

# Preface

---

This handbook is intended for students, practitioners and others involved in, and concerned with, international development and improvement of the human condition in poor countries.

It is not intended as a dictionary, or encyclopaedia, but as a broad reference source on a range of key topics. Nor does it claim to be in any way definitive or exhaustive. Each contribution offers some background on theory and practice and describes the current 'state of play' in that particular area, with some implications for the future, within the overall context of development policy and management.

Contributors come from a wide range of backgrounds and many enjoy international reputations in their particular fields. Inevitably in a work of this nature there is a bias to the place of origin, and therefore a disproportionate number of contributors either come from the University of Manchester or are connected in some way to the work of the Institute for Development Policy and Management. If the handbook had originated from a similar centre in another part of the world the aggregate of perceptions would have been different. Again, the choice of topics reflects the editors' collective judgement, and in some cases has been affected by the availability of contributors. However, we believe that the collection of chapters assembled here represents a comprehensive and balanced overview of the areas covered and provides a useful addition to the literature in this field.

We are particularly grateful to Debra Whitehead for her invaluable help in coordinating this project and in preparing these papers for publication.

