

Annual Report 2024

Social Impact Law South Africa
Norton Rose Fulbright South Africa Inc





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Introduction

The Social Impact Law Department at Norton Rose Fulbright South Africa is committed to delivering high-impact pro bono legal services that drive meaningful social change. Our work focuses on influencing legislation, enhancing access to justice for vulnerable communities, and supporting non-profit organisations and SMMEs. Additionally, we facilitate corporate social responsibility initiatives, fostering volunteerism and aligning with the Legal Practice Act and Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment Act.

Key focus areas

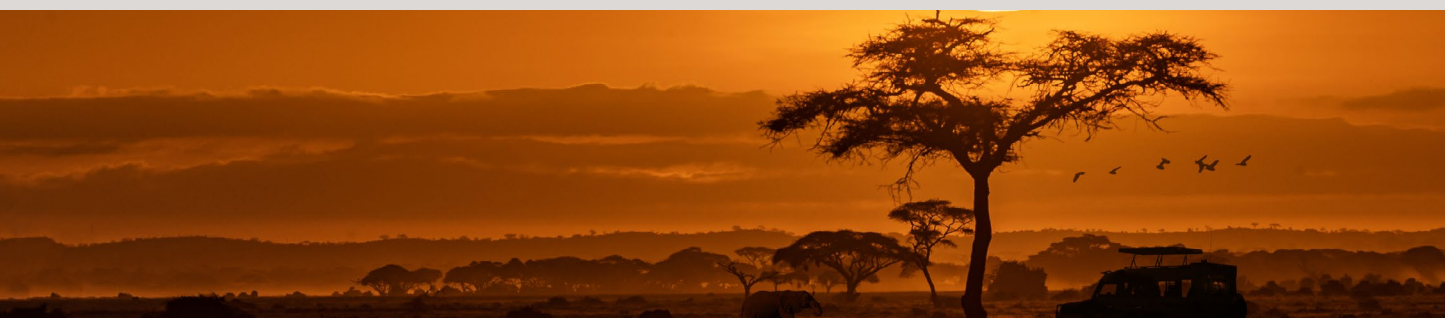
- **Access to Justice:** Providing legal representation and advice to marginalised communities.
- **Governance and Commercial Guidance:** Strengthening non-profits through sound legal counsel.
- **Legal Education & Community Outreach:** Enhancing legal awareness through workshops and consultations.
- **Estate Planning:** Offering free will-drafting services to promote financial security.
- **SMME Support:** Equipping small businesses with essential legal insights for growth and sustainability.
- **Strategic Litigation:** Advancing human rights through impactful legal advocacy.
- **Corporate Volunteerism:** Encouraging professional engagement in social justice initiatives.

Our values

We champion inclusivity, diversity, and recognition in all our efforts.

- **Inclusive:** Ensuring equal access to legal aid and pro bono opportunities.
- **Diverse:** Addressing legal matters that resonate with our professionals and their communities.
- **Celebratory:** Acknowledging the contributions of all stakeholders in fostering social justice.

Our unwavering dedication to social impact underpins our commitment to justice, equality, and community empowerment. Through strategic legal interventions and proactive engagement, we continue to shape a more just and equitable society.



CEO's foreword: Brent Botha



With great power comes great responsibility. It's a phrase we all recognise—immortalised in the Spider-Man films. It sounds inspiring on the big screen, but in reality, it comes at a great cost.

As a large law firm, we carry the responsibility of standing against injustice—not just for ourselves, but for every person affected by unreasonable and unjust laws. And we take this responsibility seriously.

That same commitment is reflected in our pro bono and community service programs. Over the past two years, Norton Rose Fulbright has dedicated an average of 18,000 pro bono hours per year to serving those who need legal assistance the most. We have spent many weekends in Soweto, Eldorado Park, and Wentworth, taking the law directly to the people through community legal advice clinics. Our Corporate Social Investment program empowers all our staff to contribute to positive change—whether by supporting access to justice or by protecting the environment. We lead by example in public interest litigation—challenging unfair laws and policies in courtrooms across the country.

