Keeping the hope for tomorrow

Community Development in Aida Refugee Camp

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Abstract

This research sought to see how Alrowwad as an organization in Aida refugee camp worked to better their community through the arts. The specific topic was how the organization faced and worked through the difficulties of the situation in occupied Palestine and how resisting the occupation was part of the organization's Community Development. Though the field of Community Development has amassed a lot of research, there is very little research done on what community Development looks like and how it works in Palestine and communities under occupation. The paper also includes global dimensions of international donation and volunteering, as well as stereotypes and structures of power. The findings are based on semi-structured interviews and theories of critical approach to community development, asset and need-based approach to community development, art and community development and a report on Palestinian Youth´s aspirations and challenges.

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Introduction

This study will discuss how community development is done within a Palestinian refugee camp. What kind of challenges does community development face in such a situation and what are their aims and motivations? The study took place in spring 2021, during the covid pandemic. This project is based on a qualitative method, with data collected through semi-structured interviews.

1.1 Background of the study

In May 2021 there was yet another flare- in the conflict between Israel and Palestine. With attacks in streets and missiles being sent from Hamas in Gaza and Israel, the world watched as humans suffered. The term apartheid has also now been used by Humans Right Watch(2021) to describe the ways in which the Israeli government maintain domination over Palestinians. The report stated that the systemic oppression and inhuman acts that Palestinians experience amount to the international definition of the crime of apartheid.

The conflict has many sides and the conflict itself is not the focus of this thesis. The focus is on the results and implication the conflict has on people living in Aida refugee camp. The need to specify that the focus is Aida in West Bank is great, as the differences between living in Gaza, West Bank or as Israeli Arab is big. Gaza has been under blockade by Israel (and Egypt) since 2008. This blockage of travel, export and import has led to a "humanitarian and health crisis" (Solberg, 2014). Israeli Arabs live in Israel and are defined as people living in Palestine prior to the creation of Israel but remained in the area Israel took after the Al-Nakba. Al-Nakba is the creation of Israel, and the following eviction and fleeing of Palestinians will be explained more in the Historical Background (2.1). The West Bank is under Israeli military occupation. In addition to Palestinians in Palestinian occupied areas and Israel, there are also many Palestinians who were forced or fled to surroudning Arab countries such as Lebanon, Syria and Jordan. The different experiences by different parts of the Palestinian population make it important to be clear on the scope surrounding

The ongoing occupation of Palestinians has led to high rates of poverty and unemployment. In Aida refugee camp there is an organization working on improving the lives of the residents. This thesis aims to look at one organization located in Aida refugee camp and see what they do, what their struggles are and how they overcome them.

1.2 Research question

The goal of this thesis is to look at the work of one organization in Aida and how they work to better the community in Aida. As development in a refugee camp in an occupied area also leads to difficulties, an important aspect of community development will be how the organization approaches the occupation and resistance and how they motivate the community to hope and struggle. The research question for this thesis will be:

> *How do Alrowwad do community development in Aida through the use of the arts and their motto of "Beautiful Resistance"?*

The research question will be answered through semi-structured interviews with the leader of the organization as well as Norwegians who have worked with or volunteered with the organization. The objective of the study is to find out what employees and volunteers experience through their work with the organization. This thesis will also look at how the work of the organization creates meaning and hope for their community, and how the community workers and volunteers maintain their hope for change though the situation is very difficult and change is unlikely to happen any time soon.

1.3 Personal interest and preconception

The Israel/Palestine conflict was not something I knew a lot about before this study. I knew some things about the conflict in relation to history and the international aspect of the conflict. But still, this subject, when I was first introduced to it, struck me as not only a great prospective idea for a master thesis but also something that truly interested me. Because instead of seeing the headlines tied to international politics and attacks from both sides, this allowed giving voice to the human beings whose lives have been shaped by the Israel occupation of Palestine. People's stories, their individual experiences are what interested me on the topic of community development in Aida.

My preconception in regards to this theme is that I did not know a lot about the

conflict and how it affected Palestinian life before the study. I was introduced to the organization by a former teacher whom I talked to by chance. And I thought it was an interesting topic which truly interested me, and so I decided to go for it, with a keen interest in how community development is done in a Palestinian refugee camp. And what the factors around it affect how it can and should be done. It was also important for me to consider my role as a Norwegian. Especially since I did not get the opportunity to travel and personally meet and see the area, the work of the organization and talk to the people who live there face to face.

I entered this study with a keen interest in listening and learning the perspective of the community, through the informants. As briefly mentioned, I knew little and had not read up on the conflict before the study. I had heard opinions from friends and family who had strong opinions on who to "side" with in the conflict. Ranging from pro-Palestinians and blaming Israeli jews and refusing their right to land, to pro-Israel and putting all the blame on Palestinians. And as a conflict that has lasted for a long time, there are a lot of things to unravel between the two nations. But I find the conflict to be extremely difficult, with many sides and grey nuances. When I was doing research, I sometimes also came across pro-Israel web pages, managed by either Europeans or Americans, and found it interesting how many had pages dedicated to "tell the truth" about the conflict. Truths such as the ´fact` that Palestinians are not actually a people and did not live in the area before the creation of Israel. There are also those who wish to send all the Israelis away and create a Palestine without Israel and Jews. These opposing and polarizing voices surrounding the Israel/ Palestine conflict underline the importance of being critical when choosing sources.

Though the aim of this thesis is not the conflict, it is important to understand this background as it directly influences the lives of Palestinians living under the occupation and in refugee camps. There is human suffering because of this conflict, but who to blame and how to fix it continues to create debate. Working on this thesis did influence me, as the stories told by the informant had an impact on me. Though my opinion grew stronger through the thesis I still wanted to be clear of the grey areas, that there is not just one side who is right and one who is wrong.

1.4 Scope and Relevance of the study

The scope of this study is Aida refugee camp in West Bank, which is situated in occupied Palestine, and how they work to better their community. The Palestinian experience is

multi-faceted, as different areas are under different pressures and have different difficulties. Situating the research project in Aida refugee camp creates a clear limitation of the scope, as the focus is the organizations' work and influence inside the boundaries that have already been defined. The field of this thesis is Community Development, with a critical approach and development through the use of the arts, both art as a space for personal growth as well as a way to resist the occupation. The critical approach to community development focuses more on people living in poor neighbourhoods in the West, but it is important to see how the approach can be used and how it works in other situations. How does Hegemony and changing the structure of oppression function for an occupied people? Especially seeing as international law acknowledge that Palestinians are suffering under a system that can be defined as apartheid. Meaning that there is a structure set to keep them separate from Israel and Israeli Jews.

This study has an academic relevance as it extends the knowledge of how communities in different situations work to better their community and livelihoods.

1.5 Structure of the thesis

The structure of the thesis will be to introduce the context of Aida refugee camp, this will include a brief introduction to the historical background, the current political support and the future of Palestine and introduce Aida refugee camp. After talking about the context the third chapter will introduce and explain the theoretical framework of the thesis, as well as briefly review the literature of the field and what kind of definition of community and community development will be used. Thereafter I will draw attention to the relevant theories of critical approach, asset-based and arts as community development. Another important theoretical perspective will be a report on Palestinian Youth and the aspiration and challenges that they face for their future. The fourth chapter will consider methodological considerations for this project. This will include the chosen research method, collection of data and informants, management of results, and data quality control and ethical considerations for this research project. The fifth chapter will present and discuss the findings from the interviews in light of the theoretical frameworks provided. And the last chapter will be a summary of the research project as well as my suggestions for further research.

Context

When talking about the Israel-Palestinian conflict, there is a need to provide information about the context, and explain why the conflict exists, where it comes from and why it to this day still is one of the most difficult and ongoing conflicts in the world. There are approximately 12 million Palestinians around the world, of which 4.75 million are in the state of Palestine, 1.47 million in Israel, 5.46 million in Arab countries and almost 700 000 in the rest of the world (Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, n.d.). Among the Palestinians in Palestine, 42.8% are refugees (ibid). In this chapter, the context and history of the Aida refugee camp will be explained. As the community is a refugee camp in occupied Palestine, there is a need for a brief explanation of the history of the Israel-Palestine conflict. After that, I offer a brief introduction to the current political situation and future of UNRWA, before the chapter concludes with the story of the occupied area and an introduction to Aida Refugee Camp.

2.1 Historical background

The beginning of the Israel-Palestine conflict can be debated. Some argue for including the nationalistic Zionism movement in 1880 as the beginning of the conflict, while others date it to 1917 and the Balfour Declaration, and others use the year 1948, the official year for the creation of the Israeli state. As the historical roots go back to 1880 that is where we will start looking for explanations as to why and how the conflict became what it is today. But after almost a decade of history between Palestine's fight for sovereignty and statehood, and Israel's fight against attacks there will only be space in this thesis for major events that shaped the area and little details about the build-up to these events. The big events that will be briefly explained are the historical roots, the Balfour Declaration, al-Nakba/ creation of Israel, the six-day war and the start of the Palestinian occupation, and the first and second Intifada and some of the events that followed such as the Oslo Accords. Many events have shaped the Israeli/Palestinian and the surrounding Arab nations relations, but these are the major event that shaped the relationship between Israel and Palestine and formed the Palestinian narrative.

> From the Ottoman colonial era to the Mandatory period, the establishment and consolidation of the Yishuv (Jewish community), the Nakba (catastrophe) and the ethnic cleansing campaigns that ensued, the "lost decade" of the 1960s, the thawra of the latter 1970s, the first intifada (literally, shake- up,

1987–1993), the Oslo period (1993–2000), the second intifada (2000–2004), and life in the era of the PNA—all of these events and eras have in their own way been decisive for the Palestinian narrative. All have coalesced to form the Palestinian national biography (Kamrava, 2016:13)

As briefly mentioned, the roots of the creation of the state of Israel can be found in the 1880s. During 1880 the ideological and political movement called Zionism became bigger (FN Sambandet, 2020). The plan to create a Jewish state was built upon the growing idealism in Europa, as well as the wish for a Nationalistic state. And the best place to create such a state was seen as what is today called historical Palestine. This is because of the historical roots Jews have to the area, that the place was where Jews lived until they were forced to flee and were spread to Europe and the Middle East around 70 CE (FN Sambandet, 2020). This historical connection has led to a feeling of ownership to what is called historical Palestine among Jews. The area today consisting of Israel and Palestine was under ottoman control before World War 1 when it came under British mandate. Briefly explained, the Balfour Declaration was a statement of British support for establishing a home for Jewish people in Palestine. The statement was made in a letter by Arthur James Balfour, the British foreign secretary to a leader of the Anglo-Jewish community (Britannica, 2020). After this statement, there was an influx of Zionist settlers who went to the area and purchased land and evicting Palestinians (Encyclopedia of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, 2010:115).

Then in 1947, the United Nations adopted Resolution 181 (Global Conflict Tracker, n.d.). This resolution sought to divide the British Mandate of Palestine into Arab and Jewish states. On May 14 1948 the State of Israel was created. Right after its creation, Israel was attacked by neighbouring Arab countries, but the invasion was defeated by the Israeli Army. The armistice agreements made and signed after the war gave Israel more land than was in the original UN partition plan (Britannica, 2020). In April of 1948 Zionist forces executed the Dalet Plan, which was a series of military attach against the Arab population. The attacks were designed to expel as many as possible, to increase the area controlled by the proposed Jewish state (Encyclopedia of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, 2010:116). The numbers of Palestinians fleeing or being expelled from their homes after the new division are said to be somewhere between 750 000 to 800 000. It is this that is called Al Nakba(the disaster) by Palestinians and by Israelis, it is called the War of Independence.

The Zionist conquest of Palestine began with the assumption that the territory's existing Arab population could be "transferred" out into neighboring territories. What ensued was a process

of ethnic cleansing. This ethnic cleansing took multiple dimensions—demographic, cultural, territorial, geographic, historical, symbolic—all meant to ensure the erasure of all things Palestinian from the land now designated as Israel (Kamrava, 2016:5)

Between 1948 and 1966 The Palestinians became a dispersed group, lacking a coherent political formation that could gather the Arab population together under one leadership. "Displaced, divided, and weakened, Palestinians faced tremendous obstacles in attempting to knit together organizations and forces that could speak for Palestinian interests" (Encyclopedia of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, 2010:116). It is in the years following Al-Nakba that the first Palestinian Refugee camps are created. Kamrava(2016) talks of a changed attitude to how Israel handled Palestinians, initially as mentioned, the plan was to empty the land of all things connected to Palestinians. But after that plan proved impractical and unfeasible, Israel began "a process of separation, apartness" that was meant to ensure that Palestinians were separated and segregated from Israel and the Israelis in as many aspects as possible (Kamrava, 2016:5).

The six-day war between several Arab nations and Israel in 1967 led to all of the areas designated to Palestinians being turned into Israeli occupied areas, as well as Israel occupying land from Egypt and Syria. These areas were the Sinai Peninsula, Gaza, the West Bank, the Old City of Jerusalem, and Golan Heights (Britannica, 2020). The Sinai Peninsula was returned to Egypt in 1982, while the rest are still under Israeli annexation and occupation. The areas that are called the Palestinian occupied territories (OPT) are Gaza, the West Bank and East Jerusalem (IMEU, 2005). The OPT remains a legal category and a lived everyday experience for the Palestinians living in the occupied areas.

