

ROLE OF SOCIAL WORKERS IN MITIGATING THE EFFECTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE IN MAKONDE COMMUNAL LANDS, ZIMBABWE

Nyahunda Louis, Matlakala Frans Koketso & Makhubele Jabulani Calvin

ABSTRACT

Climate change is among the most vital environmental aspects that the human community is endowed with. Climate as a factor of life is particularly strong to low income rural communities whose livelihoods heavily depend on rain-fed subsistence agriculture like Makonde communal lands. The purpose of social work within the context of climate change is to enhance community expertise and empower members for participation in the decision-making process through all stages of risk assessment, rescue, planning and intervention for recovery and preparedness. This paper sought to explore the role of social workers in mitigating the effects of climate change in Makonde communal lands of Zimbabwe. The objectives of the study were to identify what roles if any are social workers playing in mitigating the effects of climate change and if not, what are the impediments in that sphere. A qualitative research approach was followed within the traditional framework of descriptive and exploratory designs. Simple random, purposive and snowballing sampling techniques were used to gather twenty-five participants in the study. The Thematic Content Analysis was followed to analyse data inductively. The study found that Social Workers are not directly involved in climate change interventions in the Makonde area owing it to lack of training on climate change issues. The study recommends that climate change falls within the purview of the social work practice therefore social workers must take the lead in supporting families and communities affected by climate change following the values, knowledge base, skills and principles of the profession.

Keywords: Role, Social workers, mitigation, climate change, Makonde communal lands

INTRODUCTION

The social work profession has an essential role to play in communities where the social welfare of people is threatened by climate change (Achstater, 2014). Climate change is without a doubt, producing effects across the globe that, if left untreated, by the year 2030, will produce devastating and irreversible effects the world over (IPCC, 2014a). These effects include, but are not limited to depleted food outputs, significant or complete loss of natural resources, destruction of entire habitats, displacement of people and wildlife, loss of biodiversity, loss of marine and coastal ecosystems, breakdown of infrastructure and critical services, and increased morbidity and death (IPCC, 2014a). However, if nothing is done beyond the mitigation measures in place, by the year 2030, it is predicted that there will be permanent and irreversible effects of climate change around the world (IPCC, 2014b). Southern Africa, to which Zimbabwe belongs, is a predominantly semi-arid region with high rainfall variability, characterized by frequent droughts and floods. Sub Saharan Africa in which the study area lies, is also widely recognized as one of the most vulnerable regions to climate change because of low levels of adaptive capacity, particularly among rural communities, combined with a high

dependence on rain-fed agriculture (IPCC, 2007; Brown, Chanakira, Chatiza, Dhliwayo, Dodman, Masiwa, & Zvigadza, 2014).

According to Brown (2014), Zimbabwe has mainstreamed climate change into its national policy agenda through the Zimbabwe Climate Change Response Strategy in 2014 which provides a framework for a comprehensive and strategic approach on aspects of adaptation, mitigation, technology, financing, public education and awareness. The climate change response strategy is meant to inform the Government on strengthening the climate and disaster risk management policies. The researchers contend that the clusters of strategies to deliver the Climate Change Response Strategy envisages no provision where stakeholders like social workers can equally participate within their sphere to ensure the realization of the set objectives in the policy. The deficiency on the provision of the role to be played by Social workers in national climate policies solidifies the perceptive marginal role of social workers even from policy makers thereof. This will go a long way before the realization of the cardinal role the social work profession can play in risk and disaster reduction, management and planning. Thus, this study was conducted in a rural set up where climate change impacts manifesting through droughts, floods, water shortages, death of livestock and depletion of forests among other devastating impacts are visible. The purpose was to establish the contribution which social workers are making in fostering healing, wholeness, recovery and adaptation to climate change for vulnerable populations in the Makonde area.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Developing countries in general and poor rural communities such as the Makonde Communal Lands population, in particular, are often regarded as having the lowest adaptive capacity. The low adaptive capacity is based on the lack of access to technology, the least degree of development of social institutions, as well as the highest historical and existing stresses associated with climate change (Sango, 2012). As the IPCC (2014b) stipulated, it is an issue of shifting the global social consciousness, which can be argued to be a task that falls under the purview of social work, especially when considering how the social work mandate has been professionally defined (Cumby, 2016). According to Moth and Morton (2009), social work service users are likely to be amongst those disproportionately affected by climate change. As such, it is the duty of social workers to take action on these issues because not doing so threatens the validity of all of the work that we do. Climate change is a significant threat to humanity that requires social work solutions and action and yet social work remains relatively silent on this issue in the broader discourse (Cumby, 2016). Solving the problems caused by climate change will not occur without assistance from the social work community. Instead, there must be a strong and unrelenting effort in order to rectify it (Achstater, 2014). As for Dominelli (2012), social workers should employ a variety of mitigation and adaptation strategies to combat climate change. Under a social development perspective, intervention must be applied to all dimensions of the problem.

