



African Journal of Social Work
Afri. j. soc. work
© National Association of Social Workers-Zimbabwe/Autor(s)
ISSN Print 1563-3934
ISSN Online 2409-5605

Licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Non-commercial 4.0 International License

Indexed & Accredited with: African Journals Online (AJOL) | University of Zimbabwe Accredited Journals (UZAJ) | SCOPUS (Elsevier's abstract and citation database) | Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ) | Society of African Journal Editors (SAJE) | Asian Digital Library (ADL) | African Social Work Network (ASWNet) | Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) - South Africa | SJR | CNKI - China | Journal Publishing Practices and Standards (JPPS) | EBSCO | DOI

Older people's right to food security in an era of neoliberalism in Zimbabwe: A social protection perspective

MUSHUNJE Mildred T. and MUPEDZISWA Rodreck

ABSTRACT

Zimbabwe is one country that has had a chequered history, particularly since the dawn of independence and majority rule in 1980. Using a scoping literature review from search engines online, refereed journals and organisational documents such as those published by HelpAge International, the article considers the welfare conditions of older communal farmers in Zimbabwe in a period of economic meltdown. It begins by examining Zimbabwe's socioeconomic and political situation since independence before focusing on how the adoption of a neo-liberal agenda has impacted older people. The findings reveal that older people's well-being and overall food security have been significantly jeopardised. The paper then considers social protection options available for older people and concludes that these have, for a variety of reasons, not had a significant impact on the said farmers. The paper also discusses the role of the social work profession in supporting older people in the quest for food security. Finally, the paper concludes with a strong recommendation for the Zimbabwean government to consider comprehensive universal social protection systems for older people.

KEY TERMS: food security, neoliberalism, older people, social protection, Zimbabwe

KEY DATES: Submitted: March 2024; Reviewed: August 2024; Accepted: September 2024; Published: October 2024

KEY DECLARATIONS: Funding: None | Conflict of Interest: None

PRESENTER DETAILS

- MUSHUNJE Mildred PhD (SW), Midlands State University, mildredmushunje@gmail.com
- MUPEDZISWA Rodreck, PhD (SW), BA ISAGO, University of Gaborone, rodreck.mupedziswa@baisago.ac.bw

Current and previous volumes are available at:
<https://ajsw.africasocialwork.net>



HOW TO REFERENCE USING ASWNET STYLE

Mushunje M. & Mupedziswa R. (2024). Older People's Right to Food Security in an Era of Neoliberalism in Zimbabwe: A Social Protection Perspective. *African Journal of Social Work*, 14(4), 268-275. <https://dx.doi.org/10.4314/ajsw.v14i5.5>

INTRODUCTION

Food insecurity is a matter of limited food availability and restricted access to food. Clapp and Sen (1999) are credited with their focused discussions on access to and entitlement to food. It is through these discussions that food insecurity was viewed as a failure to guarantee access to sufficient food in households instead of the shortcomings of agriculture to produce sufficient food. Dreze and Sen (1989) argued that persistent hunger was not mere lack of affluence but of substantial and extreme inequalities. These inequalities were attributed to factors such as changes in the markets including food costs and macroeconomic government policies. Social protection support in the form of cash transfers, agricultural inputs, access to free food, and work-for-food programmes are means to prevent deprivation. Older persons are affected by food insecurity, and this has worsened in the neo-liberal era. The article provides an overview of the neo-liberal agenda, it then provides the background and context to Zimbabwe. The article then discusses older persons and how neo-liberalism has impacted their food security.

Theoretical framework

The article is premised on the human rights-based framework. Alston (1984), in his writings on global apartheid noted that:

It is paradoxical but hardly surprising that the right to food has been endorsed more often and with greater unanimity and urgency than most other human rights whilst at the same time being violated more comprehensively and systematically than any other right (p.9).

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), Article 25 (1) states that “Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food ...”. The 1996 World Food Summit (WFS) Rome Declaration agreed that hunger is both a violation of human dignity and an obstacle to social, political and economic progress. International law recognises that everyone has the right to be free from hunger, and national governments must act to ensure that this right is protected. The promotion and implementation of these rights were recognised as operating at three levels:

Obligations to respect: The State must not interfere with individuals’ livelihoods and national legislation must be in accordance with this.

