NGO-Government Relations: Conflict and Co-operation in Development Management for Rehabilitation of Demobilised Soldiers: The Case of Eastern Tigray, Ethiopia*

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Introduction

Statement of the Problem

NGOs attracted international attention in the mid-1980s after being 'discovered' by experts and institutions. Only recently have these organisations gained momentum in many countries. The organisations themselves, however, have deep historical roots (Charlton and May 1995:237; Carroll 1992:1; Fernades 1994; McPherson and Rotolo 1996:179; Clarke 1990). According to Nyang'oro, NGOs 'have been actors on the development stage for several decades, longer than the World Bank, the United Nations or any other official aid agency' (1993:283). This is accepted by the United Nations Organisation (UNO). In its document, *A Vision of Hope*, UNO gave credit to the experience and lengthy existence of NGOs: 'From the very start, the founding members of UNO recognised that NGOs existed and had an important role to play in the economic and social life of people, at

both national and international levels' (1995:186). The Anti-Slavery International (1839), the Salvation Army (1865), the American Red Cross (1881), Wild Life Conservation International (1897), the American Friends Service Committee (1917), Ouvers Hospitalieren Federation (1932) and the World Jewish Congress (1936) were among the NGOs that had long existed. Indeed, NGOs date back to much farther than the Nineteenth Century (see Smith 1997:189-207 for a detailed world history of grassroots and non-profit-making organisations).

In Ethiopia, the importance of NGOs in emergency, rehabilitation and development ventures were not adequately investigated before the great famine of 1985/86 (Tegegne 1994; Desalegn 1986; Dodd 1997). However, multilateral and bilateral international development organisations such as the World Food Programme (WFP), German Technical Co-operation (GTZ) and the European Economic Union (EEU) actively participated in such activities before the mid-1980s (Solomon and Yaraswork 1985; cf. Stahl 1990). Ethiopia's own indigenous organisations, such as 'Iquib', 'Edir' and 'Maheber'[1] have long histories (Salole 1982[2]; Dejene 1991:449-461) but their significance and organisational bases were not exploited in structuring and modeling the major local NGOs.

Despite the argument that the success of NGOs has been by default, because of the State's weakness (Bratton 1989:572; Clarke 1991; UNO/ECA 1995:268), it is widely recognised that States are not willing to admit their weakness. They are also not much inclined to give enough room to enable NGOs to operate and function smoothly. This is certainly the case in Africa.

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[1] Iquib' is a rotating credit association while 'Edir' refers to neighbouring mutual aid associations. 'Mahebers' are religious mutual aid associations attached to specific patron saints.

[2] See Salole (1982) for further discussion.

On the other hand, there is an obvious danger in developing a myth about NGOs on the sole assumption that they can be trusted simply because they are different from the State (Rahnema 1985:69). We cannot love NGOs just because they are non-governmental. Clarke contends that it is governments that 'we, the public, love to hate; non- government, voluntary, cannot be suspect' (1990:45). We should be cautious in evaluating actors such as NGOs. Some writers note that the substantial majority of NGOs working with the poor are committed to relieving the immediate consequences of poverty so they give little attention to matters concerning development theory (Cherrett *et al.* 1995:29). Few NGOs' income-generating projects manage to reach the poorest and few of them have sought to create new employment opportunities (Farrington and Bebbington 1993). Such criticisms are becoming so intense that many people question the value of NGOs as mechanisms for poverty alleviation. Their accountability is a major issue. One report questioned whether NGOs have had as much success in tackling poverty as they claim. It concluded: 'Nobody really knows. What seems clear is that even people helped by successful [NGOs] projects remain poor' (UNDP 1993 in UNO 1995:183).

After 1991, Ethiopia experienced many changes in the system of government and in government policies. These changes explain the proliferation of the Third Sector in the country. The mushroom growth of NGOs was one of many such changes. More than 250 international, national and local NGOs participated in various undertakings with the total number of beneficiaries being roughly 26 million (CRDA)[3]. In developing countries altogether, NGOs (of both the North and South) reached as many as 250 million people (UNO 1995:191). As a result, they attracted enormous attention, though interest in them varied widely in different circles. In June 1993, the

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[3] Interview of a representative of CRDA with Radio Ethiopia, June 3, 1998.

Ethiopian Government introduced the National Policy on Disaster Prevention and Management (NPDPM) to rationalise activities of NGOs in the country. The Third Sector in the country tended to reflect the organisational and functional transformation or changes countrywide, which stimulated the growth of NGOs and sometimes seemed to be their *raison d'être* (Redmond 1997:100).

Objectives and Hypothesis

The change in the system of government transformed the country's main development functions and objectives. The formulation of a rational policy in 1993 to control the functions of NGOs affected the operation of Third Sector organisations. The manner in which the policy was implemented determined how much political space could be allowed for NGO operations. This study is concerned with the variables affecting the policy implementation process, including networking and the organisational aspects.

The objective of this study was to investigate how relations between actors, particularly government and Third Sector organisations, affected the efforts to rehabilitate demobilised soldiers. The study considers how the work of NGOs was changed, following the introduction of the relief policy (the NPDPM). Ambiguous and deficient policy frameworks, together with difficult NGO-GO relations, impeded the smooth operation and flexible response of development actors, particularly the NGOs. This was due to the narrow 'political space' allowed for Third Sector organisations. By 'Political space,' I mean the area in which non-State actors can take initiatives independently of the State (Riker 1995:23). The paper also probes the effects of the policy on activities of NGOs, particularly their Food-and-Cash-For-Work-Programmes (FFWP/CFWP) for the rehabilitation of demobilised soldiers. These programmes have been identified as one of the most effective undertakings, in terms of labour and productivity (ILO 1998:25-26). It should be noted that no projects are intended

exclusively for demobilised soldiers, some of whom are among beneficiaries in the category described as 'the poorest of the poor'.

The change of government in 1991 was immediately followed by the demobilisation of thousands of soldiers of the Derg regime. The Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Front (EPRDF), which overthrew the Derg regime, also demobilised many of its guerrilla fighters, the majority of whom were landless and had no other assets[4]. However, this paper is concerned with only demobilised soldiers of the previous regime. Both NGOs and GOs worked to rehabilitate them through income- and employment-generating strategies, such as Food- and Cash-For-Work Programmes. This study has taken the Relief Society of Tigray (REST), the Adigrat Catholic Secretariat (ACS) and World Vision International-Ethiopia (WVI-E) as its three NGO units of analysis[5].

The paper argues that the introduction of the relief policy transformed the activities of NGOs by restricting hand-outs. Nonetheless, while the transformation was helpful, it did not lay the foundations of a complete rehabilitation[6] of the demobilised soldiers.

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[4] Interestingly, Eritrean forces overran the research sites, particularly Irob, where this study was conducted. Most of the demobilised soldiers were therefore remobilised for another war effort against Eritrea. For a recent development on the situation in Irob, see Ann Waters-Bayer, 'Field Trip Report from Northern Tigray: Conflict Displaces the Irob People', *A Report Prepared for Indigenous Soil and Water Conservation in Africa (ISWC)*, Addis Ababa, August 1998.

[5] In 1996/97 the regional DPPB in Mekelle concluded formal agreements with 13 NGOs. The largest NGOs are found in the Eastern and Southern zones. Among the NGOs in the Eastern zone, REST and WVI-E undertake FFWP while ACS is engaged in CFWP.

