



Exploring Practical Strategies for Promoting Youth Voluntary Participation in Rural Community Development: The Case of Mutoko District, Zimbabwe

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ABSTRACT Youth volunteering has become a vital tool for development in recent years. Worsening challenges that afflict communities such as HIV/AIDS, Unemployment and poverty, among others have increased the demand for volunteers. However, despite this high demand for volunteers, voluntary participation of youth is decreasing. Yet, it is not clear why this is happening. Consequently, failure to address this problem might deepen poverty, youth irresponsibility and curtail development efforts particularly in developing communities. This paper explored strategies which can be implemented to increase youth voluntary participation in Mutoko District. A qualitative approach involving focus group discussions and individual interviews was employed. Youth participants were selected using a multistage stratified random sampling technique. The qualitative data was analysed using the thematic system and matrix ranking technique. Results indicated that the strategies for promoting volunteering varied with geographical locations and gender. It was therefore deduced that strategies for volunteering must be crafted taking into consideration gender and distance from the urban area. The need for target oriented strategies was therefore apparent.