

# **NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS AND LOCAL GOVERNANCE**

**Gebremedhin Belete**

**A research report submitted to the Faculty of Management, University of the Witwatersrand, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Masters of Management (in the field of Public and Development Management).**

**November 2005**

## **ABSTRACT**

The basic principles of democratic governance may have been captured in policy documents but do not guarantee the transformation to an equitable and socio-economically viable society in South Africa and other developing countries. Hence NGOs as an entity of civil society have a role to foster democratic governance with its guiding principles in order to build an equitable and just society at local, national and international levels. The purpose of this case study was to explore and provide a common insight about the meaning and nature of democratic governance and the role of NGOs, in this case IDASA and AWARD, in local governance.

The main findings of the research were that IDASA and AWARD have played substantial roles in democratizing local governance, providing social services, institutional development and capacity building, policy research and advocacy. Nevertheless, the above thematic issues require further multi-disciplinary research and collective action to promote the role of NGOs in local governance.

## **DECLARATION**

I declare this report is my own, unaided work. It is submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of Master of Management (in the field of Public and Development Management) in the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other University.

Gebremedhin Belete

Signature -----

22 November 2005

## **DEDICATION**

I would like to dedicate this research report to my wife Sonja Belete who has inspired and provided me with incredible support for the study and research completion.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

I am grateful to my supervisor, Dr. Thomas Mogale for his guidance throughout the research process. I extend my acknowledgement to IDASA and AWARD executive and field staff for providing their time and availing basic information. I am also thankful to the local government bodies of Bushbuckridge and Highlands, including the Kopanang community facilitators, for their positive attitude to provide vital information and constructive opinions for the research purpose. Without their assistance, this research would not have been possible.

## ACRONYMS

|          |                                                                       |
|----------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| ANC      | African National Congress                                             |
| BSCS     | Balance Score Card System                                             |
| AWARD    | Association for Water and Rural Development                           |
| CBO      | Community Based Organization                                          |
| CDF      | Community Development Forum                                           |
| CSO      | Civil Society Organization                                            |
| DPLG     | Department of Provincial and Local Government                         |
| DPSA     | Department of Public Service and Administration                       |
| FBO      | Faith Based Organization                                              |
| GEAR     | Growth, Employment and Redistribution                                 |
| HIV/AIDS | Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome      |
| IDASA    | Institute for Democracy in South Africa                               |
| IDP      | Integrated Development Programme                                      |
| MPACD    | Ministry for Provincial Affairs and Constitutional Development        |
| NCOP     | National Council of Provinces                                         |
| NEPAD    | New Partnership for African Development                               |
| NGO/NPO  | Non- Governmental Organization/Non- Profit Organization               |
| PCAS     | Policy Co-ordination and Advisory Service                             |
| PLA      | Participatory Learning and Action                                     |
| PRA      | Participatory Rural Appraisal                                         |
| RBA      | Rights Based Approach                                                 |
| REFLECT  | Regenerated Freirean Literacy through Empowering Community Techniques |
| RDP      | Reconstruction and Development Programme                              |
| SADC     | Southern Africa Development Community                                 |
| SALGA    | South African Local Governments Association                           |
| SANGOCO  | South African Non-Governmental Organizations Coalition                |
| SLA      | Sustainable Livelihoods Approach                                      |

