

Social work and poverty reduction in Southern Africa: The case of Eswatini, Lesotho, and Zimbabwe

Jotham Dhemba, University of Eswatini

Tatenda Nhapi, Erasmus Mundus MA Advanced Development in Social Work

1 Introduction

The 2004 African Union Heads of State and Government Summit on Employment and Poverty Alleviation in Africa held in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, attributed the pervasive and persistent poverty, unemployment, and under-employment as challenges to the lack of social protection in these countries (UNICEF 2008). In this regard, Conradie (2018) postulates that in contrast to the ascendancy of welfare services as per trends in the Global North, African welfare regimes have to contend with colonial and post-colonial policies resulting in struggles towards democracy. For Conradie (2018), Africa's universal profile comprises a few citizens accessing employment, education, health care, and social services.

Undeniably, the majority of African citizens are excluded from the modern economy, and the attendant levels of poverty and inequality are high. On this basis, CODESRIA (2016) posits that African development strategies have been mainly predicated upon strict austerity measures propelled by the 1980s Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs) and sustained by continued economic liberalisation and marketization into the 2000s. In countries such as Angola, Ethiopia, Ghana, and Equatorial Guinea, GDP growth in 2010 reflected the 6% economic growth experienced across the continent before the 2008 global economic recession (Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA), 2016).

In current Global South social work practice, a critical mass of scholarship exists on policy and research regarding poverty mitigation in social work with local communities. Therefore, consistent with its values and principles, social work is a profession seeking to help and empower vulnerable groups in society as women, persons with disabilities, children, the elderly, and people living with HIV/AIDS. Furthermore, we contend that critique of the largely dominant casework social work method of intervention by Dhemba and Marumo (2017) is convincing. Dhemba and Marumo (2017) articulate that casework is individualistic, focused on psychosocial approaches but however is mainstreamed by frontline social workers in situations of cultural diversity and pervasive poverty. On the same note, Dhemba and Marumo (2017) contend that government agencies like social services departments are, by nature, formal and rigid, thereby making it difficult to change their *modus operandi* radically.

In the same vein, Pawar (2017) advocates for the facilitation of political engagement in social work practice to deal effectively with the problem of poverty. At the same time, there is a need for altering social work's common ideological position as non-political and non-religious, focusing instead on the fundamental principles of human rights and social justice (Pawar, 2017).

This article interrogates the responsiveness and appropriateness of social work education and practices to address poverty's problem in all its manifestations. Importantly the article offers a fresh look at poverty in Eswatini, Lesotho, and Zimbabwe, through a social work education and practice and lens. Therefore, it seeks to dig deeper into the theoretical and empirical ways of understanding social work's role in transforming African social, economic, and political spheres for poverty alleviation.

The article is based on a review of the social work curriculum at schools of social work in Eswatini (formerly Swaziland), Lesotho, and Zimbabwe. Besides, poverty-related research reports and policy documents were also used as sources of information for the article. Furthermore, the article is also based on the experiential knowledge of the authors. One of the authors has experience as a social welfare officer in Zimbabwe's Department of Social Services while the other has taught at universities in the three countries. The article presents a critical review, extrapolation, and evaluation of core issues in social work and the alleviation of poverty from Eswatini, Lesotho, and Zimbabwe.

The first section introduces social work and the poverty mitigation plan embedded in a situational analysis of Southern Africa's social, political, and economic conditions. This is followed by an examination of social work education and practice vis-a-viz, socioeconomic realities and challenges, and opportunities in the selected countries. Finally, suggestions for the mitigation of poverty are offered.

2 Conceptual framework

Article 1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that all human beings are born free and are equal in their dignity and rights (UN, 1948). In the same vein, Article 25 articulates everyone's right to a standard of living for his/her health and wellbeing, including among other things, food, clothing, housing, and medical care (Lombard, 2015). In this regard, poverty is a multi-dimensional phenomenon encompassing lack of access to productive resources, physical goods and services, and income, is an undesirable human condition. Added to this, Tekwa and Adesina (2018) observe the distinction of poverty as 'states' and 'processes'. The former denotes a snapshot view of basic needs deficits of the poor at a particular time and the latter dealing with causes and mechanisms of the generation and transmission of poverty over time. As such, a pro-poor policy agenda implies increased economic activity and growth where the vulnerable work and live, while simultaneously addressing the many risks to which they are exposed (Beegle & Christiaensen 2019).

