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CONFLICT AS EVIDENCE OF CHANGE

Trying to find self-course while navigating complex realities with
no particular destination in mind

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A RELEVANT CLARIFICATION

First of all, readers will see for themselves that this thesis has a particular structure, which is not the conventional thesis structure at all. In doing so, it helps me to represent the process since the research question has arisen until the research question was answered throughout a concrete experience (journey).

Moreover, this thesis is written down in first person because I do not compare, verify or aggregate any data aseptically through a set of indicators. In this thesis, I try to understand some changes that occur in a specific context by the interpretation of particular personal experiences through narratives (following interpretativism paradigm¹).

¹ Interpretivism assumes that 'person (researcher) and reality are inseparable (life-world)'; thereby knowing the world 'constituted through a person's lived experience' (Weber, 2004).

Organizations and individuals are not fully free but restricted by consequences of the action of others. Nevertheless, the opportunities for individual and collective agency are manifold: the doctrines of evidence and results are not only challenged by the academy (...) but also many development practitioners who are finding room for manoeuvre to push back and create the space for alternative framings

(Eyben, 2013; p.27)

ABSTRACT

This thesis tries to understand some social change processes by using conflict as evidence of change. Following an interpretativism approach, this thesis explores some social relations throughout conflict analysis based on people's experiences (narratives), thereby untangling different ongoing types of social change in El Hadab el Wosta, Mokattam (Cairo).

In order to do that, first, it is explained how and why the research question has arisen departing from a concrete experience and a particular worldview. Second, the socio-cultural and the professional context in which this thesis has been developed are described. The professional context is pointed out due to the contrast of two different approaches: the Logframe and the Theory of Change. Given the existence of both approaches in the local NGO work, the way both methods are applied to know the reality is explored too.

Third, the research methodology is explained: an inductive process in which the conflict analysis is applied by using a case of study based on an impact assessment that has the Theory of Change background. After that, the conflict analysis is applied, thereby discussing evidences that are found. On the one hand, it is possible to explore the nature of social changes that are occurring in El Hadaba el Wosta as well as knowing some features in each of them (what, when, where, who, how and why). On the other hand, it is possible to compare how far to go knowing this concret context by the Logframe and by the Theory of Change.

Finally, some conclusions are reached in terms of the likelihood of working with conflict in development aid realm, the diverse ways to approach to unique realities and the role of different development aid actors in development processes. Moreover, some recommendations are suggested in order to contribute to the local NGO learning process.

1. THE BEGINNING OF THE JOURNEY: WEIGHING ANCHOR AND HOISTING THE SAILS

Let me begin telling an incident. On October 29th 2013, there was a workshop related to something called Theory of Change in Alwan wa Awtar (A&A), which is a NGO located in El Hadaba el Wosta (Cairo, Egypt). The aim of the workshop was to refresh the Theory of Change to A&A staff through mini-sketches about personal change stories. Staff members prepared four performances keeping in mind the following questions:

- When did you experience a change in your life?
- What happened?
- Why did it happen?
- How did it happen?
- What did you think in that moment? How did you feel?
- Who was involved in that event/change?

In the first scene, a boy who loved to paint suffered some social pressure due to surrounding people's opinions. Family and friends told him he had to pay more attention in doing important things such as studying or finding a serious job. At last, he found hope in someone who trusted on his talent, and that person offered him a job. In the second scene, a girl wanted to travel abroad, but her parents did not give her their permission. Nevertheless, she kept insisting until one day they said 'yes'; so she could finally make her dream come true. In the third one, a girl started a university degree. She had the sensation that everything surrounding was evolving in a rush: classmates, deadlines, teachers, papers... She felt overwhelmed. One day, she wondered: 'Am I happy?', 'What am I doing here?', 'Is that what I want to do in my life?', 'I feel lost!' After a while, she decided to quit university and move to her grandmother's home. In the fourth sketch, a girl who was harassed faced the indifference of two police officers when she tried to denounce the crime. However, after a hard hiding away period owing to fear, she decided to create a website to denounce this kind of crimes.

After all performances, there was a debate about the sketches. There I was. A 25 years old boy Master Degree student from Valencia who was making an internship there. I listened A&A staff members' opinions. We were discussing about feelings, concerns, changes, crises, thoughts, oneself, others' attitudes and opinions... Then, I wondered: 'What is the common element in these change stories?', 'What do I see in all of them?' Suddenly, a question came to my mind:

Can conflict become an evidence of change?

Since that moment, I felt there was something there. I observed how conflict was in each story somehow: the boy who loved to paint vs. surrounding people's opinions, the girl who wanted to travel abroad vs. her family, the girl who started the university degree vs. herself, the girl who was harassed vs. her own society... Thus, this workshop inspired me to think about Conflict, Evidence and Change. Nevertheless, from where I depart from?

1.1. How do I look at societies to reach the previous question?

In order to reach the previous question, how do I look at societies? When I look around, I think societies are made up of multitudinous, diverse, interwoven and interdependent actors' interactions, who have endless interests, needs and emotions interplaying simultaneously. Furthermore, I think these interactions, interests, needs and emotions wholly evolve in uncertain manners because I cannot predict what these dynamics can trigger; especially when these dynamics are continuously changing making up an almost unapproachable net of ongoing processes. Therefore, I a priori look at societies as something enormous and bewildering that is nearly impossible to tackle. In the end, I realize I look at societies as *messy realities* at first sight (Ramalingam, Jones, Reba and Young, 2008).

Hence, if societies (*messy realities*) are continually made up of unapproachable net of ongoing processes that are roughly impossible to tackle, how can I know what happen? Is there something that makes enough noise to enable me to listen it as well as it did in that workshop? Is there anything flashy to make me observe it as well as it did in that workshop? In addition, concerning changes, how can I identify some change processes? Is there any sign that can externalise some change processes? Hence, I wonder: Can conflict become that externalising element?

All these questions were overwhelming me, so I decided to go step by step. First, why do I say 'change processes'? What do I understand about change processes?

1.2. Why do I say 'change processes'? What do I understand about change processes?

According to a basic definition, I can say that a change is a process itself: 'the act of passing from one state or phase to another' (Collins Concise English Dictionary). Therefore, how does this process/change happen?

In order to answer that question, I can use different approaches. On the one hand, the most fundamental example is the linear process of passing from point A to point B. Under more experimental perspective, which has been prevailing in development realm since mid-20th century and it is instilled in the development aid agencies through methods like the Logframe, causality mainly shapes change processes as a *result chain*: 'various inputs and activities leading logically to outputs, outcomes and impact' (Roduner, Schläppi and Egli, 2008; p.3).

However, is this approach close to how I look at societies? I do not think so because there are tons of interplaying factors and dynamics that can affect and/or being part of change processes. Actually, linear dynamics seldom happen because societies are rarely made up of simple and straightforward processes. Rather, changes happen in different ways involving different elements, thereby entailing breadth, multilevel and multidimensional processes. In other words, 'explanations of phenomena based on linear cause and effect are often not viable in systems that consists of numerous interdependent relationships' (OECD, 1999; Ramalingam, Jones, Reba and Young, 2008; p.14).

Hence, can I find another kind of theories that explain how change happen? Since 1990s, other approaches have gained popularity in development realm such as the Theory of Social Change. This insight goes beyond the linear cause-effect relationship due to the deep complexity of realities. Reeler (2007) identifies three types of change according to how social change has happened over the History:

- *Emergent Change* 'describes the day-to-day unfolding of life, adaptive and uneven process of unconscious and conscious learning from experience and the change that results from that.

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This applies to individuals, families, communities, organizations and societies adjusting shifting realities, of trying to improve and enhance what they know and do, of building on what is there, step-by-step, uncertainly, but still learning and adapting, however well or badly (...) This is likely the most prevalent and enduring form of change existing in any living system' (Reeler, 2007; p.9).

- *Transformative Change* consists of passing through crisis/crises or blockage. 'Crises may be the product of a social beings entering into tense or contradictory relationships with their world, prompted by shifts in external political, economic, cultural or environmental contexts (...) Crisis or stuckness sets the stage for transformative change. Unlike emergent change which is characterized as a learning process, transformative change is more about unlearning, or freeing the social being from those relationships and identities, inner and outer, which underpin the crisis and hold back resolution and further healthy development' (Reeler, 2007; p.11-12).
- Finally, *Projectable Change* is linked to human beings' capacity to imagine future scenarios and plan according to them. In other words, 'as human beings (in or out of the development sector) we pursue projectable approaches to our own development, individually or collectively planning and undertaking projects, from small to large' (Reeler, 2007; p.13).

Whilst *Projectable Change* is the result of intended decisions and there is a willingness to change, what happen when the change is non-linear, unconscious, uncertain and unpredictable (*Emergent* and *Transformative Change*)? Given my previous definition of society (an enormous net of endless and different change processes interacting in a non-linear manner, moved by multitudinous and diverse interests, needs and emotions), how can I identify change processes when *unconsciousness*, *uncertainty*, *crises* and *social relationships* play fundamental roles in the whole *system*? Again, the previous overwhelming questions came to my mind, but reformulated:

- How can I identify some emergent and/or transformative change processes?
- Is there something that makes enough noise to enable me to listen it as well as it did in the workshop? Is there anything flashy to make me observe it as well as it did in the workshop? Is there any sign that can externalize emergent and/or transformative change processes?
- Can conflict become that externalizing element? Can conflict become an evidence of emergent and/or transformative change processes?