| <b>TABLE OF CONTENTS</b>                                           | <b>Pages</b> |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| Abstract                                                           | ii           |
| Declaration                                                        | iii          |
| Dedication                                                         | iv           |
| Acknowledgements                                                   | v            |
| Acronyms                                                           | vi           |
| <br><b>CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION</b>                                 | <br><b>1</b> |
| 1.1. Context of the Research                                       | 1            |
| 1.2. Background                                                    | 2            |
| 1.3. Problem Statement                                             | 3            |
| 1.4. Purpose of the Research                                       | 4            |
| 1.5. Research Questions                                            | 5            |
| 1.6. Research Method                                               | 5            |
| 1.7. Structure of the Report                                       | 7            |
| <br><b>CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW</b>                            | <br><b>9</b> |
| 2.1. Introduction                                                  | 9            |
| 2.2. Understanding the Key Concepts                                | 10           |
| 2.2.1. Non-Governmental Organizations                              | 10           |
| 2.2.2. Democratic Governance                                       | 12           |
| 2.3. The Nature and Roles of NGOs in Local Governance              | 13           |
| 2.3.1. The Profile and Legitimacy of NGOs in SA                    | 16           |
| 2.4. The Context of Local Governance in which NGOs Operate         | 18           |
| 2.4.1. The Constitutional Mandate on Co-operative Governance       | 19           |
| 2.4.2. The Legislative Underpinning of Local Government            | 20           |
| 2.4.3. The Characteristics and Functions of Local Government       | 21           |
| 2.5. The Specific Roles and Influences of NGOs in Local Governance | 24           |
| 2.5.1. Democratizing Local Governance                              | 24           |
| 2.5.2. Service Delivery                                            | 27           |

|                                                                                      |           |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| 2.5.3. Institutional Development and Capacity Building                               | 29        |
| 2.5.4. Policy Research and Advocacy                                                  | 30        |
| 2.6. Conclusion                                                                      | 32        |
| <b>CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHOD</b>                                                    | <b>33</b> |
| 3.1. Introduction                                                                    | 33        |
| 3.2. The Research Approaches and Techniques                                          | 35        |
| 3.3. Sources of Information                                                          | 37        |
| 3.4. Data Presentation and Analysis                                                  | 38        |
| 3.5. Validity and Reliability                                                        | 38        |
| 3.6. Research Limitations                                                            | 39        |
| 3.7. Conclusion                                                                      | 40        |
| <b>CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH FINDINGS</b>                                                  | <b>41</b> |
| 4.1. Introduction                                                                    | 41        |
| 4.2. The Nature and Scope of IDASA and AWARD                                         | 42        |
| 4.3. Vision, Mission and Principles of the Organizations                             | 43        |
| 4.4. The Roles of IDASA and AWARD in Local Governance                                | 46        |
| 4.4.1. The Institute for Democracy in South Africa                                   | 47        |
| 4.4.2. The Functions and Contributions of AWARD in<br>Local Governance               | 64        |
| 4.5. The Main Challenges of the Organizations towards Democratic<br>Local Governance | 70        |
| 4.5.1. The Institute for Democracy in South Africa                                   | 70        |
| 4.5.2. Association for Water and Rural Development                                   | 72        |
| 4.6. Conclusion                                                                      | 74        |
| <b>CHAPTER 5: DATA ANALYSIS AND SYNTHESIS</b>                                        | <b>75</b> |
| 5.1. Introduction                                                                    | 75        |
| 5.2. Nature and Characteristics of the Organizations                                 | 75        |

|                                                              |                |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|
| 5.3. Roles, Relationships and Functions of the Organizations |                |
| in Local governance                                          | 77             |
| 5.3.1. Enabling Environment                                  | 77             |
| 5.3.2. Building Democratic Local Governance                  | 78             |
| 5.3.3. Institutional Development and Capacity Building       | 79             |
| 5.3.4. Social Services                                       | 81             |
| 5.3.5. Policy Research and Advocacy                          | 82             |
| 5.3.6. Pro-poor Partnership and Networking                   | 83             |
| 5.4. Analysis of Major Challenges for the Organizations      | 84             |
| 5.5. Conclusion                                              | 86             |
| <br><b>CHAPTER 6: RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS</b>        | <br><b>87</b>  |
| 61. Recommendations                                          | 87             |
| 6.2 Conclusion                                               | 91             |
| <br><b>REFERENCES</b>                                        | <br><b>95</b>  |
| <br><b>APPENDICES</b>                                        | <br><b>100</b> |
| Appendix A: Information Matrix                               | 100            |
| Appendix B: Research Questions                               | 103            |
| Appendix C: AWARD Project Area Map                           | 107            |