We showed up for those who lost everything when the Usindiso Building fire left over 500 people homeless. We stood for Zimbabwean nationals facing deportation when their permits were revoked. We fought for the rights of children and parents by pushing for legislative reform.

And we will continue to show up. Because that is what great responsibility demands.

Practice Group Leader's message: André Vos



Our Social Impact team continues to live up to its name – delivering social impact. From seminal cases litigated for the public good to delivering justice at grass roots level through our numerous initiatives, we are proud of what the firm and our Social Impact team have achieved in 2024.

Collectively, our professional staff have performed over 18 000 hours of service valued at more than R60 million during 2024.

But more important than the statistics is the real difference that the hours of service and the dedication of our professional staff and the Social Impact team have had in the past year. A perusal of the various projects and mandates covered in this report demonstrate the difference made in the lives of many people.

We are proud of the work of our Social Impact team and all professional staff who have dedicated time in the service of social justice.

It is also encouraging to see the commitment from staff within the team and across the firm who freely give their time to social impact matters, not for the recognition or for those hours to be measured in monetary terms, nor because they are obliged to render a minimum amount of pro bono hours a year, but because they believe it is the right thing to do.

A year of impact



A message from our Head of Department:
Candice Pillay

The Social Impact team aims to deliver pro bono legal services to the indigent and vulnerable, to impact, challenge and influence legislation towards a progressive human rights jurisprudence, to be relevant and insightful in our delivery of legal services to our corporate non-profit and SMME client base and to build sustainable communities through our community programmes and corporate social intervention.

In order to achieve this vision, the team supports a customer-centric approach to be:

- **Relevant** – to be personalised and meaningful in all our interaction with stakeholders, recognising that our stakeholders are clients, beneficiaries, directors and staff at Norton Rose Fulbright and all with whom we interact.
- **Responsive** – to listen, understand and then act, thereby meeting the needs of our stakeholders
- **Reliable** – to keep the brand promise to assist our stakeholders to meet their objectives.
- **Convenient** – to be available to stakeholders by being consistent in our approach to make pro bono legal services easily available to clients, to make it convenient for professionals to achieve their pro bono hours by taking on matters that align with their skills set, and by providing diverse opportunities through legal advice clinics; to recognise CSI that is already taking place and to create opportunities for volunteerism for all staff to participate.

Ultimately leadership is about caring for the people and causes you are called to lead. At NRFSA we care about people, whether they be our professionals or clients; we care about the environment and this is reflected in the many opportunities we seize to make a difference in our own environment; we care about dignity and respect and we spend every day finding new ways to enhance dignity for our clients through the delivery of legal services.

Annual Statistics for 2024

For the financial year 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024, our professional staff performed 18 877.44 hours of service valued at R61,590,836.65 firmwide.

Awards and recognitions

African Legal Awards

Litigation and Dispute Resolution Team of the Year: Usindiso Fire Victims Case

Employment Team of the Year: Parental Leave Case

Global Awards

PILnet Global Awards: Scalabrini 'abandonment' matter

ProBono.Org Annual Awards

Webinars and Training Award

Community Impact/Empowerment Award

Deeds and Conveyancing Award

Wills Award

Outstanding Virtual Service Commitment to Continuous Learning and Professional Development

Recognitions

[2024 TrustLaw](#) [Index of Pro Bono](#)



5 Pillars of Social Impact

Pillar 1: Pro Bono

We provide pro bono legal services to various individuals and organisations on issues ranging from discrimination, personal injury, violence against women and children, unlawful evictions, land claims and access to basic services, as well as the enforcement of constitutional rights and duties.

In the courts



Bethany House Trust NPO

At the end of May 2024, we were instructed by Bethany House Trust NPO - an umbrella entity for various social welfare services and beneficiaries, including hundreds of children in Child and Youth Care Centres - to institute urgent proceedings against the Department of Social Development for failing to adequately fund the continued operation of our client's programs, contrary to their obligations in terms of the Constitution and the Children's Act.

