at Ghent University, Belgium. He has written more than 200 peer-reviewed articles. His research projects focus on the

impacts of climate change on health and interventions to reduce these impacts. Several studies across Africa are testing interventions to reduce the risks of exposure to extreme heat, especially among pregnant women and newborns.



Prof Ashraf Hassen Coovadia

BOARD MEMBER

Professor Ashraf Hassen Coovadia is an accomplished Adjunct Professor with a strong medical background including MBChB, DCH (CMSA), Dip HIV Man (CMSA), FCP (Paed CMSA). Serving as Academic Head of Department in the Dept of Paediatrics and Child Health at the University of the Witwatersrand since October 2016 and as Head of Department at Rahima Moosa Mother and Child Hospital, Johannesburg, from January 2014. He completed training at University of Zambia and University of the Witwatersrand. Coovadia's current

interests encompass medical education, paediatric emergency medicine training, and public healthcare system advocacy.



Right to Access Healthcare Services

Health Rights of Migrants

Court Affirms the Right to Safe and Unhindered Access to Healthcare

The Treatment Action Campaign (TAC), Doctors Without Borders (MSF) and Kopanang Africa Against Xenophobia (KAAX) – represented by SECTION27, welcomed the [judgment](#) handed down by the Gauteng High Court ordering the state to take immediate and decisive action to end the obstruction of access to the Rosettenville and Yeoville clinics in Gauteng.

In 2025, vigilante groups harassed and intimidated individuals deemed to be foreign nationals, demanding ID books and passports and blocking them from entering public hospitals and clinics. This resulted in many people being denied access to healthcare, including both South Africans and migrants.

The court found that the state authorities failed to prevent obstruction for migrant and undocumented patients trying to access healthcare at Yeoville and Rosettenville clinics, violating their constitutional obligations. The respondents included the City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality, the National Department of Health (NDoH), the Gauteng Department of Health (GDoH), the South African Police Service (SAPS), and others.

In his judgment, Wilson J ordered the respondents to take all reasonable measures to ensure safe and unhindered physical access to the Yeoville and Rosettenville clinics for all persons seeking health services. The court also ordered that posters stating that ‘obstruction of access is prohibited’, be put up inside and outside the facilities. The ruling was an important win, confirming that healthcare facilities must uphold dignity, equality, and the right to life – rather than serving as sites of discrimination. In partnership with other organisations, we continued to monitor the implementation of the court order at the two health facilities while preparing for more expansive litigation.

SECTION27 also wrote to the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Right to Health, Dr Tlaleng Mofokeng, outlining the increasing intimidation and exclusion of migrants from public healthcare facilities in South Africa, the role of anti-migrant movements, and the government’s failure to ensure equitable access to healthcare. Our submissions also outlined both domestic and international legal obligations requiring South Africa to provide healthcare without discrimination and called on the Special Rapporteur to intervene in protecting migrants’ rights. The

Special Rapporteurs for Health and for the Human Rights of Migrants, and the Chair-Rapporteur of the Working Group on discrimination against women and girls issued an [address](#) to President Ramaphosa and asked a series of questions of the South African government in response to our submission.

Finally, we produced a ‘[fact vs. fiction](#)’ pamphlet aimed at debunking some of the myths around migrant persons and healthcare services. This pamphlet was translated into multiple South African languages with the aim of educating people and raising awareness on the issue.





Cancer Patients' Fight for Healthcare Continues

In November 2024, SECTION27, representing the Cancer Alliance, argued in the Johannesburg High Court against the GDoH and nine others for failing to utilise the R784 million designated in 2023 by National Treasury to address radiation oncology and surgical backlogs in the province. In March 2025, the court ordered the respondents to update and maintain the backlog list of cancer patients awaiting radiation oncology services in Gauteng within 45 days of the court's order. The respondents were also ordered to take necessary steps to provide treatment to cancer patients, whether at public or private facilities, and file progress reports with the court on measures taken and long-term plans to resolve the crisis. The judgment affirmed the cancer patients' rights to life, dignity and access to healthcare services. However, the GDoH filed an appeal of the judgment with the Supreme Court of Appeal, and the March 2025 order is consequently suspended pending a decision of the Supreme Court of Appeal (SCA).

In an attempt to have the court declare that despite the pending appeal of the case in the SCA, the March 2025 order is not suspended and is to be immediately implemented, SECTION27 launched proceedings in terms of section 18(4) of the Superior Courts Act alternatively section 18(3). On 20 August 2025, SECTION27 received an order which indicated that we had successfully made the case for immediate implementation of the court order. However, in October 2025, GDoH appealed the August 2025 order and was successful. As a result, the March 2025 order remains suspended pending the outcome of the SCA hearing, the date for which has not yet been communicated.

While awaiting an SCA hearing, August 2025 saw us representing the Cancer Alliance in mediation with the GDoH, convened at the directive of Gauteng Premier, Panyaza Lesufi. The mediation arose from an open letter written by our lead client, Ms Thato Moncho, as part of her grievance to the Premier. Unfortunately, the mediation process fell apart with the mediators citing that there was no prospect of resolving the dispute through mediation because the GDoH was acting in bad faith.



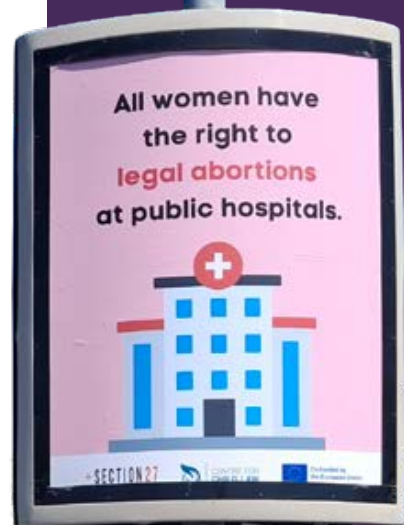


Access to Abortion Services

In 2025, the SECTION27 team successfully assisted 29 clients across the country in accessing abortion services.

As part of our awareness-raising campaign, we ran an outdoor campaign using street pole and digital screen ads. The campaign targeted women in Limpopo and the Eastern Cape, informing them of their right to free, legal abortions at public clinics and hospitals.

The NDoH invited SECTION27 to participate in a process to align the Choice on Termination of Pregnancy Guidelines with the 2022 WHO Abortion Care Guidelines. We focused on the concept of refusal to care/conscientious objection. The inclusion of this concept could have dire consequences for marginalised women, who are often refused care arbitrarily and discriminatorily under the guise of conscientious objection. The Guidelines are in the process of amendment. The United Nations Working Group on Discrimination Against Women and Girls also invited us to present our work on abortion.



Admission as *amici curiae* in Sex Work Decriminalisation Case

SECTION27, representing Sonke Gender Justice and the TAC, welcomed the Western Cape High Court ruling to admit the organisations as *amici curiae*. The main application – brought by S.H. and the Sex Workers Education and Advocacy Taskforce (SWEAT) against the Minister of Justice and Correctional Services and others. The applicants are challenging provisions that criminalise sex work. TAC and Sonke will give evidence and legal analysis that demonstrates the impact of the criminalisation of sex work on the constitutional right to have access to healthcare services, including reproductive healthcare. The evidence presented by TAC and Sonke shows that sex workers are frequently denied access to essential health services and that their interactions with the public health system are shaped by stigma, criminalisation, and fear of police surveillance. The matter will be heard from 21–23 October 2026 at the Western Cape Division of the High Court in Cape Town.