As stated before, Israel wanted the Palestinians to be separate and apart from Israel and Israelis. So the newly acquired territories lead to a dilemma, which Shafir(2017) calls a classical colonial dilemma as they could extend their sovereignty to the occupied areas, but this would lead to at least giving a choice of acquiring citizenship to Palestinians, which would decrease the Jewish majority of Israel. The other option would be withdrawing, meaning giving up on gaining the territory.

This conundrum has landed all Israeli governments to date in an endless interregnum that encourages a focus on land while discounting the land´s population. Israeli governments have dealt with this challenge by manipulating the international legal framework and, in general,

miring the country in ever-deeper denial of the causes for the untenable situation wrought by continued occupation and the resistance it generates (Shafir, 2017:12)

Because occupation does lead to resistance among the occupied people. In his PhD dissertation on resistance to foreign occupation Collard-Wexler (2013) stated that the nature and context of occupation are important predictors of resistance. He argued that a breakdown in trust and political dislocation between occupiers and the occupied people can lead to resistance. Following these statements, it is clear that Israel's stance and way of acting in regards to the Palestinians were met with resistance. Shafir(2017) quoted the Israeli prime minister with his metaphor of winning the six-day war, "we won the war and received a nice dowry of territory, but the dowry came with a bride we don't like" (p.12).

> Like other occupied peoples, the Palestinian population give the impression of obeying the Israeli military government while also avoiding compliance as much as possible. The denial of National freedom and the indignities of everyday life under occupation inevitably lead to resistance, which comes in many forms (Shafir, 2017:11).

Though there were everyday actions of resistance, the first concentrated period of resistance began in 1987 and is called the first Intifada. The first Intifada was a largely peaceful resistance movement and was a popular movement that created renewed international support for Palestinians (Encyclopedia of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, 2010:622). After some time in 1993, there was a breakthrough in peace negotiations with what became known as the Oslo Accords. This process of negotiations fostered several agreements between the two sides, one was the creation of a Palestinian National Authority (PNA, now known as the State of Palestine) and Israel's withdrawal from part of the West Bank and Gaza (Encyclopedia of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, 2010:1304). The two currently biggest political parties in Palestine are Fatah and Hamas.

The goal was to peacefully implement a two-state solution, which would happen gradually after the negotiations (Britannica, 2020). The Oslo Accords also split the West Bank (excluding East Jerusalem) into Areas A, B, and C, with the accords transferring partial jurisdiction of some areas that were given to the Palestinian Authority. (Amnesty International, n.d.). Initially, the process showed progress, but a combination of dissatisfaction and distrust broke down and delayed the process. And in 2000 the frustration

and provocation led to an outbreak of violence, called the second intifada (Ibid). This second Intifada was highly militarized and also more limited among the population (Encyclopedia of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, 2010:622). Though the Oslo accords were intended to be a transitional arrangement, and not meant to last it is still the terms and implications from this deal that is in force today (Amnesty International, n.d.).

Since 1948, and Al-Nakba, there has been an "ID card Regime" (Tawil-Souri, 2021). With this, it is meant that the way in which Israel can discriminate against Palestinians as unequal citizens, and limit their access and freedom. This resulted in Palestinians geographic and economic mobility being restricted (ibid.). For Palestinians, the ID cards have become manifestations of the occupation and how Palestinians are subordinate to Israeli soldiers as they can ask to show the cards at any point (McDonald, 2013:269). The cards are also the "strongest measure of Israel to divide Palestinians into different political and geographical entities" (ibid).

2.2 Political support and the future

As a country established by the international community, and subsequently been attacked by surrounding countries there has since Israel's beginning been an international focus on it. Nations take a stance in regards to Israel and how Palestinians are being treated. Still, it is a conflict that has lasted for a long time, and the political climate surrounding it has started to change. From UNRWA losing much financial support to countries actively aiming at the eradication of the UNRWA. In this part of the thesis, the focus will be to briefly introduce the current political situation and future hopes for Palestinian.

The UNRWA was established by the UN in 1949 to "carry out direct relief and works programmes for Palestine refugees' ' (UNRWA, n.d.). On UNRWAs own pages it states that their services encompass primary and vocational education, primary health care, relief and social services, infrastructure and camp improvement, microfinance and emergency response, including situations of armed conflict. As an agency it has been funded by UN member States, including regional governments and the European Union (UNRWA, n.d.). It is called a humanitarian "quasi-state" because it provides basic services such as education and health services (Berg & Jensehaugen, 2021). The United States of America was the biggest bilateral donor to the UNRWA (UNRWA, n.d.). So when President Donald J. Trump and his administration cut their financial support from $359.3 million to $65 million in 2018 (Zanotti, 2018) leaving UNRWA with a funding crisis. The loss of almost $300 million threatened the

general education for 525 000 students, essential primary health care for 3 million patients and food assistance for 1.7 million refugees (UN Press Release, 2018). The funding crisis started decades ago, as UNRWA relies on donors to cover expenses, and as such is vulnerable to donor fatigue, shifting donor priorities and competition from other humanitarian crises (Berg & Jensehaugen, 2021). And as the conflict goes unresolved, the need for resources increases as the population grows (ibid). As long as Israel's violations of international law and occupation over Palestine continues as is, Palestinian society will probably continue to be aid-dependent (Farsakh, 2016). The importance of providing aid that does not create aid-dependent people is big, as being aid-dependent does not empower Palestinians (ibid.).

A reason for the cut in financial support is what can be called a politicization of Palestinian refugees. Israels Representative in a General Assembly states that the Palestinian population that UNRWA serves does not meet the international criteria for receiving refugee status, seeing as 2.2 million are netizens of Jordan and 2.1 million live in Gaza and the West Bank and have never crossed an international border (UN Press Release, 2018). The French newspaper accused Israel and UAE of plotting against UNRWA, seeking to remove the organization even without any solution to the refugee problem (Berg & Jensehaugen, 2021). The goal for Israel would be not just the removal of UNRWA, it would also include the denial of the existence of Palestinian refugees and the right of return, and to remove them from the political equation(ibid). But just destroying the UNRWA would do nothing to alter the political reality, it would only increase suffering in what is already a dire situation (ibid).
The solution to the conflict is a two-state solution, with Israel and Palestine becoming two countries instead of one country occupying the other, the two-state solution has been the aim since the Oslo Accords. Though some researchers(see Kamrava, 2016; Ghanim, 2016; Frisch, 2016) propose that the two-state solution has become infeasible and that alternatives need to be sought out, there is still work done to support the two-state idea. In Bidens renewed US support to UNRWA the two-state solution is still seen as the goal, and so is it for other countries and organizations, as well as for Israelis and Palestinians

At the end of April 2021, Human Rights Watch published a report equating the Israeli control over Palestinians as Apartheid. Through laws, policies and statements by Israeli officials the objective of having "Jewish Israeli control over demographics, political power, and land"(Human Rights Watch, 2021) has been guiding the Israeli government's policy. And how authorities have upheld those goals have led to Palestinians being "dispossessed, confined, forcibly separated and subjugated"(ibid) because of their identity. Based on Israeli laws and intent of keeping Israel with a majority of Israeli Jews, the deprivations of rights

experienced by some Palestinians are so severe that "they amount to the crimes against humanity of apartheid and persecution"(ibid).

2.3. Aida Refugee Camp

As the focus of this thesis is the community within Aida Refugee camp there is a need to define and explain what Aida is, and the life within the camp. First of all, what is a refugee camp?

Refugee camps are temporary facilities built to provide immediate protection and assistance to people who have been forced to flee due to conflict, violence or persecution. While camps are not intended to provide permanent sustainable solutions, they offer a safe haven for refugees (UNHCR, n.d.)

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) defines a refugee camp as a temporary aid for refugees. This is an interesting aspect of many Palestinian camps, as many were created in 1950, meaning they are more than 70 years old and though some move to them, few leave. As mentioned in the past chapter, this has led to political discussions as people start to blame the continuing existence of refugees on the refugees, and that UNRWA provides them with the opportunity to continue to be refugees. The UNHCR defines refugees as "People who have fled war, violence, conflict or persecution and have crossed an international border to find safety in another country" (UNHCR, n.d.). This definition also poses some question related to the Palestinian cause, as the refugees living in West Bank live in Palestinian Occupied areas.

Aida Refugee camp was established in 1950, on land that was leased from Jordan. It covers a small area, approximately 0.71 square kilometres and has not been increased to follow the growth of the population. The UNRWA states that there are 3, 150 people living in Aida. Another source however states that there are 6000 living in Aida (Holy land Trust, n.d.). Holy land Trust also states that the Palestinian refugees living in Aida are people who fled from 43 destroyed villages around the Jerusalem and Hebron area. This means that, unlike some of the other camps which have a larger geographical background, there might be a case to argue for the refugee camp is more like a village than simply a refugee camp. Instead of putting coastal and inland villagers together.

Of the 6000, 4000 are under 24 years old and the unemployment rates are around 50% (Holy Land Trust, n.d.). The population density is very high, estimated to be 77,464 per sq km. Because of the high population density, Aida faces severe overcrowding problems. According to the World Health Organization, the risk of overcrowding is an increased risk of

outbreaks of disease, as well as the chance of transmitting diseases with epidemic potential, which is much bigger in overcrowded communities (WHO, n.d.). In addition to the increased risk of infections, overcrowding can also lead to shortages of water and electricity. As well as personal safety and access(because of the camp's proximity to the West Bank Barrier) and poor infrastructure (UNRWA, n.d.).

The location of the camp is between the municipalities of Bethlehem, Beit Jala and Jerusalem. It is also partially surrounded by what is called the West Bank Barrier and is also near two large Israeli settlements that are deemed illegal under international law. All these factors, along with the constant military presence and the proximity of the camp to the main checkpoint between Jerusalem and Bethlehem factor in and make the camp vulnerable to several protection concerns (UNRWA, n.d.). Some of these protection concerns include regular incursions by Israeli Security Forces (ISF), clashes involving camp residents, of which many are children, and an increasing number of injuries as a result of excessive use of force by the ISF (UNRWA, n.d.).

After the Oslo Accords, a majority of the camps land fell under Palestinian control (Area A), while some of its periphery, such as the main road running alongside the Barrier, fell under Israeli control (Area C). As a result of the Barrier and the control surrounding it, residents of the camp have limited access to job opportunities in Israel and East Jerusalem (UNRWA, n.d.). The Barrier also led to Aida camp losing the surrounding recreational area that once was available to residents. The camp's residents responded by organizing a recreational space on the border of the camp, this space included a playground, a garden and a soccer field (UNRWA, n.d.). This shows the innovation and adaptability of the residents as they gathered together to better their community, a locally started community development project that reacted to their circumstances.

In 2017 Berkeley School of Law published a report about tear gas exposure among Palestinian refugees (Human Rights Watch, 2018). The report found that several longstanding refugee camps in the occupied Palestinian territory have reported tear gas exposure as often as 2-3 times a week for more than a year. Aida and Dheishe camps had 100% of the refugees stated that they had been exposed to tear gas in the last year. Among those 84.3% had been exposed in the home, 9.4 at work, 10.7% had been exposed at school and 8.5% elsewhere(ibid). Residents of the camps also alleged that the use of tear gas by the Israeli Security Forces was not directly correlated to tensions, protests or stone-throwing. An important point in the Berkeley Report was the impact the use of tear gas had on the mental health of the residents in the camps, it found that the use of tear gas resulted in very high

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levels of psychological distress, which could lead to sleep disruption, acute stress responses and chronic post-traumatic stress disorder.

Theoretical framework

There has been a lot of research in the field of Community development, different approaches, theories and perspectives. The definition that will be used in this thesis is that Community development is working to improve the quality of life among residents in low-income communities, where community often is restricted to mean neighbourhood or multi-neighbourhood areas (Ferguson and Dickens in Haines, 2015, 45). Community Development is often seen as a development from the community's members, as in that the members have an active and leading role. The definition of Community will be based on the shared locality of the residents in Aida refugee camp.

An important contribution to the field include Ledwith's book on critical community development, the last edition came in 2020 but it is the 2011 edition that will be used in this thesis. Other contributors to the field include Dominelli, Mayo and Levitt.
These authors and researchers have all added important perspectives to the field, such as an international perspective, sustainability and women's role in Community Development. Though the field of Community Development is large, little research has been done on Community Development in such a situation as Aida is in.

3.1 Critical Community Development

For Ledwith(2011) Community Development should do more than just address the superficial problems, it should be critical in how it addresses problems and how the community development works with problems. In her book on Community Development Ledwith(2011) talks of five dimensions of community development.

- Radical community development is committed to collective action for social justice and environmental justice.
- This begins in a process of empowerment through critical consciousness and grows through participation in local issues.
- A critical approach calls for an analysis of power and discrimination in society.
- The analysis needs to be understood in relation to dominant ideas and the wider political context.
- Collective action, based on this analysis, focuses on the root causes of discrimination rather than the symptoms.