Additionally, Clark (2013) denotes that the responsibility of social workers does not only lie in understanding the repercussions of climate change overall, but also in serving as a voice for those who are left with little recourse when their neighbourhoods, homes or jobs are threatened through disaster, damage or degradation. Furthermore, Mathende and Nhapi (2018) contend that social workers must not only protect our land, air and water, but fellow community members and clients. While several natural science disciplines have had a strong voice on the issue of climate change thus far, particularly in the technology sector, the same cannot be said

of social workers on this same issue. Paradoxically, Garbarino (2017) argues that when conducting a general search of the social work literature on climate change, results are negligible. The issue of climate change falls under the social work mandate, as it disproportionately affects marginalized populations and has significant negative impacts on the health and wellbeing of individuals and communities. Equally, like all other stakeholders, social workers are required to respond appropriately in order to address these adverse effects of climate change induced disasters (Dominelli, 2012).

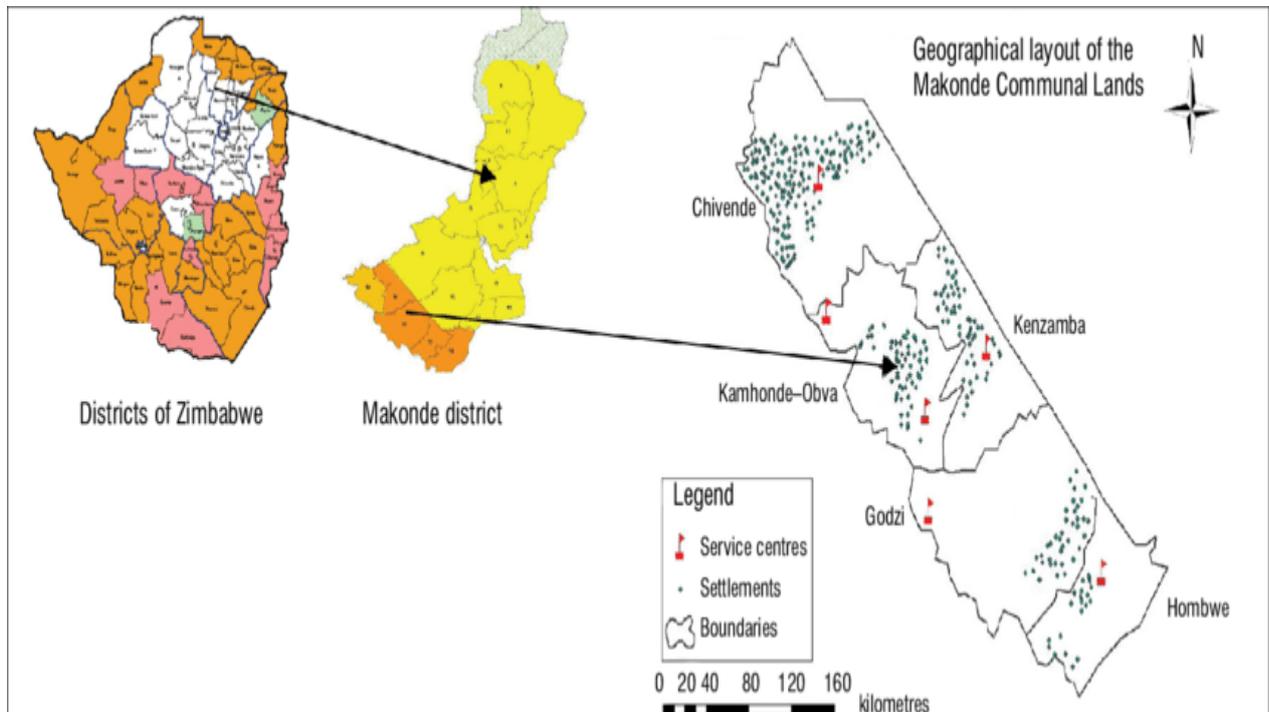
The purpose of social work is to enhance community expertise and empowerment of members for participation in the decision-making process through all stages of assessment, rescue, planning and intervention for recovery and preparedness (Dominelli, 2011). There is dearth of studies on social work intervention programmes and projects of natural disasters locally and internationally in cooperation with members of communities (Dominelli, 2011; Gray, Coates & Hetherington, 2012; Zapf, 2009). Moth and Morton (2009) denote that those experiencing deprivation and without informal support networks will be least able to adapt and cope with climate change. Additionally, there is need for immediate national action at national, local government and community level to address this and social workers have an important contribution to make in shaping this agenda. On the same note it was purported that raising the level of climate change awareness among those at risk or dealing with its social effects may impact on social worker's duties as practitioners. According to Ife (2007), social workers cannot stand idly by and watch global warming just happen, climate change will increasingly affect attempts by social workers to work internationally, as it will become another generator of social and economic inequality and injustice, and climate refugees will become a major social work concern. Social workers need to understand how it affects the populations they work with in different parts of the world and should be engaged in the debate about climate change.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Area of study

