An Emerging Partnership in Regional Economic Development: Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), Local State and the World Bank. A Case Study of Planafloro, Rondônia, Brazil

By

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Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

IN

ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN AND PLANNING

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April 07, 1997

Blacksburg, Virginia

Keywords: Civil Society, Regional Development, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), State, World Bank
There is a growing body of literature arguing that NGOs are an important tool in the efforts of civil society to influence the actions of the State, especially in the process of economic development. NGOs are primarily seen as effective advocates for the less privileged sectors of civil society. This study examines the influence of local NGOs participation in the implementation of PLANAFLORO, a regional economic development program partially funded by the World Bank in the Brazilian state of Rondônia. This study focuses on four issues that are commonly used to justify the inclusion of NGOs in the development process: representativeness, accountability, autonomy and effectiveness. This study relies on three basic methods of data gathering: focused interviews of key informants,
questionnaire-based surveys of different stake-holder
groups, and information from secondary sources. This study’s
results challenge the common wisdom regarding the positive
impacts of NGO participation in economic development
programs, and on their contribution to democratic
governance. NGOs participating in PLANAFLORO faced great
institutional and political difficulties in the process of
participation. Many NGOs did not have either the
institutional capabilities or the financial autonomy to
influence the process of policy-making in PLANAFLORO
effectively. Moreover, most NGOs did not have mechanisms of
accountability to inform the program’s intended
beneficiaries of the state of PLANAFLORO’s implementation.
Finally, both the local State and the World Bank only
reluctantly accepted the participation of NGOs in
PLANAFLORO. This fact served to greatly limit the
contribution of NGOs in PLANAFLORO.
The task of acknowledging those who have helped and encouraged me to prepare this study may be as difficult as the study itself because I have so many different people to thank. For those friends whose names are not cited here, my sincere apologies.

I initially would like to acknowledge my committee chair and advisor, Dr. John Browder, for his help throughout my stay in Blacksburg. I would like also to thank my committee members, Drs. Larry Grossman in Geography, John Randolph and Max Stephenson in Urban Affairs and Planning, and Robert Youngs in Forestry. I would also like to thank Foster Brown, Virginia Dale, and Dagoberto Moura for their contributions in different stages of my academic development.

I would also like to thank to all the people in Rondônia who kindly contributed to make this study possible. My special thanks to Mara Carneiro, Iremar Ferreira, José Carlos M. Gadelha, Walmir de Jesus, Antenor Karitiana, Eraldo Matricardi, Edvan Pinto Rios, Luiz Rodrigues, Eliomar P. Silva Filho, and José Antonio de Souza for their uncountable efforts to help me to conduct this study.

Special thanks to Suzana Müller who literally opened the doors of her house to me so I could have a comfortable
and fun place to live until this work was completed. I would also to thank John Fackenthal and William F.da Costa for lending me their computer skills. I would like also to express gratitude to Urs Buehlmann, Tracey Chew, Nichole Danraj, Ingrid Heydrich, Kalpana Kanwar, Lara Käsner, Bill O’Brien, Peter Ozolins, Shakeel Qureshi, Melissa Shaw, Frances Stanley, Jay Swami, and Diane Zahm for their friendship and support. I would like to thank all my friends at the International Club of Virginia Tech.

This endeavor has special meaning to me because of my family, especially my sister Eliane and nephews (Guilherme and Rafael) and nieces (Letícia and Patrícia). I also thank my little friend Rachel Webb for providing me with so many interesting insights into life.

