The African e-Journals Project has digitized full text of articles of eleven social science and humanities journals. This item is from the digital archive maintained by Michigan State University Library. Find more at: http://digital.lib.msu.edu/projects/africanjournals/

Available through a partnership with

Scroll down to read the article.
Book Reviews

Erratum: Volume 9 No 1 (1994) page 91:
Book Review on The Politics of Africa’s Economic Recovery by Richard Sandbrook, Cambridge University Press, New York, 1993 was mistakenly credited to Prof Kwaku Osei-Hwedie. The book was reviewed by Dr Bertha Zimba Osei-Hwedie, Lecturer, Political and Administrative Studies Department, University of Botswana. The error is regretted by the editor.


The authors explain occurrence of revolutions in the Third World. The central thesis presented is that revolutions in the Third World are caused by lack of legitimacy of governments in power due to lack of satisfaction of economic needs and denial of political rights to the general population.

Part One of the book is devoted to outlining the theoretical framework for analysing revolutions in the Third World: the concepts of revolution and legitimacy are clarified and the authors acknowledge the fact that revolutions also occur in societies where governments enjoy legitimacy. They further acknowledge that mere existence of economic deprivation is not a sufficient cause of revolution or else all Third World countries would have undergone revolutionary change by now; rather, when poverty becomes unbearable by the masses, the revolution is set in motion.

More important, the first part of the book is enriched by the four authors who present four different, yet complementary approaches to understanding revolutions in the Third World. Chaliand’s historical approach highlights issues of nationalism, ideology and the state, as well as the fact that the Third World has borrowed western conceptions of legitimacy which are difficult to uphold under Third World conditions once the revolutionary movement forms the government. Mason stresses internal factors as causes of revolution by focusing on political conflict among groups over unequal distribution of economic resources which causes government to lose mass support, leading to revolution.

However, such political conflict and resultant revolution against the government is as a result of Third World integration into the world economy which causes
dependent development and unequal income and wealth due to disruption of the traditional subsistence economy. Therefore Mason’s “internal factors” are closely linked to external factors making it difficult to clearly demarcate between the two, since the internal factors are a product of the external ones.

Foltz analyses four external causal factors of revolutions, namely instigation by big powers, primarily the Soviet Union; contagion from a neighbour who has waged a successful revolution; imitation by a local group of a revolution that has occurred elsewhere; the effects of structural changes in the world, i.e., changes in international distribution of power among the big powers, and changing economic and ideological factors. The last approach by Laidi argues that the ideology and institutions of Marxism-Leninism have been internalised by Third World groups to launch revolutionary movements and consolidate their power once in government.

In Part Two the case study approach provides a detailed analysis of diverse revolutions, each unique in its own way with common characteristics of nationalism and abhorrence of foreign domination, primarily western. The case studies are representative of different regions of the Third World, offer successful, on-going and stalemates revolutions, and are examined from different perspectives by various authors. The Ethiopian revolution is a classic illustration of interaction of Mason's internal-external factors, Foltz's external sources and Laidi’s Marxism-Leninism as causes of the revolution which overthrew the Emperor's regime. The revolution was due to modernisation through commercial agriculture which deprived peasants of land as a means of subsistence. This was compounded by drought, famine, inflation and the government’s inability to satisfy the needs of the poor.

Iran and Libya are examples of revolutions based on Islam, rejection of monarchical rule and subordination to the West or East. Therefore both internal and external factors explain the revolutions here. However, Marxism and Leninism as per Laidi are not relevant to these cases. Religion is not entertained in Marxist-Leninist ideology, yet in the case of Iran and Libya religion has been instrumental in the revolutionary transformation of both societies.

Sendero Luminoso in Peru is another case of a successful revolutionary movement instigated by internal conditions, primarily poverty. It has sustained itself without material support from external powers. However, although it has borrowed and successfully utilised the Maoist strategy of guerrilla warfare and adopted radical Marxism as its ideology, it has not been able to overthrow the incumbent regime.

The central American case studies of Nicaragua, El Salvador and Guatemala represent revolutionary movements caused by social and economic inequalities and oppression by undemocratic governments. Here again internal and external
factors come into play, plus the influence of Marxism-Leninism. But more important is the struggle between Cuba on the one hand, a role model of revolution for Latin America, supporting revolutionary movements, and America on the other hand, preventing establishment of radical governments. The Philippines revolutionary movements also stems from acute poverty among the masses and the oppression of the Marcos government. The legitimate government of Marcos was overthrown when it lost mass support.

