

Editorial

A major concern for social development and social work teachers and trainers in the Third World is the need to generate and have available locally relevant material. Part of the historical legacy of this discipline in the Third World is the dependence on North American and European, particularly British and French, literature, theory and experience. There has been for some decades the recognition of the need to document our own experiences, and to use them for teaching and training, to develop locally relevant theory, and to inform policy and practice in the field.

It is, therefore, a duty of a development journal in the Third World to promote dialogue and discussion of issues of interest and concern to development practitioners and policy makers, and to reproduce these in an accessible form. Not only is the dialogue itself, especially where it brings together a number of people from different areas of interest and different disciplines, of value, but such dialogue can, if documented, contribute towards the development of locally relevant material and the development of theory. The *Journal of Social Development in Africa* has been concerned to promote such dialogue, with particular reference to Zimbabwe, and to the SADCC and larger African region of which it forms a part. An obvious way to promote this kind of dialogue is through workshops which allow a number of people to meet and discuss issues, gives speakers an opportunity (and the impetus) to think through and present papers in particular areas, and gives policy makers, academics and practitioners the opportunity to share ideas in both a formal and informal way.

In 1986 the Journal hosted a valuable regional workshop on Rural Poverty, Social Development and Fieldwork (Hampson and Willmore, 1986), and in 1989 a national workshop on Health Manpower Issues in Relation to Equity in and Access to Health Services in Zimbabwe (Willmore and Hall, 1989). Some of the deliberations of, and the main issues raised in, this latter workshop are addressed in this issue of the Journal. David Sanders' paper, "Equity in Health: Nine Years On", traces the roots of the health (disease) situation in Zimbabwe today to its colonial capitalist past and identifies the important place that community participation and accountability must have in the development of a democratic health system. While recognising that great strides have been made in these areas in Zimbabwe in the post-Independence era, Sanders nevertheless stresses the need for much more to be done. Rene Loewenson, in "An Overview of Health Manpower Issues in Relation to Equity in Health Services in Zimbabwe", picks up these issues of equity and democratisation of the health services by focusing on health manpower issues. Drawing on her own experience and research she summarises and addresses some of the major issues of concern raised in the workshop, and looks particularly at the socioeconomic context of health and the importance of class as a factor in the distribution of, and therefore the levels of equity in and access to, health services. In the third contribution from the Health Workshop, Samuel Agere, "Issues of Equity in and Access to Health Care in Zimbabwe", recognises the maldistribution of health resources in Zimbabwe, identifies a number of reasons for this, and suggests some potential solutions and strategies to rectify the situation.

In a health related case study in this issue, which looks at community perceptions and health related behaviour, Mike Bourdillon looks at behaviour related to hygiene in three

communities. He concludes that habit and custom are more effective determinants of behaviour than rational argument, and that habits are formed only through frequent and regular sanctions.

The Bourdillon case study is one of two case studies presented in this issue. While not the usual approach to articles in this Journal, these case studies provide information and interesting insights into issues of concern to development practitioners and academics and help to document our experiences and reflections, the importance of which has already been indicated earlier. In the second of the case studies, Brian MacGarry shares the experience of introducing a new milling technology, originally developed in Botswana, into a rural area in Zimbabwe. He looks critically at the process and the results, and once again attention is drawn to the differences between the benefits that promoters of certain projects hope to provide and those that actually accrue to members of communities.

In the remaining article in this issue, in what is a very topical subject in Zimbabwe (as in other African countries) today, Kola Olugbade discusses the role that tertiary level students can play in national development and national politics. He argues that in Nigeria, rather than being seen as a threat to those in power, students could play a very important and positive role in mobilising people and promoting real dialogue in preparation for the new society to emerge after the handover to civilian rule in Nigeria, intended for 1992.

As this Journal has now entered its fifth year of publication the Editor and Editorial Board feel that this is an opportune moment to ask readers for feedback on the Journal. You will therefore find a loose leaf questionnaire in this issue which asks a few simple questions about your reactions to the Journal. We would ask you to please take the time to complete this questionnaire and mail it back to us. For institutional subscriptions, including libraries, we would ask that someone be delegated to complete the questionnaire, basing answers on the general reactions in the institution to the Journal. If anyone is ready to give any other feedback to us on the Journal generally, or on ideas about how the Journal should proceed in the future, such comments would be very welcome.

References

- Hampson Joe and Willmore Brigid (eds) (1986) **Social Development and Rural Fieldwork**, Journal of Social Development in Africa, School of Social Work, Harare.
- Willmore Brigid and Hall Nigel (1989) **Health manpower Issues in Relation to Equity in and Access to Health Services in Zimbabwe**, Journal of Social Development in Africa, School of Social Work, Harare.

The Editor and Editorial Board of the **Journal of Social Development in Africa** would like to express their condolences on the death of Dr Daniel S Sanders, Dean of the School of Social Work at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and a member of the Editorial Advisory Board of this Journal.