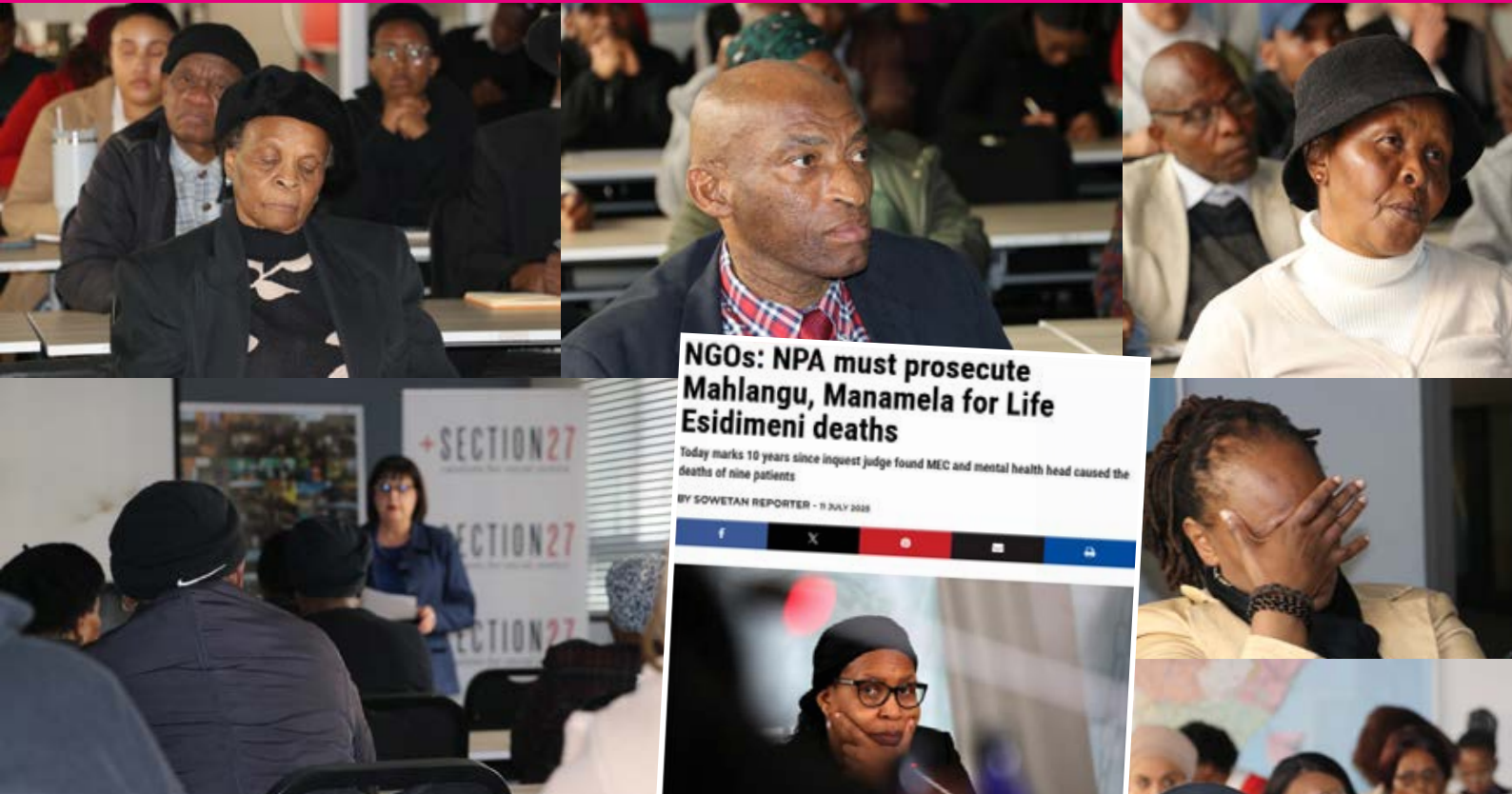
Health Professions Council of South Africa v Dr Tlaleng Mofokeng

In March 2025, we were approached by the erstwhile United Nations Special Rapporteur on the right to health for assistance with representing her against a complaint made against her at the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA). The complaint alleged that by using profanity on social media in response to a post by the Israeli Prime Minister, Dr Mofokeng had brought her profession into disrepute. In our submission to the First Medical Committee of Preliminary Inquiry of the Medical and Dental Board, we argued two points in limine, namely that the complainant did not have standing to bring the complaint and secondly that the HPCSA held no jurisdiction to entertain the complaint by virtue of the immunities afforded to the UN Special Rapporteur under international and domestic law.

Further, we argued that Dr Mofokeng's position as the Special Rapporteur provided her with a unique perspective that justified outrage at a cancelled cease fire in Gaza. Additionally, despite her position as Special Rapporteur, Dr Mofokeng was still afforded the same rights as all individuals in South Africa under the Constitution, including the right to freedom of expression.

Despite an exhaustive submission, the Preliminary Committee found Dr Mofokeng guilty of a minor transgression and issued her with a fine. In recent months, it has been established that the Preliminary Committee failed to consider the points in limine, particularly whether the HPCSA holds any jurisdiction to entertain the proceedings. As a result of this oversight and following the launch of High Court proceedings to challenge their decision, the HPCSA has agreed to settle on the basis that they made an error in law by entertaining the complaint.





NGOs: NPA must prosecute Mahlangu, Manamela for Life Esidimeni deaths
Today marks 10 years since inquest judge found MEC and mental health head caused the deaths of nine patients
BY SOWETAN REPORTER - 11 JULY 2025

Rights of Mental Healthcare Users

Prosecution in Life Esidimeni Matter Delayed

On 10 July 2025, we marked one year since the Life Esidimeni Inquest judgment – and one year of NPA inaction. The inquest court found that former Gauteng Health MEC Qedani Mahlangu and former Mental Health Director Dr Makgabo Manamela were prima facie responsible for the deaths of nine mental healthcare users. Despite the NPA giving the Life Esidimeni families and SECTION27 an update on the case, the extensive delays in reaching a decision – even after the inquest findings and a legal opinion they had sought – were concerning. As such, the Life Esidimeni families and supporting organisations embarked on advocacy activities, following a picket held the previous year, during which we handed over a [memorandum of demands](#) to the NPA. We continued to call on the NPA to act swiftly to bring to book all those responsible for the deaths of the mental healthcare users.



Access to Medicines

SECTION27 Intervenes in Excessive-Pricing Case for a Breast Cancer Drug

After being admitted as an intervening party by the Competition Tribunal in the excessive pricing case brought by the Competition Commission against Roche Holdings and others, SECTION27 will represent the Cancer Alliance in this matter. We await a date for hearing.

The Competition Commission lodged a complaint with the Competition Tribunal alleging that Roche violated the Competition Act through excessive pricing of Trastuzumab, a life-saving treatment for an aggressive type of breast cancer called Human Epidermal Growth Factor Receptor 2 Positive, breast cancer (HER2+). The Commission also alleged that the limitations to accessing trastuzumab imposed on South African breast cancer patients, because of the excessively high prices charged by Roche for its products during the relevant period, constituted a violation of basic human rights, including access to healthcare. Roche faces allegations of excessive pricing in the private sector between January 2011 and July 2019, as well as in government sales between 19 November 2015 and July 2020.





