

## ABSTRACT

This study sought to assess and evaluate the impact of poverty reduction programmes in reducing and preventing disaster risk of Mangwe communities in Zimbabwe. The main objectives of the study were to:

i) Determine through individual questionnaires the development projects that have been implemented and evaluate their impact on disaster risk reduction initiatives and also.

ii) Determine impact that the development programmes had on resilience and the social and economic lives of individuals and the community at large.

Survey and participatory interviewing methods involving 150 participants were employed to gain insights from the implemented development projects. The following conclusions emerging from the study contribute to the emerging disaster risk reduction, disaster reliance body of knowledge.

Firstly, females formed the highest number of direct or indirect project beneficiaries, most of whom have been empowered through participating in development programmes. Secondly, most households in the district still remained entrenched in the cycle of poverty and badly exposed to all forms of hazards despite scores of developmental projects having been implemented in the area.

Thirdly, the education levels in the district were still very low and they greatly influence individual, household income levels, thus forcing them to live by one dollar per day.

Fourthly, community participation in project identification and designing is yet to be achieved, hence the limited success of such projects. The study recommends that:

iii

i) Small and upcoming traders should be granted access to basic education and entrepreneurial training to increase their capacity.

ii) There is need to establish banking facilities at community level so as to encourage community members to receive money from their relatives through formal channels while at the same time encouraging saving.

iii) There is a need to diversify development projects, such as education, governance, human rights, water, sanitation, health and infrastructure development rather than pool resources to agricultural related projects that focus on food security.

Projects need to be evenly spread in all wards so as to avoid over subscribing the same wards; at the same time encouraging communities to design schemes that seek to preserve and improve their economic, social conditions and cultural mechanisms. Programmes should not be prescribed for them.