

Editorial

Since its inception this Journal has been concerned to promote discussion about the meaning of participation and to promote participation as a *sine qua non* for development and for working with people in a way that assists them to develop their capacity to control their own lives. This issue becomes even more important as so many countries of Africa accept the necessity of economic reforms, and particularly of structural adjustment. Unfortunately it would seem such programmes often do not consolidate the necessary preliminary stage of stabilisation, and do not provide for the social programmes required to 'protect' the poor from the effects of adjustment, the so-called 'human face of adjustment'. It is therefore even more important that vulnerable groups learn to analyse their situations and decide on appropriate actions to improve them.

In the first article in this issue Salole describes participation in development programmes "as a tax". The article, "Participatory Development: The Taxation of the Beneficiary?", distinguishes between participation in and ownership of projects, noting that one does not presuppose the other. He rightly recognises the abuse and manipulation of the term participation by many development workers and organisations (including donor organisations), and looks to a reassessment of the meaning of the term - particularly if participation is seen as the key to successful development.

The concerns of the Salole article are picked up in a different way in the second article of this issue, Connell and O'Neil's "The Development of Training Strategies for Community Organisers in South Africa. An Overview of the Process". They describe an attempt to build a training programme which will train people to work in a genuinely participative way, to be facilitators in the development process. Although they focus on urban community organisers, they suggest that a focus on personal growth and self awareness, and on analysis of situations, would have general applicability for development workers. They note that in South Africa the training of community organisers belonging to oppressed groups must itself break through the culture of silence with the community organisers as a group, so that they in turn can do this with the community.

Okojie's article, "Achieving Selfreliance in Food Production in Nigeria: Maximising the Contribution of Rural Women", touches on a number of critical development issues, including the impact of structural adjustment

programmes (SAPs). She suggests that to achieve the objective of food self-sufficiency, rural women must be a central target for agriculture, but that SAPs tend to discriminate against women. Again it seems that particularly vulnerable groups are not assisted by these programmes, ostensibly introduced to help them achieve a higher standard of living.

Jackson's article "Company Policy on AIDS in Zimbabwe" points to some of the issues already raised by discussions of SAPs, particularly the issue of narrow economic cost effectiveness versus employer social responsibility, and short-term gain versus long-term investment. She makes a call for integrated and supportive policies at individual enterprise and national level. Nyanguru, in the final article in this issue, looks at "The Health Problems of the Elderly in Institutions and Homes in Zimbabwe". He finds that there are marked differences in mobility and health problems between the races and sexes, probably relating to their access to facilities, the resources they command, closeness to family and friends, and previous work demands on them.

Notes from the Editor:

1. The Editorial Advisory Board has been revised and a three year tenure system (renewable) established. The Editorial Advisory Board for the period 1991-93 is: Dr J Midgley (USA), Dr J F Jones (USA), Dr R Mutiso (Kenya), Dr P Muzaale (Uganda) (to be confirmed), Dr Kwaku Osei-Hwedie (Zambia), and Mr H K Oyeh (Ghana).

2. Evaluation of the Journal. As reported earlier an evaluative questionnaire was enclosed with Vol 5 No 2 1990, and sent to subscribers and those purchasing single copies of the Journal. Although almost 500 questionnaires were distributed only 17 replies were received! Although these questionnaires were generally positive some suggestions for improvements in the future, and themes for future issues, were received. However, the number of Journal subscriptions continues to increase year by year, as does the number of articles received for potential publication, and the citing of Journal articles in other papers. These things together with direct feedback would suggest a generally positive evaluation of the Journal.

3. As there have been some requests for thematic issues of the Journal, the Journal would like to invite articles on the following potential issue themes: Structural Adjustment (for Vol 7 No 1 1992, so articles please by September 1991), coping mechanisms and traumatised children, and AIDS (particularly in relation to Africa). All articles are refereed, so please allow time for this process to take place.