Furthermore, from a developmental social work perspective, there is a need for social protection systems promoting the wellbeing of the entire population. In this regard, the social work repertoire of interventions is not a strategy for providing relief for people failed by their societies (International Federation of Social Workers, 2016). Instead, the International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) conceptualises social work as encouraging democratic participation and strengthening voices in the broader society to address poverty. Social work, IFSW opines, advocates for social protection systems as agencies for social transformation centered on building solidarity within communities and between communities and prompting self-determination and self-reliance (International Federation of Social Workers, 2016).

In this vein, it is laudable that countries like Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Namibia, and South Africa have instituted universal programs for their vulnerable categories such as children and the elderly. As such, and in compliance with developmental initiatives, priority should be focused on the most vulnerable and chronically most impoverished.

However, food insecurity is also a significant problem in Southern Africa, thereby exposing vulnerable populations such as children, the elderly, and the unemployed to extreme poverty. Unpredictable weather conditions, poor food security policies, high fertilisers, and other farm inputs costs, prohibitive transportation costs, and lack of credit facilities for farmers contribute to food insecurity in African countries (Chitereka, 2009).

Furthermore, the poverty situation in many African countries is compounded by high morbidity and mortality due to HIV and AIDS (Gorman, & Zaidi, 2013). This state of affairs has exposed many individuals and households to vulnerability due to the high levels of unemployment and the breakdown of the extended family (WHO, 2002). The unrelenting HIV and AIDS scourge have also landed older persons with the burden of caring for orphaned grandchildren, despite their own care needs (Kyobutungi, Egondi, & Ezech, 2010; Spitzer & Mabeyo, 2017). Besides, the situation in Eswatini, Lesotho, and Zimbabwe is also compounded by the rising number of child-headed households, which also demands the attention of social workers. Then again COVID 19 pandemic pervasiveness has added another twist, has come with devastating effects that social workers can only respond with limited resources given the gravity of the spread.

Given this state of affairs, social work needs to mediate the development process by enabling members of the community and society, in general, to reach out for each other through a mutual need for self-fulfillment (Rwomire, 2011). More importantly, the domain in which the social work profession is operating is enmeshed in globalisation thereby offering new opportunities and threats (Healy 2014). However, the evolution of social work in southern Africa is closely tied to the colonial legacy as its orientation reflects a wholesale transfer from the British experience (Chitereka, 2009). Social work evolved in response to urban social ills such as crime, prostitution, and poverty. The obtaining philosophy then was that such evils undermined order and stability if left unattended. Therefore, social work was an instrument of social control, and as a result, it never seriously addressed itself to the root of social problems (Chitereka, 2009).

As such developmental social work (social development) scholars in the mold of Midgley, Mupedziswa, and Osei- Hwedie, advocate for the overhauling and restructuring of social work so that it addresses the socioeconomic challenges confronting the majority of the people in the Global South (Kang'ethe, 2014). As such, this involves the transformation of social work curriculum-related and extra-curricula activities and practice.

In this vein, curriculum-related and extra-curricula activities include continuous curriculum reviews, relevant fieldwork placements, use of related concepts, progressive teaching methodologies, and ensuring the relevance of student research projects. On the other hand, extra-curricular activities involve the generation and use of indigenous materials and knowledge, undertaking and using historical evidence-based research, and ensuring relevant graduate employment patterns. In addition, a developmental social work curriculum involves the localisation of staff complement, networking with other institutions of higher learning in Africa, as well as the involvement of teaching staff towards the development and formulation of social policy ((Hochfeld, Selipsky, Mupedziswa, & Chitereka, 2009).

At the same time, social work practice from a developmental perspective emphasises the need to harmonise social, economic, and other activities through social investments and people's participation in development (Midgley, 2014). Therefore, in essence, developmental social integration integrates social and economic development activities by focusing on human

capital development (social investment) that benefits not just the individuals or communities involved but also society as a whole.

However, though social workers are determined to ensure that all humans enjoy prosperous and fulfilling lives and that economic, social and technological progress occurs in harmony with nature (IASSW, 2016) the continued use of curative and remedial approaches to social problems (Chitereka, 2009) hinders the realisation of these ideals. Resultantly, social work has often been criticised for lacking appropriateness and relevance (Mupedziswa & Sinkamba, 2014) in addressing the myriad social problems on the African continent.

