

Preface

At present millions of South Africans face severe problems in accessing even the most basic services: water, sanitation, electricity, and refuse removal. All of us understand that the democratic government faced great difficulties and enormous backlogs due to the apartheid legacy. But unfortunately, the problems confronting many citizens today are not simply the result of historical factors. Much of what the authors of this book refer to as the “crisis of service delivery” is actually a result of the pro-market policies adopted by the South African government since 1994. This text goes a long way toward explaining this process. The authors have successfully combined rigorous theoretical analysis, copious statistical information, and a broad range of case study material. At the same time, the inclusion of numerous “live” interviews lends the book a quality missing in so many academic works.

But the book does more than just chronicle the complexities of our society. The writers included herein have also taken the initiative to further the discussion about where we might find opportunities to reverse this crisis. This book deserves to be widely read. I warmly commend it. The contents are not only relevant for those interested in the transition to democracy in South Africa, but for people across the world who are confronting the processes of a corporate driven globalisation which continues to swell the ranks of the poor in all countries of both the South and the North.

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