The ANC of South Africa and PLO represent special cases of revolutionary movements. Their aim is not to transform the whole social structure but only the political system by giving power to the majority Africans and Palestinians respectively.

The case study of UNITA in Angola highlights an anti-Marxist rebel movement challenging the legitimate Marxist-oriented government. However, it has no revolutionary goals.

The main argument of the authors in their analysis of revolutions in the Third World is that incumbent governments create conditions conducive to revolutions because of their exploitative policies and oppression—but more important the use of force in response to protests and pressure for change by groups in society. In view of mass poverty and misery arising from structural adjustment programmes undertaken by most Third World governments and declining export revenues of the Third World, the potential for revolutionary upheavals are tremendous. Definitely, the authors offer a rich, collective effort on revolution and political change which is of considerable interest to students of politics and political economy.

Reviewed by Dr Bertha Osei-Hwedie, Lecturer, Political and Administrative Studies Department, University of Botswana.


The main purpose of the book is to offer a systems approach as a tool for social work and other helping professionals. Through the use of the systems-based model, Chetkow-Yanoov believes that practitioners have a chance not only to develop sensitivity and an ability to create links, but also to sharpen the understanding of how sub-units interact within a large unit. Further, the author demonstrates how practitioners in the field of social work, equipped with the principles of systems, can influence social policy through various processes. He also provides an opportunity to test the applicability of the systems concept to “a variety of micro and macro practice situations”. Unlike other authors, Chetkow-Yanoov presents the
system approach for social work practice in a down-to-earth fashion. He applies the systems and ecological concepts in various situations with ease and clarity. The intention is quite clear: to afford professionals of social work “in need” with some readily available material for use.

The book under discussion consists of eight chapters. The first chapter which is an introduction discusses the system and environment as concepts with various examples. The idea is to familiarise the reader with the necessary concepts and establish a basis for discussion. Chapter Two outlines a system-oriented model of social work, types of systems, various features of the systems and systems change. Chapters Five and Six examine systems analysis of some social work practice as well as a model of conflict resolution. Basically these chapters provide the reader with an understanding of systems, through practical examples of how to analyse a system and a representation of how to resolve a conflict in social work. The last chapter discusses implications of the system approach and provides a conclusion.

The author has written an interesting and useful text on the systems approach. The book is not a pioneering work on the systems approach, but the author makes a unique effort to provide abundant basic concepts and characteristics of systems to prepare the reader for multi-level and multi-environment analyses. The author demonstrates a comprehensive and studious familiarity and understanding of the systems approach. Perhaps the greatest strength of the book are the numerous illustrations in the chapters and exercises after every chapter. This aspect of the book creates an occasion for the author to move from the abstract to the reality level. This aspect also reflects a considerable pedagogical talent and skill.

While Chetkow-Yanoov has done an excellent work of writing such an easy-to-read book on systems approach, a reader well-versed with some background in the systems approach may find the book simplistic. The book would readily find use among students at Diploma and Certificate programmes, and at the pre-entry level to a Bachelor of Social Work. From the many examples provided in the book the author has displayed an abundant knowledge, but the treatment lacks the sophistication and depth for the inquiring mind at a higher level.

In another respect, the author tends to share a similar tendency common among many theorists of the systems theory, who tend to portray the systems approach as an “omnipotent” approach or as a “mega” approach through which all human situations can be resolved. Also that any human problematic situation can easily be disentangled through the use of systems approach. This type of understanding is not only misleading but dangerous especially for budding professionals. The understanding may not only create false confidence in the practitioner who totally believes in this “tool” for practice – but a sense of failure, frustration and disillusionment may immediately follow after a rude realisation that the approach, after all, is not an answer to all human problems.
The book is one of many on the systems approach but has made a definite contribution, which is to be welcomed.

Reviewed by Dr Lengwe-Katembula Mwansa, Senior Lecturer, University of Botswana.


One of the outcomes of the National Institute of Mental Health Task Force on Social Work Research is this edited collection of examples of the use of quantitative methods. Initiated by the realisation that only a scattering of social workers carry out research in the field of mental health, the Task Force analysed social work research articles published between 1977 and 1988.