Obligations to protect: This requires regulations against poor conduct by non-State actors that would hinder people from acquiring adequate, safe food.

Obligations to fulfill: This requires action by the State to identify vulnerable groups and to design policies that improve their access to food-producing resources or income.

METHODOLOGY

Our article is based on a scoping literature review of online articles, refereed journals and organisational documents such as those published by HelpAge International. The study problem was premised on the potential threat of food insecurity to older persons in a neo-liberal context. Data collected were from published reports, articles, studies, online platforms and publicly available materials including publications from sector specific organisations such as HelpAge International. Identified articles were screened by relevance using an inclusion and exclusion criteria of older persons and food insecurity. The inclusion criteria were all articles that had thematic issues of older persons, neo-liberalism, social protection, vulnerabilities and human rights. Data were then analysed and arranged into sub-themes for analysis. Distilled sub-themes were: Limited availability of labour; Limited access to training; technology and extension; Limited access to inputs; and vulnerability associated with disaster. The study focused on Zimbabwe, aimed at strengthening social protection mechanisms to protect older persons against food insecurity and ensure that their right to food is protected.

NEO-LIBERAL AGENDA

Zimbabwe gained independence from Britain in 1980, following a protracted armed struggle that ushered in majority rule. Prior to independence, the country’s social policy was shaped by intricate internal and external forces. According to Hall and Mupedziswa (1995), four main phases have impacted the country’s social policy planning and implementation. They argue that the first phase (1890 to 1979) relates to the pre-independence era, where socio-economic policies were characterised by “dualism”, whereby government promoted racialised development. Policies supported white settlers and ensured that they had prime agricultural land whilst Africans

were forced to live in densely populated communal areas which had poor soils and poor agricultural yields. The second phase (1980-1990), which commenced at independence saw the new government repeal many laws that segregated Africans, replacing them with inclusive legislation with economic policies that were informed by socialist and egalitarian philosophy. While the country had won political independence, economic independence remained far from being won. The country experienced inflows of people from the rural areas into the urban areas in search of economic opportunities. As the urban population grew, existing infrastructure (i.e., hospitals and schools) was insufficient to cater for the majority of the population (Hall & Mupedziswa, 1995). Challenges on the economic front forced the new government to approach the Bretton Woods institutions, which was the third phase which was marked by economic structural adjustment programmes (ESAP) that occurred between 1990 and 2000. Key tenets of ESAP were enforcement of austerity measures of removal of subsidies from health, education, food and the added burden of HIV and AIDS (Ushamba & Mupedziswa, 2008). The nation had more than 1.3 million children orphaned by AIDS and 50,000 households headed by children below the age of 18 whose parents died of the disease (National AIDS Council, 2009). Most orphans were cared for by older people. Social work services provided through the Department of Social Services consisted of support to vulnerable households through a means-tested public assistance programme that included food aid and medical treatment orders. There were also severe droughts in 1992 and 2015 which impacted older farmers acutely as they had double jeopardy of age and limited resources. The post-ESAP era, the fourth phase, resulted in a protracted meltdown arising out of the controversial land reform programme in 1998 where land was forcibly taken away from white colonial settler farmers. Given this history, Zimbabwe has remained a country in socio-economic and political distress; having moved from being one of the best food producers in the region to one that is most food insecure with inappropriate legislation being the main cause, and older farmers have borne the worst brunt.

DEFINING OLDER PERSONS

The definition of older persons in Zimbabwe is highly contested as there is no universally accepted position. In developed countries, old age is defined as 65 years and above and is aligned to occupational and retirement pensionable years (International Labour Organisation [ILO], 2014). In Africa, the age range of 50 to 65 years is stipulated to qualify as an older person (ILO, 2014). The World Health Organization (2014) defines old age as between 60 to 65 years (World Health Organization, 2014). In Zimbabwe, the definition is determined by the Older Persons Act [Chapter 17:11], which defines an older person as aged 65 years and above (Older Persons Act, 2012).