[6] Rehabilitation is defined here as an approach in the process of preparing unstable grounds for emergency interventions and enhanced development activities. It is a strategy aimed at providing a basis for long-term recovery of beneficiaries and areas. The constitution of the Relief and Rehabilitation Commission (RRC) No. 172/1979 defines rehabilitation as 'the preparation and implementation of programmes which

The limited results of the rehabilitation process were not simply that the beneficiaries did not get free food. It was the other provisions of the policy that did not work smoothly. The policy was to help provide a relief-rehabilitation-development 'continuum' for the rehabilitation of demobilised soldiers. However, the basic strategic objectives were not properly focused, and they did not encompass underlying problems, notably the questions of land, long-term employment and income generation. The strategy was perhaps unduly ambitious. It should also be acknowledged that the agencies, mainly governmental institutions and NGOs, did not work well together.

There were several reasons for the limited success of the policy. First, even though the government pledged equal treatment for all NGOs, it did not act fairly towards the latter. On the other hand, the NGOs wanted to enjoy clear organisational autonomy, but this was not accepted by the local government. Relations among the NGOs was also characterised by flabby and loose co-operation. Moreover, some NGOs came to dominate others through a process of organisational colonisation. These difficulties resulted in inefficient delivery services and the Non-Governmental Organisations' incapacity to rehabilitate demobilised soldiers. This reduced the contribution they were able to make to peace and human security.

Secondly, the GOs structurally excluded some demobilised soldiers at political, economic and social levels and the centralising and hostile attitude of the GOs impeded efforts made by NGO to curtail this trend. However, literature about exclusion mainly focuses on the West. There are few works on Africa (Gore 1994; Apter 1993; Worfe 1994). The efforts to rehabilitate demobilised soldiers did not include other salient factors, such as psychological counselling.

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will enable disaster-affected people to be self-supporting and capable of protecting themselves from possible future disasters' (p. 54). See Mimica and Stubbs (1996:281-290); Brigaldino (1996:367-369).

1.3. Research Questions

The following are the main research questions that the study aims to investigate: What roles does the State play in the management of development activities in Africa? How does the NGO-GO relationship affect 'secured development interventions' in rehabilitating demobilised soldiers? Does the implementation of policy enhance the status of strong civic organisations and the civilian life of the newly demobilised soldiers? How can the strategies employed reduce the likelihood of possible violence by demobilised soldiers? Do NGOs and GOs have the will and the capacity to work to this effect?

1.4. Research Methods

A shift is being made from simply probing interpersonal relations to conducting research on inter-organisational relations. The roots of serious poverty in the modern world have to be sought in organisations and policies (Barraclough 1997:121; Form 1971:3), and NGOs are organisations that deal with various developmental issues and problems. Their activities are complemented, controlled and checked by governments. This study is mainly about the interaction of organisations in an effort to reduce poverty.

The issues are sensitive. Care was taken to reduce gaps in data collection. The characteristics of the organisations being studied and the relationships between them, the status of respondents and how they were approached were all taken into account, since this could affect the validity and reliability of the data collected.

Primary Sources

The primary methodologies employed during the field study included an intensive interview with NGO representatives, the heads of different units and staff members concerned, representatives of the zonal DPPB, heads and experts of the Bureau of Agriculture (BOA),

heads of the Planning Bureau, officials of the zonal and *wereda* Administrations and the beneficiaries. Open and close-ended questionnaires, prepared before the study, were used.

Twenty respondents from the different organisations were selected. The selection was based on the fact that almost all the respondents were thought to have a good understanding of the issues considered. Secondly, they were closely involved in activities of NGOs and the main government bodies in the area concerned. Other members of the relevant institutions contacted during the field study were also asked to express their feelings. This further diversified the scope of the study and enabled the study team to cross-check information from different sources.

In areas like Tigray, where there is systematic control over most of the activities of both governmental and non-governmental institutions, the quality of the data can be affected by the way that researchers present themselves. If this is not done tactfully, representatives, officials and even employees of the different organisations have less confidence in sharing information. We tried therefore to employ some of the techniques of Participatory Rapid Appraisal Methods (PRAM). A series of informal and focus group discussions with the interviewees were conducted in their homes and in 'mess' (wine) and teahouses. Attempts were made to cross-check the information provided.

Fifty beneficiaries were interviewed at three project sites at Atsibi, Saese Tsadamba and Irob. At Atsibi, thirty household heads/beneficiaries were interviewed on three different sites at Haresaw, Debre Selam (Rubafelege) and Atsibi Endesilassie and also at a payment distribution centre. Group discussions were also held with the beneficiaries. At Irob and Saese Tsadamba, twenty household heads/beneficiaries were interviewed at project sites, in 'Sewa' (local beer) houses and in their homes.

Sample size was determined arbitrarily, according to the convenience, capacity and time framework of the study. The qualitative aspect of the study had to be emphasised. Beneficiaries were screened intensively so as to understand the importance, homogeneity and completeness of all the independent variables in the study. The beneficiaries of the study, the demobilised soldiers, had been randomly dispersed after the change of government. No census data on their number or where they lived after 1991 are available and any statistics in this connection would probably not be reliable.

It was also beyond the capacity of this research to include the standard sample size for the number of beneficiaries found in the research sites. Basic assessments were made in respect of the number of beneficiaries in the three project sites. We tried to obtain information about the number of beneficiaries residing in each area. In this regard, beneficiaries were informally advised to tell their own stories and this enabled us to deduce how many of them had come to the area and how many demobilised soldiers and returnees were then living there. Beneficiaries were categorised as possessing land or without land, having a multiple or single source of income, households headed by males or females, and beneficiaries working on a variety of projects or otherwise. We used as key informants, 'Abo Wonbers' (chairmen of *Kushet* — village-level administration), experts and Development Agents (DAs) from the BOA and demobilised soldiers serving as foremen at project sites.

Participatory and empirical observation of each aspect of the study was helpful, as we critically observed how NGOs carried out their daily activities through interaction with their various units. We also assessed working conditions of beneficiaries and their reaction to such conditions.

Secondary Sources of Data

This study took NGOs as semi-open entities prone to organisational and environmental changes. Like other organisations with different structures, objectives and functions, these organisations had both dynamic and static attributes. The interplay of these attributes, and the development of dynamic behaviour, gave the organisations the incentive they needed to adapt themselves to changes in the working environment. At the same time, the organisations resisted changes that threatened their survival. Absolute openness within the organisation was seen as a weakness to be remedied by partial openness. Literature on the Third Sector, project assessment reports and other documents were used as secondary sources of data.

1.5. The Setting

Tigray region is divided into four zones: Central, Eastern, Southern and Western. Eastern Tigray has a total population of 584,946 (CSA 1995). The zone has seven *weredas*: Hawzen, Atsibi Wonberta, Irob, Gulamado, Wukro, Saesi Tsaedamba and Ganta Afeshum. WVI-E, ACS and REST were active in Atsibi Wonberta, Irob and Saesi Tsaedamba *weredas*, respectively, where this research was carried out.

Atsibi Wonberta is located in the south-eastern part of Eastern Tigray. It is 860 km from Addis Ababa and 80 km from Mekelle. Atsibi and Wonberta used to be separate *weredas*, but they recently merged together, with Atsibi as the capital. Agro-ecologically speaking, the area is classified as highland. The altitude varies between 2,640 and 2,800 metres and rainfall is very erratic. According to meteorological records, there had been three normal rainy seasons in ten consecutive years (WVI-E 1995:1).

Centuries of human settlement and repeated conflicts have exhausted the fertility of the land. Exposed sedimentary bedrocks and deforested mountainous landscapes are characteristic features of this

zone. Most of the local people engaged in subsistence agriculture along with small-scale trading. Cereal crops are predominant in the area, although it is not well suited to them, because of moisture and nutrient stress (WVI-E 1995:1). The majority of the population are followers of the Orthodox Church, but there are also minority Muslim communities. Tigrians are dominant in the central parts of the area, and Afars in the lowlands. Tigrigna is widely spoken. The area, one of the poorest parts of Tigray, has been devastated by drought and wars.