  (Ledwith, 2011, 2)

With a critical approach to community development, the aim is to expose structures of power and how they affect our personal lives (Ledwith, 2011:10). Ledwith draws upon the work of Freire and his *pedagogy of the oppressed* and the concept of *conscientization* as well as Gramsci's work on *hegemony*. Working with community development from the grassroots level, where the reasons for social change should start. When the wish for change comes from within the community, from the oppressed people that engage in a process of critical consciousness where the aim is to see and understand the world in a new way, the community can come together in collective action to create an improved reality (Ledwith, 2011:33). But even though community development often is directly rooted in a geographical area, it is important to understand that the local struggles have a global significance, and if this is ignored the small victories can be "used to defuse and depoliticize the significance of the local effort"(Allman in Ledwith,2011:109). This is especially important with a critical approach to community development, to acknowledge that all communities are tied together in the modern, global world (Ledwith, 2011:24).

Freire´s book on *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* becomes very important with a critical approach to community development. In this book, Freire talks about the role education has for individuals and communities. Education is not neutral in its teachings, it has political functions and can be used to create questioning and critical citizens, or "passive and unquestioning" followers (Ledwith, 2011:53). The goal is to fight what might become a culture of silence, which is when political, social and economic domination from a controlling group lead to "passive acceptance" among the people who become marginalized (Ledwith, 2011:55). To become critical and engage it is argued that the process of *conscientization* is needed. This process happens when individuals become aware of "political, socioeconomic and cultural contradictions" and how they connect and create a hegemony, which diminishes their lives (Ledwith, 2011:100). It is proposed by Ledwith that this can be done by educators if they can provide opportunities for marginalized people to value their own experiences, history and culture in different and new ways, and provide opportunities where they can ask questions and by doing this grow confident and voicing their opinions (Ledwith, 2011:101). A way to help the process of questioning among marginalized people. is by capturing reality in a new form, and by raising questions and seeking deeper questions can help to find the source of the problem. Questions such as "Why? Where? How? Who? What? In whose interest?"(Ledwith, 2011:103".

With a critical approach, it is important to make individuals aware of the hegemony

they are a part of. Hegemony is defined as the way one class within society assumes dominance over the masses (Ledwith, 2011:137). These can be dominant attitudes that have been internalised and accepted as *common sense*, which can make it legitimate in people's minds. Gramsci defines hegemony as "the entire complex of practical and theoretical activities with which the ruling class not only justifies and maintains its dominance but manages to win the active consent of those over whom it rules" (Gramsci in Ledwith, 2011:138). Hegemonic dominance can not be maintained without the collective will of the people, it is, therefore, possible to push for change by creating a counter-hegemony, and this can be done by critical education (Ledwith, 2011:138).

The important point of critical community development is to see beyond the visible struggles of a community, to see how the community is set within wider power structures and support its citizens in seeing how these structures work and try to change them. As power works within a multidimensional system of oppression, where everyone is acting both as oppressors and oppressed, it is important to see how complex and interlinked it is (Ledwith, 2011:143).
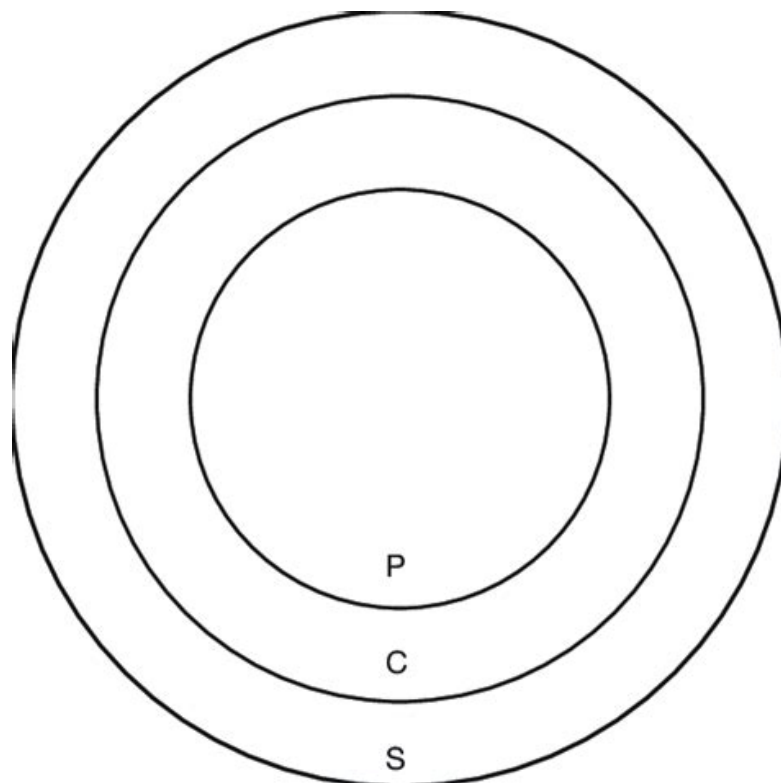
3.1.1 Thompson's PCS model

Figure 1: "*The PCS model*", 2016, by N.Thompson.

To help locate sites for intervention and change, Ledwith(2011) proposes the use of Thompson's PCS model. The PCS model, which means personal, cultural, structural, can offer insight into how the different structural contexts between the personal, cultural and structural interact in the interest of power (Ledwith, 2011:131). Before introducing the PCS model, Thompson(2016) states the importance of recognizing individuals as being located within a social structure, and how this leads to being part of different social divisions. These social divisions can be based on for example class, gender, race/ethnicity, age, disability and religion (p. 29). The **P** is defined by Thompson(2016) as the personal or psychological and is an individual's thoughts, feelings, attitudes and actions. It is also noted that individuals' thoughts and feelings of other groups in society are often shaped, to a certain degree, by personal experiences(Thompson, 2016:35). **C** refers to a cultural level of "shared ways of seeing, thinking and doing"(Thompon, 2016:35). The cultural level is often encompassing the "unwritten" rules of society, as it is often at this level that the perceived normality is decided within conventional notions of culture such as religion, belief system and nationality(Thompson, 2016:36). **S** is the structural level, which Thompson(2016) defines as "the network of social divisions and the power relations that are so closely associated with them; it also relates to how oppression and discrimination are ´institutionalized`..."(p.36).

As seen in the model(Figure 1) the personal is situated within the culture, and the culture is within the structure. It is important to recognize that though our thoughts and experiences to a certain extent are our own, they are probably shaped by the powerful role of culture and how it influences our opinions and also our actions, as well as how culture is affected by the structures of society (Thompson, 2016:36).

3.2 Asset-Based and Need-based Community Building

There are often said to be three approaches to community development, asset, need and rights-based approach. The focus will be mainly on asset based approach to Community development and a brief explanation of the needs-based approach. In her introduction to Asset-based Development Haines(2015) places asset-based community development as opposed to needs-based development. While need-based community development identifies problems and issues of the community and then tries to tackle them, asset-based community development on the other hand seeks to find the community's assets and strengths, and build on them (Haines, 2015, 47). Haines(2015) and Payne(2006) both argue that a need-based approach can result in the communities being overwhelmed by the problems that need to be

addressed and their causes. An example would be poverty and unemployment, which is hard for one community to solve by itself.

Asset-based is seen as an alternative as it tries to focus on strengths and create positive perspectives for the community instead of simply seeking the struggles of the community (Haines, 2015:47). When looking for assets and strengths within the community, individuals, associations, local institutions, as well as organizations, can all be seen as useful and valuable as they can provide the development program with their gifts, skills and capacities (Kretzmann and McKnight in Haines, 2015:48). Looking at individuals of the community, with their experiences and skills, and seeing them as assets in developing the community is an important point of this approach. Let individuals come forward with what they think they can help with, what they themselves are comfortable doing and not let outsiders decide what they think and should do. Together the individuals of the community each create the community´s human capital. Haines(2015) defines human capital as skills, talents and knowledge found among community members, she also specifies that human capital is more than just adults, it also includes children and youth and what they can contribute. It is proposed that this human capital can be "labour market skills, leadership skills, general education, artistic development and appreciation, health and other skills and experiences" (Green and Haines in Haines, 2015:48). Along with the human capital of a community, social capital is also important in community development. The social capital of a community refers to social relationships within the community, as well as the "trust, norms and social networks that are established" (Green and Haines in Haines, 2015:49). Social capital, with social relations, is vital to engage and mobilize community residents, and Haines(2015) states that it is often a critical part of ensuring the success of a project or program(p.49). Both of these types of capital are important to asset-based development. But it is important to make clear that all forms of community capital are linked together in ways that make it hard to separate one from the other. And all provide aspects to create a sustainable community and achieve a better quality of life within the community (Haines, 2015:49).

3.3 Art, Community development and resistance

The arts have a long history of being used to express personal and collective feelings. Through songs, paintings, dances and theatre humans have told stories. There was a study that discovered that art program participants had a "dramatic shift in attitude and appetite for

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arts education and training", in addition, these projects changed participants "self-expression, communication, feeling good, working hard, pride in the making, having fun, and feeling part of the team *as well as* income generation" (Kay, 2000:416). Kay(2000) found in his research that in addition to the individual and community benefit of participation in arts programs, he also found that arts programs had the potential to improve social development within communities. The social development within communities was especially evident when marginalized and otherwise disadvantaged people were encouraged to participate (Kay, 2000:416). Another study has found that participation in art programs among youth-led to improved social skills as well as reduced conduct and emotional problems (Wright et al., 2008:6). The parents in the study said that the youth found confidence and better self-esteem, that their interpersonal skills improved, that there was positive peer interaction, the youth became more independent, better at conflict resolution and problem solving as well as the skills acquired from the art activities (Wright et al., 2008:6).

In addition to improving youths skills in different ways, it has also been found that art can be used as a way to resist occupation. In Palestine, as Israel tries to erase the Palestinian presence, McDonald (2013) found that preserving and practising indigenous practices is a way to resist dispossession (p.22). "Just watch, If I sing loud enough and strong enough, we can create Palestine in the music"(McDonald, 2013:17) this quote by an informant, a musician, was said right before the informant went on stage. The next thing that happened was that all the different Palestinian people sang along to the known resistance song and danced dakbe, the traditional Palestinian dance. Folklore and protecting it is a way to resist for the Palestinian people, as they have become separated from their land and the Palestinian people live fragmented and separated. To practice the tradition became a way to stay Palestinian and true to their past. McDonald put it as that the Palestinian people have been separated from their soil, and so the "Palestinian identity, history and nation must be kept alive, carried, preserved and performed"(McDonald, 2013:22).

3.4 Youth and Development

Overall, youth comprise one-third of the Palestinian population (UNFPA and PBSO, 2017:5). But although the Palestinian youth are the hope for the future, they are absent from processes of decision-making, community development, participating in building peace and achieving security (UNFPA and PBSO,2017:5). The consequences of youth missing from decision-making is that it affects society as a whole, but especially the youth who lose a

multitude of opportunities to develop and advance their space and voice. The youth has become "unemployed, less educated, less public participation and little hope for a better future"(UNFPA and PBSO, 2017:5). The situation for Palestinian youth is described as complex. They are seen as the group that can push for the desired change in regards to the shared Palestinian hope of national unity and the end of the occupation. But as mentioned the youth are not part of decision making and lack a place and power to have a say in such foras (UNFPA and PBSO, 2017:6).

> The resolution emphasizes the need to engage youth inclusively in sustainable social and economic development and to promote their involvement in planning and policy-making, political participation, violence prevention, and promotion of societal peace by means of positive change towards peacebuilding in conflict and post-conflict situations. (UNFPA and PBSO,2017:6)

The UN security council passed Resolution 2250 in 2015 on the topic of youth and peacebuilding(UN Security Council, Resolution 2250). The UNFPA and PBSO report was created to contribute to the Security Council resolution 2250. The major concerns for Palestinian youth were reported to be fear of the occupation and Israeli military, fear of the continued blockade, division and security chaos, fear of marginalization and exclusion, fear of the future and how it may impact their lives, fear of poverty and deprivation and fear of self as in being pushed to be violent(UNFPA and PBSO, 2017:11). It was found that Palestinian youth had a high level of awareness of rights. They could list different forms of violence they experienced, ranging from economic violence to psychological violence and family and gender-based violence. The reasons that youth felt like society moved in the wrong direction was explained to be tied to:

Conflict (internal and occupation)

- The ongoing Israel-Palestine conflict, and consequences of the occupation
- Class and religion, conflicting interests of power
- Discrimination in elections
- Discrimination related to freedom of movement where Jews can access things Palestinians can not.

Social, psychological and cultural reasons:

- cultural construct that doesn't accept defeat and encourages revenge
- Being used to violence and made good at it

- Prevalence of violence in the family "to an alarming extent"
- Feelings of helplessness leading to violence

Regional and global reasons driving towards violence

- UN failing to do its duties to the Palestinian people
- Reductions of UNRWA
- The west accepting stereotypes of Palestinians being terrorist
- The difficulty for Palestinians to travel and obtain visas

(UNFPA and PBSO, 2017:15-16)

The percentage of youth feeling pessimistic is on the rise. In 2013 it was 40%, in 2016 51% and in 2017 it was 74% of youth (UNFPA and PBSO, 2017:16). As the youth is the group that can lead Palestine in a new direction, the growing pessimism can make them accomplices in using violence instead of partners towards peace. To change the trend of pessimism and to create a safe environment for the youth some things need to be addressed:

1. Lack of culture of tolerance and the prevalence of fanaticism
2. The decline of the culture of dialogue and acceptance of the other
3. Educational curricula that do not respond to the real needs of young people and do not match the demands of the labour market
4. Persistence of traditional teaching methods based on rote learning
5. Lack of law to protect youth rights
6. Youth marginalization or exclusion from decision-making positions, and
7. Weak involvement of civil society organizations in activating and engaging youth at the national level (UNFPA and PBSO, 2017:19)

Methodological approach

The aim of this chapter is to describe the methodological approach that was used for this project. The main points of this chapter will be to explain the research method used and how the collection of data and finding informants was done. I will also discuss the validity of the project, ethical considerations in regards to the subject matter and informants as well as the challenges and transparency of the study.