Profile of older people in Zimbabwe

The number of people aged 65 years or older worldwide is projected to more than double, rising from 761 million in 2021 (United Nations, 2023). By the year 2050, the population is projected to go up to 2 billion, constituting 20% of the world population, with Zimbabwe contributing a total of 520,000 to this global projection (Help Age, 2013). In 2012, the proportion of people aged 55 years and above in Zimbabwe was estimated at 7.5% of the total population, an increase from about 7% in 2002. In 2020, the population aged 60 years and above in Zimbabwe was approximately 688,430 individuals, which accounts for about 4.1% of the population (ZimStats, 2022). Life expectancy for females is 64.3 years, and for males is 59.2 years. The 2022 Census revealed that the 54% of people were 15–64-year-olds. The 65 years and above category was 3.3% in 2023, unchanged from 2022 (World Population Prospects, 2022) and in 2023, 75-year-olds and above comprised 1% of the population. The ability to work, be productive and contribute to food security by older people can be attributed to health status during retirement and if they are worthy of support with new agricultural skills.

Empirical evidence reveals that 33% of 65 years and older persons in Africa are literate (Kinsella, 2008). This evidence is important as it determines the extent to which older persons can access information such as agriculture extension material and health material and via internet-based media. According to Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) and HelpAge (2013), about 95.5% of older persons generate income from agriculture and about 98.3% of the older people “own” land. The land is used for both agriculture and for residence. Their understanding of ownership is that it is land that has been passed on from generations but there is acknowledgement that it is communal land.

Based on a study conducted by FAO and HelpAge (2012), older persons have lost pensions because of the economic meltdown in 2009 and subsequent dollarisation of the economy which eroded any savings and pension. Study findings from FAO and HelpAge indicate that 12.3% of the study respondents received some form of formal pension, of which 10% were males and 2.3% were female. The low representation of women could be an indication of the disparities in the labour force. The 2013 UNAIDS Special Report points out that the social and economic impact of HIV infection has been on older grandparents in their role as carers of children orphaned by the HIV pandemic. HelpAge notes that more than 40% of all vulnerable and orphaned children in Zimbabwe are

under the care of older persons (HelpAge, 2013). Older farmers are further impacted as they must contend with ageing in addition to HIV and economic challenges.

FACTORS AFFECTING OLDER PERSON'S FOOD SECURITY

According to HelpAge International Southern Africa Regional Age Network Strategy 2013-2015, the older persons' population in Zimbabwe is significantly increasing, and challenges include reduced economic opportunities; lack of comprehensive social protection coverage; poor health indicators for communicable diseases, especially HIV and AIDs and environmental threats including floods and droughts. As a result, older people are not as productive as they might have wished. One of the impacts of droughts is food insecurity, with older persons being the worst affected population group. Their lives remain vulnerable due to inadequate and poorly funded social safety nets and social care services. Traditional safety nets to address food insecurity, such as the Zunde raMambo (Chief's granary), have been eroded. Zunde raMambo is a pre-colonial practice to promote food security, particularly among vulnerable members of society. The primary aim of the Zunde was to ensure that a community had food reserves which could be used in times of food shortage (Mararike, 2001; Mushunje, 2006; Patel, 2012). The system was suppressed during colonial rule by undermining the traditional authority of Chiefs. It was also meant to provide social protection during periods of drought and famine for vulnerable groups such as orphans, widows and the marginalised (Chirisa, 2013).

SOCIAL PROTECTION IN ZIMBABWE

Social protection is key to protecting older persons. Harvey, Holmes, Slater, and Martin (2007) defined social protection as the process of protecting and assisting those who are impoverished and vulnerable, including women, children, the elderly, individuals with disabilities, the displaced, the jobless, and the sick. This paper adopts the International Labour Organization (ILO) definition of social protection. The ILO views social protection as a human right and focuses on employment conditions to ensure these are decent for the formally and informally employed (ILO, 2021). The ILO has been a lead agency in the Social Protection Floor Initiative, which promotes basic cash transfers and universal access to essential social services. Chirisa (2013) has classified the social protection system in Zimbabwe into three broad categories: social security, income security and social safety nets. The social safety nets comprise basic programmes facilitating education and health fee waiver schemes, drought relief and food distribution schemes (ILO, 2021). Social safety nets also cover social assistance programmes, and these use a categorical approach in that they target specific population groups deemed to be vulnerable and deserving of state support. Kaseke (2003) noted that the vulnerable groups who are eligible for social assistance include persons over the age of 60 years, persons with disabilities, chronically ill persons and dependents of indigent persons (Social Welfare Assistance Act, 1988). These are not comprehensively catered for as this is based on means testing and not universal coverage. Kaseke (2015) argues that the main reason for limited coverage of social protection for older persons is that social insurance has been used for achieving social protection coverage, yet the majority of these are in the informal sector, where they do not contribute to any formally organised social protection system. This system has failed to recognise that most of the people in developing countries are engaged in non-formal employment and are therefore excluded from participating in contributory social insurance schemes (Kaseke, 2015). The 2012 ILO recommendation (No. 202) on Social Protection Floors encourages member states to set up national social protection systems available to all vulnerable citizens. However, Zimbabwe's commitment to this has been minimal as older persons remain largely uncovered and remain socially and economically excluded due to major resource constraints.