Irob is located in the north eastern part of Tigray, 940 km from Addis Ababa and 160 km from Mekelle. Saesi Tsadamba is located at 75 km north of Mekelle. The area in both *weredas* is rugged with steep and highly eroded escarpments. War and failure of the seasonal rains seriously affected the land. The soil is exhausted through long settlement and intensive farming. Irob has a total population of 17,286 and 90,935 live in Saesi Tsadamba (CSA 1995). The people in these two *weredas* depend on small-scale trading. These activities are adopted to make up for shortfalls in agricultural production due to adverse climatic conditions. It is estimated that 98% of Irob's population is Catholic, while Saesi Tsadamba has both Orthodox and Catholic communities, with a Muslim minority.

Framework for Analysis

Officials of popular organisations, governments and international organisations adopted the *African Charter for Popular Participation in Development and Transformation* in Arusha in 1990. This Charter affirmed that one of the underlying causes of the crises engulfing Africa had been an inherent conflict of interests between NGOs and the States (Rashed and Getachew 1995:191-92).

It is usually recognised that building relationships is a long and complex process in the operation and role of NGOs. Even after establishing relationships, there are often conflicts and difficulties

(World Bank 1996:V). Generally speaking, there can be two kinds of relationships: functional and organisational. Functional relationships entail co-ordinating and strengthening the functions (specific or general) of NGOs, by exchanging information, offering technical assistance, sharing experiences, etc. Organisational or institutional relationships, on the other hand, concern the creation of co-ordinating bodies of which NGOs are members.

NGO functions and roles can be understood by investigating the sector's relations with governments. This aspect has remained unaddressed for a long time (Meyer 1996:454; Hammack and Young 1993; Weisbrod 1977:51-76; Riker 1995:100-102). The emergence of the Third Sector as an important input to development and the interest expressed in them make it easier for this issue to be examined closely. There has been intense debate on the definition and nature of these relationships since the 1980s. Consequently, the issue is becoming well documented (Bratton 1990:569-89; 1990a:87-118; Bebbington and Farrington 1993:199-219; Copestate and Wellard 1991; Farrington 1993; Fowler 1991b:53-84; Gary 1996:150; Marcussen 1996:405-423; Riker 1995:15-52 and 128; N. Heyzer 1995:1-14; Pieterse 1997:157-166).

The dominance of the government and some GO-NGOs over NGOs and the weakening of other 'independent' NGOs makes NGO-GO relations sensitive. Put simply, this means that they are used as a conduit for material/financial and political returns. This refers to 'the Cash in on Approach'. Relationships determine the success or failure of development activities. The rehabilitation of demobilised soldiers in Ethiopia hinges closely on this factor. Consequently, there are many and varied opinions and recommendations calling for closer, medium or distant relations between NGOs and governments.

At one extreme point, some people argue that closer co-operation with governments has contributed greatly to the success of NGO projects (Ahmed 1992; Sanyal 1994; Tvedt 1992:22; Carrie

1996:458). In the middle, an appropriate division of responsibilities and duties between governments and NGOs is recommended, to achieve a balanced co-operation, without infringing the autonomy of either actor (Lee 1994:169; Bratton 1987:572-73; Drabek 1987:xiv). At the other extreme point, it is argued that close co-operation and relations with governments erode the credibility, responsibility and independence of NGOs (Drabek 1987:xiv; Bebbington and Thiel 1993; Marcussen 1996:418).

In a comparative study · of relations between NGOs and governments, Drabek wrote that, in India, a collaborative/co-operative relationship exists, and that in Africa, NGOs acknowledge the frequent need to work closely with governments - or at least to avoid antagonising the authorities. In Latin America, NGOs are often opposed to governments, for many reasons, including religion (1987:XIII).

Government actions can range from granting the Third Sector considerable operational freedom (e.g. Sri Lanka) to viewing the sector as a threat to national security that should be actively discouraged (e.g. Somalia) (Hulme 1994:264). Moreover, following Korton's Analysis of State, Market and Civil Society (1990), Goodman and Chamberlain (1996:196) tried to draw an analogy with NGOs in Afghanistan with focus on prince, merchant and citizen. They argued that, rather than promoting accountability, NGOs were perhaps 'dancing with the prince', whether the latter was a government, an insurgent movement or a local warlord.

· In Africa particularly, it is indicated that 'despite the expectation of providing discretionary treatment for NGOs and African Governments for a democratic system of governance, shifting funds to favour NGOs more than governments may not be readily accepted by the latter' (UNO / ECA 1995:272). The politics of NGO-GO relationships include the proposition that NGOs should be less provocative in their relations with governments and work in a pacific

mood by lowering their voices (Bratton 1989:572-73; Goodhand and Chamberlain 1995:200-201; Drabek 1987:xiv). Others, for example Eldridge, note that a few NGOs, as observed in Indonesia, deliberately dropped the 'non-governmental' appellation, because of its 'anti-government' connotations (1989).

Efforts to reduce 'provocation' sometimes lead to co-option, which consists in absorbing new elements into the leadership or policy-making structure as a means of averting threats to its stable existence (Selznik 1981:317). On the government's side, co-option comes before suspension and dissolution. This magnifies the threatened stage in which NGOs find themselves (Hulme 1994:264). The alternative between survival and becoming redundant is recommended as a last resort to NGOs (Gary 1996:150). The strategy can be criticised for its implied questioning of NGOs' accountability and independence (Drabek 1987:xiv; Hulme 1994:264; Esman and Uphoff 1984; Bebbington and Thiele 1993).

It is often purported that one factor behind the emergence of NGOs is the inability of States to provide all aspects of services. In other words, the emergence of NGOs has been by default (Bratton 1989:572; Clarke 1991; UNECA 1995:268). However, most people regard NGOs as the most flexible and efficient means of dealing with poverty and reaching poor communities (World Bank 1996:1; 1991:135-136; UNECA 1995:271). It has been pointed out that one should be cautious in case there is a danger of building up a new NGO myth, on the sole grounds that NGOs can be trusted, because they are different from the State apparatus (Rahnama 1987).

Sometimes governments realise their weaknesses and allow NGOs to fill the gaps they have left. NGOs can thus be sources of funding. Providing resources to governments in these circumstances is assumed to lessen the friction in NGO-GO relations (Marcussen 1996:75-76; Bebbington and Thiele 1992). Prime Minister Meles Zenawi recently reiterated this (DPPC June 1997:2).

NGO-GO relations are also illuminated by the Opposition's role, which consists in directly challenging government policies and supporting other local organisations to take over such roles. Fowler openly states that NGOs should oppose illegitimate governments and weaken their bases from below (1992:7). Opposition is possible when NGOs are able to redefine the means and objectives of civil society, by counterbalancing the predatory and rent-seeking powers of governments (Clarke 1991). NGOs might thus support empowerment and democratisation. But in a system where the political space for NGOs is suffocated, any effort to bypass the government may be an act of suicide (Riker 1995:22). This is still worse for NGOs that do not have the 'cards' to influence an establishment. Such 'cards' may be support from donors, organisational and financial capacity and special links with communities or governments.

At times NGOs help grassroots and civic organisations to acquire the capacity to transform the socio-economic and political structures of a country. NGOs here serve as catalysts for mobilising public opinion through local organisations that hold politicians accountable for their actions (Fowler 1992a:16; Marcussen 1996:418).

