

Indigenous Social Protection in Africa: Pathways to Resilience and Sustainable Development

Zitha Mokomane, Department of Sociology, University of Pretoria

Zitha.Mokomane@up.ac.za

Abstract

Resilience as a concept has increasingly become a central theme in the discourse on and sustainable development. In Africa, this concept has found in expression in various regional, subregional and national commitments, initiatives and other blueprints aimed at enhancing socioeconomic development and progress towards the achievement of the goals of the United Nations Agenda 2030. This paper argues that while indigenous social protection systems such as the family has the potential to contribute to the individual and societal resistance, these systems have been largely ignored in the sustainable development discourse. To this end, the paper, draws on existing literature to demonstrate how the extended family – one of the long standing indigenous social protection system in Africa – has the potential, through its instrumental and affective roles, to enhance the resilience of its members and ultimately contribute to sustainable development. The paper uses the evidence from the literature to underscore the critical importance of recognising the role of the family, and African indigenous social protection systems in general, in enhancing individual and social resilience for the greater goal of achieving the goals of the current 2030 Agenda as well in future efforts aimed at achieving sustainable development in the continent.