ABSTRACT

The research is a case study on a group of Zimbabwean remittance transporters who are based in the areas around central Johannesburg. These transporters are popularly known as malayishas. It must be noted that the study took place at the peak of the Zimbabwean economic crisis around the end of 2008, a period that was characterised by a boom in the remittance transportation trade. The methods of data collection used include key informant face to face interviews, focus group discussions and direct observations. The research is focused mainly on assessing the role of trust in the establishment and sustenance of relations in remittance transportation. The utility of the concept is therefore noted and explained in malayisha-client relations as well as between malayishas themselves. The study established that trust is not given but rather negotiated between different parties. The process of negotiating and building trust is not only context specific but it is also long and cannot be rationalized or generalised. The study also established that informal activities such as remittance transportation constitute an important source of livelihood for participants and must therefore not be taken as a mere survival strategy. The separation of formality from informality must not lead to marginalization or downgrading of informality but the two sectors must be viewed as complementary of each other.