

- Gay J and Cole M (1967) **A Study of Learning among the Kpelle of Liberia, The New Mathematics and an Old Culture**, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, New York.
- Goody J (1971) **The Domestication of the Savage Mind**, Cambridge University Press.
- Horton R (1967) "Philosophy and African Studies", in D Brokensha and M Crowder (eds), **Africa in the Wider World**, Pergamon, Oxford.
- Levi-Strauss S (1966) **The Savage Mind**, Chicago University Press.
- Mundy-Castle A C (1968) "The Development of Nations: some psychological considerations" in **Journal of Social Issues**, 24, 45 - 54.
- Mundy-Castle A C (1984) "Are Western concepts valid in Africa. A Nigerian Review", in S H Irvine and J Berry (eds), **Human assessment and Cultural factors**, Plenum, New York.
- Mundy-Castle A C (1985) "Human Behaviour and National Development: Conceptual and Theoretical Perceptives", in Olowu A A (ed) **Human Behaviour and the Challenges of National Development in Nigeria**, Ife, University Press.

**Measurement and Analysis of Socio-Economic Development**, Donald McGranahan, Eduardo Pizarro and Claude Richard, UNRISD, Geneva, 1985, no price stated.

**Social Indicators for Human Development**, Ian Miles, Pinter, London, 1985 £18.50.

The two books for review present very different UN perspectives from which to tackle the important question of how to understand and conceptualise development. McGranahan's book is a very technical work published by the UN Research Institute for Social Development, precisely subtitled "An enquiry into international indicators of development and quantitative inter-relations of social and economic components of development". Miles' book, though physically much smaller, has a much wider interest, for the author seeks to elaborate on how social indicators "can be used in attempts to assess and improve the human condition" (p. 1), and is a report presented to the UN University under the auspices of its Goals, Process and Indicators of Development (GPID) Project (see **Journal**, Vol 1, No 1, article by Valashakis and Martin).

McGranahan's book is not easy reading. Some 171 pages of figures, and graphs are consigned to annexes, while the text itself presents arguments for combining a number of quantitative cross-national statistics to form indicators for relative development. Correlation and regression, as commonly understood, are rejected as methods of statistical analysis in favour of what is called a 'correspondence system of analysis', a form of regression analysis that does not choose between dependent and independent variables. Some 19 key indicators are selected (e.g. expectation of life at birth, per cent adult male labour in agriculture, per capita energy and steel consumption, combined primary and secondary school enrolment) and charted on a 'development

profile' for each country. The work highlights the serious problems inherent in cross-national data comparisons, the paucity of quality data on social development, and the conceptual problem of using aggregated data to represent countries as the unit measurement and observation. The analysis can only use data for 77 countries, and from these countries only 11 indicators are deemed worthwhile (alongside GDP per capita), but conclusions like the fact that "the fastest growing countries in GDP per capita 1970 – 1980 generally had higher education levels in 1970 than their average development level" (p. 270) are interesting, but hardly surprising. Although McGranahan rejects the idea of a single index of socio-economic development he and his authors end by presenting, "for what it may be worth", they say, a table listing countries by five different methods of deriving a general index. One happy result for the study is that the correlations among four methods (all involving indicators used throughout the study) were fairly high, but there were large differences with the fifth index calculated as GDP per capita.

Miles' historical and descriptive work would certainly agree with McGranahan on the inadequacy of GDP type indicators, but his study tantalisingly points to other areas where measurement is necessary to understand human development, yet under present scientific methods cannot be done. The work outlines the social indicator movement's critique of GNP statistics, suggests new areas to be included in human development, looks at the limitations of present national statistics, and explores two new approaches to useful social indicator systems, that of social accounting and the social report. Although the work is descriptive (and none the less useful for that, for its 300 plus references are valuable in themselves) it occasionally is able to go beyond the mere collation of earlier studies: the best example is in the author's discussion of the 'social report' in Chapter 6. Here he links social indicators to a discussion of the process of liberation in Africa. Measurement of national autonomy and disengagement from the world economy, of democratisation of the process of production, and productivity growth are necessary but not sufficient conditions for human development in Africa, the author argues, for environmental and reproduction relations have also to be considered. Miles concludes his study with a valuable plea for demystification so that democratic choice can inform issues of social and human concern.

A synoptic perspective on the two books shows how the field of social indicators of social and human development is still in its infancy: one study demonstrates the shortcomings of cross-national comparisons of official data, while the other shows how the many issues involved in human development cannot be captured by present methodologies. Of the two, Miles is more accessible to the general reader, with a wider perspective, but McGranahan's

is useful in involving the reader in the difficulties of those who work in the field.

Reviewed by Joe Hampson, School of Social Work, Harare

**Integrated Rural Energy Planning**, edited by Yehia ElMahgary and Asit K Biswas, Butterworth, 1985 (no price quoted).

This volume is the proceedings of a workshop organised by the United Nations Environment Programme and the International Society for Ecological Modelling. As such, the ten country case papers presented reflect the stage of progress in the countries concerned, progress which is bound to be uneven. The difference in their approaches to development range from one which reduces the recipient population to the status of passive consumers of carefully controlled amounts of a specified form of energy (Senegal) to the engagingly 'suck it and see' approach of an Indian experimental/demonstration village.

Two of the studies describe well developed purpose-built village systems which integrate several renewable energy sources; the well-known Xinbu energy village in south China and UNEP project in Sri Lanka. The purpose of the workshop may well have been to review the applicability and progress of the 'Xinbu model', but the emphasis seems to have moved from 'integrated rural energy systems' to 'integrated planning of rural energy systems' and this shift will make the findings of the workshop more useful.

Three case reports deal with what are primarily desk exercises in national planning (in Colombia, Nigeria and Indonesia), while a couple more focus on the village use of one particular technology. I found those which reported on the integration of more than one renewable energy technology into an existing community or region the most interesting, and the paper on Dodoma region, Tanzania, sounds chords which will strike echoes throughout the savanna and semiarid regions of sub-Saharan Africa.

The 'Xinbu model' may only be possible with the degree of community organisation and the low income differentials of China. The Sri Lanka case study suggests that, apart from the cost of the resident expert staff, the capital expense involved in installing equipment for some of the technologies concerned can only be recovered in regions as densely populated as south Asia, and outside these regions this equipment could hardly be adequately maintained. This applies to all but the simplest solar photovoltaic systems and possibly to the community use of a network of biogas digesters.