

In the *Mail and Guardian* issue of 5 February on page 16 was an article headed 'NGO uses donor funds to fight legal battles'. The article refers to a protracted legal dispute between members of the Board of Trustees of the Adult Learning Network and quotes a number of statements from parties to the dispute (and from a representative of a donor agency that used to fund the NGO) alleging that the Board of Trustees have mismanaged the organisation and misspent money on fruitless legal expenditure.

It is with great concern that the Kha Ri Gude adult literacy campaign notes that this article has linked the Kha Ri Gude campaign to the dispute in a totally misleading and damaging way. The Kha Ri Gude campaign is in no way connected to the Adult Learning Network any more than it is connected to any other NGO. People who may be members of literacy and other NGOs may be among the more than 40 000 voluntary educators who have worked for the campaign, but they are recruited as **individuals**, not as members of their organisation.

At the top of the article was a photograph with the caption "The Adult Learning Network is supposed to help the poor". This caption summarises the criticism voiced in this article about the Board of Trustees. Unfortunately the photograph is of a learner holding a Kha Ri Gude literacy campaign workbook with the name "Kha Ri Gude" prominent. This creates the clear association in the mind of the reader between the allegations made about the Adult learning Network and the Kha Ri Gude campaign – it suggests that Kha Ri Gude is party to misusing money meant to help the poor. This is a damaging, libellous and totally false. The *Mail and Guardian* has already apologised for this error and has been asked to publish a prominent correction and apology.

Within the article itself a criticism is made that the Adult Learning Network Board has an unusually large number of members who are government employees and states that two Board members are Kha Ri Gude (that is, also government) employees. It must be made clear that Kha Ri Gude has very few employees, a small number in the national office housed in the Department of Education. The two Board members of the Adult Learning Network are not among those employees. They are two of over 40 thousand volunteers who are helping the campaign, many of whom come from a variety of NGOs. This mention in the article is therefore misleading and false.

Kha Ri Gude is not involved in any way with the current legal conflict within the Adult Learning Network and has no information on it and therefore no opinion on the merits of the various accusations.