

In Conflict and Custody: Therapeutic Counselling for Women. Rani Dhavan Shankardass. SAGE Publications India Pvt Ltd, B1/I-1 Mohan Cooperative Industrial Area, Mathura Road, New Delhi 110 044. 2012. xxix + 282 pp. Price: Rs 425.

Rani Dhavan Shankardass has given a wonderfully practical treatise on women counselling in all its facets. It came into being for two reasons:

(1) Troubled women sent to custody by the criminal justice system were terrified by the complexities of the system. The idea of setting up counselling units seemed a first step towards addressing the women's plights and enabling them to express themselves and make their own statements about their lives.

(2) Counselling for women has been developed and practised in professional units in other areas of the world over the last 40 years or so, but has not yet been done so in South Asia. Thus its requirement is emergent and mandatory in prisons to help distressed women.

The purpose of author for writing this book is to impart theoretical and practical guidance to trainers and counsellors to enable them to be better equipped for the purposes and processes of counselling, particularly counselling for anxious and distressed women with a range of social, legal and personal problems. The discussions in this book should also be of assistance to those who wish to understand the general purposes and principles of counselling and its fundamental skills and take them to other areas of engagement where they may be modified and used.

The author has been able to come down to brass tacks with her simple and

concise narration of women in remand homes, prisons and the like, where they are baffled at the mistreatment resulting in mental instability and illness.

In our country, the realization that prisons are something else apart from a punitive 'home' is only just beginning to be understood. The fact that custodial institutions can also be a corrective one is slowly seeping into the public consciousness, among the legal fraternity, civil society and voluntary organizations. The experiments started by the police set-up themselves, as far back as the changes brought about by Kiran Bedi, IPS in Tihar jail have now been accepted gradually as a part of routine rights of prisoners.

The author's efforts in this field are commendable indeed and the book gives a hands-on, systematic review and practice of such areas related to women. Women in conflict, prisoners, etc. have a wide range of problems like discrimination and sexual harassment even inside jails, let alone the society.

The author has sought to convey this effectively in the book, while also suggesting practical remedies. Counselling, basically deals with empowerment, that is giving power to oneself, which is the best way to bring about change in women's rights. This book shows us the path to achieve the same. It is well suited to mental health professionals and social workers dealing with women's empowerment and will go a long way in encouraging and enriching the practice of counselling in such conflict-ridden situations.

The book is a pointer to acquaint oneself with features of counselling that necessitate it to be seen, understood and undertaken as a special and specialist activity; and is a reminder for those who wish to guide counsellors in their work about the nature of the activity, the stages, skills and depth of thinking that must accompany counselling if it is to achieve its worthwhile purposes.

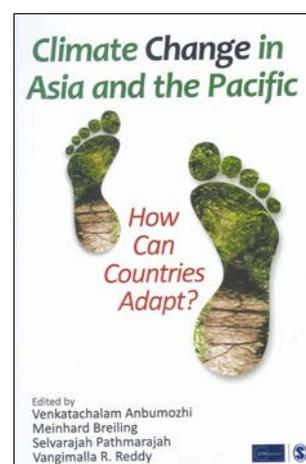
The book will prove useful towards the introduction and formulation of courses in the theory and practice of 'counselling and psychotherapy' that can be introduced as part of the curriculum in such syllabi that relate to community and social work, apart from psychology.

Overall the strength of the book lies in its simplicity and its many easy, proven methods and therapeutic interventions conducted in the most empathetic man-

ner to enable and empower distressed women to take charge of their lives. As a psychologist and behavioural scientist, I strongly support the views expressed in this book.

ABHA SINGH

Institute of Psychology and Behavioural Science, Amity University, Noida 201 313, India
e-mail: asingh@amity.edu



Climate Change in Asia and the Pacific – How can Countries Adapt? Venkatachalam Anbumozhi, Meinhard Breiling, Selvarajah Pathmarajah and Vangimalla R. Reddy (eds). SAGE Publishers India Pvt Ltd, B1/I-1 Mohan Cooperative Industrial Area, Mathura Road, New Delhi 110 044. 2012. xxiii + 363 pp. Price: Rs 1195.

The world has already warmed by 0.8°C since the Industrial Revolution, mainly due to the large build-up of greenhouse gases (GHGs) in the atmosphere. It is estimated that a further warming of about 0.6°C is built-in in the system due to the GHGs already present in the atmosphere. Even this modest warming is already impacting ecosystems, food production and freshwater sources across the world. Climate risks and impacts are likely to increase manifold in the future as the global mitigation efforts are not successful in reducing GHG emissions. More so, today GHG build-up in the atmosphere is increasing even at a faster rate. For instance, the year 2010 witnessed record emissions surpassing the threshold of 9 Gt of carbon for the first time in human history. Global mitigation efforts are

aimed towards limiting the global temperature rise at or below 2°C, which means warming of 2°C will be inevitable. Further, the International Energy Agency estimates that 'window of opportunity to keeping the global temperature below 2°C threshold' is fast closing. Given this situation, modest to severe levels of warming seem inevitable. This poses one of the most significant challenges to the global economic development. While climate change is a global phenomenon, its impacts are largely experienced at local levels and to deal with these impacts local-level adaptation strategies are required. It is wise and timely that we start thinking about the climate risks, adaptation options and adaptation policies at national and local levels.