Chirisa (2013) notes that social protection in Zimbabwe has suffered from severe economic and political strain. When formal social security systems were introduced in the SADC region, the general assumption was that their scope of coverage would expand to cover everyone (Kaseke, 2003). This assumption was based on increased economic growth, which was sadly not the case in Zimbabwe. Midgley (1994) argues that there was an expectation that informal social security systems would be formalised, and again this has not happened. If anything, the informal systems seem to subsidise the state services as households engage in coping mechanisms outside the state provisions. These have included remittances from the diaspora and internal remittances from the extended family (Mushunje, 2014). Social security has been associated with formal employment, and most older persons in rural areas remain excluded due to no formal employment for most of their lives (Harvey et al., 2007).

FINDINGS: CHALLENGES FACED BY OLDER PEOPLE

Limited availability of labour

Major sources of labour for older farmer households include family, paid workers, and community assistance. Limited labour availability is a critical factor in ensuring agricultural production among older people. The trends

have changed as the younger family members are migrating to urban areas and beyond the borders looking for lucrative opportunities for their livelihoods. Community support existed in areas where older people were organised into informal associations, and this system ensured protection of older people especially with the migration of the younger population. The traditional forms of labour pooling known as *nhimbe* are minimally practised in contemporary times as these require the older farmer household to prepare food for helpers (FAO & HelpAge, 2013). The younger people prefer engaging in activities that potentially bring high and quick returns, such as gold panning and other informal sector activities that they believe give them quick financial turnaround (Nyoni, 2012). Without consistent and predictable support, older people have challenges ensuring food security from their farm production.

Limited access to training, technology and extension

Training methods have not been sufficiently adapted to meet the specific needs and priorities of older persons. FAO and HelpAge (2012) put forth that there is a proliferation of inexperienced young extension workers who have no interest in working with older persons. This implies that the intergenerational approach is not sufficiently built into the agricultural extension systems. Extension systems comprised skilled agricultural staff that provide communities with agricultural skills. Extension support is being provided via social media platforms, excluding older persons as most have limited smartphone access.

Technology in agriculture is evolving so that farmers require continuous renewal and updates through capacity building and knowledge transfer. Good animal and crop husbandry ensures good production and productivity which improves food and nutritional security. Various management issues, inter alia, soil and water management, water harvesting, soil fertility management, post-harvesting management, and animal management, are indicated. A study conducted by HelpAge International (2012) and its partners in Zimbabwe in 12 districts across the country established that the most common technology used by older persons is conservation agriculture (CA). The high levels of uptake of the technology in the districts were due to the presence of Community Service Organisations (CSOs), including Goal Zimbabwe and HelpAge, which promoted CA. Older persons tend to be viewed as less productive and less able to adapt to new technologies and practices, such as climate-smart agriculture. As a result, these population groups tend to be excluded from agricultural support programmes and services which impacts their ability to use new technology-based systems of agriculture, impacting their food security.

Limited access to inputs

Older persons face challenges regarding the procurement of inputs for both crops and livestock production. Input support from the government enables farmers to produce for their subsistence. One of the key criteria for agricultural input support is the availability of labour. For instance, FAO supported an input programme in which, in the first phase, farmers were required to contribute US\$16 (10%), and the farmer would put in the balance, resulting in the farmer accessing US\$160. Under the second phase of implementation, the farmer contribution stood at US\$32 (20%), and the farmer took care of the difference, with the farmer ending up with a total balance of US\$160. In the third phase, the farmer contribution was set at US\$80 (50%), and the farmer paid US\$80, making the final figure US\$160. The amount was accessed through different platforms agro-dealers, including financial institutions such as CABS and Steward Bank and the EcoCash platform, and was redeemable at selected local agro-dealers (FAO, 2012). Older persons have limited access to credit due to lack of collateral, poor credit records and limited bankable agricultural enterprises. This is even though older persons have fewer debts (Gray, 2005). Obviously, this impacts older persons negatively and this programme inadvertently excludes older people as most would not have financial resources.