Makonde communal lands lies in Mashonaland West region in the north western part of the Zimbabwe under the jurisdiction of the Makonde Rural District council. The population in the Makonde Communal lands is mostly constituted by semi-subsistent smallholder farmers who depend on their annual produce as the main source of income. The suppressed economic growth of Zimbabwe has led to weakened social protection system and service provision, with adverse welfare consequences particularly to the economically disadvantaged smallholder communal farmers such as the Makonde community who are reeling with the heft effects of climate change (Sango, 2012; Uganai, 2009). The majority of the smallholder farmers have limited economic resources and a low level of technology thus exacerbating their highly vulnerable status to environmental and other hazards (Sango, 2012). It is against this background that this paper sought to explore the role of social workers in mitigating the effects of climate change in Makonde communal lands in Zimbabwe. The study was conducted in Hobwe, Kamhonde and Godzi villages.

Figure 1: Map of Makonde communal lands in Zimbabwe



(Adopted from: Sango & Godwell, 2015:93)

Research approach

The study followed the qualitative research method guided by the descriptive design. Denzin and Lincoln (2005) posit that the strength of qualitative research is its ability to provide complex textual descriptions of how people experience a given research issue. It provides information about the human side of an issue that is, the often-contradictory behaviours, beliefs, opinions, emotions, and relationships of individuals. Qualitative research can help to interpret and understand the complex reality of a given situation (Neuman, 2006). Kothari (2005) posits that descriptive research seeks to gather fertile data and in-depth understanding of the phenomenon of study.

Sampling

The sampling techniques employed in this study were simple random, purposive and snowball (Creswell, 2007, Neuman, 2006; Babbie & Mouton, 2012). Simple random sampling was used to select the three villages namely; Hobwe, Kamhonde and Godzi as they appeared on the 10th number of the sampling frame. The key informants who were social workers needed to meet the criterion of self-identifying as social workers. Snowball sampling was then followed to identify other social workers operating in the area. A total number of five (5) social workers participated in the study. Purposive sampling was followed in selecting community members who were practising subsistence farming and have been staying in the same villages for a minimum period of ten years. Twenty participants were gathered and gave insight on the matter.

Dawson and Catherine (2002) state that in purposive sampling; the sample is selected based on the researcher's knowledge of the population, its elements and the nature of research aims.

Data collection

This study gathered data through individual interviews and focus group discussions (Babbie & Mouton, 2012). Individual interviews were used on social workers and Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) officials whereas focus group discussions were used on community members and traditional leaders.