Law Reform

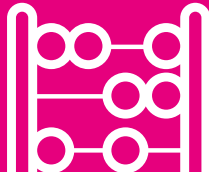
SECTION27 Addresses Shortcomings in NHI Act

SECTION27 made submissions on the establishment of the structures and processes in terms of the [NHI Act Draft Regulations on Governance](#). The submission highlighted the transparency and governance gaps in the NHI Act and noted that amendments to the Draft Regulations will, by themselves, be insufficient to meet the governance concerns that we laid out in our 2019 submissions on the NHI Bill. The submissions further set out the importance of good governance and relevant principles that must be applied, including from examples of other public entities.

SECTION27 is also representing the TAC in an application to be admitted as *amicus curiae* in litigation challenging the constitutionality of the NHI Act. We raised our concerns about the constitutionality of the governance provisions, the lack of provision of transparency and participation, and the exclusion of migrants from access to healthcare services under NHI. The litigation is on hold pending a decision of the Constitutional Court in related litigation.



Our submissions set out the importance of good governance and relevant principles that must be applied.



Right to Basic Education

Inclusive Education

Court Ruling Advances the Rights of People With Visual Disabilities

In May, SECTION27, representing Blind SA, welcomed the Constitutional Court [judgment](#) in the matter of *Blind SA v President of the Republic of South Africa*. The judgment followed the Constitutional Court's interim order dated 13 December 2024, which provided for the resuscitation of its own order in 2022, in [Blind SA v Minister of the Department of Trade, Industry and Competition](#). In the 2025 judgment, the Constitutional Court ordered the immediate reading in of section 19D of the Copyright Amendment Bill into the Copyright Act. Persons who are blind and visually impaired have, for decades, suffered due to a severe shortage of reading materials in South Africa, which has violated their rights to equality, dignity, basic education, and the right to participate in the cultural life of their choice. The judgment allowed greater access to reading materials for all persons with disabilities. The inclusion of section 19D in the Copyright Act also paved the way for the state's accession to the Marrakesh Treaty, which promotes the cross-border exchange of reading materials in accessible formats. Together with Blind SA, we wrote to the Department of Trade, Industry and Competition (DTIC) regarding the ratification process and are yet to get a response from the multidisciplinary task team representatives from the DTIC, the Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO), and the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development (DOJ&CD).





Orientation and Mobility Training for Learners with Visual Impairments

SECTION27 completed research to be published in 2026 on the shortages of practitioners providing social orientation and mobility training as well as on 'Skills for Daily Living' to learners who are blind and visually impaired. Our research report focuses on the shortage of training practitioners in schools, the implications of this shortage, how training that accommodates blind learners is currently conducted in schools, and the domestic and international legal frameworks in place to ensure these learners receive appropriate training. For visually impaired learners, orientation and mobility training is about more than just moving from one place to another. It teaches learners to read their surroundings, plan their journey, and move with confidence. Whether it is finding their way around school, crossing a busy street, catching a bus, or cooking a meal, these everyday abilities open the door to active participation in school and a greater sense of independence.

In February 2025, the *Regulations Relating to the Registration of Orientation and Mobility Practitioners* were published. The regulations address many of the obstacles that hindered the employment of practitioners in schools. SECTION27 participated in a meeting held by the Orientation and Mobility Association of South Africa and other stakeholders to confirm that Orientation and Mobility practitioners were to be registered following the passing of the regulations.



School Safety

Organisations Challenge Government's Failure to Implement the National Child Protection Register

In September, SECTION27, representing the Teddy Bear Foundation, instituted litigation at the Gauteng Division of the High Court in Pretoria, against a range of government departments for their failure to ensure the proper functioning and enforcement of the National Child Protection Register (NCPR), a mechanism designed to prevent sexual predators from moving between schools. The application sought relief against the Departments of Social Development (DSD), Justice and Constitutional Development (DOJ&CD), Department of Basic Education (DBE), provincial education departments (PEDs) and the South African Council of Educators (SACE).

The case stemmed from SECTION27's involvement in the Sekwati Primary School matter concerning the rape of a learner by a school caretaker in 2015. The education authorities failed to act. Subsequent to SECTION27 approaching a court for the requisite mandatory relief, a disciplinary hearing was conducted, and the caretaker was subsequently found guilty of the sexual rape and was subsequently dismissed. Despite the Disciplinary Committee's decision, the NWDoE failed to report the perpetrator to the DSD to have him placed on the NCPR. This matter highlights the urgent need to properly maintain and implement the NCPR to protect learners from predators. The court process will continue and most likely be heard in 2026.



Maintenance Order Granted for a Pregnant Learner

The Nkomazi Magistrate Court ordered an immediate payment of R38 000 over the next two years for a learner sexually assaulted and impregnated by her teacher. SECTION27 secured a future maintenance order despite his denial of paternity and refusal to pay support. The educator was held accountable, including through an interdict against his pension fund.

Our involvement began in 2022, when we first met the learner. At that time, she had been made pregnant by her teacher, who forced her to ingest rat poison to terminate the pregnancy. She subsequently became pregnant by him a second time. It was then that she discovered after the fact that he was HIV-positive, and she had contracted the virus, necessitating lifelong antiretroviral medication. Nevertheless, she decided to carry the pregnancy to term and keep the child.

The maintenance order marked an important victory for the learner, ensuring that the educator was held accountable for his financial responsibilities toward the child. Principals and educators have a duty to ensure that learners are safe and their right to education is protected. In our efforts to fight the scourge of sexual violence in schools, SECTION27 conducts workshops on sexual and reproductive health rights to empower learners. We will continue to monitor the educator's circumstances and approach the court again to vary the order as required.



The educator was held accountable, including through an interdict against his pension fund.



School Infrastructure

SECTION27 Continues to Monitor the Structural Order

SECTION27 has been monitoring the Limpopo Department of Education (LDoE)'s progress since December 2021. This follows a High Court order issued in the Michael Komape case, which compels the LDoE to submit new plans for eradicating and replacing basic pit toilets and addressing other forms of inadequate sanitation in Limpopo schools, and to report on the implementation of these plans every six months. According to the December 2025 report, only four out of 564 Priority 1 schools remain outstanding, with a completion deadline now set for March 2026. Priority 2 schools are meant to be completed by 2027. However, only 625 schools have been completed with a remainder of 954 schools. The quality and reliability of the LDoE's reports remain a concern. The reports often contain conflicting information, inconsistent data, and inaccuracies regarding project timelines and progress. SECTION27 calls on the public to keep track of the department's progress using our online tracker - [the Michael Komape Sanitation Progress Monitor](#). This tool contains all the data received from the LDoE to date.

SECTION27 commissioned an external evaluation and published an [Evaluation Report](#) to assess our role in influencing the DBE's policy decisions regarding the eradication of pit latrines in Limpopo schools, and to assess the extent to which our actions contributed to legal, material, and political outcomes. The report revealed clear evidence that our multi-pronged strategy played a significant and necessary role in establishing legally enforceable obligations for safe sanitation in schools; driving near-eradication of pit toilets in Limpopo's Priority 1 schools; and shaping political discourse and accountability around sanitation as a constitutional right. Through a combination of litigation, research, advocacy, monitoring, and oversight, this strategy shifted the narrative on unsafe sanitation from an administrative backlog to a constitutional crisis requiring immediate action.