Disaster induced vulnerabilities

The literature reveals that older persons are vulnerable to disasters like floods and tropical cyclones as they have mobility challenges that require support from families and community members. Mavhura and Mucherera (2020), in a qualitative study, carried out in Mbire District in Zimbabwe, revealed that the elderly are at high risk, especially in these flood-prone areas, as they are less mobile, are unable to swim, and the risk of drowning is doubled as compared to adults without disabilities. Older persons above 65, have limited ability to use digital tools because of poor literacy skills. They may not access early warning signs through the internet or social media platforms as they might not have the devices (Ngcamu, 2023). A study by Zvobgo et al. (2023) in Chiredzi indicates that older persons are vulnerable to climate change impacts as they will not be as productive as their able-bodied counterparts (Mushunje & Matsika, 2023; Nyahunda & Tirivangasi, 2021).

MAKING SOCIAL PROTECTION WORK FOR OLDER PERSONS

Taking note of the challenges that affect older persons, first, social protection should aim to protect them from food insecurity and to protect their rights, especially for those most vulnerable and economically excluded. Second, social protection that is well structured can contribute directly to rapid economic growth through human resource development and strengthen the ability of the poor, especially smallholders, to manage risks and adopt improved technologies with higher productivity.

Older persons should be viewed not as a problem but as part of the solution to economic challenges facing the country. Once they are viewed as part of the solution, then policy and programmes become positive and inclusive of the needs of older persons (Devereaux, 2013). Therefore, reducing hunger requires specific attention to both short- and longer-term interventions, in an initiative often referred to as the “twin-track approach” (Devereaux, 2013). Social workers have a role to play by advocating for social protection systems that are inclusive of older farmers. Social protection can establish a bridge between two tracks because these play a crucial role in ensuring that economic growth reduces hunger and malnutrition as rapidly as possible.

Social protection can be used as a means of providing short-term assistance to older persons’ households to cope with shocks. In Zimbabwe, older persons should be supported, through the services provided by social workers in the department of social development, to ensure access to food security. Non-formal social protection systems such as the Zunde raMambo, a community-driven initiative where members pool grain together at the local Chief’s house for use during lean times (Mushunje, 2006), could be strengthened and used to support older persons when they experience food insecurity. The Chief takes responsibility to distribute the food to the needy, usually through a selected community committee that identifies vulnerable members.

Formal social protection schemes such as *social assistance*, which is enshrined in the Social Welfare Act (1988), ensures that older persons receive public social assistance during times of shocks. In Education, the *Basic Education Assistance Module (BEAM)*, a scheme which older persons can access for the benefit of OVC under their care. Benefits of this scheme include exemption of school fees and bursaries for children living in difficult circumstances (Chikoko, Nyabeze, Zvokumba, Mwapaura, & Mhizha, 2021). In the Health sector, the *Assisted Medical Treatment Order*, which enables needy persons (including older people) to access medical treatment paid for by the government. Other government programmes have included *cash transfers* open to the vulnerable (Chikoko et al., 2021).

In addition to the state-led interventions, Zimbabwe-based NGOs have run programmes that include food and nutrition programmes like food for assets, monthly food distribution and school feeding. While the initiatives alluded to above play a critical role in improving welfare for vulnerable groups, they are mostly conventional transfer-based entitlements (food aid or supplementary feeding, as well as cash transfers or vouchers that supplement the purchasing power of the food insecure) to assist poor people in being able to survive. In short, they are relief-oriented and do not facilitate self-reliance. Hence, they all have had a very limited impact, especially when also considered in the context of the perennial resource scarcity in the country. This suggests the need to come up with more viable options and social workers have a key role to play in conducting research that can inform programmes and policies.