Data analysis

The thematic content analysis was used to analyse data inductively. According to Guest (2012), thematic analysis is the most common form of analysis in qualitative research, which emphasizes pinpointing, examining, and recording patterns or themes within data.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Role of Social workers in mitigating the effects of climate change

The general theme that emerged from the discussion with social workers operating in Makonde communal lands is that social workers are playing a role in mitigating the effects of climate change by supporting marginalized and vulnerable groups in the community. Though there was a consensus that social workers are not directly involved in the climate change discourse but their interventions on daily basis seeks to proffer solutions and rescue planning mechanisms from all sources of social turmoil where climate change is not excluded. One of the informants indicated the following:

“We are not directly involved in the climate change phenomenon but we are cognisant of the fact that climate change of course has created some social and economic forces that create poverty and marginalization of the inhabitants in this community. The already vulnerable are affected the most by the effects of climate change.” (Social worker A)

“As Social workers we are committed to supporting the vulnerable and marginalized groups by ensuring that their voices are heard and that decisions are made so that their needs are taken care of. I can safely say by so doing, as Social workers we are extending a hand in mitigating the effects of climate change in a broader sense”. (Social worker B)

This finding is supported by Achstater (2014) who posits that based on current conditions and the principles embodied in the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics, social workers have a moral and ethical responsibility to counter the negative effects of climate change. Mitigation and adaptation strategies are effective ways for the profession to get involved. It further emerged in this study that social workers are making use of their professional skills to deal with exigencies posed by climate change in the community. The skills which were commonly elaborated on are crisis counselling, use of social justice lenses and the

person in environment skills. This finding is consistent with the assertions by Cumby (2016) who denoted that social work have a role to play in dealing with environmental issues like climate change due to specific skills that they hold and the mandate of their profession. This is what one of the practitioners had to say the following:

“As Social workers, we are endowed with unique skills that we are employing that contribute to tackling issues like climate change. We render counselling to people during crisis and as a result of the highest level of vulnerability in this community, most people cannot withstand the psychological trauma posed by drought as a result of climate change.” (Social worker C)

We normally counsel render counselling to them and take them through empowerment mechanism for self-reliance which I feel is an immense contribution to the climate crisis.” (Social worker A)

The above is corroborated by Cumby (2016) who posits that by bringing the necessary skills that are currently required to mitigate these issues (climate change), social workers can promote meaningful changes to the health and wellbeing of clients. It was further submitted that social workers are relentlessly dealing with all forms of injustices emanating from climate change since people are being affected disproportionately by climate change. On the same wavelength, Alston (2015) denotes that in an environment where scientific and technological knowledge dominates, social work has a critical role to play in bringing human rights and social justice issues to the fore in the debate about climate change, environmental catastrophes and global challenges.

Most social workers postulated that they are using their social justice lenses skills to deal with all form of injustice by promoting equal distribution of resources and advocating for social change in the community. It emerged in the study that there is power dominance and political affiliation matrix in terms of accessing certain resources especially farming inputs and food aid rations. This is in consistent with Friedman (2010) who contends that social workers should promote the general welfare of society, from local to global levels, and the development of people, their communities, and their environments. Social workers should advocate for living conditions conducive to the fulfilment of basic human needs and should promote social, economic, political, and cultural values and institutions that are compatible with the realization of social justice.

Social workers indicated that they are trying their level best to advocate for social justice in terms of equal access of resources though sometimes they are hand bound to fully challenge some practices due to the volatile political climate in the area, fear of their lives and loss of jobs they operate as under dogs. Most of the social workers were employed under the Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social welfare. The researchers argue that the quest to promoting social justice should be inherently done openly with no fear. By operating as underdogs, social workers are not carrying the mandate of their profession to the optimum level. Additionally, social workers should pay particular attention to vulnerable, oppressed, and at-risk populations (NASW, 1999) in the community when engaging in this proactive work (Achstater, 2014).

As stated in the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics (1999), a fundamental aspect of social work is the attention to the environmental forces that create, contribute to, and address problems in living. Additionally, it states that social workers

engaging in policy work should promote legislation that ensures everyone's access to basic human needs. It affirms that all people should have equal access to resources. Work towards policy implementation and reform should reflect the fundamental principle of social work - promoting human rights and social justice.