Only five out of 564 Priority 1 schools remain outstanding.

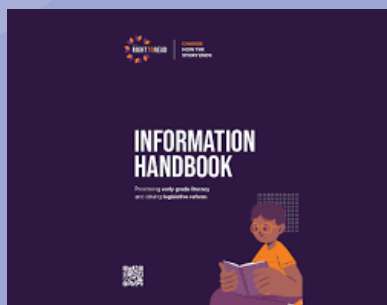


Rights Literacy

Right to Read Regulations Campaign Advocates to Make Early-Grade Literacy a National Priority



Early-grade literacy remains a national priority for the Right to Read Regulations Campaign. In July 2025, the Campaign hosted a roundtable discussion with academics relating to the first 'T' - i.e., time. The event brought together a diverse group of education stakeholders, including academics, lawyers and department officials. The report from the first roundtable will feed into further roundtable discussions and assist with advocacy initiatives. The Campaign will continue engaging communities and strengthening the coalition to make literacy a guaranteed right for all children living in South Africa.



Learners Across Provinces Participate In Rights Literacy Workshops

SECTION27 rolled out 34 rights literacy workshops across provinces in 2025 with learners in the Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal, Limpopo and Mpumalanga on sexual violence, sexual and reproductive health rights and corporal punishment. The workshops reached a total of 1246 learners. We also carried out a community radio campaign in Limpopo and the Eastern Cape to reach the broader public and enhance the school programming.



Civic Education

In celebration of Human Rights Month, SECTION27 conducted a civic education workshop at Ithafa High School in Thusi Village, Ermelo. The school, which has faced persistent gang-related challenges common to the area, has been a long-standing partner. The workshop covered civic responsibility, accountability, and voter participation in both local and national elections. As a result, many learners gained new insight into how they can influence change in their communities, especially around infrastructure deficits, water scarcity, and safety issues.

We held four interactive civic education workshops with 127 learners in KwaZulu-Natal and Mpumalanga in grades 9 to 12, covering topics such as the rule of law and democracy, voting and electoral systems and democracy outside the elections. The engagement highlighted how social media platforms continue to inform learners' views on politics and the effect on their communities, while also highlighting a gap in understanding of the voter registration process, what to do on voting day and how South Africa's constitutional democracy works. The workshops also highlighted how young people see themselves as playing an important role in the local decision-making processes that shape their communities and lives.

Most of the learners reached would be first-time voters by the time voter registration opens for the 2026 local government elections and were very keen to learn more.



Most of the learners reached would be first-time voters by the time voter registration opens.





Cross-cutting Areas



Budget Justice

The 2025 fiscal year was characterised by an unprecedented three budget cycles, during which our advocacy consistently led the national discourse around human rights and fiscal accountability. We made 12 parliamentary submissions, distributed between SECTION27 and the Budget Justice Coalition (BJC). Our interventions uniformly challenged the inadequate resourcing of essential services, the contraction of fiscal space for health and education, and the systemic exclusion of affected populations from budgetary processes.

SECTION27 hosted the third annual Gender-Responsive Budgeting (GRB) workshop as part of the BJC's capacity-building programme along with the Women's Budget Group. The convening brought together coalition members, feminist economists, and activists to critically reflect on the limitations of existing gender mainstreaming frameworks and the integration of GRB principles across the budget cycle. In August, the BJC launched its first-ever GRB [Manifesto](#), a visually engaging tool designed for use in both community and policy spaces.

We empowered marginalised communities to engage Parliament and Treasury directly for the first time, shifting civil society from reactive to proactive in fiscal debates. The BJC hosted 12 provincial-level budget trainings. In Limpopo, our letter to Parliament led to the first-ever public hearings in the province, where participants from three budget trainings engaged Members of Parliament directly with their demands. By their involvement, the hearings became a forum for the voiceless, creating a new layer of accountability around fiscal decisions.



Climate Justice

SECTION27 convened a roundtable discussion titled “Lessons in Overcoming Barriers in Climate Justice Advocacy in Health and Education”. The discussion brought together 32 participants from across South Africa, representing civil society, academia, law, and grassroots organisations. Together, we examined common barriers encountered between the 2024 convening and the 2025 roundtable, exchanged lessons learned, and shared strategies for advancing climate justice initiatives focused on the rights to basic education and healthcare.

A [Climate Justice Toolkit](#) was developed to empower civil society, educators, healthcare workers, and communities with the knowledge and tools they need to advocate for climate-resilient systems. We also produced a [Learning Brief](#), which captures key insights, reflections, and recommendations from our research and advocacy efforts. It also highlights the urgent need for deeper community engagement and more collaboration between stakeholders across sectors. These two publications were launched through a webinar that promoted further engagement with our partners and the public around the intersection of climate change, education, and health.

To include women’s voices in civil society advocacy calling on the NDoH to adopt constitutionally compliant climate change adaptation plans and budgets, we conducted workshops with members of the Eastern Cape Health Crisis Action Committee (EHCAC) on government budgeting and climate justice. We published stories on how climate change has impacted women in the area. In collaboration with EHCAC, we made submissions to the [National Council of Provinces Committee on Appropriations on The Appropriations Amendment Bill](#).

As part of our work with partners, we collaborated with the Vaal Environmental Justice Alliance (VEJA) to gather and compile a [report](#) on the health impact of living in the densely populated Vaal Triangle, and the level of knowledge community members have regarding pollution and climate change. The research also examined the availability and resourcing for healthcare interventions available for health complications resulting from climate change and environmental degradation in the area.





Food Justice

McDonald's-Branded School Desks Condemned as Marketing Ploy Targeting Vulnerable Children

Civil society organisations committed to food justice, children's health and education rights condemned the handover of McDonald's-branded 'MiDesk' desks to two Cape Town schools, facilitated by the Minister of Basic Education, Siviwe Gwarube. The organisations argued that the McDonald's donation of desks promoted junk food marketing targeting vulnerable children. We called on the DBE to safeguard children's health rather than exposing them to the marketing of high-fat, sugar and salt foods.

Report: Optimisation of the National School Nutrition Programme

SECTION27, in collaboration with PRICELESS and UNICEF submitted a report on the Optimisation of the National School Nutrition Programme (NSNP). The report aims to develop an investment case for optimising the NSNP through the provision of a nutritious breakfast. In addition to the report, three policy briefs have been developed and will be submitted to the DBE.

We have been monitoring media reports on the NSNP and a common theme in these reports has been the impact of poor procurement processes on the delivery of the programme. Procurement-related issues were reported in KwaZulu-Natal and Gauteng. Following engagements with the Gauteng Department of Education, we wrote to the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Basic Education requesting it to inquire into the procurement issues plaguing the NSNP and to hold the two provinces to account.



Department Fails to Address Front-Of-Package Warning Label Demands

The draft regulations for front-of-package warning labels (FOPL) on unhealthy foods and child-targeted marketing restrictions are still pending finalisation. In March 2025, we requested access to records concerning these regulations. The Department of Health has not yet provided a satisfactory response.





