

Takatso Sibanda, MSc

Email: sibanda2@msu.edu Phone: 619-798-0585

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/takatsosibanda>

Research Lab: <https://www.safersexmsu.com/graduate-students.html>

PROFESSIONAL INTERESTS

I am a community engaged researcher with extensive experience in development programming and evaluation. My research centers local insight & lived experience in the framing, practice as well as evaluation of wellness promotion initiatives. My work explores narrative inquiry methodologies such as film and creative writing in qualitative research. I am keen to contribute to community-centered initiatives facilitating access to affirming & inclusive wellbeing services.

EDUCATION

2024– 2029 **Ph.D. Ecological/Community Psychology**

In-progress

Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI

Chair: Robin Lin Miller, Ph.D.

Cognate: Development Evaluation in Africa

2022 – 2023 **MSc. Advanced Master of Science in Cultural Anthropology and Development Studies**

KU Leuven, Leuven, Belgium

Thesis title: Becoming who I am: The lived experiences of identity development among gender diverse individuals in Flanders, Belgium.

Advisor: Patrick Devlieger, Ph.D.

2022 – 2023 **MSc. Master of Science in Development Studies**

National University of Science and Technology, Bulawayo, Zimbabwe

Thesis title: The Influence of Socioeconomic Factors on the Psychosocial Health of Male Sex Workers Engaged in Civil Society Organisation Programmes in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe.

Advisor: Travor Murai, Ph.D.

2005 – 2009 **BSc. Psychology**
University of Namibia, Windhoek, Namibia

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

5/2025 – Current **Graduate Research Assistant**

Research Consortium on Gender-based Violence, Department of Psychology, Michigan State University

Project: A Review of literature on community-engaged approaches to studying gender-based violence.

Supervisors: Rebecca Campbell, Ph.D., Katie Gregory, Ph.D.

- Conceptualization of review topics and research questions
- Organizing and coordinating the Literature review writing project to identify and analyze effective GBV interventions
- Overseeing document organization on SharePoint
- Participating in consortium community brainstorming workshops using MIRO
- Data extraction, coding and analysis through COVidence
- Collaborative writing of literature review
- Assisting with digital media on The Michigan Victim Advocacy Network (MiVAN) Paper to Practice Project

9/2024- Current **Research Partner**

Salus Center: Lansing, Michigan, USA

Project: Exploring volunteer engagement processes in safer space practice.

Supervisor: Jae Puckett, Ph.D.

- Collaborative program design and implementation of weekly drop-in hours at Salus Center to enhance reach and accessibility of resources
- Facilitating community access to personal care, health and legal resources
- Training volunteers in safer space practice and ethics of care to enable welcoming and

affirming service provision

- Development of safer space volunteer engagement model and tools to enrich management of volunteers

8/2024 – Current **Graduate Research Assistant**

HIV & Sexual Health Research Team, Department of Psychology, Michigan State University

Project: Promoting Rights-based Evaluation

Supervisors: Robin L. Miller, Ph.D., Giovanni P. Dazzo, Ph.D.

- Assisted in the development and piloting of the co-researcher model which seeks to transform evaluation practice by centering local expertise, priorities and values in the evaluation of human rights programs focusing on realization of LGBTQ, gender, racial/indigenous, and disability rights
- Provided logistical support in planning for the 2024 pilot project in Zimbabwe
- Facilitated key informant interviews with various human rights activists to understand their lived experiences in human rights advocacy work
- Data entry and transcription
- Data coding and analysis through MAXQDA

1/2019 – 6/2024 **Research Assistant**

Ali Douglas Development Consultancy: Bulawayo, Zimbabwe

- Qualitative data collection, transcription and MAXQDA analysis for 10+ local and regional program evaluations for civil society programs facilitating access to comprehensive health services for LGBTQIA+ persons in Africa
- Assisted in consulting application processes
- Facilitated Medical Research Council of Zimbabwe research ethics approval processes
- Extensive project, team, and data management through various platforms such as Microsoft Teams, One Drive and Google Drive
- Assisted in compiling research protocols, study designs, and questionnaires

- Training survey enumerators to equip them with the knowledge & skills to collect quality data.
- Dissemination of research results to community partners to provide insight for informed decision making and program improvement
- Participated in community partner events to deepen relationships and collaboration

WORK EXPERIENCE

6/2018- 6/2022

Life Skills Facilitator

Dominican Convent School: Bulawayo, Zimbabwe

- Facilitated wellness and personal development through Head, Heart, Hands and Health life skills activities for grade 8 to 12 learners
- Provided academic support and counseling services to promote wellbeing
- Coordinated career guidance workshops empowering students to navigate potential career pathways
- Coordinated life skills camps to promote personal development
- Engaged in extensive project coordination

12/2015-12/2018

Psychosocial Support Programs Coordinator

Baby Heroes Africa Foundation: Bulawayo, Zimbabwe

- Assisted with maternal and neonatal health needs assessment research at 5 hospitals in Bulawayo and Matabeleland South to identify gaps in health care services
- Designed, implemented and managed the “Siza Ngothando” Psychosocial Support Initiative at Mpilo, Lady Rodwell and Maphisa hospitals to alleviate some of the unique challenges faced by preterm families
- Facilitated support groups and coordinated sexual reproductive health workshops for preterm mothers to promote holistic well-being for both mothers and babies.
- Coordinated case management activities including home visits, nutritional or medical support to promote long-term well-being
- Fundraising; extensive project and data management

