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The American University in Cairo
Graduate School of Education

EGYPTIAN YOUTH BUILDING A PEACEFUL COMMUNITY – A CASE STUDY

A Thesis Submitted to

Graduate School of Education

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the degree of Master of Arts/Science

by Shereen Aly

under the supervision of Dr. Jennifer Skaggs

December/2014

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Abstract

This is a qualitative case-study that focuses on a sample of Egyptian youth-led initiatives that are working in the field of peace-building within “Selmiyah” movement. These initiatives have a variety of activities and interventions, working with different age groups from children to adults and in different communities, addressing different aspects of the peace education; such as conflict resolution skills, environmental issues, community organizing, and development-related projects. Using interviews, participant observations and document reviews; the researcher was able to provide a deeper view of the background and perceptions of the founders of these initiatives and the movement, the motives for creating the initiatives, the methodology and philosophy of the initiatives, the financial and organizational sustainability and the added value behind joining the movement. “Selmiyah” is a movement that was created by a group of youth who wanted to create a platform for collaboration and advocacy among all the CSOs actively working within the peacebuilding field; the movement includes now more than forty groups and a thousand individuals. This research also explains the reasons behind the creation of Selmiyah as a movement, the added value it can bring, the dynamics and processes of Selmiyah and the future of the movement. From the findings a number of things can be concluded, first peace is a comprehensive value and accordingly peace education work addresses different aspects of society, on awareness, skills and practice levels. Second, there is a need within Egyptian society for the concepts and tools that are being introduced by the initiatives working to promote peace culture. Third, the initiatives that are working on the ground have spent extensive time and effort on structuring their theoretical frameworks and curricula to provide good quality, if not high quality, services to their communities. Fourth, sustainability is a key challenge and thus it can be extremely beneficial to collaborate through a movement structure.

Contents

I.	Introduction	7
II.	Literature Review	16
1.	Overview on Youth Discourse:.....	16
	New Youth Development Movement in the US:.....	17
	Overview of Egyptian Youth Discourse:.....	20
2.	Role of Civil Society in Peacebuilding:.....	31
	Definition of Civil Society:	31
	Role of Civil Society in Peace Building:.....	33
	Overview of Civil Society in Egypt:	36
3.	Global Case Studies of CSOs Contributing to Peace Building Process:	39
	The case of The Kosovar Youth Council:	39
	The Case of Children’s Learning Services in Sierra Leone:	40
4.	Overview of Peace Education:.....	42
	Definition of Peace Education:.....	42
	Ian Harris Model of Peace Education:.....	48
III.	Research Design and Methodology	56
1.	Case Selection:.....	57
2.	Data Collection:	60
3.	Location of the Researcher:	63
4.	Data Analysis:.....	63
IV.	Data Findings	66
1.	Introduction:.....	66
2.	Question 1: Why are youth involved in initiatives related to Peace education?.....	66
	Background and Motives for founders of the initiatives and movement:	66
	Background and motives for starting the initiatives:.....	76
3.	Question 2: How are these initiatives structured?.....	85
	Goals and Framework:.....	85
	Institutional Sustainability:.....	89
	Framework, Curriculum and Capacity Building:	92
4.	Question 3: Why do the initiatives choose to belong to Selmiyah movement?.....	99

Creating Selmiyah:	100
Structure of the Network or Movement:.....	107
Joining the Network or Movement:.....	110
Dynamics within the Network:.....	113
Recommendations to Selmiyah:	116
Future of the Network or Movement:.....	120
V. Discussion and Conclusion.....	123
1. Methodology of Developing Frameworks:	124
Orientation towards values:.....	124
Experiences through practice:	126
Research and readings:	127
2. Harris Model Vs Selmiyah Model:	128
International Education:	129
Human Rights Education:.....	130
Development Education:	131
Environmental Education:	133
Conflict resolution Education:.....	134
3. Selmiyah's Added Value:	136
4. Selmiyah in the Future:.....	138
Network vs Movement:	138
Recommendations regarding internal processes:	140
5. Conclusion	144
Limitations of Research:.....	148
Opportunities for Further Research:	149
VI. References:.....	151
VII. Appendix.....	154
Appendix 1	155
Appendix 2	157
Appendix 3	158
Appendix 4	159

Table of Tables

Table 1. Summary of Initiatives Included in the Study**Error! Bookmark not defined.**

Table 2. Summary of Legal Status and Financial Model of Initiatives within Study..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

I. Introduction

This research is exploring the potential insight and lessons learnt that can be deduced from the case of Selmiyah, a grass-roots movement that is aiming to spread the culture of peace through different dimensions and channels. This movement that includes over forty initiatives, whose founders and participants are primarily youth, is providing a unique model for civil society organizations (CSOs) in Egypt, where there are a few movements working together on the ground. The dimension of peace education is unique and provides a complete shift in pedagogy and education philosophy. Most of the initiatives within Selmiyah are considered within the non-formal sector, while some of them are working in collaboration with educational institutions such as schools or universities. This research offers a detailed description of fifteen initiatives within the movement that were selected to form a diverse and comprehensive sample, the description shows the motives for creating the initiatives, their structure, the framework and methodology they follow, the recruitment and capacity building of team members and volunteers, and the organizational and financial sustainability. Some background about the founders of the initiatives and Selmiyah is provided. Another description is written to explain the creation of Selmiyah as a movement, the added value it can bring, the dynamics and processes of Selmiyah and the future of the movement is presented. The researcher uses a peace education model developed by Ian Harris to analyze the comprehensive nature of the initiatives within Selmiyah; the Harris model will be explained later in this section. This research offers insights to all CSOs who are interested in the field of peace education, to educators who would like to reflect on how to integrate such concepts within educational institutions, and policy makers who can think of ways to integrate this work into school reforms.