While the science of climate change and its mitigation options, have well-developed literature, risks, impacts and adaptation options are poorly understood and even poorly documented. Much of the existing adaptation literature comes from the developed countries. The Asian region is found to be more vulnerable to climate change compared to other regions due to its large population, and its large dependence on natural resources and agriculture. This book provides a rigorous and up-to-date analysis of the climate change risks and impacts for the Asian region. It also presents some of the successful adaptation case-studies in the region and provides a stepwise guidance on ways to integrating adaptation programmes into the mainstream policy and planning process.

Adaptation to climate change has multiple dimensions ranging from science to economics, administration and policy making. Most often it is not possible to bring many experts from various domains to a common platform and dissect the successful case-studies and prepare a roadmap for future interventions. It is only fitting that this book draws together a total of 46 seasoned professionals from premier research institutions, development banks, Government departments, academia and private sector not only from various parts of the Asia-Pacific, but also from the OECD countries. One of the major limitations of a multi-author edited book is that it easily tends to lose continuity and becomes disjointed, especially at the transition of two chapters. While each of the chapters make great read, the whole book does not; thus

weaning away, especially the generalist readers. However, the editors of this book have so skillfully weaved the contributions of different author-teams that it retains its flow from the very beginning to the end and is able to engage not only specialists and fellow professionals, but a general audience as well. The book has a total of 25 chapters written by different author-teams. These chapters are broadly divided into five parts. Part one outlines the climate change challenge and defines the scenarios and the risks. Part two traces the evolution of the adaptation measures in the region. Part three presents the successful case-studies from the region. Parts four and five talk about ways and means to integrate adaptation into the mainstream policy planning. High-quality modelling and analysis presented in this book brings a lot of new data on the table. Professionally drawn innovative charts too provide a wealth of information, especially to the fellow professionals.

Climate change is likely to impact almost all the sectors of the economy. However, agriculture is one of the most vulnerable sectors as despite the technological advances in the second half of the 20th century, weather and climate still remain the key factors determining agricultural productivity, especially in developing countries depending largely on the dryland farming. Given the large population density and a high dependence on agriculture in the Asia-Pacific region, climate change vulnerability is intricately linked to livelihood security and food security in this region. Studies suggest that if global warming continues unabated, by 2080s the global agricultural productivity will decline by about 16%, with developing countries experiencing a disproportionately larger decline of about 20%. To enable the local communities to deal with the threats of climate change, adaptation needs to be incorporated into the mainstream policy and planning process. In this book the authors based on their rich experience in implementing adaptation programmes across this region, present a stepwise approach for integrating climate change into the planning and policy process through the power of examples, pilot projects and successful demonstrations. The first step involves 'building the scientific understanding and capacity on climate change and adaptation'. The second step involves targeted communica-

tion with planners and policy makers to initiate pilot projects to gain experience and create examples. The third step involves actual implementation of pilot projects along with the community, government and private organizations. The fourth step involves taking these examples to a level higher and actually making adaptation interventions part of the mainstream policy and planning process. The book describes a number of pilot project examples, implemented in different parts of Asia and the Pacific – especially notable are the experiences in the Mekong basin, Japan and in India. These successful pilot projects will likely catalyse adaptation action in other parts of Asia as well. It is important that planners and policy makers take note of these examples.

While experience and literature in climate change adaptation are still evolving, many of the Asian developing countries have already included many of the adaptation-related policies, programmes and projects in their national development plans. The least developed countries in Asia have also prepared their national adaptation programmes of action (NAPA). Many of the multilateral and bilateral development agencies such as Asian Development Bank and United Nations Development Programme, and international donor agencies such as Japan International Cooperation Agency, KfW and AFD (French Development Agency) have already started funding adaptation programmes in the region. However, given the scale of the problem, these efforts may not be adequate; many of these initiatives may not be completed due to lack of resources and low priority. This may delay the developing countries' readiness to climate change impacts. The authors suggest a remedy to it that 'policy-makers should review their development plans through the climate lens and identify the linkages between climate and development'. Unless climate change adaptation programmes are included in the business-as-usual planning and development process, climate change adaptation needs will remain unfulfilled.

RAJIV KUMAR CHATURVEDI
N. H. RAVINDRANATH*

*Centre for Sustainable Technologies,
Indian Institute of Science,
Bangalore 560 012, India
e-mail: ravi@ces.iisc.ernet.in