

1.2 Abstract of the Proposed Research Project

The abstract must be a maximum of 300 words and suitable for public dissemination. Your abstract must follow the following structure: Background, problem, research question and objective, methodology, and potential impact.

Note: This abstract (not the full proposal) will be translated in French or English and made available for unilingual reviewers in order to facilitate group discussion in the review process. Please note that your full application will be assigned for evaluation to reviewers who are proficient in the language of your application.

This proposal aims to address key issues related to the precarity of women in rural areas during the COVID-19 pandemic as a starting point for post COVID-19 rebuilding. It seeks to document and explore women lives before and during the pandemic to identify trends and triggers that elevate or depreciate the livelihoods and health statuses. The project will use this analysis, which we associate with the application of a 'peoples science' action approach, to first explore a series of strategies and actions to enhance prevention both the health and livelihood spheres. We will explore dependencies both on the state and the biomedical model and how these might be transformed into more locally sustain approaches and strategies so that future external shocks and distance, such as pandemics, might be better managed by and for women. But the work will go further than this by exploring how new and innovative approaches and strategies, developed through the 'co-production' of solutions and action by local women and other stakeholders and partners might "rebuild better", especially in the field of public health and livelihood strategies. The positive attitude of women to vaccination in rural areas, despite the appalling failings of the state during the pandemic, is indicative of the desire and capacity of women to ukuvula isango, while men remain more hesitant and resistant. We believe there is considerable opportunity here for the spirit of ukuvula isango to build on the community engagement of the vaccination outreach programme and extent that spirit to other spheres.