

AFRA

WHAT IS AFRA?

AFRA - the Association for Rural Advancement - was formed in late 1979 in response to the massive and continuing hardships imposed on black people in rural Natal by the Government policy of uprooting and relocating them.

* The objects of the Association are broadly:

a) to monitor, enquire into, record and publicise the social and economic position of rural people in Natal.

and b) to take action to alleviate hardships, discrimination and oppression suffered by them, and to encourage their social and economic advancement.

* Afra believes that South Africa is a single country whose government should be in the hands of all its people. It opposes the systems of migrant and contract labour, influx control, the pass laws, and the restrictions on the rights of black people to own and occupy land anywhere in South Africa. It opposes particularly all removals of people that are designed to entrench the "homelands" and "group areas" policies.

* Afra opposes the oppressive labour conditions operating on most South African farms and is committed to the idea of a farm labour system where workers can organise into democratic trade unions and have access to independent housing.

* Afra supports rural development programmes which are sensitive to local needs and incorporate the communities they serve into their decision-making and operation.

* Afra opened a full-time office in Pietermaritzburg in June 1980. Since then it has been investigating the conditions of rural communities in Natal, especially those in already established resettlement camps and in areas apparently due to be removed by the state. This information has been stored and documented and given appropriate publicity, mainly in the form of published reports and factsheets. It has provided legal advice and information to rural people whose rights may be infringed in the process of their eviction or removal. It intends to open a rural advice office in Estcourt in 1982 to extend its provision of education and advice in these matters to the rural people in that area.