

Mapping Non-State Actors in Ethiopia

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Acknowledgements

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Executive summary: Mapping NSAs

The Cotonou Africa-Caribbean-Pacific Partnership Agreement of 2002 makes specific provision for the involvement of civil society in the development and implementation of European Union strategies and programmes. This study was commissioned by the European Union and the Ministry of Capacity Building as the first step in signposting a major EU funded civil society capacity building programme in Ethiopia of 10 million euros over the next five years. The main aims of the research were to:

- Understand the context and current issues facing Non-State Actors (NSAs) in Ethiopia
- Map key groups of registered NSAs
- Gather detailed information about NSAs working in specific areas of governance, namely: conflict resolution and prevention, women's empowerment, human rights, democracy and those NSAs that use lobbying and advocacy to further their aims.

Chapter 2 sets out the terms of reference and the methodology used during the study.

The key research questions were defined as:

- What are the social and legal/political contexts in which NSAs work in Ethiopia?
- What relationship do NSAs have with the levels of government with which they operate (national, regional and local)?
- What are the key features of the ways in which NSAs operate in Ethiopia (types of activities, geographical spread, relationship with government, opportunities for advocacy and policy involvement)?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of the registered NGOs that work in the fields of human rights, democracy, women's empowerment, conflict prevention or advocacy and lobbying? (In particular in which areas do they need to build capacity: administration, service delivery, training, management, advocacy and policy analysis?)
- What policies do the key donors working in Ethiopia have towards building capacity in civil society?

The methods used comprised the following. A literature review and historical essay to set out the political and social context of civil society in Ethiopia. A bibliography accompanies the literature review and can be found in appendix 1. An annotated bibliography (appendix 2) comments on the useful published and unpublished texts concerning civil society. In order to map the key groups of NSAs a typology was developed which is accompanied by explanatory notes and a regional profile. During two field visits, a series of semi-structured interviews was conducted with Government officials, representatives of civil society organizations and donors to

investigate capacity building needs and the relationship between Government and NSAs. One field visit took place in Addis Ababa and during the second each of the regional capitals was visited, with the exception of Gambella. In addition, questionnaires were issued to donors and to NSAs working in the field of governance to establish two databases and to furnish further information on capacity building needs. Finally, a seminar was held with representatives of NSAs, Government and donors to present the main findings of the research and their views are incorporated in the conclusions.

Chapter 3 contains the literature review and essay on the historical context of Ethiopian civil society. The review sets out the theoretical background to understanding civil society, examines definitions and concepts and considers debate and opinion on the usefulness of the concept of civil society in the African context. The essay on the historical context considers how Ethiopian civil society has developed detailing the role of the church and relations with the state and the early presence of local self-help organizations. Civil society/state relations during the Haile-Selassie era are discussed and the growth of specific groups of associations such as the trade unions, development associations and faith-based organizations. The civil war and the subsequent Derg regime, the essay concludes, was a particularly unpropitious time for the development of civil society, characterised by repression and abuses of human rights. The final section examines the current political context and acknowledges a more enlightened attitude and growth in both civil society organizations and a more open political context, for instance the development of the free press. It concludes, however, that there are still significant obstacles to a fully functioning pluralistic civil society.

Chapter 4 contains the national typology of NSAs accompanied by explanatory notes to indicate sources and the rationale for the typology. The regional profile was compiled from various sources of data and makes an attempt to show a regional comparison of activity. The regional profile is accompanied by a broad assessment drawn from the regional field visits. It should be noted that the registration for NSAs in Ethiopia is extremely complex and incomplete and therefore the typology and profiles are incomplete mainly because of the unavailability of data. The two final sections of this chapter give an overview of the situation of the media and political parties in Ethiopia because although not normally counted as NSAs they are crucial to the full functioning of civil society in a democratic state.

Chapter 5 contains the main findings of the research with respect to the different understandings of the three groups of respondents of the nature and role of civil society; the relationship between Government and civil society and the capacity building needs of NSAs. The findings show significant differences in understanding of the nature and role of civil society, reflecting the changing climate within Ethiopia. Whilst some Government representatives, donors and NSA spokespersons recognize a wider role for civil society in terms of the empowerment of citizens and the creation of a more democratic, accountable and transparent Government, this understanding is not shared by all. The view that civil society, and, in particular, NGOs are there to carry out service delivery and 'fill the gap' in services that Government cannot provide was widespread in the most marginalized regions. In terms of the relationship between Government and civil society, the study shows that although there is an improvement, NSAs are beginning to develop policy dialogue, advocacy and lobbying skills, an effective working relationship is marred by mistrust and misunderstanding of the role of civil society. If civil society is to play a

more productive role, both NSAs and Government have to work to promote better understanding and effective collaborative partnerships. The analysis of opinion on the key areas for capacity building in terms of external relations highlights issues of constituency building, networking, advocacy, lobbying and policy dialogue skills. In addition there are key issues of internal management, such as, project design and management, strategic planning, monitoring and evaluation as well as capital resource needs and human resources development.

Chapter 6 analyses the information gathered for the databases on donors and NGOs working in the field of governance. From the responses from the NGOs it can be concluded that there are a number of large and small organizations working in the area of governance: human rights, democracy and women's empowerment were the key areas with fewer organizations involved in conflict prevention and resolution. The capacity building needs show that most require training work with the priority areas named as: advocacy and lobbying, strategic planning, human resource development, external communication and project design. The donor responses from 9 organizations suggest that 70 per cent of the funds allocated for civil society work focus on areas of governance although the range of grants available suggests that actual grants per organization may be quite small. However, the small number of responses collated in this database means that there is an incomplete picture.

Chapter 7 collates some of the key issues arising from the study which are perhaps best summarized as a series of questions for consideration:

- What needs to be done to create a coherent shared understanding of the role of civil society which can encourage greater plurality of views and an improved working relationship between Government and NSAs?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of membership organizations in Ethiopia in terms of building civil society and is their independence from Government an issue which should be addressed?
- Development associations, key members of Ethiopian civil society, play an important role in development but is the ethnic base of some (but not all) of these organizations an issue for the future?
- Advocacy, lobbying and policy dialogue activities are features of some of the more successful NSAs and symptomatic of a developing civil society. What procedures need to be established and capacity building undertaken to create a more enabling environment for policy dialogue?
- Freedom of information is crucial to the effective functioning of civil society. How can this be encouraged by legislative attitudinal change?
- What role should Government play in helping to build civil society: should this be in terms of improving the legislative and administrative framework?

Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Background to the EU civil society research project

This European Union (EU) funded research study was launched by the EU as a direct result of the Cotonu Africa-Caribbean-Pacific (ACP)-EU Partnership Agreement of June 2000, the most recent aid and trade agreement between the EU and the 77 members of the ACP countries. This agreement for the first time contains provisions for the involvement of civil society in the development and implementation of EU strategies and programmes. This mapping research project is seen by the EU as a first step in signposting a major EU funded civil society capacity building programme to be launched in the coming year, budgeted at 10 million Euros over five years.

This Non State Actor (NSA) capacity building programme will be managed by a Project Management Unit to be selected by international tender. A Steering Committee to be chaired by the National Authorising Officer will provide an overall supervisory role and provide guidelines as to the types of activity, size of projects and other implementation modalities and also monitor the overall progress of the programme. Representation on this Committee will include Government officials from other Ministries and/or Regions, at least two NSA representatives and any other persons deemed suitable. The EU Delegation will monitor the implementation of the projects with the assistance of the Project Management Unit.

The programme's timescale is divided approximately into two halves: a first half of about two years when progress of the Fund and learning from experience will be evaluated and nearly half the project funds will have been spent; a second half will then follow, guided by the recommendations of the evaluation. The programme will use all relevant and suitable communication means to spread the word of its activities, including radio, local publications and workshops.

This research project and ensuing capacity building programme have been developed in Ethiopia in collaboration with the Ministry of Capacity Building and the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development. The Ministry of Capacity Building itself has hired international and national consultants funded by the British Department for International Development to assist it in its several roles, especially the building of its own capacity at woreda and kebele levels of the administration to be better able to interface with civil society organisations. All NSA capacity building initiatives are taking place within a major government initiative of decentralisation of government decision making, especially down to regional, woreda and kebele levels. At the time of writing this process is far from complete and thus has an impact on NSA-Government relations at the lower levels, remarked on later in the report.

The EU initiative is thus not taken in isolation. Most donors in Ethiopia, multi-lateral and bi-lateral, see NSAs as key players in democratic and development processes, potentially taking part in negotiations and policy formulation with government. Donor funding of NSAs takes place on a relatively small scale bi-lateral basis. The EU sees this substantial extension of its partnership to NSAs as contributing to a stable and democratic environment, to an increase in civil society ownership of development processes, to promoting new public-private partnerships and to ensuring the greater sustainability of co-operation programmes. While the Fund will be open to NSAs in

general the EU is also particularly interested in supporting and strengthening NSAs involved in particular issues of governance such as: conflict prevention and resolution, women's empowerment, human rights, democracy and those organisations that use advocacy and lobbying to further their aims and objectives.

In parallel with these two initiatives of the Ministry of Capacity Building and the EU, the World Bank has also initiated a civil society research programme focusing on civil society relationships at woreda and kebele levels, as a prelude to launching its own civil society capacity building programme in 2005 of some six million US dollars, again in partnership with the Ministry of Capacity Building. This programme is also planned to last for five years. The World Bank project will include the vast, widespread and important informal sector of non-registered organisations (eg iddirs and iqubs) within its scope, whereas the EU programme will focus on Non State Actors registered with the government at national and regional levels.

Thus it can be said that civil society and its strengthening in Ethiopia is now fully on the agendas of the Government, the donors and civil society players themselves.

This EU research project on NSAs, the precursor to the implementation of the capacity building Fund, was started in late January 2004 and should be completed by late April 2004.

1.2 Broad aims of the research

The key aims of the research were to:

- Understand the context and current issues facing NSAs in Ethiopia
- Map key groups of registered NSAs
- Gather detailed information about NSAs working in specific areas of governance, namely: conflict resolution and prevention, women's empowerment, human rights, democracy and those NSAs that use lobbying and advocacy to further their aims.

Chapter 2 The methodology

2.1 The original terms of reference

The original terms of reference for this research project were broad and set out four objectives:

- To make a general analysis of the relationships and linkages of NSA with the political institutions (government, federal, regional and local) and their representatives, development partners (donors) and the constituencies they represent; this should also include an analysis of the self perception NSAs have of their own role.
- Execute a mapping exercise in order to identify all operating NSAs in Ethiopia and categorize them according to their different areas of expertise and activities. Based on the findings of this exercise, assess the capabilities and constraints of identified actors.
- Collect comprehensive information on donor involvement, their policies, partners, and their specific support.
- Create two separate tables/databases of existing Non-State Actors and donor activities respectively.

The European Union uses the term Non-State Actors (NSAs) to include the full range of civil society groups as well as the private sector. As the research findings show, this is not entirely consistent with the definitions used by other commentators and there are disagreements about the inclusion of certain groups within the term NSA. In consultation with representatives from the European Union and representatives from the Ministry of Capacity Building and the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development, the terms of reference were refined in order to limit the scope of the project and enable its completion within the time frame and budget allowed.

In particular the requirement to map all NSAs was felt to be beyond the scope of the project, given the time and budget allowed. After discussions it was agreed that for the purposes of the research a broad definition of Non State Actors would be accepted but that for some aspects of the work a narrower focus would be used to allow collation of the more detailed information required by the EU and the Ministries on Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) operating in specific areas of governance. Thus the following definition and narrower focus were used during the research and were reflected in the methodology adopted.

The broad definition

NSAs are understood to include both formal registered non-governmental organisations, trade unions, and professional organisations and a wide variety of informal, often community based, associations.

The narrower focus

The European Union is committed to working with non-governmental organisations that are registered within Ethiopia and stated that it was particularly interested in those involved in governance and engaging in advocacy and lobbying activities. More specifically the European Union stated its wish to have detailed information on those NGOs working in the areas of: conflict prevention, women's empowerment, human rights, democracy as well as those using advocacy and lobbying techniques to further their aims and objectives. The aims of the research as outlined in the introduction were used to develop the key research questions and these were agreed in consultation with the European Union prior to the start of the research.

2.2 The key research questions

The key research questions were as follows:

- What are the social and legal/political contexts in which NSAs work in Ethiopia?
- What relationship do NSAs have with the levels of government with whom they operate (national, regional and local)?
- What are the key features of the ways in which NSAs operate in Ethiopia (types of activities, geographical spread, relationship with government, opportunities for advocacy and policy involvement)?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of the registered NGOs that work in the fields of human rights, democracy, women's empowerment, conflict prevention or advocacy and lobbying? (In particular in which areas do they need to build capacity: administration, service delivery, training, management, advocacy and policy analysis?)
- What policies do the key donors working in Ethiopia have towards building capacity in civil society?

Three outputs from the research were also agreed with the European Union prior to the start of the research activities.

- A report detailing the main findings of the research.
- Two databases: one to focus on donors who support work in the area of governance and civil society and a second focusing on registered NGOs working in the fields of: human rights, democracy, women's empowerment, conflict prevention or advocacy and lobbying.

- A dissemination seminar to which donors and representatives of NSAs and Government personnel would be invited, to present an overview of the findings of the research.

2.3 The methodology

The methodology used for the research is set out in the following six sections relating to the research questions:

1 The social and political context of NSAs in Ethiopia

The literature review, compiled by Dr Teketel of Addis Ababa University, describes the theoretical background to civil society and its origins in an African context and discusses key texts on the characteristics and functions of civil society. This is contained in chapter 3. The Ethiopian literature dealing with the key issues currently under discussion has been detailed in an annotated bibliography and this can be found in appendix 1. The research team decided that this annotated bibliography should include both academic texts and what is commonly called the 'grey' literature. Academic texts are those published in journals or books. However, there are considerable numbers of 'grey' texts, that is studies or research reports commissioned by donors or civil society groups that deal with specific issues or problem areas and are a crucial part of understanding the development and context for civil society in Ethiopia. Whilst generally in the public domain, such texts are not always formally published but are an important source of information on the issues under discussion. It was felt that these would be of interest to the readers of this report and should therefore be included in an annotated bibliography. The literature review giving the theoretical context is followed by a short essay by Professor Christopher Clapham setting out the historical, social and political context of civil society in Ethiopia.

2 Mapping the key groups of NSAs in Ethiopia: the typology and regional profile

One objective of the research as set out in the terms of reference was to map the main civil society groups operating within Ethiopia. As explained earlier, the time scale did not allow a complete mapping and therefore, in consultation with the European Union, it was decided to develop a typology setting out the main groups in existence and attempting to define their broad characteristics: numerical and geographical, organisational base, main functions and funding source. The national typology is accompanied by a regional profile setting out the data available on the presence of NSA groups in each region. Both profiles are contained in chapter 4 and accompanied by a discussion of the basis for the classification and a list of sources. The typology and regional profiles were developed prior to the field visits and refined

after discussion with the European Union and donors during a feedback session after the first field visit in which preliminary findings were also discussed.

Most of the data used in the typology and profile are drawn from the Ministry and Bureaux of Justice and the Disaster Preparedness and Prevention Commission (DPPC) and its regional offices. However, obtaining data was problematic. Not only are the data incomplete, but the complex arrangements for the registration of some civil society groups means that there is a danger of double counting. For example, in some regions the DPPC register projects rather than organisations and in the national register held by the Ministry of Justice there are several instances of organisations being registered twice. Wherever possible double counting has been avoided. It is also the case that many self-help community based groups such as iddir and iquib are not registered and therefore their presence can only be estimated. Obtaining data at the regional level was also extremely difficult. Letters were sent to the President of each region prior to the field visits (described below). However, in all cases these failed to obtain responses and requests for data had to be made again during the field visits to interviewees. The regional profile is accompanied by notes which attempt to provide a description of NSA activity within the region to supplement the data. Despite the problems in gathering accurate data, the research team believes the typology and regional profiles provide the best estimates available of the number and spread of civil society groups operating in Ethiopia.

3 The current political/social climate in which NSAs operate: the relationship with government and the strengths and weaknesses of NSAs

These areas were investigated in a series of semi-structured interviews conducted during two field visits. The first took place between 26-30 January and the second between 14-25 March 2004. During the first field visit 30 interviews were conducted with a range of NSAs, donors and government personnel. Representatives of the following NSAs were interviewed: international and national, that is Ethiopian, NGOs; faith groups; trade unions; professional and business associations; networks and umbrella groups. In addition a number of donors, particularly those working in the area of governance, were interviewed along with representatives from the Ministries of Justice and Capacity Building.

Questions were asked to gather data in the following areas: the definitions and role of civil society; the activities and scope of NSAs; the relationship between NSAs and government and the strengths and weaknesses of NSAs. A full list of interviewees and the questionnaires for the interviews are contained in the appendix.

The second field visit focused on action at the regional level. Nine regional capitals were visited, excluding Addis Ababa which was included in the first field visit and Gambella which could not be visited for security reasons. 40 interviews in total were

conducted. The range of interviewees from the Government included personnel from: the bureaux of justice, finance and economic development, capacity building, disaster preparedness and prevention and the people's organisation and community mobilisation bureaux (sometimes differently named in different regions). Examples of representatives from the NSA sector interviewed included: international and national NGOs; development associations; membership organisations such as those representing women, youth and farmers, some professional associations, co-operatives and one group of representatives from an iddir. Questions focused on the definition and role of civil society, the relationship between government and civil society and the range and scope of NGO activity. There was also discussion of the issues of independence from government concerning development and membership associations in particular, and the strengths and weaknesses of NSAs and therefore their needs for capacity building. The list of interviewees and the questionnaires used are contained in the appendix.

The schedule allowed for only one full day interviewing in each region and therefore the amount that could be accomplished was limited. However, the research team was able to get a broad feel for the level of activity in the regions and the relative strengths and weaknesses of the various organisations. This information has contributed both to the overall findings which are contained in chapter 5 and also the notes accompanying the regional profile in chapter 4.

4 The strengths and weaknesses and needs for capacity building of the NGOs working in governance

The two field visits elicited information on the capacity building needs of NSAs working at various levels from a variety of organisations. However, given the specific interests of the European Union in the field of governance, particular efforts were made to interview those working in conflict prevention, women's empowerment, human rights and democracy and questions were asked in both national and regional field visits to gather information on lobbying and advocacy activities. All interviewees were also asked for information about organisations working in these areas.

At the end of the first field visit, a questionnaire was devised for the data base for NGOs working in the area of governance on the basis of the interviews that had been carried out. The database contains information relating to the size and activities of the organisations involved; their main areas of activities in the specific fields, the key areas for lobbying and advocacy activities and their needs for capacity building. The questionnaires were sent out to a total of 90 NGOs and 37 were returned. Cross tabulation has been used to complement the data obtained from the interviews and this is summarised in chapter 6. A copy of the questionnaires and the main fields for the databases is contained in the appendix.

5 The policies of donor organisations

After the first field visit a questionnaire for donors was developed on the basis of information gained during the interviews. The questionnaires were distributed to 20 donors and 9 responses received. The information requested relates to the size and duration of the grants given, the main areas funded by donors and their criteria for funding and funding cycles. While the main purpose of the database is to enable NGOs to access information relevant to their activities, a summary of the data is contained in chapter 7.

6 Feedback from donors, Government and NSA representatives

At the conclusion of the first field visit, the researchers made a presentation to a meeting of donors on the preliminary findings. The feedback given at this meeting helped to shape the interview schedule and questionnaire for the second field visit. After the second field visit a dissemination seminar was held for an audience of donors, Government and NSA representatives. The seminar began with a presentation of the overall findings and concluded with a discussion of some of the key issues arising from the research. The points made by the audience were collated and have been used to elaborate this section of the report, chapter 7.

