

## **Introduction**

In the 1970s environment and development problems were brought to everyone's attention by campaigning groups. The 1980s saw the two themes brought together into the concept of sustainable development. Many grand plans and statements followed. But the 1990s will be all about making the idea happen in practice, from the ground up.

This depends, above all, on institutional reform and commitment. The IDEA programme was created with this in mind. How do we move from the stage of endlessly discussing the symptoms of environment and development problems to the point where something happens to address the causes and cures? It so often comes down to acquiring local participation, enhancing human capital or skills, empowering people and moving forward on a reiterative (or learning by doing) path.

This slim volume promotes these ideas in a coherent way. It is a part of the growing tool kit that will enable people to move forward to action.

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