The state and the Non-Governmental Organisation sector in South Africa, 1994-2001: A case study of the relations between the National Development Agency, the Labour Research Service and the Institute for Democracy in South Africa.

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Declaration

I declare that The State and the Non-Government Organisation sector in South Africa, 1994-2001: A case study of the relations between the National Development Agency, the Labour Research Service and the Institute for Democracy in South Africa is my own original work, that it has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other university, and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by complete references.

Nyameko Confidence Mgoqi   17 January 2005

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Ten key words

Growth Employment And Redistribution, a macro economic strategy

Reconstruction and Development Programme, a policy framework

Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs)

State

Structural relations

Labour Research Service (LRS)

Institute for Democracy in South Africa (IDASA)

National Development Agency Act

National Development Agency (NDA)

South African Non-Governmental Organisation Coalition (SANGOCO)

Definition of major terms

RDP policy framework phase

It is the phase that was guided by the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), a government policy adopted in 1994 until August 1996. The policy imperatives of the RDP permeated all government policies and programmes until August 1996 when GEAR was adopted. During this phase the government's policy framework prioritised social development and social investment.

GEAR policy framework phase

It is the period from August 1996 when the government adopted the macro-economic strategy that is known as the Growth, Employment And Redistribution. Its imperatives permeated through all government policies. During this phase the government emphasised growth before redistribution.

Non Governmental Organisations

They are independent and voluntary organisations that are not functioning as government agencies or as political parties (SANGOCO & Interfund, 1999). They ought to be non-profit and aimed at contributing towards advancing human endeavor in order to achieve an ideal, just and prosperous society.

State

Jordan (1985) as quoted by Thomas A. &Potter D. (1992) defines the state as a way in which society controls itself and ensures that others do not control it and further as a form of a protection racket which claims a monopoly over the use of force. The state encompasses the executive, legislative and judiciary institutions all entrusted with the function of making and enforcing public policy

symbolically and in realty. The government is therefore, entrusted with the function of signifying the executive branch of the state.

Structural relations

It is a general mode of description that seeks to analyse the nature and manner of interactions between or among different structures or entities. In this study structural relations refer to or acknowledge the structural separation of the NGO sector from the state structure. Secondly, it refers to the manner in which both structures interact with each other.

Acronyms

IDASA

Institute for Democracy in South Africa, is an NGO that was established in 1987 in order to address racial polarisation and contribute towards democracy.

LRS

Labour Research Service is an NGO, which was established in 1983 in order to assist the trade union movement by imparting bargaining and research skills through research, training and education.

NDA ACT

It is a special law passed by the South African government in 1998 in order to inform and guide the establishment of the National Development Agency.

NDA

National Development Agency is an independent statutory body established to provide grants to development NGOs and CBOs. It was also established to facilitate policy dialogue between the state and civil society organisations with the overriding aim of ensuring harmonious relations between the State and the CSOs.

SANGOCO

The South African Non Governmental Organisation Coalition formed in August 1995 to serve as an umbrella body for NGOs aimed at unifying and strengthening the NGO sector. In the post GEAR phase it assumed an anti-GEAR stance.

Abstract

This research is an attempt to evaluate the nature of structural relations between the new democratic state and the Non-Governmental Organisations from 1994 up to 2001 in South Africa. Emerging from an apartheid past into a process of transformation and reconstruction, the role of all institutions in the South African society is crucial, particularly that of NGOs. The NGO sector is generally recognised as being better positioned than government to deal with development. However, in order to create a platform for cooperation between the government and NGOs', certain key structural issues need to be addressed.

The NDA, to a significant extent, has been strategically located to address some of these issues in order to synergise government efforts towards poverty eradication and policy dialogue between the state and the Civil Society Organisations (CSOs). The Labour Research Service (LRS) and the Institute for Democracy in South Africa (IDASA) formed part of this case study in order to illustrate the dynamics of structural relations. At the same time, the ability of the NDA to galvanise support of CSOs to participate in the fight against poverty and ensure their participation in government policy-making processes is crucial and this investigation has assessed these aspects.

The impact of the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) and the Growth Employment And Redistribution (GEAR) have been considered in this investigation as key government policies that could contribute to the nature of structural relations. The reasoning behind this is that South Africa has a huge development backlog and these two key policies are specifically aimed at addressing the core of this problem.

Conclusions drawn from the research findings suggest that the NDA still has an enormous function to perform firstly by addressing its own credibility issues and to make a greater attempt to be in

constant interaction with CSOs. This is relevant particularly in view of the fact that the NDA did not adequately incorporate the LRS and IDASA in its policy dialogue activities and if these two powerful urban NGOs are not brought to the table the chances are limited that the NDA could access smaller ones in the rural areas. However, it has been found that the introduction of GEAR did not directly affect relations, even though the RDP inspired the participation of NGOs. It is hoped that the information gleaned from this research will be useful in the analysis of the NDA, LRS and IDASA to analysts and policy developers. Analysis of structural relations assists in identifying critical stakeholders and in galvanising the support of credible organisations that can consolidate government initiatives in the fight against poverty and drawing NGOs to the table in debating alternatives to the national challenges.

Acknowledgements

Dedication

This study is dedicated to Nomvuyo Mgoqi and Thamsanqa Bobotyana (my parents) who have always supported my endeavors and to my three sisters Pamella Nobongoza, Thembakazi Mgoqi and Nobulali Mgoqi who have been affected by sacrifices our family has made for attainment of my education.

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CHAPTER 1

1. Introduction

This study is aimed at analysing structural relations between the State and the NGO sector. It focuses on the relations between two NGOs, namely the Labour Research Service (LRS) and the Institute for Democracy in South Africa (IDASA) on the one hand and the National Development Agency (NDA) on the other. The NDA is a State intermediary structure established to facilitate funding and policy dialogue between the State and the NGO sector (as Civil Society Organisations). The three institutions have been included in order to analyse the way in which a state-designed institution (NDA) relates with NGOs and in turn the way NGOs responded in general and in particular the LRS and IDASA.

The period under investigation is 1994 to 2001, a phase that falls within the new political dispensation in South Africa. The period from 1994 to 1996 was characterised by the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), a policy flagship of the new government that was aimed at mitigating the challenges posed by the apartheid colonial era. The apartheid period was characterised by evils such as racism, socio-politico-economic inequalities, brutal suppression and repression of civil society. Thus the RDP sought to address such socio-politico-economic imbalances through consensus and by allowing space for civil society to assume a central role in the process of reconstruction. The period 1996 up to 2001 was underpinned by the imperatives of the macro-economic strategy of the government, namely the Growth Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) strategy, an approach that appears to be contradictory to the RDP in some respects, for example, GEAR puts emphasis on cuts in spending on education, health and social welfare (Weeks, 1998).

However, it is worth noting that even though the government has maintained that GEAR is in line with the RDP objectives, the debate is still hot within civil society quarters e.g. trade unions, which

postulate that GEAR has replaced the RDP. Both these policy phases have had a bearing upon the nature and manner of State and NGOs interactions and have been identified in this study in order to investigate whether there exists evidence that suggests substantial deterioration of relations between the State and the NGO sector in the GEAR policy phase.

The RDP phase was marked by high expectations coupled with a high level of consensus and cooperation between the State and NGOs. Nonetheless, in the GEAR phase, a memorandum was issued rejecting the visit by the (IMF) Managing Director (MD), Michel Camdessus, on 16 October 1996, and some NGOs (e.g. Alternative Information Development Center-AIDC) began to express utter disappointment towards neo-liberal policies in South Africa. This disenchantment was expressed by making particular reference to the paradigm shift towards GEAR by the government (http://www.aidc.org.za/?q=book/view/124, 1996). This example epitomised a widespread conviction by a significant proportion of social actors, particularly trade unions and social movements, who proclaimed their opposition to the GEAR stance of the government.

Civil society was afforded a centre stage which in turn influenced policy dialogue and decisions particularly in the development of the RDP as opposed to the process of GEAR development. Hence, the emergence of GEAR has been critiqued partly for the fact that its formulation process undermined the spirit of participatory democracy and people centred and driven development. It was particularly these values that were generally viewed as central to the "South African miracle" or transition.

In the main, GEAR has been critiqued for its inability to address the apartheid socio-economic imbalances in the same way that the RDP had and would have done. Secondly its (GEAR) inability to meet its own goals, for example to create more jobs in the economy, was an additional critique (Templeton Peter, interview: 2002). These factors have set the stage for new developments that are

worth examining in order to ascertain how they are manifested in the State-NGOs structural relations. According to Dor (Year not indicated:1), the World Bank and IMF " have played a significant role in redirecting South Africa's transformation from the rights, policy directives and targets as set out in the Constitution and the RDP to an approach more in keeping with structural adjustment".   Furthermore Dor argues that it is due to GEAR that in the post-1994 period market-driven-housing and land policies, the 'user pays' approach to water delivery, the increasing privatisation of infrastructure and services have taken root. These sentiments are also shared by Weeks (1998:1 & 4), who argues that the RDP's first goal of economic growth was modestly "achieved during 1993-1995…[in that] for the first time in four years per capita income did not fall…". He also emphasises that a careful study of the

GEAR strategy 'suggests that its recommended growth scenario' implies an increase in inequality.

In this study, one of the aims of the research is to discover whether such claims can be backed by substantial evidence and to particularly determine whether GEAR replaced the RDP effectively. In the same vein, the historical context of state and NGO relations in South Africa during the 1980s will serve as a backdrop in order to fully contextualise the developments of the new political dispensation in studying the state and civil society relations.

1.1 Background to the study

In this section the historical background of the three institutions under study will be presented in the sequence in which they were formed. It is understandable that their formation and mandates, to some extent, reflect the perspectives and context within which they were founded.

1.1.1 Labour Research Service (LRS)

During the heightened anti-apartheid struggles of the 1980s, the Labour Research Service was formed. Gordon Young and Martin Nicol are two of the prominent founders of the LRS (LRS Annual Report, 1987/8). Sarah Ryklief, LRS Director, notes that the formation of the LRS was conceived when the two co-founders and others were studying at the University of Cape Town and they realised that there was a need to bolster the strength of working peoples' organisations (Ryklief: Interview, 2001). The 1983 establishment of the LRS was aimed at capacitating the trade union movement with the skills and knowledge to engage with employers on behalf of the workers. The structural model followed by this institution was twofold, with a library (Cape Town Trade Union Library), formed in 1983, to function as an information dispensing unit and operating semi-independently. While the research unit (Labour Research Service) was formed in 1985 to provide training and advice (LRS Annual Report, 1999/2000). For many years these entities functioned parallel until 1999 when both the Labour Research Service and the Cape Town Trade Union Library decided to merge in order to compliment their resources in advancing their common agenda and programmes. The services offered by the LRS since inception included training, education and dispensing educational material, as well as a research centre for the trade unions.

Other programmes that were offered by the LRS include the Worker's Communication Centre that

provided Internet training in order to facilitate information sharing and the Labour History Archive was housed in this centre. The archive was a programme that continually developed multi-media historical background of the trade union movement.

Another project was the Economic Research Unit that housed the Actual Wage Rates Database (AWARD). This database collected wage information from unions and subsequently provided wage analysis. Alongside this, was the Social Auditing Programme that assessed and profiled performance of South African companies in areas like labour relations. The Director's Fees Survey project monitored the actual growth of director's remuneration of listed companies. Economic Training was an intensive training on macroeconomics for union negotiators and researchers, while the Commissioned Research Unit undertook specialised investigations on trade, economic and financial issues for unions.

The Education and Media Unit, through evening seminars, commissioned training and publications, whereas international study circles provided training, sharing of information and experiences on a variety of issues that affected the labour movement. The Workers' World Radio Productions through pre-recorded productions were featured in community radio stations and was under the control of the labour movement.

Finally, the Labour Research Service Publications' section provided a variety of services using the TULEC organiser's manual, bargaining monitors and bargaining indicators. These services ranged from the production of key information and analyses to support trade unions, as well as guide for union leaders on collective bargaining that was contained in a bulletin on bargaining (LRS brochure, Year not indicated).

The LRS provided its services to the following trade union federations: COSATU (Congress of South African Trade Unions), NACTU (National Congress of Trade Unions) and FEDUSA (Federation of Unions of South Africa). These services include training and education on bargaining skills, the labour legislative framework, and research. The LRS received funding through its projects (fees from trade unions) and from donors. However, the actual figures or percentages, from both sources of funding, (i.e. trade union fees and donor funds) could not be determined throughout the process of data collection for the purposes of this investigation. In the post 1994 era some of its projects were funded by the Department of Labour's 'Strengthening Civil Society Fund' programme and additional funding was also received from the Transitional National Development Trust (TNDT), once again actual percentages could not be determined for the purposes of this study (LRS Brochure, Year not indicated). The TNDT was later incorporated into the NDA because it was a mere transitional body that served as a forerunner to the NDA.
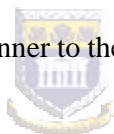
However, funding of the LRS by the NDA became a question for debate considering that the NDA questioned the necessity of funding the LRS. The argument put forward by the NDA was that its role was to make grants available to developmental NGOs and CBOs (Community Based Organisations) and that the LRS did not fit into this criterion. Conversely, the LRS felt that by virtue of the constituency it served (i.e. workers through their unions) it qualified for the NDA funding. The reasoning was simply that the working class falls within the ambits of the poor and therefore there was neither a contradiction of the mandate, nor the criterion of the NDA (Ryklief: Interview, 2001).

1.1.2 Institute for Democracy in South Africa (IDASA)

IDASA was established in 1987 by Van Zyl Slabbert, former leader of the Opposition, and Alex Boraine, former Progressive Federal Party MP, as the Institute for a Democratic Alternative South Africa. The first offices were opened in Port Elizabeth, an area characterised by great apartheid repression in the 1980s. Thereafter it expanded to other cities of South Africa mainly addressing the polarisation between black and white South Africans. In July of the same year an IDASA-led conference to Dakar, Senegal brought together members of the exiled African National Congress and the Afrikaner establishment (http://www.idasa.org.za/history.htm, 2000). Renamed in 1994 as the Institute for Democracy in South Africa, the organisation has embarked on the activities of consolidating the newly found democracy (Kabemba & Friedman, 2001).

Between 1990 and 1994, IDASA engaged in activities aimed at bringing together both forces of the old order and the new order. Since 1994 (the year of the first democratic elections) IDASA has expanded its strategic interventions with the government on behalf of the public by developing different units focusing on a number of issues and these shall be elaborated upon below (Annual Report: IDASA, 1999).

IDASA had two operating centres one in Cape Town and another in Pretoria. These centres catered for provision of the following programmes, services and units: The Budget Information Service (BIS), Community Safety Unit (CSU), Curriculum Development and Citizenship Education Unit (CDCE), KwaZulu Natal Democracy Project (KZNDP), Local Government Information Centre (LOGIC), Political Information and Monitoring Service (PIMS) and the Transformation and Equity

Program (TEP). Other special programmes and units include the Public Opinion Service (POS), Southern African Migration Project (SAMP), Publishing Unit and the Radio Unit. All units, in the period under study, were supported by a central national management function (http://www.idasa.org.za/acronyms/default.htm, 2000).

