

Glossary

Africa-centred	Putting African values at the centre of a process, intervention or plan.
Africanism	The belief and act of putting African values at the centre of a process, intervention or plan.
Ageing	A gradual process of social, economic, biological, intellectual and psychological changes experienced throughout life. While ageing involves deterioration of, for example, the physical aspects of life, in an African perspective, the intellectual aspect increases with ageing especially from accumulated wisdom and lived experience that come with age.
Ba	A group of Black Africans often referred to by a derogatory name ‘pygmies’ (meaning short people). They consist of the Bambenga (Mbenga), Bambuti (Mbuti) and Batwa (Twa). Presently, they are found in the Congo rainforest in larger numbers, but also in other countries.
Bantu	African philosophy in Congo and other countries. In its original and positive meaning, bantu means people but more specifically Black people. It also refers to a group of Black people who speak a group of languages classified by that name. At present, this group is estimated to have 240 million to 350 million people speaking over 500 different languages.
Bato	African philosophy in Cameroon.
Biako ye	African philosophy in Ghana.
Bomoto or bantu	African philosophy in Democratic Republic of Congo.
Bulamu	(Uganda) – <i>Upenyu</i> ; (Shona, Zimbabwe) - valuing life and good health. The ethic is to not harm or kill.
Case management	A process of planning implementing, reviewing and terminating work with a person or an individual to address their social challenges.

Casework	Doing social work with one person or an individual and their family.
Child/children	The legal definition of a child is every human being below the age of 18 years. However, there are several other ways of defining a child from a social and cultural perspective. In most communities in Africa, a child is any individual who is still under the care of a parent or older guardian or who has not yet undergone initiation or rites of passage into adulthood specific to tribal groups.
Clients	An old term used to refer to people who use social work services.
Collective	A family, group, village or community.
Collectivism	Thinking or working as a family, group or community.
Colonial	As a result of or relating to foreign domination philosophically, mentally, educationally, socially, economically, psychologically, spiritually, religiously or otherwise.
Communal	Relating to or involving a community or part of it.
Community development	A method of intervention that focuses on long-term well-being and addresses long-term needs; it is often preventive, empowers and builds using community assets, opportunities and participation.
Community work	A method of intervention that focuses on short-term welfare and addresses immediate needs, it is often reactive addresses immediate, short and medium-term problems.
Community-based	Of, at or relating to the community level.
Community-led	Initiated by the community or at the community level.
Community	The third smallest unit of society made up of villages.
Critical thinking	Deep or higher consideration.
Culture	A people's ways of being; culture includes ideas, knowledge, customs, behaviours, art, law, habits, beliefs, religion and history among other aspects. Rather than being static, cultural is dynamic and changes overtime although there are some traditional, fundamental aspects that communities cling to in defining their identity.
Decolonial	Focused on removing foreign domination philosophically, mentally, educationally, socially, economically, psychologically, spiritually, religiously or otherwise.

Decoloniality	The act of thinking about or acting to remove foreign domination philosophically, mentally, educationally, socially, economically, psychologically, spiritually, religiously or otherwise.
Decolonisation	The process of removing foreign domination philosophically, mentally, educationally, socially, economically, psychologically, spiritually, religiously or otherwise.
Decolonising	Removing foreign domination philosophically, mentally, educationally, socially, economically, psychologically, spiritually, religiously or otherwise.
Developed community	A community that has all the tangible and non-tangible goods, infrastructure and services required to satisfy their short- and long-term needs.
Development	A process of ensuring that a community has all the tangible and non-tangible goods, infrastructure and services required to satisfy their short- to long-term needs. A developed community has all the tangible and non-tangible goods, infrastructure, human expertise and community services required to satisfy their short- to long-term needs.
Developmental approach	A process of development that prioritises preventative interventions and considers needs in the long term as opposed to constantly responding to short-term welfare needs.
Developmental social work	Social work that emphasises use of investment strategies to meet the material needs of individuals and groups and the adoption of practice interventions that lead to progressive, sustainable social change.
Developmental	Focused on ensuring that a community has all the tangible and non-tangible goods, infrastructure and services required to satisfy their short- to long-term needs.
Disability	A situation where a person with an impairment is not able to achieve full functioning physically, socially, economically, spiritually, psychologically or otherwise due to societal barriers.
Empowering	An activity or intervention that results in people having control over their lives, resources, aspirations and development activities.
Empowerment	A process of ensuring that people have confidence, willingness, readiness and control over their resources, aspirations and development activities.
Environment	Refers to the living and non-living elements that surround human life and include but are not limited to