1.3. Why does evidence arise? What do I understand about evidence?

According to the above questions, I need to find an element that indicates and informs me that something is happening in order to start to know and understand some emergent and/or transformative changes. That means, I first need to find the externalizing element that allows me to observe some emergent and/or transformative changes.

Facing *messy realities*, I must be aware that 'there is a need to grasp what is really happening beneath the surface. In the confusing detail of enormously complex social processes, we need to turn down the volume of the overwhelming and diverse foreground and background "noise" of social life, to enable us to distinguish the different instruments, to hear the melodies and rhythms, the deeper pulse' (Reeler, 2007; p.2). In other words, notwithstanding I take into account society is made up of *enormously complex social processes*, I need to make my own picture of it in order to understand some social

changes. Through this understanding process, I simplify what is surrounding, but I must accept this limitation inherent to any knowledge².

Thus, looking at society (*messy reality*), it is in this moment when I need evidences that show me some human relations are happening, and I wonder if conflict can be one of them. Nevertheless, apart from conflict, I am aware there are many types of human relations such as goods exchange or communication (verbal/non-verbal), among other ways. However, why conflict and no other type of human relations?

1.4. Why does conflict appear? What do I understand about conflict?

In this thesis, I wonder about how to identify some emergent and/or transformative change processes inherent to human relations that form the society. In doing so, I implicitly ask to myself, how can I identify others' relations?

Reviewing the workshop who made me wonder about conflict, evidence and change, I observe there was a common point in all stories of change: confrontation of different positions among characters. Why did I see it that fast? When I watched those performances about change and I saw the conflict, the first thoughts that came to my mind were tension and violence. Given my mind-set, I assume at first sight 'that "conflict" and "violence" are one and the same. This stems from the belief that conflict and violence are indistinguishable, that violence is the only (and/or best) method of addressing conflicts, and that the only way to deal with confrontation or difference is to "win", "destroy" or "beat" "the other"' (Brand-Jacobsen, 2000; p.16-17).

Hence, I realize confrontation can be a type of human relation that is noisy and flashy enough to make me listen or look at, especially when I am in a context where I just landed from abroad. Thus, conflict is 'a ubiquitous phenomenon in human and social reality, a major driving force' (Galtung, 2000; p.3) that easily externalizes human relations.

However, conflict is not necessary violent or negative per se. It can also be 'an opportunity to reach towards a higher, more constructive, positive goal, working to transcend and overcome contradictions within a system, relationship or culture' (Galtung, 2000; p.16). Rather, in this approach, conflict may become 'the main social transformation leverage as well as a learning opportunity' (Gascón, 2001; p.7).

Even more, Gascón (2001) suggests that conflict is a process itself that is made up of three stages. It stems from different needs (economic, ideological, biological...), which are not opposite or irreconcilable at first sight. However, when these needs from one side face the needs to the other side, then we talk about problems. Finally, crises mean the blast of the conflict, which is stormy and violent generally. In addition, Gascón (2001) affirms that, as long as conflict is inseparable from human relations, it is a phenomenon that is necessary to know to handle instead of avoid it. Thus, he suggests the need to know in any conflict who is involved, what the different stances are and what the underlying needs/interests behind the stances are in order to reach the core of the conflict. Hence, this can be a useful approach to understand the core of some human relations.

² By simplification, I mean that 'human thought is not capable of knowing the "whole"; but it is capable of seeing greater connectedness between the known elements' (Eyben, 2006; p.30).

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Therefore, in short, conflict is a process that expresses some human relations that can show me, at the same time, some emergent and/or transformative changes as long as it externalises those human relations that shape these non-linear, unconscious, unpredictable and uncertain types of change. In other words, conflict can make these types of change visible.

After all, I have a clear view in the beginning of the journey in which I will try to identify and understand ongoing emergent and/or transformative changes through conflict. However, there is more. I previously said that changes happen in different ways involving different elements, thereby entailing breadth, multilevel and multidimensional processes; so apart from the types of change that I will try to understand, having the conflict as evidence can lead me to different dimensions of social change.

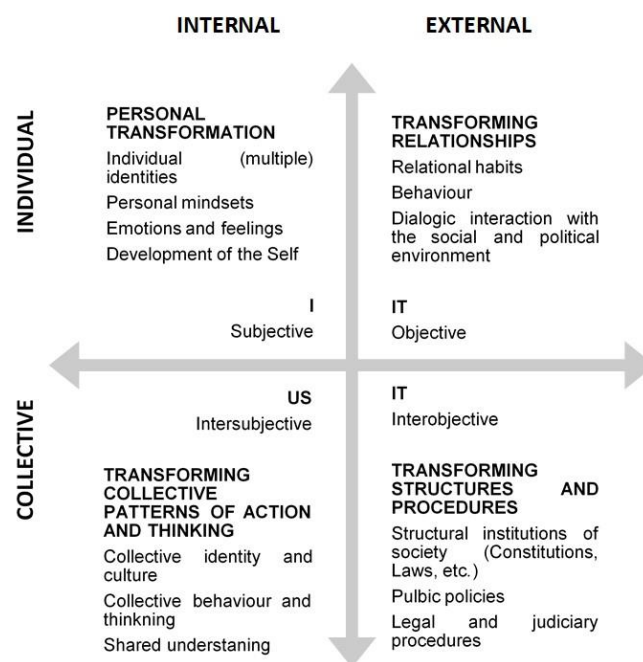


Figure 1: The dimensions of social change

Source: Retolaza (2011), Theory of Change. A thinking and action approach to navigate in the complexity of social change processes

As Retolaza (2011) argues, in individual-internal dimension, the personal transformation is based on the change of some individual identities, personal mind-sets, emotions/feelings and the development of the self. In individual-external dimension, some externalized human relationships can bring about the transformation of relationships: relational habits, behaviour and dialogic interaction with the social and political environment. In addition, at collective-internal dimension, I can try to interpret some transformations of action and thinking patterns through conflict: collective identity and culture, collective behaviour and thinking, and shared understanding. Finally, in collective-external dimension, structures and procedures can be transformed: structural institutions of society, public policies and legal and judiciary procedures.

1.5. Three elements interplaying: Conflict, Evidence and Change

I will try to identify and understand ongoing emergent and/or transformative changes through a case of study (impact assessment) based on the interpretation of some narratives made by people from a

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specific context who has talked about what has changed since A&A started working in the community (I will explain the methodology in following sections).

Why throughout narratives and no other ways? Because I try to understand some non-linear, uncertain, unpredictable and unconscious processes in a specific context by a wider view, so I cannot set some indicators previously that compel the analysis. I try to avoid *de-contextualization* or *homogenization* by performance indicators as it can happen in a *result-based approach* (Eyben, 2013) such as the Logframe. In doing so, I 'forgo closed, bounded worlds for those more open-ended and less conveniently encompassed; that transgress the boundaries of conventional social science; and that seek to create a social science about human life rather than *on* subjects' (Lincoln, Lynham and Guba, 2011). On the one hand, the limitation to use this approach is the impossibility of comparing to other contexts or establishing a clearer and more conventional analysis method. However, on the other hand, it can give me a wider view in which it is possible to understand some needs, interests and emotions as well as knowing who is involved in these changes and how they interplay and evolve. That is to say I can reach an *appropriate imprecision* which means that 'certain level of inaccuracy needs to be accepted in any analysis' (Ramalingam, Jones, Reba and Young, 2008; p.14).

2. THE HALFWAY OF THE JOURNEY: IN THE MIDDLE OF THE OCEAN

Where am I? How is the place where I try to understand some emergent and/or transformative change processes? How do I try to understand what goes on? In this section, I will answer to these questions. I will talk about two kind of contexts: geo-cultural and professional. On the one hand, I talk about geo-cultural context not only because it is not possible to understand emergent and/or transformative changes without a loose idea about people's attitudes and values in this concrete case, but also because of A&A mission and vision.

On the other hand, I include the professional context because I want to show the dualistic way to approach to reality that the organization where I made my internship has, thereby using the Logframe and its own Theory of Change (ToC). By having these two approaches together, one can realize how far it possible to go trying to understand things that are happening through one method and the other one.

2.1. Geo-cultural context

As I mentioned at the beginning of the journey, I made an internship in A&A, which is a NGO placed in El Hadaba El Wosta in Mokattam, Cairo. Egypt is an African country sited on the Northeast of the continent and it has around 82 million population according to the World Bank. Moreover, it is a young population, according to Index Mundi, because around the 50% of population is younger than 24 years old.