Socio-Economic Rights

Thubakgale v Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality

SECTION27 intervened as *amicus curiae* in the matter between the *Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality and Thubakgale and Others*. The Municipality lodged an appeal to the Supreme Court of Appeal (SCA), against a 2023 High Court decision. The court held the Municipality in contempt for failing to provide houses to the respondents (residents) at the Winnie Mandela Informal Settlement. The court further held that the Municipality must pay a fine of R1 300 000. The court left open the question of constitutional damages.

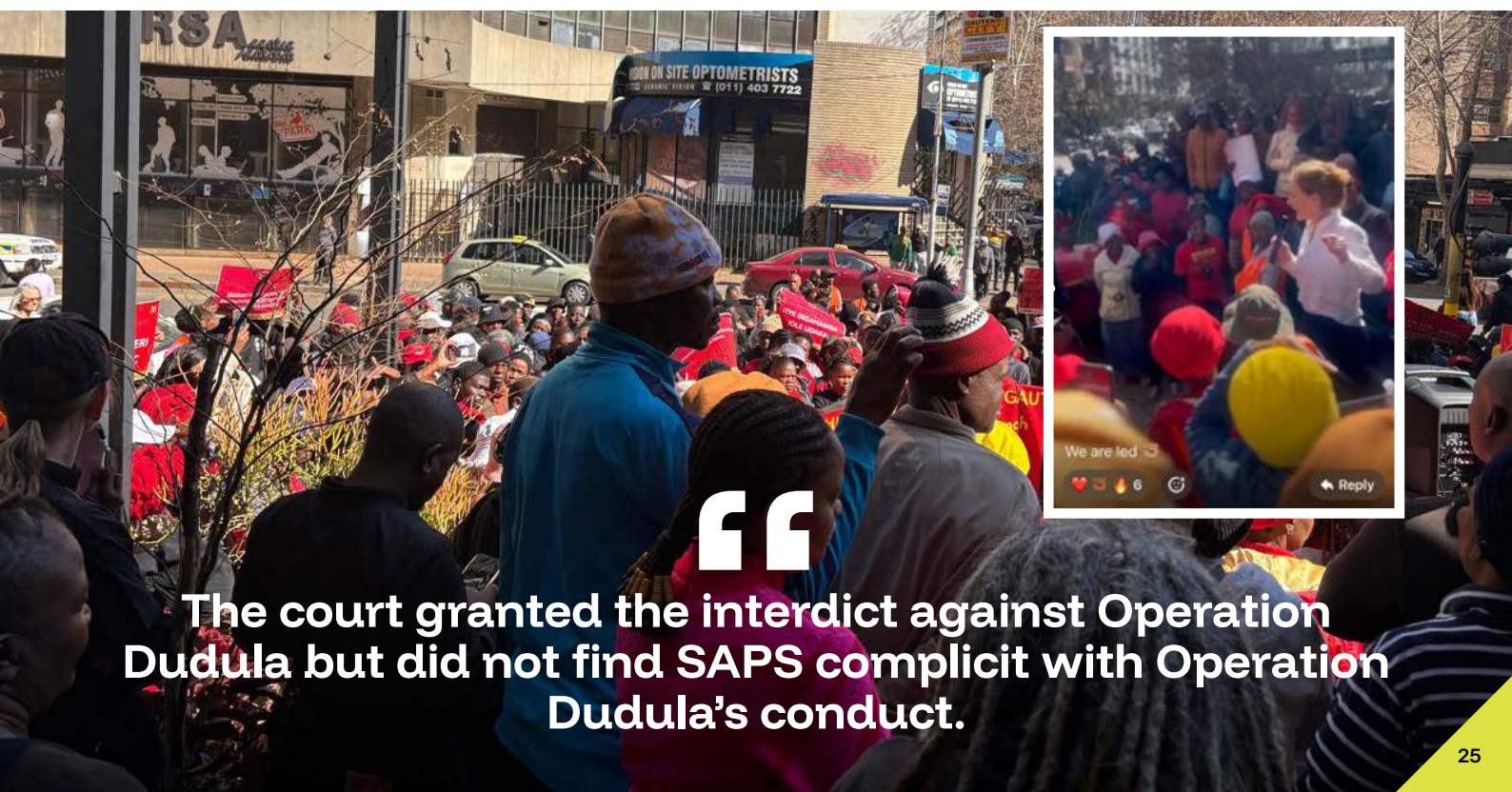
SECTION27 submitted that constitutional damages are an appropriate remedy to vindicate socio-economic rights and the residents' rights in this matter. The Municipality opposed our application, but the SCA admitted us as an amicus. The matter is set down for hearing in February 2026.

KAAX v Operation Dudula

In 2024, the High Court granted SECTION27 leave to be admitted as *amicus curiae* in a matter between *Kopanang Africa Against Xenophobia (KAAX) and others v Operation Dudula and Others*. The matter sought an interdict against Operation Dudula for victimising and intimidating foreign nationals. The applicants further challenged the constitutionality of section 41 of the Immigration Act 13 of 2002, as it authorised warrantless searches of persons in private spaces.

SECTION27 argued that Operation Dudula's conduct adversely impacted migrant persons' right to healthcare and basic education. We further argued Operation Dudula has a constitutional duty not to infringe constitutional rights, and that Operation Dudula's conduct negatively infringed migrant persons' rights. Finally, we argued that the Court has an obligation to make a just and equitable order that includes a declaratory order against Operation Dudula.

The court handed down the judgment on 4 November 2025. In its judgment, the court granted the interdict against Operation Dudula but did not find SAPS complicit with Operation Dudula's conduct. The court clarified the interpretation of section 41 of the Immigration Act to mean that the section does not permit warrantless searches in private spaces, that a police officer could on reasonable suspicion that a person is undocumented, request identification, and finally that no person under 18 years old could be interrogated or arrested unless it is a measure of last resort and in compliance with section 28 (1)(g) of the Constitution.



“

The court granted the interdict against Operation Dudula but did not find SAPS complicit with Operation Dudula's conduct.

Our Advice Office

The Advice Office continued to provide vital support to members of the public seeking assistance with matters relating to the rights to education and healthcare. The most common issues reported related to migrant health, general access to healthcare services, and challenges with Grade 12 examination registration for migrant learners.

During this period, the Advice Office received **567** cases. Of these, **160** related to education, with a significant proportion concerning learner admissions and school placements; while **272** related to health, including access to healthcare services for migrant persons. The remaining **135** matters fell outside SECTION27's mandate and where possible, they were referred to the appropriate institutions.

A significant number of the health-related matters formed part of the litigation challenging the obstruction of safe access to healthcare facilities in Gauteng, with Yeoville Clinic and Rosettenville clinics cited as the two facilities affected by unlawful obstruction.

The Advice Office received approximately **50** Termination of Pregnancy matters. Of these, **35** clients received assistance, while we were unable to assist **13** clients. Many of the successful interventions can be attributed to the support provided by Ms Nomonde Tanase, Deputy Director of Maternal Health at the Gauteng Department of Health, who has continued to provide invaluable assistance in resolving TOP matters across Gauteng.