	animals, plants, forests, fisheries, birds, water, land, sunlight, rocks and air.
Environmental	Relating to the living and non-living elements that surround human life.
Environmental social work	Social work that seeks to maximise use of the environment to address social challenges and maximise social functioning.
Ethic	Right or wrong.
Ethical	Being right or wrong.
Family	The smallest unit of a household from which persons derive care, protection and basic identity. A family in an African sense goes beyond the western view of a nuclear family to include extended family and kinship relationships. In fact, family also includes non-biological members who have been nurtured or cared for by any family member and have become life-long friends through specific rites.
Fieldwork	Refers to work, activities or learning that happens where social work is practiced. Just as in farming, farmers work in their fields.
Framework	A general outline of a process or product.
Gender	Relating to being male and female, with all the roles. Traits and expectations as constructed by society.
Gerontology	The study of ageing or older adults.
<i>Gimuntu</i>	African philosophy in Angola.
<i>Girmamawa</i>	(Hausa, Nigeria) – the ethic of respect. Valuing humanity, treating a person as a person, elders, parents, land, ancestors and spirituality.
Global North	Refers to the dominant races of countries of Europe or with majority people of European roots, including Australia, Canada, Israel, New Zealand and the USA.
Global South	Refers to the dominant races of countries of Africa, Asia, South America and Oceania.
<i>Hadza (Hadzabe)</i>	A group of Black people in Africa also known as the Hadzapi, Hatsa, Tindiga, Kindiga and Kangeju found in Tanzania and surviving mainly on hunting and gathering.
Household	The smallest unit of a community composed of people who live together and regularly share a meal.
<i>Hunhu, unhu, botho</i> or <i>Ubuntu</i>	African philosophy in Zimbabwe.
Impairment	The loss of a body part that leads to handicap and eventually disability.

Imperialism	Dominance, usually colonial dominance.
Income	Material or monetary gains from work, welfare, aid or savings; income is used to meet basic needs.
Indigenisation	The use of approaches, techniques and practices that a group of people own as theirs; also refers to the act of returning to what you refer to as yours.
Indigenised	Returned to what was originally yours.
Indigenising	The process of returning to what a group of people refer to as their own.
Indigenous	Of a group of people's own invention.
Individualism	The act of valuing the individual more than the family or community.
Individualistic	The tendency to value the individual more than the family or community.
Institutionalisation	An old Western approach to welfare that puts people in residential institutions to receive the care they need, for example, old people's homes, disability homes or children's homes.
Intergenerational	Cutting across or involving different generations of people.
International	Relating to two or more countries or people from two or more countries.
<i>Itorero</i>	(Kinyarwanda, Rwanda) – good members of society and a strong sense of cultural values and leadership skills. The ethic is to respect our cultures.
Justice	The quality of being fair, impartial and equitable in the treatment of persons or issues. It also includes the act of returning and replacing; apologising and reconciling when someone does wrong; as well as warnings and punishments for wilful acts of wrongdoing.
<i>Kagisano</i>	(Swahili) – good neighbourliness. The ethic is to promote harmony.
<i>Khoi</i>	Khoi are Indigenous people spread across Southern Africa countries, often grouped with the San people, who are of short stature and historically survived on hunting or gathering, moving frequently from place to place in small groups. Some of them still survive in the same way today.
Kush	The Kush speak a mix of languages from Africa and Asia Kush (later named Nubia) was a large powerful kingdom in present-day Sudan. The exact population of this group is not known but runs into tens of millions. They are mainly located in the Horn of Africa, which is the eastern part of