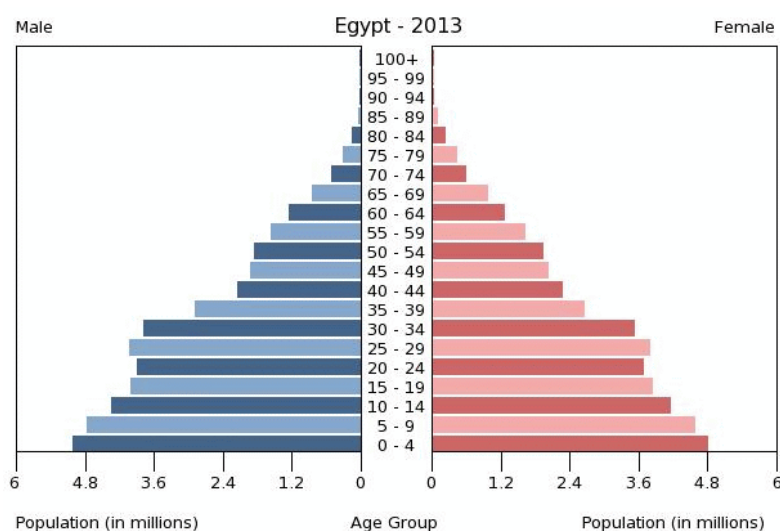


Figure 2: Egypt population pyramid

Source: Index Mundi

In addition, according to the last Human Development Report made by UNDP in 2013, Egypt is a medium human developed country due to its position 112th, between Paraguay (111) and the Republic of Moldova (113). Furthermore, given its young population, it is important to talk about the literacy rate. According to Index Mundi, in 2012, the literacy rate was 72%, and Egypt was in the position 160 over 205 countries, between Laos (159) and Rwanda (161). In 2013, the literacy rate was 74%. However, this rate does not tell what happens inside classrooms. As a youngster from El Hadaba el Wosta says, 'Education in Egypt sucks' Why this kind of opinion? Among other reasons, because violent tools are used in formal education, especially in public schools. For example, it is common to live situations like

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this one: 'normally, the teacher when he hit him [a kid], he needs to be quiet and sit down' Furthermore, a man who worked in A&A at the very beginning says: 'I discovered that some of the kids they have a very high violence in school'

Regarding the economy and in order to complete this short overview, Egypt is the 41st economy of the world according to the International Monetary Fund, between Philippines (40) and Finland (42) over 187 countries.

Moreover, getting closer to A&A area, the capital city of Egypt is Cairo with 18,290,000 population at urban area, and 20,439,541 in the metropolitan area (Wikipedia data). Mokattam, where A&A is located, is far from the Nile riverbed and Downtown, and it constitutes the main high hill of the city where it is possible to see almost the whole city.



Figure 3: Alwan wa Awtar location

Sources: The World Factbook and Google Maps

Economically, Mokattam is a much more humble area than others such as Zamalek (where all Embassies are) or Dokki (trade centre). I could easily see that just walking in streets. In addition, in some spontaneous conversations, some youths told me their fathers were taxi drivers or *bawabs* (caretakers), which are socially consider the lowest-paid jobs.

Mokattam has different income level areas. As a youngster from the NGO block said, 'there are levels of class' People from the NGO area have lower income level than other areas such as Nafura. This fact seems to affect people's mind-sets because some youths, who live in A&A area, identify Nafura to modernity, whereas the NGO area is 'conservative'

Once I have a vague idea about Egypt, Cairo and Mokattam, I need to know about culture because A&A works to change some attitudes and values through education and arts (I will explain it in detail in the next section).

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Given my lack of knowledge about Egyptian culture, I need to check some data that compares the society where I was making my internship and the society where I am from (Spain) in order to place me culturally. I resort to World Values Survey (WVS). WVS 'is a global research that explores people's values and beliefs' (WVS, 2014) among almost 100 countries throughout quantitative data. This is a limitation because reality is much more complex, but I need to do it to have a vague idea about where I was culturally.

WVS establishes two main dimensions axes to compare some attitudes and values of people from all over the world: Traditional values versus Secular-rational values and Survival values versus Self-expression values.

- Traditional values 'emphasize the importance of religion, parent-child ties, deference to authority and traditional family values. People who embrace these values also reject divorce, abortion, euthanasia and suicide' (Inglehart and Welzel, 2005; WVS, 2014).
- Secular-rational values 'have the opposite preferences to the traditional values. These societies place less emphasis on religion, traditional family values and authority. Divorce, abortion, euthanasia and suicide are seen as relatively acceptable' (Inglehart and Welzel, 2005; WVS, 2014).
- Survival values 'place emphasis on economic and physical security. It is linked with a relatively ethnocentric outlook and low levels of trust and tolerance' (Inglehart and Welzel, 2005; WVS, 2014).
- Self-expression values 'give high priority to environmental protection, growing tolerance of foreigners, gays and lesbians and gender equality, and rising demands for participation in decision-making in economic and political life' (Inglehart and Welzel, 2005; WVS, 2014).

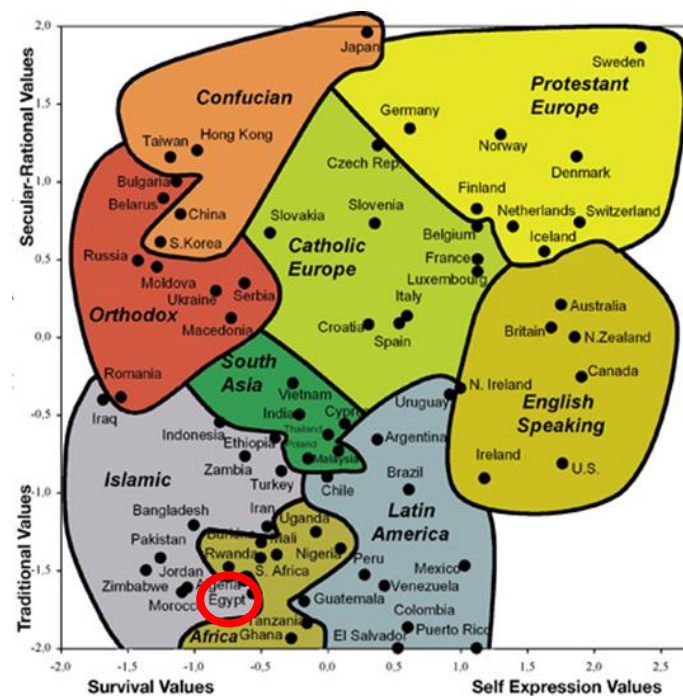


Figure 4: The World Values Survey Cultural Map 2005-2008

Source: World Values Survey

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According to WVS, Egypt is close to Traditional and Survival values. What does it mean? That means, principal social norms are mainly based on conventions as well as Egyptian society considers economic and physical security of first importance comparing other elements such as inner development or self-expression.

How can customs be instilled in the reality? Throughout gender inequality or by social pressure to keep a certain way of life. On the one hand, in quantitative insight, comparing WVS data collected in 2012 in Egypt and 2011 in Spain by same questionnaires, the 11% of Egyptians disagree on the sentence 'when jobs are scarce, men should have more right to a job than women', whereas almost the 80% of Spaniards do. Another example, the 51% of Egyptians are strongly agree on the sentence 'on the whole, men make better business executives than women do', whereas the 3% of Spaniards strongly agree on that.

Concerning traditions, a third quantitative example can be the marital status. The 39% of Egyptian youths up to 29 years old are married, whereas the 9.5% of Spanish youths up to 29 years old are. Finally, a fourth example is that the 52% of Egyptian youths up to 29 years old feel to be very identified to whom following the conventions handed down by one's religion or family is important, whereas the 10% of Spanish youths up to 29 years old feel it.

On the other hand, by qualitative perspective, an experience of a young girl from El Hadaba el Wosta (Mokattam) can show the importance of traditions and the existence of gender inequality: 'Now my father and my mother can't make any permission to travel anywhere without anyone coming with me. It's bad for me because I'm girl, but when I marry, it's good. Not is good. I like... when I marry... but now... It's not my life. My life with my family. Not travel anywhere because it's bad for me because I'm girl, but if I were a boy I can do travel anywhere'

How can the importance of economic and physical security can be shown comparing to inner development and self-expression? Again, using a quantitative approach by WVS data of Egypt in 2012 and Spain in 2011, the 62% of Egyptians are classify as materialists, whereas the 32% of Spaniards are. For example, the 26% of Egyptians say they feel very or quite secure in their neighbourhoods, whilst the 85% of Spaniards do. Moreover, the 51% of Egyptians assure that robberies are very or quite frequent in their neighbourhoods, whereas the 14% of Spaniards do.

Through a qualitative perspective, as a 23 years old girl, who is mother of a baby, says when she talks about her future son's education: 'I would teach him to respond by himself (...) no one should insult him and no one should take away from his dignity by words or by physical beating (...) [she prefers] he is able to depend by himself and defend himself'

After all, given this loose idea about my geo-cultural environment, I explain how my professional context during my internship period in A&A was.