IDASA received its funding from a variety of institutions, foreign governments and international agencies including companies both local and international. Local companies on average contributed about 25 per cent of the overall IDASA annual budget, while international donor funding agencies accounted, on average, for about 75 per cent of remainder of the annual budget (Calland: Interview, 2001). IDASA had an average of about 141 staff membership and many programmes, which demonstrates that IDASA could be regarded as a fairly large NGO. However, IDASA, did not receive any funding from the NDA.

1.1.3 The National Development Agency (NDA)

The NDA is an intermediary and facilitating institution that was established by the state in order to facilitate policy dialogue between the Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and the State. Secondly, its function is to provide funds by awarding grants to developmental CSOs. The NDA establishment in 1998 was preceded by a number of processes.

In 1994, the new government created a new ministerial position of a Minister without a portfolio with Jay Naidoo as the Minister. It was in this Ministry that the debate around the necessity for an institution like the NDA was started. The office of the then Deputy President (Thabo Mbeki) and the Cabinet became involved in the process of conceptualisation and development of the NDA. While the legislative processes were taking place an interim grant-making institution was established (Transitional National Development Trust) which was later incorporated into the NDA in 1999. Prior to that, in November 1998 the NDA Act was passed as Act 108 of 1998 and in 1999 the NDA Board was elected which was representative of both the Government nominees and those of the SCOs (www.tndt.org.za).

The NDA is a statutory body based in Johannesburg and between 2000-2001 was in the process of extending its administrative centers countrywide. Already in 2001, the NDA had developed some mechanisms of reaching out to other provinces in order to grapple with the challenges of facilitating interactions and relations in the diverse CSO sector with the state. The South African Government (SAG) was the main funder of the NDA as it provided about two thirds of the NDA budget, while the European Union (EU) provided the remainder to the NDA budget (Development Update, 1999).

1.2 Statement of the problem

The research problem under investigation for this study is an examination of relations between the State and the NGO sector and will focus on the three institutions, namely: the Labour Research Service, Institute for Democracy in South Africa and the National Development Agency. The study will focus on their relations in order to get a sense of the nature of the relationship between the state and the two NGOs. Secondly, this study will investigate the extent to which the policies adopted by the new government have contributed either in improving or worsening these relations with specific reference to the RDP and GEAR. Notwithstanding, the RDP and GEAR, other pieces of legislation will also be referred to e.g. the Non-Profit Organisations Act (Act 71 of 1997) and the Public Finance Management Act (Act 1 of 1999).

Another aspect that this research will seek to examine is to determine whether there exists any possibility for good relations between the NDA, the LRS and IDASA considering that both the LRS and IDASA were members of the South African Non-Governmental Organisations Coalition (SANGOCO). SANGOCO, was an umbrella body established to unite the NGOs and their activities. SANGOCO had assumed an anti-GEAR policy position and a pro-poor approach, as it viewed the introduction of GEAR by the government as a move that was counteractive to the interests of the poor in South Africa. It is henceforth imperative, for this investigation, to assess the impact that this continued to have upon structural relations. Conversely, the degree of independence and autonomy that both the LRS and IDASA enjoyed despite simultaneously being members of SANGOCO could also serve as a crucial finding.

Interestingly, in the final analysis, the NDA is a state designed instrument that is tasked to harmonise and facilitate relations between the State and the CSOs (note that includes NGOs). In this investigation the impact of SANGOCO's anti-GEAR stance will be examined and further an assessment will be done as to whether its (SANGOCO) stance posed any challenge towards the NDA fulfilling its mandate.

1.3 Hypothesis

The challenge in the new political dispensation was to ensure a close and positive interaction between the state and NGOs in the process of redressing the imbalances of the past, whilst ensuring frank and genuine dialogue between these two entities. The NDA was viewed as the body that could facilitate this debate and hence achieve positive interaction based on its mandate.

However,

- the NDA did not have a comprehensive strategy of interacting consistently with the LRS and IDASA;

- this absence of interaction strategy from the NDA contributed to the slow deterioration of relations between itself and the LRS and IDASA;

- the adoption of the GEAR policy also contributed significantly to the slow deterioration of relations because it meant less funding for the LRS and IDASA and

- in relative terms, the RDP was a popular policy as compared to the GEAR strategy and this impacted negatively on good relations between NDA, LRS, IDASA and generally between the state and NGOs.

1.4 Aims of the study

The aims of this study are to consider the context that characterises the nature of relations between the NDA, LRS and IDASA. Furthermore, it will examine the dynamics of structural relations between the State and NGOs in the post 1994 era in South Africa with the aim of assessing how the new political dispensation and the legislative framework have shaped the State and NGOs relations. This will be achieved by:

- assessing the extent to which the two policy phases (RDP phase and GEAR phase)

have affected structural relations between the NDA with the LRS and IDASA;

- evaluating the capacity and procedure of interaction that had been developed by the NDA in facilitating relations between itself (NDA) with the LRS and IDASA

- ascertaining the manner in which funding, or lack thereof by the NDA, affected its relations with the LRS and IDASA and

- analysing the extent to which the NDA related with the decisions and programmes of SANGOCO in relation to its role of facilitating relations between the State and NGOs. It is through these considerations that both the nature of relations and the context of those relations can be captured.

1.5 Significance of the study

This study will benefit the understanding of policy makers, managers and directors of NGOs as it will raise findings and expose complexities involved in the interaction processes between the NDA, LRS and IDASA. Additionally, these findings will demonstrate both specific and general dimensions of relations and provide information on the factors that inform structural relations. This, in the final analysis will assist in improving upon NGOs' lobbying and positive relationship building between themselves and state institutions because this study attempts to set out a clear framework in terms of influential factors impacting broadly on structural relations.

Secondly, it will provide a relevant background that would benefit other researchers in carrying out further research in this field and other related fields. In this regard, the findings of this study will enable researchers to gain a clearer understanding of interactions between the NDA with LRS and IDASA. Furthermore, it will provide an understanding of constraints and opportunities faced by both the NDA and the NGOs.

1.6 Research design

Given that the study on structural relations between the state and the NGO sector is a broad and in-depth one, this investigation has assumed a case study design focusing on three institutions, namely the Labour Research Service, the Institute for Democracy in South Africa and the National Development Agency. In essence, the purpose of this study is to examine various opinions and perspectives mainly amongst key people within the three mentioned institutions, as well as other participants in general (outside the three institutions) who are conversant with the dynamics at play in the state and NGOs sphere. The reason for this is that the people in the positions of power have a great impact in the way in which processes unfold and through the power they wield eventually influence, to some extent, approaches that are assumed by institutions. Secondly, this research will analyse the policies (i.e. RDP and GEAR) because they are a part of various factors that have a bearing on the relations.

In the final analysis, the idea is to achieve a balanced account of not only the three institutions under study, but to gain a broader picture of all factors and forces at play which ultimately either determine or influence the manner in which the institutions under study perform. This is in line with the reality that a case study in research is used as a tool to achieve a somewhat detailed and focused analysis of variables and factors that in the end impact on the general phenomena of things. Moreover, the case study approach, which is the nature of this investigation, as a research tool is both a quantitative and qualitative tool, a matter that has to be borne in mind about this study (Welman & Kruger, 1999).

1.7 Organisation of the study

The chapter progression for the remainder of the study is set out below:

Chapter 2: Entitled: **Structural relations: a theoretical account** presents a general theoretical and conceptual framework of the structural relations between the state and the NGOs from which different models of dealing with structural relations is derived. This chapter also captures the historical background of the nature of relations in South Africa dating back from the 1980s to the present focusing mainly on the three institutions under study.

Chapter 3: Entitled: **Capturing the perceptions and perspectives of the main actors** presents the research methodology and its sub-tools that have been employed in this study. Furthermore, it provides a detailed account of such instruments and the motivation for their choice and use. Finally, the limitations of utilising these tools will be indicated.

Chapter 4: Entitled: **Factors and forces at play: an empirical account** presents the empirical findings and results and provides a discussion and analysis of these findings. Finally, propositions for alternative models that might address the problematic of structural relations will be provided.

Chapter 5: Entitled: **The case for a better and fair dialogue: NDA, LRS and IDASA** provides summary findings, recommendations and concludes the assumptions made earlier in the study. It further examines the impact of the findings and tests the relevance of the study vis-a`-vis deviations and unexpected findings. Additionally, suggestions of certain areas and aspects of the LRS, IDASA and NDA that can be remodeled and sharpened will be presented. Finally, critical aspects of the study that need to be subjected to further research will be highlighted.

CHAPTER 2

STRUCTURAL RELATIONS: A THEORETICAL ACCOUNT

2. Introduction

In essence this chapter seeks to provide a broad framework within which the debate and dynamics on the structural relations between the state and NGOs take place. The debate is broad ranging from conceptual and theoretical contestations to observations on actual developments with regards to the issue of relations. This chapter attempts to analyse the strands of the debate without which the entire exercise sought through this study would not be fulfilled, unlike in the previous chapter, which was in the main an in-depth introduction to the subject matter. These strands will be captured under different themes that stand relevant to the debate on structural relations of which, to a certain degree, the South African experience is the manifestation. Therefore, the intended purpose is to assess the broader context within which structural relations between the three entities take shape and examine all such factors in their proper perspective.

There is no evidence to date that suggests any in-depth academic research has been done on the structural relations specific to the NDA relating with the LRS and IDASA. Therefore, works by authors and practitioners, writing broadly on structural relations between the state and NGOs, have been consulted and analysed. Such studies have provided both a theoretical and philosophical framework that can help in understanding the dynamics of the State and NGOs relations. For example the works of Mamdani (1995), Edwards & Hulme (1992) and Wood (1990) to a significant degree have illuminated some of the complicated elements of the discourse on structural relations and these will be discussed below.

There are mainly two strands of research, which stand relevant to the South African experience that focuses on the relations between the State and NGOs. On the one hand there is a current of thought that seeks to interpret structural relations in terms of their evolution and development from a Marxian perspective of class struggle and this approach is championed by authors like Fatton (1999), Zaidi (1999) and Wood (1990). The other tradition encompasses the analysis that focuses on the South African literature of both pre and post apartheid period that is represented by authors such as Singh (1992) and Nzimande (1995). This tendency present an exposé of the South African case which blends various theories with an aim of determining a best practice for the South African case. In this study, both analyses have been reviewed with the aim of capturing the context within which the State-NGO sector relations could be understood.

To give form, flow and coherence to this chapter as a way to locate a vantagepoint in analysing the debates, for this investigation, sub-headings will reflect the themes involved. Firstly the focus will be on the state, its relevance and role from a theoretical and philosophical point of view. Secondly the case for CSOs (inclusive of NGOs) will be presented along the same contours of theory and philosophy. The South African experience will then be superimposed upon this context. Towards the conclusion of this chapter the debate will be summed up to shape the essence of various theories and perspectives in order to give substance to the study.

2.1 A theoretical account

Various theoretical and philosophical positions suggest that the state is, to some extent, a way in which society controls itself. Based on this, the recognition of the civil society's emergence and legitimisation is therefore seen as a result of state's inadequacy to address some of the societal issues, which are assumed to be logical negations of the state. In other words, this represents a non-state way of addressing some of the societal issues. What is of importance in this section is to fundamentally ascertain the societal relevance of the two entities and the relationship that results thereof. It should be noted that the issues overlap, even though subsections have been created, and in fact separate categorisation is only meant to ease reference. Furthermore, terms such as NGOs, CSOs and civil society will be used interchangeably in referring to the NGOs, which is the focus of this study.
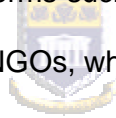
2.1.1 A case for the state: its role and weakness

According to Wood (1990) and Mamdani (1995), the state assumes power in society and by virtue of that power it is able to organise society. It is through this power that the 'government controls wider frameworks within which people and their organisations operate' (Edwards and Hulme, 1992, 16). Therefore, it can be deduced that the state's role in society is or supposed to supersede that of all other social actors (particularly in the context of this study, the NGOs).

Furthermore, Shubane (1995) argues that the prerequisite for the flourishing of civil society,

both intellectually and practically, is the existence of the democratic state. Logically this argument is in line with the argument of Fatton (1999) that intimates that in Africa the democratisation process was not brought about necessarily by civil society. Therefore, as it is important to recognise the role of the civil society in challenging the state, the democratisation process cannot necessarily be regarded as the sole responsibility of the civil society. This argument stems from the state-centrist perspective because it portrays and emphasises the state's role in society as the centre of gravity from which many processes emanate.

However, as one of the weaknesses of the state is its hierarchical structure, it is within that hierarchy that power is centralised in the uppermost level. Government's relationship with the population is authoritarian in for example, enforcement of peace, collection of taxes and the protection of the social order irrespective of how that social order leaves the citizenry at the (neglected) end. Meanwhile the NGOs are non-hierarchical and much more flexible with an emphasis on good relationships in order to promote true partnership and participation. The state therefore, due to its structural shortcoming, inadvertently leaves a vacuum that enables CSOs to fill the void (Edwards and Hulme, 1992). Nonetheless, these contrasting roles do not necessarily imply adversarial relations as such between the two entities.

It is with regard to these contrasting constants between the state and NGOs that Biggs and Neame (1994) suggest that the absence of a practice base, underlying the ideological foundations and policies of governments and multilateral institutions militates against building an alternative. In this regard a good example is the World Bank (WB) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) that leave a limited space for the NGOs to effectively and fundamentally change the social order. It is also in this situation that NGOs find

themselves in a position where they need to strategically identify the manner in which they should approach these issues. They have a choice to either engage in a constructive dialogue (incrementalist or reformist approach) or to shout from the sidelines (the abolitionist approach) for the change of the social order.

The other weakness on the part of the state is the alarming regularity with which individuals are moved around in the government system "…partly because there is often a barrier between the 'pilot project' stage of cooperation… and the acceptance and diffusion of new approaches throughout the government hierarchy" (Edwards and Hulme, 1992,17). Therefore, when certain milestones are reached in projects an official embarks on other projects' milestones based on the operational regime of that particular state institution. In the light of the points raised here it is worth noting that if positive relations do not exist between the government and NGOs, no amount of money or advice will make a difference. In addition, conflicting interests and agendas within government ministries may make dialogue and consensus impossible thereby undermining the efficacy of even the strongest NGO inputs and this is not a recipe for success.

