

Copyright is owned by the Author of the thesis. Permission is given for a copy to be downloaded by an individual for the purpose of research and private study only. The thesis may not be reproduced elsewhere without the permission of the Author.

**A CRITICAL EXAMINATION OF THE ROLE AND IMPACT OF
NGOS IN THE PROVISION OF HOUSING FOR THE POOR OF
ADDIS ABABA: APPLICATION OF A RIGHTS BASED LENS**

**A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of
Master of Philosophy in Development Studies at
Massey University, Palmerston North, New Zealand**

Amy Fraser

2013

Abstract

Our world today is experiencing the fastest urban growth rates in history, with developing countries at the forefront of this trend. This rapid urban growth is contributing to a multitude of problems, since countries lack the resources and institutional capacity to manage them effectively. As a result, the prevalence of slum and squatter settlements is escalating within the urban environment. This thesis seeks to critically examine the role and impact of NGOs in the provision of housing for the poor of Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The study argues that housing is a human right and explores whether a rights based approach is an effective means for NGOs to employ, in order to achieve successful housing provision.

The methodological approach to this study was largely qualitative, due to the fact that it deals with matters relating to social relationships and issues of power. This mode of enquiry has provided a deep understanding of the issues facing NGOs working in Addis Ababa. The primary mode of data collection was semi-structured interviews, which were carried out during the four weeks of field research in Addis Ababa.

The findings of this research reveal that the role and impact of NGOs seeking to provide housing within Addis Ababa is extremely limited, due to a number of serious and debilitating factors, including a restrictive policy environment, excessive bureaucracy, and a lack of sound governance. In addition, it was discovered that the employment of a rights based framework for housing provision would be exceptionally difficult within Addis Ababa, thus posing serious risks for NGOs and the communities in which they work. This thesis highlights the importance of context and how it can change the suitability and roles played by those within the development sector.

Acknowledgements

I am extremely grateful to my first supervisor, Dr Rochelle-Stewart Withers. I thank you for all your guidance, patience and wisdom over the past year. From the beginning, you showed confidence in me and my abilities and I am really appreciative. You have a real gift as a mentor and I will miss the laughs we shared. Special thanks also go to my second supervisor, Professor Regina Scheyvens, who provided me with feedback on my first draft. I feel privileged to have had you look over my work and your suggestions have been invaluable. Thank you to the rest of the Development Studies staff. You have all played your part in ensuring my colleagues and I have been equipped and ready to tackle the Masters' year.

To all of my research participants and people in Addis Ababa who helped me along the research journey — this would not have been possible without you. Thank you for being so open and honest when sharing your incredible stories with me. My deepest appreciation goes to Samson Sebsie, who I met as my research assistant and left as a great friend. Thank you for watching over me during my time in Ethiopia. I do not think you will ever know how much you taught me about life in Addis Ababa and how large a part you had to play in the success of this thesis. I am forever indebted to you, and I wish you all success and blessings in the future.

Immeasurable thanks goes to my family, especially my Mum and Dad. Thank you for all that you have done for me. It has been a long journey and you have been there every step of the way guiding and supporting me. Thank you for equipping me with the skills that have allowed me to complete this degree — you are simply amazing! Finally, thank you to my wonderful best friend and lifelong companion, Dave. You have been with me through all the highs and lows of this research, hearing every word of each chapter hundreds of times. Your constant love, company and encouragement means more to me than you will ever know. I could not have done this without you — we make an amazing team.

Table of Contents

ABSTRACT	I
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	II
LIST OF FIGURES	VII
LIST OF TABLES	VII
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	VIII
CHAPTER ONE - INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 RESEARCH JUSTIFICATION	2
1.1.1 PERSONAL RATIONALE	3
1.1.2 ACADEMIC RATIONALE	4
1.2 RESEARCH AIM, OBJECTIVES AND QUESTIONS	5
1.3 METHODOLOGY	6
1.4 OUTLINE OF THE THESIS	7
CHAPTER TWO – CONCEPTUALISING HOUSING	9
2.1 INTRODUCTION	9
2.2 URBANISATION	10
2.2.1 DEFINITION AND CONCEPTS	10
2.2.2 URBANISATION GLOBALLY	11
2.2.3 URBANISATION IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES	14
2.3 GLOBAL APPROACHES TO HOUSING FOR THE POOR	18
2.3.1 DEMAND FOR HOUSING SOLUTIONS	18
2.3.2 PROGRESSION OF GLOBAL APPROACHES TO HOUSING	20
2.3.3 CURRENT PRACTICES	24
2.4 NGO APPROACHES TO HOUSING	28
2.4.1 MODES OF DELIVERY	29
2.4.2 EXAMPLES OF INTERVENTIONS BY NGOS	33
2.4.3 POSITIVE ROLES FOR NGOS	36
2.5 CONCLUSION	37

