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**GENDER, EXTERNAL MIGRATION AND RURAL LIVELIHOODS IN
MANGWE DISTRICT: A CASE OF EMPANDENI WARD 1 BY**

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**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT THE
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ABSTRACT

The study seeks to establish the consequences of male migration to South Africa and Botswana on the livelihood and reproductive lives of women in Empaneni area. Focus is on the remittance behaviour and its implications on the household well-being as well as the gendered implications of migration on decision making. The study uses a qualitative case study design so as to get detail on the experiences of women on the matter. Focus group discussions, key informant interviews and face to face interviews are used for data collection purposes. In the study 10 percent of the total number of households is purposively sampled to form the sample size. It emanates from the study that male migration is driven by economic factors such as unemployment, lack of education and crimes. The study reveals that male migration alters gender roles. Specifically, women are now doing traditionally male dominated gender roles as a result of migration. The findings of the study reveal that the continued devaluation of the South Africa Rand has reduced the purchasing power of remittances in the area. Migration also increases vulnerability of women to HIV infection and other Sexually Transmitted Infections. However migration is still broadly acknowledged as one of the most important sustainable livelihood strategies adopted by individuals, households or communities to enhance their well-being. Given the collapse of rain fed agriculture in sustaining the livelihoods of households in the area, there is need to expand irrigation schemes in the area so as to improve household food security and purchasing power. There is also need by government and non-state actors to promote livelihoods diversification in the area into activities that do not necessarily demand rainfall like crops. It is also integral for researchers to focus on rural women and livelihoods in the context of migration and HIV/AIDS. This will play a cardinal role in generating context specific information that may go far in the formulation of pro-rural women policies.

Key words: Male migration, household, livelihoods, well-being