2.1.2 A case for civil society (NGOs): its role and weakness

Mamdani (1995) states that the Western analysis of the state and civil society paradigm is characterised by a unilinear evolutionist perspective, which seeks to define civil society within the confines of state formation. Wood (1990:61) confirms this by acknowledging the long existence of an intellectual tradition in the West, "…which has in various ways delineated a terrain of human association, some notion of 'society', distinct from the body politic, and with some moral claims independent of, and sometimes opposed to, the state's authority". This therefore, suggests that the civil society conception is rather a unilinear interpretation that is embedded in western social thought. Furthermore, according to this view, besides state formation, civil society is a natural condition of freedom rather than a historically produced sphere of life as once argued by Hegel. In the same vein it implies that state formation processes and periods in Europe ought to be the lines along which different world societies are supposed to follow. Another problematising factor in the debate is, to some degree, the argument by Nzimande (1995) that the concept of civil society is used as a descriptive short hand even though the term itself is left un-discussed. This view also demonstrates the complexities involved in any endeavor aimed at discerning the actual boundaries of civil society (as a social entity or force) within a western paradigm.

In terms of the development agenda, Edwards and Hulme (1992) refine the debate even further by arguing that in comparison, the effectiveness of the contribution by the government and the NGO sector to social development leaves the impression that the impact of NGOs is more effective than that of the government. This argument appears to, whilst acknowledging the greater contribution by NGOs, to interpret the state (notwithstanding the role of government in that state) as a point of reference to better

understand civil society and its contribution towards social development. This therefore narrows the debate towards a balance sheet of social benefits (demonstrating capital gains or losses) as a motif for existence and social relevance of NGOs.

Notwithstanding, the relevance of social benefits that accrue from NGOs' efforts towards social upliftment as a way to relate to the theoretical debates and definition of NGOs it is equally important to identify some of the weaknesses of this sector. Fatton (1999) suggests that it is critical to appreciate the role-played by civil society formations in periods of acute scarcity and deprivations by mitigating deleterious effects of the economic crisis. NGOs have only been able to generate collective welfare and thereby supplanting the state in public goods' provision. Yet, the promotion and defence of private rights and sectional claims by civil society formations has paralysed the sector by its failure to challenge the coercive social discipline of the market. This becomes clear when considering that the lopsided balance of class, ethnic and sexual power is a product of a complimented effort by both the state and the market. In this case the civil society fraternity tend inevitably to privilege the privileged and marginalise the marginalised in its pursuance of private rights promotion (Fatton, 1999). On the other hand Petras (1997) argues that the NGOs have become the community face of neo-liberalism due to their failure to challenge and usurp the capitalist state power and advance socialism. Against this background it is important to note that the systems and structures through which resources and power in society are distributed remain unchanged.

Resultantly, this situation undermines the efforts of NGOs whose function is localised and transitory. This failure is partly as a result of the NGOs inability to form linkages with other structures e.g. village co-operatives, social action groups and other relevant stakeholders (Edwards and Hulme, 1992). Therefore, the increase in number of NGOs and size does not

necessarily relate to the impact of the NGO work, as the broad social system remains unchanged. In the final analysis the contribution by NGOs does not become effective in as far as the broader societal context is concerned.

In following this line of thinking it becomes clear that in the main, civil society analysis is always done at the expense of the state and not in its own right. Hence the pious analysts of this sector less expose some of the serious NGOs' shortcomings. Notwithstanding that, Princen and Finger (1994) also emphasise, to some degree, that within the nation-state context NGOs, do sometimes, raise issues that are either ignored or overlooked.

Having said that, while the importance of advocacy cannot simply be taken for granted. It is worth reminding that decades of NGO lobbying have not dented the structure of the world economy and the ideology of its ruling institutions, nor has it brought about the alternative vision of development that most NGOs ascribe to, albeit poorly articulated in practical terms. Indeed, one of the criticisms often made to NGOs by official donor agencies is that insufficient work has gone into developing workable alternatives. This trend, which the NGOs tend to follow, is that of a 'band aid social welfare'. Instead of challenging structural adjustment as the cause of deindustrialisation, unemployment and low growth, they submit proposals on poverty alleviation to the donors (Zaidi, 1999:219). This situation demonstrates clearly the limitations of NGOs because their deliberate micro focus ignores the linkages and leaves a path of political expediency as an option.

In concluding the aspect of theoretical and philosophical foundations of this debate, a palpable duality between a society-centrist perspective and a state-centrist view exists. According to Mamdani (1995), Africanist scholars analyse the former as equating the rise of the civil society with that of democracy, whilst the latter understands and portrays the

process of state formation as the motif of world history. The state-centrist approach views the state as universal and that state formation processes follow a common pattern universally. This investigation is inclined to the state-centrist perspective, because the state controls the 'broader frameworks' and this does not necessarily imply that the civil society does not appropriate some power of its own through lobbying and other activities. Having said that, the author holds a different view to the assertion that 'state formation is a motif of world history' and that 'its (state's) formation process follows a common pattern'. The reason for this is informed by the historical context that brought about the imposition of the nation-state to the Third World countries by the western powers and the fact that the motif force of world history in this epoch is class struggle (Cabral, 1966). Nevertheless, this investigation has its focus on the state and NGOs relations but these can be interpreted along theoretical contours of the class struggle although at this stage the attempt through this study has been not necessarily to base arguments purely on such lines.

2.1.3 Historical mitigating factors

Another analysis worth considering is that the NGO sector has been made vibrant by the end of the Cold War phase. Edwards and Hulme (1992) suggest that it is inconceivable that NGOs will achieve their objectives in isolation from the national and international political process and its constituent parts. Therefore, in accordance with this view, an argument can be justifiably advanced that whether NGOs are in agreement or disagreement with the broader system within which they conduct their activities, it is necessary that they relate with that system or its structures in some way. Besides, the post-Cold War era has brought in a power shift. Power is no longer exercised by the state and the markets alone, but has been extended to include a third sector namely civil society. Therefore as a political

imperative the hallmark of the post-Cold War era is both power redistribution and sharing (Mathews, 1997).

This view further argues that singular state power within certain boundaries is beginning to fall away, as regional and global links and cooperation appear to be getting stronger (Stiles, 1998). Secondly the post-Cold War era is witnessing the strength and participation of the non-state actors in influencing both national and international agendas. That is so in that there is continued proliferation of NGOs even within national borders and that alone is an indicator of the development of the sector (Mathews, 1997).

Clark (1991), when arguing that the relations between these entities are informed by the mode of power positioning and exercise, confirms this. For example, in liberal democracies NGOs appear to play mixed roles by collaborating with government in specific programmes and challenging the government in others. This aspect of the 'state exercise of power' is one of the focal points of this investigation and has been analysed in order to see the impact that the democratised South African State has on the State-NGO relations and this will be elaborated further in Chapter 4. Therefore civil society cannot be independent of the state but can be state-organised, although not state controlled, while at the same time autonomous of the state. However, the aggregate of interest varies and naturally there is over-concentration of interests from different institutions and entities. Partly due to this, the relationship between government and NGOs is underpinned by benign neglect and sometimes by outright hostility (Edwards & Hulme 1992). With government holding a suspicious view of NGOs, perhaps by design, as both the government and NGOs relate differently to the issues of the population or citizenry.

At this point it is important to note that a variety of material (Zaidi, et al.) is mainly charecterised by an in-depth conceptual perspectives on the foundation and basis of the state and NGO sector relations. Although these perspectives are diverse and they paint a dynamic picture, which at times or to some extent assumes different approaches. In some instances it is critical and further questions the existence of NGOs. Whilst at the same time, to a remarkable degree, it acknowledges and endorses their existence, but in a way that seeks to configure and modify the nature of relations with an intention to institutionalise and stabilise that relationship. These different approaches, some emergent and others already tested, derived from the state and NGO relations in the Northern Hemisphere appear to attract a significant amount of attention from policy makers, intellectuals and other observers. In so much so that an impression is created that the nature of relations between the two entities (State and NGOs) has to emulate those in the North.

Regarding this aspect of the debate, both historically and conceptually, there have been three fundamental choices. The first choice is that of NGOs serving as conduits for government to deliver on social development. Secondly, NGOs could serve as agents for social mobilisation, critically challenging the manner in which state power is exercised. Thirdly, the approach of both working within government and at the same time advocating for fundamental change in social and political structures could be an option. Zaidi (et al.) suggest that in modern times many NGOs appear to have chosen the latter approach, sometimes regarded a 'direct approach', with the hope to influence the direction of government policy and not necessarily to replace it nor to be conduits of government. Notwithstanding the value of this argument, the author would like to express is that the model or approach assumed by either State or NGOs mainly depends on the nature of the broader context. Therefore, these challenges are not mechanical because issues are

underpinned by contexts and the most critical of all is the change of the social order away from neo-colonialism and capitalism to a socialist dispensation.

2.2 The South African context

The nature and form of relations that have existed historically in South Africa between generally the state and NGOs have a huge bearing upon the contemporary nature of these relationships. In other words, the extent of responsiveness of the state towards the needs of NGOs or the lack thereof may be related to the historical background or context. In arguing this point, Butler (1998) suggests that 'public policy decisions can, like technological investment, lay down a series of self-reinforcing mechanisms which lock future policy-makers into their preordained logic. Simply because previous public policy choices indeed affect the contexts of contemporary choices and serve to lock them in a path of policy development. Consequently, the extension of such a system of mutual expectation is always easier than a radical remodeling of it. This argument suggests that it is worth analysing in-depth the manner in which, in the new political dispensation (post 1994), the state seeks to relate with the NGOs. This refers in particular to the logic and framework of such policy mechanisms and the extent to which these differ from those of the old order. This is simply because the logic of the new policies may still be hamstrung by the old order policies or from a certain perspective the logic of the new policies may appear as some kind of perpetuation of the old paradigms but in a new (disguised) form.

2.2.1 South Africa in the 1980s

The Apartheid State was repressive and in turn the anti-apartheid struggle, as significantly contributed to by the civil society, was conceptualised in different forms in efforts of seeking to define it (Reitzes, 1995). There is a prominent view that argues that the struggle against apartheid was aimed at dislodging the state power rather than to move it in a more accountable and democratic direction (Singh, 1992). This clearly indicates a common feature that both civil society and political society can clasp hands when advancing a common cause and their potential can contribute significantly in bringing about socio-economic change in society.

2.2.2 The advent of the new political dispensation

Informed by different currents and strands of thought the experience in the South African context has been pursued as a form of soul searching spearheaded in many instances by NGOs themselves. This has been and probably will continue to be the case due to the realisation that since the early 1990s South Africa had been faced with the challenge of transformation and most significantly of ensuring an optimal position for the NGO sector.

As early as the 1990s, the debate around the nature of a post-apartheid civil society had been an extremely hotly contested issue. There have been three different perspectives that attempted to give direction to the nature, identity and role this sector should play. One view held the position that the sector should assume a watchdog role against the anticipated new state in order to secure democracy, moreover, an associational socialism (Swilling, 1992). Another view articulated the need to maintain the interconnectedness between the civil and political society by dismissing the separation of the two as a bourgeois conception of democracy, which endanger socialist construction (Nzimande & Skhosana, 1992). The third view argued for a working class civil society, which would assume a watchdog role while it simultaneously focuses on constructing socialism (Mayekiso, 1992).

2.2.3 Relations in the new political dispensation: IDASA and LRS

In the light of the conceptual contentions by various authors, namely Edwards and Hulme (1992), Princen T. and Finger M. (1994), Mamdani (1995), Wood (1990), Nzimande & Skhosana (1992) and Mayekiso (1992), in the new political dispensation in South Africa IDASA has assumed a two pronged model: that of strengthening government capacity while monitoring- assuming a watchdog role (Kabemba & Friedman, 2001). For example, in 1995,

the programmes of IDASA fell into three categories: governance, security and public education and within these three the main theme running throughout was underpinned by its two pronged policy. Therefore, it can be argued that the dilemmas that confront NGOs in terms of how to relate with either the state or government to a significant extent are a universal phenomenon.

In line with IDASA's two pronged strategy, which it terms 'constructive criticism' in relating with government has been expressed through its projects. On the one hand it helped in building the institutional capacity of government through the training of councillors at the local government level and simultaneously monitoring government. This was done under the auspices of two projects namely LOGIC for the training on councillors and PIMS for monitoring. Secondly, the Soshanguve peace and development project entailed creating a relationship between the unemployed youth and the police through a night community watch by about 100 unemployed youth.

Furthermore programmes like the Open Democracy Advice Centre meant to ensure that government information is available to both government officials and the broader public and the portfolio committee monitoring clearly demonstrates that the government institution-building objective is realised. On the other hand the critical element of the IDASA's strategy is fulfilled by its conduit mission of giving training to different interests groups for example COSATU (Congress of South African Trade Unions) on labour laws. Training the Youth Commission on improving their policy lobbying activities in turn to ensure that the state and the government is held accountable demonstrate this point (Kabemba and Friedman, 2001).

The two-pronged strategy of IDASA could be critiqued on the basis that it was chosen in order to relinquish the watchdog role and assume a more cooperative function with the government. This is simply because it realised that the government would retaliate as a result of IDASA's criticism. It could be further argued that the two-pronged approach by IDASA was a retreat from engaging the government critically and it weakened the very democratic principles that IDASA claimed to stand for.

That retreat could be informed by the criticism it suffered in the statement by the former president Nelson Mandela in the 1997 ANC (African National Congress) National Conference in Mafikeng. At this conference NGOs were criticised for seeking to undermine and discredit the 'new' government and further for being in cohorts with the US (United States of America) hidden agenda sponsored under the USAID (United States Agency for International Development). The attack was regarded, by some, as aimed specifically at IDASA and as a result IDASA had to immediately readjust its approach and strategy (Interview with Gitanjali Maharaj, 2001). Consequently, in putting together different programmes and activities the leadership of IDASA had to be more cautious considering potential negative consequences.

On the other hand the LRS had committed itself "…to educate workers and to develop programmes relevant to the working class movement" (LRS Annual Report, 2001:3). Furthermore, with its strategic objectives, LRS promotes and enhances 'full active participation of workers in the political and socio-economic activities of South Africa by providing information, education, research' and consultative services to trade unions, federations and any other labour formation (http://www.rosalux.de/engl/partners/africa_lrs.htm, 2003). It appears that the strategy

employed by LRS was that of mainly focussing on the trade union constituencies as a means for effective change of the social order in the post apartheid South Africa.

This is further confirmed through the analysis made by the Director of LRS, Sarha Ryklief that 'the mass-democratic movements of the eighties were essentially based on bread and butter issues such as electricity, water and low wages' and that 'these core local issues culminated in the mass movement against apartheid', which 'people saw as the cause of such local problems' (http://www.waronwant.org/lid=5725, 2003). Therefore, in addressing inequalities in the new political dispensation rather than solely focussing on building a relationship with government and state institutions, the LRS is committed to strengthening working class.

2.2.4 NGO funding

In the South African NGO context, the issue of NGO funding by foreign donor agencies had been shifted away from the CSOs towards the new government. This issue had its own consequences, both in terms of the programmes and s ize and scope of activities, including NGOs themselves. According to Kabemba and Friedman (2001), as part of adjusting to the shocks created by the shift in funding IDASA, rationalised as a way of cutting costs by reducing its seven regional offices to only two, one in Cape Town and the other in Pretoria. Through a major grant from the Norwegian Agency for Development (NORAD), IDASA was able to purchase the two buildings that could be used as offices.

