



## RESEARCH ON UNEMPLOYED LEARNERS IN SOCIAL AUXILIARY FIELD IN LIMPOPO, KZN & NORTH WEST

Research paper by

Richard Machava and Lebo Thwala

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### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

One of South Africa's national priorities is to address the various social development needs prevalent amongst individuals, families, groups and communities. Social Auxiliary Work (SAW) and Social Work are recognized as essential skills that can address these important social needs. Social auxiliary work and social work are at the forefront of social development and transformation, particularly in traditionally under-resourced communities.

The need for social auxiliary workers in South Africa was identified more than two decades ago, consequently leading to its recognition and definition in the Regulations to the Social Service Professions Act, 1978.<sup>1</sup> These Regulations define social auxiliary work as "an act or activity practiced by a social auxiliary worker under the guidance and control of the social worker and as a supporting service to a social worker to achieve the aims of social work".<sup>2</sup> This implies that social auxiliary workers are assistants to social workers, providing support services and working under the supervision of social workers. Social auxiliary work complements and supports social work in all focus areas that serve individuals, families, groups and communities.

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<sup>1</sup> Mabasa, T C. (2010) Collaboration or Separation?: The relationship of social workers and social auxiliary workers at the Department of health and social development, Gauteng, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg South Africa

<sup>2</sup> Loffell J, Allsopp M & Atmore E (2008) Human resources needed to give effect to children's right to social services. Children's Institute, UCT. Accessed 15 September 2014: [www.ci.org.za](http://www.ci.org.za).

In 2007, the SACSSP recorded 1,455 fully registered and 2,077 conditionally registered (trainee) social auxiliary workers.<sup>3</sup> Requirements to train a potential Social Auxiliary Worker is a Grade 10 or an equivalent certificate or an NQF level 3 qualification. SAW's are trained over a period of one-year. Learners can enroll at any of the Health and Welfare SETA (HWSETA) accredited Social Auxiliary Work FETC training providers.

## AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the study are:

- To estimate the number of unemployed social auxiliary workers in LP,KZN & NW;
- To compare provincial unemployment distributions amongst SAW's

## METHODOLOGY

Databases were obtained from two different sources. In Kwa-Zulu Natal, the SAW graduates database was obtained from a HWSETA accredited Social Auxiliary Work FETC training provider. While for the North West and Limpopo provinces, databases were obtained from provincial SAW coordinators. To determine the number of unemployment amongst SAW graduates in KZN and NW, graduates were contacted telephonically and asked about their employment status. Those that indicated that they were employed were excluded from the analysis. The database from Limpopo only contained unemployed SAWs and there was no need to contact them.

## RESULTS

Table 1: Number of unemployed Social auxiliary workers in NW, LP & KZN

Province	Gender		Disability		Total
	Female	Male	No	Yes	
KZN	*	*	*	*	67
LP	166	82	244	5	497
NW	121	55	*	*	176
<b>Total</b>	<b>287</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>244</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>740</b>

\*Data not captured

The table 1 above shows the number of unemployed Social Auxiliary Workers in the provinces of Kwa-Zulu Natal, Limpopo and North West. The result shows that, out of the data captured, there was a total of 740 unemployed Social Auxiliary workers in the three provinces. Out of the unemployed workers, 67 were from Kwa-Zulu Natal, 497 from the Limpopo province and 176 were from the North West province. Two-hundred and eight-seven of the workers

<sup>3</sup> South African Council for Social Service Professions (2008) Social Auxiliary Work Learning programme, Pretoria South Africa. Accessed 15 September 2014 <http://www.sacssp.co.za/website/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/SAW-NQF-level-4-Qualification.pdf>

were female and the rest of the 137 were males. Only five of the unemployed workers had a disability and were all from Limpopo.

Provincially, females were found to be the majority of the unemployed workers. In Limpopo, out of the 497 unemployed workers 166 of them were female and 82 of them were male. In the North West out of the 176 unemployed workers, 121 were female workers and 55 of them were male.

## CONCLUSION

The results generally indicated that there are Social Auxiliary Workers that are unemployed. Limpopo had the highest number of unemployed workers. Considering socio economic factors in South Africa the number of unemployed SAW workers was to be expected, however more needs to be done in the Limpopo and Kwa-Zulu Natal provinces. It is recommend that there be an effective employment system of SAW's in the provinces of Limpopo and North West. This would be a possible way to reduce the high numbers of unemployed SAW's.

## REFERENCES

Loffell J, Allsopp M & Atmore E (2008) Human resources needed to give effect to children's right to social services. Children's Institute, UCT. Accessed 15 September 2014 [www.ci.org.za](http://www.ci.org.za).

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