The result of the Department's decision to reduce and/or terminate funding to our client would have led to the closure of its doors, the retrenchment of its employees and the dispersion of the vulnerable beneficiaries in its care - where many of whom have already endured unspeakable traumas.

Our client greatly feared a repeat of the Life Esidimeni tragedy, and we are pleased to have prevented any decision(s) that would have caused further trauma and/or infringement of the safety, health and dignity of the children in our client's care, by securing continued funding.

The team was assisted in this matter by Advocate Gillian Benson.



Kya Sands Burning Wasteland Community Forum

We are instructed by the Kya Sands Burning Wasteland Community Forum NPC to pursue litigation against, inter alia, the City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality, the Johannesburg Metropolitan Police Department and Pikitup SOC Ltd for failing to implement relevant waste management by-laws, and by implication, failing to curtail and respond to the prevailing issue of illegal dumping and burning of waste at the Kya Sands and Msawawa informal settlements.

In August 2024, we obtained an order in the High Court, Johannesburg compelling the COJ to conduct comprehensive air quality testing. The results of the air quality testing are due in April 2025. In the meantime, we are in the process of bringing a comprehensive application aimed at securing the assistance of multi-level government stakeholders to close the dumpsites, stop the burning and remove the waste.

This matter is ongoing, and the team is assisted by Advocate Samantha Martin, Advocate Melissa Scheepers and Advocate Herco Scheepers.





Baby Savers South Africa NPC

We are instructed by Baby Savers South Africa NPC and Door of Hope Children's Mission NPC to bring a constitutional challenge to certain provisions of the *Children's Act 38 of 2005* for, inter alia, failing to regulate the provision of safe relinquishment services of infants through receptacles or boxes that are attached to approved places of safety, such as child and youth care centres, known as "Baby Saver Boxes".

During the final preparations for the constitutional challenge, our clients instructed us that the Gauteng Department of Social Development had refused to reregister (and therefore, deny funding to) Door of Hope Children's Mission NPC, on account of their continued use of Baby Saver Boxes.

We subsequently brought urgent interdict proceedings against DSD, and successfully secured continued registration and funding for Door of Hope Children's Mission NPC, pending finalisation of the constitutional challenge.

This matter is ongoing, and the team is assisted by Advocate Garth Hulley SC, Advocate Gillian Benson, Advocate Leigh Franck and Advocate Orapeleng Peter Tholo.

Projects



Indalo Inclusive / WWF Project (Port St Johns) - NRFSA's role and impact

The Sustainable Fisheries Programme aims to empower small-scale fishers in Port St. Johns by strengthening governance in the various fishing cooperatives, business acumen, and sustainable fishing practices.

Indalo Inclusive South Africa NPC, under contract with WWF-SA, provides targeted interventions to enhance cooperative management, ensure regulatory compliance, and improve transparency.



A key component of this initiative was a series of governance workshops facilitated by Candice Pillay. These workshops played a pivotal role in equipping cooperative leaders and members with essential governance skills, legal compliance knowledge, and decision-making capabilities.

Key contributions:

- **Legal and Governance Expertise:** Delivered structured training on cooperative governance, corporate structures, compliance, and leadership responsibilities.
- **Practical Skill-Building:** Provided cooperative members with templates for meeting notices, agendas, and resolutions, ensuring adherence to governance best practices.
- **Regulatory Compliance Support:** Assisted participants with navigating the CIPC system, enabling them to manage cooperative registrations and legal documentation effectively.
- **Strategic Leadership Development:** Facilitated role-playing exercises to strengthen decision-making, conflict resolution, and cooperative leadership skills.

Impact of the governance workshops:

- Increased understanding of cooperative governance and legal responsibilities among cooperative leaders.
- Enhanced transparency, accountability, and compliance within fishing cooperatives.
- Strengthened participants' ability to establish and maintain effective governance structures.
- Provided practical tools for cooperative management, ensuring sustainability and growth.