Even though it is appropriate to see the relationship between the donors and recipients as a two-way process wherein each influence the other it is worth noting that the funding requirements may imply otherwise. For example, before 1994, the criterion for aid from

many donors was anti-apartheid, yet in the post 1994 era, funding has been stream lined mainly on specific projects (Kabemba & Friedman, 2001). In other words, funding is for a specific project or for core activities of a recipient organisation. Therefore, it can be argued that an organisation that may be unable to carry out such a project for whatever the reasons could fall outside these parameters and not be funded, with the resultant collapse of some of the programmes due to the lack of funding while a 'specific funded project' thrives. In the final analysis an argument could therefore be advanced that both official and non-governmental donors do exercise a subtle imposition on the agendas of the CSOs.

It is ironic to realise the official donors' suggestion that their funding is informed by their support for the South African vision for democracy and development as benchmarked by bilateral agreements. Rather than imposing their own vision the findings of a study focusing on six major donors in South Africa revealed that it was only Australia and Netherlands that actually aligned their programmes to correspond to the government needs (Kabemba & Friedman, 2001). In the main, funding is focussed on supporting liberal democracy's main aspects like respect for human rights, freedom of expression, protection of minorities and multipartyism and a differing perspective is not supported (Kabemba & Friedman, 2001). The other less noticed element is that donor priorities are expressed in generalities, e.g. avoidance of dependency, making it difficult to understand the main priorities. The challenge for the recipient organisations is to be able to adjust themselves in such a way that they, in the final analysis, do not remain as mere appendages of donor agencies' priorities and do not lose their own objectives. A visible strategy that had been adopted by both the LRS and IDASA was to bring in different donors on a single project so that none may have leverage to veto the direction in pursuing such a project (Interviews: with Sarah

2.3 Conclusion

In this chapter, as set out in the introduction, both theoretical and philosophical perspectives have been examined with the purpose of seeking to engage in the debate on structural relations. As part of that process some critical elements have thus emerged which could be considered crucial to the debate. Elements such as the heterogeneity of NGOs themselves, for example, and the manner in which these play themselves out in engaging with public policy do demonstrate the influence of these factors. In the same vein, the ideological disposition of both the state and NGOs and the nature of structural relations, that is an outcome thereof, pose another interesting challenge. Nevertheless, the pre 1994 expectations juxtaposed with the post 1994 South African NGO role illustrated clearly the symbiotic relationship that exists between philosophic-theoretical and actual strategy of both entities in reality.

It is against this background that we turn in the next chapter to elaborate the process of investigation that has informed this study. The research tools, methodological decisions and their justification will be presented as part of Chapter 3.

Chapter 3

CAPTURING THE PERCEPTION AND PERSPECTIVES OF THE MAIN ACTORS

3. Introduction

In chapter 2 the focus was placed on the theoretical and philosophical strands of the enquiry and an analysis of structural relations between the state and CSOs. This was aimed at capturing the context of the broader deliberation. It has provided a comprehensive backdrop, both historical and theoretical, against which the state and CSOs relations unfold. In this chapter the research strategy and methodology utilised in the study will be presented and justified. Additionally, the context within which the research was undertaken will be presented with the aim of indicating limitations that were experienced. The research literature that has been examined has influenced the nature and design of the research and this shall become clear in the presentation of this section. Finally, the research methodology will be linked to the broader discussion intended in this mini-thesis, in order to ensure coherence of the elements of the investigation.

3.1 Literature review

General literature available on the state and NGO sector relations has been consulted and in particular reference material that focuses partly on the 1980s and mainly on the post 1994 era in South Africa. This source material has provided a broad theoretical and conceptual framework from which to launch the study and assisted in the formulation of the particular research problem and aims of the research.

An in-depth review and analysis of primary sources, which included particularly documents and public statements by the Labour Research Service, Institute for Democracy in South Africa and the National Development Agency was carried out. This significantly contributed towards creating the general framework for the study and its relevant aspects. Forster (1994:149) confirms the importance of examining primary sources and suggests that "Company documents are *(con) textual paradigms* which are an integral part of other systems and structures in organizations".

Secondary sources (i.e. books and journals) were consulted in order to enhance the depth of the study and ensure comprehension of certain trends in the institutions under study and broader institutional and structural issues involved in the sphere of investigation. This was also designed to address a possibility that there could be significant peculiarities in the LRS, IDASA and NDA in relation to their structural relations. These would clearly be only understood if a broader framework and its issues were clarified.

3.2 Research design

In this study a variety of research tools have been used to elicit the necessary information. Having said that, it is of critical importance to link the research method employed with the research objectives of the study being undertaken (Brewerton and Millward, 2001). The study of structural relations between the NDA, IDASA and LRS in the new political dispensation is not static but very dynamic. With this in mind, it is worth taking into cognisance the fact that broader factors in the South African context have a bearing upon the issue of structural relations. Therefore, due to the need to capture the nature of contributing factors that impact on the dynamics of structural relations between the three institutions it has thus emerged that gathering relevant data has been like shooting a

moving object. Hence, a flexible, interactive and open-ended method of capturing data had to be applied.

3.3 Research methodology

The research tools selected for this study are, in the main, informed by the nature of the research problem. In this respect, Forster (1994:149) suggests that the choice of either qualitative or quantitative research elements "is determined by the questions we are seeking to answer". Secondly, although the focus of this study is more inclined towards qualitative research, as a result of the research problem at hand, an attempt has been made to blend both qualitative and quantitative traditions. It should be noted therefore that this case study is informed by both qualitative and quantitative elements of enquiry. According to Welman and Kruger (1997:7) the difference between quantitative and qualitative research traditions is that the quantitative tradition is founded on the positivist principles whereupon the main focus is on quantifying data by applying the strict natural scientific approach. On the other hand, qualitative research is fundamentally opposed to quantitative methods because it holds that quantitative methods are inappropriate and 'not applicable to the phenomena being studied in the human behavioural sciences'. The essence of the qualitative tradition is that of recognising the value of various patterns of human and social behavior regardless of their quantification.

For this investigation the overriding intention has been to capture the context and provide a well-balanced view of the developments in the post 1994 structural relations between the state and NGOs, hence the strategy of blending elements of both traditions has been employed. In acknowledging the importance of the strategy of blending, Neuman (2002)

suggests that even though there are clear-cut and fundamental differences between qualitative and quantitative research methods, they do, however, compliment each other and contribute to the understanding of social phenomena. Therefore, the nature of the research question in this study has had a bearing on the degree of inclination towards either of the two methodologies mentioned above. Furthermore, it can by virtue of this investigation being a case study be realised that the research is far more inclined towards qualitative methodology, while at the same time applying certain necessary elements of the quantitative methodology in the interest of achieving an objective analysis and findings. Ultimately, it ought to be noted that the incorporation of these two methods is done in such a way as not to compromise the study and its findings by trudging a narrow path and merely choosing one single methodology over another.

3.3.1 Qualitative methodologies

In the light of the presentation, this investigation is influenced by the qualitative tradition, qualitative tools that have been used are discussed below.

3.3.1.1 Participatory observation

A participative observation and familiarisation process initiated this study by interacting with both the LRS and IDASA. Nason and Golding (1998:235) argue that "the notion of observation …rather than …being seen as a separate category amongst a list of alternative research approaches, it might be conceived as consisting of processes which form part of other 'methods'…". Informed by this view the participative observation approach in this study took different forms and levels of intensity. In terms of the IDASA observation stage this took the form of a pilot study at the initial stage of this project through working with

IDASA for six months in 2000. With the Labour Research Service, a similar approach was used through visits to its offices and attending a variety of the organisation's activities in 2000 as a way of ensuring a firm grasp of what LRS represents as it carried out its functions. This has also helped in the determination and identification of appropriate tools and techniques of gathering data for this project that would ultimately ensure balanced research findings.

In addition an event sample was undertaken in order to deepen observation by attending two conferences that were organised by IDASA in 2000. The first was the Democracy 2000 Media Conference, a project that was co-funded by IDASA and the British Council. The other conference was the Chapter Two Network conference in 2000. The purpose was to gauge the level to which the government policies filter through and the depth of engaging these policies in a general sense within IDASA as compared to other social actors and NGOs that took part in both conferences. This was aimed at assessing the impact of the relations between IDASA and the NDA including (in the long run) the character of relations between the state and NGOs in South Africa.

3.3.1.2   Semi-structured discussions

Informal and semi-structured discussions took place in 2001 around the issue of state and NGO relations with one representative from each of the three organisations i.e. LRS, IDASA and NDA. These were carried out separately, with Richard Calland (PIMS Manager-IDASA), Alison Bullen of LRS (Trade Union Library Head) and Professor Rose September (NDA Board member). These sessions helped a great deal in linking the information

provided in secondary source material with the actual issues that the three institutions were grappling with. Furthermore, it also assisted in shaping and determining critical themes that characterise the basic nature of structural relations, thus meeting the intended purpose of this study. The process of discussion did not involve other stakeholders to any significant extent (a category of respondents that are either referred to as role players) as they were not primarily the institutions of focus for this case study, as was the case with the LRS, IDASA and NDA. Therefore, the questions that were focussed on in the interview sheet were a product of an intense effort of linking the burning issues (those of concern to the two organisations) and the state institution (NDA) they dealt with. Included in the interview sheet were also textual issues raised in the secondary sources and from the body of literature (e.g. books and journals). All these issues were related to the question of structural relations between the state and NGOs that were applicable and relevant to the NDA, IDASA and LRS.

3.3.1.3 Semi-structured interviews

The respondents were interviewed using the semi-structured interview technique, focusing on the top management structures of the LRS, IDASA and NDA as well as other stakeholders in the field of state and NGO sector relations. Both top management representatives and other stakeholders were selected, because the author viewed them to be capable of articulating the information and positions in terms of the information required for this research. The rationale behind this approach was based on the experiences of the top management and constant exposure and analysis of trends of structural relations that were a key performance area in their jobs.

This collection of data using semi-structured interviews has been conducted using purposive methods that focus on the top management structure of the LRS, IDASA and NDA including other role players in the field of the state and NGO sector relations. The rational for using purposive sampling was informed by two considerations that is to make a decision as to what stratum of the organisations under study had to be identified that would eventually relate to the issues intended for investigation through the research. Secondly purposive sampling method as the word 'purposive' suggests is a deliberate tool to solely execute the investigation with the aim to directly respond to the objective of the investigation.

According to Welman and Kruger (1999) semi-structured interviews are also used in contexts where respondents come from different backgrounds and the topic under study has some critical [sensitive] aspects. The issue of funding, for example and particularly the trend of competition that is beginning to develop in the NGO sector, has further motivated for the use of semi-structured interviews. Therefore, this approach has helped in capturing the context of structural relations between the NDA, with the LRS and IDASA. Through this approach more critical information with regards to inter-institutional interactions is believed to have been obtained. Bless and Higson-Smith (1995) note further justification for the use of semi-structured interviews and they recommend that as semi-structured interviews by their nature are less prescriptive, they give respondents leverage to share more information. Semi-structured interviews are therefore considered as a qualitative tool as they enable the respondents to give a range of answers to open-ended questions.

3.3.1.4   The case study approach

In the main, a case study as a research tool belongs to the qualitative research tradition and as such is oriented more towards the specific case rather than a variable, as is the

case with the quantitative research tradition. According to Welman and Kruger (1999), a case study method is opted for mainly when it is unfeasible and unnecessary or impossible to carry out a study across the entire population. Additionally it is a valuable tool for an in depth analysis of dynamics at a close range within the broader framework. However, a case chosen to some extent and in some cases can be representative of the entire population.

For the purpose and intention of this investigation a number of institutions (NGOs, parastatals and government departments) could have been included in order to capture the trends that state and NGOs relations take in the new political dispensation. Nonetheless, due to the huge number of NGOs, state organs and parastatals it became clear that it was not feasible given the limited resources and time. Hence a case study was therefore selected as the best option.

Therefore, the context has informed, to a significant extent, the research methodology. In addition to this, appropriate research tools (e.g. semi-structured interviews etc.) had to be selected and applied in order to evaluate trends that characterise structural relations between the state and NGOs in general and the LRS, IDASA and NDA in particular. Within the case study area, both qualitative and quantitative investigative tools were utilised in order to ensure a comprehensive account of the relevant information. In addition to the three institutions under study (NDA, LRS and IDASA) another category constituted by other 'role players' has been incorporated into the study. This has been included for the purpose of ensuring an objective position from which structural relations unfold (Brewerton & Millward, 2001).

This attests to the two issues raised in this investigation that the research tools chosen are in the main informed by the nature of the research problem. Secondly, that the focus of this study is more inclined towards qualitative research methods and that is as a result of the nature of the research problem at hand. Once again an emphasis is hereby made that this study is a product of both quantitative and qualitative approaches.

3.3.2 Quantitative methodologies

A critical instrument of data collection has been an interview sheet. It was drafted to further

compliment informal discussion sessions and other source material during the conceptualisation stage of this study. Interviews were carried out in line with the sampling frame outline and the duration of each interview took about forty-five (45) minutes. However, there were intervals of about three months after every three sessions. The purpose of this was to ensure that data is gathered alongside other related activities of data collection and in order to allow a longer time span so as to gather as much developments as possible.

The sample frame and size thereof is critical to the generalization of the findings and theory formulation. Taking this into account, elements of the quantitative tradition have been included in this study in order to not only ensure objectivity, but also due to an awareness that scientific knowledge is only obtained by systematic methods.

3.3.2.1 Sampling frame

Sampling is one of the important elements of research and is in fact the life and blood of the research process. There is a sequence to suit different types of research and a sampling frame is always a crucial starting point. A sampling frame is an overall and complete list of all units wherein each unit of analysis is indicated just once and Welman and Kruger (1999) and Bless and Higson-Smith (1995) are also in agreement with this view. With regards to the sampling frame, there was one challenge that made it difficult to understand the actual frame from which the sample had to be drawn. By the year 2000, there were about 10 000 Non-Profit Organisations that were registered in the records of the Department of Social Development. However, not all NGOs or CSOs had applied for registration and the departments' officials also noted that from time to time applications were being received (Telephonic enquiry: 18 August 2000). Some were registration renewals by organisations,

others were resubmissions of the applications that could have been referred back earlier due to technical errors and some were new applications. On the other hand, in the records of SANGOCO, there were no records of all NGOs.

Therefore, that meant that a reliable sampling frame of all NGOs that existed in South Africa was not available including that of government departments or departments solely mandated to constantly and consistently interact with NGOs except for the NDA. Therefore the LRS and IDASA were selected on the basis of their history in that both were established in the early 1980s. Secondly, geographical location was a strong motivation given that both NGOs were situated in the Western Cape province and therefore accessible. Moreover, due to their in-depth level of work and their diversity in terms of their mandates, for example IDASA monitored the processes of parliamentary democracy whereas LRS focused on strengthening working class movements, this made an interesting case to investigate. In essence this diversity of mandates promised to give this investigation a balanced account of structural relations.

