























micro-foundation approach (Coetzee, 1996) to development practice in informal settlements. In contrast to much of the development literature which focuses on political, economic and social processes at a macro level, the micro-foundation approach takes into account how individuals experience the way that these factors influence their daily lives. This approach holds as its basic assumption that all people value respect and want to be treated as worthy individuals. Development efforts should therefore help to satisfy people's needs for solidarity, friendship, leisure, joy and happiness and contribute to removing the "...dehumanising sense of meaninglessness" (Coetzee, 1996:102).

## CONCLUSION

The stories told by the research participants and reported in this paper vividly illustrate the effects of poverty and violence on the lives of individuals who live in informal settlements. In addition, their descriptions of what social workers should do and what social workers should be like provide us with clues about how we should be approaching social work in informal settlements. While the study focused on one informal settlement, it is hoped that the insights gained may guide practice in other informal settlements.

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