The politics of NGO-GO relations, one of the basic variables affecting many development and rehabilitation activities, is characterised by the proposition that NGOs should work with governments for complete collaboration and co-operation, i.e. without any resistance and opposition. This option is a characteristic feature of Scandinavian NGOs (Klausen and Selle 1996:99-122). It is rare in most African NGOs, since it endangers their survival. Full co-operation depends on the nature of both political systems and the Third Sector organisations.

NGO-GO relations are also illuminated by attempts to strike a balance between the above roles. This can mean playing a new game with old rules, i.e. a balancing act whereby NGOs exploit the

'economy of affection' for governments, without being 'colonised' by them (Goodhand and Chamberlain 1995:200-201; Paul 1988:66).

It is on the basis of the above framework that the roles of NGOs in rehabilitation and development can be examined. NGO roles in rehabilitating 'sensitive and delicate' beneficiaries can easily be affected and disturbed by the pattern of NGO-GO relations. Sensitivity and delicacy are attributed to demobilised soldiers, with particular regard to the attention they received from GOs.

Discussion of Findings

The Politics of NGO-GO Relations in Ethiopia: An Overview

Poverty reduction efforts in Ethiopia have never been governed by clear laws or policies concerning the agencies or organisations that should be involved. Most of such activities were undertaken in conformity with guidelines based on the Civil Code of Ethiopia. There is, however, a strong organisation responsible for such undertakings — the former Relief and Rehabilitation Commission (RRC), now known as the Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Commission (DPPC).

Restrictions on Third Sector organisations have their base in the legal framework of Ethiopia. The legal practice aims to assimilate the organisations into civil associations, as defined in the 1960 Civil Code, and regulate them accordingly (Human Rights Watch/Africa 1997:41).[7] Several humanitarian organisations were accused of having other objectives opposed to the Derg regime, which was in power from 1974 to 1991 (Clay and Holcomb 1986:3; Dawit 1989:182-220;

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[7] Article 404 reads: 'an association is a grouping formed between two or more persons with a view to obtaining a result other than the securing and sharing of profits'. Article 411 requires, however, that the statutes of the association be signed by 'not less than five associates'.

cf. Tegegne 1994:62). Until 1991, activities of NGOs in Ethiopia were closely monitored by the Derg regime. NGOs supporting projects in areas outside the government sanctuary were put under stern control (Toye, June 1996:iv). A number of NGOs were ordered to discontinue operations during the 1980s famine, mainly because of conflicts with the regime* (Riker 1995:34). There was an autarchic control over the organisations during the Derg period.

The Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) overthrew the Derg regime in June 1991. The emergence of a multitude of international and local non-governmental organisations since the 1984/85 famine, and especially after the change of government in 1991, therefore necessitated the creation of a regulatory and co-ordinating mechanism. The realisation of the power decentralisation policy further accelerated the law enactment and policy formulation process. In 1993, the Transitional Government of Ethiopia (TGE) came up with a policy that fundamentally restricted the provision of free relief hand-outs[8]. This policy envisaged transformations in the role and activities of NGOs.

There was a debate about which activities of NGOs were political by nature. Conventionally, activities such as human rights protection, empowerment, advocacy etc., are considered to be highly political. However, every activity of NGOs is political, because no

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[8] Here, NGOs should note that the practice was not launched in an organised manner so it could not be applied strictly. This is also observed in the NPDPM of the present government. Similar approaches to the concepts can be discerned under different wordings. The RRC establishment proclamation No. 174/1979 defined relief as 'the supply of food, water, medicine, clothing, shelter and similar basic necessities to disaster-affected people until they became self-supporting, rehabilitated or resettled'. Proclamation No. 10/1995 on the establishment of DPPC employed the term assistance for relief. It treated assistance as 'comprehensive measures taken to prevent the future emergence of a disaster area under similar circumstances in addition to meeting the needs of disaster victims in terms of food and other basic necessities of life'.

activity is immune from policy issues, which involve political decisions (cf. Riker 1995). Among the basic issues concerning responsibilities of NGOs and the government, the strategies to abate disaster include basic attributes of policy. These strategies are crucial in determining not only the relations between NGOs but also their sensitive relations with the local government. The official position of the present government on the Third Sector in Ethiopia is based on bringing efficient functional outputs to NGO projects. Although there is some misunderstanding between the NGOs and GOs, there are signs that they will be rectified as time goes by (Simon Mechale 1997)[9].

It is reported that the present government has generally less hostile relations with NGOs than the Derg had. However, this 'decreased' hostility is not accepted by all NGOs (Toye, June 1996:vi). Although a comparison with the past does seem to indicate some relative improvement in the present government's attitudes towards NGOs, the government's autarchic tendencies vis-à-vis the NGOs are evident. Similarly, the contentions of some NGOs mainly reflect the reality at the micro level.

The strategies of WVI-E, in its relations with the local government in Atsibi, varied between keeping a low profile, co-opting and taking pragmatic decisions. Government bodies criticised the NGO for maintaining its organisational autonomy. This perhaps arose from a religious factor. Although religion is believed to inspire the work of NGOs in Africa (Dejong 1991:6), the inability of WVI-E to infiltrate the dominant Orthodox followers of Atsebe Wonberta led to an inward-looking 'seclusion' of the organisation. Some beneficiaries said they preferred not being paid to becoming converts (cf. Hancock 1993).

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[9] The Commissioner said this at a meeting held in Addis Ababa in August 1997.

On the other hand, the ACS attempted to take up a position of resistance complemented by selective collaboration. For its part, REST took the alternative line of complete co-operation (cf. Klausen and Selle 1996:99-122).

Government bodies criticised some of the NGOs for undermining the former's roles and recommendations. In Zambia, Collier (1996:246) found that some FFW projects of NGOs attempted to undermine the role of the local government by creating NGOs-beneficiaries networks, and this disrupted relations between local government authorities, beneficiaries and NGOs. He warned that isolating NGOs from local government would not help towards the achievement of the poverty alleviation objective. Sometimes the NGOs were commended for accomplishing fundamental development activities particularly in Tigray. However, most of the staff of the NGOs believed that, in Tigray, such activities were designed to secure more funds without being closely involved in the project implementation process.

Impact of Relationships on Interventions and Rehabilitation: NGO Cash and Food For Work Programmes (CFWP/FFWP) and Demobilised Soldiers

A Brief Background to NGO Projects

The CFWP of ACS: Long Experience in Irob

ACS is part of the organisation of the Catholic Church in the country. The Church came to the Eastern zone of Tigray more than a century ago. It has carried out developmental and religious projects at both zonal and regional levels.

The ACS developmental activities began more than two decades ago. The organisation's programme emphasises environmental conservation activities. ACS is also involved in providing education to the people of the region.

ACS undertakes the CFWP, while REST and WVI-E conduct the FFWPs. The CFWP of ACS dates back to the 1970s. This programme is widely known as the Adigrat Diocesan Development Action (ADDA). Except during the intensified war in Tigray, the CFWP of ACS continued various environmental and infrastructure activities in Irob and two other *weredas* of the Eastern Tigray zone.

The CFWP of ACS is one of the extensive and long-term projects for remedying natural resource depletion and shortage of cash income sources in Eastern Tigray. UNICEF undertook similar CFWP in Ethiopia in the 1980s (Webb and Von Braun 1993). However, the former was distinctive in that it had a well-established background among the people of the area who closely collaborated on the projects and also in other values.

The major justifications for ACS using cash instead of food are that cash is easier to pay than food; it is not perishable and it is easier to transport in such a rugged and inaccessible area as Eastern Tigray. Beneficiaries who get cash can also use the money according to their own priorities.