3.3.2.2 Sampling method

In terms of the sampling method, a number of considerations and decisions had to be thought through, as this area of the study was not tailor-made. The key question was related to the actual area of focus to be targeted in terms of the structural layers of the organisations under study. In this regard, certain questions needed answers. For example, should the study focus at gardeners and cleaners in the yards of the three institutions in order to understand factors that had a critical bearing on the dynamics of structural relations? Wouldn't engaging board members, senior management staff and coordinators of these entities better capture critical policy decisions taken by these entities? The purposive sample appeared to be a viable tool and was chosen as the method because the questions

that were pondered (as highlighted above and discussed earlier in this chapter, see PP. 41) demonstrated clearly the magnitude of the task (Bless & Higson-Smith, 1995:95).

Through purposive sampling it was considered that board members, senior (project) managers and senior administrators had to be chosen in this study. Other actors or stakeholders outside the three institutions were also identified in order for them to share their perspectives, perceptions and approaches that serve as underlying factors on the issue of structural relations. Additionally, this was done to discover the influence that these stakeholders themselves could be contributing in the process of dialogue. In this context a purposive sampling method also appeared to be a viable tool. According to Neuman (2000) purposive sampling, notwithstanding its shortcomings, can be used to investigate unique cases that are critically informative.

3.3.2.3 Sample size

In terms of sample size, the question to be answered was related to the number of respondents that had to be interviewed and how to select them from each category. The sampling size depended predominantly on the availability of respondents and their willingness to participate in this project (Bless & Higson-Smith, 1995:94). Brewerton and Millard (2001) suggest that there is an interrelationship that exists between the availability of population specific-information, the goals of the research and the research method selected. In line with his approach the sampling size of a case study focusing on specific goals and their impact in the broader context reveals what would otherwise be complex to uncover. The table below outlines the names of respondents and their institutions.

Table 3.1   Interviewees that participated in the study on structural relations between the State and NGOs in the pre and post apartheid South Africa

LRS	IDASA	NDA	ROLE PLAYERS
4	4	2	3
Sarah Ryklif	Richard Calland	Peter Templeton	Gitanjali Maharaj-Independent
Alison Bullen	Lindiwe Ndlela	Dr Rose September	Marcia Andrews –

			SANGOCO
Martin Jansen	Prof. Chris Tapscott		Karen Nelson –NPP
Thomas Ketsise	Vincent Williams		

The above table, illustrates in percentage form that about 36 % of respondents interviewed were from LRS, while for IDASA 15 % of the top management availed themselves for interviews. About 29 % of NDA board members were prepared to take part in the study. The role players accounted for a further 20 % and this category of respondents constituted a representative from SANGOCO, the NPP (Non-Profit Partnership) and an independent observer. NPP is a tax lobby organisation that focuses on the South African tax regime and lobby for relief of tax levies for non profit organisations and for donors that fund non profit and charitable activities. Through the engagement of these role-players insights a wide spectrum of insights was obtained from independent perspectives including the views of SANGOCO, NPP and Gitanjali Maharaj (being an independent observer).

3.4 Summary

Having identified the area of the study, the main challenge has been to provide a brief analysis of the entire terrain of NGOs and the state institutions in order to capture the vantage point of the trends and dynamics. Consequently, the undertaken process of analysis took the form of identifying key actors and factors in the NGO/ State relations' deliberation in the post apartheid South Africa. In doing that, reading newspapers, the Internet and analysing the strategic direction of the government policies and critical respondents particularly from the civil society sector became a crucial exercise. The government policies such as the RDP White Paper, Non-Profit Organisations Act, National Development Agency Act and Growth Employment and Redistribution strategy have played a critical role in shaping the direction of the new government especially in the context of this investigation.

3.5 Limitation of the study

There were serious challenges (problems) that were encountered throughout the process and key amongst them was access to the board members and managers or the top structure of these

institutions. On the other hand, access to the other role players who had to be almost at the same level as the top layer category, proved a serious challenge too. This meant that a serious effort had to be taken to securing access and to work closely with the two representatives from IDASA and the LRS, namely Richard Calland and Alison Bullen respectively, and keeping in constant interaction with and requesting their assistance in this regard. Additionally, interview sessions took place whenever the respondents were willing to participate and ready to do so. At the same time, the sample size had to be reduced due to the potential respondents who could not be accessed. Ultimately, other board members could not be reached although they could have provided valuable information.

The other critical limitation is the purposive sampling method in that it is critiqued for not being based on the objective consideration through scientific criteria. Instead it could be reliant on the subjective consideration of the researcher (Bless and Higson-Smith, 1995). Nonetheless, for the purposes of this study many factors had to be considered and among them was to request the senior staff, including the board members, to participate in the study.

 Furthermore, the assumption that board members are conversant with issues was a risk in that some of them proved to be unaware of certain themes when interviews were undertaken. Hence it has been revealed in this study that not all board members are conversant, not only with the impact of government policies on institutions they head, but are also less conversant about debates relating to the overall state and NGO relationship dynamics and this was another limitation of the study. Nevertheless, decisions had to be taken, which at best could bring to the fore issues and factors which otherwise would not have been identified.

While undertaking this study it became evident that research needs the ability to compliment techniques, methodologies and procedures that may not be uniform. Perhaps it is for this reason that Bechhofer (1974) suggests that the research process is not a clear cut-sequence of procedures following a neat pattern, but it is a messy interaction between the conceptual and empirical world, deduction and induction occurring at the same time. However, what was clear was that the objectives of the study could not to be compromised as they formed the basis of the study. In this investigation, the methodology had to compliment the objectives of the study whilst at the same time objectivity had to be maintained throughout the process.

3.6 Conclusion

In this chapter, the focus has been placed on the research techniques that have been employed in the process of gathering data and to present the rational for the selection of such techniques. The nature of the study has meant that different techniques had to be employed e.g. both qualitative and quantitative approaches, whilst at the same time the study by its own nature (case study) is leaning heavily on the qualitative method. In the next chapter the presentation of results, analysis and discussion will take place.

Chapter 4

FACTORS AND FORCES AT PLAY: AN EMPIRICAL ACCOUNT

4. Introduction

In this chapter, the focus is placed on the presentation of data relating to the study and an analysis of structural relations between the state and NGOs in general and the LRS, IDASA with the NDA in particular. The issue of structural relations between the state and NGOs is pertinent considering that South Africa is a young democracy and its society too finds itself, at times, struggling to come to grips with change. In this context the democratic state has a responsibility to ensure that there is equilibrium between its role and that of the CSOs and other entities. This issue will be discussed in this chapter. The presentation below shall demonstrate firstly these issues from the perspective of the respondents and secondly they will be debated further in subsequent sections of this chapter.

4.1 Presentation of the results

In this section below, answers to questions in the interview sheet will be presented in selected categories, unlike their order in the attached interview sheet. This has been done in order to ensure coherence and flow both in the presentation of data and analysis thereof. These issues will be packaged in categories and will be dealt with throughout this chapter because they form the fundamental aspects of this study. The categories cover various themes in accordance with general responses as represented by all respondents and specific responses that were captured per organisation i.e. LRS, IDASA and the NDA. The issues are divided into four sub-sections that are preceded by a brief introduction, followed by tables and discussions in the following manner:

i)   All respondents' input on general trends and dynamics in the NGO sector (as 4.3)

ii)   Experiences and perspectives from LRS (4.4)

iii)   IDASA: experiences and perspectives (4.5)

iv)   Experiences and perspectives from the NDA (4.6)

The tables capture the interview questions, responses and percentages thereof. The percentages demonstrate the degree of commonality or lack thereof, in terms of the views of all respondents that participated in this investigation. These sub-sections present the overall empirical results of this investigation as well as an analysis of the data and further reflection in terms of the conceptual and theoretical framework in order to draw inferences which will inform, shape and give substance to this research in its wider context. Key findings and discussions thereof will be identified in the summary, which precede the conclusion. In this way the overall scope of this investigation and its critical findings will thus take shape.

4.2 General trends and dynamics in the NGO sector in South Africa

The pre and post apartheid environment of both the state and NGOs, in the South African context, was characterised by a variety of factors. The most critical of these was government policy and its national priorities. In the same vein, the manner in which state power was exercised and the consequences of that exercise to the citizenry, had a bearing and determined the atmosphere within which the deliberation on state and NGOs relations unfolded. Meanwhile, the perception and perspective of NGOs, to some extent, influenced the overall relationship. In other words NGOs were not passive participants in the making of state and NGOs relations both by the apartheid state in the past and in the new political

dispensations. In this section the general overview of structural relations will be presented,

analysed and discussed.

Table 4.1 The overall dynamics of structural relations

Issues	Common responses	%
State and NGO relations in the 1980s	Relations were conflictual with the NGOs that were opposed to apartheid policies	100
Have relations in the 1980s between the state and NGOs affected relations in the new political dispensation	Yes, because there is an interconnection between the past and the present due to the fact that some of the actors and factors are still present	92
Description of the structural relations in the new political dispensation	Relations are dynamic and not constant yet, because the democracy is still young	92
Structural imperative of the NDA model	The idea of an NDA was good although the challenge was the way the NDA carried out its mandate	77
In engaging with the State power NGOs have assumed mixed roles	Yes, and that was the way it should be especially in the new political dispensation because there was a need to open the debate	100
The degree of state control upon the NDA	For a variety of reasons the state might have a greater control upon the agency due to the fact that the NDA was established by the Act of parliament	100
The impact of the critical statements by former president Nelson Mandela and current president Thabo Mbeki on the issue of the role of NGOs	The statements suggest some tension which was necessary for dialogue and not all NGOs were included in such statements because of NGO diversity	69

4.2.1 The State and NGOs` structural relations in the 1980s

In terms of the state and NGO structural relations in the 1980s, all respondents were of the view that apartheid's political climate was characterised by state harassment of any entity that appeared to be opposed to the policies of the apartheid government. Given that NGOs are heterogeneous and not homogeneous, this meant that an NGO could choose its own approach. This approach could be to either support or oppose the apartheid state policies and in that way the relations between the Apartheid State and that specific organisation would have been thus determined (Ryklief: Interview 2000). To a large extent relations between the state and progressive NGOs in the 1980s were conflictual and the main cause of the conflict was attributed to the policies of apartheid. In this regard all respondents attested unanimously to this fact. In the 1980s there was a strong sentiment of a "society centred" approach whereby the state was seen as an instrument in the hands of some social minority group with less power of its (state's) own (CASE Report, 2000:13). Hence, there was strong opposition from a significant section of progressive NGOs who advocated for democratic change.

4.2.2 The nature of structural relations in the new political dispensation

In the new political dispensation, a perception existed that relations were not clearly distinct, as the government had not defined them. On the other hand, NGOs argued that they had tried to provide guidelines on the nature of relations through lobbying and advocacy. By virtue of having engaged in these activities and in them (activities) NGOs made suggestions on the nature of these relations. However, the respondents hastened to suggest that because NGOs are operating independently of each other they were free to develop approaches of their own. Therefore, a centrally determined form of relating with the government could somewhat counter the values of the pluralist neo-liberal democracy. According to Williams (2000) it has to be understood that the state is the central agent in

the transformation process. However it is important that the relationship between itself (state) and CSOs is more structured without compromising the role of the latter. Furthermore, that the government's failure to define a coherent policy and vision on the role of NGOs makes the situation even worse for a clearly defined inter-sectoral roles and functions' model for the transformation of the South African society. In the light of these findings it could be concluded that the state should lead the way in terms of developing both the mode and mediums of the relationship and in the process towards achieving this the inputs of the CSOs should be taken into account.

The new democratic state as part of the new political dispensation was underpinned by consensus. However, some of the anti-apartheid (progressive) NGOs began to lose their collective voice and this was regardless of former NGO activists having joined the state apparatus. This loss of collective voice by progressive NGOs was partly due to the fact that anti-apartheid donor backing which had subsequently dried up due to the demise of apartheid had initiated the formation of some of these organisations. Meer (1999) concludes that the redirection of overseas funding for apartheid victims and other donor funding from progressive NGOs to government had significant setbacks for NGOs to the point that some had to close down [ultimately losing their voice in the new dispensation]. The fact that some of the government officials emerged from the NGO sector itself to a large extent remained immaterial, in as far as structural relations were concerned, for their numbers were not necessarily representative of the NGOs interests.

On the other hand, the policies of the new government formed part of the critical indicators for this study particularly when considering that in the 1980s one of the critical developments on the structural relations were the State policies and in turn the response of the CSOs. The findings of this study suggest that in the new political dispensation the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) and the Growth and Employment Redistribution (GEAR) remain important developments in

the policy framework of the post apartheid South Africa. However, the respondents could not conclusively demonstrate any substantial evidence to the fact that indeed, either the RDP or GEAR brought any significant changes in the manner they (LRS and IDASA) related with the state. The only clearly emphasised point was that the RDP was a popular policy. Therefore, even though the respondents expressed their experiences and observations with regards to the impact of government policies to structural relations it became clear that government policies from their (respondents') perspectives could not be regarded as adequate indicators for structural relations. Above that a substantial number of respondents emphasised that the relations are symbiotic and that is due to the fact that the South African democratic system is still young.

Whilst it is critical to note the input of the respondents with regards to the RDP / GEAR dialogue and whether the latter replaced the former, it is important to take note of the persistent argument by SANGOCO (Discussion Document: NGO Week 2000) that in fact GEAR replaced the RDP. Perhaps the indifference of respondents regarding the cross-purpose of the RDP and GEAR is attributable to the fact that NGOs are wary of assuming direct positions vis-à-vis government policies, as some respondents suggested. It is also due to the reality that positions of SANGOCO are not necessarily binding to its members as it (SANGOCO) is a mere umbrella body and that its critique of GEAR is aimed at influencing the line of CSOs. This aspect of the debate is key to this investigation and it will be returned to in sub-section **4.6.2** of this chapter.

4.2.3 Structural model and effect of the NDA

Whereas a mere 13 per cent of the respondents could not share their observations about the NDA due to limited information or knowledge, the rest of the sample expressed satisfaction with the establishment of the NDA starting with the passing of the NDA Act in 1998. Some of the respondents, except for NDA board members indicated that they were involved in NDA processes and that had been the case since the establishment of the agency. In acknowledging the importance of the agency itself, its structural model and role they further acknowledged the importance and relevance of a medium for dialogue (NDA) between the government and the NGO sector. In the same vein respondents also expressed concern over the slow pace of the NDA formation and the likelihood that the agency might not manage to execute the mandate it had been given. They hastened to caution that the agency could turn out to be a strategy of government to manipulate the NGO sector. Hence some respondents admitted that the agency ought to have been and should be examined quite closely right through into the future.