An important aspect of any research project is the data collection method and a characteristic of social research is the fact that the `object` that is to be studied is actually ´subjects` as they have consciousness and agency (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007, 97). In social research, it is quite normal to distinguish between quantitative and qualitative research methods (Byram, 2016:10). Though some researchers argue that there is little difference, Bryman (2016:32) differentiates them based on the epistemological and ontological orientation. He argues that the fundamental differences between quantitative and qualitative research strategies are that quantitative research has a deductive approach to the role of theory and research, as well as being more of a natural science model and having the goal of objectivism. Meanwhile, a qualitative research method is more inductive, has an interpretative approach in regards to epistemology, and constructivism as the ontological position (Bryman, 2016:32). These differences are basic, but also fundamental in how the research approaches data collection and how to use the data. But Byram (2016:34) states the necessity of not "hammering a wedge" between the two methods. As the method of collecting data in social research is closely tied to different visions of how reality should be studied (Byram, 2016:17) a researcher needs to be aware and conscious of what and why they choose as they do.

The research design of this project is what is called a case study (Byram, 2016:60). The aim is an organization and how that organization relates and impacts its community, with voices from the organization and foreign volunteers and friends of the organization.

4.1 Qualitative Research

The chosen method for this project is a qualitative approach. When choosing what method that is most appropriate to use for the project, it is important to consider the character of the material that the research hopes to gain (Flick, 2018: 210). With a qualitative approach, the focus is often more towards words rather than numbers (Byram, 2016: 375). The hope is that

when using qualitative methods to gather data that the researcher can find opinions and experiences that cannot be measured or counted (Dalland, 2017: 52). This is a method where there are in-depth interviews with a few informants. The usual methods used in qualitative research are ethnography, qualitative interviewing, focus groups, language-based approaches to the collected material such as discourse analysis, and collecting and analysing texts and documents (Byram, 2016: 377-8). The method used in this research was mainly qualitative interviewing, with some supplemented documents on the organization from some of the informants. The initial plan was to conduct a short ethnography, or fieldwork, where I would see and be part of the organization work, but due to ongoing pandemic this became impossible and the method was reduced to online interviews as will be discussed more in-depth in the challenges of the study chapter (4.6).

Qualitative research is more in line with meaning-making, for example how a social phenomenon is prescribed meaning (Creswell & Creswell in Løland, 2020:57). As the focus area of this research is community building in a refugee camp, which is within an occupied Palestinian area, meaning-making is important. And so to understand the implications for community building the best approach would be to talk with the people who work with community building and to give them the space to talk about their own experiences and opinions. It is important to specify that the paradigmatic understanding of this research is social constructivism. The idea of social constructivism is that the world is created, a social construction, in the interaction between humans (Hjelm, 2014). With the idea of social construction as a base, there is also a reason to argue that what is defined as a social problem is decided in the interactions between humans (Hjelm, 2014:38).

4.1.1 Interviews

In qualitative research there are two main types of interview formats, the unstructured interview and the semi-structured interview, sometimes just called qualitative interviewing (Byram, 2016: 466). In these forms, the interviews are made to be more open, and there is an emphasis on the interviewees' own perspectives more so than to have clear and specific research questions (ibid). Important points in unstructured and semi-structured interviews are to give space for informants to "ramble", as it gives insight into what interviewees see as relevant and important(ibid).

characteristic of its unique flexibility, the semi-structured interview is sufficiently structured to address specific dimensions of your research question while also leaving space for study participants to offer new meanings to the topic of study (Galletta, 2012: 1-2).

Prior to doing the interviews, the researcher prepares an interview guide, which consists of more or less open questions (Flick, 2018: 217). The open questions help with maintaining the flexibility of the interview, as the interviewees can provide more in-depth answers where they feel it is needed, or delve into specifics. With semi-structured interviews, it made it possible to circle into certain themes, while also making it possible for participants to come with new perspectives and being able to follow them up. I chose this method as I focused on community building but due to little prior knowledge of the community, this method made it possible to follow up input from informants and not be completely stuck to certain perspectives. I also asked about personal experience and stories the participants had with the work of the organization and experiences of being in the camp.

The interviews were conducted online, over different platforms, but one of the interviews were conducted face to face. The interviews all took place in January 2021. All participants were interviewed once, but one of the interviewees was also provided with an opportunity to check the quotes he gave that would be used in the thesis. As some informants were Norwegian, these interviews were in Norwegian and were translated by me for use in the thesis. But the interview with the Palestinian was in English, this is something that will be discussed under challenges of the study 5.6.

4.1.2 Personal observation and participation/Advantages and Disadvantages of conducting online

Due to Covid-19 and the ongoing pandemic, it became impossible to conduct the interviews in the camp. Due to this, the interviews, as well as all contact with participants and the whole process of finding informants happened online. This did lead to little room for participant observation during the interviews. Due to the interviews happening online, I have zero personal experiences tied to the lives in the camp. The positive aspect of being able to do the interviews online is that I was able to do them, some of the informants I would not have been able to meet up with. But due to the interviews happening online, personal interaction with the material is minimal. It can be argued this is positive for neutrality, but as I will talk briefly about in Challenges of the Study, can also be a drawback at least in personal relation to the informants. I did not know any of the informants prior to the research and only met them for

the interviews with no interaction with participants after the interviews were done except a couple of messages.

Though I did not have the opportunity to meet most of the informants face to face, I I still saw most of their faces during the interviews (except one informant who wished to not use video call). As such I could get a feel of the feelings related to the question, feelings that are not always easy to translate into words on paper. For the researchers, this makes any form of (real-life) contextualization of the statements and the persons in their study much more difficult and leads to sampling problems if they want to construct homogeneous groups for example (Flick, 2018:268)

4.2 Respondent sample size

The total size of respondents and informants were five people. The normal sample size for informants in qualitative research has no established number. A study found that the sample size varied from 1-95, and another study found it to be between 5-350 (Mason in Bryman, 2016:417). So after 5 interviews and little response, I ended the active search for informants. So although the sample size is relatively small, it can be a point that the smaller sample size "increases the researchers' chances of getting close involvement with their participants in interview-based studies and generating fine-grained data" (Bryman, 2016:417).

To find relevant participants there were created criterias, they needed to have worked at, volunteered at, or knowledge of the organization in Aida. First, there was also a hope to find more Palestinians to participate, but as I will talk about later it was very difficult to get any answers to emails or posts. The interviews were done one on one, but in one case the interviewer met with two informants at the same time. Initially, the hope was to have more informants but getting them proved hard when everything had to be done online. After the first interview, I had hoped for a Snowball effect, which is a technique where after the first interview the "sampled individuals propose other participants who have experience or characteristics relevant for the research" (Bryman 2016:415). This was done by my contact info and a brief introduction to the research being sent around to employees in the organization. It was after I got my contact info and these presentations shared on Facebook pages that I finally got my last four informants.

4.2.1 Getting access

With the method chosen to be qualitative, and going for experiences and words from informants, finding relevant informants is critical to the study. As already stated, the original plan was to do more of an ethnographic study. Where I as a researcher to a certain degree could participate in the organization and see the community it served. This would have led to a study based on the work of the organization within the camp. But due to Covid-19, those plans had to be revised, and the interviews went almost entirely online. I had an initial informant through the organization and hoped he would function as my entry point, and be my gatekeeper. Hammersley and Atkinson (2007:49) state that gatekeepers often are ethnographers' initial point of contact in this kind of research. Gatekeepers are often concerned with what kind of picture the ethnographer will paint of their community or organization, and Hammersley and Atkinson (2007:51) state that they usually have practical interests in seeing themselves or others in the community/organization presented in a favourable light. There might be a point to be made about the distance as a hindrance to finding informants. As briefly mentioned in the introduction, there are strong opinions on the conflict, and there might be a fear of misusing the information that Palestinians provided. In a face to face meeting, time could have been given to get to know potential informants, but the lack of this might have led some to not get back in touch and participate.

4.2.2 The Respondent´s biographical data

Five informants participated in this project, one Palestinian and four Norwegians who in different ways had worked with or volunteered in the organization. The Palestinian participant is a male who was part of the creation of the organization and is still working in it today, he agreed to the use of his real name in the thesis. Among the four Norwegians, everyone is connected to the organization through the school project in various ways, either from the organizational level, as teachers or as students. They have been anonymized and given the names of Berit, Inga, Maria and Tor for the sake of letting their quotes feel more personal and be distinguishable. The connection between the Norwegian schools and the Palestinian organization was through a program where the schools sent money in support of the organization, earned by yearly student activities. The schools also sent down students and teachers to provide their Norwegian students with an opportunity to learn about the Israel-Palestine conflict, where the school trip visits different camps and settlements as well as tour guides of Jerusalem. And in their trip to Aida, it is arranged for them to see the work

of the organization. And this is where four of the informants have their connection to the organization and the community. Three of the informants were teachers and organizers of the trip and cooperation, and one was an earlier student who went down with her school, as well as volunteered the following year. All participants have earned a Masters Degree in various fields, and as such the level of education is high.

4.3 Management of results

An analysis is more than just one specific stage in the research project. It can be argued that it really begins with the formulation and clarification of the research problem, and then is a continuous process during the process of writing ((Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007, 158). In this part of the thesis I will outline how the process of analysis was a continuing process that followed throughout the project.

The first aim of an analysis is to describe a phenomenon or compare several cases (Flick, 2018:419-420). The second aim of an analysis is to look for explanations, under what conditions are there differences from this specific case to others (Flick, 2018:420). With qualitative data analysis, the researcher works with linguistic material aiming to make statements about "implicit and explicit dimensions and structures of meaning-making in the material and what is represented in it"(Flick, 2018:420). Bryman (2012) refers to thematic analysis as one of the most used approaches to qualitative data analysis. Thematic analysis is an approach where the researcher looks for themes in the collected data material. Themes can be categories found in the data, things that relate to the focus of the research, built on codes identified in the transcript (Byram, 2012:584). But Byram also points out that a theme can also be something that provides the research "with the basis for a theoretical understanding of his or her data that can make a theoretical contribution to the [existing] literature" (Byram, 2012:584).

The process of analysing starts before the processing of the data starts. The decisions made at the beginning of the study influences and shapes the analysis. From the beginning of the study there is a process of selection, interpretation and decision-making (Daly, 2007:210). As a researcher, the decision of which questions to ask and who to talk to affects the analysis. During a study choices related to what include and what to exclude also affect the analysis of the study (ibid). And during the transcription of the collected data, from verbal to written form, there are decisions made in sentence structure, pauses, intonation, and meaning (ibid).

All the small decisions made during a research project can affect the result, which is why it is important to be self-conscious and transparent in the decisions made.

4.3.1 Presentation of Data

The findings will be presented through selected quotes from the interviews in the next Findings and Discussion chapter. The quotes will be used to highlight the personal opinions and experiences of the participants and to shine a light on the research question. In the findings and discussion chapter, the findings will be presented in different categories. The quotes will be from the interview transcripts. In each category there will be some quotes, the categories include factors hindering development, community enrichment, stereotypes and contacts/ narratives and hegemony, challenges of politics and the future and art as expression and giving children space.

4.4 Data Quality Control

In qualitative studies, the usual means to assess and establish the quality of a quantitative research is through reliability and validity (Bryman, 2016:383). The reliability of a study is based on the dependability of data and procedures, which Flick (2018:543) ties to the specific qualitative method used in the study. Reliability can be tied to being able to reproduce results and data again, but due to social changes this is not a reliable method of quality or aim in social research. So what emerges as a way to create reliability is transparency in how the data was obtained and making it clear what participants in a study have stated, and what is the researcher's interpretation (Flick, 2018: 542). The second important aspect in regards to the data quality is validity. A project's validity can be in terms of the coherence between the researcher's observation and the theoretical ideas that are made, but validity can also be about the degree to which findings can be generalized across social settings (Bryman, 2016:384). on the design and the informants.

4.5 Ethical challenges faced during the study

A lot of methodological difficulties are also ethical challenges (Hagen & Skorpen, 2016:170). Mainly these ethical challenges are related to how researchers treat research participants, and also in regards to if there are things researchers should or should not do in the interaction

with participants (Bryman, 2016:121). The ethical challenges can be categorized into different groups, such as *non-maleficence*: meaning avoiding things that could harm research participants, *beneficence*: which is to create positive and identifiable benefit from the research and not just to do research for its own sake, *autonomy* or *self-determination*: to respect participants values and decisions, and the last category is *justice*: meaning that all people should be treated equally (Murphy and Dingwall in Flick, 2018:136). For Byram (2016:125) the ethical challenges are summed up to be whether there is harm to participants, if there is a lack of informed consent, whether the study invades the privacy of participants, and the last point being if deception is involved. Informed consent and confidentiality/protecting participants have been given their own space to elaborate the ethical considerations and consequences they have in regards to this project. But three of Flicks points, *beneficence*, *autonomy* and *justice* will briefly be related to the project here. This is a project about the lives and hopes of people, and to better understand Alrowwads work and method to better their community. To learn more about how Community Development can be done. Flicks (2018) point of autonomy and *justice* is relevant to this project as it involves people of different backgrounds and different opinions. To respect them all equally as individuals with their own voices and experiences, and let their values, hopes and experiences be clear in the research is really important.

