

## Preface

THIS VOLUME DESCRIBES the wide range of applications that have been found for qualitative assessment methodology in the planning, evaluating and improving of nutrition and health related intervention programmes.

UNU and UNICEF are very pleased with the success of the initiative, which they launched together in 1983. It was designed to explore the feasibility and potential of utilizing focused anthropological methodologies to appraise programme efforts in developing countries for the improvement of nutrition and health, maternal and child welfare, and food security and health.

The 43 papers and synopses that follow demonstrate the extent to which this approach under the acronyms RAP, for "Rapid Assessment Procedures," and RRA, for "Rapid Rural Appraisal" has proved useful to United Nations organizations, bilateral agencies, private voluntary organizations, and to governments, universities, and individual researchers in developing countries. It is gratifying that development of the general methodological approach and of specialized applications continues.

UNU and UNICEF will maintain their interest in and support of the RAP approach both alone and in combination with quantitative methods that strengthen national capacities for essential research in support of sound policies and programmes for human and social development. These are the types of tools that can bring to government decision makers and community leaders the information they need to make programmes more efficient, more effective, and more sustainable.

We hope that this book will stimulate still broader discussion and use of these relatively rapid and inexpensive qualitative assessment techniques. Its content should also prove useful as a reference text for the faculty and students concerned with issues of international development and health.

Heitor Gurgulino de Souza  
Rector  
United Nations University

James P. Grant  
Executive Director  
United Nations Children's Fund