Furthermore, though much of the Global South has attained gender equality progress in terms of parity in education, increased economic and political participation levels, extreme poverty and enduring inequalities persist with distinct gender characteristics (Tekwa & Adesina, 2018). Moreover, the divide over the historical roots of African social work and the impact of colonialism raises concerns about what African social work is and should be. It is perhaps on this basis that Mupedziswa and Sinkamba (2014), among others, contend that this Western/remedial approach versus- social development reflects the profession as being in a state of crisis hence the call for its transformation to developmental social work.

Therefore owing to these shortcomings, developmental social work embraces community development as one of its strategies because of its potential to improve the conditions obtaining in communities. This is not just socially and economically but also as a stable functioning and cohesive community through community members' efforts and external support.

However, one of the drawbacks of the community development narrative in countries like Zimbabwe is the reliance on donor funding. For instance, the United States government provided more than \$422,000 (a \$50,000 increase from 2018) to support community-based organizations in seven provinces in the country (United States Embassy in Zimbabwe, n.d.). Very often, there are challenges of sustainability in the event of withdrawal of donor funding or when the funding cycle of the projects comes to an end.

3 Social work and poverty alleviation

This section examines social work practice and education in relation to the socioeconomic situation obtaining in Southern Africa with a particular focus on Eswatini, Lesotho and Zimbabwe.

3.1 Eswatini

Despite its lower-middle-income country status, 69 % of a total population of about 1.1 million Swazis live below the national poverty line. The pervasiveness of poverty in Eswatini is also manifested in high and rising levels of inequality as its Gini-coefficient stands at 0.51 % (Ministry of Economic Planning and Development, 2006), which is one of the highest in the world. Resultantly the gap between the poor and the rich continues to widen, thus making poverty and inequality the significant challenges facing the country. Other problems include slow economic growth and high levels of unemployment, especially among the youth.

Furthermore, the United Nations Country Programme (UNDP) notes that Eswatini has high communicable (HIV and TB) and non-communicable disease incidence and prevalence. Unfortunately, this state of affairs obtains in the face of health system constraints, high maternal mortality, high chronic malnutrition levels, and increased numbers of vulnerable

households. Also compounding the situation is the low participation of women in decision-making, high incidence of violence, mainly gender-based violence against children and women, and high rates of teenage pregnancy.

Taking cognisance of these challenges, the National Development Plan (Government of Eswatini, 2016) contemplates adopting the following measures:

- Involving communities to be helped in intervention measures to eradicate poverty,
- Ascertaining from the communities themselves how local authorities could be reformed to make them more accountable and responsive to the local needs and
- Institutionalising consultation, collaboration, and co-operation among all agencies involved in poverty alleviation (i.e., central Government, local authorities, NGOs, donors, and others).

Given social workers' ethical responsibility to promote inclusivity of the poor and marginalised the University of Eswatini's Bachelor of Social Work programme introduction in 2014 was also a complementary initiative to address social problems in the country. The Eswatini Christian Medical University (a private university) also introduced a social work programme in the same year, making it two universities offering a Bachelor of Social Work degree qualifications. As stated in the Field Education Manual and Policies document, social work programme introduction at the University of Eswatini was in response to the rising tide of social problems in the country (University of Swaziland, 2017).

However, at the time of writing only the first two cohorts of students had graduated at the University of Eswatini and Eswatini Medical University. No follow-up tracer study was commissioned to establish the whereabouts of these graduates and empirically verify if they were harnessing the developmental approach in their frontline social work roles. Nevertheless, impressions can be deduced from the social work curriculum at these universities and what is happening in the field of practice.

First, it is essential to note that University of Eswatini social work curriculum includes social development as one of the core courses. The social development approach has increasingly gained traction in social policy thinking as the panacea for confronting African countries' social and economic problems (Manyama, 2018). Therefore, graduates are expected to undertake developmental social work roles involving a shift from a sole focus on the individual to community development as the principal intervention strategy (Gray, Agllias, Mupedziswa & Mugumbate, 2017).

However, several challenges impede Eswatini social workers from robustly engaging in developmental social work. Firstly, the profession is not well known in the country hence not as visible amongst state and non state actors. Resultantly, many positions that are supposed to be a preserve for skilled social workers are occupied by non-social workers, thereby denying them openings to utilise their skills. A contributory factor to this problem is the absence of a legitimised statutory body to protect social workers and regulate social work practice. Therefore anyone can claim to be a social worker even without the requisite credentials.

