

Editorial

The level of analysis presented in the different papers of this issue of the journal is varied, and the only point of commonality is that of the four papers' explicit reference to African examples either in terms of country (Kenya, Zimbabwe) or of some of the continent's social problems (urbanisation), or in terms of its ability to solve these kinds of problems (social services in rural areas). A new feature is that of a forum for expanded reviews, entitled Review Articles.

In the paper entitled "Rural Growth Points in Zimbabwe" Wekwete looks at an often neglected aspect of rural development, that of the stimulation and growth of rural settlements through a variety of means — central and local government policy, planning rural investments, along with complementary activities. In examining the Zimbabwean example, he concludes that it is important to strike a balance between promoting locally based activities and those coming from outside, and argues that genuine development of rural growth points can only be meaningful where there is an improvement of rural incomes and where capital flows allow for greater access and utilisation of government social services.

Patel's paper, "Some Issues of Urbanisation and Development in Zimbabwe", complements Wekwete's paper by focusing on the historical development of the problem of urbanisation in Africa, and particularly in Zimbabwe, and the rapid rise in urbanisation which has taken place in the latter half of the century. Patel notes that attempts to deal with problems of rapid urbanisation, the primacy of a few larger cities, and overurbanisation in Zimbabwe are being made — specifically in relation to redressing the rural-urban imbalances in the distribution of services and resources. One such strategy is that of growth points and service centres. However she also sees that more investment is required in urban areas if the former racial imbalances within the urban areas is not to be replaced by socio-economic divisions, and calls for more research to define the baseline data necessary to inform urban and rural development policy decisions.

Rural growth points may be one important vehicle for the delivery of social services, but Muzaale presents a wider spectrum of interventions, and designates them all as 'social development'. "Organisation and Delivery of Social Services to Rural Areas" is a discussion of the strategies of meeting social needs in rural areas following market and non-market criteria, and is thus a useful complement to Wekwete's focus on planning economic incentives. Both papers, however, recognise that the balance between equity

and growth is difficult to specify in concrete terms, let alone achieve. In discussing the various implications of a focus on rural social services Muzaale concludes by mentioning the necessary research agenda implied for social development education. His suggestions carry forward a previous set of proposals featured in an earlier issue of the Journal (Vol 2, No 1 1987), and as they focus on vulnerable rural households and the survival-systems they adopt, provide a useful and practical challenge to practitioners and researchers across all disciplines involved in social development.

Mulwa describes a development education programme from Kenya so as to illustrate in a practical way his theme, "Participation of the Grassroots in Rural Development". Readers of this journal will be familiar with previous analyses of the subject: Mulwa seems able to take the discussion forward because he describes both the theory and the practice of participation, the vision combined with the practical blocks and constraints. His apparently contradictory finding that participatory development is only possible where there is skilled and dedicated leadership leads him to conclude that effective leadership training is a central element of successful participatory development.

The two review articles in this issue of the journal offer critical examinations of two recent important books. Roger Riddell has written a detailed study entitled *Foreign Aid Reconsidered*. Together with another study edited by Ibbo Mandaza entitled *Zimbabwe: The Political Economy of Transition* they are reviewed in some depth in a new section of our journal, that of Review Articles. We hope that readers find value in this extended forum for book reviews.