The Advice Office also participated in demonstrations in solidarity with communities affected by xenophobic attacks. This included participating in marches alongside our partner organisations, Lawyers for Human Rights (LHR), Socio-Economic Rights Institute (SERI), KAAX, and TAC in support of the protection of migrants' rights and access to essential services.

Media Advocacy

In 2025, SECTION27 sustained a strong media presence with our coverage in the media reaching over 2 000 hits. The highest coverage was obtained through online platforms, followed by print and broadcast. SECTION27 brought human rights and social justice perspectives to some of South Africa's most pressing issues, chief among them the the unprecedented 2025 budget cycle. South Africa went through three major budget cycles and SECTION27 and the Budget Justice Coalition played a prominent role throughout the year. From challenging the proposed VAT increase and advocating for progressive alternatives, to scrutinising Budget 3.0, the Medium-Term Budget Policy Statement and the implications of fiscal policy for health, education and other socio-economic rights. Alongside this, our litigation and advocacy generated significant coverage of the Cancer Alliance's landmark victory on Gauteng's radiation oncology backlog, the ongoing pursuit of accountability for the Life Esidimeni tragedy, and the fight to eradicate unsafe pit toilets in Limpopo schools. Our media work also brought attention to access to contraceptives and sexual and reproductive health, PEPFAR funding cuts, migrant access to healthcare, sex workers' rights, the National Child Protection Register and the rights of learners.

Our media coverage has appeared primarily on current affairs programmes, with strong presence on English-language outlets, followed by Afrikaans and isiXhosa platforms. Nationally focused coverage has dominated over the years, with regional highlights in Gauteng, the Western Cape, and KwaZulu-Natal. Key publications featuring our work include IOL, SAFM, Sowetan, News24, and the Daily Maverick.

161

education
related cases

273

health-related
cases



CLIP COUNT

2024



BROADCAST

369



PRINT

440



ONLINE

1215

spotlight
In-depth, public interest health journalism

Spotlight on Healthcare

During 2025, Spotlight continued to establish itself as a leading source of trustworthy, public interest health journalism. We published 132 original articles – typically in-depth articles of around 1 500 words. Most of our articles were republished by leading media partners such as News24, The Times, Daily Maverick, and the Financial Mail.

By far, the biggest story of the year was the abrupt cuts to health aid and research funding from the United States. In 2025, we pivoted to focus on the cuts and their impact. In all, we published around 30 articles relating to the cuts – ten of them were jointly published with our colleagues at GroundUp News. One of these stories, an investigation by Jesse Copelyn into the impact of the cuts in Mozambique, would go on to be a finalist in the Standard Bank Sikuvile Awards in 2026.

2025 saw vindication for a series of investigative articles Spotlight published back in 2018. In May 2025, the Special Tribunal ruled that companies owned by Thapelo Buthelezi must repay more than half a billion rand. The matter relates to several of Buthelezi's ambulance companies that won large government tenders in the Free State and North West. Spotlight's Health4Sale series was first to uncover the serious issues with these contracts and the impact it was having on emergency medical services in the two provinces. It remains some of the most important work we've done.

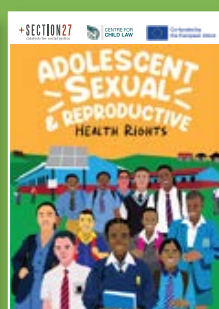
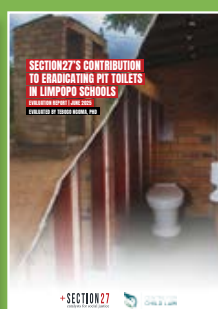
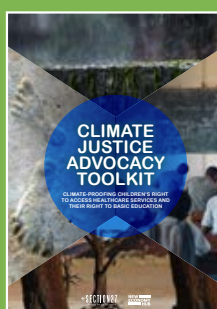
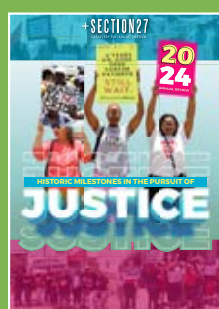
Spotlight launched leading health and pharmacy expert Dr Andy Gray's monthly #InsideTheBox columns on Spotlight. His columns have proven to be very popular, as have our continuing series of #InTheSpotlight special briefings, which included stories on the country's latest HIV stats, why TB is so hard to treat, the performance of South Africa's immunisation programme, and HIV self-testing.

Spotlight made important progress in 2025 relating to the transparency of important HIV and TB data. Spotlight and GroundUp News together requested a rich set of data from the National Institute for Communicable Diseases (NICD) in terms of the Promotion of Access to Information Act. After some follow-up and delays, the NICD gave us the data, and we published a story based on the data. The case set an important precedent regarding the transparency of health data held by the NICD.

On the topic of data, in November 2025, Spotlight launched a [new HIV dashboard](#) and graph generator. The dashboard is based on outputs from Tembisa, the leading mathematical model of HIV in South Africa. Finally, Spotlight remains editorially independent from both SECTION27 and its main funder, the Gates Foundation. Spotlight is a member of the Press Council and is bound by the South African Press Code. Spotlight received no Press Council complaints against it in 2025.

Our Publications

CLICK ON THE COVERS TO READ



Opinion Pieces

- [Open letter | 2024 calls for a bold SONA that aligns policy across government](#) – SECTION27 and other organisations
- [Reversing austerity: How Budget 3.0 can restore educational integrity and infrastructure in South Africa](#) – Equal Education's Mahfouz Raffee and SECTION27's Matshidiso Lencoasa
- [The real work of nation building begins on the front line](#) – SECTION27's Matshidiso Lencoasa
- [Why foreign loans are a self-imposed straitjacket for SA's economy](#) – SECTION27's Matshidiso Lencoasa and Institute for Economic Justice's Liso Mdyanya
- [How gender-responsive budgeting in South Africa can combat entrenched inequality](#) – Budget Justice Coalition's Juhi Kasan, Kirsten Pearson, Lisa Higginson, Thokozile Madonko, Aliya Chikte and Matshidiso Lencoasa
- [How education and support can break the cycle and combat teenage pregnancy in South Africa](#) – SECTION27's Zeenat Sujee
- [Not using the laws against sexual predators in schools means we're failing our kids](#) – SECTION27's Zeenat Sujee and Tendai Mafuma
- [Budget 2025: The true state of the nation](#) – SECTION27's Matshidiso Lencoasa and Gauta Mashego
- [Court victory for corporal punishment victims – why this ruling on sanctions against teachers is significant](#) – Joy Hlatshwayo, Livhuwani Malelelo and Demichelle Petherbridge
- [Postponed Budget offers opportunity for rights-based fiscal reform](#) – SECTION27's Mduduzi Nkosi and Matshidiso Lencoasa
- [Justice for Cwecwe: How child survivors should be protected](#) – SECTION27's Zeenat Sujee and Centre for Child Law's Karabo Ozah
- [Poor infrastructure imperils KZN pupils' right to education amid climate catastrophes](#) – SECTION27's Benni Mudau
- [How much of a say do South Africans have in the budget?](#) – Budget Justice Coalition's Matshidiso Lencoasa and Bongani Xezwi
- [Reversing austerity: How Budget 3.0 can restore educational integrity and infrastructure in South Africa](#) – Equal Education's Mahfouz Raffee and SECTION27's Matshidiso Lencoasa
- [How power dynamics fuel gender-based violence](#) – SECTION27's Faatima Laher
- [Lessons in Overcoming Barriers in Climate Justice Advocacy](#) – SECTION27's Jonathan West
- [Women still carry heaviest burden of underfunded education system](#) – SECTION27's Matshidiso Lencoasa and Gauta Mashego
- [SA's school safety crisis demands accountability, not just words on paper](#) – SECTION27's Gauta Mashego
- [Silent threat: How air pollution may shape SA children's faces](#) – SECTION27's Kholofelo Mphahlele
- [Life Esidimeni: The NPA has the evidence, now it must do its job](#) – SECTION27's Sasha Stevenson
- [Quiet economic growth for whom?](#) – Budget Justice Coalition's Matshidiso Lencoasa and Clotilde Angelucci