2.2. Professional context

A&A started working in El Hadaba el Wosta in 2006. Since then, A&A wants to promote 'a society of free, responsible and creative individuals where everyone is accepted for who they are and encouraged to engage in continuous self-development' (A&A, 2013). A&A started opening an Arts Centre to provide cultural activities to community children and youths, thereby instilling values such as equality, non-violence, respect, freedom of expression or diversity. For example, in terms of diversity, as a young boy

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explained, A&A exposes children and youths to not only people from other sides of the city, but also from other countries: 'A&A gave us the chance to... to deal with foreigners and... different communities and understand their... community and foreigners and stuff like that'

At the beginning, A&A had some troubles to settle within the community owing to people's rejection. As a lady from the community who has been living in A&A block explains: 'at first, mothers didn't accept at all of the children coming (...) In the beginning, they started tuff'

Nowadays, A&A is accepted in the community and, apart from the Arts Centre, A&A offers more activities based on the same ends throughout a Community Library and a Non-formal Education Centre.

However, instilling these values means to change some attitudes and values features of Egyptian society that I explained. For instance, it is difficult to have a society where someone is accepted for who he/she is if there is a huge social pressure on him/her owing to gender differentiation or due to family traditions.

Therefore, according to Retolaza (2011) the level of social change that A&A promotes is related to patterns; that means, changing *ways of thinking about things*. Using an iceberg metaphorically, what A&A tries to promote is not on the surface, it is down the water. It is necessary to go deeper to untangle what A&A is doing.



Figure 5: Levels of social change

Source: Retolaza (2011), Theory of Change. A thinking and action approach to navigate in the complexity of social change processes

Whilst I can get some information/data about *who, what, where, when* and *how* by some performance indicators (Logframe), wondering about change processes in attitudes and values (*ways of thinking about things*) asks me for going further.

Data/information	Knowledge	Understanding/wisdom
'who', 'what', 'where' and 'when'	'how'	'why'

Figure 6: An information, knowledge and learning continuum

Source: Eyben (2006), Relationships for aid; based on Ackoff (1989)

In order to understand some change processes in *ways of thinking about things*, it is necessary to go deeper to know not only *who*, *what*, *where*, *when* and *how*, but also *why*. As it is shown in the Figure 5, the Theory of Change can help me on that. Fortunately, A&A works throughout the two approaches, so I can know how far it is possible to go by each of them.

Each frame has different evaluation standards to know the change (or changes) that A&A project has promoted (and it is promoting). In other words, each frame has different impact evaluation/assessment approaches. It is relevant to point it out because this thesis is based on a case of study about an impact assessment made by one of these two frames.

2.2.1.A&A and the Logical Framework

In this approach, A&A designed a Logframe Planning Matrix for a period of 3 years (2010-2013). According to A&A proposal A&A wants to promote the development of 'the cultural, intellectual and learning capacity of children and youths in the district of Hadaba el Wosta (El Mokattam) so they become active citizens and lifelong learners'. In order to reach this impact, A&A sets some specific objectives (in longer term than results) such as providing access to cultural and artistic programs for 300 children and youths, developing reading and writing skills of children and youths or scaling up A&A non-formal education program, among other specific objectives. These specific objectives are reached through the implementation of some activities.

How can A&A know that these specific objectives have been (or are being) achieved under the Logframe approach? According to some international organizations that apply the Logframe such as the European Commission, there are two different processes: monitoring and evaluation. While monitoring consists of the 'ongoing analysis of project progress towards achieving planned results with the purpose of improving management decision making' (European Commission, 2004; p. 46), evaluation is the 'assessment of the efficiency, effectiveness, impact, relevance and sustainability of aid policies and actions' (European Commission, 2004; p.46).

Departing from the previous Evaluation definition, A&A creates some indicators for specific objectives to 'determine the relevance and fulfilment of objectives, developmental efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability' (European Commission, 2004; p.46). In the same way, according to the Development Cooperation Directorate (DAC), that means setting some indicators to 'ascertain results (output, outcome, impact) and assess the effectiveness, efficiency, relevance and sustainability of a specific development intervention' (DAC, 2010; p.8).

Therefore, A&A designs indicators that respond to some concrete criteria (relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability) due to its application for an international organization (DROSOS) that works with the Logframe. According to European Commission (2004):

- Relevance means the suitability of the project to solve the problems it wants to

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- Efficiency is the achievement of the objective by reasonable costs
- Effectiveness means the project influence to achieve the main objectives it wants to reach
- Impact refers to projects effect within its environment
- Sustainability means the likelihood of keeping the benefits of the project beyond the development aid agency financial aid

Hence, considering these criteria, A&A sets some performance indicators as follows due to this *result-based approach* (Eyben, 2013):

Specific Objectives	Indicators
To provide access to cultural and artistic programs for 300 male and female children and youth aged 7-20 years from Hadaba el Wosta	90% attendance of 100 children and youth every year at visual and performing arts activities and field trips
	Set up of an arts program schedule
	Beneficiary self-evaluations and portfolios
To develop the reading and writing skills as well as the love of reading of 375 male and female children and youth aged 7-20 years from Hadaba el Wosta	Observed improved literacy skills amongst target beneficiaries
	Progressively better attendance rates
	Increase of children frequenting the library
To scale up A&A's non-formal education program through arts for 210 girls and boys aged 7-20 years in Hadaba el Wosta	Expansion of space available for educational activities
	Development of a non-formal education curriculum and activities database
	Set up of a non-formal education program schedule
	Observed improved beneficiary attitude to learning (based on criteria)
To provide over three years, six intensive summer arts and non-formal education programs for a combination of 120 new and current A&A beneficiaries aged 7-20 years from Hadaba el Wosta with 40 beneficiaries every year	70% participation rate during the summer program and 90% absorption rate into regular arts and non-formal education activities upon completion
To build the capacity of the implementing organization, Alwan wa Awtar	Development of A&A Tool Kit Manual and DVD
	Development of student profiling system
	90% staff, animator and volunteer training attendance and 80% satisfaction with trainings
	Observed improved financial and administrative processes

Chart 1: Specific Objectives and Evaluation Indicators

Source: A&A (2009), Learning through the Arts Project Proposal

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Regarding this chart, one can clearly see the specific objectives that A&A wants to reach by project activities and how A&A will measure them. This approach can underpin some information that is easier to handle because it is possible to aggregate, compare and/or verify. However, these indicators do not tell anything about the context in which A&A works and what effects the project can have in the context in longer term. Hence, A&A is aware about the limitations of working through this approach. Indeed, A&A makes explicit that the donor sets the need of working with this frame. As we can read, 'the following thoughts on desired results are present as request by the client. However, it is worth nothing that the team of consultants is skeptical of the linearity of the Logframe as a method and its focus on output and service delivery versus impact' (A&A, 2009).

Therefore, A&A realized that working through another method was necessary. Indeed, in *Seeds of Change* (A&A, 2013), A&A used another method called Most Significant Change³ in order to assess its impact at individual level through personal stories of change of some youths within the community. However, what about the context? What about the community? Thus, a wider and more flexible method, which avoids Logframe linearity as well as gives a more social approach, was developed by A&A: Theory of Change.

2.2.2.A&A and the Theory of Change

As it was explained before, A&A works to promote 'a society of free, responsible and creative individuals where everyone is accepted for who they are and encouraged to engage in continuous self-development' (A&A, 2013). In order to make A&A desired social change happen, this figure represents the pathway to change, thereby showing the necessary conditions that need to occur.

³ The Most Significant Change method is a qualitative technique. It 'involves the collection of significant change stories emanating from the field level, and the systematic selection of the most significant of these stories by panels designated stakeholders or staff (...) Once changes have been captured, various people sit together, read the stories aloud and have regular and often in-depth discussions about the value of these reported changes. When the technique is implemented successfully, whole teams of people begin to focus their attention on program impact' (Davies and Dart, 2005; p.8).

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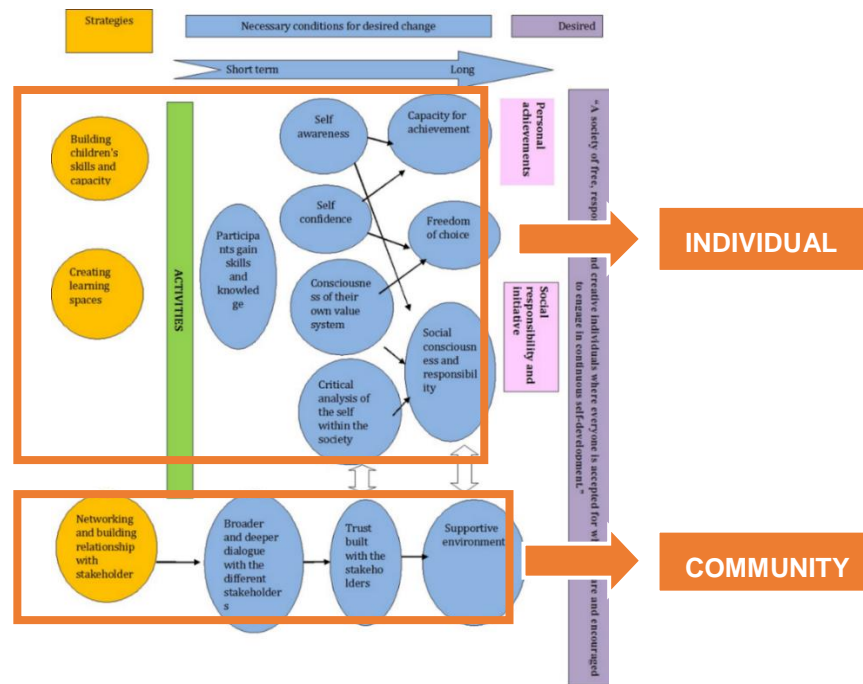


Figure 7: A&A Theory of Change

Source: Adapted from Alwan wa Awtar's Theory of Change

The more we go to the right, the longer term it takes as well as the less control A&A has on the change process. In addition, it is possible to differentiate two spheres: individual and community. At individual level, A&A promotes attitudes and values such as self-awareness, self-confidence or critical thinking by activities in which children and youths participate. A&A considers that 'individuals are the drivers for social change, and that individual will lead to structural change or a change in social norms' (A&A, 2013). Concerning the community sphere, 'A&A expects that conducting a variety of activities with the community such as parents meetings, dialogues on common issues, or joint activities with neighbouring institutions will create broader and deeper dialogue with the stakeholders about the issues affecting the community and the children' (A&A, 2013). In longer term, this can lead to an 'inclusive and free society which supports individual continuous development and learning' (A&A, 2013).