Both formal and informal social safety nets are critical for older persons to effectively participate in agriculture and ensure their food security. Several legislation and policies designed for the protection of older persons do exist in Zimbabwe, but the implementation remains fragmented. The Older Persons Act [Chapter 17:11] enacted in 2012 is in place, but it has not been translated into key tangible actions. Though the Older Persons Board had been put in place, it does not have the resources to conduct awareness campaigns and policy engagements with older persons on the existence of the Act. The Directorate was meant to help older persons to channel concerns regarding their well-being and their livelihoods.

Zimbabwe Aged Network (ZAN), an affiliate of HelpAge International, has established community structures in the form of Older Persons Committees (OPCs), which are responsible for monitoring and reporting issues relating to the well-being of older persons. ZAN has made some efforts to incorporate other stakeholders and broaden advocacy for mainstreaming ageing in both state and non-state developmental programming (FAO, 2013). To date, its catchment area has remained small as funding for such initiatives remains insignificant. The jury is still out regarding what impact it is likely to have in terms of efforts to improve the welfare of older persons in Zimbabwe. The systems-based approach might help pull these initiatives together, for efficiency and effectiveness for the benefit of older persons in Zimbabwe.

It is important to ensure that there are sufficient resources to support older persons to facilitate self-reliance through continued learning and re-tooling. Social workers can be conduits to link older persons with appropriate service providers in instances where they need access to social protection. Ferreira and Robalino (2010) argue that social assistance and social insurance make up a country’s social protection system. Older persons can benefit from a combination of these. It is important to mainstream older persons into programming by government and NGOs and to prioritise their welfare. Social workers employed in NGOs must be advocates that intercede for older

persons. This implies influencing the operationalisation of legislation targeted at promoting social protection for older persons and farmers, such as the Older People's Act.

Older persons are a wealth of knowledge in terms of identification of the suitable technologies and can help in the adaptation of new technologies for agriculture and food security. In the application of Indigenous Knowledge systems, older persons may have a better understanding of how to address phenomena like climate change. The intergenerational approach towards promoting sustainable agriculture for communal and resettlement households in Zimbabwe requires an in-depth understanding of the context of the intervention in terms of gender differentials, cultural practices and decision-making roles of women and youth in the food and agricultural value chains.

CONCLUSION

The UNDP (2022) notes that Zimbabwe lacks longitudinal empirical data on ageing and relies mainly on international organisations. A central argument put forth by the authors is that older persons be supported to access social protection that will ensure food security. They should be supported with systems so that the absence of labour does not hamper their farming enterprises. There is a need to engage with older persons in policy dialogue to influence policy. Social workers would be instrumental in facilitating dialogue and ensuring that the views of older persons are incorporated in policy formulation. The Network of Older Persons has been clear in its quest for inclusion in policy dialogue, and this should be actively promoted and strengthened. It is critical for food security programmes targeted at older persons to address the nutritional challenges that tend to affect their health and physical ability. In this regard, it is critical to design and implement locally relevant and sustainable food security initiatives that tap into the experiences of older persons. Strategies for boosting income-earning opportunities for older persons are critical for them to cope with increased household burdens, especially imposed by the loss of young adults in the household. Income-generating activities are key to enabling older persons to cope with the demands. Social workers have a presence in communities through the Department of Social Development. They could work with older people and link them to income generation opportunities and training.

Older persons have a critical role in contributing to the overall development of any given country. In the case of Zimbabwe, apart from their contribution to agriculture, they play a critical role, especially since the younger generation has out-migrated due to economic hardships and limited employment opportunities in Zimbabwe. Hence, for economic development to be comprehensive, the contribution of older persons must be recognised. While some of them do access social protection, the benefits have a very limited impact. There is, therefore, a need to consider introducing a comprehensive social protection framework to cater to the needs of the older population in general but those in communal farming. Social policy initiatives should be revisited rather than continue with the existing narrow social protection approach. Social work has an important role in terms of championing the course of older persons in Zimbabwe.