In order to be able to view this model and critique it objectively, there is a need to understand more the definition and context of youth on a global and local level, to understand the narrative of youth contribution to society. Another important dimension is to look at the definition and context of civil society on a global and local level. While peace education as a term started appearing in the 1980's, it is still a very new concept to the Egyptian context, more background needs to be provided to understand it further, and to explain the Ian Harris model. After providing all the above mentioned background, the findings from this research will be presented, followed by an analysis and discussion of the findings and the conclusion of the researcher, highlighting the limitations of this research and opportunities for further research.

First, there is a need for a paradigm shift in the way this nation looks at youth. On a global level, youth perceptions are also not very consistent, however in the 1980s, there was a shift in the narrative in the US affected by the new youth development movement. While there are several researches debating the positive and negative consequences of these new narratives of youth and their role in the global community, however this movement has created focus on treating youth as assets or resources rather than problems. This is mainly driven by the human capital theory, which exists in a lot of the literature. Having said all that, if this theory is adopted in Egypt, this new perception of youth can help the community see the actual contributions that were done in society by youth, such as the movement that is under study here and all the initiatives within it, and provide further discussion on how youth can contribute to society and participate in its betterment.

In Egypt, the youth bulge has been perceived by the State as a problem rather than an opportunity to Egypt, this can be deducted on different levels, the first is the continuous change in the public bodies in charge of youth; in 1979 the Supreme Council for Youth and Sports was

established, then in 1999 it was closed and the Ministry of Youth was established, in 2005 the Ministry was dissolved and two councils were established, one for youth and one for sports (Abdelhay, 2005), after the 25th of January revolution the National Council for Youth (NCY) was dissolved and the Ministry of Youth and Sports was re-established again. Second, from a legislative perspective, there is one article in the 2014 constitution, Article No. 82, third chapter entitled “Rights, freedoms, and national duties”, which portrays youth as dependent beings that need care and support, with no mention of their contribution to the community or any other social roles (Abdelhay, 2005). In his report, Abdelhay concludes that there is a need for a clear comprehensive law for youth, however due to lack of ownership from a single entity whether a ministry or a council, this issue was never concluded. Third on the execution level, the current Ministry of Youth and Sports has published some of their strategic goals for the years 2013-2017, which include: maximizing the benefit from free time - guaranteeing freedoms - developing the cultural and health awareness - building the mental image of the ministry - raising the professional, managerial and technical efficiency of workers (Ministry of Youth and Sports, n.d.). It is clear from the above strategic goals that the approach is problem-based not asset-based where the State is trying to develop methods to support youth and there is no mention of their role in the advancement of society.

Second, with regards to civil society, it is difficult to define it, however there have been several attempts to define it according to the nature of its formation, its role within society or the values that govern it. Regardless of all this debate on definition, civil society remains an important component of society, especially in this region where CSOs are increasing and gaining strength more and more. Research shows that civil society can have a role during conflict times and can contribute to the peace building process. Its role as well is essentially related to

structural prevention which is working within the community to eradicate all the causes of structural violence, such as unequal distribution of resources, human rights issues, discrimination and prejudice. The civil society in Egypt is suffering from many challenges related to legal status, to funding constraints, to organizational sustainability and public image issues. These challenges are impeding the progress of civil society in Egypt. This research focuses on youth-led CSOs that are working to spread the culture of peace through peace education.

Third, Peace Education is defined differently in the literature, there are common dimensions or levels mentioned, peace education has to do with changing the mindset or perception, with gaining the skills needed for peace building (Danesh, 2006, p. 56), and with the ability to practice these skills through providing channels and alternatives. Another important dimension is to provide successful models as this is a new culture that is being promoted. Peace education is seen by researchers as essential to build a new holistic non-discriminating world view that can contribute into bettering humanity's approach to life, "peace education is the only route to true civilization and true civilization is both peaceful and peace creating" (Danesh, 2006, p. 57). Based on this vision, the UNICEF considers Peace education as an essential component of basic education, and thus is not only necessary in countries where there is conflict but everywhere (Fountain, 1999). There is recommendation in that same report to integrate peace education within the education system rather than becoming a separate subject. In many of the research available, there is consensus that Peace education requires a pedagogical shift to student-centered approach because it serves the purpose of the peace building process. Paulo Freire describes the settings in which non-interactive and non-participatory methods are applied as violent, "Any situation in which some individuals prevent others from engaging in the process of inquiry is one of violence. The means used are not important; to alienate human beings from

their own decision-making is to change them into objects” (Freire, 1921). This entails sincere assessment of the current education systems and what kind of culture and values they are producing.