4.5.1 Ethical approval

Prior to starting any research involving gathering personal information, it is mandatory to notify NSD (Norwegian Centre for Research Data) about the research, as it involves gathering personal data. To get the research design and methods examined before starting the research is to ensure that the project upholds ethical standards (Flick, 2018:139). NSD will help to ensure that the planned process of the research project is in accordance with data protection legislation. If the planned project is set to collect, analyze, store or publish it is seen as processing, meaning anything that is done by the researcher in regards to the data is processed. And it is this process that needs to be clarified to NSD for them to help and approve the project. In addition to the processing of data, the fact that this research also collects personal data, even if anonymized in the thesis, it still needs to be notified to NSD. NSD defines personal data as any data that can be linked to a person, such as a name, email or sound recording. When the research project receives approval from NSD, it means that

aspects such as confidentiality, participants' right of withdrawal and protecting participants have been approved.

4.5.2 Informed consent

According to Bryman(2016) if there is more than minimal risk for involved participants in the research project, then informed consent is essential. A general rule is that participation in social research is voluntary, and that it also is based on participants having the fullest possible information about the goals and method of this particular research (Ethik-Kodex in Flick, 2018:137). To provide thorough information about the project and its aims, I made an Informed consent form. Consent should be given by individuals who are competent to do so, they should also be informed prior to giving their consent and it is vital that the consent is given voluntarily (Flick, 2018:140). I applied the research project to NSD, and there it is also needed to provide an informed consent form before getting approval to go ahead with the interviews. The form provided the participants with the purpose of the project. The paper also gave brief information about me as a student, my supervisor and my University. And another important job of the consent form was to inform the participants about their rights tied to the study, such as the right to withdraw at any time during the project as well as inform them that the interview would be taped but that the tape was to be deleted after transcribing the interview. The informed consent form will be attached at the end (Appendix 1)

4.5.3 Confidentiality

Anonymization of the participants of a study is vital for the confidentiality of the study (Flick, 2018:443). And the participants were told that they would be anonymized, so this makes it important to take identifiable information about them away, whilst at the same time also provide basic and relevant information as to why they are relevant and part of the project. Flick (2018:143) also mentions that the researcher should try to avoid asking for unnecessary personal information, as it creates more work in regards to anonymizing the individual. If there is too much information about the features and the context of an anonymous person gathered together, it could make it possible to identify the person, even if he or she was made anonymous (Flick, 2018:443). Anonymization of informants is often a challenge, and so was it also in my case. Towards the end of the project, one of the informants was sent the quotes that were selected from this person so that the informant could

comment, and could also specify or explain more if they felt like it. After he had read them he gave me his permission to use his name in the project, as well as the name of the organization since he stood by what he had said.

As the interviews were recorded, this also brings in the responsibility of handling the audio in a responsible way. This was done by using an audio recording from the school library and recording and storing the interviews on the recorder and deleting when the interviews were transcribed. During the transcription, the interviews were also made anonymous so that the real names were not in the transcribed document. As mentioned earlier, most of the interviews were online, and the participants could choose the digital conversation platform that would be the platform for the interview. The most used one was Zoom.

4.6 Challenges of the Study

A big obstacle at the start of the research was finding participants. For a couple of weeks there was no contact, before a couple of Norwegians took contact. This led to a snowball effect where I suddenly had more possible participants, but all of them were Norwegian. This forced me to reformulate the initial research question, as initially, the idea was to focus more on Palestinians' own perception of the organization and community development to also include an outsider's voice. Instead of only focusing on the community´s own perception of community development, I included the perspective of the international activist and volunteer. As mentioned earlier, the fact that I as the researcher have never been to Palestina, nor any form of refugee camp, is also something I consider a challenge. This is because I have little frame of reference to understand their lives, as well as no experience seeing how the organization works in its community. On a somewhat related note, as the study was conducted online the researcher is more distant from the place and community. Doing the interviews online could lead the interviewer to focus more on interaction than the place, which could lead the researcher to be disembodied (Markham in Hagen and Skorpen, 2016:170). This could be a critical point because the researcher would be more distant and unable to attach, which would lead to the researcher's own position and voice being hidden.

A second challenge is with communication. According to communication models, a message has several stages of being coded and decoded. All the stages could lead to misunderstanding, which could lead to miscommunication or worst case being that there is a misunderstanding without the involved parties understanding that there is a

misunderstanding. As one of the interviews was done in English, and English being a secondary language to both interviewer and interviewee, may increase the chance of misunderstandings happening. The other interviews were done in Norwegian, and all participants had Norwegian as their mother tongue and during the transcription, the interviews were translated. Translating the interviews sometimes led to difficult situations in regards to specific words which in Norwegian had an emotional depth that was hard to truly translate. Additionally to words with deeper meanings, there were also words in dialect, which also were hard to translate while staying true to all dimensions and hinted realities behind the chosen words. An interesting challenge I found was the more emotional sentences and words, wherein the interviews the way they were spoken, where the pressure in the word was put also impacts the meaning. As such, handling the interview in English was easier, as speaking in a second language is harder and oftentimes there is a more limited vocabulary. This makes the speaker sometimes choose more straightforward words to get their message across, instead of more complicated words or using metaphors, though they might suit the intended message more.

Though there were some difficulties at the start of the thesis in regards to finding informants, I managed to adapt and continue with a new and interesting point of view. The opportunity to include an international perspective of the work also opened my eyes and provided the thesis with including the global dimension of the Israel-Palestine conflict, as well as how it affected the community.

Findings and Discussion

This chapter will introduce the findings and material that was gathered in the semi-structured interviews and discuss it in the light of the theory presented. The focus will be the community development of Alrowwad in Aida refugee camp. When looking over the transcribed material, and working with it, five themes were identified, being: Factors hindering development and the Future of Palestine, Community Enrichment, Stereotypes and Contacts/ Narrative and Hegemonies, Challenges of politics and humanitarian aid and the last theme being the arts as expression and free space for children. Within these themes the difficulties and opportunities will be examined to answer the research question *How do Alrowwad do community development in Aida through the use of the arts and their motto of "Beautiful Resistance".*

5.1 Factors hindering Development and Future of Palestine

A major theme in responses in regards to future hopes and dreams and difficulties is the uncertainty of the situation. As explained in the context chapter, Palestine is still occupied, and the international community does not seem to do much in regards to helping Palestine become sovereign and the UNRWA is continuously losing the financial support it has had. Additionally to that is the flare-ups in the conflict, most recently in May 2021 with violence in several of the occupied Palestinian areas, attacks between Israel and Hamas in Gaza, and lynching in streets between Israeli Arabs and Israelis.

As such, a problem of community development is the situation in itself. The reality is that life's not easy in Aida as refugees are living under these uncertain circumstances on many different levels. Being under military rule, and the fact that entering and leaving the refugee camp is being monitored makes it hard to find jobs and earn an income. As seen in the chapter about Aida refugee camp, it is very small in regards to size but a camp whose inhabitants keep increasing. With already defined borders, the only way to build is upwards and so, the population density continues to increase and put pressure on the refugees living there. Aida is controlled by the Israeli Occupation Army with walls and gates, and high unemployment and poverty are creating pressure within the camp.

In Aida refugee camp we are to the south of Jerusalem, North of Bethlehem. Surrounded by this illegal wall of expansion and annexation on the east and north. With 5 towers of snipers, cameras of surveillance and frequent incursions by the Israeli Occupation Army. And Aida was classified as among the most exposed to tear gas in the world in 2017 by a study by Berkeley University. And so… with the continuous occupation policy targeting young people and children, it is as if we are restarting our work every day, with young people. (Abdelfattah)

With Aida quite close to a checkpoint, it is exposed to quite a lot of human rights violations. This was experienced first hand by Inga during her time as an EA (Ecumenical Accompaniment), where she was placed nearby. She saw young boys being taken during night raids, and their parents not knowing where they were for quite a while afterwards. In addition to the arrest, there is the fact that Aida refugee camp, along with Dheisheh, is the two places with the highest number of attacks using tear gas in the world according to the report made by the Human Rights Center. And the prevalent use of tear gas put a mental pressure on the inhabitants of the camps as explained in the context chapter.

The situation is hard, and even short-time visitors could feel the pressure in the camp. Inga stated that both her mother and herself "almost went crazy" as they visited and saw the everyday lives of the refugees in Aida. She talked about a pressure which she would have succumbed to if she were to live there permanently. As mentioned in the context chapter the unemployment rates are high, especially now due to covid. Many had jobs in the tourist industry, which were heavily affected by Covid. According to some of the informants, there was a reluctance to move outside of the refugee camp even if they could afford it or had the opportunity. Because moving out would remove the refugee status from them and this was something that some did not want, as a stance to the occupation. This makes many choose to keep on staying. For many when imaging what a refugee camp is, what they think of is tents, but in Aida, there are stone buildings and it is continuing to grow. shows the paradox of the refugee camp. They are by definition temporary but it has already lasted over half a century as Aida refugee camp was established in 1950. Families grow and increase but the only way Aida can grow is upwards.

The refugee situation is unstable, and the future of Palestine is also unsure. Researchers are writing about how the realization of Palestine is slipping through the fingers of Palestinians as the results of past events and agreements, as well as Israeli influence (see Kamrava, 2016: Ghanim, 2016; Frisch, 2016; Shihada, 2021). For the Norwegian volunteers,

it seemed to be easier to talk about how it seems to be an impossible situation with an unsure future.

> The more I'm there, the more people I talk to, the less I believe that anything will happen. And that's not because the people on the grassroots levels don't want it, it is because the systems on both sides are so distorted (´skakkjørt´) that there won't come a solution to it. I wish something could happen, and I hope the next generation will be better. But I don't see any hope of it becoming better when the kids in the Bethlehem area, in the schools I've been to, the only Israelis they can relate to are the soldiers with loaded weapons standing outside their school gates. (Inga)

The different situations between the Palestinians whose future is dependent on how this conflict is solved, and outsiders who won't personally be affected is big. Though all the volunteers and informants from outside of Palestine hope for a better future and strive for it, they also seem more accepting of the difficult situation. But for Abdelfattah it is a continuous battle that can't be stopped. He can't take a break from it, it is the thing that will determine the future for the children. "We pave the road for a better Palestine, for a better future for these young people who have determined to live for their country," said Abdelfattah, the end goal is making Palestine better.

> So, in the hardest times, I refuse to despair, even when I am fuelled by anger and frustrated by all that is happening, and couldn't achieve what I wanted and couldn't help those who are in need of help, those who are in need and so on. I look at children, I look at children and what am I going to say to them if one of them comes and looks me in the face and says ´what did you, what did you do to make a change? What heritage are you leaving us? (Abdelfattah)

The Palestinian Youth Challenges and Aspirations Report talks of the dwindling positive attitudes among youths. The negative trends have been going on for years. Though some may choose to hold on to a positive attitude like Abdelfattah, others give up on making a change. The organization was started in 1998, meaning it has worked for change for over 20 years. Through the second intifada and other skirmishes that have happened. It was created 5 years after the Oslo accords, and the promise of a Palestinian nation, but there has still not been much development in that regards. And the incursions by the Israeli military occupation continues creating a psychological pressure.

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There is a knock on the door in the middle of the night, it gets blown up and then they take your 14-year-old son. He gets blindfolded, it breaks all the human rights, it breaks UNICEF´s guidelines, all those things. Then they take your son, who is still a child, and then you're not told where he is. To talk with a mother who doesn't know where her child is… (Inga)

When 13-14 year olds get arrested, everyone is at risk of being attacked by tear gas and high unemployment and poverty. There are many reasons to be angry and feeling hopeless.

When there is a high unemployment and poverty rate, there are many families and individuals who need help. But with a limited economy, Alrowwad can only help so many. To help one but not the other can often lead to jealousy, and this was mentioned as a struggle especially in regards to emergency help (food, clothing, sanitary products etc.). Additionally the fact that the leader of the organization has a house outside of Aida, and got the opportunity to take a PhD abroad also might lead to people feeling jealous of the opportunities that he was given.

5.1.1 Live or die for Palestine

An important cause for Abdelfattah through the organization was to change the mindset of young people, that the goal or that it was normal to die for Palestine. Abdelfattah talked of the norm of talking about dying for Palestine, as it was seen as a noble death. He wanted to change the mindset into I want to live for Palestine. This was briefly talked about in the report about Palestinian youth and the challenges and aspirations they face. A study by Banat(2010) found that the Palestinian youth who participated in martyrdom operations were motivated by nationalistic, religious and humanitarian reasons. And as such is closely related to the Israeli occupation and the realities that follow. It was this mentality of dying for Palestine that Abdelfattah wanted to change.

But nobody has been saying I want to live for my country. So that's why, how to save lives, how to inspire hope, how to give our children and young people to express themselves in the most beautiful, creative and hopefully non-armed ways, and think of living rather than dying. (Abdelfattah)

The youth are more vulnerable, but they are also resilient in the face of challenges. Though they have fewer opportunities for education and employment, and frequently experience violence and being occupied. To support Palestinian youth and giving them space and hope, make them want to participate in changing the future and not to die for it.