Hence, through the pathway to change explanation, it is possible to know the underlying assumptions in which the A&A Theory of Change is based on (Chart 2). Why are underlying assumptions important? Because 'we project our possible future based on the mindsets we have at present day, so there are many aspects of the future impossible to grasp or visualize with the learning tools we currently have' (Retolaza, 2011; p.2). That means, it is important to make the underlying assumptions explicit because through learning processes, it possible to re-think and re-adapt these assumption (so does Theory of Change) depending on new context conditions.

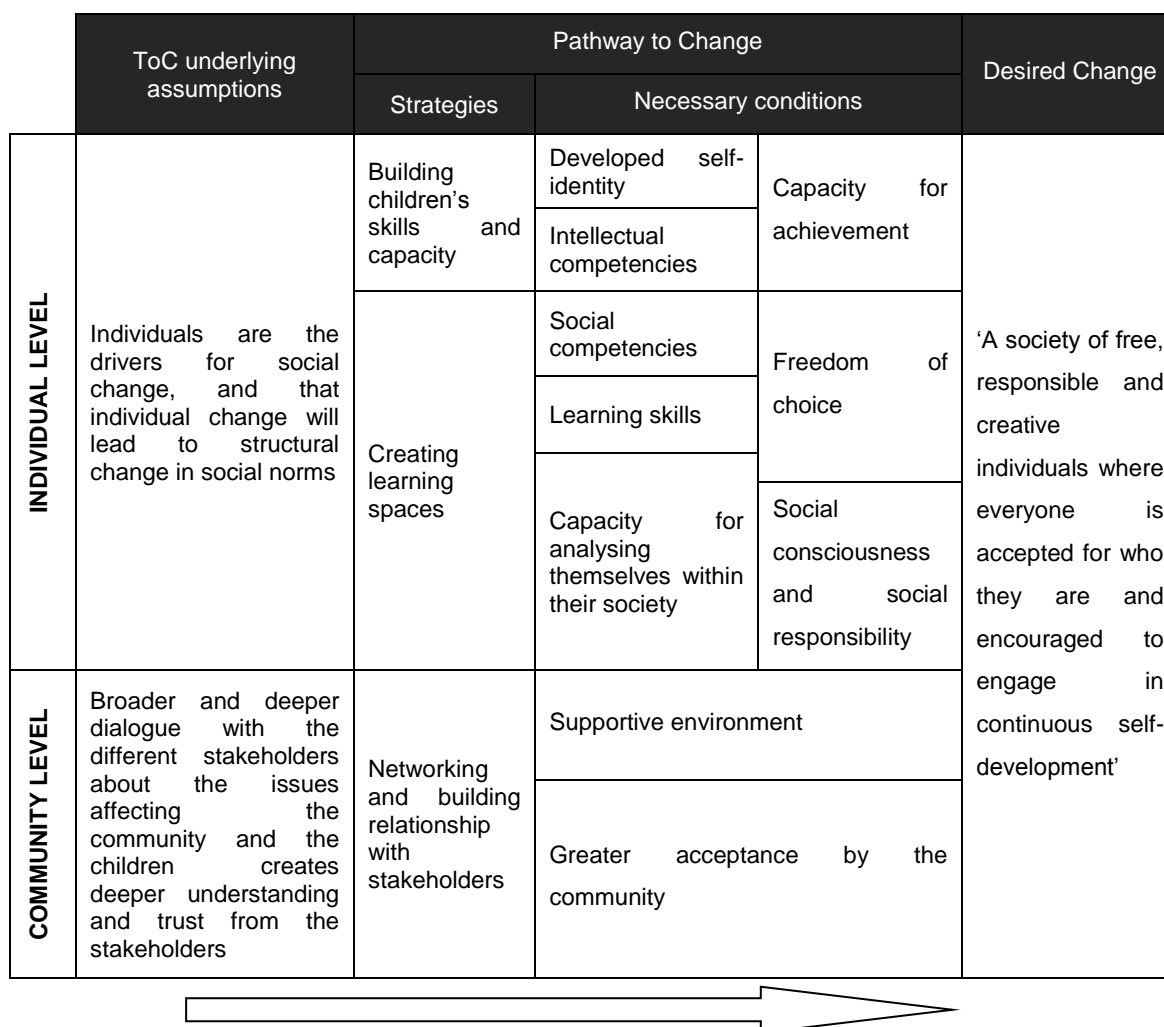


Chart 2: Underlying assumptions and the pathway to change

Source: Self-designed

Unlike the Logframe and its set of indicators, how does A&A know if these necessary conditions are happening or not under ToC approach? That was my main task during my internship there, and this research stems from that impact assessment process. In the next section, I explain how I face this specific context explaining the research methodology.

2.3. How do I face this complex reality to try to understand some emergent and/or transformative changes within it?

This research is based on an inductive process from an impact assessment, and the interpretation of collected data of that process through a conflict look. However, I go step by step in order to understand the methodology.

From where do I depart in order to assess A&A impacts under ToC approach? Whilst Monitoring has a similar meaning in ToC and Logframe, Evaluation is defined in a different way. Here, unlike Logframe criteria, the Evaluation mainly answers some questions to know if the objectives that were set before have been reached or not. In addition, Impact Assessment process is added, and it is defined as 'the systematic analysis of lasting or significant change –positive or negative, intended or not– in people's lives brought about by an action or a series of actions' (O'Flynn, 2010).

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Monitoring	Evaluation	Impact Assessment
Measures ongoing	Measures performance against objectives	Assesses change in peoples' lives: positive or negative, intended or not
Main work during implementation	Main work in middle or at end of project/programme cycle	Can be included at all stages and/or can be used specifically after the end of programme/project
Focus interventions	Focus on interventions	Focus on affected populations
Focus on outputs	Focus on outcomes	Focus on impacts
'What is being done?'	'What has happened? Did we achieve what we set out to achieve?'	'What has changed? For whom? How significant is it for them?'

Chart 3: Monitoring, Evaluation and Impact Assessment definitions

Source: El Abd, I.; Guijarro, D. and Abed, J. H., (2012). AWAN WA AWTAR. Impact Assessment & Organizational Learning: Overview of the strategic review intervention; O'Flynn, (2010). Impact Assessment: Understanding and assessing our contributions of change.

- Monitoring focuses on activities A&A performs. For example, we talk about Monitoring when we try to know how many kids attended a specific activity, the materials that were used, the space where the activity took place or the activity timing.
- In terms of Evaluation, A&A has developed 14 educational objectives⁴ considering its ToC. I will not discuss the objectives here because I just want to understand the overall Monitoring, Evaluation and Impact Assessment process. Nevertheless, it is important to highlight that the evaluation process is based on knowing if we achieved or not those educational objectives.
- Impact Assessment focuses on knowing what kind of changes people have experienced after time. Unlike evaluation, impact assessment does not set any objective to achieve. It has a wider view, so I can even know some impacts that occur out of A&A Theory of Change. In the long term, it is possible to differentiate between the intended impacts and unintended impacts because the intended impacts become the necessary conditions in order to make the desired change happen.

After defining Monitoring, Evaluation and Impact Assessment in these terms, this is the way I transfer these processes to A&A Theory of Change. I also include an element that is not explicit in the Logframe: unpredictability.

⁴. If you need information in detail, you can consult the document *Alwan & Awtar General objectives of Educational interventions* (2013).