Through these workshops, Norton Rose Fulbright South Africa has played a critical role in fostering governance excellence, ultimately empowering small-scale fishers to operate efficiently and sustainably within the fisheries sector.



Dipaleseng Just Energy Transition Indalopreneur Project

Between August and December 2022, Indalo Inclusive NPC, a client of the firm, was contracted by a university to support a research project. This involved coordinating and facilitating local stakeholder engagements in Dipaleseng Local Municipality to understand the challenges and opportunities posed by climate change and the just energy transition, particularly in light of the decommissioning and repurposing of the Grootvlei Coal Power Station. During the engagement, many stakeholders expressed a need for further awareness and education about climate change and the just energy transition.



In response to this, the Dipaleseng Climate Change and Just Transition Community Awareness & Consultative Workshops were conceptualised and implemented.

The aim was to fulfil this request by utilising social dialogue as a mechanism for honest and transparent conversation about climate change and the energy transition.

Building on the success of the Dipaleseng Climate Change and Just Transition Community Awareness & Consultative Workshops, a complementary project was implemented, namely the Dipaleseng Just Energy Transition Intervention Design and Exposure Project. The project's key activities included working with over 130 local stakeholders and community members to co-design and test ward-level just energy transition interventions, developing an action and financial plan for each intervention, and hosting a project symposium to present the results and interventions to potential funders.

The Dipaleseng Just Energy Transition Indalopreneur Project was designed to mobilise six municipal wards in Dipaleseng towards creating social and green innovations to the level of implementation. Over a period of three months and five training sessions, the six wards needed to create a viable social ownership model for their businesses. This is when the Social Impact team intervened. Over the course of the training sessions, participants were introduced to the corporate landscape in South Africa, navigated the Companies Act



and the various legal/juristic business entities that exist and were introduced to corporate governance, company secretarial obligations and legal compliance. Once the information sessions were completed, Candice Pillay then worked with each ward/community to model their own unique community ownership enterprise model. The final deliverable of the project is to assist each of the six communities to have their businesses registered in terms of the model that was chosen either a private company, a trust, a cooperative or a non-profit company. Together, Indalo Inclusive and the Social Impact team will mentor the businesses to ensure that their business models will translate into tangible environmental, social and economic outcomes.



The Land Claims Court project

In October 2024, the heads of the pro bono teams at all the major law firms were contacted by the Land Claims Court with a request for assistance with its historic case files project.

The purpose of this project was to assist the Court with uploading inactive case files to CaseLines, as part of the digitalization of its archives. The process ensured that documents in the case files were scanned and uploaded to CaseLines, making them readily accessible to practitioners.

We received our first batch of files to scan and upload towards the end of November 2024. To date, we have successfully assisted the Court in uploading approximately 60 of the 200 dormant files.

We are grateful for the support of associates and candidate attorneys within the firm, who volunteered their time on weekends and after-hours on weekdays. Their efforts have greatly streamlined the process.

The Court has extended its gratitude to our firm for assisting them to begin the process of tackling their dormant matters.

Pillar 2: Impact Litigation

In the courts



Protecting parental rights:

The Commission for Gender Equality's commitment to legislative reform

On 1 November 2024, the Commission for Gender Equality (CGE) addressed the Constitutional Court on the discriminatory and unconstitutional framework for parental leave in the *Basic Conditions of Employment Act, 1997* and the *Unemployment Insurance Fund Act, 2001*. All parties, including the Minister of Employment and Labour, acknowledged that the current framework requires legislative reform.

While there was agreement on the unconstitutionality of the law and a temporary suspension of any declaration to maintain some parental leave, the Minister opposed any interim relief. CGE emphasised the importance of interim relief to safeguard constitutional rights until reforms are enacted. CGE proposed a flexible leave system allowing parents to share four months and two weeks of leave, while other parties suggested different allocations.

CGE also submitted that denying parental leave to adoptive parents of children over the age of two is unconstitutional, advocating for inclusive reforms that support all adoptions.

