



THE KHULISA “JUSTICE AND RESTORATION” PROGRAMME

“My neighbour really heard what I was saying about the hurt I suffered and I got to understand her position as well, for the first time. We made our peace.”
JARP Programme Participant

Programme Description

Khulisa implemented a pilot project at Phoenix, KwaZulu Natal in conjunction with the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) and Department of Justice (DoJ) at the beginning of 2007. The Phoenix JARP programme is a community based initiative that provides alternative methods of dealing with crime, wrongdoing and conflict in the community to the retributive criminal justice system. These include restorative conferencing, such as victim offender mediation, conferencing and circles; and alternative conflict or dispute mediation and peacemaking. While the initial focus of JARP was to service the Phoenix court, it has developed and expanded its services to other courts and referral sources, such as schools, the police and directly to the community. JARP offers the community a more active role in responding to crime and conflict.

Phoenix JARP has been positioned by the DoJ&CD as a Best Practice Model for South Africa. External evaluations conducted by UNISA and the University of KZN reflect both the achievements of the project and its potential.

Programme Aims and Objectives

- Reduce recidivism by facilitating collaborative problem solving alternative dispute and restorative mechanisms at the pretrial and pre-sentence levels
- Assist in reducing prison overcrowding by promoting alternatives to incarceration
- Assist the courts and police by reducing their work load and case backlog
- Assist in the healing of victims, offenders, families, and community members who have been affected by crime



- Aid in the repair and rebuilding of relationships damaged by wrongdoing
- Facilitate the peaceful reintegration of victims and offenders into their communities, through dialogue with their victims, offenders, families and communities
- Empower communities to assume more responsibility for dealing with conflict and crime instead of over reliance of the police and courts
- Contribute to the development of standards of best practice, and to develop training materials that encourage best practice
- Share research finding with restorative justice advocates, practitioners and other interested parties
- Help make justice more meaningful and accessible to the public, particularly to disadvantaged communities and vulnerable groups such as women and children
- Participate in the formulation of an integrative model of justice more familiar with African values and customs

Programme Outcomes

- Build community resources by:
 - Teaching conflict resolution skills
 - Training community mediators
 - Encouraging local crime prevention initiatives
- Foster peacemaking, in the spirit of Ubuntu, by offering:
 - Restorative justice to support those affected by crime
 - Conflict resolution across the community to respond to disputes
 - Rehabilitation and reintegration of those responsible for crime

Programme Successes

Independent evaluation of the Phoenix Justice and Restoration Programme (JARP) reveals a very high rate of satisfaction among all role-players and stakeholders.

- Phoenix JARP decreased court case load by 39% over an 8-month period.
- Mediated over 1800 cases in a one year period
- Both victims and offenders indicated they were satisfied by agreements reached in restorative mediation (90.6% and 86.6% respectively).
- 84.7% of Victims believed the offender had gained an understanding of the harm he/she had caused, while 92.5% of offenders surveyed believed that mediation had helped bring about genuine change in their behaviour.
- The majority of victims (69.4%) and offenders (60.4%) indicated mediation to be more valuable than appearing in court and deals with problems effectively and speedily.



- The majority of victims and offenders (96.2%) said they would recommend mediation to individuals in similar situations to themselves.
- The majority of community members believe that JARP can play a role in making community safer through crime prevention programmes.
- The project was awarded the “Extra Mile” award for excellence by the Kwa-Zulu Natal Department of Justice in 2007.

Case Study

“I pressed charges against my neighbour for assault and crime injuries after a particularly bad fight, says Shereeta Naidoo. “It was recommended to us at the court house that we rather try resolving our dispute through Mediation services offered by JARP. We did and I was so surprised at what came out during our open discussion in the safety of the centre. My neighbour really heard what I was saying about the hurt I suffered and I got to understand her position as well, for the first time. We made our peace, I withdrew the charges and now I don’t just have a neighbour, I have a friend I can call on when in need.”