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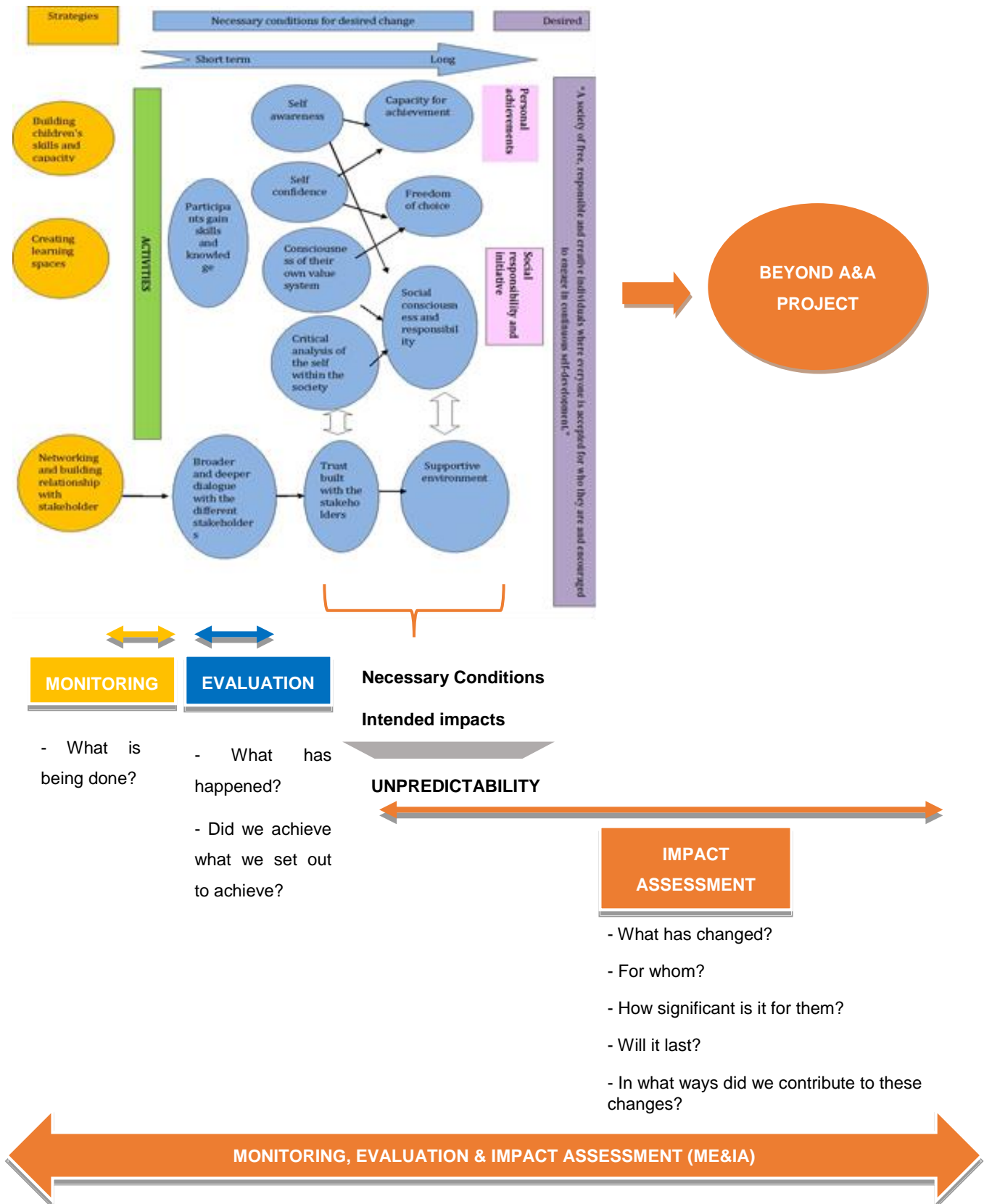


Figure 8: A&A Monitoring, Evaluation and Impact Assessment under its ToC

Source: Self-designed by adapting ME&IA chart to A&A ToC

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Given this departing point, how did I collect the data to assess A&A impact? How did I try to get information about A&A complex context? First, I suggested a three-step process for eight community youths who has been joining A&A activities, at least, since 3 years ago: photography, interviews and a session prepared by them. Three of them were A&A staff members, whereas the other five were not. Their ages were between 14 years old and 24 years old.

I asked them to take pictures of things that have changed since A&A started working in El Hadaba el Wosta. It could be whatever: people, places or actions. Why photography? Photography can be very useful because no impact assessment regarding the community level has been done since A&A started working. Thus, pictures can be very illustrative showing or representing what has change. Moreover, because I wanted to get current participant/workers (youths) involved, this manner to assess the impact was more enjoyable than other tools. They used mobile phones and digital cameras and they took 10 pictures maximum for some days. There were three rules:

- They should have respected the limit of pictures they could take. In this case, 10 pictures.
- They could not tell to the others what they had on their pictures because of the possibility of finding some commonalities.
- After giving pictures, they could not tell to the others what they talked about during the interviews.

The next step after taking the pictures was the interviews. They made some non-structured interviews in which they explained what is on pictures trying to know about:

- Who/What appears on the picture (who/what has change)?
- How was the change (how was the process of change)?
- Why change happened (why changed)?
- What was the influence of A&A in that change if any (to what extend and in which way A&A is promoting the desired change)?

At the end of interviews, if participants took more than four pictures, they were asked to choose four of them in order to know the significance of the changes. The duration of the collecting data process took two months approximately: December 25th, 2013 to February 18th, 2014.

In addition, at the end of all interviews, interviewees were asked if they wanted to share their experiences with the rest of participants in order to prepare a session for A&A staff. They agreed on that and, at the beginning of March 2014, I had a meeting with them in which I gave them the pictures they took. The point was having the pictures as the materials to prepare the session for A&A staff. In order to prepare the session, they should have kept in mind these questions:

- What has changed since A&A started working here?
- What do we want to express/say?
- How?
- Why do we want to express/say that?
- For what?

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- Challenges?

Finally, the session for A&A staff took place on March 25th, 2014. However, more people attended the session such as donors or community women and men. I attended the session as observer.

Second, I wanted to include former participants and people who has been involved in A&A since 2006 to have a wider view on A&A impacts. I assumed some difficulties to ask to this group, who are not as attached as participants to A&A, to take some pictures. Hence, I prepared some structured and semi-structured interviews for them. This collecting data process took from December 12th, 2013 to February 16th, 2014.

During the collecting data process, there were some setbacks and limitations. For example, the period when I collected the data. Most of participants, who were asked to take pictures, said that they could not take pictures of what they really wanted sometimes. In January, A&A was close for some weeks to evaluate the last activities period and to prepare the next one. Hence, during that period, some participants could not take pictures of children/youths doing activities in A&A. Moreover, it was exams period so some participants were more focus on school issues than on taking pictures.

Another limitation was the youths' interpretations of the question I asked them to take the pictures. They answered different questions through pictures, but the interviews re-directed the centre of attention on the question I wanted them to answer. In addition, the number of people involved in the process was a limitation. Why eight people instead of more? Without any doubt, the more people are involved in assessing impact, the richer and more complete information I can get. However, I had to be aware about the amount of information I could get and the analysis that I was able to do.

A fourth limitation was the tool they used to take pictures: cameras. Most of them, they used mobile phone cameras. However, not all of them had phones with cameras, so A&A lent a camera while it was opened. Thus, if they wanted to take pictures out of A&A schedule, they could not do it.

Moreover, the language was a very important barrier. I did not know Arabic, so there was an A&A staff member assisting me in translation in most of the interviews. That means I could not get the first hand meaning of what interviewees said, I could not get the meaning of language use and there was not a direct communication between interviewees and me.

The last limitation I can highlight was the discussion about controversial issues. Sometimes, I could not go deeper owing to some sensitive topics. For example, in an interview with a father of two kids (who have being attending A&A activities for two years), I asked him about an A&A activity that is related to mothers: mothers' gatherings. Surprisingly for me, I could not get any answer because he did not even know that his wife was attending these gatherings.

Third, after collecting all the data, I analysed data through two categories: intended impacts and unintended impacts. Why intended impacts and unintended impacts? Because intended impacts are those ones A&A tries to promote, and they can somehow lead to A&A desired change (necessary conditions); whereas unintended impacts are the ones A&A is not meant to promote, but A&A has promoted (or it is promoting) due to its work within the community.

Under these two categories, I identified elements that have changed and elements that are changing. Why does this difference exist? I identified some ongoing changes I cannot say they have been settled completely. In some of them, the process is uncompleted owing to a conflict between *movers* and

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blockers. Movers ‘are those social organizations, public entities, private corporations, key individuals, political parties, donor agencies, etc. committed to the desired change’ (Retolaza, 2011; p.23). Blockers ‘are those who are against the process, due to their own interests being negatively affected (...) Similarly, they may be blocking the process because of a question of inertia and historical lack of trust or rivalry with the movers or the subject of change’ (Retolaza, 2011; p.23). Hence, I created a chart as follows:

	WHAT...	
	HAS CHANGED?	IS CHANGING?
Intended impacts		
Unintended impacts		

Chart 4: Impact assessment analysis

Source: Self-designed

Throughout this analysis, I tried to assess A&A impacts within the community since it started working in 2006.

After assessing A&A impacts, how do I try to understand some emergent and/or transformative changes in that context? Inspiring by previously explained Gascón’s (2001) approach about conflict, I apply a conflict analysis on the ongoing changes I identified in the A&A impact assessment due to the existence of a conflict. I interpret what goes on through the conflict analysis departing from the experiences collected during the impact assessment.