The Constitutional Court has reserved its judgment, which could lead to a more equitable parental leave framework for all South African parents, marking a crucial step toward parental equality and better support for families.

The team was assisted by Advocates Heidi Barnes SC, Mpho Rasivhetshela and Keneilwe Ramela.

The High Court's judgment is available here: [Van Wyk and Others v Minister of Employment and Labour \(2022-017842\) \[2023\] ZAGPJHC 1213.](#)



The SCA affirms the Commission for Gender Equality's position on sexual consent

On 24 April 2024, the Supreme Court of Appeal issued judgment in an appeal which will have a significant impact on the reporting and prosecution of rape and related sexual offences.

The SCA was tasked with considering whether there were grounds to interfere with the High Court judgment, which attracted much controversy last year for appearing to accept that a complainant's consent to certain sexual acts (foreplay), amounted to tacit consent to other sexual acts (penetration), notwithstanding the party's prior express agreement not to engage in penetrative intercourse.

The SCA outlined the correct approach to interpreting consent in the *Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act 32 of 2007* and proceeded to set the accused's acquittal aside and to reinstate his conviction.

In laying out the correct approach to consent, the Court agreed with the Commission's submission that consent must be clearly communicated. The Court noted that the Act requires that consent must be "given *consciously and voluntarily, either expressly or tacitly*" and that there must be "agreement", a meeting of the minds. The Court considered prior case law which emphasises that consent must be active as mere submission, or acquiescence, or lack of resistance does not convey a willingness to engage in a penetrative sexual act.

With reference to the foreign jurisprudence submitted by the Commission, the Court found that there must be explicitly or tacit consent to each specific sexual act, as consent to one form of sexual act does not encompass consent to all kinds of sexual acts. Thus, the Court clarified that consent to foreplay or oral sex does not amount to consent to vaginal penetrative sexual intercourse."

The SCA's judgment provides useful guidance on the interpretation of consent in the context of rape under the Act and will go a long way in arming prosecutors and courts to effectively convict those guilty of rape and related sexual offences.

The team was assisted by Advocates Gilbert Marcus SC and Emma Webber.

The SCA's judgment is available here: [Director of Public Prosecutions, Eastern Cape, Makhanda v Coko \(248/2022\) \[2024\] ZASCA 59 \(24 April 2024\) \(saflii.org\)](#)



Should a judge impeached for misconduct be in a position to select judges?

The Social Impact team is representing Corruption Watch NPC in an application to the Western Cape High Court which seeks to challenge the constitutional validity of the National Assembly's decision to designate former Western Cape Judge President Dr Hlophe, to the Judicial Services Commission (JSC). The National Assembly had previously accepted the removal of Dr Hlophe as a judge following a hearing of the JSC's disciplinary committee.

Interim relief was granted to Corruption Watch on 27 September 2024, with a full bench of the High Court finding that the National Assembly had:

- Abdicated its responsibility to the MK Party.
- Acted irrationally.

- Acted contrary to section 165 of the Constitution which requires it to assist and protect the courts to ensure their independence, impartiality, dignity, accessibility and effectiveness.

Despite requests by the Umkhonto weSizwe Party (MK Party) and Dr Hlophe, the JSC refused to postpone its October sitting, and an urgent application for the postponement of that sitting was dismissed by the Gauteng High Court on 5 October 2024, affirming the lawfulness of the JSC's decision to proceed without Dr Hlophe.

The MK Party has sought to appeal the interdict and this application was heard on 1 November 2024 and judgment is reserved. In the interim, Dr Hlophe has resigned from the JSC, and the MK Party has purported to withdraw his nomination. However, given that these decisions appear to have been tactical and do not adequately deal with the Assembly's unlawful designation, Corruption Watch will persist in seeking final relief in the early part of next year.

The team was represented by Advocates Geoff Budlender SC, Pranisha Maharaj-Pillay and Mitch de Beer.