Furthermore, reliance on theories and methods rooted in non-African contexts in the teaching of the social development course results in limited effectiveness in equipping students with the appropriate knowledge and skills to implement developmental social work. This is

compounded by the lack of clear guidelines for implementing the developmental approach (Manyama, 2018).

Lastly, and even more problematic is the reality that the Department of Social Welfare (DSW) is not flexible enough to accommodate a mix of developmental interventions. The DSW is supposed to be the major employer of social workers and has the mandate for government's obligation to overcome poverty challenges. The DSW's *modus operandi* remains mostly remedial in focus, and therefore social workers are expected to carry out their work within these parameters. To give context to the foregoing, currently 94,000 families have been hit hard by the impacts of a poor 2020 harvest, lower earnings, rising prices and COVID-19. One-third of Eswatini's population will be especially vulnerable to hunger in the run-up to the 2021 harvest, according to a recent government-led assessment (World Food Programme (2020)). Such a socio-economic development trajectory makes the impetus for a developmental approach implementation to mitigate poverty.

3.2 Lesotho

Lesotho, which has a population of just below 2 million as it stands at 1,880,661 (Bureau of Statistics (BOS), 2007), also experiences high and increasing poverty, unemployment, inequality, and HIV and AIDS. The high inequality levels are demonstrated by its Gini-coefficient, which was estimated at 0.52 in 2003 (Bello, Letete, Rapapa & Chakobane, 2008). Resultantly the levels of poverty are high with the United Nations (2009) asserting that 40 percent of the population of Lesotho live below the United Nations "official" poverty line of US\$ 1.25 a day. The United Nations Development Programme poverty index of 2005 also ranks Lesotho as one of the world's poorest countries occupying the 91st position out of 103 countries.

With a distinguished history of traditional social support systems, the Government has more recently established itself as a pioneer, within sub-Saharan Africa, of formal social protection programmes. The Government's Vision 2020 has the goal of Lesotho being firmly established as a mature democracy and a prosperous middle income nation by the end of the current decade (Government of the Kingdom of Lesotho, 2014). To achieve this, the National Strategic Development Plan for 2012-2017 included a significant emphasis on social protection for reduction of vulnerabilities. The National University of Lesotho is the only institution in the country offering degree-level social work training since 2001. There is also the National Health Training College, which provides the certificate in auxiliary social work programme (the first cohort graduated in 2012) designed to produce cadres to work at the community level (Jhpiego, 2013).

The National University of Lesotho's social work curriculum incorporates social development as a core course. This is premised on the realisation of the need for social workers to address the root causes of social problems inclusive of poverty. In this regard, some social work students also do their fieldwork placements in developmental agencies to be exposed to tenets of developmental social work. Besides, some students' research projects focus on developmental social work themes, and all this is designed to prepare them for employment in developmental social work roles. Lesotho social workers are employed in a wide range of organizations, including government departments, NGOs, and relief agencies, but the Ministry of Social Development is the major social work graduates employer.

Challenges exist in social work services delivery in Lesotho, principally the developmental approach implementation. However, what is encouraging is that in years in 2012/2013 the

Ministry of Social Development adopted a policy shift from a welfare orientation to a developmental focus. In this regard, the ministry established a community development department tasked with spearheading this transformation (Dhemba & Marumo, 2017). However, a lot remains to be seen as to how this process will unfold. We contend in this developmental social work embedding agenda it is one thing to establish an operational function (department) and another to operationalise the developmental approach. It is encouraging, though, that social workers have room to put into practice their developmental social work knowledge and skills.

However, what is disheartening is that despite the name change from the Department of Social Welfare to the Ministry of Social Development and the adoption of a developmental approach, the colonial legacy of remedial social welfare still prevails. This is also probably because of the lack of clarity on how the developmental approach should be implemented. Hochfeld, Selipsky, Mupedziswa, and Chitereka (2009) postulate that there is no information on how the developmental approach is operationalised. Therefore, it would have been easier if the shift from welfare to developmental social work was accompanied by guidelines as to how this was to be achieved.

As the Ministry of Social Development is perennially underfunded resources constraints also hampers the transformation from welfare to a developmental approach. Resultantly, there are staff shortage challenges leading to burnout on the part of social workers as they have to contend with immense workloads. Shortages of transport also make it difficult for social workers to be proactively involved in community work and developmental activities.

Furthermore, there is no established regulatory framework for social work practice in Lesotho. This has created a situation where agencies involved in developmental activities are not obliged to employ social workers; instead, social workers have to compete with professionals from other disciplines.