Community members' perceptions on the role of social work in mitigating the effects of climate change

Mixed views emerged on the roles of social workers in mitigating the effects of climate change especially amongst the community members. In the focus group discussions most community members submitted that they have never been exposed to social workers' services in the climate change phenomenon but rather they only engage with social workers on issues pertaining to social welfare when they visit their offices. Some of the views they shared were as follows:

"I do not understand the scope of social work services, we have never seen much or anything evolving from social workers either in educating them on early warnings on natural disasters and in this regard climate change."

Mpambela and Mabvurira (2017) aver that social workers have a significant role to play in educating and informing the people about the causes and effects of climate change. Social workers must work towards enhancing adaptation to climate change and strengthen the resilience of individuals and communities amidst climate change induced shocks. This gives credence to Ife (2007) who highlighted social workers cannot stand idly by and watch global warming just happen social workers need to understand how it affects the populations they work with in different parts of the world and should be engaged in the debate about climate change. It is the researchers' cogent view that indeed social workers need to flag up the significance of profession in their areas of influence for clients to be aware of what the profession can offer not to operate as under dogs in an environment where their scope of services is not popular as it should be. Social work practices have to contribute to a great social transition, a systemic change (Dominelli, 2011). The researchers argue that it is through ensuring transparency of their departure point from social work in service rendering that will make the social transition possible and recognition of their services in a broader spectrum otherwise failure to do that will justify the findings that social work is silent on climate change issues (Cumby, 2016; Achstater, 2014).

Non-Governmental Organisation Social workers' understanding of their role in mitigating climate change

All the social workers attached to NGOs unanimously submitted that there is perceptive marginal role for social workers when it comes to disaster rescue and planning in the climate change phenomenon. The following are some of their views:

"it is not our duty to sometimes inform the community members that they are making interventions from the social work spectrum since our special focus is hinged on community development and social change"

It emerged that social workers attached to NGO understand their professional mandate that seeks to eradicate all forms of social ills that cripples the well-functioning of families, individuals and communities and it is such professional background which enable them to lobby with their employers to channel resources towards addressing environmental issues like climate change. This supported by Dominelli (2013) who posited that social workers have expertise on working with populations at risk, link them with resources and alleviating all barriers to human well-being. Dominelli (2011) highlighted that social workers play significant roles in dealing with these issues (climate change), including helping people understand the issues; promoting sustainable energy production and consumption; mobilising people to protect their futures through community social work; and proposing solutions to greenhouse gas emission.

Social workers can foster climate change endeavours that are equitable for all. The researchers contend that social workers are not doing much in line with the above mitigation mechanism in Makonde communal lands especially on sustainable energy production. This is because the participants in focus group discussions proffered little knowledge about renewable energy initiatives. The social workers acknowledged not to be playing a role in that terrain. Additionally, the study found that from the expositions of Social workers, there is minimal appreciation on the role of social workers in the climate change discourse and this can be attributed to lack of maximum exposure for the community with regard to the full scope of services of Social workers and this makes the perceptive marginal role of the profession to be acute. There was a general view from social workers from government and NGOs that social workers should be at the frontlines of advocacy against climate change though most of them cited lack of training on climate change phenomenon during the professional incubation process. In a different view to this finding, Cumby (2016) denotes that social work is missing a crucial piece to the puzzle right now in terms of thinking from an environment perspective but social work training equips social workers with excellent skills to make a positive difference in the world. It emerged that Social workers can no longer ignore the environmental aspects within the realm of what social work is. The most pressing theme that generally dominated the discussion with social workers is the passiveness of the Government of Zimbabwe in terms of channelling the social work profession at the front lines of climate change mitigation nationally. The Zimbabwean government appreciates that climate change is one of the threats to the country and its people and has the potential to undermine many of the positive developments in its meeting the country's developmental goals (Brown et al., 2014; Chagutah, 2010).

