
The State of Social Work Field Education in Africa

Emmanuel Chilanga¹, Julie Drolet¹, Jill Hanley², Yassannah Nurudeen¹, Kamal Khatiwada¹, Godfrey Makoha², Uzo Anucha³

¹University of Calgary, Faculty of Social Work, Alberta, Canada. ²McGill University, School of Social Work, Quebec, Canada. ³York University, School of Social Work, Ontario, Canada

Corresponding emails: emmanuel.chilanga@ucalgary.ca; jdrolet@ucalgary.ca; mohammed.musah@ucalgary.ca; godfrey.makoha@mail.mcgill.ca; kamal.khatiwada@ucalgary.ca; jill.hanley@mcgill.ca; anucha@yorku.ca

Abstract

Social work is a growing professional discipline in Africa. Field education, or fieldwork, is a component of social work education that enables students to apply their classroom learning to practice in the field. It has been argued that social work educators in many African countries focus on classroom theoretical instruction with limited attention to field education. The Transforming Field Education Landscape (TFEL) project is a partnership project that is conducting a study to understand the current state of social work field education in the African continent. This partnership brings together partners including post-secondary institutions in Ethiopia, Kenya, Eswatini, as well as international social work professional organizations. In the study, African social work education coordinators, directors, and heads of departments from undergraduate and graduate social work programs were invited to complete one survey per post-secondary institution. The purpose of the study was to understand social work field education placement models, policies, local practices, and gaps. It will be, to the best of our knowledge, the first pan-African study of social work field education in the past decade. The presentation aims to share the preliminary results of the study. The research at the International Social Work Education and Practice Conference in Kenya under the track 'Field Education in Social Work Education track'. Implications and recommendations for social work field education will be discussed.

Keywords: social work education, Africa, field education

