



National Alliance for the Development  
of Community Advice Offices

**Nadcao is committed to the development  
and long-term sustainability of  
Community Advice Offices(CAOs)**

## **INTRODUCTION**

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The National Alliance for the Development of Community Advice Offices (Nadcao) is a non-profit organisation committed to the development and long-term sustainability of Community Advice Offices (CAOs).

Community Advice Offices are small, non-profit organisations that offer free basic legal and human rights information, advice and services to people who are marginalised through poverty, social circumstances and geographical location. Nadcao works with 320 CAOs in all 9 provinces throughout South Africa.

## **MISSION**

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We envisage a sustainable CAO sector, providing effective service delivery and having an effective voice able to attain recognition, institutionalisation and support from society.

## **VISION**

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A society in which poverty is eradicated and human rights and social justice are realised for the poor in South Africa.

## **OBJECTIVES**

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- Strengthen the CAOs;
- Conceptualise and develop ideas for the advancement of CAOs and community-based paralegals;

- Identify, influence and support initiatives and interventions that will ensure the sustainability of the sector;
- Facilitate the provision of relevant support and development services;
- Mobilise resources in the context of a newly-defined model of sustainability; and
- Articulate the issues of the sector within an authoritative national source.

## **CENTRAL CASE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM**

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Nadcao distributed a Central Case Management System (CCMS) to CAOs to ensure that casework data was being captured correctly. The CCMS enables CAOs to generate statistical reports of their casework, which will be a useful tool when meeting with potential funders, stakeholders and partners.

Nadcao rolled-out a Super User programme in each of the provinces as a way to address the challenges that CAOs commonly face, including limited computer skills and internet access. A Super User is defined as a caseworker within an advice office who is highly skilled and trained on the CCMS.

## **PROVINCIAL FORUMS**

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Prior to the establishment of Nadcao, the CAO sector was fragmented, with no coherent strategy or vision for sustainability. As part of the sector consolidation process, Nadcao supported the emergence of representative structures, which helped to strengthen

the provincial forums. With the assistance of Nadcao, all 9 provinces have functioning provincial forums.

## **SECTOR REGULATION AND RECOGNITION**

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For many years, CAOs managed without sufficient regulation. NADCAO, together with the National Task Team (NTT) on Community-Based Paralegals, made an oral submission to Parliament's Portfolio Committee on Justice and Constitutional Development calling for the inclusion of community-based paralegals in the Legal Practice Bill.

The Committee committed to preparing a report that will accompany the Bill and that will argue for a legislative framework to be developed for the regulation of paralegals.

## **ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY-BASED ADVICE OFFICE OF SOUTH AFRICA**

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Two National Working Committees (NWCs) - comprising of 18 provincial leaders (2 representatives per province) - were formed to represent the provinces at a national level. As part of the sector institutionalisation process, the NWCs decided to form a new membership organisation that will serve as the national voice of the CAO sector: Association of Community-based Advice Office of South Africa (ACAOSA). NADCAO, working closely with NWCs, will facilitate ACAOSA's full establishment.

## FOUNDING MEMBERS

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1. Association of University Legal Aid Institutions Trust
2. Black Sash Trust
3. Community Law and Rural Development Centre
4. Foundation for Human Rights
5. Ithembalabantu
6. Karoo Centre for Human Rights
7. Social Change Assistance Trust

## GOVERNANCE

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Nadcao is a registered non-profit company (NPC), governed by a Board of Directors consisting of three members:

1. Mr Schalk Meyer;
2. Mr Langa Mtshali (Chairperson); and
3. Ms Marcella Naidoo.

## FUNDERS

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Charles Stewart Mott Foundation



Atlantic Philanthropies



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## **CONTACT DETAILS**

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Registration number: 2012/060283/08

NPO number: 104-280