Finally, this study was made possible by a doctoral fellowship grant provided by the “Conselho Nacional de Desenvolvimento Científico e Tecnológico” (CNPq), the National Council of Scientific Development and Technology of Brazil.
**ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ASGM</td>
<td>Association of Rubber Tappers of Guajará-Mirim</td>
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<tr>
<td>ASM</td>
<td>Association of Rubber Tappers of Machadinho do Oeste</td>
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<tr>
<td>ASSPB</td>
<td>Association of Soldiers of the Rubber and Rubber Tappers of Pimenta Bueno</td>
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<tr>
<td>AVHRR</td>
<td>Advanced Very High Resolution Radiometer</td>
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<td>CD</td>
<td>Deliberative Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>CEPLAC</td>
<td>Executive Committee for the Cocoa Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>CIEL</td>
<td>Center for International Environmental Law</td>
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<tr>
<td>CIMI</td>
<td>Indian Missionary Council, Conselho Indigenista Missionário</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CNP</td>
<td>Program Normative Commission, Comissão Normativa de Programa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CNS</td>
<td>National Council of Rubber Tappers, Conselho Nacional dos Seringueiros</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMAI</td>
<td>Independent Evaluation Committee, Comitê de Avaliação Independente</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPT</td>
<td>Pastoral Land Commission, Comissão Pastoral da Terra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CU</td>
<td>Conservation Unit, Unidade de Conservação</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CUNPIR</td>
<td>Coordination of Indian Nations and Peoples of Rondônia, Southern Amazonas and Northern Mato Grosso, Coordenação da União de Povos Indígenas de Rondônia, Sul do Amazonas e Norte do Mato Grosso</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DER</td>
<td>Rondônia State Highway Department, Departamento de Estradas de Rodagem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECOPORÉ</td>
<td>Ecological Action of the Guaporé Valley, Ação Ecológica do Vale do Guaporé</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDF</td>
<td>Environmental Defense Fund</td>
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<tr>
<td>EMATER</td>
<td>Rondônia State Technical Assistance and Rural Extension Company</td>
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Empresa de Assistência Técnica e Extensão Rural  
**EMBRAPA**  
Brazilian Agricultural Research Enterprise  
Empresa Brasileira de Pesquisa Agro-Pecuária

**FAERON**  
Federation of the Agriculture of Rondônia  
Federação da Agricultura de Rondônia

**FETAGRO**  
Federation of Rural Workers of Rondônia  
Federação de Trabalhadores na Agricultura de Rondônia

**FIERO**  
Federation of Industries of Rondônia  
Federação das Indústrias de Rondônia

**FOE**  
Friends of the Earth

**FORUM**  
Forum of NGOs and Social Movements of Rondônia.  
Forum de ONGs e Movimentos Sociais de Rondônia

**FUNAI**  
National Indigenous People Foundation  
Fundação Nacional do Indio

**FUNDAGRO**  
Rondônia State Agricultural Credit Fund  
Fundado Agrário de Rondônia

**IBAMA**  
Brazilian Institute for the Environment and Renewable Resources  
Instituto Brasileiro do Meio Ambiente e dos Recursos Renováveis

**IBDF**  
Brazilian Institute of Forestry Development  
Instituto Brasileiro de Desenvolvimento Florestal

**INCRA**  
National Institute for Colonization and Agrarian Reform  
Instituto Nacional de Colonização e Reforma Agrária

**INDIA**  
Institute of Defense of the Amazonian Identity  
Instituto de Defesa da Identidade Amazônica

**IPHAE**  
Institute of Pre-History, Agriculture and Ecology  
Instituto de Pré-História, Agricultura e Ecologia

**ITERON**  
Rondônia State Land Institute  
Instituto de Terras de Rondônia

**KANINDÉ**  
Kanindé Association of Ethnic and Environmental Defense  
Associação de Defesa Étnica-Ambiental Kanindé

**METAIRELÁ**  
Indigenous Organization of the Suruí People  
Organização Indígena do Povo Suruí

**NGO**  
Non-Governmental Organization
OSR
Organization of Rubber Tappers of Rondônia
Organização de Seringueiros de Rondônia

PACA
Environmental Protection of Cacoal
Proteção Ambiental Cacoalense

PAMARÉ
Indigenous Organization of the Cinta-Larga People
Organização Indígena do Povo Cinta-Larga

PIN
National Integration Program
Programa de Integração Nacional

PLANAFLORO
Rondônia Natural Resources Management Project
Plano Agro-Pecuário e Florestal de Rondônia

POA
Annual Operative Plan
Plano Operativo Anual

POLAMAZONIA
Amazon Agricultural and Mineral Poles Program
Programa de Pólos Agro-pecuários e Agro-minerais da Amazônia

POLONOROESTE
Northwest Rural Development Program
Programa Integrado de Desenvolvimento do Noroeste do Brasil

SEAGRI
Rondônia State Secretariat of Agriculture and Supply
Secretaria de Estado da Agricultura e Abastecimento

SEDAM
Rondônia State Secretariat of Environmental Development
Secretaria de Estado de Desenvolvimento Ambiental

SUDAM
Superintendency for the Development of the Amazon
Superintendência do Desenvolvimento da Amazônia

SUDHEVEA
Superintendency for Rubber Development
Superintendência do Desenvolvimento da Borracha

STR
Rural Workers Labor Union
Sindicato de Trabalhadores Rurais

WWF
World Wildlife Fund
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