

**Poverty Alleviation Strategy:
Engagement of Indigenous Community-based Groups as
Assets towards Community Development**

J.C. Makhubele¹ and M.L. Shirindi¹

**¹*Social Work Department, University of Limpopo, School of Social Science,
Private Bag X 1106, Sovenga, 0722, South Africa
Telephone: +27 (0)15 268 2291, Facsimile: +27 (0) 15 268 3636,
E-mail: Jabulani.makhubele@ul.ac.za***

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ABSTRACT African people have harnessed various coping mechanisms in managing taxing circumstances in their lives. The majority of people in rural areas are unemployed and poverty stricken. No matter how downtrodden people might be, they always bounce back to normality, expending effort to solve their problems, and seeking to master, minimize and reduce socio-economic challenges. The aim of the present study was to explore and describe how indigenous community-based groups can be effectively engaged as a poverty alleviation strategy. Objectives of the study were to establish which strategies are used to engage community members in developmental projects, and how communities are engaged in decision making processes for developmental purposes. The researchers used a qualitative exploratory research design. A purposive sampling technique was used to select sixty Black African women, age ranges from 18-60 years, irrespective of marital status. The NVivo program was used to manage and organize qualitative data. The responses were transcribed, and translated into English as interviews were held in Northern Sotho. Focus group interviews were held with five groups (N=50) of ten women living in Dikgale, and also in-depth interviews (N=10) were conducted. Indigenous Community-based groups were found to be one of the most empowering community groupings for women living in rural areas and they enhance self-reliance, personal initiative and personal responsibility. There is a need to effectively harness, harmonise and rationalise indigenous community based groups within their indigenous cultures and successful realisation of community development goals and objectives requires the identification and working together with these groups.