What is the conflict?	
What is the phase of conflict? Needs? Problems? Crises?	
What are the parties of the conflict? Who is involved?	
How does the conflict happen?	
How has been the current point/moment reached? How have the process evolved?	
What is the matter? What is the contradiction?	

Chart 5: Conflict analysis

Source: Self-designed inspired by Gascón’s (2001) approach

Through this analysis, I try to understand some ongoing emergent and/or transformative changes that are happening right now in El Hadaba el Wosta (Mokattam, Cairo).

3. SIGHTING LAND

Departing from the analysis I explained above, it is time to start with the insights I could reach after the conflict analysis. As I explained before, I use the impact assessment analysis made from the interviews and the observation in the session prepared by youths.

3.1. Conflict: Relations between young girls and boys

What is the phase of the conflict? Needs? Problems? Crisis?	There is a problem in the community due to relations between young boys and girls.
What are the parties of the conflict? Who is involved?	<p>On one side, some community youths who have regularly attended A&A activities (<i>movers</i>). On the other side, other youths who have not attended A&A activities, and the majority of adults (<i>blockers</i>).</p> <p>The stances in this conflict are clear. For some community youths there is not any problem on having friendship relations between boys and girls. On the contrary, other youths and the majority of adults consider friendship relations between boys and girls bad.</p> <p>As a young girl who has attended A&A activities for a long time points out, if you are a girl 'it's bad to talk with boys, it's bad to laugh with boys or kidding with me... because... these things... Not only my father or my mother only. All people here'. Moreover, a young boy affirms 'they [adults] have never understood that there could be a relation other than there's a must be something between those two, and the reputation would be bad and so on...'</p> <p>In fact, youths who have attended A&A for a long time talk about 'they' referring to adults. That means youths consider adults the other side because they do not understand them. For example, as a young boy argues 'I don't think her parents would understand as much as they came here [to A&A] and looked at us, and how we treat each other, and how we... joke together and stuff like that; but there's still a red line. She is a girl and we can't, for example, touch her sometimes [as a friendship sign]'. On the side, adults consider reputation very important. For instance, a father, who attended the session prepared by youths, said that although they (youths) treat each other politely, that is something they (parents) would not want to see on their sons/daughters.</p>
How does the conflict happen?	The conflict appears when some community youths, especially the ones who have been attending A&A activities for long time, have a behaviour that is censored by the rest of the community. For example, as a young girl explained, 'until now, if they [adults] saw a boy with a girl after 7pm [A&A closes at 7pm], they think this boy and girl is not... It's something bad (...) [Someone] can make angry with the boy and girl: "you should...

	<p>girl go to your home and boy go anywhere else!”</p> <p>In addition, there is a special pressure to young girls due to the possibility of risking their reputation. As it has been seen, it is bad for girls being seen with boys who are not their couples or relatives.</p> <p>However, notwithstanding rumours and gossips, some community girls, especially the ones who have attended A&A activities for long time, keep their attitude and behaviour. For instance, a young girl argues: ‘I think now I make my life easier than before (...) I’m sure it’s not a wrong thing... and... people all the time speak... if you... do good things or bad things. They will speak’. Another example is a young girl who thinks she does not want to pay attention to gossips because of hanging out with boys: ‘I don’t put this in my head... I don’t think of it because I know who my friends are. I know what A&A is, so I don’t even listen to this. I’m not interested to bother myself’.</p>
<p>How has been the current point/moment reached? How have the process evolved?</p>	<p>Youths, who have joint A&A activities, have shared spaces of interaction among them since they were children. Hence, they got used to deal with others regardless of the fact of being boys or girls.</p> <p>It is relevant because, for example, boys and girls are separated in formal education. That means they do not usually share common spaces in schools. Nevertheless, they have done it for a long time in A&A. Therefore, these youths see these friendship relations in a different way than the rest of the community afterwards.</p>
<p>What is the matter? What is the contradiction?</p>	<p>The way of thinking of some youths in terms of the sense of freedom. Whilst in previous generations this topic was not a matter of freedom; nowadays, some community youths consider important to deal with whomever they want freely regardless of the gender.</p> <p>As a young girl affirms, there are ‘hard principles that I was... think about it before (...) “didn’t speak with boys”, “didn’t make any friendship with them”... Something like that. It was making... my life complex... and hard without any reason, you know’. In doing so, they question the social norms.</p>

Chart 6: Relations between young girls and boys conflict analysis

Source: Self-elaborated

3.2. Conflict: Relations between some youths and their families

<p>What is the phase of the conflict? Needs? Problems? Crisis?</p>	<p>It is not possible to understand this conflict without the previous one. There is a problem when some youths deal with their families due to the relations between young boys and girls (latent conflict). Here, some youths want to deal with whomever they want to regardless of the gender. However, families are worried about that because reputation is very</p>
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	important and they must take care of their sons/daughters.
What are the parties of the conflict? Who is involved?	Some community youths, who deal with boys and girls indistinctly (<i>movers</i>), and their relatives (<i>blockers</i>), who consider that is not acceptable. As a young girl points out, 'I remember the first day I worked in A&A and I said "[he] called me"... My mother... not shocked (...) It wasn't acceptable thing... but, you know'
How does the conflict happen?	When some youths face some families' pressure owing to the preservation of the reputation. Again, a young girl explains: 'I want them [boys who are her friends] to call me more to try to make my mother use to it, to make it easy thing (...) She [her old sister], all the time, came to my house and found me... For example, my mother says "[she] went to [a place] with some boys" (...) And [her old sister] sits all the time "you are not a good girl and you have..."'
How has been the current point/moment reached? How have the process evolved?	As in the previous conflict, due to boys and girls' sharing spaces in A&A, some youths got used to deal with others regardless of the gender. However, families make pressure on youths because they want to keep the good reputation, whereas youths consider that having friendship relations with the opposite gender does not entail anything negative for family reputation.
What is the matter? What is the contradiction?	<p>The youths' autonomy sphere. The more they get older, the more they claim for a more autonomous sphere by facing relatives' authority on girls dealing with boys or vice versa. In doing so, youths challenge their family norms.</p> <p>Indeed, a young community girl argues: 'the things that [were] acceptable for them [adults] before... works before with them, with the last people. It can't now (...) Can work before with my mother and with her mother's mother... But now, it can't work with us because we... we maybe see more things because we see the world with other eyes, with another view'.</p>

Chart 7: Relations between some youths and their families conflict analysis

Source: Self-elaborated

3.3. Conflict: Relations among community youths

What is the phase of the conflict? Needs? Problems? Crisis?	In this conflict, we can differentiate different some community youths' ways of thinking about A&A.
What are the parties of the conflict? Who is involved?	Mainly, there is an issue in how some youths who work in A&A (<i>movers</i>) are perceived by the ones who do not work in A&A (<i>blockers</i>).
How does the conflict	Part of A&A staff members are community youths who have grown joining A&A activities. However, despite some youths have attended A&A

happen?	activities for a long time too, they are not working in A&A. This differentiation entails the creation of distinct attitudes towards A&A of community youths because they have different perceptions.
How has been the current point/moment reached? How have the process evolved?	<p>On the one hand, some youths perceive A&A as a NGO that plays an important role within the community as well as they develop some social responsibility. For instance, as a youngster who works in A&A says, 'I apply to a big project in my university (...) You learn in it how to make a project to yourself, for example. You'll take a problem in your society and you will try with your team to find a solution'. Another example is a young girl who affirms: 'now, I worked in A&A some months (...) When I was a child, A&A supported me. Because it supported me, now I support children (...) These children will be older, when support other children (...) I saw when I was child... someone, another, was beside me. Now, I'm beside the children, because A&A supported me, now I support the children. It's real thing. I support any child if she or he wants anything from me, I can help them'. Therefore, these youngsters consider they play an important social role within the community, so they have a relevant responsibility.</p> <p>On the other hand, this social awareness is understood in another way by other youths who do not work in A&A. It is understood as seeing 'themselves with that form of pride... higher than everyone' of them. As another youngster explains: 'I feel that something is broken between me and the NGO (...) The main reason is the youths... They see themselves... They have too much pride and treat everyone else like they are better than us'. They get this pride meaning because they have another idea about A&A social role. They see A&A as place where kids can go to have fun when they are out of school instead of being in streets: 'the NGO helps people learn through enjoying their time as well, and having fun'. These youths do not go beyond and see the A&A social role by promoting gender equality or the self-expression, for instance.</p>
What is the matter? What is the contradiction?	It is raising a sort of social awareness by some community youths, whereas not by others.

Chart 8: Relations among community youths conflict analysis

Source: Self-elaborated

3.4. What do these conflicts tell me? What about social change?

First, concerning types of changes, some youths' sense of freedom, the youths' autonomy and the raising of some social awareness are some ongoing processes that 'step-by-step, uncertainly, but still learning and adapting, however well or badly' (Reeler, 2007) are happening. That means I can a priori say they represent emergent changes for *movers* (some community youths who have been involved in A&A since long time ago) because I cannot interpret any relevant crisis. Indeed, having these changes

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is the result of a long-term process that began when A&A started working in that community. For example, young boys and girls have been sharing common spaces over years. In addition, these youngsters (*movers*), have been exposed over years to different worldviews by conversations about endless amount of topics with not only people from other sides of the city with different backgrounds, but also with people from other countries such as USA, Netherlands, France or Spain. In fact, I even had discussions about many topics in which I shared different opinions with community youths. However, these changes can entail crisis or unlearning processes for *blockers* (parents/adults and other community youths) because they have not been exposed to the same; thereby supposing transformative changes for them.

