

individuals and families in various settings. Given the very complicated situations facing many families in Africa and the limited social work resources available, good supervision would seem particularly important in providing effective services.

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**Adjustment in Africa: Reforms, Results, and the Road Ahead**, A World Bank Policy Research Report, The World Bank, Washington D C, 1994, ISBN: 0-8213-2787-9. Price: N/K.

Implementing Structural Adjustment Programmes in Africa has not been an easy task. This is clearly demonstrated in the report made on policy research by the World Bank. A study on adjustment was carried out on twenty-nine countries in Africa, and only six showed some improvement in macro-economic policies and stronger results in economic performance.

The survey examined macro-economic and sectoral policies and discovered that poor policies were largely to blame because they did not facilitate growth. Heavy government spending also contributed to slow growth in the economy. Those countries with better policies achieved faster growth, but generally government spending was high, increasing from the early 1960s and reaching a peak of 17% of GDP in 1988. Even though Africa suffered a fall in terms of trade between 1970-80, it was still expected to pay for its external loans. The report clearly demonstrates how loans and grants affect public income and how changes in terms of trade have an impact on private income.

The report reveals to the interest of the reader how the macro-economic situation reached a crisis proportion in sub-Saharan Africa. Scholars will be interested to see how the report explains the impact of debt crisis in our African countries and how this has led Africa to lose its access to commercial lending. The World Bank explains that the sub-Saharan countries can improve balance of payments by reestablishing a balance between income and spending. It cites pitfalls that befall Africa and goes on to explain some of the inappropriate responses that perpetuate.

Sub-Saharan African countries are supposed to have promoted in unleashing markets, accompanied by high rates of investment in order for competition to help them improve their allocation of economic resources. The report points out that the World Bank in 1991 had recommended countries to try to get price signals right to promote a good business atmosphere. The survey revealed that governments did not handle agricultural and trade issues satisfactorily but did well in reducing administration costs and in the rationing of foreign exchange.

Readers who reside in countries where structural adjustment is implemented and retrenchment is in process will find Chapter Four absorbing because it deals extensively with the problems of the public sector and lack of evidence of significant public enterprise reform.

The World Bank does not only study why and how sub-Sahara Africa did not succeed but also how reforms are paying off. The part on 'pay off' is of interest. It deals with positive issues in the structural adjustment exercise. The section will be of interest to those interested in understanding how macro-economic stability and improved prices for exports, especially agricultural exports benefited some of the countries concerned.

Most sub-Sahara African countries embarked on development programmes with an intention of eradicating poverty. This has been very slow in Africa because of slow economic growth, rapid population growth, and fragile resource bases.

Chapter Six clearly puts across reasons as to why a large number of people in Africa are poor. It also discusses methods of enhancing the capabilities of the poor and tackling poverty through increasing GDP per capita, by securing the right kind of growth and investing in social services. Since poverty and environment are often linked, this section will help the reader understand the interrelatedness of the two phenomena and what could be done to reduce poverty. The World Bank regards investment in people as the right kind of growth and they defend their view against the sub-Saharan African accusation that structural adjustment is hurting a lot of people. The defence given that structural adjustment contributes to faster GDP per capita growth is accounted here in a very defensive way to convince implementors to proceed with it. To a person who does not have an experience of the effects of SAP the argument is very convincing.

This World Bank Policy Research Report is an educative thesis for scholars, economists and other parties interested in understanding why Africa has undergone SAP, what went wrong in the process of implementation, where the poor are, what has been achieved and what next can be done if the exercise is to continue.

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**Uganda – Social Sectors A World Bank Country Study**, The World Bank, Washington D C, 1993, 196 pp, ISBN: 0-8213-2713-5. Price: \$11,95.

Uganda, a country once a showcase of Africa, has depreciated during the last three decades as a result of its declining social indicators. After reading the whole report one would feel total reconstruction and restructuring is required in all sectors if restoration of functioning is to occur.