10/2010-Current

Founder

Lub'elihle Foundation: Bulawayo, Zimbabwe

- Designed, implemented and coordinated a wellness program for adolescent girls and young women based on the Head, Heart, Hands and Health model to foster personal development, leadership, and well-being
- Coordinated resource mobilization processes
- Facilitated over 30 life skills workshops to foster personal development.
- Coordinated sexual reproductive health & rights workshops to raise awareness and facilitate access to healthcare services
- Planned 15+ field trips for inspiration and experiential learning
- Facilitated 15+ support groups to foster sustained peer support
- Provided psychosocial support using systemic approach
- Provided career guidance, coordinated career development workshops to equip participants with skills & knowledge, for navigating potential career pathways

9/2009-12/2013

Programs Officer

Contact Family Counseling Center: Bulawayo, Zimbabwe

- Provided systemic counselling & facilitated support groups for over 300 survivors of child sexual abuse and their caregivers to foster healing and community resilience
- Facilitated capacity development workshops that served over 200 people comprising police officers, teachers, nursing staff, court staff, parents, community leaders, and community-based organizations to strengthen key support systems for children
- Managed the psychosocial support fund worth USD20,000
- Coordinated case management activities including home and school visits to sustain ongoing support

- Collaborated with Ministry of Education and 15 schools in managing the “Give a Voice” learner focused child sexual abuse awareness, prevention and advocacy project
- Coordinated 6 life skills camps for 75 child sexual abuse survivors to empower participants with personal development tools
- Coordinated employee wellness program to promote wellbeing and address burnout

EVALUATION CONSULTANCY EXPERIENCE

- 2024 Miller, R. L., (Lead Evaluator) Dazzo, G. P., (Lead Evaluator) & **Sibanda, T.** (Co-Evaluator). *Pilot study*. Funded by Global Equality Fund. \$20,000. June (2024). **Project Title:** Promoting Rights-based Evaluation: The Co-researcher model pilot study, Zimbabwe.
- 2022 Sithole, M. (PI) & **Sibanda, T.** (co-PI). *Needs Assessment*. Funded by Aids Fonds. \$10,000. August to October (2022). **Project Title:** Love Alliance Capacity Needs Assessment for South Africa, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Kenya, Uganda, Burundi, Nigeria, Burkina Faso, Egypt and Morocco local partners.
- 2022 Sithole, M. (Lead Evaluator) & **Sibanda, T.** (Co-Evaluator). *Evaluation*. Funded by Aids Fonds. \$15 000. Jan (2022) to June (2022). **Project Title:** Hands Off II: Sex work, violence and HIV in Southern Africa: exploring the impact of the Hands Off II intervention on changes in the level of experienced violence and the number of new HIV infections in sex work communities, Bulawayo and Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe.
- 2021 Sithole, M. (PI) & **Sibanda, T.** (co-PI). *Model Documentation*. Funded by the Sexual Rights Centre. \$3000. December (2021). **Project Title:** Documentation of the SRC Mentorship Model, Bulawayo, Zimbabwe.

- 2021 Sithole, M. (PI) & **Sibanda, T.** (co-PI). *Needs Assessment*. Funded by the Sexual Rights Centre. \$ 3000. September (2021). **Project Title:** Needs Assessment study End of term and Impact Evaluation of the Going the Last Mile for HIV Control, Bulawayo and Gweru, Zimbabwe.
- 2021 **Sibanda, T.** (PI). *Needs Assessment*. Funded by An Association of LGBTI People in Zimbabwe (GALZ). \$1000. May (2021). **Project Title:** Social inclusion, civic and political participation among LGBTQI+ communities in Zimbabwe.
- 2021 Sithole, M. (PI), Maphosa, M., (co-PI), Ndlovu, N., (co-PI) & **Sibanda, T.** (co-PI). *Validation*. January-April (2021), funded by the Catholic Relief Services (CRS). \$5000. **Project Title:** Validation of the Zimbabwe Employment Market Opportunity Analysis (ZEMOA) for Adolescent Girls and Young Women.
- 2020 Sithole, M. (Lead Evaluator) & **Sibanda, T.** (Co-Evaluator). *Evaluation*. Funded by the Sexual Rights Centre December (2020). \$3000. **Project Title:** End of term and impact Evaluation for Social and Economic Empowerment (SEE) Project for Men who have sex with Men (MSM) and Transgender persons, Bulawayo, Zimbabwe.
- 2020 Sithole, M. (PI), Dube, N, M. (PI) & **Sibanda, T.** (co-PI). *Strategic framework development*. Funded by the Ministry of Environment, Climate, Tourism and Hospitality. \$8000. July to September (2020). **Project Title:** Development of Monitoring and Evaluation Framework for the National Climate Change Learning Strategy.
- 2020 Sithole, M. (PI), Maphosa, M., (co-PI), Ndlovu, N., (co-PI) & **Sibanda, T.** (co-PI). *Operational study*. Funded by Sexual Rights Centre. \$6000 June to August (2020). **Project Title:** Operational Research on Use and Access to Pre-exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) by Sex Workers in Zimbabwe.

