Legal Resources Centre workshop on legislative drafting, May 22-23. 1998

http://hdl.handle.net/2144/19014

Boston University
Dear Anne and Bob

Re: LRC letter of support for the proposed programme on Legislative Drafting:

The Legal Resources Centre (LRC) is an independent non-profit public interest law centre, which seeks innovative and effective solutions through the law, to the problems experienced by its clients who are the poor, homeless and landless of South Africa and those who suffer discrimination by reason of race, gender, or social and economic historical circumstance. It seeks to use law for the development of a democratic society based on the principles of the rule of law, human rights and social justice.

The LRC is committed to translating political, social and economic rights into a reality for all South Africans. The LRC has a potentially vital role in giving life to the Constitution and Bill of Rights and to use it to address the sharp inequalities and injustices in South Africa and to deal constructively with the consequences of our Apartheid past.

The LRC’s active participation in law reform initiatives improves the legal and policy environment in which poor communities operate and facilitates their access to resources. Pro-active law reform obviates the need for costly and time consuming litigation and produces better results. Over the past three years the LRC Land, Housing and Development Programme has commented on a range of new policy and legislation in both urban and rural areas. (Appendix attached).

Given the change in South Africa, our experience in working with communities, a most important window of opportunity exists for the LRC to play a greater role in the law making process. We clearly anticipate an increased role in activities in this regard and it is most important to further train and develop the LRC’s expertise in this regard. The Legislative Drafting workshop attended by LRC attorneys and candidate attorneys was an important learning process.

We usually engage in the legislative drafting process with partner NGO’s, most notably National Land Committee affiliates and NGO’s in the Land and Housing Sector. At times we also engage in the process on specific instructions from client communities, in both policy formulation and legislation drafting, or for the purposes of commenting on Bills.
In our interaction with other NGO’s there is a critical need for such organisations to also be trained on how effective commentary and proposals for legislative drafting could be prepared. The Seideman workshop will be of crucial importance for those organisations who do not actively intervene in the law making process. The Seidemans approach clearly demystified the legalise and principles in terms of which laws could be drafted so that such laws are more efficient and comply with key principles contained in the constitution.

The LRC is in the process of engaging with the Seidemans about further training needs and depending on our time constraints and availability be prepared to present case studies on our experiences with NGO’s in the law making process.

We wish to strongly support and commend the Seidemans in their initiative.

Sincerely

[Signature]

BONGA MAJOLA
National Director