

Chapter 1

Introduction: An Overview of School Social Work in Sub-Saharan Africa

Rodreck Mupedziswa, Noel Garikai Muridzo, & Samuel Lisenga Simbine

Background and context

This book comprises 10 chapters written by various academics from various institutions including the School of Social Work at Midlands State University, the Department of Social Work and Criminology at the University of Pretoria, the Department of Social Work at the University of Limpopo, the School of Psychosocial Health, Faculty of Health Sciences at North-West University, Africa University, University of Witwatersrand, and School of Health & Society at the University of Wollongong. Some chapters were written by either serving or former practitioners in the field of social work and social development. The book explores various issues in the field of school social work, including conceptualizing school social work, exploring issues, challenges, models of intervention, and prospects of school social work, with particular focus on sub-Saharan Africa. In this introductory chapter, the editors give an overview of school social work in sub-Saharan Africa as well as a broad-brush account of issues covered in the publication.

Overview of school social work

Social work is a helping profession that grew out of responses to social problems brought about by modernisation and industrialisation. In the context of Africa, the profession largely grew out of the need to deal with problems brought about by colonization and related challenges. Over the years, a number of professional areas of specialisation have emerged and been developed in response to the numerous issues and settings that emerge and play out, in people's lives and interactions. These include child