	Africa, but some are in the North and South. Some of their languages are Semitic, meaning they are related to Hebrew, Arabic and Aramaic languages.
<i>Kuumba</i>	(Swahili; Shona, Zimbabwe) – creativity. The ethic is not to imitate.
Land	Refers to the space owned by a family, clan or community where homes, farmland, livestock, pastures and cemeteries are found.
Livelihoods	Activities that give people resources to meet basic needs of food, health, land, education, clothing and shelter but also water, nutrition, communication and energy.
<i>Maaya</i>	African philosophy in Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea, Guinea, Gambia Liberia, Sierra Leone and Mali.
<i>Masarwa</i>	The San, also called the baTwa.
<i>Medemer</i>	African philosophy in Ethiopia.
<i>Musha</i>	(Shona, Zimbabwe) – permanent home in ancestral lands. The ethic is to protect and maintain permanent homes.
<i>Muthu</i>	African philosophy in Botswana.
<i>Mutoro (Tswana)</i>	Responsibility. Valuing that we have a responsibility towards each other and future generations and a responsibility to our environment and responsibility to <i>ukama</i> maintain relations.
<i>Mutunchi, iwa or agwa</i>	African philosophy in Nigeria.
<i>Mzima/phelele</i>	Holism/holistic. Valuing connection between people, their past and future, environment and spirituality.
Nguni languages	Nguni languages include Zulu, Xhosa, Swati and Ndebele, Hlubi, Phuthi, Bhaca, Lala, Nhlanguwini and Isingqumo. Nguni people are found in South Africa, Eswatini, Lesotho, Zimbabwe, Botswana, Zambia and Malawi.
Nile-Sahara people	The Nile-Sahara people are so called because the Nile river is important to many of their livelihoods while some of them are found in the Sahara desert area. The population of this group is estimated to be between 50 million to 60 million as at 2023.
<i>Obuntu</i>	African philosophy in Uganda.
Older persons	Persons aged 60 years and above
<i>Omundu</i>	African philosophy in Namibia.
Orature	Oral literature. It includes folklore, songs, stories, poems, metaphors or idioms, proverbs, gestures,

	riddles, judgements, histories, wisdoms, rules, methods, genealogies (family trees) and names.
Participation	A process whereby beneficiaries of community projects make decisions about their needs, priorities and interventions, in line with their aspirations.
Philosophy	A way of interpreting the people, the family, community, society, environment and the spiritual world.
Policy	Refers to written or unwritten laws, rules, regulations, procedures and pronouncements of families, villages, communities, organisations, country, continent or global community.
Postcolonial	Happening after colonisation – the time referred to as post-colonial is difficult to pinpoint because colonisation is multifaceted and has not ended in other facets.
Poverty	A situation where someone does not have enough basic needs of food, health, land, education, clothing and shelter but also participation, sleep, water, nutrition, environment, communication and energy, among others.
Practice-based	Focused on developing skills of practice.
Proverbs	Statements of wisdom that contain knowledge and can be a theory in themselves.
Reflection	Deep or higher thinking or consideration.
Religion	Refers to a system of spiritual beliefs; religions include African, Abrahamic (Christian faith, Islamic faith, Bahá'í faith and others), Rastafarianism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Pacifica and others.
Responsibility	The act of contributing to self, family, village, community, society and humanity.
Rights	Expectations to family, village, community, society and humanity.
Rural	A geographical area where people live in villages, depends on agriculture or mining.
<i>Sandawe</i>	A group of Black people found in Tanzania who survive mainly on hunting and gathering.
<i>Sankofa</i>	(Akan, Ghana) – look back to inform the future/History, looking back to inform the future, reflect.
<i>Shosholoza</i>	(Nguni) – resilience, remaining strong despite adversity/ resilience and resistance.
<i>Simunye</i>	(Nguni) – strengths in numbers, we are one. The ethic is to promote co-operation and collectivism.
Social development	Improving human functioning and relationships.