3.3 Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe's economic challenges include a high unemployment rate of more than 90%, cash liquidity challenges, natural climatic shocks and eroded livelihood options. Zimbabwe is a historically renowned country for food self-sufficiency and security backed by commercial and rural grain production. The Fast-Track Land Reform Programme (FTLRP) for land redistribution to peasants and domestic elites of the year 2000 resulted in the loss of agricultural productivity and an increase in poverty (Moyo, 2011).

Zimbabwe is classified as a low-income country, ranked 154 of 187 countries on the 2016 Human Development Index. At independence, in 1980, Zimbabwe inherited a particular type of capitalist social and economic formation characterised by a small formal sector, co-existing with a highly marginalised weak rural sector employing about 80 percent of the labour force. This created pervasive economic and social dualism, which consistently undermined inclusive growth and development (Government of Zimbabwe, 2016).

In August 2018, the Government of Zimbabwe announced a Transitional Stabilisation Programme (TSP) – an ambitious agenda of governance and economic reforms intended to secure the political transition and attract international investment (UNICEF 2020). The Programme prioritizes fiscal consolidation, economic stabilization, and growth. It also includes a governance reform section focusing on the rule of law, access to justice,

democratization, respect of human rights, national unity, peace and reconciliation, and alignment of statutes to the constitution (UNICEF 2020).

As agriculture is not a sustainable source of livelihood in urban areas, unlike the rural population, the urban population depends on formal and non-formal employment. However, given Zimbabwe's on-going cash liquidity problems, industrial closures, low foreign investment, and low salaries, most urban households are highly vulnerable and poor. Compounding the situation is that they have limited access to primary social access, including safe drinking water and sanitation facilities.

Zimbabwe has an estimated population of 14.2 million people, 10 million of whom live in rural areas. Life in Zimbabwean is increasingly tricky, with 63 percent of all households living in poverty and 16 percent in extreme poverty (United States Agency for International Development, 2018). Agriculture remains the livelihood strategy of the first choice, accounting for 58.6 percent of annual household incomes. Formal wages and salaries account for about 36.1 percent, while other sources (including remittances, petty trading, casual work, informal businesses, natural resources, and other non-agricultural sources) account for about 5.3 % (PICES, 2013). Therefore as a result of the squeezed job market, Zimbabwe has the second-largest informal sector in the world, accounting for more than 94% of the country's employment (Herald Newspaper, 2018).

The United Nations, in collaboration with Government and donors is committed to, "realizing the Sustainable Development Goals in a universal, human-rights based and transformative manner"(UNICEF, 2020). UNICEF (2020) noted that the delivery of development outcomes is intricately bound to citizen engagement through inclusive, participatory mechanisms. In this vein, UNICEF, Ministry of Public Service Labour and Social Welfare, UNDP, and UN Women are developing a Community Based Feedback Mechanism (CBFM) in the implementation of government social protection programmes. This will facilitate citizen engagement through a structured feedback platform (UNICEF Zimbabwe country programme, 2020). In terms of the scope of disasters in Zimbabwe Cyclone Idai which hit during the weekend of 15–17 March 2019, has been most fatal in recent memory bringing heavy rains and strong winds that triggered flooding and landslides. Cyclone Idai affected 270,000 people in Zimbabwe: 51,000 were displaced, more than 340 died and many others went missing (Chatiza, 2019). Scores of children were orphaned, while female survivors faced gender-based violence. Roads and bridges in Chimanimani and Chipinge were severely damaged; some 1,500km of the road network was rendered unusable for months, affecting market access. Arable land was rendered unusable and at least 348 cattle, 17,000 chickens, and 222 goats and sheep were lost, alongside losses of stored cereals (Chatiza, 2019).

As for COVID 19 infections as of 3 September 2020, 6,678 COVID-19 cases and 206 deaths were confirmed, with 85 per cent in the five provinces of Harare, Bulawayo, Matabeleland South, Midlands and Manicaland (United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA) 2020).

Zimbabwe's social workers have an ethical responsibility to address the challenges mentioned above in the pursuit of human rights and social justice. In Zimbabwe, social work training dates back to 1964 establishment of the School of Social Work in city of Harare (then Salisbury) to produce cadres who would deal with poverty issues among other social ills. Therefore, given its relatively long history it is expected that Zimbabwean social work has come of age. In addition to the University of Zimbabwe, social work training is also offered at

Bindura University of Science Education, Zimbabwe Eziqiel Guti University, Women's University in Africa, Africa University and Midlands State University.