The High Court's judgment is available here: [*Democratic Alliance v Hlophe and Others* \(16170/2024;16771/2024;16463/2024\) \[2024\] ZAWCHC 282.](#)



Litigating against alleged hate speech and harassment by Julius Malema and the EFF

The Social Impact team represented the South African Human Rights Commission in Equality Court proceedings concerning statements made by Julius Malema at an EFF political rally. The Commission contended that the statements infringed the *Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act, 2000* because:

- It constituted hate speech based on the prohibited grounds of race, opinion and belief (including the analogous ground of political opinion).
- Constituted unfair discrimination on such grounds.
- Constituted harassment.

The Commission has stressed the importance of the right of all South Africans to participate in political discourse and to be free to express their opinions and views without being subject to the threat of violence and harm. Further, that it is not permissible for political figures to incite violence against those who disagree with their views.

The Commission's challenge was heard by Judge Sher over a number of days in February, March and December 2024. Judgment has been reserved and is expected in the new year. The team believes that the outcome will be important for our understanding of how populist political speech is to be evaluated under the Act and how the prohibition of harassment should be adjudicated.

Advocates Karrisha Pillay SC, Sibonile Khoza and Tongayi Masvikwa represent the team.



Defending the integrity of Parliament

The Social Impact team represented Corruption Watch NPC as *amicus curiae* in the Constitutional Court urgent appeal concerning Jacob Zuma's eligibility to stand as a candidate for the Umkhonto weSizwe Political Party in the May 2024 national election.

In its unanimous decision, the Court found that Jacob Zuma is ineligible to be a member of the National Assembly in terms of

section 47(1)(e) of the Constitution. Corruption Watch successfully contributed to this outcome by providing the Court with valuable insight into the interpretation of section 47(1)(e).

The judgment relied upon several of the points raised by Corruption Watch:

- When the court of first and last instance convicts and sentences an individual, the disqualification takes effect immediately as the conviction and sentence are final and not subject to appeal. The appeal process requirement is meant to ensure finality and nothing else.
- The purpose of section 47(1)(e) is to uphold the integrity of South Africa's democratic system, founded on the rule of law, by preventing serious violators of the law from becoming members of the National Assembly.
- The Electoral Court's interpretation would lead to the absurdity of treating Constitutional Court convictions less seriously than those of a magistrate's court.

We are proud to have contributed to this significant ruling that reinforces the rule of law and the integrity of South Africa's democratic processes.

The team was represented by Advocates Max du Plessis SC, Pranisha Maharaj-Pillay and Catheryn Kruyer.

The Constitutional Court's judgment is available here: [*Electoral Commission of South Africa v Umkhonto Wesizwe Political Party and Others* \(CCT 97/24\) \[2024\] ZACC 6.](#)



Defending the Zimbabwe Exemption Permit

In a landmark decision, the Constitutional Court has confirmed that Zimbabwean Exemption Permit (ZEP) holders have a right to fair administrative action. This ruling comes after the Helen Suzman Foundation and the Consortium for Refugees and Migrants in South Africa (CoRMSA) challenged the Minister of Home Affairs' decision to terminate the ZEP under the Promotion of Administrative Justice Act, 2000 (PAJA).

The challenge was initiated on the grounds that the Minister's decision was unlawful, invalid, and unconstitutional, impacting approximately 178,000 Zimbabwean nationals currently holding ZEPs. On June 28, 2023, the Pretoria High Court ruled in favour of the applicants, finding that the decision was procedurally unfair and infringed on the constitutional rights of ZEP holders. The court highlighted that the Minister's failure to conduct a fair 'notice and comment' process rendered the decision uninformed and procedurally irrational.

Despite the Minister's attempts to appeal the High Court's decision, including applications to the High Court and the Supreme Court of Appeal, the Constitutional Court dismissed the Minister's application for special leave to appeal on June 18, 2024. The Constitutional Court found that the application had no reasonable prospects of success.