Chapter 3 Literature review and historical overview of civil society

3.1 An overview of theoretical and conceptual issues on civil society

3.1.1. Background: The revival of the idea of civil society

Given...the current renaissance of a 250-year-old concept long relegated to disuse, it would seem imperative to clarify and to present a clear exposition of the developing idea of civil society, its historical antecedents, the social context of its emergence and transformation (in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries), and its continuing relevance to the problem and crises of modern existence (Seligman 1992: 4).

It is generally accepted that the concept of civil society is Western in origin. It relates to the emergence of the modern industrial capitalist society in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and associated political, sociological and economic transformations. One of the central issues in the current debate is whether the concept of civil society is relevant and useful in non-Western, particularly African, developing societies.

The concept of civil society was revived in the 1970s in the context of political struggles and intellectual reflections on the totalitarian states in East European and social movements against authoritarian regimes in Latin America (Lewis 2002: 573; Mamdani 1996: 14; Seligman 1992: ix). The growing pace of globalization in the 1980s and 1990s boosted the debate. A number of factors contributed to interest in civil society development: the ascendancy of neo-liberal theory and ideology in the wake of economic crisis; the attendant market-oriented reforms including structural adjustment programmes; and the critique and delegitimization of state-centred approaches to development. An apparent consensus emerged that "*the failure of the postcolonial state (was) the key explanatory variable of Africa's development conundrum*" (Eyoh 1996: 47).

Heightened interest in civil society followed the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe and state socialism in the Third World; the rise of popular pro-democracy movements against authoritarian regimes and one-party rule in many parts of the developing world, including Africa; and the rise of participatory development theories which emphasised the importance of addressing the problems of increasing and widespread poverty and inequality through genuine popular participation and empowerment. Discourse began to focus on the balance of the nature and role of the state and that of non-state actors (including the private sector and non-governmental and civil society organisations) in the process of development, democratization and good governance.

However, even a cursory view of the emergent literature shows that the concept of civil society, especially its application in the context of developing countries remains highly controversial. Central issues concern the relevance and usefulness of the concept of civil society in the context of non-Western societies with radically different historical, political, and socio-cultural conditions; the definition of the concept and the delimitation of the types of organisation which may fall in the domain of civil society and the characteristics and functions of civil society in many contemporary Third World and African societies.

This brief overview of the theoretical and conceptual issues on civil society has a limited aim: to put the action-oriented research and findings on civil society in Ethiopia in an intelligible context and to relate the findings of the study to the broader debate on civil society.

3.1.2 Civil society in the African/Ethiopian context: relevance and usefulness

The difficulties in analyzing the complex relationship between state and society are plenty. Some of these are associated with the fact that the European based concepts of state and civil society can not automatically be used in an African context, due to the much more complex web of institutions existing and the specific historical trajectory which these countries have gone through. (Marcussen 1996: 3).

In a recent review of the relevant literature on this specific issue, David Lewis identifies four positions on the relevance and usefulness of the concept of civil society in the context of Africa. He characterizes these as: Western exceptionalism, universal prescription, adoptive prescription and 'the wrong question to ask' (a view which holds that the very question of relevance and usefulness of the concept of civil society in Africa is a misplaced and misguided one (Lewis 2002: 574-582).

"Western exceptionalism"

The view characterized as Western exceptionalism is a rather sceptical and pessimistic view. It is not just that the concept originated in the West but the proponents of this position argue that contemporary African societies are characterized by historical, economic, political and socio-cultural conditions radically different from the Western experience. The current attempt by some scholars and policy makers to apply the concept of civil society for either analytical or policy purposes is: "*just another in a long line of attempts at misguided policy transfer from the West*" (Lewis, 2002: 574). The arguments forwarded revolve around the general backwardness and underdevelopment of the African continent and touch upon various political, cultural, social-structural and economic conditions in Africa which have created obstacles to the growth of a robust and vibrant civil society. There are four main arguments advanced.

Socially, Africa lacks the level of industrial capitalist development, and the associated social structure and social relations, which historically have been the conditions for the emergence and growth of civil society, including the rise of the middle and working classes and associated public domain of social and ideological struggle. On the contrary, like African states, African societies tend to be the artificial creations of colonialism. Ethnic and religious affiliations or vertical patron-client networks still serve as the primary basis of social and political relations which are inimical to the

development of a shared public domain with universal values and discourse which is central to the concept of civil society.

Politically, there is lack of a clear separation between the public versus private domains and state and society. In this context what is civil and uncivil, what is formal and informal get mixed up. Power and authority tend to be fragmented where different types of so-called 'traditional' and 'modern' authorities and institutions exercise influence. The implication of this is that the attempt to construct a clear separation between the state, market and civil society tends to be artificial and unrealistic. For example, Francois Bayart argues that: "*civil society does not exist in Africa because Africa does not have a homogeneous society*" (quoted in Dessaiegn 1999). For Bayart civil society cannot be understood outside of opposition to, and confrontation with the state but African societies have a tendency to tolerate autocracy and domination.

Economically, African states and societies have always been subordinate and dependent on external resources. The so-called civil society is no exception to this reality. The dependency on external patrons distorts local reality lending an artificial character to the balance of local political and social relations. Furthermore, since the 1980s following the social and economic crisis and the imposition of structural adjustment programmes, real power in Africa is exercised by powerful external agencies such as the World Bank and the IMF. Accordingly the idea of African national societies based on the balance between state and civil society misses these central transnational interventions and influences (Lewis 2002: 577). Hence the civil society agenda as a pillar of democracy and good governance, mainly promoted by external actors and donors, must be situated in the broader context of global economic and political restructuring in general and structural adjustment in particular (Dessaiegn 2002:103).

Furthermore, the de-legitimisation and marginalization of the African state, and the recent tendency by donors to channel resources and aid through alternative routes such as NGOs and CSOs, only serves as a means for local elites who straddle the state, market and civil society sectors, to tap resources for sectional and private interests. For some commentators, there is a worrying tendency that the proliferation of institutions and organisations, which claim to be civil society but with dubious sectarian interests, undermine the legitimacy and integrity of the African state and society leading to confusion and disintegration. Such organisations that exist tend to be artificial (with little local constituency), dependent and weak. It follows that the central values and characteristics associated with civil society in the West such as autonomy and voluntarism have little meaning and relevance in the African context.

Based on these and other similar arguments, many scholars and analysts of African and social and political processes argue that the idea of civil society has little relevance and utility as analytical concept or as a tool for policy formulation and action.

“Prescriptive universalism”

This view argues for the relevance of civil society in the African context. Prescriptive universalism is an optimistic view *“based on the idea of a positive, universalist view of the desirability of civil society as part of the political project of building and strengthening of democracy around the world”* (Lewis 2002: 574). Furthermore, according to Lewis:

Following from such positive views of civil society has come the phenomenon of prescription at the level of policy. Within development policy discourse, the framework of good governance has brought support for civil society as part of a policy package transferred to Africa and elsewhere by official donors and NGOs. For example, it has taken the form of support for the monitoring of elections and voter education by civil society organizations, and the ‘capacity building’ work in relation to local NGOs through the provision of organisation support and training (Lewis 2002: 576).

The main problem with this view is that it tends to imply that the concept can have universal relevance regardless of historical, political and socio-cultural differences. The policy prescriptions that flow from the universalist perspective may also lead to unexpected outcomes.

“Adoptive prescription”

The adoptive perspective seeks to find a middle ground, *“between crudely imposing the concept from outside or simply abandoning it altogether as being inappropriate”* (Lewis 2002: 578). The concept of civil society can be relevant and useful in the African context if it is applied with care taking into account the specific historical, political and socio-cultural and economic conditions of contemporary African societies.

“The wrong question to ask?”

The fourth view, related to the third, argues that the very question of relevance and usefulness of the concept of civil society is the wrong question to ask. The concept of civil society as currently revived has in fact always been important, explicitly and implicitly, in the analysis of social and political process, starting from the colonial and through the post-colonial era. For example, various types of associations and organisations (such as trade unions, cooperatives, religious groups and movements) served as the building blocks of the national anti-colonial struggle in Africa (Mamdani 1989) Similarly, various types of civic organisations and associations played active and important roles in the more recent pro-democracy movements against one party authoritarian regimes as well as in the criticism and resistance to the ravages of structural adjustment policies.

These dimensions of historical and socio-political processes cannot be dismissed through a retreat into Western exceptionalism. To say that the idea of civil society is merely a Western phenomenon imposed by external forces misses these realities and the local processes of struggle and accommodation in Africa. As Mamdani argues, the real challenge is the study of *“actually existing civil society”* (Mamdani: 1996: 13-14).

Lewis concludes that the adoptive argument is most persuasive and useful: "*By examining the range of local meanings being created around the concept in certain African contexts, it becomes clear that 'civil society – broadly defined - refers to increasingly universal negotiations between citizens, states and market'*" (Lewis: 2002:582).

3.1.3 Definitions and composition of civil society

While there is no generally agreed upon definition of what constitutes civil society, there are two broad approaches to the conceptualisation of civil society: the political and sociological (IDS 1998).

The political concept of civil society

The political concept emphasises the normative aspects of civil society. Historically, its roots are in the classical liberal approach: understanding civil society in relation to the state and political and economic relations in the emerging industrial capitalist society in Western Europe and North America. It is the contemporary version of this approach which is also dominant in the current revival of the idea of civil society. The liberal/political concept of civil society is based on two fundamental premises.

Civil society is not just about a multitude of civic associations and organisations in a society. On the contrary, civil society is first and foremost about certain civic virtues and values in the public sphere, after all the word civil implies civilized. The central civic virtues associated with the liberal and political definition of civil society focus on individual freedom, liberty and pluralism and in that sense it is directly associated with the classical, liberal, democratic theory (IDS, 1998: 4).

Secondly, the political liberal concept emphasises not only the autonomy or independence of civil society from the state, but views civil society as an essential counter balance to the state.

This approach opens itself to the criticisms made of Western exceptionalism. The normative implications are untenable because it assumes that all societies are bound to follow the Western democratic, liberal path and in all cases the nature and function of civil society must be the same. Because of these limitations the political approach remains a minority view although an important antidote to the analytical and policy dangers of an indiscriminate use of the concept.

The sociological concept of civil society

The following can be taken as a sociological concept of civil society:

An intermediate realm situated between state and household, populated by organised groups or associations which are separate from the state, enjoy some autonomy in relation with the state, and are formed voluntarily by members of society to protect or extend their interests, values and identities (IDS 1998:7).

Whilst such a definition appears simple and straightforward, it contains serious problems. Certain characteristics, which underlie the definition, such as voluntarism, autonomy/independence, and operation in an open public sphere, may not be present in the African context. Many African social groups are informal and there is the question of

State or party related organisations which legally and ideologically claim to be members of civil society. This is an obvious issue in the Ethiopian context as the research findings indicate. The sociological concept of civil society does not necessarily solve the problem of which groups are to be included in the definition of civil society.

Which types of associations and organisations fall within civil society?

A cursory overview of the relevant literature indicates general agreement about the inclusion of non-governmental organisations (NGOs), professional, business and trade associations, religious and cultural associations and those that advocate or represent the interests of specific groups, for example, women, young people or those with disabilities.

However, there is substantial disagreement about a number of other entities, including: self help organisations (for example, in the Ethiopian context, iddir), ethnically based associations, co-operatives, political parties and the private or free press.

According to Naomi Chazan:

Not all social associations are part of civil society: some organisations contribute to its growth and others do not. Civil society is separate from the state but relates to the state: Parochial associations that do not evince an interest beyond their immediate concerns, groups that do not have a concept of state independent of their own aims, and those totally controlled by the state agencies are excluded from its domain (Chazan 1994: 256, 278 as quoted in Marcussen 1996:16-17).

Chazan excludes 'parochial' associations, the local, informal, traditional, indigenous community based associations, on the grounds that their agenda does not go beyond the immediate concerns and day-to-day problems of their localized members and they do not 'address the state'. 'Populist' organisations such as religious, ethnic and regionally based associations that promote 'sectarian' interests are also outwith civil society because they do not have a concept of the state independent of their own aims, they fragment the public sphere and may attempt to capture the state.

Such a view highlights the contradictions and ambivalence involved in the application of the concept of civil society in the African context. On the one hand the inclusion of every association and organisation that lies between the family and the state may stretch the concept so much as to render it useless, whilst excluding the 'populist' and 'parochial' associations will narrow the concept so much as to exclude the most prevalent forms of associational life.

However, it may be argued that the sociological approach does provide basic defining criteria (such as autonomy, voluntarism and public sphere engagement) as well as an open framework for empirical investigation and case by case validation of the characteristics and functions of civil society organisations in different contexts. Moreover, the approach also concurs with the view expressed earlier that civil society needs to be viewed within the social and political context of the country concerned.

3.1.4 The characteristics of civil society organisations

The literature suggests that the main characteristics include autonomy/independence, plurality, voluntarism (voluntary participation) and trust and solidarity (Bothwell, 1997; Perlas 1999).

Autonomy

Both the political and sociological definitions of civil society agree on the centrality of autonomy and this is usually referred to as the freedom and independence of civic organisations to set their own agenda without the direct intervention or dictation from external forces, especially the state. In reality, civil society organisations exist not in a vacuum but in specific historical, political, and socio-economic contexts and their autonomy is circumscribed by these contextual factors. Autonomy may therefore be relative: a matter of degree and subject to negative or positive change. In addition to the state, civil society institutions interact with other organised social forces including other civic institutions which circumscribe and limit their ability to act independently. The sociological approach, while emphasising the importance of autonomy, leaves it open for empirical investigation of its nature and degree in specific contexts.

Voluntarism

Civil society institutions vary from small membership organizations, mainly engaged in self-help activities, to large and medium scale organisations engaged in all sorts of service, development and advocacy activities. Accordingly, they exhibit differences in their style of organisation, internal democracy and level of membership participation. The self- image of civil society institutions as democratic, participatory and accountable thus needs a close scrutiny. However, voluntary membership and participation is one of the important characteristics and principles of civic organisations. Authoritarian regimes have, of course, made a mockery of this principle by a blanket co-option of whole organisations and their membership.

Plurality

The notion of plurality indicates not only the large number and types of associations and organisations occupying the public sphere but also a diversity of interests, objectives, organisational forms and capacities. As Marcussen noted: "*Civil society is not a uniform and homogeneous group of institutions. On the contrary, the institutions of civil society are a myriad of particular interests, which have got an institutional form or an institutional expression. They express conflicts, rivalries, and*

struggles – or consented action. They may act as integrating or disintegrating elements” (1996:25).

Thrust and solidarity

Thrust and solidarity refer to the reciprocal mutuality and confidence individual members place on the reliability of the behaviour and actions of fellow members. For example, in informal community based organisations mutual dependence is the binding factor rather than published rules and regulations. Thrust and solidarity, however, do not necessarily imply the absence of competition and conflict in associational life. As civic associations grow in size and complexity, thrust and solidarity become diluted and assume more abstract and remote characteristics.

3.1.5 State-civil society relations

The key issue has already been referred to: autonomy, which is normally described as protection from interference by the state. However, African scholars warn against a static or homogeneous concept of state/civil society relations: these may vary from one institution or sector to another depending on the objectives, approaches and mutual understanding with state authorities. (Beckman 1993: 29; Mamdani 1991, 1996). However, there is a general perception that civic associations engaged in the promotion of sensitive issues such as human rights and the rule of law in developing countries may get into antagonistic and acrimonious relations with the state (Bratton 1989:429). Bratton argues that instead of pre-judging the nature of the relationships between the state and civil society we should adopt a more flexible analytical framework involving situations ranging between “*disengagement versus engagement*” (1989: 428).

3.1.6. The ‘burden’ of civil society: the functions of CSOs

Even those writers who are supportive of the building of civil society and its positive roles and functions note that civil society cannot be assumed to be virtuous by definition. The plurality and diversity of CSOs as well as the contradictions and conflicting interests and values means that theoretical or ideological prescriptions may not fit with empirical reality. A further question is whether civil society is an analytical category or a fully formed phenomenon. That aside, the following ideal type roles and functions of civil society organisations have been identified (IDS 1998: 13-15).

Enhancing state performance: This relates to the role of civil society organisations in enhancing the quality and effectiveness of public services: for example, the role of CSOs and particularly NGOs, in relief work, service delivery and development activities.

Public policy and decision making: CSOs can play a role in mobilising particular constituencies to participate in public policy and decision making process, especially amongst poor and marginalised groups.

Transparency and information: CSOs may also contribute to better governance and the development of a public culture of transparency and accountability in government as well as other influential segments of society through the discovery, publication and dissemination of information and debate about public policy, legislation, public expenditure allocations and policy implementation.

Social justice and the rule of law: CSOs also can contribute to social justice and the rule of law through advocacy and exposing violations of human rights, as well as by advocating and lobbying for the implementation of existing laws or legislative reform to improve the functioning and accountability of government.

Empirically it is not difficult to find organisations in many African countries engaged in all these activities, however, the role and impact of CSOs in terms of inculcating and institutionalising a public culture of participation in policy making and respect for human rights in Africa is yet to be guaranteed. The current aspiration in Africa for civil society as the pillar of democratisation and good governance may be somewhat exaggerated. According to one Ethiopian scholar:

I shall argue that the foundation for democratic and accountable governance lies not so much in discrete civil society institutions but rather in popular, mass-based civic movements.... At present civil society in Ethiopia can play an important role in promoting public awareness, but this is a much more limited role than securing democracy which is what donor agencies and others expect civil society to accomplish (Dessaiegn 1999: 3).

Finally, there is a prevailing assumption of a progressive transition in the role and functions of civil society, especially NGOs, from relief and rehabilitation, through development activities to advocacy. It is this assumption which underlies the current concern with rights-based approaches as the culmination of the vision and mission of civil society. However, this evolutionary scheme is questionable. It is more probable that civil society will always be plural and diverse in its objectives and functions.

3.1.7 Civil society: conceptual analysis or policy application

According to Lewis, the question of relevance and usefulness of the concept of civil society can be seen from two angles: the first one is "*something to think with*", namely as an analytical category useful for the purpose of describing and analysing social and political structures and process. The second one is as "*something to act with*", namely for the purpose of action and policy (Lewis 2002) For the reasons already advanced, the differing views on the concept, definitions, relevance and role of civil society, Lewis suggests that policy and action may be somewhat more problematic, but as a useful analytical tool he advances the following:

It is precisely the ambiguities, which lie at the heart of the idea of civil society that gives it importance at this moment in history. Cut loose from simplistic policy transfer from the West, the concept of civil society has become part of the political and social discourse of a wide range of groups and individuals in Africa and elsewhere. Whether or not civil society can be identified in recognizable forms 'on the ground', it has taken on meanings which are providing researchers, policy makers

and ordinary people with the means to rethink politics and citizenship under conditions of global change (Lewis 2002: 583-84).

3.2 Civil society in Ethiopia: history and development

3.2.1 Background to civil society in Ethiopia

Concepts and definitions of civil society have been dealt with in some detail in the preceding literature review by Dr Teketel in section 3.1 above and thus will not be addressed here again in this essay by Professor Christopher Clapham on the history and development of civil society in Ethiopia over the past more than half a century.