5.2 Community enrichment

One of the themes that were mentioned in several of the interviews was the perceived results of the organizations' work and how it enriched the community. This theme and the theme of giving children space could be harmonized and fused, but I chose to have it in two separate chapters. This is because the main aim, as well as the original aim of the organisation, was the work towards children within the frame of art. As such, newer programs and by-products of the organizations` work in regards to the bigger community deserved its own chapter.

The organization was started by Abdelfattah and a group of friends after he came back from his PhD in France. It was normal for youth to say "I want to die for my country" when talking about their nationality and pride, but not so normal to say that you want to live for it. And so, as a person who loved theatre, and had experience with it, the organization started with theatre. This was done because of the belief that the arts are a powerful way for people to express themselves, this will be the focus of chapter 5.5. The organization's building was built on his family land, and he himself organized and wrote plays. The organization had more of an asset-based approach to community development, where programs were based on what workers and volunteers had skills or experience with.

With limited educational opportunities, little work opportunities and few things for kids to do, kids roamed the streets. Kids roaming the streets, with past experiences of military violence are more at risk of throwing stones which often results in them being arrested and put in military prison. With a critical approach, the solution would be tied to the fact that Palestinians are oppressed. Palestinians try to change the structure, but Israel has the most power. This will be the focus of Stereotypes and Contacts/ Narratives and Hegemony (5.3). As mentioned, the main approach to community development in the organization is an asset-based approach, but it has also adopted a need-based approach in the face of COVID.

> As I said, more than 90% of unemployment rate within this year, with COVID-19. When there is cold weather, rain and so on, and sometimes snow, we sometimes make an emergency cell, to help people, some provide heating machines and blankets, and some warm clothes, also to the needy. And some help when the electricity cuts, and so on, to provide some lighters with batteries, so they are not in complete darkness. So there are programs that, again, respond to the needs of the community, even though it is not our role within our agenda of

work. But we cannot isolate ourselves, and say, we are a cultural organization and so we will not do this. (Abdelfattah)

The organization's response to the pandemic will be introduced more in Community Development during Covid-19 (5.2.4). There is little money, but that is not because Palestinians are lazy. And so it would probably create a distance between the organization and the community if it chose to ignore the obvious struggles of the community. During Ramadan in both 2020 and 2021, the organization collected money from donors all over the world to send food packages, as well as clothing to Palestinians living in Aida refugee camp and neighbouring areas. Maybe it is through these honest handouts that the community builds trust in the organization and its work. The community does trust the organization, and as an informant put it, it's a small refugee camp, if they did not like the organization they would not go there, or stop their kids from going there thus ending its work.

When you need to get through a checkpoint to get anywhere, and your ID card decides where you can enter or not, it is a system that makes it hard to earn money. As Palestinian refugees, they are promised to have their basic human rights and needs covered by the UNRWA but they have in recent years struggled with gaining financial support as showed in Political support and the Future (2.2). But because the situation is tough, and there are few ways to earn money, the organisation has programs aimed at creating more self-reliant men and women. The organization created a program where women had greenhouses on their rooftops and were taught how to grow vegetables.

And as a great success, the women, who have their greenhouses and became productive rather than just waiting for support for this or that. The women who try to give back, also volunteer to train others what they experienced and so on (Abdelfattah)

The organization also started offering cooking classes for tourist or visitors, where Palestinian women could earn some money teaching Palestinian dishes to others. The organization also teaches photography and video journalism, and can give out diplomas after successfully finishing courses. With these types of training, people can get work as photographers. Especially for women who finish the courses as they could take pictures in the women-only parts of weddings.

Giving space to women became important, as the organization saw that helping

mothers finding peace within themselves also helped their families. The organization started having more programs aimed towards women, such as giving them a women-only gym space, giving vocational training in photography for women and helping women have greenhouses on their roofs. Being able to respond to community needs were also important for the organization, and to develop programs that respond to the needs of the community.

> Like for example, a lot of women wanted fitness space, so we were the first in a refugee camp to offer space for a gym for women, with yoga, depending on volunteers, most of the time yoga sessions, Zumba, fitness and so on. And the first football team for girls in a refugee camp. (Abdelfattah)

The organization also works towards job creation. This they did by having 18 employees hired full-time and 6 part-timers. In addition to those the organization also employs occasional workers when building or fixing something. There is a limit to how many employees an organization can have, but in addition to those directly hired the organization also works with educational programs and vocational training.

The organization was started in the '90s, so they have built up experience with community building. Thus they recently "branched out" with mobile programs, where they can go to surrounding areas with instructors who can teach there but also act as a resistance to the separation and fragmentation of Palestinians. The organization has helped change the view of the arts in the community. As an informant talked about before all the children and parents answered when asked what they hoped to be in the future was "doctor, engineer, doctor, engineer, doctor…" and the arts were seen as something you could have as a hobby but since it was not something you could live on it was not acceptable to choose as an occupation. Now it has become more acceptable, and when the children travel and hold performances the parents are proud.

5.2.1 Gender roles

Culture is constantly changing, and change can come from within or outside. And part of culture is the norms and ideas around gender roles. This subchapter will talk about how gender roles have been effected through the work of the organization and influences from volunteers. Inga travelled with two friends in mid-2000 to volunteer, and as three Norwegian ladies, they were different, based both on their visible traits as well as behaviour.

> We received the nickname "The three lionesses", and we did make ourselves quite visible, well, firstly you are visible because you are white, but also there are more men in the streets and such. So the fact that we were girls and walked around, and went to the shops and so on (Inga)

What used to be male-dominated areas could be seen with women in them, as they moved around to everyday stuff such as shopping or going to the internet cafe. But change does not only happen as a response to outside influences when someone else shows an alternative way, it can also happen from personal experiences.

> And the rationality of these young people has changed. When boys come back from international artistic tours, and because we want to put boys and girls on equal grounds, if there are dishes to wash or something, everybody is on the sink. So, when a child, a boy comes back and does his tea or wash his own dish, that is a great change of course. (Abdelfattah)

When the organization takes the children on national or international trips, boys and girls both have to lend a hand. This thing in itself affects their families when they go home, and suddenly the boys can help and do tasks that used to be delegated to the women and girls of the family. Though some things change, there are still differences in roles and expectation between a Norwegian woman and a Palestinian woman. But though individuals gain new personal experience, and groups may create a culture within the group, it might not change the structure of the Palestinian society, at least not in the short term. But Inga noted last time she went, that she felt like the girls definitely took up more space than they used to.

The programs aimed at women, such as the rooftop greenhouses provide women with something for themselves. They can also get an education and even work with the organization. I was told of a girl who grew up in the organization, was part of some of the programs and ended up getting employed. Through the organization she got opportunities that she might never have had otherwise, now she is employed and earns money. Though public domain changes and women can take a place there and can have work, there are still responsibilities tied to marriage and family. Inga recounted how when she told kids she was unmarried, they would laugh at her. But it does show an alternative route to what is expected of them, that there is a choice.

5.2.2 Motivation for continuing

As seen in the chapter discussing the difficulties faced when working on community development in Aida, there are a lot of factors hindering development. And things don't seem to change for the better just yet. How has the Abdelfattah, employees and volunteers kept up the motivation? Where do they find the energy and motivation to keep up the work when it is like working against the current. A recurring theme is the hope of justice and human worth.

But for Abdelfattah his motivation was based on his faith. His faith provided hope for the future, since Allah is just and won't accept injustice. This also helped him accept the long time he has worked with little change to the situation. The belief that miracles "will not happen alone, we need to provoke them" was also something he talked about as part of the essence of his work. For Inga, her motivation was related to information about the situation, and how it is portrayed in the media. She wished to show the youth that the rest of the world doesn't view them as terrorists. To travel and meet the residents of Aida and elsewhere in Palestine as humans. Berit, Maria and Tor found the work as a way to help and understand their own privilege and found motivation in seeing the difficult reality and wanting to help. Tor also was motivated by the impact the cooperation between the schools and the organization had on students and was happy as he saw that many students had chosen career and education because of their experiences through the visits to Aida. For him, the work was based on realizing how privileged you are and becoming aware of how others live and why they live like that. How violence, war and alienation affect people. And then consider, what we should do with that?

5.2.3 Individuals as Asset

Alrowwad was created in 1998 by Abdelfattah and some friends. Abdelfattah volunteered as the leader and had a job at the side until 2010 when he became a full-time employee of Alrowwad. He was part of the organization from the beginning and really believing in the work and promise of the organization, Abdelfattah is of great importance to understand both the role of Alrowwad and how Alrowwad is gaining financial support.

As a Palestinian who got the opportunity to take a PhD abroad, he gained a international network. In the beginning, it was this network of friends that provided the organization with financial support and donations. Then in the mid-2000´ the organization was introduced to a Norwegian secondary school that wanted to find a project to support over time. From the schools' side, they had been looking for a cause to continuously support, the

first place that was sought out was Palestinians in Lebanon. After some time searching, the school representative got to know a Palestinian woman, who created a meeting with Abdelfattah from Alrowwad.

> When I met Abdelfattah, he told me with great enthusiasm what was going on. He has later admitted that he did not have a lot of faith that this would lead to anything meaningful. Because he has a lot of international contacts in the USA, in England and in France, who supported him with resources (Tor)

The influence Abdelfattah had on the Norwegian informants was big. Everyone talked of how inspiring he was and were impressed by the work he did. Inga also stated how much she loved the flat hierarchical structure she saw when she visited. The door to his office was open, and children could go and just talk to him. The cooperation between the schools and Alrowwad provided a lot of resources for the organization through the years they cooperated before the incident that made 3 of 5 ends the support.

> It is not very hierarchical, in the middle east it is very normal with a hierarchical system, with CEO, director, here is mister boss, but Abdelfattah, he is still, even though he is over 50, one of the kids in Aida. And he walks around and talks to everyone, and everyone can express themselves, be it through dance, make a movie or talk to him. (Inga)

The closeness between Abdelfattah and the community also made the Norwegian volunteers trust him and the organization more. Abdelfattahs social capital, with his ties to the community in Aida, and his big social network that could provide financial support may be some of the reasons for the success of the organization.

5.2.4 Community Development during COVID-19

As mentioned, the covid-19 pandemic increased the unemployment in the camp to 90%. As an organization part of the community, they could not ignore the situation and so they started organizing help in various ways.

> When things are more difficult, it turns a lot to us, the humanitarian aid as I explained in a dignified way. So with the Covid-19, for example, there was a lot of work on trying to find food packages, sanitary products, disinfectants, gloves, masks and so on. Medicine for

chronically sick people and so on, diabetes, insulin for diabetes, sick people and so on. A lot of work has been done on providing these possibilities for the isolated families as well because they were confined, when they were infected as well to give them what they need because they cannot go out. (Abdelfattah

The financial struggles of UNRWA have been felt in Aida, and so the responsibility that belongs to UNRWA has partly been taken up by local initiatives. And Abdelfattah talked about how if UNRWA or the Palestinian Government did something, they as an organization would not need to do it but when something was not done they would try to answer to the needs of the community. Like other places in the world, to reduce the spread of covid-19, limitations of interaction and lock-down were used. This also affected the kind of programs that could be offered and how they could be offered by the organization.

A lot of programs have turned online, even sometimes dance training while using zoom. Theatre and dance sessions, I have done some on Zoom as well, and some with different groups coming, with small numbers with all the precautions and so on. So the level of the intensity has decreased a little bit because sometimes also there are closures, complete closure, or curfews that people are not allowed to move, outside of their houses and so on. (Abdelfattah)

Adapting to the new reality of Covid, with restrictions in regards to meeting others resulted in the organization trying to do practises online instead of doing them face to face. But the pandemic also led to Alrowwad closing the guest house, since travel was restricted. The guest house and the restaurant were part of the income of the organization. So the organization experienced both a responsibility to act and a reduction in income and funds. There was public funding for Ramadan, where it was possible to donate money for food, clothes, family food packages and more.

5.3 Stereotypes and Contacts /Narratives and Hegemonies

A shared point between all informants is the Norwegian school and their collaboration with Aida. This collaboration meant financial support sent annually, as well as sending teachers and students to visit once a year. These visits were positive for both students and the children in the camp.

Then we visited that family. The (Norwegian)girls that were with us on the trip were taught how to wear the hijab. And these youths are quite equal, anyway, these girls appeared to have special tricks, with these hijabs they could make them more or less spicy/suggestive. I could not see this, but they had a code for this. To explain simply and probably wrong, ´I am available and you look handsome and interesting`, then you tie your hijab slightly differently. (...) I never really understood and didn't really feel the need to either but the youth thought it extremely thrilling (Tor)

Providing this space for meetings between youth across cultures. A place where they could bond over different things was seen as a positive influence, said several of the informants. Bente, Maria and Tor talked about the influence these meetings and the trip had on their students, how many seemed to be affected in a way that changed their further educational choices. While for Abdelfattah it proved a space for renegotiating stereotypes for the Palestinian youth. A specific word that came up in regards to stereotypes was ´terrorist`. The report on Palestinian Youth and their challenges and aspirations mentioned the fact that the west accepting the stereotype of Palestinians as terrorist as one of the factors that made the youth feel like the Palestinian society was moving in the wrong direction.