Journal Articles

- [South Africa's Life Esidimeni Disaster and the Institutional Corruption That Opened the Door to It; INSTITUTIONAL CORRUPTION AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN MENTAL HEALTH, Vol 27/2, 2025, pp. 273-284 PDF](#) – Sasha Stevenson
- [South African Child Gauge 2025: Law reform and case law affecting children 2024/25](#) – Paula Proudlock, Lori Lake, Zeenat Sujee, Demichelle Petherbridge, Anthony Westwood, Nadine Harker, Nancy Hornsby, Tara Carney, Lucy Jamieson, Amanda Mpedi, and Angela Stewart-Buchanan
- [Harnessing public food procurement as a tool for diet-related non-communicable disease prevention in public health facilities in South Africa" in Legal approaches to NCD prevention in Africa \(2026\)](#) – P Knipe & T Mafuma
- [South African Child Gauge 2025: Public financing to protect violence against women and children](#) – Russell Wildeman, Lucy Jamieson and Matshidiso Lencoasa

Our Submissions

- [SECTION27 Submission to the Standing Committees on Appropriations on the Division of Revenue Bill \[B7-2025\]](#)
- [Budget Justice Coalition Submission to the Select and Standing Committees on Finance on the 2025/26 Budget](#)
- [SECTION27 Submission on the Digitalisation of Birth Registration in Africa: Challenges and Opportunities for Children's Rights](#)
- [SECTION27 Submission to the Standing Committees on Appropriations on the Division of Revenue Bill \[B15-2025\]](#)
- [Budget Justice Coalition Submission to the Select Committee on Appropriations on the Division of Revenue Bill \[B4-2025\]](#)
- [Budget Justice Coalition Submission to the Select and Standing Committees on Finance on the 2025/26 Budget](#)
- [SECTION27 Submission on the National Health Insurance Regulation on Governance](#)
- [SECTION27 Submissions to the UN Special Rapporteur on the right to health: Access to healthcare services for migrants in South Africa](#)
- [SECTION27 Submission on Minimum Uniform Norms and Standards for Admission of Learners to Public Schools \(Notice 3415 of 2025\)](#)
- [SECTION27 Submission on The Regulations on Minimum Uniform Norms and Standards for Capacity of Ordinary Public Schools, 2025](#)
- [SECTION27 Submission to the Select Committee on Special Appropriations Bill \[B 22-2025\]](#)
- [Budget Justice Coalition Submission to the Select and Standing Committee on Finance on the 2025/26 MTBPS](#)
- [Submission to the National Council of Provinces Committee on Appropriations on the Division of Revenue Amendment Bill \[B28—2025\]](#)
- [SECTION27 submission to the Standing Committee on Appropriations on the Division of Revenue Amendment Bill](#)
- [BJC submission to the Standing Committee on Appropriations on the Division of Revenue Amendment Bill](#)
- [SECTION27 submission to the Select Committee on Appropriations on the Division of Revenue Amendment Bill](#)
- [BJC submission to the Select Committee on Appropriations on the Division of Revenue Amendment Bill](#)
- [Position Statement: Advancing Equity and Patients' Rights in the Review of Human Resources for Health Remuneration and Deployment Policies](#)



Fundraising, Monitoring & Evaluation

Fundraising

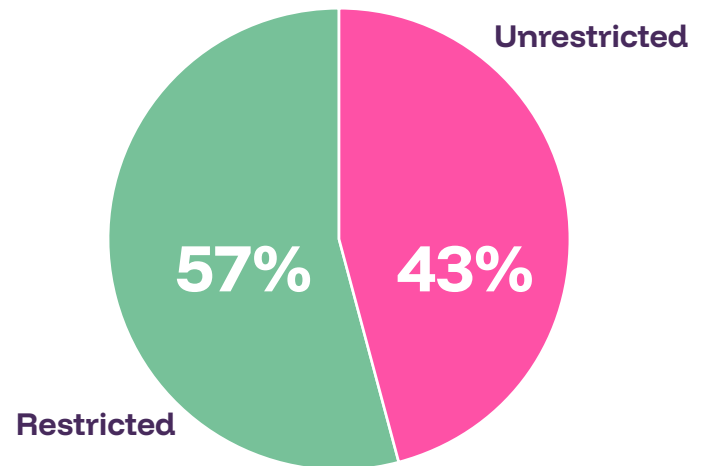
The seismic shift in the global funding landscape that was triggered by the US shuttering of USAID continued to have repercussions throughout the year, as we saw major bilateral donors scale back their international assistance budgets to prioritise domestic agendas, while multi-billion-dollar shortfalls at agencies like the World Health Organization caused havoc in national health infrastructure worldwide. Despite this, we managed to remain stable, securing sufficient resources to end the year with a small surplus.

We were thrilled to become a delivery partner under the Pandemic Fund's US\$25 million grant award to South Africa to boost its prevention, preparedness, and response (PPR) capabilities and fend off pandemic threats. Led by NDoH and three implementing entities, the Food and Agriculture Organization, UNICEF, and the World Health Organization, SECTION27 is responsible for reviewing, updating and developing all policies, regulations and legislation, and recommending revisions to current legislation to enable integrated disease surveillance and response, and pandemic preparedness. Other partners include the Agricultural Research Council-Onderstepoort Veterinary Research, the Clinton Health Access Initiative, the National Health Laboratory Service, the National Institute for Communicable Diseases, Stellenbosch University, the South African Medical Research Council, the University of Pretoria, and the University of Witwatersrand.

We were also pleased to be welcomed back into Standard Bank's Expanded Democracy Support Programme after the mandatory break in the grantee funding cycle. Standard Bank believes it has a vested interest in a functioning constitutional democracy; that it is a public good from which Standard Bank benefits, and that supporting various organisations that play an important role in promoting a healthy democracy is a shared responsibility.

Our alignment with Standard Bank's philosophy was highlighted in March when, to commemorate Human Rights Month, Sasha Stevenson joined Dr Kirston Greenop, Standard Bank's Head of Corporate Citizenship

Funding Type 2025



and Yoni Bass from the Social Justice Initiative, in a webinar on how business can play a more active role in supporting social justice and human rights. Dr Greenop's belief that "you can't create business value in a society that's crumbling," aligns directly with our aim to tackle systemic issues, including those that directly cost companies money – for example, KPMG has calculated that gender-based violence costs the country between R28.4 billion and R42.4 billion a year. The webinar can be viewed [here](#).

In light of the global funding crisis, we will continue to advocate for the South African private sector to step up with local funding to try to tackle some of the root causes of the country's more systemic social justice issues.