According to Petras (1997), NGOs do not necessarily have a mandate, as they are not elected whereas democratic governments are. This poses a technical difficulty in that whilst NGOs should maintain a watchdog role by ascertaining what the NDA could become in future their lack of a popular mandate limits their efforts regardless of the legitimacy of issues they raise. Whilst on the other hand the government would pursue its programmes even if such programmes were to the detriment of NGOs. At the same time, NGOs are faced with the risk of being co-opted by the state as this is the institution that drives the transformation process (Williams, 2000). In this context what remains to be seen is whether NGOs could be able to change, for example, an NDA if it would turn out to be a strategy of government to weaken the NGO sector by setting a poverty agenda and criteria for funding. However this issue falls outside the ambits of this investigation as it relates to the future

trajectory of the NDA and its effects.

4.2.4   NGOs mixed roles in engaging with state power

All respondents were of the opinion that in the new political dispensation in South Africa NGOs have assumed mixed roles by either agreeing or disagreeing with government on specific issues or policies of the government in the overall process of dialogue. Some of them (NGOs) have qualified this matter as a 'dialogical approach to the exercise of power' further suggesting that this is the way the relations ought to be. For the simple reason that in a democracy all sectors and spheres of society should be able to express themselves irrespective of agreements or disagreements on specific issues and those should be noted in the spirit of dialogue without necessarily being viewed in a negative light. These responses appear to be in line with Clark's (1991) argument that in engaging with the state power NGOs assume mixed roles and the same applies to the state in its exercise of power, whereby agreements or disagreements from both sides are proportionate to the issues at hand.

However this unanimity on the mixed role phenomenon between the state and NGOs is more political and ideological. In the sense that during the anti-apartheid struggle there was no consideration, at all, of the 'mixed role' phenomenon as the struggle was intensified against the apartheid state. Nonetheless, in the post-apartheid era the state and NGOs 'mixed role to the exercise of power' rationale appears to have had some relevance. It is important to realise that the common denominator is rather the historic role that the NGOs assign themselves in any socio-political setting (Zaidi, 1999). In other words, with NGO diversity put aside the issue remains as to in whose interests does the neo-liberal state in South Africa wield power and as such what NGOs (as social actors) consider to be their collective mission given that neo-liberalism serves capitalism. Therefore while the mixed roles thesis appears to be convenient this convenience ought to be subjected to a rigorous

analysis. Nonetheless, it is a conclusive finding of this study that the 'mixed roles' approach in the period under study was regarded as a true character of the nature of state and NGOs relations in South Africa by all respondents.

4.2.5   The probability of state control of the NDA

It has been found that the NDA could, formally, be understood to be a parastatal or a conduit to distribute funds and for dialogue between the state and civil society but in the same vein it could also very well be under state control. Based on the balance of probabilities, the state does have a greater control over the NDA given that this agency was established, first and foremost, through an act of parliament. Secondly the funds that it disbursed mainly emanated from state coffers and by virtue of this arrangement the government had leverage to determine the extent of distribution and the type of NGOs that should receive this funding by means of influencing the funding criteria, for example. In addition to this, even though the board members are both from government and civil society, the minister does have a greater leverage or power in determining the direction that the agency takes in executing its mandate. Almost all respondents, whilst acknowledging the fact that the NDA remains an initiative of government expressed at the same time that the state has the upper hand over the NDA.

Some of the respondents raised quite pointedly the risk that in this process of grant-making (disbursing funds), a likelihood exist that the NDA could be used by the state to deprive certain organisations of funding from the tax payers revenue due to their fundamental disagreement with government. In that way certain NGOs might end up being weakened in particular those that depend mainly on the NDA funding. Scenarios of this nature, which by definition pose critical limitations to NGOs, are summed up by Edward and Hulme (1992) as a manifestation of the fact that the state controls broader frameworks within which NGOs exist and operate and NGOs therefore have a limited alternative recourse.

4.2.6   Impact of statements of Mandela and Mbeki on relations

The December 1997 statement of former president Mandela in the Mafikeng ANC (African National Congress) conference suggested that there was an attempt by foreign interests (governments and institutions) to undermine the newly found democracy by using NGOs to oppose new government's policies (CASE Report, 2000). Later on the statement by president Mbeki in May 2001 in the SANCO (South African National Civic Organisation) conference suggested that there were some NGOs whose agenda was mainly to undermine government. These two statements are critical particularly the way in which they influence structural relations between the state and NGOs.

About 69 per cent of the respondents felt that there was indeed some tension although it was necessary because it was healthy for any dialogue. Simultaneously the statements did not include all NGOs because the sector was diverse and mandates of different organisations remained heterogeneous. On the other hand it was further felt that such statements as expressed by both heads of government had a substantial potential to influence relations towards a conflictual situation, which was not desirable. This was especially the case given the history of the 1980s and the nature of relations then. Therefore, in the process of dialogue the expression of views is necessary, although they ought to be exercised with caution and should be applicable to both ends of the continuum. For the simple reason that even though both presidents critiqued certain organisations, probably on some founded basis, the risk was that less informed members of government might criticise NGOs because to them it would appear fashionable and acceptable. Consequences thereof might be undesirable to both entities as it would be quite ambitious for the NGOs to consider themselves to be capable of undertaking the development agenda without the intervention and support of the state and for the state as well (Williams, 2000).

4.3 Experiences and perspectives from LRS

The internal organisational mandate, processes and programmes shape and inform the way in which an organisation relates with other actors in the broader context. Hence it is important in this section to consider the experiences of the LRS in both pre and post apartheid era and inline with that to also assess its mandate in a context of changing paradigms. At this point the mandate of LRS, its needs, approach, towards the NDA and the new government will be presented as informed by LRS respondents.

Table 4.2 Issues and responses from the LRS interviewees

Issues	Common responses	%
The influence which LRS programmes received from the agenda of unions	The training needs of unions were the areas that LRS provided its services, therefore, in that regard unions could have had some influence. Otherwise LRS agenda was basically autonomous	100
The main funder of the LRS	Combined donor grant funding	50
LRS and funding from the NDA	There was funding, but the NDA caused a lot of discomfort when it questioned the need to fund LRS on the basis that labour formations were outside the ambit of poverty alleviation projects	50
The strategic direction of the RDP and response of LRS	The RDP was a popular policy and received an unprecedented support of LRS	25
GEAR strategic direction and whether it had replaced the RDP	Even though LRS did not assume direct policy positions except by merely pointing out weaknesses, GEAR had contradicted	75

	the RDP policy even though the GEAR strategy did not affect LRS in terms of its relations with government	

4.3.1 LRS programmes vis-à-vis trade unions' agenda

In this investigation it has been found that in as much as the LRS provided services to the trade union movement, the agenda of those unions was not homogenous given that different unions belonged to different federations and thus it was not really practical for the LRS to become influenced. However, there was some relationship between the needs of unions and the programmes that the LRS did provide and that could not necessarily be interpreted as influence of the LRS agenda by unions. Over and above this, the LRS has a mandate of its own which was to contribute towards the strengthening of the trade union movement in South Africa. This was a mandate that had its own historicity dating far back to inception in the 1980s. This was emphasised by all respondents.

As the new political dispensation was realised it also ushered in a period of the struggle for economic freedom that manifested itself by trade unions seeking further advice in the struggle of creating a worker friendly environment. According to the LRS Annual Report (1994-1995) it had to adjust to the new needs of unions that have emerged as a result of the developments in the new political dispensation. The challenge for all NGOs was to ensure that the programmes they rolled-out should be informed by the needs of the audience or people for whom the programmes have been designed (Hlope, 1998).

4.3.2   Main funding source for the LRS

The respondents at LRS suggested that their funding is through a combination of donor grant funding and further from the unions themselves. Other funding was through the Department of Labour's 'strengthening civil society fund' for the work they were carrying out in assisting trade unions. The LRS had engaged with the NDA over NDA's refusal to fund LRS, as it, according to NDA, did not meet the criteria of poverty relief organisations as per the funding criteria of the agency. In other words the respondents indicated that LRS did not necessarily have a main funder as such but rather it had combined its funding in order to ensure that funders did not unduly influence the agenda of the organisation.

In the broader context the NGO sector had suffered skills flight (skilled personnel taking jobs in government and corporate sector) due to the new opportunities brought about by the new political dispensation. The ability to undertake serious fund-raising by NGOs was weakened as a result of this. It could also lead to more demands on government to fund NGOs and if such support is not forthcoming or has certain conditions attached to it, then a stage could be inadvertently set for some tensions. A discussion on this issue of funding will be briefly entertained under sub-section **4.4.3.** to cover both LRS and IDASA.

4.3.3   LRS and NDA funding

The NDA funded the LRS in line with the agency's mandate and LRS respondents pointed out their intention to insist on pressurising the NDA to continue funding the LRS. That was so because the LRS considered that its services were intended to assist the poor as its role and function was aimed at advancing the interests of the workers and therefore it was incorrect to refuse to consider LRS for funding. In addition Ryklief (2001) expressed pointedly that the LRS had been following all the NDA processes from its inception in order to monitor any deviations from executing the mandate by the NDA.

The respondents continued to raise concerns over potential clientilism of those entrusted to serve in the board of the NDA and that such an occurrence could harm not only the organisations which the NDA was supposed to disburse donor funds to, but the agency itself. This would not be in line with the spirit under which the agency was established and the LRS would closely monitor the activities of the NDA. The LRS respondents also indicated that while they viewed the establishment of the NDA as a good initiative, they remained critical towards it. Another interesting discovery was that about 50 per cent of the LRS respondents indicated that they were not very much aware of the NDA and its mandate and further its funding criteria. A discussion on this issue of NDA funding will be briefly entertained, as well, in sub-section **4.4.3.** to cover both LRS and IDASA.

4.3.4 LRS on the strategic direction of the RDP

The strategic direction of the RDP was informed by the demands of the anti-apartheid struggle that later changed into a government policy and the South African electorate supported it. Crucial issues that the RDP raised ranged from curbing unemployment, addressing housing backlog etc. and the LRS was in support of those goals. However the respondents could not find the link between the popularity of the RDP and whether it did improve structural relations between the state and NGOs. In other words even though the LRS was in support of the RDP it did not have any direct influence upon the relations between the government at the time of the RDP's high prominence (1994-early1996: before the NDA was established) and later when the NDA was in the picture. A combined discussion will be presented under sub-section **4.4.5** in order to dovetail the experiences of IDASA and for coherence purposes.

4.3.5 LRS on GEAR and whether it replaced the RDP

The respondents suggested that the major tenets of the GEAR strategy e.g. its emphasis on fiscal discipline, labour deregulation and its globalisation elements fundamentally contradicted the founding principles of the RDP and that was the major weakness of this strategy. At the same time, respondents suggested that the policy of the LRS was not to assume direct positions on public policy except by merely pointing out weaknesses of such a policy in question. It is in that view that the majority of LRS respondents chose not to comment whether the RDP was replaced by GEAR and instead expressed critical views towards the GEAR strategy. A combined discussion will, once again here, be presented in sub-section **4.4.5** for coherence purposes.

4.4 IDASA: experiences and perspectives

IDASA prides itself for being 'mid-wives' of the democratic South Africa and at the same time it points to its foundations in the old South Africa. For the purposes of this study the history of IDASA, its contribution and on the other hand the political changes in South Africa provide a spectrum upon which IDASA's response and initiative towards the state could be evaluated and understood for the pre and post 1994 era. The developments in the new political dispensation and views within IDASA towards such changes are presented below.

Table 4.3 Issues and responses from the IDASA interviewees

Issues	responses	%	Common
The anti-GEAR stance of some organisations that IDASA worked with e.g. COSATU and the impact of that close interaction upon the relations between IDASA and other state organs	IDASA focussed on its programmes, mandate and interacted with other entities on issues of common interest and it maintained positive relations with all parties namely COSATU and other state organs	100	
Main funder of IDASA	Overseas donor funding constituted 75% and the local funding constituted 25%	100	
IDASA and funding from the NDA	None, because IDASA did not view itself as a poor organisation and also because it never applied for the NDA funding	50	
The strategic direction of the RDP and the response of IDASA	The RDP was a popular policy right from the beginning and IDASA was in support even though IDASA did not	75	

	assume direct positions on government policies as a matter of its policy. The RDP was more oriented towards people centred development	
The strategic direction of GEAR and whether it replaced the RDP	GEAR was the instrument that sought to strengthen the objectives of the RDP by focussing mainly on, although not only limited to, fiscal discipline. Hence GEAR could not replace the RDP	75

4.4.1   IDASA's relations with COSATU and government reaction

The respondents in their totality suggested that the relations with COSATU and its anti-GEAR stance did not have any influence upon the programmes and activities of IDASA because its (IDASA's) activities were informed by the mandate and policies of IDASA. The activities that IDASA collaborated on with COSATU were merely on areas of common interest in the same manner that IDASA embarked on collaborative activities with state institutions. Therefore, the interaction was more pragmatic than ideological and, in the main, it centred around issues of common interest. Thus, the whole matter of collaboration between IDASA and COSATU did not cause any discomfort in the eyes of the government and other state institutions because it had nothing to do with critical positions assumed by COSATU towards the GEAR strategy. The reason being that in their (IDASA and COSATU) interaction each party was entitled to a different position. Widman (1996) further elaborates upon this point by suggesting that bringing people together and facilitation of opinions of different social actors in deepening democracy is the focus of IDASA. In other words IDASA in pursuits of its own goals for a democratic society determines relevant stakeholders and interacts with them on specific issues of common interests (Kabemba & Friedman, 2001).

4.4.2 Main funding source for IDASA

Respondents of IDASA pointedly emphasised that it was the strategy of IDASA not to have a main funder but to have a variety of funders in order to ensure that the organisation did not find itself in a difficult position wherein an individual 'main' funding source determined what IDASA should do or not. Furthermore, to a large extent IDASA received foreign donations and that accounted for about 75 per cent while the 25 per cent was received from local donors during the period under study. This funding was mainly project specific. The concern that the respondents raised was the little support that the government gave to NGOs by not giving significant tax incentives to local donors who donated to NGOs. This failure of government was viewed to be in direct contrast to its repeated emphasis of ensuring that the environment was enabled in order for NGOs to participate fully in the democratic society.

4.4.3 IDASA and the NDA funding

Respondents suggested that there was no funding that IDASA received from the NDA. The reasons thereof were that IDASA did not necessarily view itself as a poverty relief organisation, given the work it did, but rather dealt with poverty issues at the level of policy rather than downstream work like soup kitchen operation for the needy. The second reason cited was that it could also be that no application had been forwarded by IDASA to the NDA requesting funds.

Although these findings have accentuated the importance of the role the NDA had, in terms of disbursing funds, the concern was about the criteria set by government. This relates to the role of NDA assistance to poverty relief NGOs because that could be interpreted as a selective way in which the government chose whom it would provide the donor funds to and who should not. In other words, sidelining certain organisations on the basis of the agenda they pursued, although the funds that were disbursed by the NDA were not only from the South African Government but were also from the European Union.