Ethiopia, it should be stated straight away, has provided a thoroughly unpropitious setting for the development of 'civil society'. By a very long way sub-Saharan Africa's oldest surviving state, it has a legacy of authoritarian government that has allowed only very limited space for the development of the autonomous organisations that civil society requires. Though Ethiopia has from the earliest times been a multi-ethnic state, and though individuals from a wide range of ethnic and social backgrounds have risen to the highest positions in it, its political culture and institutions have been disproportionately shaped by the cultures of the historically dominant Amharic and Tigrinya speaking areas. These were founded on the economic base provided by ox-plough agriculture, and have commonly been described as 'feudal'. Though there are important differences from the feudal experience of western Europe, this characterisation is broadly accurate in indicating an hierarchical society in which power derived from control over rights in land, and was dominated by monarchy, aristocracy and church. Ethiopian society, like any other, has never been entirely static, and important changes have taken place, most of all in the century that preceded the overthrow of the imperial system of government in the 1974 revolution. But attitudes towards authority, which are critical in the development of civil society, have been deeply entrenched and slow to change, not least because these have generally been enforced and reinforced by people in power who stood to benefit from them.

It has historically been extremely difficult, in highland Ethiopian society, to express open dissent from the actions and opinions of one's social superiors, and especially one's rulers. Such dissent has almost invariably been interpreted by rulers as constituting a public challenge to their authority, which has therefore had to be suppressed. This interpretation readily becomes self-reinforcing: people do not only dissent from the actions of their rulers *unless* they also wish to challenge their authority. Ethiopians are in practice rarely as subservient to their rulers as their public profession of obedience indicates; but dissent has had to be expressed in coded and secretive ways, resulting in the development of a political culture that has aptly been described as byzantine.

One looks in vain in Ethiopian history, therefore, for those institutions that provide the origins for the development of civil society in western Europe. The Ethiopian Orthodox Church, for example, did not form an institution distinct from the political authorities in the way that happened there; still less did Ethiopia experience any equivalent to the protestant revolution, with its emphasis on free thought, free expression, and free organization, which laid the foundations for the development of the modern idea of a civil society in northwest Europe and north America. There was no equivalent, in an almost entirely agrarian and pastoral society, to the cities which in Europe established

the basis for civic government and civil liberties, and for the idea of citizenship. Ethiopia did indeed experience a constant tussle for power between the monarch and an aristocracy established in the different regions, but this did not result in any formalized system of power-sharing. Instead, provincial rulers, entrenched behind the natural barriers provided by northern Ethiopia's spectacular topography, were able to combine formal obeisance to the emperor with effective local control. In any case, the government itself generally did not try to do very much: there were cases of brutal and autocratic rule aplenty, but these could only be endured or rebelled against; there was little attempt to restructure social life in ways that might call for more sustained and organised resistance, and little government administrative system through which central state policies could be implemented.

There were, inevitably, forms of autonomous local-level organisation, these fell into Chazan's categories of 'parochial organisations' but did not provide the kind of check on government power that the Western model of civil society implies. A form of justice known as *aferesata*, for example, involved communal attempts to identify criminals, while savings and self-help organisations known as *iddir* and *iqqub* have provided insurance and social support. Horizontally-linked social organisations were however few and weak in the hierarchically organised societies of highland Ethiopia, which were far removed from the misleading stereotype that sees African societies as being held together by communal values and mutual assistance.

Some of the other peoples incorporated into Ethiopia over the last century and a half have provided a more conducive background for civil society organisations, but these have been politically subordinated, and only with the advent of a measure of communal self-government since 1991 has there been any mechanism through which their social values could be incorporated into political institutions. The Gurage people, to the southwest of Addis Ababa, have maintained a very strong sense of mutual support that has enabled them to form Ethiopia's most prominent business community. Other southwestern peoples, such as the Kambata, Hadiya, Sidama and Welayta, in some degree share similar values. Oromo intellectuals have identified an ethic of equality, derived from the historic *gada* or age-grade system, that they contrast with the hierarchical structure of Amhara and Tigrayan societies, though in practice different groups of Oromo – Ethiopia's largest and most dispersed ethnic group or nationality – have evolved in very different ways; maintaining social cohesion and effective organisation within Oromiya has been correspondingly difficult. Some pastoralist groups, notably the Somali and Afar, have a level of individualism that comes close to anarchy. Taken as a whole, therefore, bases for civil society emanating from 'traditional' Ethiopian societies are few and weak.

3.2.2 The Haile-Selassie era

The development of formal institutions of the kind that we associate with civil society dates only to the era of emperor Haile-Selassie, and especially the period between Ethiopia's liberation from Italian occupation in 1941, and the revolution of 1974. Even so, these institutions were weak, and heavily restricted to the towns and especially Addis Ababa. In particular, newspapers and other media were entirely under state control, and (uniquely in Africa) there were no political parties of any kind – not even a ruling single party.

Labour unions originated with the railway workers in the mid-1940s, and spread to other, mostly foreign-owned, enterprises such as the Wonji sugar estates. They were regulated by a decree of 1962, and affiliated to the Confederation of Ethiopian Labour Unions (CELU). Despite close and often heavy-handed government supervision, unions did acquire a measure of autonomy prior to 1974, and the outbreak of a mass of strikes in early 1974 (reflecting declining living standards, especially after the 1973 oil price rises) was one of the precipitants of the revolution. There was however no means through which labour could be incorporated into a highly elitist political system run directly from the palace. The earliest business association, the Addis Ababa Chamber of Commerce, dates from the 1960s.

One especially intriguing kind of organisation, dating from the early 1960s, was the regional development association, formed by Addis Ababa residents originating from particular regions or ethnic groups, in order to raise funds for development projects in their homelands. These were characteristically established under the leadership of senior government officials who came from the area concerned, and sought the patronage of the emperor or some other member of the imperial family, in order to demonstrate their loyalty to the regime. The first and by far the most effective was the Gurage association, which could draw both on the high level of social solidarity among Gurages, and on their prominence in the Addis Ababa business community; leading Gurage businessmen were effectively assessed for the contribution that they were deemed able to provide, and social pressure was brought on them to pay it. The association's principal project was building a motor road that linked Gurageland to the national network. However, the formation in 1966 of an association that brought together two major Oromo groups, the Metcha-Tulama Self-Help Association, immediately aroused the government's suspicions, since an ethnically aware Oromo population would pose a major threat to the regime and, indeed, the unity of the country. Its president, General Tadesse Biru, was deputy commander of the territorial army, an organised militia of little military significance which Tadesse was however suspected of trying to turn into an Oromo force; he was also accused of making politically inflammatory speeches during a fund-raising tour of Oromo areas. Whatever the truth of these accusations – and the imperial government was deeply hostile to independent organisations that would be considered perfectly normal and acceptable in most countries – General Tadesse and his associates were arrested and the association was suppressed. One member of the association, an army lieutenant, was executed after throwing a hand grenade in an Addis Ababa cinema.

While civil society organisations in the provinces were scarce, the foundations were being laid in some places by the spread of Western, and especially Protestant churches, which were encouraged by Haile-Selassie only in those parts of the empire which were not historically associated with the Orthodox Church, and hence especially in the south and west. Missionaries were allowed to operate under a decree of 1944, and the most prominent mission church, the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus (EECMY) was formed from an amalgamation of Lutheran churches in 1959; it was especially strong among the Oromo of Welega, and also in parts of the south, notably Sidama and Kambata. Another evangelical church, Kale Hiwet, was stronger in other parts of the south, such as Welayta. Partly because their members were drawn from outside the Amhara-Tigrayan core, partly because of their external (and especially Scandinavian) connections, and partly perhaps also because of the theological basis of protestant Christianity, these churches provided a stronger basis for civil society activities than the Orthodox Church, and their members were prominent in other organisations such as the labour unions.

By far the most active and vocal independent organisations of the imperial era were however the student unions, which first came to prominence during the attempted *coup d'état* of December 1960, when students demonstrated in favour of the short-lived military regime. From then until the 1974 revolution, the university was a centre of opposition to the regime, and clashes between students and government authorities became a recurrent feature of Addis Ababa life. Though students were disproportionately drawn from urban and elite groups, they played a critical role in articulating wider grievances: the slogan 'land to the tiller', precursor of the revolutionary land reform of 1975, originated in student demonstrations in the late 1960s. They also had external linkages, notably through connections to the much more explicitly radical emigré Ethiopian student movements in North America and Europe, and their almost universal commitment to various forms of Marxism. It was through interest in Stalin's theory of 'the national question' among students in the early 1970s, who included the current Prime Minister Meles Zenawi, that the idea of ethnic federalism entered the Ethiopian political agenda.

But although many of the elements of a prospective Ethiopian civil society originated in the Haile-Selassie era, these had no way of bringing effective and constructive pressures to bear on government, in the way that Western concepts of civil society assume. The imperial regime, indeed, was strikingly devoid of mechanisms through which any form of political organisation could be incorporated into the decision-making process. It was therefore unsurprising that frustrated would-be civil society members, including the students and the trade unions, played a very prominent role in the upsurge of social protest that culminated in the 1974 revolution.

3.2.3 Civil society and the revolution

The outbreak of the Ethiopian revolution at the end of February 1974 was greeted by a massive effusion of civil society activities. The lid had been blown off a previously repressed society, and everyone (at least in the urban areas) rushed to participate in the new order. The stagnant state-owned press was replaced by a mass of enthusiastic bulletins; demonstrations took place daily, and extended to groups who would never previously have considered any public expression of their views; Ethiopians in the diaspora rushed back to join in the ferment; and for a while it seemed that a new, peaceful, open and democratic Ethiopia was to replace the straitjacket of the old regime.

This outpouring of popular sentiment has persuaded some observers that Ethiopia was indeed ready for an immediate transition to democracy, and that the rapid closing of the political space that ensued from November 1974 onwards was simply the result of the hijacking of the revolution by a brutal and dictatorial military oligarchy. This conviction is, in my view, naïf. In every revolution, from France after 1789 to Iran after 1979, this initial opening has been rapidly followed by repression, and Ethiopia was no different. In Ethiopia as in other revolutions, there were critical issues for decision – over land ownership, the status of Eritrea, the structure of government – about which conflict was inevitable; there was no tradition of peaceful debate and compromise; and the ideological positions established by the parties, whether nationalist or Marxist, were absolute and passionately held. Even so, the crackdown was particularly brutal. The mass murder of leading members of the old regime in November 1974 was followed by a vicious terror in which rival factions fought for power, the intensification of the war in Eritrea, revolt in parts of the countryside, the Somali invasion of Ogaden, and the eventual supremacy of a hard-line nationalist faction in the military, led by Mengistu

Haile-Mariam and supported to the hilt (with massive quantities of arms) by the USSR. The aspirations for a peaceful and open society simply vanished in the bloodshed.

Under the Derg, as the military regime was called, no rival to the centralised state was permitted to exist. It was much more repressive, because vastly more ambitious, more ruthless, and better organised, than the imperial regime. Complete control was re-established over the media. An efficient administrative grid, based on the peasants' associations in the countryside and the urban dwellers' associations (or *kebeles*) in the towns, was imposed on the entire population. The entire economy was brought under state control, down to state ownership of all land, and cumbersome bureaucracies were established to manage it. Independent labour unions were crushed, and brought under the official All Ethiopia Trade Union (AETU). Students and intellectuals either died in the terror, signed up with the regime, retreated traumatised into private life, went into exile, or (in a few cases) carried on the struggle as rural guerrillas. The general secretary of the Mekane Yesus church, Gudina Tumsa, was murdered by the government, as was the Ethiopian Orthodox patriarch Tewofilos, though the churches themselves survived. Eventually, on the tenth anniversary of the revolution in 1984 (and amidst the famine), the Workers' Party of Ethiopia was created, at the head of the last fully-fledged Communist regime to be established before the collapse of the Soviet bloc in 1989.

The Derg period was thus an unequivocally grim time for Ethiopia's still nascent and fragile civil society, but in retrospect it can be seen to have laid some of the foundations for the relative flowering of civil society groups since 1991. For a start, it demonstrated the counter-productivity of unfettered state control. Even when the regime had generally benevolent intentions, over agricultural development for example, the heavy-handed way in which it sought to impose them made clear the need for policy to be discussed and implemented in a more open way. At the other extreme, the appalling abuses of human rights brought home the need to control the state, in a way that had not previously been so obvious. The Derg pushed the idea of an authoritarian and centralised state to breaking point, and from the fragmentation that accompanied its collapse arose opportunities for autonomous social organisation that had not previously been recognised. The levels of organisation developed under the Derg also made necessary a more formalised system for controlling state power: whereas previously, civil and personal autonomy had depended on the possibilities for evasion inherent in a very weakly structured system of government, it now had to be more explicitly organised. Most controversially of all, resistance to the Derg drew to a significant extent on the mobilisation of ethnic or 'national' identities, in opposition to a highly centralised state, and in the process made the inherent pluralism of Ethiopia's social composition much more evident than before. Many of the historic obstacles to the creation of an effective civil society in Ethiopia nonetheless remained.

3.2.4 Civil society since 1991

The change of government in May 1991 led to a transformation – not only in principle, but to a significant extent in practice – in the role of civil society in Ethiopia. The new EPRDF Government had an explicit commitment to political pluralism, notably in the form of its policy of ethnic federalism, while the excesses of the Derg had encouraged an atmosphere far more conducive than previously to a free and open society. Global events, not least the commitment of donors to democracy, human rights and 'good governance', likewise created an environment in which domestic civil society received

some international protection. At the same time, powerful elements of state hegemony remained. These derived in part from historic attitudes associated with Ethiopian statehood, including concepts of authority that continued to equate open dissent with treason, and a deep resentment of external influence. In part, too, the EPRDF Government lacked a commitment to the liberal values on which civil society depends; its leadership was drawn from the same generation of pre-1974 student radicals as the Derg, and was still heavily imbued with Marxist concepts of politics; its immediate experience of fighting a long guerrilla war likewise predisposed it to authoritarian methods, strengthened by the conviction that it alone represented the real interests of the people, and especially of the exploited peasantry who had provided the backbone of the insurgency. There has been a tense and complex interaction between continuing authoritarianism and greatly enhanced opportunities for autonomous civil society activity.

The most striking evidence of autonomy is the emergence, for the first time in Ethiopian history (save for the brief post-1974 euphoria) of a genuinely independent press. There have been justified concerns about the quality of this press, and its heavy concentration in Addis Ababa and major provincial towns; there have also been problems of government harassment and the imprisonment of journalists. Unlike many other African states, there is no independent radio – a more powerful medium than the press, especially for reaching rural areas. The very existence of an independent press, however, guarantees at least some space for the dissemination of information unwelcome to the government, and for open discussion. It is symptomatic that the September 2001 crackdown in Eritrea included the closure of all independent newspapers; no such measure is conceivable in Ethiopia.

At the same time, there has been a burgeoning of formal civil society organisations, of a kind that likewise did not previously exist. Two of the most prominent, the Ethiopian Human Rights Council (EHRC) and the Ethiopian Women Lawyers Association (EWLA), have shown that it is now possible to establish organisations that are both autonomous and committed to public values such as human rights and the rule of law. There is equally a much increased space for professional associations such as the Chambers of Commerce and the Ethiopian Economics Association, and for independent think-tanks and research bodies like the Forum for Social Studies. For the first time, Ethiopia has since 1991 developed private institutions of tertiary education, heavily concentrated though these are in fields such as law and commerce where qualifications yield an immediate financial return. As with the press, it can be argued that these organisations are largely restricted to an urban (and Addis Ababa) elite; but this is an inevitable reflection of the structure of Ethiopian society, and their reach is gradually spreading out to smaller towns and the countryside.

The most explicit expressions of political pluralism, opposition parties, are also the most restricted; but at least, for the first time in Ethiopian history, these are now permitted to exist. The most noteworthy are the Southern Ethiopian Peoples' Democratic Coalition (SEPDC) led by Dr Beyene Petros, and the All Amhara People's Organisation (AAPO). As their names indicate, these are both based in individual regions, established under the new system of ethnic federalism, which makes it difficult for them to organise at a national level – unlike the ruling EPRDF, which is formally a coalition of different ethnic parties. In some regions, notably Oromia, independent political activity is closely monitored. At the same time, ethnic federalism (even under EPRDF control) does help to create niches within which civil society organisations can operate with a greater freedom than in a more centralized system. Religious organisations, and especially the

independent churches, can also work far more freely than before. There has been an explosion of church (and also mosque) building, and a rapid spread of pentecostalist sects. Even the Ethiopian Orthodox Church is no longer associated with the regime in the way that it was in the imperial era. Islamist activity, funded largely from Saudi Arabia, has come under increasing scrutiny.

Ethiopian civil society organisations clearly depend to a significant extent on external support: through direct diplomatic pressure, funding, and incorporation into global networks of one kind or another. Many of them would find it hard to survive without this support, and there are certainly organisations that have grown up in order to tap into opportunities for external patronage. Some civil society organisations have developed positions closely attuned to those of the government, and doubts have been expressed as to their autonomy. But there is also, to an extent that was not visible before, a real commitment to civil society among at least a number of individuals who have demonstrated a level of courage and dedication that goes well beyond the mere adoption of fashionable external ideas.

There remain considerable though ill-defined constraints on the ability of autonomous civil society organisations to operate as a normal and accepted part of the political process. However, there is nevertheless a real basis for an Ethiopian civil society in the making.

Chapter 4 The national typology of Non-State Actors

4.1 The criteria for development of a typology

The broadest conceptualization of civil society views civil society as a public domain of associational and civic life in between the state and the family. The very term NSA provides an overriding criterion for classification, that is independence from the State; however, in the Ethiopian context, as was mentioned in chapter 3, this can be a contentious issue. In addition it is clear that in Ethiopia, as in many developing countries, there is a great plurality and diversity of organisations and associations, making the task of providing a concise and workable typology difficult. A number of criteria can be used to classify organizations, such as:

- Functions of the organisation (for example: relief, service provision, development, promotion of specific interests, advocacy, etc).
- Organizational modalities/bases of organization (for example: membership based or non-membership organization; secular versus faith-based; traditional versus modern; particularistic (for example, ethnic, religious area, area based versus universalistic: citizenship, interest, shared values, professional, occupational, standards and principles).
- Legal status (for example: registered versus non-registered, formal versus informal).

Scientific rules of classification of empirical phenomena are guided by the principles of:

- Exhaustiveness: namely that the typology developed must be able to accommodate all the relevant individual entities of the universe. No relevant unit must be left out of the classification scheme.
- Exclusiveness: The typology developed must generate mutually exclusive categories in such a way that no single unit can fall into more than one category simultaneously.

4.2 The criteria used in the study

However, the enormous diversity and overlapping of functions and organizational modalities of non-state actors in Ethiopia may make it very difficult to meet these criteria of classification. Accordingly, in developing the typology of non-state actors for the purpose of this study, the following key considerations have been taken into account and information, where available, provided as part of the matrix. Notes on the specific sources follow this section.

The primary function of the organization

It is evident that NSAs may engage in more than one activity, which makes classification on the basis of function alone difficult. Non-State Actors may start with one specific activity or objective but in time may add more functions. In the Ethiopian context, this is important because the historical record, for example, indicates that a large number of international NGOs started to operate in connection with the 1984/85 famine focusing on relief and rehabilitation but later moved on to development activities. Furthermore, while engaging in development and service delivery, NSAs may engage in various types of awareness creation, empowerment of their constituencies as well as policy advocacy in specific areas of interest. While empirically individual non-state actors may thus simultaneously engage in more than one activity, it is however possible to classify non-state actors on the basis of their primary functions as stated in their article of association/formation, the amount of resources they devote to particular activities, as well as the functions perceived as primary by the NSAs themselves. Hence classification on the basis of primary functions can be taken as a generative principle.