Though social work teaching methodologies employed in Zimbabwe as elsewhere in universities in Southern Africa are lecture-based and participatory, it is necessary to engage students in active problem-solving and empowerment processes consistent with the philosophical approach of community social work and social development (United States Agency for International Development (USAID), 2009). Furthermore, the criteria for determining the quality of training has often included admission requirements, length of training and universities' international affiliations (Mupedziswa & Sinkamba (2014) Significantly, owing to the land reform and rural development programmes that Government implemented over the years curriculum changes in Zimbabwe have focused more on the developmental approach (Dziro, 2013). Furthermore, in common with the universities of Eswatini and Lesotho, social development is offered as a separate course or subject by universities in Zimbabwe.

The other option would be to mainstream social development (developmental approach) throughout the social work programme, such that it becomes the overarching approach of the particular institution or degree. Social development content can also be integrated into other courses (Hochfeld, Selipsky, Mupedziswa & Chitereka, 2009).

Zimbabwe also faces several challenges in engaging social workers in the fight against poverty. In common with Eswatini and Lesotho, the major social workers employer, Zimbabwe's Department of Social Services is mandated to address poverty but its structures have not been transformed towards pursuance of a developmental focus. This makes it difficult even for the most innovative and resourceful social workers to implement the developmental approach.

Secondly, the process of developing indigenous knowledge and cultural competence that social development emphasises cannot just start with practice but preferably is galvanised by research and education in the classroom so that graduate social workers can competently apply these skills in practice (Spitzer & Twikirize, 2019). As such, Rankopo and Osie-Hwedie, cited in Healy (2014) emphasise the importance of indigenisation as the development of culturally relevant interventions, recognising, and privileging local contexts. Their emphasis is that social work cannot merely be transplanted, as its distinguishing feature is the intervention at the point where people intersect with their environment, which necessitates the adoption of indigenous approaches to social problems, inclusive of poverty. They assert that cultural explanations of social reality are more relevant than those that seek to transcend all cultures.

Moreover, a service delivery capacity assessment of the Department of Social Services revealed that one social worker in Zimbabwe serves 48000 children (Wyatt, Mupedziswa, & Rayment, 2010). As such, there is a severe burnout experienced by social workers because of the enormous workload (Wyatt, Mupedziswa, & Rayment, 2010). The other challenge militating against the full implementation of social development is the high turnover of social workers because of failure to retain them. The Department of Social Services, for example, suffered consistent staff attrition in 2018, with large numbers of previously trained and experienced staff moving mainly to the United Kingdom and Australia (UNICEF, 2018). This leads to a situation where the remaining social workers are overworked, thereby compromising service delivery.

4 Conclusion

Though the developmental social work is both appropriate and necessary for the Southern Africa region and elsewhere in Africa, social work education in the area must engage meaningfully with curriculum-related activities so that practitioners have clear guidelines on its operationalisation. Furthermore, it would also be necessary to provide the resources required to capacitate social workers to engage in developmental work. The development of functional regional networks would also go a long way towards fulfilling needs such as sharing ideas, expertise, and material, pioneering new and innovative approaches and models, and ensuring that social work education standards and programmes relate directly to regional and local needs (Hochfeld, Selipsky, Mupedziswa, & Chitereka, 2009).