The advantages of paying cash rather than food are supported by arguments from different backgrounds. One major work in this field is T. Jackson and D. Eade's 'Against the Grain - The Dilemma of Project Food Aid' (1982). Research undertaken in Southern Africa also supports the argument that cash has advantages over food, particularly in rehabilitating demobilised soldiers and returnees (Whiteside 1996:123-24; Coelho and Vines 1994; Buchanan 1994).

Objective clarity, participation of beneficiaries, effective attainment of objectives, feasibility and the lasting benefits of food-

based programmes are other factors that have increased scepticism about food for development projects through FFWP (Barraclough 1997:126).

It was noted that ACS found itself fulfilling both the material and spiritual expectations of several beneficiaries in Irob. Its CFWP was run by staff sharing the same ethnic and religious background as the beneficiaries and this facilitated project planning and implementation.

The FFWP of REST

The Relief Society of Tigray (REST) was established in 1978 by Tigrians abroad who were participating in some way in the civil war against the Derg regime. During its difficult formative years, the NGO's basic objective was to assist those sections of the population in Tigray who were seriously affected by recurrent drought and war.

REST served as the relief arm of the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) during the seventeen years of active armed struggle. Some observers argue that REST was an 'organic part' of the liberation movement (Duffield and Prendergast 1994:24) and it was widely believed that REST was a branch of TPLF (Omaar and de Waal, November 1994:11).

The toppling of the Derg regime and the establishment of a government controlled by members of the TPLF helped REST to assert a dominant position, in a 'stabilised' way, over relief and developmental issues in Tigray.

REST believed that the FFWP would enable the beneficiaries to realise the benefits of development projects. Drought and war, and the fact that so many people needed assistance, pressurised REST into providing free relief hand-outs during the 1980s. The attendant 'dependency syndrome' 'created' by the free relief hand-outs made the NGO reverse this dangerous policy.

REST had perceived relief and development as being inextricably linked. In other words, a transformation from relief to development-oriented strategies meant shifting resources and efforts, which had inevitably been focused on relief during the war, in an all-out effort to promote long-term sustainable development (REST 1996:5). The top priority was to address the root causes of poverty. The respondents identified environmental degradation as the main problem facing the people of Tigray. The ecological disturbance, which led to starvation, could be reduced by remedying the environmental situation.

REST launched a series of FFWPs in Tigray in the late 1980s and in the early 1990s. Its main FFWP activities were undertaken through the Environmental Rehabilitation and Agricultural Development (ERAD) projects, which included soil conservation, road construction, reforestation, irrigation and construction of small dams.

Beneficiaries received 3 kilogrammes of grain per day per person. It was soon realised, however, that all the activities could not be rewarded equally. The payment of 3 kilogrammes to all beneficiaries was considered unsatisfactory. In our research zone, one of the major activities was road construction. The area is rocky, with rugged scenery in various places where new roads were constructed along with the maintenance of old ones. It was therefore decided that payments should be commensurate with the length of the roads constructed by the beneficiaries. About 2,000 to 2,500 beneficiaries were engaged to construct one road. For 1 kilometre of road, they received 60 quintals of grain.

The respondents stated that they had been involved in carrying out the projects and selecting beneficiaries in the first period. The responsibility for this was delegated to the *baitos* of the *wereda* and *Kushet* administrations. The NGO released payments in accordance with the recommendations of the implementing bodies.

The respondents said that the results of the FFWP could be measured in relation to the benefits afforded by the programme. It was believed that measurement based on expectations might be misleading. Because of the seriousness of the problems faced, and the efforts needed to mobilise the people and provide the various inputs required by the project, it was considered advisable to evaluate the project by comparing the results with those obtained in the past. Some of the project results also resolved other related problems, although one should not ignore certain negative consequences, which were indeed being tackled by the NGO's integrated rural development programme.

The Kilete Awulalo Area Development Programme (KAADP) of WVI-E

WVI-Ethiopia began its intervention in Ethiopia at the height of the drought and famine in the 1970s. Its main objective was to settle Sudanese refugees and other people displaced by the Ogaden war. The main activity consisted in supplying relief hand-outs. The 1984/85 famine posed a serious challenge to the organisation and running of the NGO. The first WVI-E feeding centre was established in Alamata (Wello) in 1984. Thanks to the Community-Based Technical Programme (CBTP) and to its Revolving Agricultural Inputs Loan Schemes (RAILS), the NGO expanded its strategies into the Area Development Programmes (ADPs). By mid-1992, WVI-E had 13 ADPs in different parts of the country.

With continued fund-raising and international expansion, WVI became one of the eight largest American NGOs, which together account for 80% of all US aid to Africa. Ignoring the government funding they receive, these eight NGOs provide 70% of all private US aid to Africa. Catholic Relief Service (CRS) and WVI together account for 45% of such aid (Anheier and Seibel 1990:371).

KAADP (one of the 13 ADPs of WVI-E) was established as part of a new strategy and operational method. Officially, the main focus of KAADP is 'integrated rural development'. This includes reforestation, earth dam construction, road construction and maintenance, establishment of health posts, construction of boreholes and provision of credit facilities. These activities were mostly undertaken through Food-For-Work Programmes (FFWP). In an agreement concluded in 1993 with the regional DPPB, the NGO committed 74,326,979 Birr and 19,729.7 MT of food during the life span of the project from 1993 to 1997. In 1997, another agreement was concluded for the next four years, and the NGO committed 45 million Birr and additional material inputs.

The FFWP of WVI-E was regarded as a means of serving the community and developing a better approach to enable the NGO 'to achieve the results of a community-based sustainable transformational development that would avert dependency and enable the community to decide on its fate' (WVI-E 1995). The objectives set by the NGO depended, to a large extent, on the policy environment in which it found itself. We however observed that NPDPM, the basic ingredient of the policy, was not fully understood. Few of the interviewees seemed to know much about the policy. They felt that the FFWP of KAADP brought about some improvements as a result of activities undertaken by the NGO. At any rate, the definition of the role of KAADP was fraught with problems.

Demobilised Soldiers

Ethiopian history is 'rich' in militarisation and mobilisation. The different empires and warlords mobilised large numbers of cavalry and infantry against one another and at times against external invaders. The Eighteenth Century 'Era of Princes' remains an illuminating case. Emperor Tewodros II (1855-68) set up a professional standing army in the middle of the 19th Century. This

effort was continued by subsequent rulers. During the reign of Emperor Haile Selassie I, the Italian invasion and internal resistance in Eritrea and in other regions pushed the regime to expand and strengthen the military.

The most extensive militarisation of all began after the Derg (Military Council) came to power by overthrowing the Emperor in 1974. The disengagement from the US, the invasion of Ethiopia by Somalia, the intensification of internal resistance in the northern parts of the country and in urban areas together contributed to the wide-ranging militarisation of the country. A peasant army of over 250,000 was mobilised within a year of the military junta's takeover (Human Rights Watch 1991:291; Dawit 1989:49-50). Subsequent extensive conscription into the military and rounds of military services through the *kebeles* (urban administrative structures) and Peasant Associations (PAs) gave a further boost to militarisation. The militarisation launched by the various internal armed rebellion movements and fronts further reinforced the militarisation of the country. This new dimension to the history of warfare and militarisation in Ethiopia inspired the evolution of a 'regimented society' with the attendant rebellion, conquest and counter-insurgency campaigns. 'Whose face have you not disfigured? Whose wife and child have you not captured?' have been the songs of soldiers since the 14th Century (Caulk 1978, in Human Rights Watch 1991:22-23). Titles such as *'Fitawurari', 'Dejazmatch', 'Kegnzmatch'* and *'Ras'* were military ranks comparable to the dukes, earls and barons of medieval Europe (Dawit 1989:71; Bahru 1998:260-62).