That children can see that the world has not forgotten them. If I can be a part of the world, with my white skin and Norwegian ´norwegianness`. Can be there and show that we don't believe you are terrorists, I think this is horrible, this that's done to you (Inga)

Outsiders can travel to Israel and Palestine, Inga came to Israel with an aeroplane and landed in Tel Aviv, a city Palestinians can't enter. These travel restrictions were also mentioned in the UNFPA and PBSO report. The travel restrictions make everyday life harder for Palestinians as well as creates barriers between Palestinians. The fact that Israelis can access cities, places and sites where Palestinians cannot as well as the fact that Palestinians outside of the West Bank cannot enter the West Bank, and Palestinians in for example Jordan cannot enter into Palestinian occupied areas. But life continues on, and it is in the situations where people can see that more than being terrorists, these are humans just as you.

And people are just so incredibly nice. They don't need to know you, we don't need to speak the same language, but they invite you in and they create these big meals and serve chicken and meat and you need to eat and eat. Because they just keep on serving and serving, no matter how little they have, and they're just so… incredibly hospitable. And even the children

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running after us who want to take a picture with us, or the old ladies that invited us in for a cup of coffee or tea. Or the old men smoking shisha in the streets and who kind of nods, approvingly, or if it is that.... (Inga)

It was the meetings with humans that really mattered to Inga. And Tor also talked of being invited to tea and sitting inside and being told personal stories and how these were the moments that affected him. Though it was impossible to have all the students partake in these kinds of intimate moments where true stories and experiences were shared, it left great impressions on him.

A lot of Christians in the west supporting Israel, referring to Zionism, and refusing to see the Palestinian side. Israel were the victims, and they have the right to defend themselves, with no space for Palestinians and their lives. And it was this approach to the conflict that was important to fight for many of the Norwegian volunteers. To provide narratives from Palestinians to Norway. Inga mentioned the importance as an outsider to provide understanding and support for the Palestinians.

I've seen the importance for the kids who live in a refugee camp, in an area that is one of the most at-risk areas in regards to teargas, that there is someone outside who still remembers them and who still cares. The importance of that, yeah, volunteering, that people come because they want to, not because they are receiving a salary for it, the importance of that is just so incredibly big. (Inga)

Though there is poverty, there is the internet and access to the world through the internet. If you feel like the rest of the world is judging you based on the actions of someone else it might be easy to become bitter and angry.

5.3.1 Who has the power

The situation is difficult. The solutions don't seem to hold up. And little happens. Then violence flares up and sometimes escalates and the human suffering increases. In the UNFPA and PBSO report the external and internal power negatively influenced youth both through the way they use and protect their power. Externally Israel has military power over and occupies Palestine, and internally there are conflicting interests of power. Alrowwad works in Aida, and has recently branched out to surrounding neighbourhoods and refugee camps but is still limited in their area of influence, as it is still located within West Bank.

With the political powers within Palestine being split mainly into Hamas and Fatah and both working hard to support their own party, youths are left out of decision making and power. Israel having control over much of Palestine and military power puts them in a more powerful position in relation to Palestine. A lot of the struggles at the community level are tied to the structural challenges the Palestinians meet through the Israeli occupation. Limited access to work and employment leads to poverty, restricted movement leads to fewer work opportunities which again leads to less work. People become poorer with little means to change things. The innovations from a grassroots level are vast, people adapt and react, creating opportunities for themselves to survive. In Aida the organization educates and gives people diplomas as well as other initiatives where locals can earn some money, in addition to those who found work in the tourist industry.

The idea of critical community development is based on the presumption that change can be made from below and work its way up and change the structure of society. But when Palestine is partly occupied, waiting to become its own country yet still under Israeli control, they have limited influence over the structure of power they are situated within. It is through the international community they gain a voice. Berit and Maria said that, though they sent money to support, they felt that more than money the people and organization in Aida wanted them to spread information about their situation. To tell people what it is like, what they experience when they visit Aida.

5.4 Challenges of politics and humanitarian aid

This became quite a broad topic, but within this chapter, I hope to show the informants' thoughts on politics, humanitarian aid to the region as well as the stereotypes mostly aimed at Palestinians from the international community and how, especially the Norwegian informants, perceived how these topics affected the Palestinians they met.

As an organization aiming at development, it also aims at being non-political. Not supporting any political party or politician to create a free space for children and youth. A place that doesn't have agendas of gaining the support of youths. In the UNFPA and PBSO(2017) report the political agendas were mentioned as one of the challenges for Palestinian youth. The report had found that there was a fear of being controlled by a political party or to be exploited by institutions. As such the importance of being critical in regards to whom the organization should partner with is significant. The topic of what to do, what area to focus on, was also an important aspect in regards to who the organization would accept to

work with. For Abdelfattah, it was important to criticise the "easy way" of promoting peace between Palestinians and Israelis.

> But we don´t work with Israelis, for example, because for us, it cannot be possible to work with your occupier while the occupation is still going on. Even if there are great Israeli people, who have great work and respect human dignity and rights. But their role, for me, is not next to me. Their role is within their own community to make a change in their community, to be able to work together as equals, not as master and… so on. (Abdelfattah)

But it was still important to work towards peace, with the slogan of Beautiful Resistance the organization used art to promote peace, but as stated Abdelfattah did not want to participate in work with Israelis. But there was another point that came across from another informant. Tor supported the work of a small village named ´Neve Shalom- Wahat al-Salam´, where Palestinians and Israelis lived together in peace and the children went to school together. But he states that he has been met with scepticism in his support of this village.

> And many have criticized me for starting this stuff after I retired, and they think I'm naive and do-gooder, because this will lead to nothing. To believe that one can play games and get peace and such, but this is not a game, this is serious work. And the thing is that all parties in that village have agreed to be equals to each other, there are no differences between people. Things happen through elections and shared meetings, that's where decisions are made. And a central element of this is school. (Tor)

For Tor, this is a good example of a grassroots movement towards peace, a beacon of hope for a future where two people share one country. Something going through all the interviews is the belief that this can only be solved with peaceful means. With the slogan of `Beautiful Resistance` through people living together and working hard to live together on equal grounds and not using violence to get somewhere.

An important incident that came forth during three of the interviews was the support from several Norwegian schools, and how four out of six ended the collaboration based on political attitudes found in the population. The support projects were started at the beginning of the 2000´-s. After a while, six schools sent money to support, among others the organization in Aida. After a while, the first retracted its support because parents of students had come forward and disapproved that the school had "Anything to do with Palestine". But

five schools continued to support annually for some more years before an incident happened during one of the annual trips for students and teachers to Aida and the refugee camp.

> My angriest moment (working with the organizations) was the time a teacher saw the picture a mother had hung up of her son, who had been shot and died. And the teacher accused the dead son of being a terrorist, which resulted in 3 schools ending the cooperation and support of the organization. Even though both the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as well as the UN both declared that he was not. That teacher also basically accused the entire camp of being a nest of Hamas terrorists (Maria)

As a result of this incident, 3 schools ended the collaboration. Even when the leader of the organization came to Norway to talk about the incident, and thank the schools for the time they did support the organization's work, the leaders of the schools refused to even meet him. As the school collaboration had become a major financial supporter of the organization, to suddenly have half-stop supporting it financially was a hard hit financially for the organization.

5.4.1 Truthfulness and the intentions of helping

Another recurring theme that came up in all of the conversations was the intentions of helping. Both from the perspective of the organization, as well as the volunteers, talked about how important it is to enter in, be it a partnership, volunteering or donating with good intentions. This chapter will also include the difficulties of the organization in deciding who to partner with. Because as the CEO of the organization said, the organization is not looking for a donor, they are looking for partners

> So it was important to discuss with us, for partners, to see where their support can be meaningful and respectful, in a dignified way. And not just to send food packages, and say we have helped these poor miserable people with some crumbs on the table, this is more humiliating than the occupation itself. But it was a way to help us build infrastructure, to create jobs, help people keep their dignity and be proud of what we achieve together (Abdelfattah)

For Alrowwad it was about more than just the physical needs, it was to also protect the dignity of the receivers. Individuals and families who received help in the form of food

packages and the like should be able to keep their dignity even in the face of poverty. They should not be used to make the people sending money feel better about themselves.

> So the partnership, even if the people want to support it with food, aid or whatever. It can be done in a respectful way. I don't have to put people in line and take photos that they are receiving this and, being in a horrible situation and so on, this is more humiliating than the occupation itself. We care about the safety of our people, we care about their dignity, so we can support such a number of families and so on, but I don't need to show them in such an undignified way. (Abdelfattah)

The wish to protect the dignity of humans also came through when Inga talked about the increased tourism to Aida. After Banksy painted on a wall in Aida, it gained international fame (because it was made by Banksy) and people went to see and take pictures of that artwork. And she talked of the pros and cons this resulted in, because yes it led to more people going there, but they went to Aida on sightseeing, but because they went there they would see the lives of people living there and this might impact them into reading more about the situation.

The fact that the organization aimed at being non-politically aligned also was part of their hope of coming across to the community as truthful to their aim. And this truthfulness was mentioned as part of why the community trusted the organization with their children. As the organizations' dance group sometimes went on international trips, the fact that families trusted the organization with their children was important. While truthfulness to the community was staying non-political for the organization, the Norwegians talked about the power balance and being aware of that as their way of staying truthful to Palestinians.

> We chose to be very careful with criticism(..) Not to come with condemning statements about what is a different reality than what we are used to. That could be quite rude, and a bit of a neocolonialist way of thinking. We know best, and now we come from the high north and can tell you what you need to do. It was not like that. We found we had shared interest in the message of a peaceful co-existence between two people in a country (Tor)

The Norwegian volunteers did not want to be "white saviours", they did not travel down as rich Norwegians there to lessen Palestinians burdens. And many of them felt like they met people who were less concerned with money, and more eager for them to participate, be it playing with children or sharing information. Inga talked about how children would "rather

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you play football with them than give them a football" and the idea of presence and intention of helping to be more important than how much money you brought. Tor talked about his activism as based on altruistic ideals, based on ideals of humans having inherent value, and to wish them dignified and respected lives.

5.5 The Arts as expression and giving children space

The aim of this part is to discuss the influence the arts program of the organization had on the children in Aida. In the restricted area that Aida refugee camp is, there are limited activities given to children. They grow up with the wall, surveillance, night raids and siblings and friends being arrested for throwing rocks at the Israeli occupation soldiers. And it leads to a very hard and difficult situation to grow up in. The art program for children was the original aim of the organization, as Abdelfattah wanted the kids to learn to live for their country, not just to die for it. The organization found that some of the children struggled with the meaning of life and had no aspirations or hopes for the future.

> Now once I was reading a story for young people and children, it is about people who have dreams and how they can dream big. So, of course, at the end, I asked these children what they dream of, what they want to be and so on. Some of them said I want to be a doctor, engineer, lawyer, pilot, photographer, painter, nurse and so on. But three children said, ´I want to die`, and we dug a little bit with the discussion with the children, and they said, ´well nobody cares, when the Israeli soldiers come in the night even you, you are not with us when they raid our house, and destroy everything and take my brother or sister (Abdelfattah)

For Abdelfattah the children were the point of the organization's work. For children to gain free space, a place to be seen and heard. A place where they could talk and express their worries, their hopes and their problems through the arts. And through this work, to meet with children who had tough backgrounds and struggled, to give them a place to come. The organization created a place where children could come with their struggles and be heard, in addition to practising the arts. One of the points the UNFPA and PBSO(2017) report made was the lack of space for youth to be part of decision making, and that providing them with a place to voice their concerns and let them have a say is important in helping them keep a positive attitude for the future. To let them say what they wanted to say, even if it can be hard for the parents, or for parents to disagree with them.

> Again, all the work that we are doing, in a comprehensive way, is to allow a free expression for young people. I am not here to talk in the name of women, in the name of children, in the name of young people, in the name of adults and so on. So everybody can have that space of expression, whether it is through writing, whether it is through acting, performing, theatre, dance, music, whether it is through painting so on (Abdelfattah)

As Kai(2000) found, youth participating changed the way participants in art projects expressed themselves, worked hard and found pride in what they were doing. And participating in these programs or groups could provide a change for the kids, giving meaning to them. Berit and Maria both talked about a boy, who was given space and responsibility in one of the groups who when he had grown up had taken higher education and became a nurse. And they talked about how providing a sense of accomplishment could help children become more comfortable in pursuing education.

> So there was this young girl, and she, despite being the one whose name means life she was the one … who wanted just to die. Because nobody cares, because the Israelis had taken her twin brother who was 13 years old at the time. And her elder brother was 15 years old, and the elder one had been imprisoned for a few years and the other one for a few years, the younger one. And… she experienced that all the time, and of course nobody cares in the sense that nobody protects. Even the Palestinian Authority has no authority over anything with the Israeli occupation coming. But she, little by little she joined the dance group, and she was involved with regular training and so on. (Abdelfattah)

Participating in the organization's arts program provided a place for her to become more positive in life, a place where she could express her sorrows and frustration. But changing the mindset of children in such situations is a difficult task. Because no matter how they listen and provide space for children to practice the arts, the children return to their homes and brothers, fathers or other family members are still missing or arrested. Success is in the small steps, the changes in attitudes to the future. As Abdelfattah stated "It is about putting the dot in the I as people say" to tell people that they are important. As individuals, they are more than just a potential number on a list of martyrs or people handicapped by the Israeli military. It was specified that the beauty of the work was the change among the children. Because they did make a change, social and psychological for children and families. With the different programs with different aims, people could find some income and children could gain

confidence and parents become proud. The shift from talking about wanting to die, to I want to live, and to have an aspiration for the future was something Abdelfattah was proud of.