REFERENCES

- Abdel H. S. (2009). Qualitative research beyond statistical significance, *Journal of Education, Qatar National Committee for Education, Culture and Science*, 38(171), 268-283.
- Abdelaziz, S. R. (2019). Mechanisms of employing social work research to achieve Egypt's 2030 vision: A study from the point of view of faculty members and the supporting body in some social work faculties. *Journal of Social Work, Egyptian Association of Social Workers*, 61(5), 229-276.
- Gray, M (2005) Dilemmas of International social work: Paradoxical processes in indigenisation, universalism and imperialism. *International Journal of Social Welfare* 14(3) 231-238.
- Drèze, J., & Sen (1989). *Hunger and Public Action*. Clarendon Oxford
- Clapp, J., & Sen, A. (1999). Development as freedom. *International Journal*, 55(1), 160.
- Chikoko, W., Nyabeze, K., Zvokuomba, K., Mwapaura, K., & Mhizha, S. (2021). The harmonized social cash transfer program in Zimbabwe: Achievements and challenges. *Journal of Economics and Behavioral Studies*, 13(5), 12-21.
- Devereux, S. (2013). Trajectories of social protection in Africa. *Development Southern Africa*, 30(1), 13–23. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0376835X.2013.755871>.
- Ferreira & Robalino (2010). "Social protection in Latin America: achievements and limitations." World Bank Policy Research Working Paper 5305 (2010).
- FAO (2013). State of food insecurity in the world: the Multiple Dimensions of Food Insecurity. Rome.
- Kimani, J.K FAO & HelpAge (2013) Don't leave us behind: Older people in Zimbabwe call for a society for all. Published, 17 October 2014 <https://www.helpage.org/blog/dont-leave-us-behind-older-people-in-zimbabwe-call-for-a-society-for-all/>
- HelpAge International (2013). Including older women and men in HIV Data: Help Age Briefing.
- Government of Zimbabwe. Older persons' Act (Chapter 17:11) Act 1/2012.
- Government of Zimbabwe (2014). Labour force survey from the Zimbabwe statistics authority Zimstat
- Chirisa, I. (2013). Social Protection Amid Increasing Instability in Zimbabwe: Scope, Institutions and Policy Options. in Devereux, S & Getu, M (Eds) Informal and Formal Social Protection Systems in Sub-Saharan Africa. (OSSREA). Kampala: Fountain Publishers.
- Chikoko, Nyabeze, Zvokuomba, Mwapaura, & Mhizha, 2021 Provision of child protection services in Zimbabwe: review of the human rights perspective, Published in Cogent Social Sciences 22 October 2022, Law, Political Science, Sociology
- Government of Zimbabwe (1981). Growth with equity: An economic policy statement. Harare: Government Printer.
- Hall, N., & Mupedziswa, R (1995). Preface. In Hall, N & Mupedziswa, R (eds) Social policy and administration in Zimbabwe. Harare: JSDA Publishing.
- Harvey, P., Holmes, R., Slater, R., & Martin, E. (2007). Social protection in fragile states. London: ODI.
- HelpAge International, Centre for Community Development Studies (CCDS), Help Age Zimbabwe, Zimbabwe farmers Union (ZFU), IBS, CIVIC and Elizabeth Chanakira Cancer Trust (2013) The Zimbabwe Ageing Network and the Older Person.
- HelpAge International (2009). Witness to climate change: Learning from older people's experience. Retrieved on 12 September 2024 from: https://www.ifa-fiv.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/059_Climate-Change-and-Older-People.pdf
- HelpAge International Southern Africa Regional Age Network Strategy: 2013-2015
- International Labour Organisation (ILO). (2012). Social Security for all: Building social protection floors and comprehensive social security systems. Geneva: ILO. Retrieved on 21 September 2024 from: http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/---emp_ent/---multi/documents/publication/wcms_213761.pdf World Bank
- ILO (2014) Social protection for older persons: key policy trends and statistics / International Labour Office, Social Protection Department. - Geneva: ILO, 2014 (Social protection policy paper; No. 11, ISSN: 1020-9581; 1020-959X (web pdf) ISBN: 9789221292012; 9789221292029 (web pdf) International Labour Office Social Protection Dept. https://www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/wcmsp5/groups/public/@dgreports/@dcomm/documents/publication/wcms_310211.pdf
- ILO. (2021). World social protection report 2020–22: Social protection at the crossroads –in pursuit of a better future. International Labour Office, Geneva. Retrieved on 20 September 2024 from: <https://www.ilo.org/publications/flagship-reports/world-social-protection-report-2020-22-social-protection-crossroads-pursuit>
- Kaseke, E. (2003). Social exclusion and social security: The case of Zimbabwe. *Journal of Social Development in Africa*
- Kaseke, E. (2015). National Social Protection Floors and Income Security for Older Persons: Prospects for Zimbabwe. *Social Development Issues (Follmer Group)*, 37(1), 1-13