The number of troops mobilised by the previous regime is not exactly known. Different sources give different figures. The most widely cited figures (including those for the militia) vary between half a million and one million (Human Rights Watch 1991:6; Dawit 1989:49-50; Morrison 1992:128-29; Keller 1995:125; Bahru 1998:264). In 1991, the main six fronts of those who had been

fighting the military government had an official total military strength of 127,700 (Transitional Government of Ethiopia 1991). The actual numbers, however, could have been higher. It is estimated that more than half a million people died as a result of three decades of war in the country (Human Rights Watch 1991:4; Pool 1993:394).

The causes of the disintegration of the military body as an army and as an institution are hardly different from the problems facing the government. There were internal difficulties over the structure and role of the army. Dawit Woldeiorgis, a former government official, said '... since the internal resolution of the internal conflicts will bring about the demobilisation of this huge force, Mengistu ensures that the forces are kept busy and scattered throughout Ethiopia' (1989:61). It was surprising to observe the sudden total collapse of what was supposed to be a strong army, which was there to defend the regime and the country's national interests. In fact, the army was swept away completely. Its downfall was followed by an unprecedented proliferation of light weapons. During the 1974 revolution, the Military Council attempted to confiscate weapons in the people's possession. In Bahru's words, this was the 'arming of soldiers...accompanied by the disarming of civilians' (1998:276). 1991 witnessed the rearming of civilians. It is estimated that the uncontrolled proliferation of light weapons accounted for 90 percent of the death toll during the conflict and post-conflict phases (Kock 1998:12-17 cited in Specht and Empel 1998:4). Such light weapons are easy to transport and even the local blacksmiths can repair them.

Almost all the beneficiaries (demobilised soldiers) covered by this present research were living in the same areas where they had lived before they were mobilised. Most of them were born there and had served from three to seven years in Alula, Atse Kaleb, the 4th and Zaray Yakob Divisions in Eritrea. The highest rank among the ex-servicemen was Captain. Most of the ex-servicemen had joined the army willingly. Their reasons were generally economic. Eleven of the

conscripted respondents left the army after serving for some years. They did not opt to do this, however, because they thought they would have no opportunities if they left.

It was a pity that we did not find any ex-servicewomen among the respondents. Indeed, we tried to make the selection purposive so that female respondents could be included but all the respondents turned out to be ex-servicemen aged between 28 and 57 years. The majority had elementary education and quite a few (8) completed Grade Twelve. Most of them (37) were family heads. The largest family size was ten, and the lowest, four. The remaining respondents were single, divorced or widowed without children or family dependents. Several of them lived with their parents or relatives.

Many respondents had property (mainly land and cattle), before they joined the army. Few of them got their property back on their return. The majority said that the government authorities had told them that land allocation had been completed by the time they arrived. However, some claimed that even after they were told that land redistribution had been completed, land categorised as uncultivated or unoccupied was allotted to some returnees.

Impact Assessment

In this context, impact assessment consists in looking into the effects of NGO-GO relations on the role NGOs played in rehabilitating demobilised soldiers. As mentioned in the objective of this study, there are no projects exclusively intended for demobilised soldiers, neither are there any NGOs undertaking such activities.

Assessing these effects is not a simple task. In fact, the assessment should be comprehensive enough to provide a complete picture of the issues involved. This study does not claim to have made a complete coverage of the basic criteria and procedures for project assessment. Its objective is to understand the role NGOs

played in rehabilitating segments of a society that could easily create instability and public disorder.

Three important issues affected the role of NGOs in the rehabilitation of demobilised soldiers:

Selection of project area and beneficiaries: Despite the fact that NGOs were given priority in the selection of project areas, the recommendations of GOs carried more weight here. In practice, the overriding decisions were taken by GOs. Most of the areas where NGOs operated were poor and several NGOs were allotted regions which were difficult to manage in terms of potential and capacity. Even the local administrations in such regions kept on demanding more assistance from the NGOs.

The selection of beneficiaries used to be more contentious than the selection of project areas, although the line separating area and beneficiary was so thin. The living conditions of the beneficiaries usually indicated the nature of their areas. Most poor people lived in areas without resources. The selection of beneficiaries entailed some targeting and the identification of target groups often generated debates among experts in the field. Specht and Empel indicated that this question became more relevant in the post-conflict context where needs were urgent and the principles of social justice extremely sensitive (1998:10). The effectiveness and efficiency of organisations determined the extent to which they could reach the needy. Different organisations used different selection methods, which ranged from voting by beneficiaries to group discussions, participatory selection by organisations and government bodies.

The fundamental issue was to determine who was poor and hence eligible to participate in projects (i. e. to receive assistance). Even if a 'situational definition' could be reached, no NGO was allowed to target a particular section of a society. Indeed, there used to be a debate about inclusive and exclusive methods of targeting

demobilised soldiers. One line taken was that any reintegration project had to encompass not only demobilised soldiers but also returning refugees and internally displaced persons. In this regard, it was argued that special attention should be given to demobilised soldiers since they posed a unique threat to peace and security.

Apart from REST, the NGOs played restricted roles in selecting beneficiaries through the local administrative structures ('*weredd*' and '*tabia baitos*'). This was a sensitive issue, particularly to the demobilised soldiers. At times it led to political manipulation and unfair distribution. There were cases where the needy were excluded, particularly, demobilised soldiers with large families but no land or other assets.

Project formulation: Projects of NGOs are expected to be integrated. Moreover, Integrated Development Programmes (IDPs), as they are called, should include the major areas in any development activity. An NGO engaging in the construction of small dams should also have health and agriculture projects including training. In-depth studies of NGO activities for rehabilitating the poor showed that small and repeated interventions were really more feasible and worthwhile. Nonetheless, GOs give preference to those NGOs that submit broad projects. It is clear that the size of the financial input became more important than the rehabilitation and development of beneficiaries and regions. This approach had a negative impact on the formulation of small projects for specific groups of beneficiaries identified as having real needs.

Project implementation: The practice of transforming NGOs into mere funding channels greatly inhibited the role of NGOs in the rehabilitation process. Unless NGOs participate in implementing projects, corruption and unfair treatment of beneficiaries can occur more easily. Implementation includes budget allocation, provision of materials, project execution, payment and evaluation. Selecting an ex-serviceman to participate in a project meant he had passed all the

screening procedures. If he actually participated, it was difficult to guarantee his payment in the form of grain and edible oil. Who guaranteed his payment? After working for more than a month, beneficiaries often had to beg for payment. Sometimes they were told that the payment had not been processed, or that it had not arrived or that the work they did was for their own benefit so they could not ask for payment! Obviously then, the CFWP/FFWP addressed only social obligations.

The local government in the Eastern zone closely influenced the functions of NGOs. Government bodies wanted this policy to be strictly implemented. Two NGOs, the Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) and the Nazareth Children's Centre and Integrated Community Development (NACID), were banned from Eastern Tigray in 1996 and 1997 respectively. Admittedly, as the NGOs brought in more money, they became less involved in the project implementation and control functions. At the same time, they earned higher status, more respect and appreciation in the eyes of government bodies. As a result, the smooth functioning of NGO projects depended on:

(a). The amount of funds (financial and/or material) the NGOs were willing to give to government bodies.

(b). The willingness or reluctance of NGOs to act simply as funding agencies, without assuming much of the implementation functions.

(c). The existence of 'special values' in the NGOs, such as political and economic values, which attract a good status ranking by government bodies.