The report found that although the use of advanced analytic techniques was increasing, the research tended to use "...quick, inexpensive and relatively simple research methods", for example, cross-sectional and quasi-experimental designs and samples of convenience. The editors argue that the increase in the more advanced methods needs to be encouraged because they improve the researcher's ability to study complex social problems and interventions while reducing the risk of oversimplification and inferential error. Hence the idea of stimulating further research development through this collection of examples applying advanced methods.

The authors of the papers in this volume assume the reader is familiar with basic research methodology, including descriptive statistics and elementary inferential techniques. The volume focuses on three types of methodological issues: measurement; issues related to the incorporation of non-quantitative variables in quantitative analysis; and issues surrounding the use of quantitative techniques to analyse complex social phenomena. Three papers are devoted to each of these issues.

The measurement of complex and abstract concepts used in social work is addressed by Nugent and Hankins who evaluate Hudson’s Generalised Contentment Scale; Kronick and Silver examine different software packages that can be used for content analysis; and Orme and Fickling describe the use of latent variable structural equation modelling. The papers on the analysis of non-qualitative variables using quantitative methods includes a paper on logistic regression by Morrow-Howell and Proctor; the application of log-linear analysis by Combs-Orme; and a presentation of event history analysis by Fraser, Pecora, Popuang and Haapala. Addressing the question of how to model complex social phenomena, Koeske describes moderation effects; while Coulton and Chow analyse interactions using regression techniques; and finally Streeter and Gillespie present an application of network analysis.
All the articles in this collection provide excellent examples of a variety of techniques and methods, and include illustrations from different areas, including family preservation and prevention of risks to infants. However there is a potential problem with the discussion about the relative merits of certain research methods and approaches over others. The editors tend to equate “good quality” research with sophisticated quantitative data analysis; this provides a relatively narrow perspective on the future development of social work research.

As the editors themselves point out, one of the problems with social work research is the lack of linkage between substantive theory and methods of inquiry, a consequence or cause of the much discussed rift between social work practitioners and social work researchers. Nevertheless, the solution to this problem goes beyond the adoption of more sophisticated quantitative methods, and calls on social workers to be exposed to a wide variety of methods, and gain expertise and sophistication in the methods that match most appropriately the problem at hand. This would significantly contribute to closing the gap between research and practice.

The recent contributions to the social work literature on qualitative research methods make a valuable contribution in this regard, as does the discussion about the relevance to social work of analytic approaches used in the humanities and social sciences (eg, the use of oral histories). Add to this the debates surrounding the “alternative research paradigms” in social work, for example, constructivism, feminist research methods, etc, and what emerges is a methodological forum that matches the type of substantive theoretical considerations one would encourage social work practitioners to consider.

Social work research should be responsive to the different settings and problems it confronts without being ranked as more or less advanced or more or less sophisticated. A fairly obvious example of this is presented in many African countries where the types of survey methods advocated in developed countries are not only completely impractical, but more importantly inappropriate. A different approach to research needs should be adopted, not one less “sophisticated”, but one more responsive to the entire context of the phenomenon under study. Quantitative analysis should not, and cannot, be the standard to which social work research is held.

Despite this tendency towards methodological elitism, this volume will be of considerable use to social workers who wish to increase their knowledge of advanced quantitative methods, and bringing such a collection together undoubtedly provides a contribution to the advancement of social work research.

Reviewed by Prof Christine Marlow, Fulbright Scholar, University of New Mexico, USA (on attachment at School of Social Work, Zimbabwe).

Effective action concerning AIDS is desperately needed. AIDS has been described as a misery-seeking missile, targeting the most disadvantaged people and the poorest countries of the world. The country of Zimbabwe has an epidemic which equals that anywhere else in the world. This fact can be appreciated whilst reading Jackson’s first chapter dealing with the AIDS pandemic. Policymakers would do well to give greater heed to the implications of the HIV surveillance study results quoted by Jackson and more recent figures such as Rusape’s HIV prevalence in pregnant women, a massive 46% in 1993.

But AIDS Action Now is far from being just a collection of erudite statistics. By contrast, the material is highly readable, interspersed with case histories, quotable quotes, cartoons, illustrations and photographs. The author has worked hard to organise her material with which she is highly conversant and to summarise and popularise relevant research carried out by others.

Sections on counselling and employment are areas where Jackson brings her considerable expertise to bear. Her section on orphans is a good starting point for anyone contemplating involvement in this area; her avoidance of “AIDS orphan” terminology is both intentional and stratifying. Her constant linkages of the epidemic to issues surrounding poverty and development help readers to appreciate underlying socioeconomic factors which impact on HIV/AIDS.