CHAPTER THREE – RIGHTS BASED APPROACHES	38
3.1 INTRODUCTION	38
3.2 THE EMERGENCE OF RIGHTS BASED APPROACHES	39
3.3 EXAMINATION OF KEY PRINCIPLES AND CHALLENGES	42
3.3.1 <i>MULTITUDE OF MODES FOR IMPLEMENTATION</i>	46
3.3.2 <i>POLITICISATION</i>	47
3.3.3 <i>FALSE HOPE</i>	49
3.4 UNDERSTANDING THE APPROACH FROM DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES	50
3.4.1 <i>NGO PERSPECTIVE</i>	50
3.4.2 <i>GOVERNMENT PERSPECTIVE</i>	52
3.5 CONCLUSION	54
CHAPTER FOUR – METHODOLOGY	55
4.1 INTRODUCTION	55
4.2 THE SUITABILITY OF A QUALITATIVE METHODOLOGY	56
4.3 POSITIONALITY AND RESEARCH APPROACH	58
4.4 RESEARCH METHODS	59
4.5 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS	61
4.6 FIELDWORK PREPARATIONS IN ADDIS ABABA	62
4.7 FIELDWORK EXPERIENCE	62
4.7.1 <i>INTERVIEWS</i>	65
4.7.2 <i>DOCUMENTS</i>	67
4.7.3 <i>PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION</i>	68
4.8 OBSTACLES FACED	68
4.9 RETURNING FROM THE FIELD	70
4.10 CONCLUSION	71
CHAPTER FIVE – CONTEXTUALISING ETHIOPIA	72
5.1 INTRODUCTION	72
5.2 ETHIOPIA CONTEXT AND DEMOGRAPHICS	72
5.2.1 <i>HISTORY OF GOVERNANCE</i>	74
5.2.2 <i>ECONOMY</i>	76
5.3 THE CITY OF ADDIS ABABA	77

5.3.1 URBAN HOUSING SITUATION	78
5.3.2 HOUSING PLANS FOR ADDIS ABABA	81
5.3.3 MAJOR CHALLENGES FOR HOUSING PROVISION IN ADDIS ABABA	84
5.4 NGOS IN ADDIS ABABA	86
5.4.1 HISTORY OF NGOS IN ETHIOPIA	86
5.4.2 WORKING ENVIRONMENT OF NGOS IN HOUSING SECTOR	88
5.4.3 CHALLENGES FOR NGOS	89
5.5 CONCLUSION	92
<u>CHAPTER SIX – RESEARCH FINDINGS</u>	<u>93</u>
6.1 INTRODUCTION	93
6.2 ARE NGOS FACED WITH ANY CHALLENGES WHEN TRYING TO SET UP AND PROVIDE HOUSING IN ADDIS ABABA?	94
6.2.1 GOVERNANCE	94
6.2.2 LACK OF MONEY AND RESOURCES	99
6.2.3 PERCEPTIONS	104
6.2.4 NEED	107
6.3 WHAT RELATIONSHIPS DO NGOS HAVE WITH OTHER DEVELOPMENT ACTORS AND TO WHAT EXTENT DO THESE RELATIONSHIPS AFFECT THEIR ABILITY TO BE EFFECTIVE AGENTS FOR CHANGE?	110
6.3.1 TENSION BETWEEN GOVERNMENT AND NGOS	110
6.3.2 COMMUNITY	113
6.3.3 PRIVATE SECTOR	115
6.4 ARE NGOS ABLE TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE FACILITATION OF A RIGHTS BASED APPROACH TO HOUSING WITHIN THE CITY?	116
6.4.1 POLICY	116
6.4.2 CLIMATE OF FEAR AND CONTROL	119
6.4.3 SLUM CLEARANCE PROGRAMME	121
6.5 CONCLUSION	123
<u>CHAPTER SEVEN – DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION</u>	<u>124</u>
7.1 INTRODUCTION	124
7.2 DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH OBJECTIVE ONE	125
7.2.1 THE CHALLENGES NGOS FACE WHEN TRYING TO SET UP AND PROVIDE HOUSING IN ADDIS ABABA	125

7.2.2 THE RELATIONSHIPS THAT NGOS HAVE WITH OTHER DEVELOPMENT ACTORS AND THE EXTENT TO WHICH THESE RELATIONSHIPS AFFECT THEIR ABILITY TO BE EFFECTIVE AGENTS FOR CHANGE	128
7.3 DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH OBJECTIVE TWO	130
7.3.1 NGO CONTRIBUTION TO THE FACILITATION OF A RIGHTS BASED APPROACH TO HOUSING WITHIN ADDIS ABABA	130
7.4 RESEARCH SUMMARY AND CONCLUDING STATEMENT	133
7.5 SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH	135
REFERENCES	137
APPENDICES	149
APPENDIX 1: INFORMATION SHEET	149
APPENDIX 2: CONSENT FORM	151
APPENDIX 3: INITIAL SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS	152

List of Figures

Figure 2.1: Urban and rural populations by development group 1950 -2050

Figure 2.2: Nations by percentage of urban population living in slums in 2010

Figure 6.1: Flows of net ODA to Ethiopia

List of Tables

Table 2.1: Do's and Don'ts of the Enabling Approach

Table 3.1: The Shift in Development Thinking

Table 4.1: Research Participants

Table 5.1: Houses Constructed in Addis Ababa 1996 – 2003

Table 6.1: Policies and Projects Implemented in Addis Ababa

Table 6.2: Growth of the NGO Sector in Ethiopia

Table 6.3: Charities and Societies Proclamation 2009

List of Abbreviations

CBOs	Community Based Organisations
CRDA	Christian Relief Development Association
CSP	Charities and Societies Proclamation
DFID	Department for International Development
EDO	Environmental Development Office
EPRDF	Ethiopian People’s Revolutionary Democratic Force
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HFHE	Habitat for Humanity Ethiopia
IHDP	Integrated Housing Development Programme
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IMF	International Monetary Fund
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MWUD	Ministry of Works and Urban Development
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NSDF	National Slum Dwellers Federation
ODA	Official Development Assistance
RBA	Rights Based Approach
SDI	Slum/Shack Dwellers International
SPARC	Society Promotion of Area Resource Centres
UDHR	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
UN	United Nations
UNCHS	United Nations Centre for Human Settlements
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHSP	United Nations Human Settlement Programme
UNICEF	The United Nations Children’s Fund