2019 Sithole, M. (PI) & **Sibanda, T.** (co-PI). *Needs assessment*. Funded by the Sexual Rights Centre. July (2019). \$3000. **Project Title:** Needs Assessment study Rapid Assessment of Livelihood Options, Viable Sources of Income and benchmarking the nature and levels of conflict among MSM and Transgender Communities in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe.

RESEARCH MANUSCRIPTS IN PROGRESS

Sibanda, T. Exploring the Made in Africa Evaluation Framework and its potential contributions to contemporary evaluation approaches in community psychology in Africa and globally.

Sibanda, T. The Partial Insider: Piloting the Co-researcher model within the Promoting Rights-Based Evaluation Framework in Zimbabwe.

Sibanda, T. Becoming: An ethnography of identity development among gender-diverse persons in Flanders, Belgium.

Sibanda, T. It's not easy money: Socioeconomic factors and psychosocial health-A qualitative study on male sex workers in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe.

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Sibanda, T. *It's not easy money*, Socioeconomic Factors and Psychosocial Health: A Qualitative Study on Male Sex Workers in Bulawayo Zimbabwe. Society for Community Research and Action (SCRA, Division 27 of the American Psychological Association) 20th Biennial Conference, June 17-21, 2025, Michigan State University.

Sibanda, T. The Partial Insider: Piloting the Co-researcher model within the Promoting Rights-Based Evaluation Framework. Center for Culturally Responsive Evaluation and Assessment (CREA) 8th Conference, April 8-11, 2025, Chicago, IL.

SYMPOSIA PRESENTATIONS

Sibanda, T. (December, 2021). *The Influence of Socioeconomic Factors on the Psychosocial Health of Male Sex Workers Engaged in Civil Society Organisation Programmes in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe*. Paper presented at Sexual Rights Centre (SRC) Imagined Inclusive Futures Conference and Promoting Rights Inclusion, Diversity and Empowerment in Education (PRIDE) Research Symposium, Bulawayo, Zimbabwe.

Sibanda, T. (April, 2021). Navigating Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) access for sex workers during the COVID 19 lockdown. KU Leuven Field School: Saving (whose) Lives: Global Health, Vaccination and Mobilities in Pandemic Times.

AWARDS, FELLOWSHIPS AND SCHOLARSHIPS

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| 2025 | Center for Interdisciplinary Research, Collaboration, Learning, and Engagement (CIRCLE) Graduate Fellowship (\$5000) , Michigan State University |
| 2024 | Global Queer Joy Fellowship (\$1,000) Center for Gender in Global Context (GenCen), Michigan State University |
| 2024 | Graduate Office Fellowship (\$1,200) Department of Psychology, Michigan State University |
| 2024 | Graduate School Fellowship (\$500) Michigan State University |
| 2024 | Psychology Futures Fellowship (\$500) Michigan State University |
| 2024 | Office of International Students Fellowship (\$750) Michigan State University |

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| 2022 | VLIR-UOS International Master's Program Scholarship (20, 000 Euro)
KU Leuven University |
| 2021 | Promoting Rights Inclusion, Diversity and Empowerment in Education (PRIDE) Scholarship (\$2000) Sexual Rights Centre |

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT EXPERIENCE

8/2024 -Current **Volunteer**

Salus Center: Lansing, Michigan

- Manning reception desk during drop-in resource hours, to foster a welcoming and affirming space for all visitors.
- Engaging in conversation and answering questions about programs
- Facilitating access to personal care, health and legal resources to ensure that visitors receive the assistance they need
- Assisting with planning and coordination of community events

8/2024 -Current **Volunteer Advocate**

MSU Center for Survivors: East Lansing

- Providing trauma-informed advocacy, support and crisis intervention for survivors of sexual assault via hotline and crisis chat
- Facilitating resource navigation to enhance survivor well-being
- Participating in relationship violence and sexual assault awareness & prevention initiatives

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

- African Evaluation Association Society (AfrEA)
- MSU African Graduate Students Association (AGSA)
- MSU Women of Color Community (WOCC)
- Society for Community Research and Action (APA Division 27)

- Southern Women Academics Forum (SWAN)

CREATIVE WORK PUBLICATIONS

Sibanda, T. (2021). Healing. In R. Baya & P. Nyoni (Eds.), *Intwasa Short Stories Anthology* (Vol. 1). Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa.

Sibanda, T. (2020). Bekezela: Insights on domestic violence. *MOEA Women's Magazine*, (3), 7-8.

Sibanda, T., Dhlakama, L., Moyo, R., & Karuma, B. (2018). *Sworn to the Depths of Inyangani*. Multimedia Box Publishing.

Sibanda, T. (2018). The situation. In S. Muyambo (Ed.), *One Poem 2020 Survivor Edition Anthology*. Tsonga Mukololo Publications.