References

- Beegle, K., & Christiaensen, L.** (2019). *Accelerating poverty reduction in Africa*. Washington, DC: World Bank.
- Bello, H., Letete, M., Rapapa, N. P., & Chokobane, L.** (2008). An evaluation of the poverty reduction impact of the non-contributory old age pension programme in Lesotho: The case of Manonyane community area. *Review of Southern African Studies Journal-ISAS*, 12 (1 &2): 76-106.
- Bureau of Statistics Lesotho (BOS)** (2007). *Lesotho 2006 census of population and housing preliminary report*. Maseru: Government Printers.
- Chatiza, K.**, (2019). *An analysis of policy implications for post-disaster institutional development to strengthen disaster risk management*, Harare: Oxfam.
- Chitereka, C.** (2009). Social Work Practice in a Developing Continent: The case of Africa. *Advances in Social Work*, 10(2), 144-156.
- Conradie, I.** (2018). Social Policy in South Africa: The challenges of poverty, inequality, and exclusion. *Social Work and Society*.
- Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA)** (2016). *Child and youth institute African futures and the futures of childhood in Africa: Call for applications*. Dakar: CODESRIA.
- Dhemba, J.** (2012a). Fieldwork in social work education and training: Issues and challenges in the case of Eastern and Southern Africa. *Social Work and Society*, 10 (1): 1-16
- Dhemba, J.** (2012b) Overcoming poverty in old age: Social security in Lesotho, South Africa, and Zimbabwe revisited. *International Social Work*, 56 (6): 813-827.
- Dhemba, J., & Marumo, M.** (2017). Social work practice in Lesotho's Ministry of Social Development. In M. Gray, *The Handbook of Social Work and Social Development in Africa* (pp. 49-58). London: Routledge.
- Dziro, C.** (2013). Trends in social work education and training: The case of Zimbabwe. *International Journal of Development and Sustainability*, 2(2), 1423-1435.
- Dziro, C.** (2014). Community development and corporate social responsibility: A case study of mining companies in Zvishavane and Mutoko in Zimbabwe. *IOSR Journal Of Humanities And Social Science*, 19(1), 61-70.
- Gorman, M., & Zaidi, A.** (2013). Global age index 2013 insight report. HelpAge International. [Online] Available at <http://www.helpage.org/resources/publications>. (Accessed October 20, 2017).
- Government of Eswatini** (2016). *The national development strategy (NDS)*. Mbabane: Ministry of Economic Planning and development, Government of Swaziland.
- Government of the Kingdom of Lesotho** (2014). *National Social Protection Strategy*. Maseru: Government of Lesotho.

Government of Zimbabwe (2016). *Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy*. Harare: Government of Zimbabwe.

Gray, M. (Ed.) (2017). *The handbook of social work and social development in Africa*. London: Routledge.

Gray, M., Aglias, K., Mupedziswa, R., & Mugumbate, J. (2017). The expansion of developmental social work in Southern and East Africa: Opportunities and challenges for social work field programmes. *International Social Work*, DOI: 10.1177/0020872817695399.

Herald Newspaper (2018). *Zim has the world's second-largest informal economy: IMF*. Retrieved February 12, 2018, from <https://www.herald.co.zw/zim-has-worlds-second-largest-informal-economy-imf/>

Hochfeld, T., Selipsky, L., Mupedziswa, R., & Chitereka, C. (2009). *Developmental social work education in East and Southern Africa*. Johannesburg: Centre for Social Development in Africa, University of Johannesburg.

International Association for Schools of Social Work (IASSW). (2016, August). *Global Agenda for Social Work and Social Development IASSW Statement Theme 3: Promoting environmental and community sustainability*. Retrieved March 2018, from <https://www.iassw-aiets.org/2016/08/24/1464/>

International Federation of Social Workers (2016, October 3). *The Role of Social Work in Social Protection Systems: The Universal Right to Social Protection*. Retrieved from /www.ifsw.org: <https://www.ifsw.org/the-role-of-social-work-in-social-protection-systems-the-universal-right-to-social-protection/>

Jhpiego (2013). *Social work education and practice in Lesotho*. Baltimore, Maryland: Jhpiego.

Kang'ethe, S. M. (2014). Exploring social work gaps in Africa with examples from South Africa and Botswana. *Journal of Social Science*, 41(3), 423-431.

Kyobutungi, C., Egondi, T., & Ezeh, A. (2010). *The health and wellbeing of older people in Nairobi's slums*. *Global Health Action*, 3: 1, DOI:103402/gha.v3i0.2138. [Online] Available at <http://dx.doi.org/10.3402/gha.v3i0.2138>. (Accessed August 24, 2017).

Lombard, A. (2015). Global agenda for social work and social development: A path towards sustainable social work. *Social Work/Maatskaplike Werk*, 482-459.

Makaripe, T. (2016). *Social worker shun Zimbabwe*. Retrieved from www.fingaz.co.zw: <http://www.financialgazette.co.zw/social-workers-shun-zimbabwe/>

Manyama, W. (2018). Where is developmental social work as social work practice method in Tanzania? The case of the Dar es Salaam region. *International Journal of Social Work*, 5 (2): 43-57.

Midgley, J. (2010). The theory and practice of developmental social work. In: J. Midgley and A. Canoley (Eds.) *Social Work and Social Development: Theories and Skills of Developmental Social Work*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 3-28.

Midgley, J. (2014). *Social development: Theory and practice*. London: Sage.

Moyo, S. (2011). Three decades of agrarian reform in Zimbabwe. *Journal of Peasant Studies*, 1-40.