Although the Minister has not taken steps to call for representations or to engage in dialogue with ZEP holders and representative institutions, the ZEP has been extended to all ZEP holders until 29 November 2025. ZEP holders who qualify for other 'mainstream' visas have been encouraged to make use of a waiver process designed to streamline their applications.

The team will continue to assist CoRMSA and its constituents in finding a fair resolution of the plight of ZEP holders, many of whom have contributed meaningfully to South African society for up to 15 years.

Advocate David Simonsz has assisted the team in this matter.

The High Court's judgment is available here: [*\[2023\] ZAGPPHC 490*](#). The Constitutional Court did not issue a judgment.



The rights of asylum seekers to fair administrative action

The Social Impact team continues to represent asylum seekers through litigating a number of matters where the Department of Home Affairs has failed in its obligation to deal with their applications in a fair manner. The team has instituted several applications under the *Promotion of Administrative Justice Act, 2000* to review and set aside the decisions, including the failure to make decisions, of Refugee Status Determination Officers (RSDO) and the Refugee Appeals Authority.

This assistance is crucial for these clients who, in some cases, have waited up to 15 years for their applications to be finally determined.

For one of our clients who is already a recognised refugee, we are reviewing the RSDO's failure to determine his family's application to be joined to his status, under section 3(c) of the *Refugees Act, 1998*. Of interest in this matter is that we will ask the High Court to impose its own decision in the matter given the seeming inability of the Department to determine basic applications expeditiously. Such substantive relief is a relative novelty under South African administrative law and is only granted in exceptional circumstances.

It should be borne in mind that for all our asylum seeking and refugee clients the stakes are high, as they have fled from countries, such as the Democratic Republic of Congo, which remain volatile and where they would likely experience persecution and violence were they to return. In this regard, conflict in the North Kivu province has led to the displacement of 200 000 people in recent months.

The team is however encouraged by a recent change in approach from the Department, with a number of the applications being settled.

Pillar 3: Community Service

For the period ending 31 December 2025, professional staff performed 5737 community service hours.

We conduct a range of community programs in collaboration with various stakeholders, aimed at empowering vulnerable members of society by providing legal information and advice. These programs are delivered directly within communities, with the support and involvement of local stakeholders.



Topics we cover:

- Marriages and marital regimes
- Rights of children
- Divorce and maintenance
- Rights to privacy and medical treatment
- Parental rights and responsibilities
- Rights of immigrants and refugees
- Domestic violence and harassment
- Administration of deceased estates and drafting of wills
- Accessing housing rights, PIE and ESTA
- Prevention of unfair discrimination
- LGBTQIA+ rights



Johannesburg Child Welfare: Masibambisane Centre. We are partnered with Johannesburg Child Welfare to provide legal services to the Eldorado Park community at the Masibambisane Elton John Centre on the last Friday every month.

Dobsonville Human Right Centre: We are partnered with Martha Chauke, an experienced paralegal, to provide legal services to the community of Dobsonville, Soweto. These clinics occur on the first and last Saturday of each month.

Women And The Law (WATLA): Legal workshops are held in various communities in Johannesburg South, to teach and empower women about the law, including the drafting of wills and the provision of testamentary advice.

Women of Wentworth Org: Legal workshops are held in Wentworth, to teach and empower the community about the law.

Domestic Violence Helpdesk: We operate a domestic violence helpdesk at the Randburg Magistrate's Court, where we provide assistance to members of the public in applying for domestic violence protection orders.

Refugee Clinic: The Social Impact team services individual refugee and asylum seeker clients in various respects, such as in the renewal of their visas, access to healthcare, schooling and employment, and in their appeals to the Refugee Appeals Authority.

ProBono.Org Virtual Clinics: Professional staff members volunteer at various clinics hosted by ProBono.Org weekly.





Pillar 4: Wills Projects

Norton Rose Fulbright’s Wills Project provides free wills, along with education on estate administration, to underserved communities. This initiative exemplifies our commitment to social justice by ensuring individuals can protect their rights and legacies.

