

We need a fuller and more thorough investigation into the sociology of Shona sculpture. If this book provokes such a study, it will have served a further useful purpose.

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**The Gender Dimensions of Urban Poverty: The Case of Dzivarasekwa** By *Neddy R. Matshalaga*, Harare, Institute of Development Studies, University of Zimbabwe, 1997, 50 pp.

**The Gender Dimensions of Urban Poverty: The Case of Tafara** By *Neddy R. Matshalaga*, Harare, Institute of Development Studies, University of Zimbabwe, 1997, 51 pp.

These two short pieces provide basic data on household economies in two of Harare's high-density suburbs. Each is based largely on a survey of 320 households. Although there was an attempt to randomise the samples, it is not clear how the population, including those living in rented shacks, was established. The survey comprised a questionnaire that included such topics as household size, income, education, use of health facilities, food and accommodation. There were also questions on perceptions of poverty and its causes. The survey data were supported by informal interviews and discussions, from which some short extracts appear. But there is no mention of whether or how verbal answers to questions were verified in any of the cases.

The reports largely present descriptive statistics of the results of the surveys, paying particular attention to differences according to the gender of the household heads but with little attention to further analysis. The sample in Tafara is on average much poorer and less educated than that in Dzivarasekwa. As an indication of poverty in Tafara we find over half the children of school-going age are out of school, which is disturbing for the long-term future of the community. Around 60 per cent of men claim not to be getting enough food in both samples (slightly fewer in Tafara); 65 per cent of women in Dzivarasekwa make the same claim as do 75 per cent in Tafara. The author does not offer a systematic comparison of the communities nor an analysis of the differences.

Although the reports are limited in both data and analysis, it is useful to have such descriptive data on the quality of life in high-density suburbs of Harare. It is right that we should be disturbed by such data.

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