Bases of organization and related issues

One major problem related to the diverse nature of non-state actors is that a number of other designations are used to represent the domain, such as: civil society and the third sector (vis-a-vis the so-called the first and second sectors referring to state and market respectively). In addition, the term Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) is also some times used to represent the whole universe of NSAs. For example, in Ethiopia it is customary to refer to all formal NSAs as NGOs (the official designation being *Mengistawi Yalhonu Dirjetoch*, (MEYAD) in Amharic). However, there is also an analytical position which views the term NGOs just as one sub-sector within the much broader domain of NSAs or civil society and after discussion with the Ministry of Capacity Building and the European Union, this point was taken into account in developing the typology.

Furthermore, there is an inconclusive controversy over whether to include in the civil society universe entities such as:

- (a) Traditional/informal/indigenous associations, also called Community Based Organizations (CBOs) for example, in the Ethiopian case iddir, and iqqub;
- (b) Political parties;
- (c) Free (non-government) press;
- (d) Churches.

In a way some of these problems are easy to handle because the study may be presumed to follow the Ethiopian law and accordingly define NSAs simply as all those associations and organizations so defined and registered according to existing relevant laws and regulations. However, since one of the purposes of the study was to develop a broad typology of NSAs in the country, following the legal definition of NSAs could have been considered too narrow and restrictive. Therefore it was decided to develop a broader and inclusive conception of the domain of NSAs followed by a more specific delimitation pertinent to the purpose and objective of the study.

One of the difficulties of this broader approach is, for example, related to CBOs. These may also be termed as self-help groups. According to existing laws CBOs are not part of the official domain of civic associations because the large majority are not formally registered with the Ministry of Justice. But totally excluding CBOs from the purview of the study not only leaves out an important area of the associational life of the people but also misses important developments in the CBO sector relevant to the objective of the study. CBOs in Ethiopia are currently developing beyond their traditional functions (for example, mutual help and insurance in the case of death and burial for iddir) and branching out into other important domains of activities. In addition, CBOs are currently working with both formal NGOs and other Non-State actors as well as the Government in various activities of a broadly public nature: for example, HIV/AIDS prevention and control.

Similarly, the issue of faith based organizations (FBOs), the free press, political parties can be handled with careful delimitation and justifications. In the case of FBOs for example, it can be argued that it is not the churches and religious establishments as such which can be included in the domain of NSAs but the affiliated association and organisations engaged in various activities of a broadly civic nature. In fact, in the Ethiopian context, some of the oldest and most important NSAs are precisely those faith-based organizations deriving from the major Christian denominations and Islam. A great deal of insight into the historical experience of NSAs including state-civil society relations under the various political regimes in the country can be gained from the FBOs.

Regarding the free press, in spite of the role and importance of the free press, to the extent of being characterized as the 'fourth estate' in the process of democratization and good governance in the context of developing countries, it is important to note that it is not individual entities of the free press that directly belong to the field of civil society as such but the affiliated associations and organizations of the free press, such as associations for journalists. However, since the presence and field of operation of the free press is considered important to the development of democracy in Ethiopia, a brief report is appended below.

The case of political parties is also contentious: the various intellectual traditions and theoretical perspectives on civil society make a distinction between civil and political society. Furthermore, although civil society cannot be viewed as totally a-political, one of its defining features is that it does not directly contend for state power. In democratic theory, the role of civil society is mainly viewed as promotion of civic political culture and democratic values through dialogue, education, and representation of interests rather than a direct contention for and capture of state power. The implication of this brief expose is that political parties as political parties

(both ruling and opposition) cannot be defined as belonging to the domain of NSAs. As in the case of the free press, the operation of political parties is crucial to the development of democracy and a brief report is appended below, although neither are included in the typology.

In defining Non-State Actors a further criterion is often used that of ‘non-profit making’, that is the organizations do not exist, as private enterprise does, to make a profit for the owners or shareholders. However, co-operatives are often counted as part of civil society and as Non-State Actors, although one of their primary purposes is to make a profit. However, co-operatives have other defining features: their self-help potential and their organizational base in membership as well as their potential to represent members’ interests in a primarily agricultural economy.

4.3 The typology

Taking in to account the various issues discussed above, the following broad typology of NSAs is used. The classification scheme is based on combination of various criteria suggested above (function, organization, legal status) as well as the specific interests of the clients of the study. However, there will remain some anomalies and inconsistencies with regard to exhaustiveness and exclusiveness although every effort has been made to eliminate double counting in estimating the numbers of each type of organisation, Further explanatory notes and comments on sources are provided below.

4.4 Notes on the classification and sources

1 Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs): (Ethiopian and international)

- Main function: relief, service delivery, development, in principle, wherever they operate in the country.
- Organizational basis: largely non-membership, that is the organisations have users or clients.

Those registered at federal level with the Ministry of Justice are included. Local NGOs that only work in one region register with the relevant Bureau of Justice and are included in the Regional typology.

2 Regional development associations

- Main function: relief, service delivery and development but these are mostly ethnically or area based, that is to serve the interests of an ethnic group or a specific area of the country.

- Organizational basis: largely membership based, although members may be drawn from outside the Region where the organization operates or indeed outside Ethiopia.

These organisations are often referred to as Government Organised NGOs (GONGOs) and their independence remains a contentious issue. While most are registered with the Ministry of Justice as NGOs and would defend their independence, commentators from other sectors of civil society would suggest their closeness to Government, in some cases the presence of prominent personnel on the boards of directors, and their close involvement in policy implementation makes their independence questionable. Some were developed in the post 1991 period, for instance the Amhara Development Association while others are older, for instance, the Gurage People Self-help Development Association. Likewise there are some very new ones such as the Afar Pastoralist Development Association which began in 1995. Where possible, these organisations are also shown on the regional typology to describe the regional distribution.

3 Faith-based organizations (FBOs)

- Main Function: Primarily relief, service delivery, development
- Organization: largely non-membership (in the strict sense of associational membership).

The focus here is not on the churches, mosques or religious establishments as such, but affiliated local organizations: all the major Christian Churches (Orthodox, Catholic, Protestant) as well as Islam have affiliated locally based organizations engaged in various relief, service delivery and development activities as well as advocacy and conflict resolution. NSAs under this category date from the Haile Selassie period, and some of them have a complex history of difficult relationship with the state during the Derg period. In addition, given the social and cultural foundations of the people in a society such as Ethiopia and the importance of religion in this foundation, the role of FBOs may be potentially large. It is because of these considerations that it is useful to put FBOs under a separate category (although most of their activities as well as legal status is similar to NGOs under section I above).

4 Organisations working in women's empowerment, human rights, governance and democracy and conflict prevention or resolution.

- Primary function: provision of education or services associated with these issues. In addition, many of these organizations are involved in advocacy and lobbying.
- Organizational basis: both client and membership based.

This group has been separated out because of the interests of the clients of the study. It should be noted that a prominent organization, the Ethiopian Women Lawyers Association, operationally falls in this category but is actually registered as a professional association. The Ethiopian Political Science Association appears twice in the register under professional associations and also under civic organizations working on human rights and democracy. In addition the Forum for Social Studies, although sometimes referred to as a professional association, is also a research, advocacy and lobbying organisation commenting largely in the area of rights.

There is a further distinction to be made. Many organisations would say that they aim to ‘mainstream gender’ in their operations. This section includes only those organisations that have special projects on women’s empowerment.

5 Other Non-State Actors

This category includes a large number of sub-categories:

- Primary function: representation of members’ interests
- Organisational basis: membership based

Business associations

The key example is the Chambers of Commerce. These are membership based and exist in most parts of Ethiopia.

Trade and labour unions

The Confederation of Ethiopian Trade Unions has nine affiliated trade union federations which themselves have union members. These cover the following areas: agriculture, forestry and fisheries, transport and communications, energy, chemicals and mining, food beverages and tobacco, textiles and garments, commerce and technique, construction and cement, hotels, tourism and general service, banks and insurance. The Confederation has total membership of about 300,000.

Professional associations

This includes organisations such as The Ethiopian Lawyers Association as well as policy and research organisations, for instance, the Ethiopian Economic Association and the Forum for Social Studies.

Youth, women's and farmers' associations

These are present in most regions and are organised in every kebele. Their independence from Government is questioned by some commentators.

Miscellaneous

This group contains a range of organizations with special interests. For instance, organizations and related associations specifically formed by people with disability to promote the interests, protect the rights, and provide special services to people with disability, for example, the Ethiopian Federation of Associations of People with Disability and the associations and organizations of people living with HIV/AIDS. Other examples in this miscellaneous group include cultural, sporting and historical associations.

Cooperatives

These groups are organised at community level and are there to represent the interests of their members which would include, for instance, farmers and traders as well as those connected with a specific trade. These groups are not registered with the Ministry of Justice but with the Federal Co-operatives Commission or regional Co-operatives Promotion Bureaux.

6 Community based organisations (CBOs)

The most important indigenous institution under this category in Ethiopia is the iddir (others included are iqqub, maheber, debo). These are primarily self-help or mutual aid organisations focused on serving the social and economic interests of their members. They are membership based and most are not registered, although some, particularly in Addis Ababa are registered.

4.6 The Free Press

The number of free press newspapers and magazines estimated to be operating in Ethiopia is around 50. However, this is only a broad estimate since many of these are short term operations. This compares with five federal newspapers and ten regional papers. In addition the party of Government also has its own newspapers. There is no free radio or television in Ethiopia but the State-run broadcast media have federal and regional stations. The free press operates largely in Addis Ababa and there is a significant lack of diversity in all forms of media within the regions.

The law governing the press and broadcast media officially guarantees freedom of speech, which is also a constitutional provision. There is also a Broadcasting Agency which, when in operation, will be in charge of licensing, although many question its ability to be objective and therefore encourage diversity. Critics also argue that Government has the means to suppress information that it does not wish to be circulated, for example by confiscating copies of newspapers.

There is a new press law which is in the process of being enacted. Critics of this argue that the free media will not be given fair treatment as provisions include that non-Ethiopians are not allowed to invest in free newspapers, whereas this is allowed for State-run media, thus discouraging greater variety of provision. The Government argues that outside funding would make the free media subject to foreign manipulation. In addition it is argued that proposed regulations on who may be employed as a journalist are discriminatory and will be used to control employment and that a requirement for the licensing of street vendors of newspapers will be used to impede distribution of the free press.

Representatives of the free media argue that in the current situation the Ministry of Information is all-powerful and that what is required is an independent media authority in charge of licensing and media policy. The other area which concerns representatives of the free media is that of access to information. While a freedom of information act is currently being drafted, it is argued that the Government is reluctant to share. As one representative of the free media said: "*The Government is not ready to give information and to work together with the private press.*"

Asked what could be done to build capacity, one spokesperson for the free media commented on the need for better training for journalists (with open access to representatives of the free and State owned media) and for improved research facilities, for example, an internet centre. Although it is one opinion, this representative argued that donors could help by pressing for law reform: "*In their country they know what role the press plays and what freedom of the press means...at least it has to be their word about democracy...I would rather they fight the draconian law and not help us ...because that is an issue of principle.*"

4.7 Political parties

At the last election, there were five political parties with national coverage (including the party of Government) and a further 14 with partial coverage as follows:

Main parties with national coverage

Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF)

United Ethiopian Democratic Party (UEDP: formed after the last election, see note below)

All Ethiopian Union Party (AEUP)

All Amhara People's Organisation

Council of Alternative Forces for Peace and Democracy in Ethiopia (CAFPE),
predominantly southern based

Parties with partial coverage (more than one region)

Oromo National Congress (ONC)

Khambata People's Democratic Organization

Southern People's Democratic Organization

Afar National Liberation Front

Agew People's Democratic Organization

Dawro People's Revolutionary Democratic Organization

Gambella People's Liberation Party

Selti People's Democratic Unity Party

Khambata People's Congress

Shekecho People's Democratic Movement

Gamo Gofa People's Democratic Organization

Tembaro People's Democratic Organization

Hadiya People's Democratic Organization

Mareko People's Democratic Organization

In total, however, there were 65 registered parties at the time of the last election. It should be noted that the party of Government has links with other parties which may be registered independently. In addition there are several parties operating outside Ethiopia in North America, Europe and other African countries that are not registered. Most of these claim to represent a specific ethnic group. Registration based on ethnicity and the right to represent a single ethnic group is permitted under Ethiopian law.

In the House of Representatives, the main legislative making body in the Ethiopian parliamentary system, only 12 seats out of 542 are held by opposition parties: 8 seats are held by Southern parties (Hadiya and Khambata), one seat by All Ethiopian Democratic Party and 2 seats by the United Ethiopian Democratic Party.

Registration for political parties is carried out by the Election Board and each party is required to have a constitution and to have 15,000 members from 4 regions to register as a national party.

Women's representation is very low. In the House of People's Representatives female representatives make up 7.7 per cent of the total, 12.9 per cent in the regional councils and 13.9 per cent in the Kebele councils. There are 6 women in senior decision making positions: out of 16 ministerial offices there is only one female minister, 4 state ministers and 1 vice minister.

Opposition parties complain that they are subjected to harassment and that citizens are not free to openly support an opposition party. Fear of losing a Government job, the fact that land is State owned and that public services are used as an instrument of pressure are some of the reasons advanced. Most challenges occur at election time and complaints include the lack of access to public media experienced by opposition parties, the limited coverage of the free media and its cost, and a general culture of harassment by Government cadres, which is most frequent in the rural areas. Financial constraints also impede opposition politics. The Party of Government, it is said, has most resources, makes use of public resources at election times and opposition parties are prohibited from receiving funds from abroad and are therefore dependent on member's contributions which are minimal in a poor country. A commitment to State financing for political parties has never been enacted.

One of the key weaknesses of opposition parties in Ethiopia is their large number, their failure to form around issues and therefore their splintered attack on the party of Government. Coupled with the emphasis on ethnicity, issue based politics is barely on the agenda. After the last election the democratic parties (Ethiopian Democratic Unity, The Joint Political Forum and the Ethiopian Democratic Party came together to form the United Ethiopian Democratic Party. With the 2005 election firmly in view there are moves to create a coalition of opposition parties: The United Front. To date meetings have been held between 15 opposition parties, 10 in the diaspora and 5 from within Ethiopia (UEDP, AEUN, ONC, CAFPD and Southern People's Council.)

Major demands of the opposition groups which would help to ensure free and fair elections include the following:

- The Election Board which governs the formulation of election procedures and oversees the conduct of elections is currently composed of members who are nominated by the Prime Minister and ratified by the House of Representatives which itself is of course dominated by the Party of Government. The demand is for an independent Board whose members are selected in an open and transparent manner to ensure neutrality. Election courts for the processing of election complaints of abuse should also be neutral and independent.

- Open access to the public media for opposition parties should be a requirement of law and enforced.
- Security of opposition candidates should be guaranteed to enable free movement and freedom to campaign.
- More extensive use of international observers throughout the election process to monitor and guarantee respect for human and constitutional rights.
- State financing of political parties and legislation to control the use of public resources to ensure a more equal contest.

4.8 Notes on sources

The following sources were consulted to compile the national typology:

1 Ministry of Justice-Association Registration Office (MoJ/ARO). List of Associations Registered in the MoJ/ARO (Amharic Title, No Date (ongoing compilation).

2 Christian Relief and Development Association (CRDA): CRDA Members Profile. CRDA: Addis Ababa, May 2003.

In general the CRDA document provides a good description of various aspects of almost all its member organizations but CRDA members form only a portion of even the NGO sector.

3 Ministry of Capacity Building (MCB): Non-Governmental Organizations/NGOs/ Regional Distribution in Ethiopia (Chart data source:- Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Commission's Report of 2002. MCB, March 2003.

This document gives us an aggregate statistical profile specifically for the NGO sector drawing on the DPPC report for 2002. However, there are some differences when comparing the figures from CRDA with those from DPPC. It would appear that the DPPC sometimes records projects rather than organisations.

Chapter 5 The main findings of the research

5.1 Introduction

This section of the report draws on interviews conducted during both field visits. The first field visit took place in Addis Ababa and interviews were held with a variety of Non-State Actors (NSAs), donors and representatives from the Ministries of Capacity Building and Justice. In the second field visit, interviews were held in nine regional capitals (Gambella and Addis Ababa were excluded) with representatives of regional Government and NSAs. The Government officials were drawn from the Bureaux of Justice, Disaster Preparedness and Prevention, Finance and Economic Development, Capacity Building and the relatively newly created Bureaux which have responsibility for membership organisations, for example, the Bureau of People's Representation and Organisational Affairs although this is entitled differently in some regions. A wide range of representatives from NSAs was interviewed, including international and national (Ethiopian) NGOs; development associations; membership associations, such as women's, farmers' and youth associations; co-operatives; professional and business associations and iddirs.

The section is organised in parts. The first part deals with the definitions of civil society used by each of the groups of respondents and discusses the various views on the role of civil society: views from the federal and regional levels are considered in turn. The second part considers the relationship between Government and civil society at federal and regional level. The final part discusses views on the strengths and weaknesses of civil society organisations.

5.2 The definitions of civil society used by the respondents

The results of the first field visit in Addis Ababa showed a large measure of agreement between each of the key groups of interviewees on the definition of civil society. Broadly speaking all parties excluded the private sector and the Government and its agencies in their definitions of civil society. Most respondents agreed that civil society should include Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) that is both international and national organisations that are registered with the Ethiopian Ministry of Justice. This category included associations of NGOs and networks of associations such as Christian Relief and Development Association.

Regional and local development associations were also included by most respondents although there was disagreement as to whether those that are closely associated with Government, such as the Tigray Development Association, should be included. One of the main criteria for inclusion as part of civil society used by most respondents was that of independence from government and the main issue over the inclusion of development associations was the question of their relationship with Government. This was particularly noticeable at the regional level where NGOs frequently viewed development associations as an 'arm' of the Government. The independent status of membership organisations, such as the women's, farmers' and youth groups was also questioned by NSA respondents in the regions.

However, it should be noted that Government spokespersons at the regional level clearly included development associations and membership organisations as part of civil society as did the representatives of those organisations themselves. Indeed, Government spokespersons as well as the representatives of development and membership organisations stressed their wide membership and the fact that they 'represented their members' interests as important reasons for their inclusion as the following comment from a regional government spokesperson suggests: *"organisations that are set up by the interests of their members... for service reasons and not for profit."*

Development associations and mass membership organisations were formed at different times in different regions, some are much newer than others, and although all are registered as NGOs with the Ministry and Bureaux of Justice, the Government was the main instigator behind the formation of many of these. The comment of one representative of a women's association illustrates this dichotomy: *"It is the direction of the Government that we should have civil society organisations...we are a totally civic organisation acting as an NGO... we are a partner with the regional government... we are not part of the Government institutions."*

However, a representative of a different women's organisation explained that in a change of policy three years ago, the Government decided that these organisations should become independent, although it should be noted that many retain Government members on their boards of directors. This issue is discussed further in the section on the relationship between Government and civil society.

Professional associations, such as the Ethiopian and Addis Ababa Chambers of Commerce and others representing lawyers and economists, for instance, were considered by all to be members of civil society, as were trade unions and confederations of unions. Faith based groups and community based organisations, both registered and unregistered, such as iddir and iqub were also included.

Although the European Union itself includes the private sector as within civil society, most respondents excluded it on the grounds that it is profit making. However, some interviewees included co-operatives on the grounds that they served their members' interests and were also 'self-help' organisations, although they also aim to make a profit. The media was also excluded by most interviewees on the grounds that the media was either private and profit-making or a Government organisation. However, media associations such as professional associations or unions of journalists were considered as members of civil society and the point was made by NSAs and donors that it is important to work with the media, particularly the free media, to support civil society. Similarly, most respondents excluded political parties from the definition although one donor pointed out that in terms of building a pluralistic civil society it was also important to work with such groups.