In this regard (also linking elements of sub-section **4.3.3**), Kabemba and Friedman (2001) and the LRS (Brochure, year not indicated) suggest that both NGOs have identified the implications of funding in as far as the articulation of the organisation's mandate is concerned. Neame and Biggs (1994:1) caution that the one who pays the piper calls the tune and " the piper plays the tune" hence the way in which the funds, issues and processes of accountability are negotiated is important for protecting the aspirations of NGOs from the dominance of donors. Therefore, the strategy of funding diversification is a sound tactic that both NGOs appeared to have identified.

In the NDA founding documents, the input of the CSO's contribution towards social development

was envisaged as furthering the mission of the RDP. In the same vein the NDA role and function was also conceptualised with the aim of addressing the funding crisis that had crippled the CSOs since 1994 (NDA Final Report, 1998). The underlying reason being that the NDA was to make grants to the sector and identify other institutions countrywide that could facilitate this process and intersections (between NDA and these entities when funds were on transit) had to be thoroughly monitored. However, this could not be realised as Macfarlane (Weekly Mail & Guardian, 12 April 2001) concludes that the NDA was unable to distribute funds efficiently. Therefore it could be argued that in spite of the LRS having received NDA funding, against the initial reluctance on the part of the NDA and IDASA's non-inclusion demonstrates to some degree the extent to which the inter-institutional mechanism falls short in the process of resource distribution to alleviate poverty. In the light of inter-institutional facilitation of funds distribution, certain NGOs e.g. the LRS and IDASA's expertise could have been utilised thereby address the remote NDA engagement with NGOs.

4.4.4   IDASA and the strategic direction of the RDP

The RDP enjoyed popular support in South Africa and it was a product of thorough consultation and it embodied the demands of the liberation struggle. The respondents further suggested that IDASA supported the RDP because it was in direct contrast, in many respects, with the South African past, which was characterised by conflict and racism. Sustainable development in all spheres of government such as housing, employment, health care, education etc. and a people centred approach were the major tenets of the RDP which the 'new' South African society and its institutions were expected to respond to. This was so, regardless of the fact that IDASA, as a matter of policy, did not assume direct positions towards government policy (in terms of rejecting or supporting).

4.4.5   The GEAR strategy and whether it replaced the RDP: views from IDASA

According to the respondents GEAR was seen to be a strategy that was not in direct contradiction to the principles of neither the RDP nor that it undermined the RDP at any point. The strategy was rather seen as a tool meant to consolidate the founding principles of the RDP, whereupon issues of fiscal discipline and responses to macro-economic imperatives etc. could be prioritised. Therefore the weaknesses of GEAR ought to be dealt as mere flawed sub-elements and, at the same time, not in relation to the RDP. In this respect the GEAR strategy did not replace the RDP in the views of IDASA's respondents.

The discussion in this section will also focus on issues partly touched on in the previous sub-sections, namely **4.3.4** and **4.3.5** of this chapter. With respect to the responses of the LRS on the subject of whether GEAR indeed replaced the RDP, it is important to recognise that the RDP policy enjoyed the popular support according to the above findings. This is reflected by the basic protocols of the two NGOs, i.e. that of not supporting directly and openly government policies, which were

overlooked in their openly declared support for the RDP.

Ironically the GEAR strategy appears not to have managed to influence a similar response from the two NGOs in that an emphasis by respondents was on their organisations' policy of not assuming direct positions towards government policies. The LRS respondents acknowledged that GEAR had undermined the RDP in some respects as opposed to IDASA's respondents who cited technical inadequacies of a strategy (GEAR), which by and large was in line with the RDP. Weeks (1998) argues that despite many similarities between the RDP and GEAR there are stark differences for example the RDP envisage growth whilst addressing the issue of inequalities.

On the other hand, GEAR focuses solely on growth with no emphasis on addressing inequalities that are vestiges of the apartheid past. GEAR, a neo-liberal economic policy that emphasised less social expenditure and more trimming of public debt led to the demise of the RDP. Resultantly, civil society began to identify strategies to effectively combat poverty and part of that approach was to challenge the government on its introduction of GEAR (Development Update: 1999). It is therefore conclusively arguable that GEAR had meant a significant shift away from the RDP towards a neo-liberal set-up.

4.5 Experiences and perspectives from the NDA

It appears that one of the new government's priorities is to reduce poverty and within that priority the role of the civil society is envisaged. Whether or not the NGO sector necessarily agrees with this priority, as a matter of national priority in order to curb poverty, the government expects the NGOs to play a positive role. The NDA mandate is to synergise the government efforts with those of the CSOs in addressing one of what could be regarded as the country's priorities, at least, according to government. The function of facilitating policy dialogue between the state and CSOs is an important variable in measuring the actual or nominal nature of structural relations as envisaged in the spirit of the NDA Act. However, NDAs posture and initiative in pursuit of its mandate and its perspective towards government's economic policy becomes important in engaging with the NGO sector. In this section experiences and perspectives from the NDA will be presented.

4.4 Issues and responses from the NDA interviewees

Issues	Common response	%
The NDA devised method aimed at interacting with CSOs	The extension of the agency into all provinces through opening of offices and holding consultative sessions with stakeholders was the method	100
How was the NDA's policy dialogue	It was attempted through policy forums	100

function achieved through its methods of linking with CSOs	that were in the pipeline aimed at facilitating policy dialogue	
NDA support or non-support of the GEAR strategy	The role and function of the NDA did not position it to either support or oppose government policy but to play a broker role between the State and the CSOs	100
The effect that GEAR's introduction had on the extent of participation in government policy-making processes by LRS and IDASA	Not sure, as that could have been the case	100
The influence of SANGOCO's anti-GEAR stance and the relations between the NDA and NGOs	SANGOCO represented NGOs but not very strongly and the NGOs were very diverse hence there was no negative impact posed by its the anti-GEAR stance	100

4.5.1   NDA's devised method of linking up with CSOs

At any given point, for a new entity which had come into existence to assume a particular role and function, it would be critical that it found a sound point of entrance in order to succeed in executing the mandate at hand. The National Development Agency was a new agency in the new political dispensation in South Africa in as far as structural relations between the state and NGOs were concerned. In other words the NDA was a conduit aimed at dealing with funds' disbursement and policy dialogue between the State and CSOs.

The NDA respondents indicated that the method of linking up with CSOs was through decentralisation of the NDA by opening provincial offices in order for the NDA to be accessible throughout the nine provinces. In addition to that, stakeholder consultation processes in the form of workshops and debates were unfolded in 2002 to all nine provinces and subsequent to that a publication was issued. CSOs were also continually invited by the NDA to give input to the programmes of the NDA and in addition the agency carried out an internal programme of evaluation in order to establish areas of weakness so as to improve on those (Interview with September: 2002). The agency also suggested that its role was to assume a function of serving as a broker between the state and CSOs in order to ensure that there was an ongoing dialogue for the two entities in

determining the development agenda of South Africa (Templeton: 2002).

The respondents could not confirm whether there was any link between the NDA and LRS or IDASA and whether any of the two organisations had been recipients of the NDA funding or participated in the stakeholder consultations that were carried out. However, there was limited source material that could be found for this section of the investigation both in the South African context or even a similar NDA model in the source material consulted. Perhaps at another level, if this type of investigation is pursued more relevant source material would have been developed by then which could enrich such researches as this study paves the way towards that.

4.5.2 How was the NDA's policy dialogue function achieved through its methods of linking with CSOs?

After the NDA started a process of opening offices in different provinces it hoped that through this increased access to CSOs would be achieved. The respondents submitted that policy forums were in the pipeline in 2002, but had not yet taken place. These policy forums were to be constituted by representatives from CSOs in order to debate development and related policy matters thereof. For the period under study it could be concluded that the failure to undertake policy dialogue with CSOs did not only put in question the pace with which the NDA was established, but also the limited space meted out to CSOs in terms of them engaging with public policy. This finding appears to be consistent with the hypothesis of this investigation.

4.5.3 The NDA and GEAR

NDA is a parastatal entity that was founded through an Act of parliament and has a specific mandate that is to firstly eradicate poverty and to facilitate policy dialogue between the state and CSOs. By virtue of this, the NDA respondents submitted that this mandate did not position the NDA to either support or oppose the government policy but rather to act towards fulfilling its mandate. That was to actually facilitate dialogue between the state and CSOs. Thus in the perspective of the NDA the GEAR strategy was not treated as a key policy or a major determining factor in the state and NGOs structural

relations in the sense of whether it inhibited its (NDA) activities but that the NDA had to function regardless.

It could be concluded therefore that even though the democratic state created the NDA as a platform for debate and fund disbursement for poverty alleviation the onus remained upon the CSOs to take up the challenge of engaging government on its policies. This is in line with the theoretical framework of Edward and Hulme (1992), Petras (1997) and Zaidi (1999) who note that the state controls the broader frameworks within which NGOs operate and that NGOs should also not become the community face of neo-liberalism. That being said, it remains to be seen whether the NDA policy dialogue platform will in future produce robust debates around policy choices, which could shift government away from neo-liberal policies.

4.5.4 Public participation: LRS and IDASA after GEAR's introduction: The NDA's account

The NDA respondents could not confirm whether the extent of participation of both the LRS and IDASA in the government policy formulation processes dwindled or increased after the introduction of GEAR. Therefore the impact of GEAR on structural relations between the state and the NGOs in the post apartheid South Africa could not be judged from the angle of increased or decreased LRS or IDASA input after GEAR's introduction. It could be assumed that due to the fact that the NDA came on board later in

2000 than was intended for 1998 that these dynamics could not be understood although they could have assisted in shaping the way forward.

It is also observable, based on the findings of this study, that there is some inability, on the part of the NDA, to clinically analyse trends in the participation or lack thereof, by various CSOs in policy dialogues. This could, however, be partly attributed to the enormous number of CSOs and an environment within which the NDA has to operate.

4.5.5 The impact of SANGOCO's anti-GEAR stance

The NDA did not assume positions in as far as government policies and strategies were concerned and in interacting with NGOs the anti-GEAR stance of SANGOCO and organisations under that coalition proved not to be an impediment in the carrying out of NDA programmes and processes with CSOs. In addition to that, the NDA respondents suggested that SANGOCO was in fact one of the cooperative partners it had to such an extent that SANGOCO benefited in the NDA funds and other services.

An area of concern though, that has been raised emphatically by one of the respondents was the tightness of the Public Finance Management Act (PMFA) provisions (Interview: Templeton 2001). This Act suggests a tight limitation on expenditure deviation and yet the development stage of the agency made it prone to serious deviations that would have negative consequences to the agency. Added to that, sections 39, 51(b)(ii), 53(2) 43 of the Act treat as an act of misconduct any expenditure that could be found to be fruitless or irregular. Simultaneously, section 45(d) and (e) further stipulate that any official in a public institution should comply with the provision of PFMA and safeguard assets and manage liabilities of the state. Therefore, pitfalls of this nature only result in the agency being a mere symbol of commitment towards social development, poverty eradication and policy dialogue, whilst such policies incapacitate redress of such issues.

4.6   Summary of key findings

In this section key findings will be summarised and analysed in order to provide some recommendations, in chapter 5, in terms of the scope and factors influencing structural relations. An in-depth discussion of the findings in the structural relations between the sate and NGOs on a broader level and LRS, IDASA and NDA on a specific level will assist in demonstrating the underlying processes and trends.

4.6.1 From the 1980s to the present: a brief observation

The struggle against Apartheid State policies by the progressive NGOs in the 1980s was not merely an insignificant process in the South Africa history and in fact has demonstrated that the forces for change marshaled greater influence and power. That is so because in the new political dispensation, from the Government of National Unity (GNU) to the present, government has made one of its tasks the issue of civil society participation. Chapter 10, Section 195 (1) (e) of the South African constitution indicates that, "People's needs must be responded to, and the public must be encouraged to participate in policy making (Act 108, 1996). Further to that section 59 (1) (a) provides that, " The National Assembly must facilitate public involvement in the legislative and other processes of the Assembly and its committees".

Moreover, through other acts of parliament, such as the Non-Profit Organisations Act (Act No. 71 of 1997) aimed at creating an enabling environment for Non-Profit Organisations' activities, the commitment towards ensuring civil society's role in the law making processes is evident. In the same vein, the passing of the National Development Agency Act (Act 108 of 1998) which informed the NDA establishment. The Taxation Laws Amendment Act (Act No. 30 of 2000) aimed further at

improving tax environment for charitable entities, etc, and are other pieces of legislation that could be viewed to further confirm this commitment. There is somewhat a form of confirmation to some extent of the willingness by the state and government for CSOs to participate although there remains some tangible gaps in as far as the form which CSO participation ought to take (Williams, 2002).

4.6.2 Policy dialogue and gaps

Similarly, and in the same vein the constitutional and legislative framework has also posed some serious challenges at the level of structural relations. In this regard, for example, the debate on the formulation of the RDP policy remains an interesting feature in as far as genuine consensus is concerned. IDASA and LRS both submitted to have been supportive of the RDP even though usually, as a matter of policy, they do not take positions on every government policy except by merely pointing out strengths and weaknesses of such a policy. This confirms the argument that the RDP "… was adopted as a part of the new South Africa's commitment to democracy and as redress for a discriminatory past. It was very difficult, if not impossible, for anyone to question or criticise the proposed approach … without being accused of supporting apartheid…" (http://www.cde.org.za/debates/debate3.htm, 14/11/2000:1). Yet on the introduction of GEAR and responses thereof brought about a dramatic shift whereupon other analysts even pointed out that the new political dispensation "witnessed a contest between proponents of three distinct policy ideologies- neo-liberal, social democratic and radical…" (Bond, 1995:150). SANGOCO took the debate even further by cautioning government to scratch GEAR if it was serious about poverty alleviation (Development Update, 2000). This demonstrates two points that policies have a potential to impact on structural relations and that diverse ideologies which are in fact universal underpin the policy direction. Hence

critical policy decisions and directions are crucial in the study of relations because they can serve as a springboard for agreement or contestation as that was the case with apartheid state policies.

However, in the context of the organisations in this investigation, the issue of government policy was an area of interest and concern, at the same time. It was also felt that the practical mechanisms of interaction should not be limited to policy dialogues of the NDA but should also include participation in the form of advocacy and lobbying through public hearings of parliament and other government forums. Furthermore, it became clear that there still remains some ambiguity as to the actual expectation in terms of roles from both the state and NGOs in spite of what could be regarded as state and CSOs' partnership rhetoric.

4.6.3 The NDA and its mandate

The NDA's establishment was through Act 108 of 1998, aimed primarily at contributing towards eradication of poverty through granting funds to the civil society organisations. Section 3(2) (a) i) stipulates that the secondary objective of the NDA is to consult, dialogue and share development experience between civil society organisations and relevant organs of the state (NDA Act, 1998). Although evidence of this could not be found in this study, funding had begun to be disbursed. Whilst IDASA had not received any funding from the NDA at the time covered by this investigation, the LRS had received funding. A portion of the grants had been re-channeled by the European Union countries away from the NGOs and towards the new government. Thus distribution thereof remains of critical importance. This is because funds, which could have been received by a particular organisation in the apartheid South Africa through the direct funding strategy in the new political dispensation, could bypass such an organisation.