The book covers important national, cultural and individual factors relating to the epidemic in Zimbabwe and other African countries. In two comprehensive appendices, the author provides an annotated bibliography describing resources available and a review of organisations involved with AIDS in Zimbabwe.

Some important areas receive limited discussion by the author. Thus the important strategy of reducing HIV spread through the control of sexually transmitted diseases by the establishment of a national control programme, increasing accessibility to affordable treatment and the development of community-based awareness programmes are only touched upon. Another important though controversial area not addressed concerns the relative effectiveness of different AIDS programmes. Many AIDS programmes are expensive failures and some are actually detrimental and undermine community initiatives and coping mechanisms.

The section on traditional healers is helpful in understanding the relevance of traditional religion to the AIDS epidemic. It is a pity that the specific contribution of Christian-based AIDS initiatives to the epidemic has not also been sympathetically addressed. Some will be disappointed concerning the unnecessarily negative
view portrayed of the role of the church in AIDS-related activities. Diversity of practices abound even in the Catholic Church and one fundamental Christian organisation has recently gone so far as to say that distributing condoms to people at risk of getting HIV is an important component of a Christian-based HIV prevention programme (MAP, 1993). Major paradigm changes concerning AIDS are taking place amongst church groups; as the epidemic unfolds over the next decade, we are likely to see large numbers of church volunteers involved in prevention, homecare and orphan support activities.

In the chapter on HIV avoidance, a large section is devoted to condom use and non-penetrative sexual activities, which latter are acknowledged to be rarely practised in Zimbabwe; by contrast, the practices of pre-marital abstinence and marital faithfulness get short shrift from Jackson. This is surprising, given the fact that the latter strategy is advocated by most agencies in Zimbabwe. A more balanced discussion of abstinence-faithfulness strategies and description of peer education methods which have led to partner-reduction behaviour change by individuals and communities would be more helpful.

This book is meant especially for professionals who are being affected directly or indirectly by AIDS. It is almost certain that even the most well-informed AIDS worker will learn something useful from this superb single-author overview of AIDS and AIDS action. Will the book lead to “AIDS Action Now” as its title suggests? Certainly it will. The book represents an excellent introduction to anyone contemplating involvement in AIDS activity in sub-Saharan Africa.

Reference


Reviewed by Dr Geoff Foster, Director, Family AIDS Caring Trust (FACT), Mutare, Zimbabwe.


Valerie Møller combines qualitative and quantitative data which was gathered in areas of chronic unemployment in South Africa. The outcome is an easily accessible analysis which will have immediate relevance to readers in countries with developing or developed economies. Social development workers, planners and social workers all have good reason for welcoming this study. They will be encouraged by the essentially optimistic tone of the findings, but they may also be discomforted to find themselves put on the spot by its conclusions.
The study sets out to test Marie Jahoda’s 1982 ‘Deprivation’ model where the victim of unemployment not only experiences the material loss of income, but additionally suffers from the loss of ‘Access to Categories of Experiences’ (ACE). These ACE categories are: time structure; social contact beyond the family; participation in collective purpose; status and identity; and the enforcement of regular activity. The model shows how ACE provides an essential contact with reality. The loss of employment undermines our grip on it and this study explores the effects of this deprivation. Møller accepts refinements and criticisms of the Jahoda thesis, but she constructs her study such that the people’s subjective reactions will be the test of the theory. The outcome is a detailed analysis of the quality of life of the unemployed.

The unemployed experience severe loss in their own perception of life’s satisfactions. Despite their overwhelming desire to seek and get back into employment, after some time without work they begin to assume that they lack some of the essential qualities that would enable them to resume a productive life. Those with luck, education, or a desperate dependence on employment, are those thought most likely to stave off unemployment. Those lacking sufficient of these qualities may, in the last resort, be driven to crime or other non-sanctioned activities in order to survive. Essentially, the unemployed see themselves as victims of economic misfortune and they strive to make the most of their situation.

