

Paralegal Training on the Social Grants

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A paralegal training workshop on the Social Grants took place at Khanya College's House of Movements from 17 to 19 December 2021. The training was conducted by Khadija Dawood, a trained lawyer. The workshop was attended by CHWs and Khanya's community monitors and interns. The participants are training to provide advice to community members at the Legal Advice Office that Khanya intends to open in 2022.

The objectives of the workshop were to develop an understanding of the Social Grants in South Africa, within the context of the country's neoliberal policies. The workshop also focused on deepening an understanding of the law, the spirit of the law and the limitations of the SA constitution.

The workshop also focused on the role of the advisor in assisting community members to access the social grants, to assist members with their queries about available grants and the procedures needed to access these grants.

I learnt how capitalism has impacted on black people's lives in South Africa. While black women are responsible for social reproduction they do not get any social grant for themselves between the ages of 18 and 60 years. The key issues for black people especially women and communities is how to implement the Constitution and the Bill of Rights and spirit law.

Lerato Tala, one of the community monitors who attended the workshop said, "What I've learned from the role play at paralegal workshop is the importance of following the guidelines to assist your client as an advisor. Advisors need to keep their client calm and they need to ask client relevant questions to ensure they all the information and evidence needed to build a case."

John Richards, another community monitor at Khanya College shared his reflections on what he had learned, "I found the workshop very educative and informative. I got a sense of how the acts worked and when it came to the role play which was one of the assessments, I got a clear sense of how to treat and advise a client. The role play showed that as an advisor you need to be able to take note of every detail the client raises.

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