

destroyed. Their mode of production is invalid. The future has to lie both in urbanisation, and in rural revival, built on very different productive forms. The Horn of Africa is in no hurry to discover these new forms. It may well be that in socialism some of the answers will be found, despite Markakis's doubts. The vast intellectual and economic powerhouse of the west will undoubtedly play a part too. The solution will still be African. Until then, Markakis's description will hold true: the "starving, homeless multitude were now counted in millions" (p xv).

Reviewed by Renfrew Christie, University of Cape Town.

Imposing Aid: Emergency Assistance to Refugees, B E Harrell-Bond, OUP, Oxford, 1986 (440pp, price not given).

This book is an appraisal of assistance programmes to Ugandan refugees who crossed into Southern Sudan in 1982. The publication of the book was very timely in view of the currency of refugee issues in Africa, and the rapid increase in the incidence of forced migration. The vast majority of refugees and displaced persons in Africa are in rural areas and had, until recently, escaped the scrutiny of researchers and academics. This book is one of those rare instances of such scrutiny.

Although many voluntary humanitarian aid agencies have rallied to help in instances of tragic involuntary mass movements of people, the assistance offered in such cases has rarely been questioned. Usually, questioning such seemingly necessary aid could be regarded as inhuman, since one would be asked whether one would rather see death due to hunger than humanitarian aid. What is being questioned in this book is definitely not the advent of aid itself, but how it is delivered and the extent to which the recipients are involved in decisions that affect their lives.

The title of this book is most telling and makes no pretence to neutrality. The stance taken, right from the start, provokes even the 'converted' to further question the benefits of aid. The perspective adopted is clear and the frankness is humbling.

The book is divided into two parts. The introduction (27 pages) gives a clear and succinct background to the study and clearly exposes some of the assumptions that have hitherto dominated discussion on the behaviour of refugees and responses to need by aid agencies. The introduction, therefore, puts the reader in a frame of mind to absorb the remainder of the detail.

Part of the book describes the 'patterns of flight' by Ugandans, the characteristics of their settlements and the demographic features of the refugee population. Part two of the book looks at the reaction of aid agencies and the impact of the delivery systems. In this book, the author destroys the major assumptions on refugee behaviour and exposes the subtleties of human need in contrast to the intentions of aid agencies. The revelations from the study could be quite disturbing to those who believe strongly in the intentions of humanitarianism and those who have given selflessly to this cause.

The book is of practical value not only to researchers (who could find inspiration in the innovative methodology) but also to practitioners and implementers of aid agency policies. For the latter group the book may be threatening in that it questions their selflessness. The writer, however, maintains that this was not the major intention of the book. It is stressed in several parts of the book that if cutting back of

aid results from the reporting of the research findings, then the book would have failed in its endeavour to alter the modes of delivery.

The involvement of refugees themselves in gathering data, and the focus on participatory methods, is an innovation which is both new and progressive. Dr Harrell-Bond is, however, very frank about the methodological weaknesses inherent in some of the methods of research used. This awareness of limitations of research brings credibility to the major findings of her study.

The appendices contained at the end of the main text (74 pages) are as informative as the text itself, especially the inclusion of the message of ICARA II which gives added value to the book and places it in proper perspective.

Although this book contains a lot of valuable research experience and findings, its length could reduce readership among the less academically oriented relief workers, most of whom would benefit immensely from the findings of Dr Harrell-Bond's study. Some of the detail makes inspiring reading to social scientists, but may put off those that seek clear indications of ways to improve their service delivery. Parts of the book express very personalised experiences of the author and these may not appeal very much to those that do not share similar frames of reference.

The above comments are, however, not intended to discourage readership but instead to indicate how intrigued the present writer was at reading through the book. It was a rewarding experience and the book is recommended to anyone who cares about the participation of recipients of aid in decisions about the delivery of assistance.

Reviewed by Stella Tendai Makanya, School of Social Work, Harare.

Conservation in Africa — People, Policies and Practice, David Anderson and Richard Grove (eds), Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1987 (355pp, £35, US\$54.50 hbk).

This book's stated aim is to take an inter-disciplinary look at the practice and policies of conservation in Africa. By so doing it hopes to shed some light on the important social context of conservation. The book provides a solid case for the inter-relatedness of conservation and human development and searches for a model that is complementary rather than competitive in approach.

Contributions from sixteen writers are split into four sections each with an introductory chapter. The chapters in Part One deal with past and present conservation ideologies in Africa; from the introduction of conservation legislation in the Cape Colony in the mid-nineteenth century to the present debates about the need for new forms of conservation policy. Part Two of the book considers conservation in the context of wildlife and game parks, and in relation to African pastoralists who make use of those same rangelands. Part Three looks at conservation priorities for rural communities, with chapters dealing with indigenous and imposed resource management systems. Finally in Part Four, conservation is considered in its present relationship to development and a plea is made for more local democratic participation in the management of the resources which are held 'in common' (soil, water, grass, trees, wildlife).

Environmental crisis and demographic collapse are scarcely new to Africa, despite the western media image of an Africa that has changed from 'Tarzan's Garden of Eden', a century ago, to the brink of a population and resource crisis today. The