In summary, the key criteria used by respondents to define civil society were: independence from Government, organisations which operate on a non-profit making basis and whose aim is to 'serve the interests of their members' and those that operate on a self-help basis.

5.3 The role of civil society

The results of the interviews in Addis Ababa suggested that there was general agreement by donors and NSAs of a three fold function for civil society. Service delivery was one named function, which is most generally associated with NGOs. It was suggested that Government alone would never solve the problem of poverty and therefore civil society could contribute to poverty reduction through provision of services. Secondly, it was acknowledged that civil society has a role to play in empowering citizens, through promotion of transparency and accountability. A third function was outlined as the creation of a democratic, pluralistic society through the promotion of interest groups. In connection with NGOs this was described as 'advocacy and policy dialogue', though the role of the broader spectrum of NSAs would include the pursuit of sectional interests, for example, the promotion of the welfare of its members by a trade union.

The Government spokespersons at the federal level put forward a slightly different view of the role of civil society. This was very much a legalistic view based on the understanding that organisations are free to promote the interests of their members or their 'client' group as long as they abide by the law and the rules of their own associations. In reference to non-registered organisations, the view was that these should respect the norms of society. However, there was also recognition that civil society should work in partnership with Government towards poverty reduction and that it has a role in democratisation. This was described in terms of the conduct of civic and human rights education and the monitoring of elections. It was also acknowledged that there should be a partnership in which civil society should be involved in planning and implementation of Government policy and that Government should likewise be involved in the planning for civil society interventions.

The regional interviews elicited interesting discussions on the role of civil society. On the one hand there was a very clear view put forward by representatives of Government that NGOs are there to further development and to supplement or provide the services that the Government cannot deliver: *"They are mainly organised to solve social problems that the Government cannot do... to fill the gap."*

On the other hand there was several comments that recognised a quite separate view of the role of civil society corresponding to the view put forward by the donors and NSA spokespersons at the federal level: that civil society has a role to play in empowering citizens through promotion of their interests and also in the creation of more transparent and accountable government. Some comments from government spokespersons in different regions illustrate these points.

"We have to build a democratic society ...(it) can only be built when people know what their interests are... let people get the chance to be organised." (Government spokesperson)

"These organisations are getting stronger and they can play an important role in the political forces – they can challenge the Government if there is something wrong...or they can contribute a lot of things for the Government in terms of policies...for example the journalists they can expose a lot of things for people... they can correct if there is something wrong." (Government spokesperson)

"To bring forward the best for their members, to provide them security and good governance and to create a good environment so they can have their rights and responsibilities." (Government spokesperson)

While such comments are illustrative of a changing view within Ethiopia, and particularly within Government, it should also be acknowledged that this was not universal. In some of the more marginalised regions there was little understanding of a role beyond 'gap filling'. Indeed, in such regions references were made mostly to NGOs rather than the wider concept of other NSAs within civil society and the emphasis was almost entirely on service delivery. It should be noted that the quotes shown above were comments made by precisely those Government officials who have responsibility for building capacity or for liaison with NSAs and therefore it might be expected that their views are not shared by all who have to deal with NSAs. Indeed, some commented directly that among their colleagues there was little understanding of a wider role for civil society and that NSAs too lack a broader perspective.

The NGOs interviewed at regional level were all devoted to a wide variety of development activities. Many spoke of their role in promoting members' or users' interests and although there were some good examples of advocacy and lobbying to take forward these views, they were clear that in terms of their ability to engage in policy dialogue there were limitations and in some regions it was obvious that NGOs did not engage in any lobbying and advocacy activities at all. Some of the larger development associations and membership organisations clearly recognised their role in making an input to policy and claimed successes in this respect, although the issue of independence raised earlier prompts questions about the strength of this claim.

However, it should be noted that some NSAs were also forthright in their understanding of a role for civil society in democratisation.

"I want to say they are the countercheck of Government – they can contribute a lot ... they can shake up the Government ... and exercise their democratic rights... they are democratic counter checks." (spokesperson Women's Association)

"Civil Society are the mirrors of Government ... if civil societies are acting freely it is a sign of democracy." (Professional Association spokesperson)

Such views are not necessarily widespread. Indeed, other comments from NSAs suggest that this understanding is not shared by many who see their function mainly in terms of service delivery. Those holding such broad views of the role of civil society also questioned whether there were sufficient procedures for civil society to act on to carry out such checks and balances and that both Government and civil society need to have a much better understanding of the role of civil society.

In summary, there was a wide spectrum of views expressed about the role of civil society both at federal and regional levels which is indicative of the changing climate within Ethiopia. Donors, some NSAs and some Government spokespersons clearly recognise a wider role for civil society in terms of the empowerment of citizens and the creation of a more democratic, transparent and accountable Government but this

understanding is not shared by all and it was particularly absent in the case of the more marginalised regions. It is also questionable whether the more enlightened views expressed by some are translated into action to facilitate greater dialogue and partnership between Government and civil society. This is investigated further in the section on the relationship between Government and NSAs.

5.4 The relationship between Government and Non-State Actors

At federal level the overall relationship, or rather lack of a working relationship, is based on a mutual lack of trust which reflects the different views that Government and NSAs have of the role of civil society organisations in a modern state.

The federal Government views

From the Government side there is recognition of the lack of trust, which it sees in part as an 'unfounded' fear of Government control. Within one section of the Government this was seen in part as stemming from the history of Ethiopia: a 'hangover from the previous regime' which had bred mistrust in both parties. From the Government perspective NSAs are seen as having unreasonable fears about control and regulation which are not based on fact. One spokesperson commented that there was no evidence to show that the Government had acted unreasonably in de-registering any organisation, a view which would undoubtedly be contested by a number of civil society organisations.

There was also recognition by the Government respondents that some Government personnel view civil society organisations as part and parcel of opposition parties and that this colours their perception of the role of civil society. Likewise there was also an admittance that some Government officials believe that civil society organisations should always support Government policies and ideas, leaving little space for a pluralistic approach.

Two current contentious issues highlight this lack of a working relationship. Government respondents felt that NSAs, and in particular NGOs, mistrusted the Government's attempts to relate to civil society through the auspices of the Ministry of Capacity Building because they saw this as another feature of 'control'. The second is the whole issue of the legal framework and regulation. New legislation to govern the NGO sector is currently in its second phase of drafting. However, it was the Government view that the NGO sector was unrealistic and unfair in criticising the legal process and regulatory framework. This Government view is perhaps best summed up in the words of one spokesperson who commented that: some organisations think: "*this is my own NGO and who are you to control.*" In support of this view cases were cited of NGOs which had allegedly made improper use of funds.

It was also pointed out that the Government had involved representatives of civil society in the discussion of the draft legislation and that a number of issues of concern to the NGO sector had been included: the change in the requirement to register annually to every three years, the legalisation of networks or umbrella

organisations and the legalisation of income generating activities. It should be noted that the NSA sector is critical of the draft legislation and its alleged failure to respect Constitutional provisions on freedom of association and ownership of property. However, the correctness of either view is not the issue. These comments are included as illustration of the gap in understanding between both parties as to their respective roles and functions.

The Government view on networks provides a further example. From the Government perspective networks were seen as wishing to go beyond the limits of information sharing to actually 'implementing projects' which was not regarded as a legitimate activity.

The NSA view at federal level

The responses from the NSA representatives interviewed in Addis confirm the lack of trust although several of those interviewed commented that the relationship had improved over recent years and that a minority reported good working relationships with the Government over certain issues. There was also recognition from some that civil society organisations are not mature in their approach to Government and were partially to blame for the breakdown in communication: there was some sense of shared responsibility.

On the negative side, the issue of the Government being 'controlling' and unwilling to listen was mentioned by several respondents. Asked about the barriers between Government and civil society, one commented: *"The major barrier in my opinion, is that the Government still thinks it is the only body in the whole development process in this country... they really believe that they are the ones that know everything"*. There was a feeling that although the Government formally states its wish to work in partnership and to involve civil society organisations in policy dialogue, in practice the process is not participative. As one respondent remarked: *"(the) Government has to change ...from their heart. They speak about participation but they don't operate in this way... there is a need for a fundamental change in their perspective"*. A second representative from the NGO sector spoke about the Government's *"extreme reluctance... to accept the growth of NGOs, they see this as threatening"*.

The view that the Government should be less involved in controlling civil society but more proactive in providing an enabling environment was put forward by several respondents. There was little support for a Government role in capacity building but a definite view advanced by several organisations that the Government should be providing an enabling environment. Several organisations were critical of the current draft of the federal legislation for civil society organisations and there was criticism of the lack of consistency of the registration and implementation regulations at regional and sub-regional level and complaints about overly bureaucratic procedures which are extremely time consuming and wasteful of resources.

The major stumbling block is over the question of civil society's right to advocate and lobby on behalf of its client group or users. Two of the organisations interviewed had been suspended by the Government in the recent past. Although these suspensions had ostensibly been about 'technical issues' such as late annual returns to the Ministry of Justice, the opinion was that suspensions had occurred because the

Government disapproved of the organisations' activities or questioned their right to make a public stance on key issues.

Several respondents put forward the view that there were certain issues on which the Government was prepared to listen and accept alternative views but others which were definitely 'no-go areas'. This was summed up by one commentator: *"If you do advocacy on issues like women or youth rights (even at the federal level) you are safe. If you do advocacy at the lower level, it is much better. If you do advocacy at the federal level on the Government's policy package, you are at risk."*

There were several examples of NGOs which had successfully established good working relationships with Government officials and some elected representatives at federal level and successfully advocated for changes in legislation and policy in key areas of family law and the penal and civil codes and some of the professional associations also noted consultative relationships. The Poverty Reduction Strategy and the policy on food security were also cited as examples where meaningful consultation had taken place. However, others commented that sensitive areas like the rights of pastoralists, human rights issues and the policy of agricultural-led industrialisation were subjects where the Government did not wish to listen.

It is also interesting to note that when asked about advocacy and partnership working, the respondents most frequently spoke about making contact with or establishing a relationship with Government officials. Only one or two organisations talked about making contact with elected representatives. Whilst this might indicate a lack of expertise amongst civil society organisations, in the opinion of one respondent it reflects the reality of the parliamentary situation in Ethiopia: *"the parliamentarians are there to rubber stamp ... there is not that much interest in creating checks and balances and questioning."*

Many organisations commented that it was much easier to establish good working relationships at the local (regional and sub-regional) level and quoted examples of successful advocacy strategies. For instance one organisation spoke about using its own funds to innovate in the area of non-formal education and then successfully involving local officials in sharing good practice as a method of advocacy. Again it should be noted that organisations commented that uncontentious issues like action on traditional harmful practices and HIVAIDS were where they had most success in terms of advocacy. However, there were also comments that suggested that the decentralisation process is hampering effective action at the local level. Organisations complained that the frequent change of local Government personnel connected with this process made it extremely difficult to establish meaningful and effective working relationships.

Asked to explain the mistrust between Government and civil society, several respondents commented on the historical context whilst others offered that civil society organisations were seen as allied to opposition parties or viewed as dependent on donors and to be pushing a 'foreign' agenda. However, one respondent attributed the recently improved relationship to the fact that the Government also has to listen to 'foreign donors' as part of the PRSP process and was unwilling to scare away resources. The effect of a 'more democratic' wing in the ruling party, the need for NGO help with food aid in recent drought periods and the presence of more informed and less compliant citizens in the post-Imperial and post-

Derg periods were also advanced as reasons for a recently improved climate for civil society.

In terms of civil society's responsibility for building a better relationship with Government, there was recognition that although the Government might wish to "*control everything...we also have to push for more space.*" It was also acknowledged that some organisations are not mature enough to establish dialogue with Government: that advocacy requires a collective voice and that there is a lack of effective fora for advocacy. The competitiveness of NGOs and the fact that they don't talk to one another was also highlighted along with the unwillingness of some civil society organisations to speak out.

The Donor view

To some degree the Donor view represents a mid-way position between the NSA and Government. There was general agreement that: "*there's a situation of general mistrust*" and many comments put this down to the historical context of the development of civil society in Ethiopia, the relative 'newness' of the sector and the lack of clarity of understanding on the part of both Government and NSAs of the role of civil society. Several donor representatives commented that the Government saw NSAs and NGOs in particular as 'service deliverers' and 'gap fillers' rather than as organisations with a stake in policy dialogue and development. One donor representative commented: "*There is no understanding in reality of what NGOs do outside of construction and food distribution... Relief is well understood by Government but not development*".

Many comments reiterated the belief of the NSA sector that the Government is seen as wishing to control everything. This was variously described as a "*top down approach*", "*paternalism*", "*the state is (seen as) the centre of everything*" and, less delicately, as "*authoritarian*". However, there was also recognition that the lack of dialogue and mistrust was not only the fault of the Government. NSAs were seen as reluctant to organise themselves and lacked the skills and knowledge to engage with Government. Others suggested that NGOs feared Government and were therefore reluctant to 'speak out' and that in some cases the lack of NGOs' own accountability gave the Government an excuse to ignore them.

However, there was also acknowledgement that the relationship between Government and NSAs had improved recently. It was felt that the consultation over the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper and the subsequent setting up of a civil society group to monitor implementation of the strategy had been a major step forward. This was described by one respondent as: an "*opening of the door for civil society*". The formation of a group to work on a food security policy, at the invitation of the Government, was also cited as a positive development. However, others emphasised that there was a continuing need to build trust and for the Government to be more open, to recognise that civil society is a source of expertise and has a role to play in policy and development and that real opportunities for consultation should be provided, not just tokens. The Government was described by one commentator as professing to want a partnership but not understanding what the process should be.

Other causes of the communication barrier between Government and NSAs were pinpointed as the lack of enabling legislation and the bureaucratic procedures that civil society organisations have to undergo in order to work at federal or local levels. These factors were described as contributing to frustration and lack of trust.

A quote from one respondent sums up much of what the donor group discussed and the stage of the development of the Government/civil society relationship: *"They (NSAs) say there is more openness from the Government since about two years ... they are still unsure and careful but are a little more willing to organise themselves and take their place... but a lot of them are from the old generation and are afraid of engaging... so there is still lots of fear... but there is the beginning of trust and I think too from the Government...It is a building of trust from both sides that is in process"*.

The relationship at regional level: the NSA view

Most of the interviews of NSAs in the regional capitals were conducted with NGOs, the development associations, women's farmers' and youth associations and co-operatives.

The 'mistrust' described at federal level was less evident at the regional level where NGOs engaged in development activities have to register with the Disaster Preparedness and Prevention Bureaux or in some cases the Bureaux of Finance and Economic Development. In order to operate at the regional or sub-regional level a working relationship has to be established in order to get things done. The bureaux also have a role in monitoring and evaluating the work of NGOs and this inevitably means working together. Most NGOs interviewed suggested that they had established partnership working although there were complaints about the bureaucratic nature of the relationship. As one NGO commented: *"as long as we behave properly and submit our reports on time we are the darling of the Government."*

However, it must be remembered that in the most marginalised regions, NSAs are extremely thin on the ground and here it was clearly difficult for organisations to establish a working relationship with Government. One spokesperson from an NGO in such a region described the situation as *"not being enrolled in the regions' development vision."*

Where there were good working relations established, NGOs in some regions also reported some successes in terms of lobbying and advocacy. One spokesperson for an international NGO pointed out that where the NGO had resources and was able to demonstrate innovative and good practice, Government officials were able to adopt new ideas. Examples from NGOs included successful inputs to policy development on issues such as exemption schemes for health charges, agricultural schemes for pest control, water conservation schemes, conflict prevention, lobbying on the land issue to ensure women's entitlement and the regional family law and on environmental issues. One international NGO also reported that they thought that the contacts made by their Addis headquarters had been particularly helpful in getting them access.

However, other comments described the lack of understanding by Government officials of the role of NGOs particularly in terms of their input into policy. Several commented that their relationship with officials below the regional level was often more difficult than that at the regional level. One commented that, as an NGO, when it tried to mobilise people at the local level it was blamed for having a 'hidden political agenda'. Others commented that the Government was not good at 'acknowledging our contribution' or 'using our expertise'.

As at the federal level, comments from NGOs and Government spokespersons noted the lack of co-ordination amongst NGOs and their inability to network and therefore to provide an effective and coherent voice for Government to listen to. Likewise there were some comments from NGOs about the rapid turnover of personnel particularly at the sub-regional levels and therefore difficulties in establishing effective working relationships.

The development associations and membership organisations usually reported excellent working relationships, particularly in the more developed regions. Answers to questions about the governing structures of some of the largest of these organisations often revealed that boards of management included high ranking federal and regional Government officials or in some cases elected representatives and therefore the comments about their relationship with Government, the 'access' of these organisations and their ability to engage in the policy development process have to be viewed within this context. However, many of these organisations in the most developed and larger regions reported direct access to Government officials and elected representatives and had non-voting 'seats' on the councils. Such structures were not in place in the least developed regions and in some places it is clear that development associations and membership organisations are at a very early stage of development.

There were good examples of policy and advocacy activities from among the membership associations in some of the more populous regions. In particular the women's associations reported several successes including: making input into the regional versions of the family law (the issues of land entitlement for women, rights for cohabiting couples and provisions for girls forced into early marriages were mentioned), lobbying for greater women's representation within the political structures and affirmative action to secure entitlement to agricultural extension services for female headed households and rights to food for work programmes. However, there were also comments which indicated the lack of information coming from Government about proposed policies which made it difficult for organisations to lobby and advocate effectively.

The Government view

Again most respondents reported good working relationships although there were comments about some NGOs which failed to give out adequate information about their activities reinforcing the view stated earlier that the 'good relationship' may to a certain extent rely on NGOs sticking to the agreed procedures.

In the earlier section we reported a range of views about the role of civil society and it is clear that those who favoured a broad view encompassing a role in terms of empowerment and involvement in policy dialogue also acknowledged the Government's limitations in bringing this about. This was partially blamed on the lack of understanding of some Government officials and the newness of these ideas in Ethiopian society but also it was recognised that very often the structures to support policy dialogue and genuine consultation are absent. One Government official commented that the Government has to acknowledge what are the advantages of having a strong civil society, it has to: *"internalise what are the advantages (and to) direct the conditions for this how are they going to (do it) what support is expected from the Government... how to build a relationship with civil society"*.

The problem of a lack of a culture of dialogue was commented on by one Government spokesperson: *"not only the civil society, the Government workers, they have a fear if they criticise the Government they will be out of a job or something like that...but in a democratic society this is upside down ... they should be able."*

There were some encouraging signs of movement in this direction of changing this culture at the regional level. Several regions reported establishing NGO fora, conferences that had been held to discuss regional policy, NGO and Government co-operation in drawing up guidelines for NGOs, meetings to discuss the draft NGO legislation and proposals to have NGO/Government fora organised on a sectoral basis to cover, for example, education, agriculture, health etc.

However the issue of the lack of willingness to exchange the information necessary to dialogue was also commented on: *"If I don't tell you my problem you cannot know what to do, what way to help...the Government should be transparent to say what problems it has, at what state it is ... the same is true of assisting organisations...they should show their transparency also."*

In summary, the relationship between civil society and Government is fragile but beginning to grow. Much needs to be done to build capacity on both sides if civil society is to play a full part in the development of Ethiopia but as one respondent noted: *"the door is open"*.