We were also front and centre in various donor forums. Sasha was invited to speak at the 2025 Serious Social Investing Conference, co-hosted by the First Rand Foundation, Mercedes, GIBS and Tshikululu. And, at the suggestion of past SECTION27 Chair, Alice Brown, Sasha was invited to moderate the main panel at the Ford Foundation convening with its outgoing President Darren Walker, among others. Both engagements provided valuable visibility to SECTION27 among both current and potential donors.

In August, in partnership with Investec Private Client Philanthropy, we hosted an intimate evening at the Rand Club in Johannesburg, featuring Sasha Stevenson in conversation with Daily Maverick's Ferial Haffajee.

They examined the politics of health and the resulting healthcare system it has created in Gauteng and around the country, and offered insights for real reform. With a special appearance by legendary guitarist and singer-songwriter, Vusi Mahlasela, after the discussion, the evening was enjoyed by all who attended. We are grateful for the support from Investec Trust, the Cameron Schrier Foundation, who supported Vusi's appearance, as well as the Rand Club, who provided the venue at no cost.

Our income split of restricted versus unrestricted funding declined slightly, down from 48% unrestricted

income in 2024 to 43% in 2025. This is a reflection of the ongoing challenges of securing core funding combined with an observed increase in project-based funding.

In line with our advocacy for increased private sector funding, and to promote local investment in local issues, we have set an annual target of 50% of our annual income to come from local sources. While we narrowly missed this target in 2024, we successfully surpassed the target in 2025, with 52% of our income coming from local sources, with the philanthropic sector remaining as the largest contributor.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Measuring social justice impact is complex and long term, and rarely the product of a single intervention or one organisation. As we strengthen and adapt our monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system, we are intentionally embedding a reflective, learning-oriented approach, one that focuses on contribution rather than attribution, and one that can contribute to the effectiveness of the broader social justice sector.

While we care deeply about being able to produce evidence of our contribution to impact, we are equally committed to reflecting on, documenting and sharing the challenges and successes along the way, and how we are using those reflective moments to learn and adapt our various strategies as necessary. This approach also relates to our M&E system, where we are continuously testing and learning about what monitoring data we need to collect, what questions to ask, what tools work best, and how to use the data.

We published our first external evaluation, titled "[SECTION27's Contribution to Eradicating Pit Toilets in Limpopo Schools](#)". The evaluation examined how our legal mobilisation model, using litigation coupled with advocacy, research, and community mobilisation contributed to legal, material, and political change in relation to school sanitation in Limpopo.

The report's key findings include:

- SECTION27's multi-pronged strategy that was anchored in litigation, research, advocacy, monitoring and oversight, **played a significant and necessary role** in establishing legally enforceable obligations for safe sanitation in schools; driving near-eradication of pit toilets in Limpopo's Priority 1 schools; and shaping political and public discourse around sanitation as a constitutional right.
- By combining litigation, advocacy, research, monitoring, and community mobilisation, SECTION27 **translated courtroom victories into tangible improvements in learners' safety, dignity, and education rights.**
- The lessons from this case provide **important insights for future interventions:** sustained pressure, credible evidence, and legal accountability mechanisms are essential to turn court victories into real-world change.

The evaluation process itself, facilitated by M&E specialist Dr Tebogo Ngoma, was immensely valuable. It involved centralising 10 years' worth of documentation along with interviews with current and previous staff. It gave the legal, field, and communications teams the chance to stop and reflect on ten years of painstaking work, helping them see the big picture – what they've achieved, insights from an external perspective, and how this work fits into broader systems change. The report also provided some valuable recommendations that we have taken on board.

Our approach to M&E was profiled in the [2025 Business in Society Handbook](#) (page 178) in a case study entitled "Valuing Impact in Social Justice and Advocacy." The case study showcases how our M&E system has evolved over the past four years, highlights our intentional approach to learning and how this approach has already benefited the organisation from an adaptive management perspective.

Thank You

Donors

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Thank You

Our Legal Counsel

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Thamsanqa Malusi
Zama Mahamba

Our Partners

Abortion Support South Africa
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Wits PHR
Teddy Bear Foundation
Treatment Action Campaign
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
Wits Law Clinic
Médecins Sans Frontières
IBIS Reproductive Health
VEJA
Wits RHI

Financial Reports

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2025		
Figures in Rand	2025	2024
ASSETS		
Non-Current Assets		
Property, plant and equipment	666 673	838 391
Current Assets		
Trade & other receivables	1 799 216	406 095
Cash & cash equivalents	29 073 136	40 018 173
	30 872 352	40 424 268
TOTAL ASSETS	31 539 025	41 262 659
EQUITY & LIABILITIES		
Equity		
Contingency reserves	5 850 655	5 850 655
Accumulated surplus	12 103 855	11 494 304
	17 954 510	17 344 959
LIABILITIES		
Current Liabilities		
Trade & other payables	1 272 993	1 655 606
Donor Funds received in advance	12 311 522	22 262 094
	13 584 515	23 917 700
TOTAL EQUITIES & LIABILITIES	31 539 025	41 262 659

STATEMENT OF SURPLUS OR DEFICIT AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME		
Figures in Rand	2025	2024
Grant Income	36 330 047	36 205 464
Other Income	1 198 786	571 485
Operating expenses	(39 419 036)	(37 842 701)
Operating (deficit)	(1 890 203)	(1 065 752)
Finance Income	2 499 754	2 680 015
Surplus for the year	609 551	1 614 263
Other comprehensive income	-	-
TOTAL COMPREHENSIVE (DEFICIT) / SURPLUS FOR THE YEAR	609 551	1 614 263

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY

Figures in Rand	Contingency reserves	Accumulated surplus	Total Equity
Balance at 01 January 2024	5 850 655	9 880 041	15 730 696
Surplus for the year	-	1 614 263	1 614 263
Other comprehensive income	-	-	-
Total comprehensive income for the year	-	1 614 263	1 614 263
Balance at 01 January 2025	5 850 655	11 494 304	17 344 959
Surplus for the year	-	609 551	609 551
Other comprehensive income	-	-	-
Total comprehensive income for the year	-	609 551	609 551
Balance at 31 December 2023	5 850 655	12 103 855	17 954 510

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

Figures in Rand	2025	2024
CASH FLOWS FROM / (USED IN) OPERATING ACTIVITIES		
Cash receipts from donors	26 155 142	48 803 098
Cash paid to suppliers and employees	(39 419 281)	(36 995 309)
Cash (used in) generated from operations	(13 264 139)	11 807 789
Interest received	2 499 754	2 680 015
Net cash from / (used in) operating activities	(10 764 385)	14 487 804
CASH FLOWS FROM / (USED IN) INVESTING ACTIVITIES		
Purchase of furniture, fittings and equipment	(210 652)	(533 013)
Proceeds on sale of non-current assets	30 000	485
Net cash from / (used in) investing activities	(180 652)	(532 528)
Total cash and cash equivalents movement for the year	(10 945 037)	13 955 276
Cash & cash equivalents at the beginning of the year	40 018 173	26 062 897
TOTAL CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS AT END OF THE YEAR	29 073 136	40 018 173

+SECTION27

catalysts for social justice

section27.org.za

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