On the other hand, the serious shortcoming of the NDA, according to David Macfarlane was its inability to distribute funds efficiently and this became a sore point in 2000 when there was a backlog of about 4000 applications that were not allocated funds (Weekly Mail & Guardian, 12 April 2001). Another issue had been the slow pace of establishing

the agency and appointment of the chief executive officer, which only took place on the 1st July 2000 (Development update, 1999/2000). This has been viewed as having hampered the work that the NDA had to undertake as per its mandate.

At another level the NDA experienced criticism for the dual role it has to play, as stipulated by the act, and this has been seen to be the reason for the agency being unable to perform its functions (Development update, 1999/2000). This relates to the fact that the NDA is mandated to disburse funds and at the same time facilitate policy dialogue between the state and CSOs. Despite the backlog in the allocation of funds by the NDA, and whether this was due to the dual function as part of its mandate, the concern was raised by one of the NDA respondents (Templeton, 2002) on the subject of PFMA's 5 per cent expenditure deviation standard. In the light of these challenges it would be interesting to observe how the agency may deal with this and other similar problems. The provisions of section 4(2)(b) of the NDA Act stipulate that, "the NDA may make recommendations with regard to legislation and policies directly or indirectly constraining effective development in the Republic" (NDA Act, 1998:3). For the future purposes, to be assessed is whether the NDA would embark in some self-rectification through this provision.

In terms of the second objective of the NDA, that of ensuring dialogue between SCOs and state on development agenda, it appears to have unfolded in essence only in 2002. The question is whether the NDA can manage to bring about a credible process of dialogue between the state and NGOs in the South African transformation process. On a comparative note NEDLAC has to some extent managed to create a credible platform for debate, notwithstanding challenges. Since inception the NDA had been confronted with problems, which at the time could be treated as teething problems. Some of these took the form of being internal and organisational relating to agency's leadership up to the point that the Minister of Social Development admitted to problems in the NDA (Weekly Mail & Guardian, 10 August 2001). Some of these problems contributed to the amendment of the NDA Act in April 2003 and the pending investigation of irregularities by the Minister of

Social Development, Dr Zola Skweyiya (Mail and Guardian, 10-16 October 2003:4). In this research the question has been to comprehend how the NDA impacted upon the dynamic of structural relations based on its mandate. It is clear, as the findings imply, that the NDA does have a critical role to play however, if it does not succeed it would affect good relations even though it might not necessarily lead to a full scale conflict between the state and SCOs, similar to that of the 1980s.

4.7 Conclusion

The hypothesis has been partially confirmed and this warrants further investigation perhaps at another level. This is so because in this case study, carried out between the NDA, LRS and IDASA, findings have demonstrated that between 2000 and 2001 there has not been any constant interaction strategy between the LRS, IDASA and the NDA. If there is no strategic interaction with LRS and IDASA, a further question can be posed as to what about other CSOs which are in rural areas, smaller in size as compared to LRS and IDASA and without a long history like these two institutions? The fact that in the period under study there was no comprehensive strategy of interaction between the NDA with the LRS and IDASA and also on a broader level that did not imply conflict or dwindled relations as such. In this respect the hypothesis of this investigation has not been confirmed.

In the presentation and discussions of this chapter, the main themes of this investigation have been visited and tested against the hypothesis. In this process, a prominent feature or realisation about the study is that the scope, to a large extent managed to capture the magnitude of structural relations. At another level of study a research on structural relations in the post apartheid South Africa will need to be undertaken in future. Just as it was

indicated previously in this mini-thesis, i.e. that carrying out this study on structural relations was tantamount to shooting an object in motion. It is evident that further investigation remains to be done and its findings might shed more light and perhaps confirm some of the findings of this investigation. The final chapter will now draw on the aggregate findings of this investigation and will present general conclusions and recommendations where necessary.

Chapter 5

THE CASE FOR A BETTER AND FAIR DIALOGUE: NDA, LRS and IDASA

5. Introduction

In this chapter, realignment of both salient features of the literature review and findings will be undertaken with the purpose of summing-up this investigation by citing key elements of the debate and inserting recommendations thereof and conclusions. This process is better amplified by Mason (1990) with the argument that a process of analytical induction involves the generation of a theory from data and the use of strategic sampling to assist in the refinement and strengthening of theory. With this in mind, a point is invoked that the theoretical sampling is integral to the process of analysis, although its relationship to qualitative analysis is distinct from, for example, statistical sampling and statistical analysis.

In the new political dispensation in South Africa, one of the major determining factors has been the development of the constitutional and legislative framework. This process has been underpinned by neo-liberal ideology and therefore, it is within this context that even the enactment of laws, as indicated in chapter four of this mini-thesis e.g. the NDA Act of 1998 as amended aimed at the establishment of NDA, needs to be understood. Moreover, constitutional provisions as indicated in Chapter Ten section 195 (1) (e), that the public must be encouraged to participate, clearly demonstrate that NGOs to a large extent have a responsive role in society. On the other hand, the state and government have an operant role, that is leverage to determine directly or indirectly the nature of relations between itself and the NGOs. This is neither a state-centrist position as Mamdani (1995) would

characterise, but rather an empirical observation, which is characteristic of the democratic dispensation context, at least, in the period under study. Perhaps this could be accounted, as proclaimed by Zaidi (1999), by the fact that the government and state institutions control wider frameworks within which people and their organisations in society exist. Therefore, the fact that NGOs have missions and policies of their own does not necessarily result in NGOs being independent, because such missions and policies have to comply with founding documents of the nation state i.e. the constitution and policies emanating thereof.

To further engage this argument, the conflictual climate of the 1980s between the state and NGOs in South Africa turned out, in the new political dispensation, not to have been about NGOs struggling to dislodge the state but rather against the racist foundation and composition of the state and policies thereof. According to the CASE report (2000:6) "during the apartheid era, democratic forces in South Africa did not generally challenge the prominence of the state as such, but rather the specific uses to which state power was put". In this context even the most hardened enthusiasts of NGOs, despite adhering to the withering-away-of the-state thesis, are not advocating for the replacement of the state by NGOs (Zaidi, 1999). Thus to some degree, NGO's existence and their activities are parallel to government and the state in general, but still within the ambits of the state.

5.1 The NDA effect and recommendations

Noting the upper hand that the state has over society due to its position and power, in this instance it is better to analyse the NDA from that perspective. However this does not signify that civil society does not command power and influence of its own towards the state power in society. This makes it difficult for CSOs to challenge the NDA as a construct of the body politic within a democratic transforming South Africa. All the same, the NDA is a parastatal established by an act of parliament with the Minister for Social Development at the helm. Perhaps thus the findings of this study demonstrate that there is support for the NDA concept and model albeit concerns over inefficiencies of the agency. This leaves the NDA as a government's initiative to institutionalise relations between the state and NGOs generally in South Africa. However, on a material level there does not appear to be evidence to suggest any meaningful interaction between the NDA and NGOs, at least for the period covered by this study.

On the other hand, the effectiveness of the NDA can be increased by the extent to which it reaches out to CSOs. According to the minutes of the Parliamentary Monitoring Group (23 October 2003), the staff of the NDA suggested to the Portfolio Committee for Social Development that the NDA would embark on a road show in an attempt to inform the general public about the NDA and its activities. This could be a step in the right direction although it also demonstrates the challenges that the agency have to deal with because having to advertise itself, despite three years of existence since 2000, does not serve as a good track record. Poverty eradication is a national priority and the NDA is an institution entrusted with the task of building partnership between the state and CSOs in fighting poverty. However, the delay by the NDA in developing a method of interaction between

itself and CSOs had a negative bearing upon the main aim of poverty eradication and further fails to facilitate a credible process of policy dialogue between the CSO and the state. Therefore, it can be argued that the poverty alleviation effort falls short of being mainstreamed as HIV/AIDS programmes are, yet one of the intentions for the NDA establishment was to mainstream poverty relief and alleviation.

In broad terms it can be safely argued that both in the 1980s and in the post 1994 era government policy had, to a large extent, informed and influenced the programmes and direction of the civil society organisations in South Africa. The establishment of the NDA and its mandate (i.e. poverty eradication and policy dialogue function between the state and CSOs) clearly demonstrates the intention of government towards alleviation of poverty. The commitment by the South African government to the United Nations to assist in efforts to halve poverty by 2015 in the world further amplifies this point (http://www.un.org.News/Press/docs/2001/gashc3627.doc.htm). In line with this approach, it is therefore clear that the medium of interaction or relationship between the CSOs and government is determined, to some extent, by the priorities of the state. Hence whilst noting the dichotomy between the apartheid state policies and the democratic state's policy priorities this study recognises that the essence of any relationship between the state and CSOs is fundamentally based on policies as was the case in 1980s to the present dispensation. As to whether or not CSOs are in support of poverty eradication policy priority becomes of secondary importance in the debate.

In terms of the government's intention towards the poverty eradication debate, there is some contradiction which has been pointed out by the CSOs particularly COSATU and SANGOCO that relates to the introduction of GEAR (SANGOCO, INTERFUND, Report 1999/2000). At this point the debate becomes somewhat dual by leveling criticism at the

GEAR strategy and simultaneously comparing it to the RDP, and further suggesting that the government is not committed to addressing poverty in South Africa. The fact that civil society entities continue to debate against GEAR, departing from the backdrop of poverty eradication, and the government's strong support towards GEAR, does suggest the existence of certain tensions.

Despite the fact that the state does, to a large extent, carry out its agenda and further determines the programmes of CSOs through state policies (as state policies shape overall debates because even if CSOs agree or disagree or raise policy oversights that is in response or feeds to the state policies) the CSOs on the other hand suffer from their own difficulties. For example SANGOCO (the NGO's umbrella body that was formed in 1995) boycotted the Civil Society Initiative's (SCI) conference, which was convened in April 2001 (Mail and Guardian, 2001) whilst some SANGOCO members in fact attended the conference and fully participated against the call e.g. IDASA. It also emerged in the interviews with IDASA's respondents that SANGOCO was operating much as an NGO itself rather than as an umbrella for all its NGO members. This disequilibrium appears to have remained for some time because a new NGO umbrella body with the name National Alliance for NGOs of South Africa was to be launched in 2003 and it claimed to have some members (Mail and Guardian: October 2003).

Therefore, what could be taking place in the new political dispensation is that NGOs, in their diversity and through a uniting umbrella body, would be struggling against neo-liberal policies and advocating for poverty eradication, as well as assuming a watchdog role on the democratic state. Instead, as it appears, NGOs were weakened by a situation where there was discord and disunity of NGOs due to competition for resources. This is not suggesting though that there is no role that the NGOs could play in the new political dispensation, but

rather serves to point out that the current state of affairs to a large extent negates the fundamental objectives that NGOs should be pursuing.

5.2 Institutionalisation of structural relations: a recommendation

The state and the government seem to have committed themselves to ensuring that the environment enables NGOs to participate in various ways in policy dialogue. The NGOs on the other hand are keen to participate irrespective of their dilemma as to how to handle relations in terms of their watchdog role and collaboration with the state. Although this is an important issue, the most serious one is the lack of a clear structuralising or unsound institutionalising process upon which relations could unfold (Williams, 2001). For example, it appears to be the intention of government to institute a forum where NGOs could come together to give inputs on different state organs. Whilst, this policy dialogue forum and function entrusted upon the NDA as envisaged in Section 2 of the NDA Act (Act 108, 1999), seems to be inadequate in terms of ensuring thorough involvement of other CSOs e.g. LRS and that alone serves to be contrary to the intent.

This is simply because there are two basic ways in which NGOs and state relations could possibly be structured. It could be either by having a forum where government, state organs and NGOs would meet in certain intervals, similar to Imbizos, to deliberate on policy issues either to inform amendments to existing policies or the enactment of new ones. Or alternatively, create forums as per sectors within which NGOs operate. This could be achieved, for example, by drawing in specific NGOs that are working in the environment sector and build a forum and in that way enable NGOs to provide input in policy through such recognised forums and with such sessions meeting at agreed intervals. The current

practice whereupon NGOs make policy inputs through public hearings, lobbying and advocacy does not afford adequate space for large numbers of organisations to give input, but rather only enables middle-class and predominantly urban NGOs that make those inputs. An effort perhaps ought to be taken to involve other less fortunate organisations to make policy inputs as well.

5.3 Conclusion

In this study strategic issues were dealt with in the first instance from the perspective of time lines looking at relations from 1980s to 2001. This was achieved by looking at structural issues, funding, and the impact of government policies to structural relations both on a broader scope and at the level of the LRS, IDASA and NDA. It is found that the NDA still needs to ensure that it reaches out to a broad spectrum of CSOs in order for them not only to be given grants, but also to enable them to participate meaningfully in policy dialogue. Perhaps in this way the material conditions of the marginalised people could be propelled into the socio-economic agenda of South Africa and that would restore the voices of the voiceless people and this would counteract the problem of elite group of NGOs deliberating exclusively.

It has also emerged that IDASA did not receive funding from the NDA, but could contribute to policy development and that LRS had to pressure the NDA in order to receive funding. These factors to a large extent demonstrate gaps in the practice of the NDA and this had the potential of creating problems. However, there was no conclusive evidence to suggest a collapse of relations between the state and NGOs on this basis. It is the intention of the

author to return to this study and check the impact these issues might have in the near future.

The government insisted on the need to integrate the RDP into all government departments, spheres, structures and systems in order to streamline accounting functions for the RDP funds (www.cde.org.za/debates/debate3.htm). Therefore arguing the case of the introduction of GEAR, an interesting discovery was to find that both the LRS and IDASA did not assume direct policy positions except to only critique certain aspects of government policies. Yet, both supported the RDP, while the LRS pointedly expressed its reservations with GEAR perhaps due to its history as an institution that is embedded in working class struggles. Another finding is the discovery of some degree of ambiguity of relations as respondents could not characterise unanimously the nature of these (relations) in the new political dispensation. Instead respondents cited that the government has not defined the role of NGOs except in certain sectors wherein some NGOs become roped in to render certain services and this forms part of the dilemmas of the state an NGOs dialogue.

A surprising finding has been that the tax regime could not emerge strongly as a major issue that could influence relations by the LRS and IDASA. Yet with other stakeholders, in particular the Non-Profit Partnership, respondent raised the importance of the recognition and incentives for the non-profit work which is a contribution by the NGOs and other non-profit actors. In this study pertinent issues are raised which the NGO activists need to take into cognisance and such issues could address the dichotomy that exists between what organisations argue to advance positions of the civil society and what they actually do. South Africa should seriously take note of the issue of development, and the importance of empowerment and participation and must realise that these issues cannot be left solely in

the hands of the state, but that civil society collectively has a duty to assume. In order to express this more pointedly from a historical context, Fanon (1967: 166) suggests that "each generation must discover its mission,…fulfil it, or betray it". Therefore in the transformation process in South Africa civil society has an obligation to contribute meaningfully in the processes of bringing about change.

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