Factors that impedes Social workers' involvement in the climate change discourse

Lack of training

All informants attributed their barriers to action to lack of training on climate change issues on social work education. One of the informants noted the following:

"I was never exposed to anything about climate change during my training as a Social worker. It is my fundamental belief that the new breed of Social workers from Universities especially in Zimbabwe are not being exposed to such information in as much as climate change is a contemporary pressing issue."
(Social worker D)

This finding justifies the assertions made by Cumby (2016) that if social workers are never exposed to environmental issues like climate change within the social work context, they are less likely to feel a sense of responsibility for such issues. The informants unanimously submitted that they have come to be furnished with the tenets of the climate change discourse through a series of workshops on climate change and environmental management which they have been attending. Such workshops are being organised by International Non-Governmental Organizations in collaboration with other local NGOs specializing on environmental issues. It emerged that the government is not doing much in terms of training Social workers on climate change issues for the purpose of scaling up early warning's information dissemination and intervention.

Marginal role

This study established that social workers do not know how best to integrate climate change into their daily work. The informants denoted that this can be attributed to the perceptive marginal role by the recipients of their services which influence lack of need to incorporate climate change into their day to day work. One of the informants said the following:

“When considering factors of human development during training, no emphasis was put on the contribution of ecology and its effects on human development and its now difficult to fully execute our duties in that terrain.” (Social worker C)

“When clients come to our offices engulfed in chronic poverty, in as much I admit that climate change is indeed making life difficult for them, it is difficult for me to talk through climate change lenses with them”. (Social worker B)

“Another challenge is most people lack adequate understanding about the climate change phenomenon later alone its contribution to their problems. You see now at the end of the day we become sandwiched between a hard place and a rock. (Social worker C)”

Nemachena et al., (2011) indicated that indeed the problem of understanding climate change is one of the major challenges confronting African people. They went on to say this type of understanding climate change is crucial in planning the adaptation for sustainable livelihood particularly in rural communities. The researchers argue that lack of adequate understanding on climate change is making social work clients not to present problems emanating from climate change for social work intervention for they do not fully understand how to connect it to their catastrophes. This in turn is ironically creating a barrier on social workers to zoom in the climate change terrain when exploring the clients' presenting problems and interventions respectively.

To give insight to this finding Kemp and Pankilas (2015) propound that social workers should employ a variety of mitigation and adaption strategies to combat climate change. Under a social development perspective, intervention must be applied to all dimensions of the problem. All Social workers acknowledged that climate change should be incorporated into the day to day work of social workers because most problems prevailing in the community are evolving from climate change. Cumby (2016) argued that if social work is to remain relevant as a profession, then we need to consider an interpretation of our mandate and skill set that is inclusive to environmental issues like climate change.

CONCLUSION

Climate change is one of the greatest cross-cutting issues of the twenty-first century. This study revealed that social workers' involvement in the climate change discourse is not intensive as it should be though the informants submitted that they are doing their utmost best within the available means to support the well-being of families, individuals and communities. Climate change falls under the purview of social work by definition of the profession. However, little is being done by social workers in mitigating the effects of climate change in Makonde communal lands. Lack of inherent action of social workers is attached to barriers emanating from lack of exposure to climate change issues during training, failure of the Government to mainstream social work services in the climate change terrain and lack of intense need to integrate climate change issues into their day to day work. This in turn is creating a perceptive marginal role of social workers by the community even on the work they are doing in the climate change phenomenon.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The researchers recommend that the Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social welfare which is the biggest employer should shift its mandate for social workers by incorporating environmental issues on the scope of services social workers can render. Furthermore, the Government of Zimbabwe should mainstream the role of social workers into its climate change policies and initiatives for recognition of social work as a profession. Universities that train social workers in Zimbabwe should make climate change form part of the curriculum for social workers to be acquainted on how ecological factors are critical in human development. This helps to avoid an arm bush of roles after training. Climate change is a contemporary issue that needs to be incorporated in the Universities curriculums of all disciplines. Social workers need to flag up the significance of the profession in areas of their influence to avoid future perceptive marginal roles towards their services.

REFERENCES

- Achstatter, L. C. (2014). Climate Change: Threats to Social Welfare and Social Justice Requiring Social Work Intervention. *21st Century Social Justice*, 1(1), 4.
- Alston, M. (2015). Social work, climate change and global cooperation. *International Social Work*, 58(3), 355-363.
- Babbie, E., & Mouton, J. (2012). *The practice of social research*. Southern Africa: OXFORD University Press.
- Brown, D., Chanakira, R. R., Chatiza, K., Dhliwayo, M., Dodman, D., Masiwa, M., & Zvigadza, S. (2014). Climate change impacts, vulnerability and adaptation in Zimbabwe. *International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) Climate Change Working Paper*, 3.
- Clark, E.J. (2013). Social work and the environment. NASW News. Retrieved from <http://www.socialworkers.org/pubs/news/2016/12/social-work-environment.asp>.
- Creswell, J (2007). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches*, Second Edition. SAGE Publications: Thousand Oaks.
- Cumby, T. (2016). Climate change and social work: Our roles and barriers to action.

