

socialised into certain behaviour patterns.

In another example of generalisation, she highlights the success of Asia in bringing down birth rates without anywhere mentioning that in China, the most populous Asian country, government policy under Mao Zedong forced the restriction of births to one per couple - a highly unpopular policy with no parallels elsewhere in Asia.

Despite such flaws, the book is a valuable attempt to chart the influence of international economic factors on women in the developing world. In helping to set agenda issues, it will be of particular interest for women's groups and policy-makers.

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*Urban Low Income Housing in Zimbabwe*, Christopher J. C. Mafico, Avebury, Aldershot, England, (203 pp, ISBN 1 85628 226 0, price £32.00).

The provision of low income housing is a problem that has confronted the Government of Zimbabwe since independence and remains largely unresolved. This book by Christopher Mafico is an interesting historical perspective to the provision of urban low income housing in Zimbabwe. It is divided into eight chapters. Mafico begins by giving a brief literature review of literature Zimbabwe's low income housing and also by examining some perspectives. Although he attempts to review literature on Zimbabwe's low income housing this is, however, done very superficially as the author simply identifies previous research without stating the conclusions of these studies.

In Chapter 2 the author examines the beginning of urban low income housing as a consequence of the process of urbanisation. The author also examines the measures taken by the colonial settlers to weaken African agriculture and therefore force the Africans to migrate to urban areas in search of employment. These measures included the Hut Tax, Native Locations Ordinance Act of 1906, Land Apportionment Act of 1930, Industrial Conciliation Act 1930, Native Registration Act of 1936 and the Vagrancy Act of 1936. The author argues that African workers were considered temporary visitors to urban areas, who were therefore expected to go back to their rural homes at old age or at the cessation of employment.

Consequently, the provision of housing for African workers was never taken seriously and as the author observes "the lack of a clearly defined housing

policy that housing lagged behind demand and overcrowding was a common feature." The common practice was for employers to accommodate their domestic workers within their premises and for industrial workers to receive tied accommodation.

In an effort to help us understand the problems surrounding low cost housing in Zimbabwe the author attempts to answer the question 'What is housing? He adopts the definition of the Government of Zimbabwe that housing is "a stock of shells for the provision of shelter against the weather and alternately process by which that stock is created". He concedes that housing goes beyond the physical structure and that it has a social and economic meaning. This is a very pertinent point that the author makes for the form and structure of housing is largely dependent on the meaning put to housing. The author makes a very interesting analysis of traditional housing in Zimbabwe and makes an equally interesting conclusion that "the traditional housing system of housing is very much a process intimately related to the users' needs and very much in the user's control". There was therefore no housing backlog in traditional society, the author observes.

The author is quite forthright in his evaluation of government policy on low income housing. He argues that government has not been as innovative and committed as it should have been to low income housing and that the question of affordability has not been sufficiently addressed, hence the mushrooming of housing projects which low income groups can not participate in.

He goes on to criticise government's policy of demolishing squatter settlements and thus, "merely disguising the problem and giving it time to become bigger and more complicated".

The author writes very convincingly and is able to articulate the weakness of Zimbabwe's policy on low income housing. One cannot help but agree with him that urban low income housing cannot be realised unless there is a major overhaul of the housing policy. The housing standards adopted are artificial and do not take cognisance of the social, political and economic realities of Zimbabwe. What need is needed therefore is an appropriate response to the problem of low income housing. Christopher Mafico's book exposes in a brilliant manner, the problem of urban low income housing in Zimbabwe and thus challenges policy makers to be more innovative in addressing this problem. This book therefore provides useful reference material for policy makers and social policy students interested in urban

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