

separating out the causes and effects of these different dimensions of differentiation are not addressed. Not until Part III of the book does Low begin to hint at this dynamic. Specifically he advocates a broader implementation of farming systems research which would more fully account for gender and on and off-farm activities in assessment of the production and distribution impacts of technological developments.

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Popular Participation in Planning for Basic Needs. Concepts, Methods and Practices. Franklyn Lisk (ed), (ILO-WEP), Gower Publishing, Aldershot, 1985 (277pp, no price quoted).

Those readers familiar with the Basic Needs Approach (BNS) to development will be aware of the fact that this approach divides basic human needs into such categories as consumption goods, service goods, employment and mass participation. Thus the Basic Needs Approach to development, as endorsed by the International Labour Organisation (ILO)'s World Employment Conference held in Geneva in 1976, assigns a key role to popular participation as a means of action for improving the human condition. This book is about the concept of popular participation within the general context of the Basic Needs Approach as endorsed by the International Labour Organisation. The publication is the outcome of a World Employment Programme (WEP) project and is based on research undertaken within the framework of the ILO - a major proponent of the idea.

The book is in three parts. Part one looks at definitions, concepts and typology. Judging by the tone of the book, there is no doubting that the authors are very much in favour of popular participation as a tool for development. Hence they argue, for instance, that popular participation is an important condition for achieving sustained economic growth and social progress and a fundamental goal of development in its own right. Thus, in a sense, they see popular participation not only as a means to an end but as an end in itself. As the authors put it, "Popular participation is therefore an end goal of development as well as a means of attaining more equitable development" (p17).

In this section of the book attempts are made to define various relevant words - terms salient in people-oriented development endeavours. The concept of participation is defined, as are other concepts such as employment, consultation, self reliance, decentralised planning, and decision making, to name the major ones. The concept of cooperation is also mentioned, and on this score the authors argue that popular participation can include cooperation between decision-makers and those affected by their actions, without any formal surrender of power to participants, although they may be allowed to modify decisions in order to retain their cooperation.

Part 2 of the publication is entitled 'Participatory Development: National Experiences' and it looks at specific country experiences in terms of efforts to incorporate popular participation in development activities. Countries looked at include China, Tanzania and Kenya, in that order. The China case study attempts, *inter alia*, to show how popular participation can be used to promote economic and social development among the entire population and how the Chinese government actually makes use of mass participation to achieve basic needs and other related socioeconomic objectives of development. The authors maintain that popular participation must be complemented by the provision of an appropriate institutional/administrative structure as well as a political system and socioeconomic framework that allows for the active involvement of the people in the decision-making process at all levels (p97).

Tanzania serves as an appropriate example since aspects of its experience are borrowed from the Chinese model. In Kenya, the Harambee (Self Help) movement is looked at, and provides some very useful lessons. The Kenyan experience, in a nutshell, shows that when there is a mismatch between the wider political system on the one hand and the administrative and institutional structures of the planning system on the other, serious problems are bound to occur.

What is interesting about the choice of case studies is that they represent, broadly speaking, two different political persuasions, with China and Tanzania (socialist) on the one extreme and Kenya (capitalist) on the other. The authors seem to suggest that the political ideology of a country is important for popular participation to be successfully effected. For the overall development process, the political dimension of popular participation is equally important for facilitating the attainment of socioeconomic objectives (p16). However, if the examples looked at are anything to go by, then it might not be far fetched to suggest that the application of popular participation as a method transcends political ideologies. What should be viewed as paramount is the government's commitment to the idea.

Part 3 addresses the topic 'Participatory Practice: Local-level Experiences'. This is concerned with attempts to translate the concept of popular participation into practice focusing on the participation of disadvantaged groups in specific development programmes and projects as a means of improving their well-being. In this section, experiences from different corners of the world, particularly Latin America and Asia are highlighted. Perhaps an interesting lesson to emerge from the Latin American case study is that the desire and demand for participation by disadvantaged and oppressed groups could unfortunately eventually be expressed in rather violent forms, especially when confronted with fierce opposition by the elite who dominate the decision-making structures.

Another case study is that of China. In this case study, participation of Chinese women in the development process is looked at. One of the main conclusions drawn from the case is that women in China had to struggle to overcome discrimination based on traditional biases and prescriptive behavioural norms in order to defend their rights.

Finally, participation is looked at *vis-a-vis* planning, and Bangladesh is used as a case study. A self-help canal digging project is selected for scrutiny and the experience here seems to show that without a significant degree of popular influence on decision-making it becomes extremely difficult to motivate the poor to take an interest in such projects. Indeed, the poor, naturally, want to know what is in it for them before they can be 'lured' into participating in such projects as canal digging.

Perhaps the greatest contribution of the book is that it defines quite clearly not only the roles of the state, the politicians and the administrators (and other technocrats) in effective mass participation but that of the prospective beneficiaries, the peasantry, as well. On this score, the book urges that vertically meaningful consultations be held between national, regional and local authorities and that horizontal communication takes place between communities with regard to the identification of basic needs, particularly where needs and interests might coincide. This will allow for the coordination of development efforts with implications for the saving of scarce resources.

This book is a must for those interested in the topic of popular participation, empowerment and capacity building among underprivileged groups. It is a well-thought out, focused, informative and fairly well-balanced work. It is good value for money.

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Five Hundred Million Children. Poverty and Child Welfare in the Third World, Stewart MacPherson, Wheatsheaf Books, Sussex, 1987 (226pp, £32.50 hbk).

"Four comma three million African children die every year", with little hope for improvement over the next decade; "98% of the deaths of children under five are in the poorest countries"; "99% of all maternal deaths are in developing countries"; "there are between 100 and 200 million abandoned and street children in the world".

These and other statistics abound in Stewart MacPherson's book, *Five Hundred Million Children*. Not that the book is a statistical dossier, but that such statistics constitute a question to which there are