- Dawson, B., and Catherine, K.M. (2002). *Practical Research Methods*. New Delhi: UBS. Publishers Distributors
- Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2011). *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research*. Sage.
- Dominelli, L. (2011). Climate change: social workers' roles and contributions to policy debates and interventions. *International Journal Of Social Welfare*, 20(4), 430-438.
- Dominelli, L. (2012). Green social work: From environmental crises to environmental justice. Polity.
- Dominelli, L. (2013). Environmental justice at the heart of social work practice: Greening the profession. *International Journal Of Social Welfare*, 22(4), 431-439. doi: 10.1111/ijsw.12024
- Friedman, M. B. (2010). Social work and social justice: the challenge of political pluralism. *Advocacy in Social Work*.
- Garbarino, J. (2017). *Children and Families in the Social Environment: Modern Applications of Social Work*. Routledge.
- Gray, M., Coates, J., & Hetherington, T. (Eds.). (2012). *Environmental social work*. Routledge.
- Guest, G., Namey, E. E., & Mitchell, M. L. (2012). *Collecting qualitative data: A field manual for applied research*. Sage.
- Ife, J. (2007). The new international agendas: *What role for social work in centre for human rights education*. Curtin University, Perth, Western Australia.
- IPCC. (2014a). *Impacts, adaptation and vulnerability. Contribution of Working Group II to the Fourth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change*. Source <http://www.ipcc.ch/ipccreports/ar4-wg2.htm>. Accessed on 10 December 2016.
- IPCC. (2014b). *Climate Change 2014: Synthesis Report. Contribution of Working Groups I, II and III to the Fourth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change* [Core Writing Team, Pachauri, R.K and Reisinger, A. (eds.)]. IPCC, Geneva, Switzerland, 104
- Kemp, S. P., & Palinkas, L. A. (2015). Strengthening the social response to the human impacts of environmental change. Grand Challenges for Social Work Initiative Working Paper, (5).
- Kothari, C.R. (2005). *Research Methodology. Methods and Techniques*. New Delhi Wiley: Eastern Limited.London: Sage.
- Mathende, T. L., & Nhapi, T. G. (2018). The Nexus of Globalisation and Global South Social Policy Crafting: Some Zimbabwean Perspectives. *Journal of Pan African Studies*, 12(1), 499-516.
- Mpambela, M., & Mabvurira, V. (2017). Effects of climate change and their indelible impact on social work profession in Zimbabwe. *African Journal of Social Work*, 7(2), 30-35.
- National Association of Social Workers [NASW]. (1999). *Code of ethics of the National Association of Social Workers*. Washington, DC. NASW Press.
- Neuman, W. L. 2006. *Social research methods: qualitative and quantitative approaches*. 6th ed. Boston: Pearson Education Inc.
- Sango, I. (2012). An investigation of communal farmers' livelihoods and climate change challenges and opportunities in Makonde Rural District of Zimbabwe. PhD Thesis.: Unisa
- Unganai, L. (2012). *Adaptation to climate change amongst agro pastoral systems: Case for Zimbabwe*. Putnam.
- Zapf, M. K. (2009). *Social work and the environment: Understanding people and place*. Canadian Scholars' Press.
- Sango, I., & Godwell, N. (2015). Climate change trends and environmental impacts in the Makonde Communal Lands, Zimbabwe. *South African Journal of Science*, 111(7-8), 1-6.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

LOUIS NYAHUNDA

Department of Social Work
University of Limpopo.
nyahundalouis@gmail.com

FRANS KOKETSO MATLAKALA

Department of Social Work
University of Limpopo.
fransmatlakala@gmail.com

JABULANI CALVIN MAKHUBELE

Department of Social Work
University of Limpopo.
Jabulani.Makhubele@ul.ac.za