5.5 Strengths and Weaknesses of Non State Actors

5.5.1 Strengths

Most of the comments from Addis-based donors related to the NGO sector, other sections of civil society did not seem to feature much in their funding relationships. The donors recognise the core current strengths of NGOs: that they work in the regions; address poverty issues via service delivery and have good contacts with local communities. The overall message was that national NGOs are working hard in difficult circumstances and with limited resources. The donors noted that some organisations are undertaking training and using information to change, take on new roles and improve their own internal organisation and governance. Change is

apparent in many examples. Several commentators noted the growing ability of organisations to plan, fund raise and develop longer-term strategies.

It was pointed out that the sector, and in particular the number of indigenous NGOs, has grown substantially in recent years and although there is still a strong emphasis on service delivery there were examples of NGOs and other NSAs that were spearheading new forms of work in policy and advocacy. In other words although the national NGO sector appears weak to them, its strengths lie in its increasing openness to change, especially in areas of governance, lobbying and advocacy, which are priority concerns of the donors.

The Addis based NGOs were more upbeat about their sector's strengths which included their presence in the regions, contact with the local communities, membership base (where this exists), use of volunteers (only mentioned by one or two specific organisations), public and donor confidence, and media skills (again, only one or two highlighted this aspect). Their message also was that the sector is changing in relation to: advocacy work, internal governance, management and planning.

In reality the donors and the NSAs share much the same perception of NSA strengths, both asserting that a major strength of the sector is that it has recognised its weaknesses and is now trying to do something about them. The few NSAs that have addressed issues such as volunteers, advocacy and governance and internal management are seen as role models within the sector.

Both donors and NGOs noted organisational strengths as: their commitment to change and poverty reduction, knowledge of the political environment, presence in the regions and their contact with the grass roots. This contact enables them to mobilise people quickly and to maintain dialogue. Service delivery is their main activity and a major strength and they are often seen to undertake innovative approaches within this; many NGOs are moving from a charitable to a developmental approach within a service delivery framework.

One area where the NSAs are changing and developing new skills and thus strengths is in the areas of policy lobbying and advocacy, sometimes more successfully at the local level in certain regions than at the national level. However, generally they are constrained by lack of experience and skills, continuing fear of Government reaction and the tradition of mistrust of other organisations, reducing their capacity to co-ordinate lobbying and advocacy work. The commitment is there but the capacity is often lacking. As mentioned earlier there are some good examples of new initiatives in policy dialogue and advocacy at federal and regional levels. However, it should be noted that these examples are fairly embryonic at federal level while in some of the more marginal regions it is clear that policy dialogue does not take place.

Another area of changing NSA thought and action is in terms of internal governance and management; they realise there is legitimate criticism from donors and Government as to their lack of transparency in governance and management and some are taking steps to address this. One international NGO commented: "*There is more awareness in civil society now that we need to have some checks and balances...the NGOs have taken it upon themselves to have an Ethics Committee and Code of Conduct*". Combined with these issues of governance some NSAs are

realising that the lack of a constituency or consultation with service users can be a constraining factor, especially, but not only, in Government eyes. This is reflected in other recent reports, see, for example, 'Constituency Building: Diagnostic Survey on Ethiopian NGOs', Horn Consult, 2003, prepared for Oxfam GB and CRDA.

On the face of it, the membership and development associations appear to have in place internal structures of governance. Representatives described general assemblies, boards of governors and elections in which grass roots members took part to select representatives for these boards. However, it is questionable how inclusive these structures are and what level of accountability they offer. The overall issue of the independence of these organisations begs the question of how democratic these structures are in practice. The researchers were informed that the Bureaux of People's Representation and Organisational Affairs and sometimes the Bureaux of Capacity Building have a function in promoting good governance and fair elections within organisational procedures, though it is unclear whether the Government officials have the skills and know how to promote good practice.

Likewise, many NGOs reported general assemblies and voting procedures to establish boards of directors. But it is again open to question whether these structures offer genuine participation in management and policy formation, particularly when some membership levels were reported to be quite small. Certainly it is the view of the Government, both at regional and federal level that accountability and transparency are issues among NGOs.

A final area where NGOs in particular are gaining strength is in planning and fundraising. Those that are capable of planning ahead attract the interest of donors who then can club together to provide 'basket' funds for an NGO over, for example, a three year period, rather than provide the usual individual donor short term project funds for a few months. There were several examples of NGOs that had successfully bid for 'basket funds' and who enthused about this because it allowed them to plan and implement more effective strategies, given their stable funding base. In addition, under such a schemes, reporting and accounting requirements are streamlined, easing the burden for the organisation. Against this, donors commented that although they could see the advantages of basket funding for themselves, donors not being played off against one another and the absence of duplication of funding, agreement on common reporting and accounting requirements was not easy. Fundraising through income generation is difficult because of legal constraints and lack of expertise. The lack of NSA skills and the poverty of most Ethiopians constrains public fund raising.

5.5.2 Weaknesses

Internal organisation weaknesses

Generally respondents found it easier to name the weaknesses of the NSA sector than their strengths. These perceived weaknesses covered all aspects of management and administration of the organisation. The general explanation for these weaknesses was that many of the local NGOs were very small and that the weaknesses were those normally attributed to small organisations. The regional view from all interviewees echoed the Addis donor view that basic internal management

skills such as project cycle management, including project design, and financial administration, strategic planning and fund raising were weak or lacking among NSAs.

Internal management and governance

In terms of the internal organisation itself the donors pointed out the lack of internal accountability and governance which in turn could be either a cause or an effect of lack of expertise in general management, financial management, project design and monitoring and strategic planning. One more cynical but untypical donor said: *"so long as the agreed outputs are delivered we don't worry too much about how it is done"*. However, it is important to note that this lack of internal accountability is emphasised by Government which speaks of 'briefcase NGOs', organisations that are 'family businesses' and accountable to no-one. In one region the research team learned that there were about 20 brief-case NGOs but only one local NGO that was considered acceptable. Their much disapproved of presence is a weakness for the NSA sector since the Government can and does use this category as typifying the NGO sector as a whole, which is not the case. As one donor commented, if NGOs want to be critical of government they first have to put their own house in order. A code of conduct for NGOs has been established for CRDA members but in the view of some donors, there is room for improvement. Set against this, it should be noted that some of the organisations interviewed had very clear internal governance systems for management, suggesting the potential for sharing good practice on these issues.

Service delivery

Some donors added that there was too much NSA focus on service delivery, without any balancing activity in lobbying/advocating for poor communities. However service delivery is also seen as a strength.

Equipment, transport and communications

In the regions a major weakness of NSAs was universally seen as a lack of equipment, such as computers and transport which constrained communication in general, and limited access to more isolated, needy communities. Lack of office availability was seen as a further weakness. Frequently posed questions were: 'how do you reach rural communities without transport? How can we communicate or network without modern IT equipment or even telephones?' The underlying weakness here is the lack of a solid funding base, not the lack of transport and computer equipment, which are symptoms of this weakness.

Recruitment and retention of quality staff

A widely perceived NSA weakness in the marginal regions lay with the problems of recruiting good quality professional staff and then retaining them. In the cases of the mass organisations a lack of trained staff was frequently reported.

High NGO overhead costs

A recurring comment from government officials was that NGO overhead costs were high compared to their operational costs. Against this it can be said that working in marginal zones such as Somalia and the Sudan border regions demands high overheads to enable a reasonable degree of operational success.

Regional mass membership organisations

Weaknesses cited by the mass membership organisations included: weak finances dependent on unreliable membership fees, the lack of awareness among their members, lack of a good understanding of rights based approaches and lack of good knowledge of community development techniques. In the less developed regions spokespersons often mentioned the lack of internal policies and procedures for self governance.

Lack of capacity in Government

At regional level all parties, government and NSAs, repeated the huge lack of capacity among government officials, not only in terms of numbers of staff but in their own training and knowledge. One middle ranking official stated that national and international NGOs were their leaders and they themselves could only follow, having no systems, staff, training, equipment etc. In other words at regional level and woreda levels both government officials and NSAs have vast capacity building needs which must be addressed if there is to be some form of regional government/NSA partnership in the future. It is not only the NSAs which need support.

External relationship weaknesses

Constituency

The donors pointed out that NGOs rarely have a constituency in terms of major stakeholders and this absence diminishes the legitimacy of the NGO in most of its external relations, especially with the Government but also with the public. By contrast the mass membership organisations often have huge constituencies but lack skills in motivating, managing and consulting with them. As mentioned earlier, CRDA

has done some work in terms of promoting good practice but clearly this is an area for attention.

Lack of networks

Several donors remarked of the NSA sector that there is an inability to network. This weakness is based on competition between NSAs and is possibly a relic of years of survival under autocracy. However, it leads to isolation, to an inability to exchange good practice and information, lack of creativity and an inability to present a collective voice in policy dialogue. As one donor put it: *"At the national and regional levels there is a lack of networking and co-ordination: there is a need for co-ordination and constituency building and some kind of genuine representation."* Better networking could lessen the perceived degree of duplication that is found among NGOs and which the donors criticise as a weakness. However it has to be said that some NGO networks are now emerging and growing in strength at the national level but they have the traditional problems associated with networks: how to develop mutual trust and how to maintain interest and involvement. Added to this, the Government is generally suspicious of networks.

In some regions, networking between NGOs and other development actors was reported, although this was constrained by the distances involved and in some of the more marginalised regions there was no networking at all. It was noticeable that some regional Governments were attempting to bring together groups of NSAs for consultation, although it was unclear whether such meetings called by Government bureaux were for the purposes of informing participants about Government policy or to promote greater networking and Government/NSA dialogue.

Advocacy and lobbying

Another weakness linked to the external relationships aspect is the general lack of skills in lobbying and advocacy, policy analysis and policy dialogue. While some determinedly service delivery NGOs are not interested in lobbying and advocacy there is a large number of NSAs which are very interested in acquiring and developing these skills. One commentator said: *"There is a strong commitment to engage in the policy processes, despite the fact that there is not a lot of experience – the flip side is that there is no history or experience of policy analysis"*. At the federal level, those NSAs interested in acquiring greater skills in advocacy and lobbying ranged from the most intellectually sophisticated research and policy focused organisations to modest service delivery NGOs, highlighting the widespread lack of experience. Specifically, organisations mentioned the absence of information about policies but also the lack of analysis skills. One respondent said that he felt that many players did not have the legal and political science background necessary to engage in policy dialogue.

In the most marginal regions advocacy and lobbying is not really on the agenda: the political space is not there as neither the regional governments nor the NSAs see policy dialogue as part of their remit. The demands of working in marginal territories can diminish the motivation to undertake such activities.

In the more developed and larger regions some international NGOs and Ethiopian NGOs reported cases of effective local lobbying and advocacy, mainly on issues of practice. The research was not able to determine the extent to which NSAs operating in the regions but with headquarters in Addis carry out advocacy and lobbying at the federal level.

As reported earlier, it was also the case that mass membership organisations and development associations have considerable confidence and enter into policy discussion. There may be several explanations for this. The larger regions, Amhara and Tigray in particular, are the dominant ethnic groups that form the party of Government. In addition the topics reported which form the basis for lobbying, for instance, family law and women's issues, and the very status of the organisations and their lack of independence, means that they are largely seen as non-threatening. Whatever the explanation, the lack of skills in policy dialogue, on both Government and NSA sides, remains an area to be addressed.

Media relations

Although one or two organisations mentioned their media relations as being strengths (and there were some good examples of the use of radio and developed relationships with the press) others spoke about the lack of skills in this area. The lack of freedom of information and the effective controls exercised on the free press, and especially radio, are further barriers to effective campaigning, advocacy and communications.

Voluntarism

Specific NGOs also mentioned the lack of a tradition of, and understanding of, voluntarism in Ethiopia and their inability to work successfully with volunteers. Recruitment, management and retention of volunteers were seen as the key weaknesses.

Donor dependence

A final weakness is seen as the almost total financial dependence of most non membership NGOs on the foreign donor community. This of course strengthens the Government's criticism of NGOs as playing to the foreign donor, as opposed to a national agenda, and weakens their image with the public. Additionally this donor dependence raises the issue of NSA sustainability.

The mass membership and development associations rely on their members for funds, rarely receive Government support but some are developing skills in fundraising and successfully applying for funds from donors. However, lack of funds obviously constrains these organisations and prevents them from developing

professional management structures and activities which go beyond the use of volunteers. Given the Government's view of their role within civil society, developing fundraising skills for this sector may be an important part of ensuring sustainability.

The researchers also noted a small number of professional associations that have good donor support, effective management, membership involvement, activities and a high degree of independence.

5.6 Capacity building needs

Introduction

The capacity building needs reflect the perceptions of the sector's weaknesses and the findings of the research on views on the role of civil society and the relationship between Government and the NSA sector.

These needs were outlined by the NSAs, the Government officials and the donors. They fall into two main categories: needs relating to internal management issues and those relating to external relationships.

Given the newness of the sector, the small size of many national NSAs and the limited infrastructure of the mass membership organisations, it is not surprising that capacity building is required in all spheres. Despite this, priorities for capacity building will be different according to the stage of development of specific organisations, their physical location and the resources available and for this reason these identified needs are not prioritised.

Internal organisational needs

Leadership

Many respondents emphasised the lack of leadership skills. NSAs sometimes have a reputation for being director dominated, especially if the founder/director is still in place several years after the organisation's initiation. The leader of an NSA sets the tone and style internally and externally, is the guardian of the organisation's mission, the lead manager and strategist and the person with whom accountability rests. This is a very difficult role to undertake effectively and transparently and a key area for capacity building.

Strategic planning

As one donor said: *"local/national NGOs are pre-occupied with the project approach so that little time is devoted thinking ahead, identifying weaknesses and then to building up their own capacity"*. Strategic planning remains a priority if NSAs are to deliver services effectively, to consider alternative methods and to move beyond this to make an impact on policy.

Governance

Transparency and accountability of NSAs has to be improved both for internal and external stakeholders. Internal stakeholders may include paid and volunteer staff, the management and members. Key areas to focus on would include: staff consultation, governance structures and internal policies. External accountability to Government, donors, communities and beneficiaries is equally important in terms of capacity building focus.

Internal management and administration of the organisation

Comments from all sectors, at federal and regional levels, highlighted the need for capacity building in all aspects of internal management including: general organisational and financial administration, needs assessment, project design and management, monitoring and evaluation and staff development.

Constituency

Developing a constituency and membership were seen as vital to developing better governance and legitimacy. Whilst these may be seen as facets of internal organisation, it is important to note the connection between developing a constituency and the ability to advocate and lobby effectively. In the opinion of the researchers, there is little understanding amongst some organisations of the links between the voice of the service users or membership and effective advocacy.

Quality of staff: recruitment and retention

In the poorer regions there is a real weakness in recruiting and retaining quality staff. This is a product of several interlocking structural problems including lack of: federal government interest in marginal regions; donors and secure funding; local infrastructure, including transport and communications and the attractions of urban life to potential NSA staff. The obstacles to recruitment and retention of quality staff remain high, possibly too high for normal conventional capacity building remedies. Innovative approaches will be needed to tackle this issue.

Volunteers

Some, but not many NSAs, struggle to select and manage volunteers, who outside the mass membership organisations are mainly lacking in Ethiopia. Capacity building is required to enable organisations to recruit, manage, retain and harness the potential of volunteers.

Cross cutting themes

Not always associated with conventional organisational capacity building, a general cross cutting theme identified was the need for better education and training in the general understanding of development and development approaches, techniques and concepts, for example, participatory and community development techniques, rights-based approaches, women's empowerment and methods of poverty reduction. A second cross cutting theme that should be considered, given the wide ranging views reported earlier, is that of understanding the concept of civil society and its potential role in development.

External Relationships

Policy research and analysis, advocacy and lobbying

Many NSAs and donors identified needs in policy research and analysis; understanding of the policy environment; advocacy and lobbying and media skills.

NSA networks

Effective advocacy and lobbying requires a co-ordinated voice. Capacity needs to be built in how to establish and maintain networks and how to use these to develop a strong and coherent voice.

Donor dependence

In the short to medium term there is no solution to donor dependency given the poverty of the country, the lack of a philanthropic and charitable tradition, and the Government's own donor dependence and shortage of funds. Capacity building for fund raising has to be coupled with skills for organisational development, external communications and improved transparency and accountability. The legal framework for income generation, fundraising and adequate reporting and accountability needs to be put in place.

Other potential for civil society capacity building

Federal and regional level elected representatives and Government officials

For effective functioning of civil society and understanding of its roles and for better communication, capacity needs to be built with both Government officials and elected representatives at federal and regional levels.

Many respondents, including the Government officials themselves at local levels, recognised their own shortcomings in terms of understanding the role and function of civil society and being able to put in place the procedures that would enable improved dialogue and co-operation. There would appear to be little point in building the capacity of the NSAs without also paying attention to the needs of the corresponding Government players.

Chapter 6 Donors and NGOs working in the field of governance

6.1 The NGO database

The information in this section is drawn from the responses sent out to 90 international and national NGOs working in the field of governance: human rights, women's empowerment, democracy and conflict prevention and resolution. Ninety questionnaires were distributed to NGOs which were identified as working in these areas from information drawn from the interviews, the CRDA directory of NGO members and also the Devinet database (a British Council and CRDA initiative). Thirty-eight questionnaires were returned and the information that follows is based on analysis of these responses.

6.2 The size and range of NGOs working in the field of governance

The size of the NGOs working in these areas, as determined by the level of annual turnover, was as follows: 6 NGOs or (18 per cent) have an annual turnover of over two million euros and might be classified as large organizations, and 11 NGOs or 33 per cent had annual budgets of below 200,000 euros and might be classified as fairly small. Most of the respondents (16 or 48 per cent) had budgets of between 200,000 and 2 million Euros.

Judging the size of the organisations on the basis of the number of staff that each has, the following conclusions can be reached: 35 responded saying that they employ full-time staff. Of these 20 specified the number of full and part-time staff: 4 organisations or 20 per cent had over 100 staff; 3 or 16 per cent had between 50 and 100 paid staff and 13 or 65 per cent of organisations had below 50 paid staff. Ten organisations said that they have part time staff. Nineteen organisations said that they use volunteers.

6.3 Funding sources

Most of the NGOs reported receiving funding on a project by project basis (33 or 89 per cent). However, 14 organisations reported receiving 'basket' funding. Although we have no comparative figures for earlier years, the number receiving basket funding could suggest the beginning of more stable funding for at least some NGOs and perhaps the opportunity for them to engage in activities which reach beyond project work to encompass lobbying and advocacy.

6.4 Structure and governance

As indicated in chapter 5, the issue of internal governance is important to legitimise the role of civil society in critiquing the government and providing input to policy formation. Sixty five per cent of organisations (25) reported having a general assembly and only 10 organisations or (26 per cent) said that the general assembly was limited to founding members. However, it was also the case that only 14 organisations (37 per cent) reported electing a board of directors, although all respondents said that they had a board, 76 per cent of respondents said this was a governing body while 34 per cent named the board as advisory.

6.5 The sectors of activity

All of the respondents said that they worked on one or more areas of governance: 24 (63 per cent) said that they worked in the area of human rights; 22 (58 per cent) named democracy work; 23 or 61 per cent cited women's empowerment and 16 or 42 per cent said that conflict prevention and resolution formed part of their programme.

6.6 Advocacy and lobbying

Seventy six per cent of respondents or 29 organisations said that they engaged in advocacy and lobbying activities. The key issues named are shown below and these have been grouped to show the number of responses naming a particular area.