> But what they do and what… Alrowwad can provide for kids, and now not only kids but also women, just the offer they have, there are no activities for the kids in the refugee camp. So the fact that there is a place where they can come and express themselves, a place to be, they might not have a good home situation… so… I just love the whole project. And ´Beautiful resistance to ugly occupation` it is just so nice, so beautiful (så fint, så vakkert), and the way it's done it's just… even though I'm not really a theatre person, nor artistic, but the value of what they do. If it is taking pictures or dancing, or being part of a play it's just so incredibly important. (Inga)

The space that Alrowwad created for the youth in the camp was recognized both by informants for the value it gave kids, as well as the artistic value and level it managed to achieve. As briefly mentioned, the organization goes on artistic tours, both within Palestina and internationally. And Berit talked of the time she saw Alrowwad´s dance group performing at one of the biggest scenes in Jerusalem and their performance. To be able to perform at such a high level also reveals the time and space that has been given to the youth. To be really good at anything there is a need to invest both much time and have access to a space to practice.

5.5.1 Beautiful Resistance

The organization's work with art is both a way to provide freedom of expression to youth and a way to resist the Israeli occupation of Palestine. This ideal is told through the slogan of the organization: Beautiful resistance against ugly occupation. The idea of the organization was that resisting the occupation through culture, art and education were great acts of resistance, and that resistance against injustice, oppression and occupation are beautiful acts of humanity.

> Peace should be truthful and based on justice and equality. And when there is no equality there cannot be peace, when there is no justice there cannot be peace, simple mathematics. (Abdelfattah)

The concept of Beautiful resistance resonated with all the Norwegian informants. The idea of nonviolent resistance as the way that could lead to peace spoke to the Norwegian volunteers.

Tor spoke of the possible non-violence spiral, referring to the flare-ups of the conflict that happen every now and then when one, Palestinian or Israeli, do something that sparks retribution from the other.

> His mission (Abdelfattah) as he himself understands it is to create interest in the Palestinian cause, and to try and achieve a more just agreement for Palestine and the Palestinian people. Without the use of violence, without war. Beautiful resistance, we are talking about music, dance, drama, life expression and normal humanitarian values. And non-violence spiral. (Tor)

Violence prevention was mentioned in the UNFPA and PBSO(2017) report as well as something that needed to be worked on to help Palestinian youth. With the prevalent use of violence, it becomes easy to turn to violence to protest, though this can lead to escalation and worsen the situation as the Israeli military is stronger than the Palestinian people. So the idea of beautiful resistance is also a way to help the youth change the future. As children can stay inside, practice the traditional dance dakbe, participate in plays or one of the other programs offered by the organization, they are less likely to wander the streets and for example, throw stones at soldiers. The children are offered another place to express their frustration with the situation.

> There are news articles that have been published with the philosophy beautiful resistance, as something that not a lot have heard about beautiful and resistance together as terminology because they always think that resistance is armed and violent and so on. (Abdelfattah)

As mentioned in 5.4.1 the Palestinians that the Norwegian volunteers met mostly talked about helping through talking about the Palestinian´s situation abroad. To spread the word of how they live. So the idea of Beautiful Resistance was important as a terminological base. To make it clear what the organization stood for, and at the same time be something that could be used by others in difficult situations where people want to resist the ones in power. The resistance in beautiful resistance was multidimensional. As the organization had mobile programs that travelled to other areas outside of Aida and in that way resisted the fragmentation of Palestinian people. They also provided safe space for children away from the streets, hopefully keeping them away from doing things that could lead to imprisonment. And last is the aspect of art as resistance. As mentioned in 4.3, art has been used to resist the

Israeli occupation among Palestinians. Dancing Dakbe and keeping the traditions alive is a way of keeping the Palestinian culture alive despite the displacement of many Palestinians.

The arts is something that gathers humans across time, space and cultures. When looking at art, be it a painting, a dance or a movie, it can be more than just where it comes from, it can create feelings in people no matter where they come from. And this was also part of the reason the arts were so important for Abdelfattah.

> So yes there is a great success and there is a great change with the look of arts. Because when you see a theatre play, and when you see a film, when you read a book, when you listen to music, when you see a painting. I don´t think anybody will say I don't like it because it is French, or American, or Norwegian or Palestinian. You like, or don't like based on how much it touches you. So this is what sets us on equal grounds and these for me are bridges that we can shape for you, young people. (Abdelfattah)

Through sharing arts, and different expressions of it is mentioned by Abdelfattah to be a way to fight stereotypes. People are people, and "we have good and bad in every country in the world". When watching movies from other cultures there are still themes that can be found and you can relate to, feelings related to the human experience such as love. The hope was that through the use of arts, and going on international artistic tours, there could be space for re-negotiating stereotypes and introducing others to Palestine.

> But their dance group is brilliant! They performed at one of the biggest scenes in Jerusalem, and it was a beautiful dance, about two people from different sides and as such, it was a political dance, telling a story. (Berit)

According to several of the Norwegian informants, the level of the dance and theatre group was high. Inga could talk about the organization when some of her friends saw a Palestinian girl participate in a rap presentation. When friends and acquaintances saw a dance performance in Jerusalem, they were so impressed that they wanted to join her and visit the organization in Aida. And Berit saw the possibility of telling political stories of barriers and separation through a dance performance.

As a community development organization, the aim is to develop the surrounding area, mainly Aida refugee camp but also surrounding neighbourhoods. But in addition to this local community, Alrowwad has also built an international community of interest. Through artistic tours, contacts and volunteers there are a group of people who share the interest of the

organization. To build these bridges with others, find supporters for the organization, volunteers, invite the organization to perform, was important for Abdelfattah.

As such the aim of the organization is twofold, community development in Aida and building bridges and connections in other places with the intention of spreading the Palestinian experiences.

Conclusion

This thesis aimed to find out how community development was done in Aida refugee camp. The main focus was on the difficulties they faced, how they handled them, the work of the organization and its impacts on the community. In a situation marked by little progress life goes on and children and youth grow up. Alrowwad started as a cultural organization focusing on the arts, but has later also programs related to vocational education and necessity distribution. The study was based on a qualitative method with semi-structured interviews to let employers and employees tell their personal experiences with the work of the organization. The findings were analysed through thematic analysis, finding recurring themes in the interviews.

In conclusion, the findings of the thesis emphasise the difficulty of the situation. When talking of what makes community development in Aida difficult, there seems to be an unending list. The past is bleak, the present is bleak and the future as well. With little signs of change in the near future, to make a positive change is an uphill battle. There are incidents of violence, tear gas attacks or arrests often. And the situation in Aida is not unique in Palestine, it was reported that there is an increasing pessimism for the future among Palestinian youth as a consequence of internal and external conflict, as well as social, psychological and cultural reasons. Abedlfattah even stated that every day it is like the organizations work with youth and children from scratch. What was done yesterday was erased, and now we build the future again. To maintain the motivation and hope through these difficult realities are incredible testimonies of their will to better their community.

To respond and involve the community in some of the decisions of the organization made the organization able to listen to what the community wanted, such as a gym space for women. Through vocational training and other types of training such as the greenhouse initiative, the organization helped families to both become more independent of aid, as well as finding something to do. The fact that women were seen as an important aspect of helping families also gave them more space. And the simple fact that during artistic tours both girls and boys had to help clean up after eating and so on, made an impact when the boys came home and knew how to make themselves a cup of tea.

As the majority of informants were Norwegian the international or global aspect of The conflict was also highlighted through the analysis. The Norwegian volunteers experienced that more than giving money, what the Palestinians they met wanted was for the Norwegians to talk of their experiences when they went home. The idea that Palestinians are

terrorists has had a negative impact on youth as they feel disbelieved and left behind. For some of the informants, it was therefore important to visit and just be there, to remind the children and youth that there are people who believe them and their struggles. But it also showed the difficulty of changing the situation, and that the global world could take on an important role in protecting Palestinian rights.

Another point that was repeated in the interviews were the intentions of helping. For the organization it was important to be critical in the decision of who to partner with, and choosing the word partner, not just donor. Because the idea was that to support the organization was more than just sending money. Supporting Alrowwad in their work was to support their ideas and the Palestinian resistance to the occupation. It was also important in regards to internal politics in Palestine, as political parties and other groups want to influence youth. But the organization wants to offer a free space for youth. For the Norwegians, the topic of intentions to help was approached differently, for them it was important to specify the humanitarian and human worth they wanted to fight for. It was not a case of coming from outside with "we know better", but a wish to help the local organization with what they were doing.

The aim of the organization was to teach the arts and culture to kids and youth. And the arts programs were the space that gave youth the opportunity to freely express themselves, be it through paintings, dance or theatre. Through the use of the arts, kids were provided with a voice in addition to the arts being used as a way to resist the occupation. The motto of "Beautiful Resistance" showed how the organization also tied its work to the act of resisting the occupation. The elements of Community Development that became important in this setting was the closeness between the organization and community, where the organization responded to needs of the community as well as creating a safe space for youth away from the military occupation and soldiers.

The results of the research emphasize the difficulty of the situation, but also the motivation and hope for change.

6.1 Recommendations for future research

An interesting topic to further the study would be to get more informants from the Palestinian society and how they work to better their situations. There has been research on the Palestinian peoples' situation, but what is the means and actions through which they

themselves work to better their lives and hopes for the future? Another point of interest is the mix of a refugee camp and community building, and how refugees and community workers handle and think of the situation in the light of a future and life outside of that situation. It would be interesting to examine if they feel like there is a gap between the two or not, and how they mix them.

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Appendix 1: Information Paper given to participants

Do you want to partake in my research project: Community Development in Aida?

This is a request to you, where I hope you want to participate in a research project looking at *how one organization works to better their community.* This paper gives you information about the aims of this project og what participating will entail for you.

Purpose
The purpose of this project is to look at how this organization and its members and volunteers work with development for Palestinians in the Aida camp, or elsewhere. The camp has been cut off from goods and services, which have lead to increased unemployment and poverty among the people living there. The organization has programs aimed at women and youth and works with culture and vocational training. This project will be a qualitative study that will produce material for a Masters thesis in Community Development and Social Innovation. The current thesis question is "How does the organization work with development for Palestinians in the Aida camp"

Who is responsible for this research project?
VID specialized university is responsible for this project.

Why have you been asked to participate?
You are getting this appeal since you work, have worked or volunteer at the organization. This project will be composed of approximately 10 individuals, who will be asked about their personal experience and feelings tied to their work.

What does it bring about for you to participate?
If you choose to be part of this project I ask of you to join me in an interview that will last around 1 hour. I will record the conversation to ensure that i have understood correctly what you have said, and the recording will be deleted at the end of the project. During the interview we may talk about topics that show your political stance, ethnic background and religious beliefs. If you approve I will use this information in my analysis.

It is completely up to you to participate
IF you choose to participate in this study, you can withdraw your consent to participate at any time without giving your reason. If you do so, all the information you have given will be deleted. If you chose to not participate or choose to withdraw later on in the study, withdrawing will not have any negative consequences for you.

Your privacy- how we will store and use your information
Your information will solely be used in relation to what is written on this paper. Your information will be handled confidentially and in accordance to privacy regulations.

The ones to handle your information will be the student, and the students supervisor. If there is a need for a translator, he will have the same confidentiality as the student and supervisor. One of the means to protect your privacy will be to create fictional names to use in the thesis instead of your real name. Individuals will not be recognisable in the final texts. Information used in the thesis will be, as mentioned political stance, ethnical background and religion, as well as thoughts and opinions around community development.

What happens to your information when we conclude the research project?
The information will be anonymized from the start. Recordnings will be deleted at the end of the project 1. July 2021.

Your rights
As long as you can be identified in the datamaterial, you have the right to:
- Access to which personal information that is registered about you, and to have a copy of the personal information given to you,
- To have personal information about you corrected,
- To have personal information about you deleted, and
- To send in a complaint to the Norwegian Data Inspectorate about the processing of your personal information

What gives us the right to process your personal information?
We can only process your information if you give us your consent.

On behalf of *VID* have NSD – Norsk senter for forskningsdata AS (Norwegian centre for research data) assessed that the process of personal information in this research is in accordance with personal information regulations.

Where can you find out more?
If you have any question related to this study, or wish to use your rights, you can contact:
- VID specialized University, Associate Professor Gerd Marie Ådna (*gerd.marie.adna@vid.no*)
- Student Kristina Hilleren (Kristina.hilleren@gmail.com)
- Privacy Representative at VID, Nancy Yue Lui, tlf +47 93856277 or nancy.yue.liu@diakonhjemmet.no

If you have questions related to NSD´s evaluation of this project, you can contact

- NSD – Norsk senter for forskningsdata AS on email (personverntjenester@nsd.no) or over phone:+47 55 58 21 17.

Best Regards

Gerd Marie Ådna

Kristina Hilleren

Agreement decclaration

I have recieved and understood the information about this project on Community Development in the Aida camp, and have had opportunity to ask questions. I agree to:

      □   To participate in an interview
      □   I agree to let the information i give be handled until the end of this project.

(Signed by participant of the project, date)