

The Impact of Mine Closures on Rural Population Dynamics: The Case of Zhombe in Kwekwe District, Midlands Province, Zimbabwe

Crescentia Madebwe

Abstract

The paper examines the demographic and socio-cultural impact of spontaneous population inflows into Zhombe following the closure of the Empress Mine in 1982. Data was collected using a questionnaire survey. Results of the study show that mine closures cause rural population change. The population directly grows through the assimilation of retrenched workers, and indirectly through potential fertility which is a function of the age structure of the retrenchees (25-40 years). 34 percent of former mine workers who settled in Zhombe were nationals, while 37 percent and 29 percent were from Malawi and Zambia, respectively. By 1992, 80% of households belonging to nonnationals were still not legally registered.

Keywords: Mine Closures, Rural Population Dynamics, Zhombe, Zimbabwe.