- Promoting an enabling environment for NGOs (2 responses)
- Children's rights (5 responses)
- Law reform
- Women's rights; gender issues
- Pastoral development
- Education: basic education, rights of girl children to education, civic education
- Health: HIV/AIDS (3 responses)
- Human rights and democracy; parliamentary procedures; transparency; voter education (4 responses)
- Justice and peace
- Poverty alleviation; PRSP

- Food and trade; food security
- No-arms campaign
- Penal reform
- Development policy

The respondents were also asked to name the NGO networks or informal associations to which they belong. The list below shows the names of the networks and the number of respondents naming each network. It would appear from this that there is not a shortage of networks, although the numbers indicating membership may indicate low membership or lack of clear identity and therefore a low profile. This area needs further investigation if capacity in effective networking is to be built.

- Network of Ethiopian Women's Associations 4
- Civic Education Forum 4
- Christian Relief and Development Association 5
- Non-formal education 1
- Network of NGOs working on political education for the 2005 elections 1
- Pastoral Forum of Ethiopia 3
- HIV/AIDS National Forum 6
- Oxfam International Group
- Strategic Initiative in the Horn of Africa
- National Taskforce (Poverty Action Network Ethiopia)
- Consortium of Reproductive Health Associations
- HIV/AIDS Prevention Control Office

6.7 Areas for capacity building

There were two sections of questions on capacity building. The first asked for indications of needs in the area of types of assistance and for information about networking needs with respect to issues, the second asked for indications of needs in terms of topics or issues. The results of this exercise are shown below.

Types of work responses	Number of
Training	36
Accompaniment	14
Involvement in capacity building networks	17
Sharing of capacity (trainers, materials)	22
Networking beyond capacity building eg gender, governance	23

From this we may conclude that most respondents would require training although it should be noted that work to establish sharing of capacity would be a popular option. The responses to the last question in this section would suggest that better networking on issues is needed and that this is a key area on which to focus.

The list below shows the issues or topics in which capacity building is needed.

<i>Issue/topic</i>	<i>Number of responses</i>
Internet governance	15
Strategic Planning	25
General and financial management	17
External communication	22
Advocacy and lobbying	26
Policy analysis	19
Media skills	20
Campaigning skills	17
Project Design	22
Project management	9
Project monitoring and evaluation	12
Human resource development	23
Constituency building	17
Use of volunteers	17
Others (un-named)	6

On the basis of these responses the priorities would appear to be: advocacy and lobbying, strategic planning, human resource development, external communication and project design.

6.8 The donor database

The donor database is intended for use by NGOs seeking assistance to work in the areas of governance: democracy, human rights, women's empowerment and conflict resolution and prevention. Twenty questionnaires were distributed on the basis of information gleaned from the interviews conducted and the local knowledge of the British Council. Eleven questionnaires were returned although the responses showed that several respondents ran more than one funding programme in the relevant area; altogether there were 20 such programmes and this information has been used for the calculation of the totals of grants available.

6.9 The number of donors and the funds available for work in governance

Of the eleven respondents most (5) were offering grants in the area of human rights; 4 in women's empowerment, 3 in democracy and one in the area of conflict resolution or prevention. However, as the database on NGOs showed, 16 organisations said that conflict resolution or prevention formed part of their programme, implying that they receive their funds from donors other than those who responded to the questionnaire. Looking at the funds available for each sector, it was clear that democracy work was the most heavily funded, (2,389,741 euros per annum) followed by women's empowerment and then human rights. The total funding available for civil society on 12 programmes named is annually 6,387,661 euros. (Two of the largest donors were excluded on the grounds that their funding did not include the field of governance.) These figures would suggest that overall governance work in the areas specified receives approximately 70 per cent of all civil society funding. This is a large proportion. Since the database of donors only included 11 respondents and the information was limited, it was not possible to analyse how far the funding was spread in terms of the numbers of organisations funded. Again, this would be an area for further investigation.

Most donors were offering grants on an annual basis but some extended to 3-year grants reflecting the move towards longer term support through 'basket funding' to NGOs. All respondents to the questionnaires said that they would allow co-financing. Almost all donors said that their funding grants were available for all regions of Ethiopia.

Chapter 7 Conclusions and key issues arising from the research

This section of the report draws together the conclusions of the research on capacity building and discusses some of the main issues raised by the research. It includes comments and feedback from a combined audience of donors, NSA and Government representatives gathered during a seminar held in Addis Ababa at the close of the second field visit.

7.1 The role of civil society

The main findings, as described in chapter 5, illustrated a broad spectrum of views of the role of civil society. At one end of the spectrum are those that see NSAs and NGOs in particular as ‘gap fillers’ providing the services that the Government cannot offer, whilst at the other are those who accept that civil society organisations have a role to play in building the democratic process in Ethiopia. While it is not possible to quantify such views, it is most likely that throughout Ethiopia, the former is the prevailing view. This would be entirely consistent with the history of the development of civil society in Ethiopia and the very ‘new’ nature of the democratic process.

The Government’s policy change, as related by a limited number of respondents, towards the encouragement of civil society in the attempt to secure a plurality of views and thus a more open and accountable system of government, requires extensive education amongst both its officials and elected representatives. The ‘change of attitude’ demanded by some NSA representatives is necessary but insufficient. In the opinion of the researchers, although some Government spokespersons advanced ‘enlightened’ views about the role of civil society, there was little understanding about how this might be put into operation or exactly what might be the gains from encouraging pluralism. In particular, there was very little recognition of the expertise that lies within various NSAs and therefore no acknowledgement about what might be gained through consultation and improved working together. The old fears of ‘losing control’ have to be replaced by actions which allow greater debate and diversity of opinion about the best way forward in the very many development issues which Ethiopia has to face. Accepting ‘opposition’ and learning how to handle competing ideas and views has to be viewed as a healthy part of the democratic process rather than simply an attack on power.

NSAs too have actions to put in place including: accepting fair and reasonable regulation; putting in place their own internal systems of good governance to ensure accountability and transparency and developing their membership and constituencies to enable civil society to have a legitimate voice. Just as the Government often fails to recognise expertise amongst civil society, NSAs themselves have little understanding about how the views of their members and the experience of their users may be used to develop a coherent and justifiable voice to which Government can respond. NSAs too have to recognise that plurality doesn’t mean that the Government has to or could listen to each and every NSA just as a coherent voice from civil society doesn’t mean total agreement on each and every issue. It does

mean that NSAs have to work together to develop considered and well researched opinions on crucial issues and point out where and why there is diversity of opinion.

Building mutual trust is a long, slow process: it cannot be achieved overnight but there are areas which need to be addressed if this process is to be encouraged. Some of these are dealt with below.

7.2 Membership organisations: strengths and weaknesses in building civil society

Within this section membership organisations refer to the associations of farmers, women and youth which exist in every region and whose origins stem from the Government's wish to mobilise various community group members. However, development associations also have mass memberships and some of the comments below also apply to these organisations. As was reported in chapter 5, a wide spectrum of views exists about the membership organisations and in particular over the issue of independence from Government. Whilst some representatives claimed that their organisation was entirely independent from Government, other views suggested that they were not and that therefore they could not be counted as full members of civil society.

It is worth reiterating that in relation to the issue of independence, various spokespersons of membership organisations reported a definite change of Government view dating from roughly 3 years ago: that the Government wishes to develop these organisations as a method of establishing a voice for the various constituencies. The establishment of the variously named bureaux with direct responsibility for overseeing the activities of these organisations might lend credence to this intention. Alternatively it might be viewed as another form of control. The question then arises: how might capacity be built amongst these organisations to enable them to become full members of civil society and what would be the advantages of doing so?

One direct advantage is their mass coverage. As far as the research could investigate, these organisations exist in every region and extend to every kebele. A direct result of building capacity within these organisations might therefore be the possibility of attaining mass coverage. For instance, if women's empowerment is an agreed goal, the possibility of delivering women's rights education to large numbers of Ethiopian women might best be attained by using the network of women's associations. The grass roots nature of such organisations would suggest that they can be a force for involvement, empowerment and mobilisation. Work with such mass membership organisations might be coupled with ideas about how capacity building might enhance independence.

Views advanced during the feedback seminar suggested that the issue of independence is crucial and that it needs to be addressed. Whilst there were some good examples of advocacy carried out by such organisations, suggesting that they can have a voice, there were also examples of conflicts of interest within the management of these organisations, in terms of the involvement of Government

members. Opinion at the seminar suggested that the question was whether Government ties violated the aims and values of the organisation and that the right to critique was essential and therefore the ability of these organisations to question and debate is one area for attention. In addition, capacity would need to be built in a number of other areas including: education about their role in civil society, about independence and its implications for governing structures, training on democratic methods of representation and participative consultation for developing policy dialogue.

7.3 Development associations: strengths and weaknesses in building civil society

As mentioned earlier, many of the points about independence made in the section above relate to development associations as well as the membership organisations for women, farmers and youth. The question relating to development associations alone concerns the issue of ethnicity and whether this is a healthy basis for the development of civil society: is it a positive or negative factor?

Like the membership organisations, development associations exist in every region of Ethiopia. Whilst some are area based and relatively small, others are large and dominate regional activity. Most, but not all have stemmed from the wish to serve the interests of a specific ethnic group. The research documented several cases of newly forming development associations in some of the more peripheral regions which are following this pattern. It also has to be pointed out that within a country that has chosen ethnicity as a legitimate principle for political formation, the accusation of representing the interests of one ethnic group may also apply to all NSAs operating within a region.

The feedback seminar advanced several views in favour of the 'ethnic' membership of development associations including: the ease of gathering a membership and the resources that this might bring; that ethnicity engenders a sense of belonging and can therefore aid participation and that ethnic groups have a right to representation. Against this was set the fact that some ethnic groups are much poorer than others and therefore there may well be an imbalance in terms of resources and that the close ties with Government enjoyed by some development associations may reinforce 'ethnic' government without proper attention to the rights of minorities. While the role of these organisations in terms of development is in some cases substantial, given the history of ethnic conflict in Ethiopia and the difficulties this causes in Government, 'exclusivity' in terms of ethnic membership maybe fuels such problems. Capacity building, in the case of such organisations, could well focus on education on human rights and conflict prevention and resolution.

7.4 Advocacy, lobbying and policy dialogue

Although there were some good examples of effective advocacy and lobbying carried out by NSAs the prevailing view was that this was difficult for NSAs to accomplish and that there was not a 'culture of consultation' which made this normal practice.

Many of the points made under the section on the role of civil society are relevant to improving the relationship between Government and civil society in order to advance policy dialogue. Clearly, building mutual trust is fundamental to the Government's willingness to listen and the NSAs' ability to be heard. It is worth noting that many of the examples of effective advocacy by NSAs at federal level had occurred where the organisation had carefully researched the issue in question, had spoken from the views of its members or users and had built a relationship with the key decision makers. At local level, representatives also spoke about having built effective relationships with the relevant Government officials and advocated from the basis of tried and tested practice. The points made earlier about NSAs improving their policy dialogue skills, learning to work together and present coherent views to which the Government can respond stand. Several of the donor and NSA respondents talked not only about the need for more information about Government policies but also about the need generally for civil society organisations which wished to carry out advocacy to be better informed and to be able to carry out policy research. One NSA representative advanced the possibility of creating a research centre shared by members of civil society working in similar fields to promote both better networking and improved policy input.

In the feedback seminar representatives advanced the following views about how to create a more enabling environment for effective policy dialogue. It was suggested firstly that the legal framework for civil society should address the issue of NSAs as partners with Government. Secondly, effective consultation procedures need to be established that are visible, open and recognised. If civil society is to play a full role, then consultation needs to extend beyond tokenism, although exchanges of information and experience are also valuable. The PRSP process and the establishment of the Poverty Action Network Ethiopia for the monitoring of the implementation of the PRSP provides one model but this is unlikely to fit all needs. Consideration should be given to establishing appropriate procedures and making these open and transparent.

7.5 Freedom of information and its role in civil society

Chapters 3 and 4 gave some assessment of the position of the free media in Ethiopia. Despite constitutional provision for a free media, the independent press is, of course, extremely critical of Government controls and moves to further limit its scope through the proposed press law. However, there is an issue here in terms of the development of civil society that needs to be addressed. Without a free flow of information, policy dialogue and a plurality of views is impossible. As several respondents noted: transparent, accountable and open government will not be attained without greater freedom of information. This requires a more flexible attitude on behalf of the Government as well as legislation for freedom of

information, if not the independent licensing authority demanded by the independent media. It also requires training and development for journalists to encourage legitimate discussion and debate and a vibrant civil society.

The feedback seminar reiterated these views and endorsed calls for a freedom of information act as well as the extension of the free media especially to radio, because of its extensive coverage in Ethiopia. In addition, suggestions were made that officials and elected representatives have to recognise their responsibility to disseminate information and that if this is to be most effective, documents have to be produced in a user-friendly format. The example of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper was cited of an example where a user-friendly document would have been extremely helpful in disseminating information and encouraging consultation.

7.6 The role of Government in building civil society

In the feedback seminar and in the interviews with NSAs a strong view was advanced that capacity building for civil society is properly dealt with by civil society itself rather than government and there was some lack of clarity about the exact role that the Ministry of Capacity Building sees itself as playing. The interviews with Government representatives in the regions to a certain extent reinforced these views. Without a coherent and collectively agreed understanding of what role civil society should play in Ethiopia, the attempt to build capacity might very well be misplaced and hinder rather than improve relations. Whilst some see improved bureaucracy and better regulation as the role, others have a wider understanding but little knowledge about what to do. In addition, as most Government spokespersons pointed out, their own officials lack capacity.

It could also be commented that there is a plethora of government offices, and their associated regulations, with whom NSAs have to liaise: the ministries and bureaux of justice, disaster preparedness and prevention, capacity building, finance and economic development, people's representation and organisational affairs, women's affairs, plus the relevant line ministries such as health and education. Whilst some ministries and bureaux are making attempts to draw up guidelines for NSAs, it must be questioned whether there is a coherent view about who is doing what and in relation to whom. This question becomes even more complicated with the progress of decentralisation and the regional implementation of policy. It is to be hoped that technical assistance being given to the Ministry of Capacity Building in the specific area of civil society will help to resolve some of these issues.

Amongst NSAs there are specific concerns about the draft legislation for civil society. These include: the issue of the registration of networks and umbrella groups, the reporting requirements and access to the property and documents of registered organisations. It remains to be seen which of these issues the new draft legislation will address, and how. Legislation for registration and also procedures for implementation of projects at regional and sub-regional level could be reviewed to look at the issues of harmonisation, and consistency of approach and to streamline bureaucratic procedures in order to avoid waste of resources. Such efforts would also help to establish data which on future occasions would make mapping civil society an easier task and furnish more accurate data.

7.8 Capacity building

The areas mentioned by civil society respondents as the priorities for capacity building have been detailed in chapters 5 and 6 and will not be repeated here. However, it should be remembered that capacity building is essentially a micro activity albeit on the scale envisaged by the size of the European Union grant. Without an improved political and social context, it is unlikely that greater capacity will have the desired long-term impact on civil society. Both Government and civil society need to work together to ensure a better relationship and maximum gains from capacity building inputs.

Appendix 1

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Appendix 2

Annotated bibliography: selected recent literature on civil society in Ethiopia

Introduction

This annotated bibliography contains a few selected examples of published and unpublished 'grey' literature. It should be noted that there is a large amount of unpublished materials on NSAs in Ethiopia, both older and recent, but mainly in the form of individual case studies of NGOs, cooperatives, associations etc. some of which are undergraduate or graduate student theses. In addition, there are published and unpublished case studies and reviews of indigenous institutions or community based organizations in Ethiopia (such as iddir, iqqub). These types of materials are excluded from this bibliography. The materials included are recent (post-1991) and selected for their broad description and analysis of the idea of civil society in Ethiopia, including the NGO sector.

Ethiopian authors are listed by first name - which is the customary way of listing in social science literature.

Asnake, K and Dejene, A (2000), '**Civil Society and Good Governance in Ethiopia**'.

This paper was prepared for the Country (Ethiopia) Workshop on Promoting Good Governance and Wider Civil Society Participation in Eastern and Southern Africa, Addis Ababa: Organization for Social Science Research for Eastern and Southern Africa (OSSREA), (32 pages, bibliography).

This unpublished paper examines the nature and role of civil society organizations in contemporary Ethiopia in relation to the idea of good governance. The strength is that it classifies the recently emerged CSOs according to their functions and contributions to good governance: enhancing the performance of the state; social justice, rights and the rule of law; transparency and information and public policy and decision-making. The discussion of the new CSOs in relation to good governance is placed in the context of a brief outline of theoretical issues, as well as a discussion of the political and legal environment and the socio-economic context in which CSOs emerged and are operating in Ethiopia. The authors note that civil society organizations are at an early stage of development and a number of internal and external factors are constraining their growth and contribution. However, the authors are optimistic and assert that although very young and fragmented, CSOs have already made a significant contribution to good governance and, if current trends continue, a vibrant and diverse civil society could develop that will play an important role in the political life of the country.

Clark, Jeffrey (2000), '**Civil Society, NGOs, and Development in Ethiopia**', Washington, The World Bank, 21 pages, executive summary, annexes.

This is a document prepared by the NGO and Civil Society Unit of the World Bank's Social Development Department and was 'published informally and circulated to encourage discussion and comment within the development community'. The paper outlines the emerging civil society sector in Ethiopia: the 'relief-to-development' shift of NGOs, critical civil society actors, networks and coalitions, code of conduct for NGOs in Ethiopia, the legal and regulatory framework, the potential public policy and advocacy role of NGOs and the challenges for the NGO sector.

Christian Relief and Development Association (CRDA) and Oxfam GB (2003),

'**Constituency Building: Diagnostic Survey of Ethiopian NGOs**', Horn Consult, Addis Ababa, November 2003, Prepared for CRDA and Oxfam GB, unpublished document, 44 pages.

This study, commissioned by CRDA and Oxfam GB, can be taken as one indicator of current efforts by the NGO sector to look critically into its own internal problems and weaknesses in relation to one of the key issues for the NGO sector: namely constituency building. The document contains an in-depth, frank and critical assessment of the problems and weaknesses of the NGO sector based on the findings of a survey of the views and attitudes of various stakeholders: NGOs, Government and ordinary members of the public.

Christian Relief and Development Association (CRDA), (2003), '**Information Package**

on NGO Contributions', Development Studies Associates (DSA), submitted to CRDA, Addis Ababa, December 2003, 38 pages, tables, annexes.

This is another valuable study commissioned by the CRDA on the contribution of the NGO sector in Ethiopia in various fields especially in relief and rehabilitation, service delivery, and development activities. This fills a critical gap in information and knowledge about the contributions of the NGO sector and it documents the resources used, outputs and assets created, size of employment created and number of beneficiaries by region and sub sector under projects implemented by international and national NGOs in the period 1997-2001.

Dessalegn Rahmato (2002), '**Civil Society Organizations in Ethiopia**' in '**The**

Challenge of Democracy from Below', edited by Bahru Zewde and Siegfried Pausewang, pages 103-119, Uppsala and Addis Ababa, Nordiska Afrikainstitutet and Forum for Social Studies (FSS).

This paper by a well-known Ethiopian scholar and current Director of FSS (an independent policy advocacy think-tank) provides a broad overview of various issues related to civil society in Ethiopia, with a focus on post-1991 developments. The author provides a brief discussion of the theoretical and conceptual issues related to civil society and his own views of the definition of civil society and the types of organizations to be included in the domain of civil society. Controversially, Dessalegn argues that CBOs (such as iddir in Ethiopia) do not belong to civil society because, among other things, these are informal institutions and it is difficult to think of civil society organizations outside of the formal organizational framework. The author notes that while the more tolerant legal and political environment since 1991 has encouraged the growth in number of CSOs, the Ethiopia civil society sector is still characterized by various weaknesses and problems and that the legal and political environment still remains control-oriented and uncertain. The major conclusion is that the fledgling CSOs in Ethiopia have an important role to play in terms of awareness creation but this is a much more limited and modest task than securing democracy, which is what donor agencies and others expect CSOs to accomplish.