Muderedzi, J., & Ingstad, B. (2011). Disability and social suffering in Zimbabwe. In H. Eide, & B. Ingstad (Eds.), *Disability and Poverty A global challenge* (pp. 171-188). Bristol: Polity Press.

Mupedziswa, R. (2001). The quest for relevance: Towards a conceptual model of developmental social work education and training in Africa. *International Social Work*, 44 (3): 285-300

Mupedziswa, R., & Sinkamba, R. P. (2014). Social work education and training in southern and east Africa: yesterday, today, and tomorrow. In C. Noble, H. Strauss, & B. Littlechild (Eds.) *Social work education and training in southern and east Africa: yesterday, today and tomorrow* (pp. 141-151). Sydney: University of Sydney.

Pawar, M. (2017). Social work practice with local communities in developing countries: Imperatives for Political Engagement. *Sage Open*, 1-9.

Rwomire, A. (2011). The role of social work in national development. *Social Work and Society*.

Spitzer, H., & Mabeyo, Z. (2017). Social work practice with older people: Perspectives from East Africa. In Gray, M. (Ed.). *The Handbook of Social Work and Social Development in Africa*. London: Routledge International. Pp. 133-144.

Spitzer, H., & Twikirize, J. (2019). Indigenous and innovative social work practice: Evidence from East Africa. In H. Spitzer, & J. Twikirize (Eds.) *Social Work Practice in Africa Indigenous and Innovative Approaches* (pp. 1-20). Kampala: Fountain Publishers.

Tekwa, N., & Adesina, J. (2018). Gender, Poverty, and Inequality in the Aftermath of Zimbabwe's Land Reform: A Transformative Social Policy Perspective. *Journal of International Women's Studies*, 45-62.

UNICEF (2018, December 20). *UNICEF Zimbabwe is inviting proposals from individual qualified national consultants for the Social Norms and Violence Against Children Prevention Systems Support Coordinator assignment*. Retrieved from <https://www.unicef.org>: <https://www.unicef.org/about/employ/?job=518755>

UNICEF Zimbabwe country programme (2020). *UNICEF Zimbabwe is inviting applications for an individual consultant for the development of a social protection community-based feedback mechanism*. Retrieved March 17, 2020, from <https://www.unicef.org/about/employ/?job=530019>

United Nations Country Programme Eswatini (no date). *Challenges*. Retrieved from <http://sz.one.un.org/content/unct/swaziland/en/home/about-the-country/challenges.html>

United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (2020). *Zimbabwe situation report 4* September 2020, Geneva: UNOCHA.

United States Agency for International Development (2018). *USAID/Zimbabwe Country Development Cooperation Strategy, 2016 -2021*. Harare: United States Agency for International Development Zimbabwe mission.

United States Agency for International Development (USAID). (2009). *Human capacity within child welfare systems: The social work workforce in Africa*. Washington: USAID.

United States Embassy in Zimbabwe (n.d). *The United States provides \$422,000 for community development projects in seven Zimbabwean provinces*. Retrieved March 19, 2020, from <https://zw.usembassy.gov/united-states-provides-422000-for-community-development-projects-in-seven-zimbabwean-provinces/>

University of Swaziland (2017). *Field education manual and policies*. Kwaluseni: University of Swaziland.

World Health Organisation (WHO) (2002). *Active aging: a policy framework*. Available at: <http://www.who.int/hpr/ageing/ActiveAgeingPolicyFrame.pdf>. [Online] (Accessed April 14, 2011).

World Food Programme (2020) *European Union supports Eswatini's hungriest with cash transfers through the World Food Programme*. Available at: <https://www.wfp.org/news/european-union-supports-eswatinis-hungriest-cash-transfers-through-world-food-programme> [Online] (Accessed September 14, 2020).

Wyatt, A., Mupedziswa, R., & Rayment, C. (2010). *Institutional capacity assessment Department of Social Services*. Harare: Ministry of Labour and Social Services.

Author's Address:

Jotham Dhemba
University of Eswatini, Department of Sociology and Social Work
P. Bag 4, Kwaluseni
Eswatini
+26876502821
jdhemba@uniswa.sz

Author's Address:

Tatenda Goodman Nhapi
Erasmus Mundus MA Advanced Development in Social Work
Consortium office address- Aalborg University
Fredrik Bajers Vej 7K, 9220 Aalborg East Denmark
nhapaz@yahoo.com
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7560-9799>