Operating across Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal, and the Western Cape, our team travels extensively to reach those in need. Recognising the limited legal knowledge in these communities, we conduct workshops on wills and estate administration, followed by same day will drafting to provide immediate peace of mind.

In 2024, the Norton Rose Fulbright South Africa’s Wills Project dedicated 277 pro bono hours to drafting 360 free wills and delivering vital legal education. Through these efforts, we empower individuals, strengthen community trust, and promote legal awareness.

Gogo's legacy

“At 93 years old, Gogo attended a Wills Project event in Vosloorus, limping into the hall with the help of her granddaughter. Determined to finalise her will, she confidently outlined her wishes.

Known in her community for her cooking, she had only a house and several large cooking pots. Gogo meticulously divided her furniture among her five daughters and two sons, ensuring each child’s inheritance was clear.

When she reached her daughter Elizabeth, she humorously declared, “To Elizabeth, I leave my number 10 pot because she lost the lid. She must get that pot!” Her mischievous gleam elicited laughter, underscoring her fairness. With her will finalised, Gogo sighed in relief, clutching the envelope containing her signed will. She left the event content, knowing her estate was in order and her family’s inheritance was clear.

While we do not know what happened to Gogo after that day, we take solace in having provided her with peace of mind. Gogo’s story is just one of many we encounter at our community wills events, highlighting the importance of bringing legal services directly to the public and making the law accessible to everyone.”

Description	Statistics
Total number of pro bono hours recorded	277.50
Total number of wills drafted	360

Pillar 5: Corporate Social Investment (CSI)

At Norton Rose Fulbright we believe that we have a responsibility to use our skills, knowledge and resources to make a difference in the communities in which we operate, to help shape the future in a way that provides economic, ecological and social benefits for all. We give back to our local communities through donations and by contributing our time and skills to a wide range of community initiatives.



Month	Initiative	Impact	SDG Alignment
February	Unfinished Business of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission	Supported social justice by contributing to the gravestone of Richard and Irene Motasi- victims of an apartheid-era double murder- ensuring their legacy is honoured.	16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS
March	Human Rights Month	Distributed Bill of Rights booklets to all staff and community clinics, raising legal awareness and empowering communities.	16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS
April	Easter Charity Drive	Collected and donated Easter treats to organisations supporting vulnerable individuals in Johannesburg, Cape Town, and Durban.	3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING
	Earth Day 2024	Partnered with SA Harvest NPC to combat food waste, promoting environmental sustainability and food security.	2 ZERO HUNGER 12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION

Month	Initiative	Impact	SDG Alignment
	Freedom Day Events	Hosted discussions and a documentary screening in Johannesburg to reflect on democracy, justice, and human rights.	
June	World Environment Day	Planted vegetable gardens at community centres across Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal, and the Western Cape to promote food security and sustainability.	 
July	Nelson Mandela Day	Dedicated 67 minutes to community service, providing food, blankets, and nutrition packs to those in need.	 
	Plastic-Free July	Encouraged sustainable practices by reducing plastic waste and distributing reusable bags.	 
September	Arbor Week	Donated 240 trees in partnership with Greenpop Foundation to support reforestation and urban greening.	 
	Lawyers Against Abuse Gala Dinner	Supported efforts to combat gender-based violence through financial contributions.	 

Month	Initiative	Impact	SDG Alignment
October	Pots of Hope for World Homeless Day	Volunteers participated in a cooking competition to provide dignified meals to unhoused individuals around the Randburg and CBD areas in Johannesburg.	 
November	Community Support Donations	Provided financial support to legal clinics and human rights organisations serving vulnerable communities.	 
December	16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence	Partnered with Sonke Gender Justice to highlight the impact of silence in addressing GBV, hosting a talk and awareness campaign.	 
	Menzi Children's Home Christmas Initiative	Provided Christmas clothes and gifts for orphans and children with disabilities, reinforcing a long-term commitment to their well-being.	
	Christmas Cheer Buckets	Raised funds to provide holiday packages to our cleaning and security staff, recognising their contributions to the firm.	



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