Hyden, Goran and Mahlet Haile Mariam, '**Voluntarism and Civil Society: Ethiopia in**

Comparative Perspective', unpublished draft paper (no date and no other particulars), 32 pages, tables, figures, bibliography.

This paper examines the nature of civil society in Ethiopia in a comparative African perspective. It is interesting that Goran Hyden, a well-known and controversial scholar in African studies, makes a contribution to the study of civil society in Ethiopia. The paper is valuable because it provides a brief but interesting discussion of civil society in Ethiopia under the three different regimes (Haile Selassie, Derg and EPRDF). The authors arrive at a seemingly startling conclusion: the Haile Selassie period emerges as the most tolerant and free environment for the operation of CSOs in Ethiopia.

Henry, Wendel Leroi (2002), '**Doing Development and Being Gurage: The**

Embeddedness of Development in Sebat Bet Gurage Identities'. A thesis submitted to the Development Policy and Practices Discipline, Faculty of Technology, Open University, 262 pages, figures, glossary, bibliography.

This PhD dissertation is valuable because it examines the nature and role of an important associational phenomenon in Africa and Ethiopia, ethnic/area based associations/organizations, and connects it to current policy discourse on the role of civil society and the NGO sector in the development process. The study contains an insightful analysis of the history of the Gurage People Self-Help Development Association (GPSDO), one of the oldest and most famous ethnic-based civic organizations in Ethiopia. The author examines the nature and evolution of GPSDO (formerly Gurage Road Construction Organization - GRCO), placing it in the context of the social, cultural, political and economic history of the Sebat Bet Gurage People, a minority ethnic group famous for its involvement in business scattered throughout

the country but originating from a densely populated Enset-cultural area in South-Central Ethiopia. The Gurage motivation for their unique self-help and rural development initiatives is analysed by the author in relation to the migratory livelihood strategy, strong rural-urban linkages and the dense web of urban and rural social institutions. The author provides an insightful analysis of the Gurage concept of development and participation in terms of the strong sense of civic virtue and the Gurage conception of citizenship rights, duties and obligations. The study also places the analysis of the Gurage and GPSDO in the broader context of twentieth century Ethiopia and particularly the travails of GPSDO and its relationships with government under the three regimes: Haile Selassie, Derg and EPRDF. Interestingly, although GPSDO is formally an ethnic based association, it has faced the roughest period in its long history under the current EPRDF regime. This is in spite of the fact that under this regime ethnic federalism has become the basis of political and administrative organization, a situation which has legitimized and encouraged the proliferation of ethnic based development associations.

Kassahun Berhanu (2002), **'The Role of NGOs in Organizations in Ethiopia'**, in

'Ethiopia: The Challenge of Democracy from Below', edited by Bahru Zewde and Siegfried Pausewang, pages 120-129, Uppsala and Addis Ababa, Nordiska Afrikainstitutet and Forum for Social Studies (FSS).

This paper examines the role of the NGO sector in Ethiopia in relation to enhancing broader democratic values in society. The discussion is paced in the context of a brief but broader discussion of the nature and role of NGOs in Africa. The central theme of the paper is how the NGO sector in Ethiopia failed to promote democratic values, even when opportunities to do so were available. The paper is a severe indictment of the NGO sector for failing dismally in this respect. Beyond criticism of the NGO sector the author also outlines some of the major factors which constrain NGOs from playing a constructive role in the promotion of democratic values including: the policy environment, social and organizational factors, entrenchment of institutional and personal interests and dependence on governments and donors.

Pact Ethiopia, (February 2000), **'Report on the Enabling Environment for the Ethiopian NGO sector'**, (Review team members: Jeffrey Clark, Lisbeth Loughran and Daniel Bekele), 30 pages, executive summary, appendix, bibliography.

This report by a major organization engaged in the capacity building of civil society in Ethiopia contains a useful summary of various issues on NGOs and civil society in Ethiopia in the past decade or so including: NGOs in the larger context of civil society, primary indicators of change and key issues in the NGO and civil society sector, expanding opportunities and capacity building needs.

Pankhurst, Alula (ed), (2003), **'Iddirs: Participation and Development: Proceedings of the Ethiopian National Conference'**, 20-21 December 2001, Addis Ababa, Agency for Cooperation and Research in Development (ACORD), 220 pages, appendices.

This document contains the proceedings of papers and discussions from the national workshop on the role of iddirs in development organized by ACORD Ethiopia. The papers included in the document analyse the nature and role of iddirs from various angles including a theoretical chapter by the editor, the nature of iddirs in relation to the creation of social capital, the experiences of ACORD working with iddirs in development and poverty alleviation. The study is based on the contributions of various stakeholders including scholars, government offices working with iddirs, NGOs, and representatives of iddirs. The document is valuable because it is often hard to find under one cover analytical and policy related issues on iddirs although they represent one of the most important and widespread forms of indigenous self-help institutions found throughout the country.

Society for Participatory Development in Ethiopia (SPADE), (1997), **'Collaboration for**

Development between Non-Governmental Organizations and Community-Based Organizations: An Analysis of Case Studies', Addis Ababa, SPADE. This unpublished study is by Bekalu Mola, a social anthropologist, 100 pages, abstract, executive summary, appendices, bibliography.

This study focuses on working collaborations and relationships between NGOs and CBOs (mainly iddir and iqqub). It analyses the experiences of six NGOs, which have been working with community-based organizations in diverse areas (saving and credit, income generation, natural resource management and rural development) in rural and urban areas. It covers: the motivations for NGOs to work with CBOs; the achievements and results of collaborations; the problems faced, and includes a SWOT analysis on various aspects of the relationships. Given recent attempts to involve CBOs as partners in development, the documenting of the experiences of NGO-CBO collaboration could serve as a benchmark for future study and policy formulation.

Appendix 3

Data Collection Format for Donors Database

EU - Non State Actors Mapping Study

British Council is undertaking a mapping study on non-state actors in Ethiopia for the European Union, Ministry of Capacity Building and Ministry of Finance and Economic Development. One of the outputs of this study will be building a database of donors. To this end, you are kindly requested to fill out this form and return to British Council not later than 30 March 2004.

Thank you for your co-operation!

Name of Organisation:		
Acronym:		
Address:	P.O. Box:	
	Tel:	
	Fax:	
	E-mail:	
	URL (Website address):	
Programme: (Please copy and use a separate form if you have more than one programme area of funding)	Programme Title:	
	Current status (e.g. ongoing, completed, proposed, etc.):	
	Objective of Programme (in not more than 300 words):	

	Sector Focus:
	Geographic coverage:
	Funds availability date:

	Duration (cycle) of funding:
	Programme budget:
	Eligibility criteria:
	Grant application procedure:
	Disbursement of funds:
	Co-funding allowed?
	Other information:
General budget	
Duration of donor grant	
General objective(s) of Donor grant	

Appendix 4

Data Collection Format for NGOs Database

EU - Non State Actors Mapping Study

British Council is undertaking a mapping study on non-state actors in Ethiopia for the European Union, Ministry of Capacity Building and Ministry of Finance and Economic Development. One of the outputs of this study will be building a database of NGOs. To this end, you are kindly requested to fill out this form and return to the British Council not later than 30 March 2004.

Thank you for your co-operation!

Name of Organisation:	
Acronym:	
Date of Registration:	
Contact Details:	Contact Person:
	Tel:
	Fax:
	E-mail:
	Website:
	P.O. Box:
	Town/Region:

Mission of Organisation:	
Main sector(s) of activity	
Objectives:	

Annual budget:	
Main Donors:	
Types of funding received:	§ Basket/ consortium § Project
Structure	General assembly: § Limited to founding members

	§ Board membership
	Board § Governing § Advisory
	Secretariat § Staffing - Full time - part time - volunteers
Sectors of Activity	q Human rights
	q Democracy/ Civic Education/ Citizenship
	q Women Empowerment
	q Conflict prevention and resolution
	q Advocacy and Lobby

	<p>What issues?</p> <p>Networks belong to</p>
	<p>q Capacity Building: which areas are most relevant?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Training - Accompaniment - Involvement in Capacity Building Networks - Sharing of Capacity (Trainers, materials)
	<p>q Networks (Beyond advocacy and capacity Building)</p> <p>E.g. Governance, Gender</p>
Needs Analysis (In-House Capacity)	<p>q Internet governance</p>
	<p>q Strategic Planning</p>

	q	General and financial management
	q	External communication
	q	Advocacy and lobby
	q	Policy analysis
	q	Media skills
	q	Campaigning skills
	q	Project: Design Management Monitoring and Evaluation
	q	Human resource Development
	q	Constituency Building
	q	Use of volunteers
	q	Other

Appendix 5

Questionnaires used for the first field visit 26 January – 5 Feb 2004

Questions for Donors

- 1 How do you perceive NSAs – what is your definition?

- 2 Which categories of NSAs are of greatest interest to you and why?

- 3 Which ones do you fund and why? (Future funding plans for NSAs)

- 4 Are you interested in funding particular regions of the country or particular activities?

- 5 What do you see as the strengths and weaknesses of NSAs and how should the weaknesses be addressed?

- 6 What is the potential for local organizations to be self sustaining financially?

- 7 How do you see the relationship between Government and NSAs at the different levels (national, regional and local)? (Legal/political environment/barriers to communication between government and civil society)

- 8 Who are the other key donors who are funding NSAs and which categories of NSAs/activities are they funding?

- 9 In your view is there any donor co-ordination in terms of funding NSAs?

Questions for NSAs

1 What are the main activities of your organisation? (or can you give us documentation?)

Do you see yourself as building capacity in other NSAs/NGOs?

Probe for details/examples on:

- Women's empowerment
- Conflict resolution/prevention
- Human rights
- Democracy
- Activities in advocacy and lobbying

2 Can you give us some idea of the scale of your organization (or can you give us documentation?)

- Geographical coverage
- Structure/central/branch offices
- Number of projects
- Staffing
- Turnover
- Members/users (number)

3 Who are your main funders?

4 Who do you think are the key donors for NSAs and NGOs?

5 Could you tell us what you think are the strengths and weaknesses of your organisation? (Eg funding, administration, management, communications, training, leadership.)

6 Please could you describe your management structure and the way in which your organization is governed? Do you have a membership (or client group/users) and how are they involved in your organisation?

7 What are the key areas where you need to build capacity in your organisation?

8 Please could you describe your relationship with government at national/regional and local level. Please can you give any examples of ways in which you have tried to influence government policy.

9 Please could you describe how you work with other NSAs/NGOs, for example, are you involved in any networks or forums?

10 Who do you regard as the key players in your area of civil society?

Typology – can we send it to them?

Questions for Government

1 Please could you give us your understanding of what is meant by civil society?

2 What role or activities do you think civil society should be involved in? (What are the problems or issues?)

3 How do you think Government should relate to civil society? (Is this different at national, regional and local levels?)

4 What do you think is an enabling environment for civil society – do you think this exist in Ethiopia today? (What changes might be necessary?)

5 What do you think are the strengths and weaknesses of civil society?

6 Does the Ministry of Capacity Building have a specific role in relation to capacity building within civil society? (Please describe what it is doing.)

6 (Alternative question for Ministry of Finance and Economic Development and Ministry of Justice)

Please describe your role in relation to civil society.

7 What role do international donors play in building capacity within civil society? (Who are the key players and what role are they/should they be playing?)

Appendix 6

Second Field Visit 15 March 2004

Questionnaire for NGOs/CBOs

1 What are the main activities of your organisation?

2 How large is your organisation? (for example, how many staff, how many activities/projects, how many users do you have? What is the budget? How many members?)

3 Who are your main funders?

4 Could you tell us what you think are the strengths and weaknesses of your organisation?

5 Could you please describe how you manage and govern your organisation?

6 Could you tell us how you work with the government in this Region?

(probe for good/bad relations/examples of advocacy/influencing etc.)

7 Do you work with other organisations in the Region – if so how?

(probe for networks and forums)

8 What do you think is the main role of civil society organisations, like yours, in Ethiopian society? (speaking out on behalf of people, asking questions of the Government, working in partnership with the Government?)

9 What are the main needs of your organisation in terms of building capacity?

(examples: managing the organisation, accounting, equipment, funding, building a membership, planning, talking to the Government.)

10 Can you name any organisations in the Region that work in the following areas:

- Women's empowerment
- Conflict prevention and resolution
- Human Rights
- Democracy

11 Can you name any organisations that use advocacy and lobbying as part of their work?

Questionnaire for Government Officials at Regional Level

- 1 What role/activities do you think civil society organisations should be involved in?

- 2 Please could you describe how you work with civil society organisations in your Region? (probe for examples of partnership working and good and bad relationships)

- 3 What do you think are the strengths and weaknesses of civil society organisations in your Region?

- 4 Are there specific problems that NGOs and civil society organisations face in their operations at woreda and kabele level?

- 5 Do you encourage civil society organisations to talk to you about your policies and plans for development? (Any examples)

- 6 Can you identify areas where organisations need to build capacity? (Examples: how to govern/manage their organisations, how to manage projects, how to relate to Government.)

- 7 Do you see a role for yourselves in building capacity in civil society organisations in the Region?

- 8 Can you please help us to complete the questions on the numbers of different civil society organisations in your Region that was sent to you early in February.

Appendix 7

List of organizations interviewed during field visits

Network of Ethiopian Women Associations, Addis Ababa
Ethiopian Human Rights Council, Addis Ababa
Action Professional Association for the People, Addis Ababa
Christian Relief and Development Association, Addis Ababa
Oxfam Canada, Addis Ababa
Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, Addis Ababa
Austrian Development Cooperation, Addis Ababa
Embassy of Finland/ Local Cooperation Fund, Addis Ababa
Department for International Department, Addis Ababa
UNDP, Addis Ababa
Media Communication Center, Addis Ababa
National NGO Forum/ Agency for the Assistance of Refugees, Displaced and Returnee, Addis Ababa
Association Registration Office, Ministry of Justice, Addis Ababa
Irish Aid, Addis Ababa
Oxfam GB, Addis Ababa
USAID, Addis Ababa
Peace and Development Committee, Addis Ababa
Ethiopian Economic Association, Addis Ababa
CIDA, Addis Ababa
World Bank, Addis Ababa
Belgian Embassy, Addis Ababa
PACT Ethiopia, Addis Ababa
Ethiopian Women Lawyers Association, Addis Ababa
Center for Local Capacity Building and Studies, Addis Ababa
Action Aid, Addis Ababa
Forum for Social Studies, Addis Ababa
Civil Society Capacity Building Programme, Ministry of Capacity Building, Addis Ababa
Confederation of Ethiopian Trade Union, International Affairs Division, Addis Ababa,
Inter-Africa Group, Addis Ababa
Cooperative Bureau, Semera
Regional Capacity Building, Semera
Regional DPPB, Addis Ababa
Rehabilitation and Development Organization (RaDO), Semera
Afar Pastoralist Development Association, Assaita
Harari Women's Affairs, Harar
Harar Relief and Development Association, Harar
Hope for the Horn, Jigjiga
Somali Region, DPPB, Jigjiga

Mother and Child Development Organization, Jigjiga, Somali
SCF Harar, Harar
SCF-UK , Jigjiga Somali
Relief Society of Tigray, Mekelle
Kembatta Women's self-help Center, Durame, SNNP
Tigray Developent Association, Mekelle
Regional Social Sector Expert, Harar Regional State
DPPB and Labor and Social Affairs Bureau, Harar Regional State
Cooperative Promotion Office, Harar Regional State
GOH Children, Youth and Development Association, Bahir Dar
HUNDEE, Addis Ababa
Oromia National Regional State Peoples' Organization and Community Mobilization Coordination Bureau, Addis Ababa
Action Aid – Awassa , SNNP
Tigray Farmers Association, Mekelle
Jerusalem Children and Community Organization, Dire Dawa
Lutheran World Federation, Dire Dawa
Aged Persons Aid and Rehabilitation Organization, DireDawa
Dire Dawa Trust Fund, Dire Dawa
Masresha Eshete Child Welfare, Dire Dawa
Cheshire Services Ethiopia, Dire Dawa
Marie Stopes Diredawa, Dire Dawa
Representatives, Dire Dawa Youth and Women Association
Deputy Head, City Administration, Dire Dawa
DPPB and Labor and Social Affairs Bureau, Dire Dawa
Regional Capacity Building Bureau, Dire Dawa
Amhara Women Association, Bahir Dar
Regional Capacity Building Bureau, Bahir Dar
Bureau of People's Participation and Organization , Bahir Dar
Regional DPPB, Bahir Dar
BOFED, Bahir Dar
SCF, Bahir Dar
Southern Peoples' Development Association, Awassa
BoFED, Awassa, SNNP
Regional Capacity Building, Assosa
Civic Association Coordination Bureau, Assosa
Regional DPPB, Assosa
Regonal BOFED, Assosa
Benishangul Rehabilitation and Development Association, Assosa
Boro-Shinasha Development Association, Assosa

Mao-Kome Development Association, Assosa
Tikuret Legumuz Development Association, Assosa
Assosa Town Chamber of Commerce, Assosa
Tigray Youth Association, Mekelle
Tigray Teachers Association, Mekelle
Tigray Cooperative Coordination Bureau, Mekelle

4.5 National typology

	Estimate of Numbers and Range	Examples	Main Function/ Activities	Membership/ User Base	Degree of Regional Presence
1 NGOs	722				
International NGOs	182	Oxfam, Save the Children, Action Aid, Goal, Care, Concern, ZOA Refugee Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Social Welfare · Health · Clean Water · Education · Relief · · URBAN/ Rural Development 	User based	All regions
National NGOs	540	Hope Enterprise, Afar Pastoralist Development Association, IHA-UDP, Rift Valley Children and Women Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Social Welfare · Health · Clean Water · Education · Urban/ Rural Development 	User based	All regions
2 Development Associations					
Regional	7	Tigray Development Association, Amhara Development Association, Southern People's Development Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Health · Education · Skills Training 	Membership Based	In most regions
Local	31	Siltie Development Association, Ogaden Development Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Health · Education · Skills 	Membership Based	In most regions

			Training		
3 Faith Based Organizations (FBOs)	40 local FBOs 31 International 192 local religious institutions	Ethiopian Orthodox Church Development Association World Lutheran Federation Islamic Affairs Supreme Council Church of Christ	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health • Education • Clean Water Relief 	User Based	

4 Human Rights Governance	20 local and 5 International	Ethiopian Human Rights Council, Action professional Association for People, Inter Africa Group, Peace and Development Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human rights education • Civic education • Policy advocacy, • Women's empowerment • Voter education • Election monitoring 	Predominantly user Based	Concentrated in Addis but some have Chapter offices and interventions in the regions
5. Other NSAs Business and trade union Professional		Ethiopian Business Women's Association Ethiopian Employees Federation			

Association	180 local and 5 International	Ethiopian Economic Association	Promote and protect their members rights	Membership based	Concentrated in Addis Ababa
Women's Association	9 Regional and 11 Other	Amhara Women's Association			
Youth Associations	7 Regional and 6 other	Tigray Youth Association			
Miscellaneous (Associations)	60				
Co-operatives	7740	Farmer's Co-operatives; Saving and Credit Co-operatives Association			
Community Based Organization	Mostly not registered	Iddir and iqqub	Self-help for members	Membership based	All regions