Nevertheless, looking at these change processes with perspective in the future, these changes may be considered in a different way. For example, they can be interpreted as emergent changes as a whole. In the end, it will depend on the way these conflicts are handled within the community, which is something unpredictable because they are still ongoing.

Second, referring to the levels of change, this analysis allowed me to interpret different *ways of thinking about things* (Retolaza, 2011), thereby reaching the second order of change. Looking at these particular human relations from outside, I could reach different worldviews between *movers* and *blockers* in these change processes owing to their roles in different conflicts. For instance, different thoughts about relations between young boys and girls within the community represent confronted *patterns* that allowed me to see more stuck people in traditions on the one side, whereas on the other side there are some youths who want to brake these conventions moved by a different way to see these relations.

Moreover, the same happens with the other two change processes. In the one related to youths' autonomy sphere, families set a 'red line' in the way boys and girls have relations, whereas some youths challenge these norms because they consider the relation between peers a part of their autonomy sphere. In the one related to relations among youths, the matter is the way some youths think about what a NGO is and what it does.

Third, concerning dimensions of change, according to Retolaza (2011), I could reach the *individual-external* and the *collective-internal* dimensions. On the one hand, some youths are transforming relationships within the community, thereby questioning social norms. For example, the way some youths act (*movers*) by having friendship relations regardless of the gender means a *dialogic interaction with the social environment* (Retolaza, 2011) in which they face the community and their own families (*blockers*). On the other hand, if I think these ways of acting are common in a group (some community youths), there is a *collective behaviour and thinking* and a *shared understanding* about conflict issues. For instance, youths who do not care about gender to have a friendship relations consider they do not do anything against their principles. They think they respect their families because they do not do anything immoral by just having some friends. These youths share the same point of view on this topic as long as they keep these friendship relations and they are even able to test their social conventions.

Fourth, these evidences about that particular context have not been obtained through settled indicators; rather, they have been achieved by the exploration of reality throughout a conflict look. Thus, what could I reach through the Theory of Chage approach comparing to the Logframe? Departing from the Theory of Change approach I could assess the impact through a wider look. In doing so, I have a vast realm where I can navigate and explore in order to understand some complex, non-linear, uncertain, uneven and unpredictable processes in that specific context, assuming that this understanding process

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entails a simplification of the reality. However, I think I could not reach the same evidences through the other method that A&A works with: the Logframe. If I review the list of performance indicators that A&A has in its Logframe matrix, I cannot observe any about the context. All of them are related to the performance of the project, whilst the context seems to be avoided. It is relevant to point out this Logframe limitation. Nevertheless, it was difficult for me to focus on the project performance in detail through A&A Theory of Change. Therefore, in terms of evaluation, each approach can lead me to different landscapes. Throughout the Logframe, I can see the project; whereas by the Theory of Change, I can see the context.

In addition, who/what highlights the relevant points of analysis in the A&A Logframe matrix and in the Impact Assessment inspired by A&A Theory of Change? In A&A Logframe matrix, the previously settled indicators set the relevant points of analysis. These indicators respond to some external criteria, thereby focusing the view in some concrete elements such as children and youths' attendance to A&A activities or the reading level of children and youths, among other elements. Nonetheless, in the impact assessment I made having the Theory Change background, people pointed me out some relevant concerns by their own personal experiences: relations between young boys and girls, relations between some youngsters and their families, etc. Hence, unlike focusing on some elements inspired by the criteria of an external actor (development aid agency), I looked at what people from the community told me I should have to look at. This is especially relevant because I am someone who comes from outside that community and my ignorance is huge.

In sum, in this wide and open realm, some community youths' sense of freedom emergent and/or transformative change (depending on *movers* or *blockers*) was reached by the interpretation of relations between some young boys and girls conflict analysis. In the same way, the youths' autonomy emergent and/or transformative change (depending on *movers* or *blockers*) was got by the interpretation of some youths and families conflict analysis. Moreover, the relations among youths conflict analysis read the raising of some social awareness emergent and/or transformative change (depending on *movers* or *blockers*). All of them represent changes in some social *patterns*, and they respond to two different dimensions of social change: *individual-external* and *collective-internal*. Nevertheless, because they are ongoing change processes, it is not possible to know what they will lead to as long as they are uneven, uncertain, unconscious and unpredictable processes.

4. ARRIVING IN PORT

After the entire journey, I can get some conclusions. First, I recall the research question: Can conflict become an evidence of change? In this concrete context, conflict can inform me that some emergent and/or transformative changes are happening, thereby allowing me to interpret and understand what goes on through a conflict analysis. In short, conflict allows me to understand these emergent and/or transformative changes, assuming this is just one way to look at the context.

Hence, understanding conflicts as processes attached to human relations can inform about social change processes. However, given the current prevailing insights about conflicts and the role of the NGOs in societies, could conflict be accepted as evidence of change? Can conflict be understood as an element to deal with?

Second, regarding change processes, I interpreted some current emergent and/or transformative social changes in El Hadaba el Wosta that affect the *ways of thinking about things* (second order of change), thereby entailing the *individual-external* and the *collective-internal* dimensions. However, given the unpredictable, uneven and complex essence of society, these changes can change their nature if they are seen with perspective in the future or if they are interpreted by others, so that means they are not fixed and absolute truths (*appropriate imprecision*).

Third, following Eyben's (2006) approach to *the nature of knowledge*, what I did in this thesis is not checking some indicators to know *who, what, where, when* and *how*, but to discuss in-depth about human/social relations to understand *what* is changing in a concrete context, *who* is involved, *when, where, how* and *why* by narratives interpretation. In doing so, it requires 'processes of human interaction and socialization [interpretation], rather than technological systems [indicators]' (Eyben, 2006; p.24). In fact, what indicators just do is indicate, as its name shows. Hence, indicators can be limited providing understanding, whereas narratives can be helpful driving to understand.

Fourth, I am also aware about the limitations of this research owing to its demarcation to a context in particular as well as it has been done by my interpretation. For example, what I identified as conflict maybe it is not for others. Thus, it is difficult for a development aid agency to apply framings like this thesis because they have many projects in different contexts that have unique realities; so the development aid agency feels more comfortable and secure using some indicators inspired by their own criteria, and applying them in all contexts to evaluate the performance of projects it funds. Unlike *appropriate imprecision*, the development aid agency way to approach to realities is a clear example of what has been named *optimal ignorance* that consists of 'getting only the information that is really needed and no more' (Ramalingam, Jones, Reba and Young, 2008; p.14) to obtain unbiased and verifiable information.

Nonetheless, it is not necessary to have both concepts, which are motivated by different approaches (the Theory of Change and the Logframe), as opposed. Dealt both well, it is possible to untangle what both approaches can provide as well as making explicit the limitations they have. Therefore, development aid agencies and local initiatives may together wonder about: 'How well informed are you about the reality that you seek to change? How conscious are you of the perceptions of other stakeholders? What are you doing to use and improve the knowledge that you have?' (Powell, 2006; p.3). It is not only important to focus on improving the knowledge about how to approach to realities through some tools such as indicators, but also to spend efforts on constructing trust and honest

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development aid actors' relationships as Eyben (2013) suggests. In doing so, it is possible to jointly explore new framings to improve development aid actors' contribution to development processes.

5. IN PORT. GETTING READY FOR ANOTHER POSSIBLE JOURNEY

This thesis is just a discussion between context-people I met in El Hadaba el Wosta-A&A and me. I hope it can contribute to A&A learning process. In the end, it is a particular reflection of some ongoing change processes of A&A context. Perhaps, it can contribute to inform A&A Theory of Change in order to create some reflection spaces where A&A Theory of Change could be re-thought. For instance, can the conflict about relations between young boys and girls show to A&A that some of the necessary conditions in the pathway to change are happening somehow? Can self-confidence be? Can freedom of choice be? Can the capacity for analysing themselves (youths) within their society be? If it is so, in which terms? Even more, is it necessary to review A&A Theory of Change underlying assumptions? These questions can maybe help A&A learning process.

Perhaps, it can inspire donors and A&A to set out the way they evaluate the project and the way they both can approach to the context together, thereby driving the co-design of another type of indicators or reframing their tools. Anyway, it just depends on how A&A can make use of this thesis.

Finally, regarding some future journeys in this concrete context, this thesis can help to think about a new possible work by following this approach (going deeper in each conflict, wondering about the role of different people in each change process, etc.) or to change the perspective to another. Combinations of what is possible to do afterwards are boundless. As it has been explained, thinking about reality as a whole complex, uncertain, uneven, unpredictable and almost unapproachable means to recognise it is absolutely out of my hands. At least, I just hope this thesis can contribute to something useful.

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