The above factors impeded NGOs from setting up possible rehabilitation mechanisms for demobilised soldiers. With the flight of Colonel Mengistu in 1991, many soldiers, carrying heavy and light weapons, began roaming around in urban areas. Armed people looted major cities. Most ex-servicemen begged for civilian clothes in

order to escape capture or death from in-coming EPRDF fighters. After calming the havoc, EDRDF called on the ex-combatants to report to training camps of the previous regime. Most of them did so and were given cash for transport and ration cards for some time. Few of them reported that they were mistreated. A Red Cross report also confirmed that there was no serious EPRDF mistreatment of ex-servicemen (in Morrison 1992:128).

The EPRDF propaganda about the Derg regime made the Ethiopian public regard soldiers of the previous regime as 'monsters' and 'cannibals'. One can imagine the feelings of the respondents' reaction to such an attitude, which inhibited social integration. The CFWP/FFWP of the NGOs had some positive impact because they came to minimise the existing problem. The promotion of interaction in project participation and the support shown by each beneficiary created a feeling of solidarity. This is because 'the importance of work does not simply lie in the fact that it provides a material benefit, but that it also enables people to participate in society and to feel that they have something to contribute' (Alder 1992:270). GOs play direct and indirect roles in either reducing or inflaming a sense of social exclusion.

One important point consisted in defining the demobilised soldiers. The basic question was: whose soldiers were these ex-servicemen? The Derg's? Those of Mengistu - as a warlord? Or Ethiopia's? The ERPRD government defined them as members of an army of dictators. The army was therefore regarded as that of Emperor Menelik II, Emperor Haile Selassie I and Colonel Mengistu. Others did not accept this assertion, for they viewed the army as one belonging to Ethiopia, defending its national security and interests although the regime also manipulated the troops for its own purposes (cf. Bahru 1998). The issue is still debatable. The way demobilised soldiers are defined can shape GOs actions towards any efforts intended to help them.

GOs have the right and power to determine resource distribution. The case of land is another major issue. The authorities have full power to refuse or allot land to any member of the community. Most of the demobilised soldiers were landless. They could only benefit from CFWP/FFWP payments. Together with most of the poor communities in the region, they were on the verge of absolute poverty. In the region as a whole, wealth was measured in terms of the area and fertility of land and the number of oxen that one possessed. Additional criteria included family size, optional sources of income and labour power within a family. The greater majority of demobilised soldiers had none. Land remained the underlying means to political power in a community. Most members of the previous regime were critical targets, in terms of party and army membership. Economic exclusion was rampant among the demobilised soldiers. It involved a structured exclusion from agricultural resources, which Gore referred to as 'restriction of access to land resources and patterns of land poverty, denial of access to productive inputs, high-value crops and output markets and processes of land degradation' (1994:26). He stressed that 'in Africa, some people were poor in the past because they were excluded from livelihood. Now they are poor because they are excluded from livelihood and they are excluded from livelihood because they are poor' (1994:81). In the Ethiopian case, however, demobilised soldiers were excluded not only because they were poor but also because they were 'politically unwanted'.

The discouragement of NGO rehabilitation schemes and the pursuit of policies and practices whereby GOs structurally excluded specific members of a society had negative effect on and 'ghettoised' the subjects (Apter 1993:6). Demobilised soldiers were therefore ghettoised and such a practice induced recruits to indulge crime and violence. Ethiopia after 1993 has been marked by a clear increase in muggings, armed robbery and other crimes. Roads leading to different regions of the country have remained insecure as

occasionally armed gangs blocked roads to rob passengers. Government sources reported such incidents and often claimed that soldiers of the previous government were responsible for those crimes.[10]

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[10] It is possible to refer to the mass media and police records of GOs. I have tried to check news broadcasts and newspapers of different times for more than one year. I have found out that in a weekly news broadcast (both TV and radio), there were three reports on violence. I was personally trapped in one of the incidents while I was coming from Dessie to Addis. More than five armed men forced the public bus, on which we were travelling, to stop just after finishing the tunnel near Debre Siena. They seized personal property including bags, watches, gold and money. At that time, a regular soldier was seated at the back of the bus. As soon as the robbers learned that he was there, they started shooting, hit him in the head and ran away with their booty. The victim was taken to the nearest hospital. The message below was the US State Department's advice to American nationals travelling to Ethiopia. However, reference to the statement should be considered cautiously, as the advice is exaggerated in some cases.

US State Department

Ethiopia - Consular Information Sheet

April 15, 1998

Country Description: The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia is a developing East African country comprising 11 semi-autonomous administrative regions organized loosely along major ethnic lines. A 17-year civil war ended in 1991 and a transitional government turned over power to an elected five-year government in August 1995. Tourism facilities in Ethiopia are minimal.

Areas of Instability: Armed attacks apparently targeting foreigners have occurred in Ethiopia. Americans throughout Ethiopia are advised to carefully consider security implications when visiting public places such as markets, restaurants, bars, night clubs and hotel lobbies and to limit their presence in these places. It is advisable to lodge at larger hotels, which offer better security. U.S. citizens should exercise particular caution in Harar and Dire Dawa, and to defer travel to the Somali Region and the Bale Zone of the Oromiya Region. In Addis Ababa, three co-ordinated grenade attacks against public places in April 1997 killed one Ethiopian and injured numerous people, including several foreigners. In 1996, bombs at the government-owned Ghion and Ware Shabelle Hotels killed five Ethiopians and wounded numerous Ethiopians and foreigners. In Southern Ethiopia, reports of banditry are not uncommon along the Kenyan border. Isolated incidents of violence have occurred in the vicinity of Lake Langano and Awassa. In Eastern Ethiopia, two

Demobilisation in Ethiopia was conducted occurred by force. After all, the soldiers had been defeated. Even in countries such as Mozambique and Sierra Leone, where demobilisation was carried out systematically, both individual and organised crimes have become a major challenge to the State. In Sierra Leone, Richards observed how excluded youth or 'young people' can be a source of violence (1996:125-30). The case of child soldiers in the same country reveals a threatening trend. In Mozambique, demobilisation, coupled with

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foreigners were killed and one wounded in daylight shooting incidents in Dire Dawa in October 1996. A February 1997 grenade attack at a hotel in Harar wounded five foreign nationals. In several of these incidents, the attacks appear to have targeted foreigners. Since the mid-1990s, there have also been several clashes between various opposition elements and government forces around Harar and in the Somali Regional State, particularly near the border with Somalia. The Awash-Mile Road has been the site of shootings, apparently by bandits operating at night or pre-dawn hours. In Western Ethiopia, military units have skirmished with forces allegedly belonging to the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF) in the vicinity of Nekemte. The Western-most tip of Gambella Region is rife with dissident activity from Sudan, and should be avoided. Visitors should seek current guidance from local officials before travelling to other areas along the Sudan border.

Traffic Safety and In-Country Travel: While travel on paved and unpaved roads is generally considered safe, land mines and other anti-personnel devices can be encountered on dirt roads targeted during the civil war. Before any off-road travel, it is advisable to inquire from local authorities to ensure that the area has been cleared of mines. Excessive speed, unpredictable local driving habits, pedestrians and livestock in the roadway, and lack of basic safety equipment on many vehicles, are daily hazards on Ethiopian roads. In addition, road travel after dark outside Addis Ababa and other cities is dangerous due to broken down vehicles left on the road and the possibility of armed robbery in some locations.