Contrary to the central thesis of deprivation, these subjects did not experience extreme negativity such as despair. They recognised many of the qualities of loss within their new situation. Aspects of life such as status, friendships, opportunity and direction were all diminished and missed. Nevertheless, many do not believe that all is lost. ‘Busy work’ (activities: exercise routines, work-seeking activities, domestic chores and maintaining friendship networks) keep the forces of social disintegration at bay. Despite extreme poverty as the consequence of prolonged unemployment and the absence of relief payments, the majority contrive to get by without recourse to ruthless behaviour. Their sense of belonging to society is powerful and their acknowledgement of dependence on family and friends is both a source of hope and embarrassment to them. Material deprivation and social stigma puts pressure on them to sink into criminality or veniality, but there are few services to whom they can turn for guidance or support.

Work, of any nature is seen as being preferable to unemployment. The instrumental benefit of income outweighs all else. Few see the benefits of being freed by unemployment from the constraints of paid work. Many feel that self-employment is just an increase in the risk factor. Poorly paid work, if steady, is preferable.

At the beginning of this book, Møller discusses theoretical models of unemployment and the relative merits of programmes which might alleviate it. She cites van der Merwe’s studies (1982/3) which classify various forms of institutional re-
sponse to unemployment. Møller appraises their effectiveness and alerts the reader to the desire of the unemployed to play a full economic role. She highlights their resourcefulness and their resilience under extreme pressure. Successful intervention must enhance and uplift their spirits as well as improve their economic prospects. Dead-end prospects will be quickly exposed and discredited. Unless the cooperation of the unemployed can be enlisted, there is little prospect of intervention programmes being successful.

Møller lists, in conclusion, four measures which would improve the quality of life of the unemployed. For those hoping to offer real support to the unemployed, this list will prove instructive:

(1) Poverty must be relieved and the social situation of the person must be strengthened to reduce the severity of social-psychological deprivation.

(2) The unemployed need to be re-educated to undo the ill-effects of shame and the alienation of stigmatisation.

(3) The family provides the greatest social and moral support for the person while unemployed. It helps to sustain the normality of community networks and the full social integration of the individual. Charitable hand-outs and other distortions to pride and status should be avoided.

(4) The efforts of the unemployed to resist personal blame for this situation must be supported. Mutual support and solidarity mechanisms which reduce isolation and reinforce positive images are vital for sustaining personal morale.

It is the young unemployed that need special attention. Their social identity is less established and they often lack the attributes which the experience of work and its routine brings to assist them in structuring their lives out of work. They are vulnerable to falling behind as the labour market changes. Frustration, coupled with high energy and fewer ties to convention, places this group in the high risk category.

Regrettably, social planners and social workers lack the institutional power to influence the direction of economic investment. But, too often, when they have access to influence, they demonstrate lack of resolve when it comes to taking a lead. They are often the only agents who have the insights into community life which would give credibility to meaningful strategies. Møller provides the evidence to strengthen their hand.

Møller’s study is timely for a newly democratic South Africa. It is also pertinent and relevant for these other economies in the North as well as in the South, which are beset with mass unemployment and a poverty of strategies to attack it. The unemployed deserve that the insights which this study provides are put to work for the common good.

Reviewed by Mr S T G Clarke, Lecturer in Applied Social Studies, University College, Swansea.
Segal (1991:82) acknowledges that "...one of the major problems involved in studying homelessness and drinking is that of causal relationship". Other factors such as accessibility and availability, affordability and peer pressure also influence the causal relationship very significantly.

The book by Segal is based on a thorough longitudinal study which provides a comprehensive account of a street population or homeless drinking population in Anchorage, Alaska. The study was carried out over one year and it employed a number of complementary data gathering techniques such as observation and interviews. The drinking behaviour of the street people was also monitored in relation to demographic, sociological and other pertinent variables. In carrying out the study Segal adopts instruments and data gathering strategies consonant and sensitive to the situation and requirements of different ethnic groups. Without going into a lot of detail on Segal's research methodology it is important to point out that for research to be effective it has to be responsive and sensitive to the circumstances of the participants or subjects, so that it reflects a seriousness of purpose in terms of intervention and also accepting and valuing the ability of the subjects of be involved in the change or treatment process. Such a methodology shows that research is not just aimed at 'data mining' but at the full participation of the subjects. The research by Segal is action oriented and it also exposes some of the problems encountered in the treatment of alcohol users which include reluctance on the part of the alcoholics and recidivism.

Segal's book comprises of six chapters. In the first chapter Segal gives a brief review of homelessness and also homelessness in Anchorage and in the second chapter he grapples with issues of methodology. The third and fourth chapters present the results and discussion of findings, while intervention and treatment are addressed in the fifth chapter; lastly in the sixth chapter Segal looks at some recommendations for intervention and treatment.

