CURRENT MEMBERS OF THE LEARNING NETWORK:

Community Based Organisations:

The Women's Circle (An organisation of grassroots groups of women in communities, working to empower women by promoting respect for women's rights)

Cape Metro Health Forums (The umbrella body for health committees which are formal structures for community participation in health)

Ikhaya Labantu (A shelter facilitating rehabilitation and skills acquisition for the homeless)

Ikamva Labantu (An umbrella organisation supporting diverse community-based delevopment projects)

Women On Farm Projects (A rural feminist NGO working to strengthen the capacity of women on farms to claim their rights and fulfil their needs)

Epilepsy South Africa (An NGO providing intergrated, equitable services to people with epilepsy through social development)

Universities:

Universities of Cape Town (A health and Human rights programme that does research exploring the role of civil society agency in realising health rights)

University of the Western Cape (The Nursing Department which trains nurses and midwives, work on sexual and reproductive health rights)

Maastricht University (Hosts a Centre for Human rights which is a world leader in research into human rights)

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

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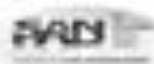www.publichealth.uct.ac.za
www.wfp.org.za
www.ikamva.org
www.epilepsy.org.co.za
www.myggsa.co.za
(search Ikhaya Labantu)

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The Learning Network

"Learning by doing and doing by learning: A civil society network to realise the right to health"

The Learning Network

THE LEARNING NETWORK FOR HEALTH & HUMAN RIGHTS

"Learning by doing and doing by learning: A civil society network to realise the right to health"

REALIZING THE RIGHT TO HEALTH - BACKGROUND

The right to health includes the right to food, clean water, housing, sanitation, social security and access to health care.

However, many South Africans have yet to experienced these rights in their day-to-day lives.

The Learning Network strives to change this, first by engaging ordinary people and civil society organisations (CSOs) to use human rights to advance the right to health and second, by bringing CSO's together with the health services to find common solutions.

LEARNING NETWORK VISION

"Empowered communities able to enjoy healthy lives"

Empowerment: means, knowledge, assertiveness, critical engagement and collective action;
Health: means a state of wellbeing determined by access to health care & healthy social conditions.

THE MISSION

The Learning Network strives to build best practice in realising the right to health through action and reflection

OVERALL GOALS

To empower civil society organisations to realise communities' right to health by:

1. Informing communities about their right to health.
2. Documenting best practice of civil society organisations realising the right to health.
3. Supporting advocacy around health.
4. Promoting functional health committees with active community involvement in health.
5. Develop ways in which health care providers and communities can collaboratively work towards the right to health.

WHAT IS THE LEARNING NETWORK DOING?

- Information dissemination
- Research & reflection on best practice
- Training on the right to health
- Support for advocacy & lobbying
- Support for members organisations
- Networking with civil society partners in SA & Southern Africa

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

Our participatory research focuses on operationalising the right to health by answering the following questions:

1. How do civil society organisations understand and practice the right to health?
2. How do health care providers understand and practice the right to health?
3. Does bringing members of civil society and health care providers together overcome adversarial approaches to rights?

OUTPUTS

From our learnings, the Network is producing the following:
- Pamphlets for community members & leaders
- Right to health toolkit & training manual
- Policy briefs
- Case studies of rights violations for training & advocacy
- Presentations to public forums
- Seminars & workshops
- Papers for publication
- A skills audit of health committees
- Documenting right to health of CSOs