Information on Crime: Pickpocketing and other petty crimes are prevalent in urban areas. There are occasional reports of thieves snatching jewelry. Armed banditry can occur on roads outside major towns or cities and may be accompanied by violence. The loss or theft abroad of a U.S. passport should be reported immediately to local police and to the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate. The pamphlets, 'A Safe Trip Abroad' and 'Tips for Travellers to Sub-Saharan Africa', provide useful information on personal security while travelling abroad and on travel in the region. Both are available from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402.

severe poverty, has diminished respect for human life and crime has become a way of life for many people, including demobilised soldiers (Macamo 1996:198-205). During the period when 63,000 Frelimo and 20,000 Renamo soldiers were being demobilised, 77 cases of injury and deaths were reported in only one day (Gutteridge 1997:48). The basic cause of this crime and violence has been the soldiers' fear and lack of confidence in their future.

In Eritrea, the demobilisation of almost 100,000 Liberation Army soldiers has remained a political dilemma (Berhane 1993:134). The aim was to reduce the army from 100,000 to 30,000. There has been discontent among the fighters '...who have carried guns and would not be incorporated into the new national army' (Pool 1993:392). The EPRDF government also demobilised 40,000 of its own fighters. It was forced, however, to allocate extra resources to make their life correspond more to their expectation. The ex-fighters have been resettled in the Dansha Resettlement Area. This scheme has been evaluated as one of the most expensive projects in the country. A study even expressed doubts about the government's ability to sustain the flow of resources (Tesfay 1998)[11]. Some reports indicate that demobilised soldiers of the previous government are falling prey to the objectives of some political organisations. The most cited case has been the recruitment of soldiers by the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF) (Keller 1995:135; Morrison 1992:132). It is easy to understand how difficult it is for the States to make demobilisation a smooth undertaking so that the risks of large-scale public disorder and insecurity are minimised. There is an underlying danger that the small and disorganised crimes of today may become organised fatal political violence in future. David Apter issues a pertinent warning in this regard. He indicates that 'it is not such a

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[11] The report was prepared for GTZ-Ethiopia. Dr. Tesfaye looked into the significance and effectiveness of the resettlement package. He presented findings of the report at a seminar organised by IDR, 1998.

different step to move from the growth of crime, to more occasionally organised protests, to more explicit forms ... manifested by [organised] violence' (1993:6).

The case taken up in the present study shows how misguided rehabilitation of dislocated and vulnerable social groups can lead to socio-political fragmentation and public disorder. Other issues can contribute to a fuller understanding of the crisis of legitimacy in successive regimes in Ethiopia. The movement spearheaded by EPRDF, which was supported by a large segment of the population, is now being plagued by many instances of failure in governance. The last seven years were marked by far more intense public outrage and estrangement from the policies and actions of the regime. The most crucial question for most citizens was, 'Can EPRDF reconstitute fragmented mass support and identification?' Today, EPRDF still finds itself in crisis. Writing on the subject, Edmond Keller said:

Any regime that attempts to restore State efficiency must be guided by competent, politically committed leaders working systematically to establish legitimacy and develop trust among society's disparate groups. The EPRDF regime initially attempted to present the public image that it had the political will to effectively reconstitute the Ethiopian State, but it demonstrated that the autocratic tendencies of the revolutionary movement continued to predominate among the EPRDF leadership. (1995:132)

The problem of the country's successive regimes has been more of 'changing fashion' in the style of rule than 'fashioning changes'[12]. The regimes have been losing opportunities for fundamental reconciliation with the people. I cannot say they knew or did not know what the public wanted; the fact is that they did not want to *listen*.

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[12] This phrasing is based on Charles Elliot, who wrote about Third Sector organisations. He criticised organisations for changing fashions rather than fashioning change.

Concluding Remarks

I attempted in the foregoing discussion to show how relations between NGOs and GOs are characterised by complex and changing factors, which together weaken the role, autonomy and independence of NGOs. The local government does not treat all NGOs equally. There is unfair policy practice. The consequences are reflected in the rehabilitation of demobilised soldiers.

Martin Whiteside defines rehabilitation as 'a process of involving re-establishing livelihood security among the poorest households in order to reduce vulnerability to future disasters, restart the local economy in a sustainable fashion and avoid dependency' (1996:121). The rehabilitation of demobilised soldiers in the areas studied has been limited and hardly comparable with the type featured in the above definition. Demobilised soldiers and other returnees without land and other assets or income did not receive the help they needed to address their major concerns such as land and other long-range income and employment-generating activities.

Efforts made by the government alone towards reducing disaster and poverty have so far been crowned with little success. NGOs have the potential to mobilise resources, to create simple systems for delivering services and to build organisational capacity from within. The stubborn and autocratic attitude of the government towards Third Sector organisations in Ethiopia cannot at present be reconciled with the positive attributes of these organisations. NGOs can obtain the leverage necessary to operate in the country only by agreeing to be led and controlled by the government. There is a practice of 'the cash in on strategy' by the government. This means that NGOs are used as mere fronts and conduits for channelling resources from donors to the government. Their mere presence is taken as evidence of the existence of democratic rights of association in the country.

The government's interest is to acquire resources, mainly financial, from NGOs and then implement important policy decisions through organisations that the government itself created. These government-sponsored organisations are tarnished with the image of independent NGOs. They manifest more characteristics of quasi-NGOs (QUANGOs) closely affiliated to government bodies and departments. They also facilitate the operation of mechanisms that the Government uses to control other NGOs.

The NGOs are desirous of carving out their own organisational and functional autonomy. They are seen trying to conceal important decisions from the government. However, the organisations cannot be a substitute for government. They exist to complement it and to support the creation of local independent civic and development organisations. The continued existence of NGOs depends mainly on the objectives that they set out to achieve, which justify the funds they raise in the name of the Ethiopian poor. The Government has the responsibility to ensure that their work is implemented properly. NGOs should be open to proper enquiries from the Government. They should also understand that protests against this practice are tantamount to trying to make excuses for their failures or malfunctioning. Some of the organisations sometimes make mountains out of molehills.

The study revealed that basic policy requirements and the pattern of their implementation determine the success of disaster and poverty-reduction efforts, in rehabilitating vulnerable segments of communities, such as demobilised soldiers, as well as the smoothness of working relations among the actors. Relations between NGOs and GOs greatly influence the success of development activities and policy implementation. The structural exclusion of demobilised soldiers is contributing to the failure of efforts to turn them into peaceful community members. These efforts are being impeded in Ethiopia, particularly at the grassroots level and this, in turn, is endangering public order and security.

List of Abbreviations

ACS	Adigrat Catholic Secretariat
ADDA	Adigrat Diocesan Development Action
ADP	Area Development Programme
AVA	Ambiguous Voluntary Agency
BOA	Bureau of Agriculture
CFWP	Cash-for-work-programme
CRDA	Christian Relief Development Association
CSA	Central Statistic Authority
DA	Development Agent
DPPB	Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Bureau
DPPC	Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Commission
EEU	European Economic Union
EPLF	Eritrean People's Liberation Front
EPRDF	Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front
FFWP	Food-for-work-programme
GO	Governmental Organisations
GONGOS	Government-organised non-governmental organisations
GR	Gratuitous Relief
IDP	Integrated Development Programme
IDR	Institute of Development Research
JRS	Jesuit Refugee Service
KAADP	Kelete Awulalo Area Development Programme
NACID	Nathereth Children's Center and Integrated Development
NDPPF	National Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Fund
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NIRP	Netherlands Israeli Research Programme
NPDPM	National Policy on Disaster Prevention Management
PRAM	Participatory Rapid Rural Appraisal
QUANGOS	Quasi-Non-Governmental Organisations
REST	Relief Society of Tigray
RRC	Relief and Rehabilitation Commission
TGE	Transitional Government of Ethiopia
TPLF	Tigray People Liberation Front
WFP	World Food Programme
WVI-É	World Vision International-Ethiopia

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