Segal observes that it is important in the treatment of alcohol and drug abusers to adopt an integrated approach and for the agencies involved to cooperate so that clients do not manipulate the agencies and also to ensure that there is no duplication of services. Agencies should not compete, for clients can take advantage of such a situation and this can defeat the intended goal of rehabilitating drug and alcohol users.

Segal has carried out research on very topical problems – homelessness and alcoholism – findings of which can be generalised to both developed and developing countries. The study reflects the need to view housing just like any other social
service. Homelessness creates cultures of drinking and the impact of alcohol abuse to the addict, to society, family, the economy and employment is too severe for society to ignore. Segal’s study highlights and reinforces the need to come up with effective and appropriate intervention strategies in preventing the occurrence or onset of the drinking problem and also rehabilitating the alcoholics. On the basis of available statistics on alcohol abuse internationally and its impact on society, alcoholism should be viewed as a scourge of our time and Segal’s book has come at the right time, that is before the problem gets even more out of control.

The book is invaluable to professionals, both academic and practitioners concerned with social problems consequent from homelessness and alcoholism. Social workers, sociologists, health professionals and practitioners should find this book very handy in their endeavours to come to the root and solution of drug and alcohol abuse.

Reviewed by Jotham Dhemba, Staff Development Fellow, School of Social Work, Harare.


The phenomenon of economic reforms is crucial in Africa because the reforms are aimed at stabilising the economy in developing counties in general. This book is a documentation of facts and arguments brought up by some of the Africa-based authors. Their discussion on economic reforms, popularly referred to as Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) were based on studies that they carried out in Kenya, Tanzania, Lesotho and Zimbabwe. The book clearly portrays the relationship of the effects of SAP to issues of employment, education, health, poverty and the general standard of living of people in the aforesaid countries. It is important to mention, and for the reader to note, that almost all the authors examined the general overview of the economy in pre- and post-colonial eras and have reported that “economic activities have remained depressed” as a result of SAP. The initial intentions of implementing the reforms were genuine and were intended to increase and improve employment opportunities and the level of production, as well as to “alleviate transitional social hardships”.

The countries of concern in this book adopted the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank sponsored adjustment programmes in an effort to achieve high economic growth. Unfortunately conditions began to decline and this became evident as a result of falling per capita state expenditure, deteriorating social
infrastructure and the decline in school enrolment and teacher quality and commitment. Health services and care and the quality of education and training also deteriorated. The level of unemployment also increased. This became a cause for concern, resulting in non-governmental organisations (NGOs) springing up in an effort to alleviate the pressures imposed on people by economic reforms.

Kenya, in particular, had 120 registered NGOs providing health care, social services, education and training. To some extent this represented a shift of services from the state to the people through NGOs. It was an advantage to the vulnerable groups because services trickled down to the masses.

In the world of employment, the formal sector contracted resulting in remarkable unemployment. The result was the introduction of the informal sector which Hart (1973) referred to as 'unregulated' economic activities. It goes without saying that the reader will come across other terms that clearly define the sector. The Kenyan and Zimbabwean writers associate the sector with women in relation to their participation in the economy and their response to changes in urban areas. Women are portrayed in this book as capable of utilising the informal activities to combat the economic pressures. The income they get sustains them since they stand a chance to lose and face double exclusion from the formal sector. Men also supplement their income by engaging in the informal sector when time permits or at the time of retrenchment. The informal sector which was initiated to complement the formal sector has proved to be quite important in terms of employment creation where the formal sector seems to be unable to absorb a reasonable workforce.

Throughout the book, the reader is kept anxious to understand the main reason behind the IMF and World Bank sponsoring SAP. The intentions are most welcome but the results in the overall assessment do not reflect a good picture. The authors have put this so vividly to the reader that one remains with a clear understanding of SAP, changes that took place and the responses to change that people implemented to counteract problems that have swept across the countries that introduced these economic reforms. The Africa-based writers appear to have consolidated information on social change and economic reforms from experiences in their countries for readers to understand the situation in which they find themselves. The book contains relevant information on the activities of NGOs, the informal sector, unemployment, Organised Labour in the case of Zimbabwe and in the Labour Reserve Economy in the case of Lesotho. The challenge that is brought about through publication of this book could be vital for academic and professional studies.

Reviewed by Violet Matimba-Masuku, Lecturer, School of Social Work, Harare.