- Kinsella, K and He, W and Wan He (2008). An Aging World. International Population Reports. Retrieved on 28 May 2024 from: <https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/publications/2009/demo/p95-09-1.pdf>
- Mararike, G. (2001). Revival of indigenous food security strategies at the village level: the human factor implications agricultural and food sciences. Environmental Science: Zambezia
- Mavhura B & Mucherera, E. (2020). Flood survivors' perspectives on vulnerability reduction to floods in Mbire district, Zimbabwe, Published in Jamba 9 March 2020, Environmental Science, Sociology, Geography, Jambá : Journal of Disaster Risk Studies
- Midgley (1994). Defining social development: Historical trends and conceptual formulations. *Social Development Issues*, 16(3), 3–19.
- Mupedziswa, R. (1995). "Social Welfare Services" in Hall, N. and Mupedziswa, R. (Eds.). Social Policy and Administration in Zimbabwe, Harare: School of Social Work, 81-105.
- Mushunje, M. (2006). Child protection in Zimbabwe: Past, present and Future. *Journal of Social Development in Africa*, 21(1), 12 – 34
- Mushunje, M.T. 2014. Interrogating the relevance of the extended family as a social safety net for vulnerable children in Zimbabwe. *African Journal of Social Work*, 4(2), 78-110
- Mushunje, M. and Matsika, B. (2023). Environmental Social Work: African philosophies, frameworks and perspectives and techniques. *African Journal of Social Work*, 13(2), 1-9.
- Ngcamu, B. (2023) Climate change affects vulnerable populations in the Global South: a systematic review published in Natural Hazards 4 July 2023, Environmental Science, Sociology.
- Nyahunda, L & Tirivangasi, H (2021) Exploring Humanitarian response strategies in the aftermath of disasters induced by climate change in Zimbabwe, Published in Development Southern Africa 28 December 2021 Environmental Science, Sociology, Political Science
- Nyoni, J. (2012). A 21st century collaborative policy development and implementation approach: A discourse analysis. *Africa Education Review*, 9(2), 289-307.
- Patel, L. (2012). Developmental social policy, social welfare services and the non-profit sector in South Africa. *Social Policy & Administration*, 46(6), 603-618.
- Social Welfare Assistance Act (1988) Social Welfare Assistance Act Chapter 17:06 Legislation as at 31 December 2016
- Ushamba, A., & Mupedziswa, R (2008). A generation at the edge of a precipice: AIDS and child-headed households in Zimbabwe. In Maundeni T, Levers, L & Jacques, G (eds.) Changing Family Systems: A Global Perspective. Gaborone: Bay Publishing. 312-327.
- UNAIDS (2013). HIV and Ageing: A Special supplement to the UNAIDS Report on the global AIDS epidemic 2013
- UNDP (2022) UNDP Zimbabwe | Annual Report, 2023 in Review https://annualreport.undp.org.zw/?trk=public_post_reshare-text, date accessed 20 October 2024
- United Nations (1948). The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)
- United Nations (2023). World social report 2023: Leaving no one behind in an ageing World. Access on 9 September 2024 from: https://www.un.org/development/desa/dspd/wp-content/uploads/sites/22/2023/01/WSR_2023_Chapter_Key_Messages.pdf
- World Health Organization (2014) Definition of an Older or Elderly Person. Health Statistics and Information Systems. <http://www.who.int/healthinfo/survey/ageingdefnolder/en/>
- World Population Prospects (2022) <https://www.un.org/development/desa/pd/content/World-Population-Prospects-2022>, date accessed 17 August 2024
- Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency (ZimStats) (2022). Zimbabwe Population and Housing Census report. Retrieved on 10 May 2024 from: https://www.zimstat.co.zw/wp-content/uploads/Demography/Census/2022_PHC_Report_27012023_Final.pdf
- Zvobgo, L, & Johnston, P I. (2023) Role of Indigenous and Local Knowledge in Seasonal Forecasts and Climate Risk Preparedness: A Case Study of Smallholder Farmers in Chiredzi, Zimbabwe, Published in Social Science Research, Environmental Science, Agricultural and Food Sciences, Sociology.