Social work interventions	What social workers do to solve social challenges, problems and issues.
Social work practice	The act of doing social work.
Social work	An academic discipline and profession that embraces and enhances long-held methods of addressing life challenges in order to achieve social functioning, development, cohesion and liberation using diverse African indigenous knowledges and values enshrined in the family, community, society, environment and spirituality.
Socio-economic development	Improving both the social (human functioning and relationships) and the economic (assets and income).
Socio-economic	Relating to both the social (human functioning and relationships) and the economic (assets and income).
Spiritual	Relating to the soul – this is different from physical or biological which relates to the body or material which relates to possessions.
Ubuntu justice	The acts of deterrence; returning and replacement; apology, forgiveness and reconciliation; and warnings and punishments.
Ubuntu or botho	African philosophy in South Africa.
Ubuntu social work	Refers to social work that is theoretically, pedagogically and practically grounded in Ubuntu.
Ubuntu-informed	Relating to the worldview of Black people of Africa from where they derive relational, communal, societal, environmental and spiritual knowledges, values and practices.
Ubuntu	African philosophy in Burundi.
Ubuntu	The name of African philosophy in Rwanda, South Africa, Botswana and many other African countries.
Ubuntu	The philosophy or worldview of Black people of Africa from where they derive relational, communal, societal, environmental and spiritual knowledges, values and practices
<i>Ubunyarwanda</i>	(Rwanda) – nationhood; there are many ethics including promoting peace.
<i>Uhuru</i>	(Kenya) – liberty/independence/freedom, the ethic is to liberate and protect African liberation.
<i>Uhuru</i>	Justice and freedom; valuing being free and independent from colonisation and injustice; valuing just laws and practices in relation to land, the environment, relations, economics and politics.
<i>Ujamaa</i>	(Swahili) – familyhood or communityhood, the ethic of promoting co-operation and collectivism.

<i>Ujamaa</i>	Community/collectivity; valuing working together.
<i>Ujima</i>	(Swahili) – collective responsibility, the ethic of looking after one another.
<i>Ukama</i>	(Shona, Zimbabwe)- <i>Harambee</i> (Kenya) – familyhood, valuing blood relations.
<i>Ukama</i>	Relations; valuing parents, blood relations and tribal family; social, cultural, spiritual, economic and political relations.
<i>Umachobane</i>	(Swazi) – sustainability, the ethic to do programmes that are sustainable.
<i>Umburi</i>	(Shona, Zimbabwe) – familyhood, valuing blood relations, the ethic of protecting families and marriages.
<i>Umoja</i>	(Swahili)– unity, peace and harmony, the ethic to promote oneness.
<i>Umucol/isiko</i>	Culture; valuing the way we do things (food, language, dress, knowledge, ethics and beliefs).
<i>Umuganda</i>	(Rwanda)– service to others, the ethic of helping others in need or reciprocity.
<i>Umunthu</i> or <i>ubuntu</i>	African philosophy in Zambia.
<i>Umunthu</i>	African philosophy in Malawi.
Unethical	Doing something morally wrong
<i>Unyanzvvi</i>	(Shona, Zimbabwe) – Professionalism, the ethic of acting professionally.
Urban	A geographical area where people live in suburbs, depend on manufacturing or service industries.
<i>Urithi</i>	(Swahili) – <i>Nhaka</i> ; (Shona, Zimbabwe) – inheritance; the ethic of protecting inheritance.
<i>Uroho</i>	(Swahili) – spiritual connectedness; the ethic of being holistic.
<i>Ururami</i>	(Shona, Zimbabwe) – <i>Ubulungiswa</i> ; (Nguni) – <i>Ubutabera</i> ; (Kinyarwanda, Rwanda)– justice, the ethic of being just.
<i>Usawa</i>	Reciprocity.
<i>Ushavi</i>	(Shona, Zimbabwe) – workmanship, enterprising, the ethic of hard-working.
<i>Utu, munto</i> or <i>mondo</i>	African philosophy in Kenya.
<i>Utu, obuntu</i> or <i>bumuntu</i>	African philosophy in Tanzania.
<i>Utungamiri</i>	(Shona, Zimbabwe)– leadership, the ethic of people-centred leadership.
Value	The importance, worth or usefulness of something,
Values	Things that have importance, worth or usefulness.
<i>Vazungu</i>	African noun for Europeans, Arabs and Asians, also <i>bazungu</i> , <i>wazungu</i> or <i>zungu</i> .

Village	The second smallest unit of a community which is composed of a few households.
<i>Vumuntu</i>	African philosophy in Mozambique.
Wazawa	Indigeneity. Valuing being black Africans and being people of the African continent.
Welfare	Also known as social welfare, this is government assistance to individuals in need so that they could meet the basic needs of life.
Western	Referring to or emanating from the dominant races of countries of Europe or with majority people of European roots, including Australia, Canada, Israel, New Zealand and the USA.
<i>Zunde raMambo</i>	A king's or community granary that is used to feed people during periods of drought or natural disasters.