



Gauteng Department of Social Development's policy change hits Abraham Kriel Bambanani hard!

For the first time in more than thirty years Abraham Kriel Bambanani (AKB) has no choice but to cut back services to children in its community care programmes.

This is a terrible thing to happen, especially in these times where the need for services to orphaned and vulnerable children is greater than ever.

This is what will happen by the end of December this year:

Services to 225 of the 525 beneficiaries in the Soweto and Westbury Family Care programmes will cease on the 31st of December and 61 employees will lose their jobs. The organisation will reduce the number of sites it is operating from and has to implement severe cutbacks in programme content.

All remaining services to orphaned and vulnerable children in the community will have to be funded solely with donor money.

AKB's Residential Care services, Early Childhood Development Centre and Skills Development Centre will continue to operate, but cost reductions will be implemented to match income.

HOW COULD THIS HAPPEN?

Abraham Kriel Bambanani (AKB) is dependent upon grants from the state and contributions from individuals, companies and corporations to fund its operations. For many years contributions by donors paid approximately 60% of required operational expenses.

This is not the case anymore. AKB lost the income from a longstanding funding partner that contributed a significant portion towards the community services expenditure. No replacement funders have been recruited yet. In addition, funders from the entire spectrum, including corporates, trusts, foundations, churches and individuals have been negatively impacted by the economic woes of the country.

The kicker was the withdrawal of significant funding by the Gauteng Department of Social Development (DSD).

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Registration No.

1952/000010/08
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Residential Care Services

2 Campuses
7 Satellite Homes

Community Care Services

2 Programmes for Orphaned & Vulnerable Children
1 Skills Development Centre
1 Early Childhood Development Centre

The crisis

Few people in Gauteng are aware of the extent of crisis precipitated on 5 April 2023, when the MEC for Social Development announced the reprioritisation of the Gauteng Department of Social Development's (DSD) budget. The massive cut in funding to non-governmental welfare organisations (NGOs) was done without prior consultation and alternative arrangements for services to vulnerable groups.

This announcement gives effect to the DSD's Institutional Realignment Project aimed at reprioritising funding away from NGO Social Welfare Services and it resulted in an ongoing crisis of care in the province.

AKB learned, on the 14th April 2023, that its programmes for orphaned and vulnerable children will not be funded by the DSD in the 2023/24 financial year. This equated to a loss of income of over R 4.5 million.

Despite this, AKB continued with services to 525 orphaned and vulnerable children in the community through the Soweto and Westbury Family Care programmes, pending efforts to recover funding from DSD.

We joined forces with the Gauteng Care Crisis Committee and Civil Society Forum. However, AKB's programmes to orphaned and vulnerable children remained one of the 62 programmes that were defunded.

For the duration of the battle to recover some of the vital funds, AKB's emergency reserves were used to sustain the services to these very vulnerable children, but these funds are now virtually depleted. The reality is, AKB does not have sufficient resources to sustain the current level of services to children in the community.

The Future

The Management team and the Board of AKB are people of faith and with faith comes hope. We believe the tide will turn and love of our neighbour as well as sanity will prevail.

Until it does, we once again ask the public to reach out to help the most vulnerable children of our society. Your love will make the difference to every child that can be reached to give the best possible care in this situation.

We are asking for your help to support our work. Please consider making a donation today.

Banking Details:

Account name: Abraham Kriel Bambanani

Bank: ABSA

Account no.: 140941336

Branch: 632005

SWIFT code: ABSAZAJJ

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