There are several models of Peace education. For this research, the model proposed by Ian Harris will be adopted, this model includes five pillars or dimensions that are related to Harris’ definition of peace and what is needed to achieve it, the five pillars are: international education, human rights education, development education, environmental education and conflict resolution education. Each pillar addresses an aspect of the culture of peace and has a different methodology of approaching the issue (Harris, 2007). This model will be explained in the next chapter and will be used to analyze the findings from this research. The reason behind choosing this model is the fact that the key components highlighted are in line with most of the other models, however Harris has done considerable efforts in clarifying the components and linking them.

In Egypt, there is no literature or research available on Peace education as far as the researcher knows. While there are many initiatives within the non-formal sector that are focusing on aspects or fields within the Peace education modules, there has been little effort done to document them. The researcher could only find the websites of these initiatives, there is no available research found. It is worth mentioning that most of the initiatives are focusing on character education which can be considered a part of peace education; a few initiatives were working on conflict resolution and mediation skills.

In conclusion a change in narrative is crucial, from researcher’s stand point, regarding youth and their contribution to society, and civil society role in general and specifically for peace

building context, to fully embrace the findings of this research; because it is based on youth efforts and CSOs that are working to address a deeply rooted phenomenon in the Egyptian society which is the culture of violence. Violence is not just physical, it can be verbal, emotional and on the level of ideas. For years now, education systems around the world have promoted violence through the oppressive pedagogy they adopt, many philosophers and educators have raised that issue and highlighted the impact of it on societies, “violence is initiated by those who oppress, who exploit, who fail to recognize others as persons – not by those who are oppressed” (Freire, 1921, p. 55). Current educators are raising the question of “what are we educating for?” is it for a world full of violence and conflicts and oppression? Or is it for a world that promotes understanding, tolerance and peaceful resolutions to conflict? This global view of the role of education is highly needed today in Egypt to reach a proper reform plan that best suits the current status of the country and that can move Egypt forward towards building a better future.

Rationale for Research:

As demonstrated above, there is a clear gap in the literature when it comes to youth engagement within the Egyptian community and Peace education efforts in Egypt. This case study of a movement called “Selmiyah”¹ provides insight on both topics as it is a movement that includes over forty youth-led initiatives that focus on Peace Education. Youth initiatives or organizations are defined, for the purpose of this study, the same as the World Bank definition in their report “Mapping organizations working with and for youth in Egypt”, which defined youth organizations as matching the following four criteria: “1. Number of youth in the board exceeds 60 %; 2. The programs/services of the organization are directed mainly to youth and children; 3. Number of employees under 35 exceeds 70%; 4. The organization depends on youth volunteers

¹ “Selmiyah” was a cheer used during the events of 25th of January revolution, which means peaceful or “In peace”.

in planning and implementing its activities.” (El-Rouby, 2007, pp. 8,9). The research will cover three dimensions, first the rationale behind this group of youth focusing on Peace education; second the structure of the initiatives, how the curriculums are designed and whether they fit within Harris’ categorization; third the rationale and benefits behind the creation of the movement.

Rationale for Qualitative Method:

The purpose of qualitative research is to understand in depth the youth-led initiatives and to gain insight on their motives and target goals. It is of essential importance to this research to document and present the personal views of the youth involved in these activities about the community, their role and the targets they hope to achieve, i.e. hearing their voice. In the field of youth research, there is availability of quantitative research in the form of reports, and while these reports provide valuable data, they are also lacking the quality of in-depth analysis that is needed to complete the picture. This research is an attempt to fill in the missing gaps within the total picture of how youth can contribute to the development of Egyptian society. Furthermore, this model holds a lot of essential questions to the role of non-formal education and how it can interact and become useful for the formal education sector. All these complex and big topics require deep analysis that integrates all points of view while maintaining diversity. The target is not just to answer some questions, the real target is to stimulate more questions and raise the curiosity enough to conduct more research.

Statement of the Problem:

Youth in Egypt are perceived by the community and State as dependent beings who require care and support to become productive citizens, there is minimum expectation that they

can play a role in society within this transitional phase in their lives. During and after the 25th of January revolution, youth demonstrated great potential in contributing to the improvement and advancement of society. Peace education is not very popular in Egypt, there is not enough research in the field and there are a few initiatives (outside of the initiatives included in this case study) focusing on it. A group of youth initiatives and organizations working on Peace education with all its different dimensions, decided to create a movement called “Selmiyah” as an umbrella for their work. There are many aspects of this phenomenon that require in-depth qualitative research; this research project will take “Selmiyah” as a case study to understand more about these youth activities within the Peace education field.

Research Questions:

This case study will focus on three dimensions:

Question 1: *Why are youth involved in initiatives related to Peace education?*

- *How did they choose this field?*
- *How do they perceive the importance of these initiatives?*
- *Why are they interested to engage in civic work?*
- *How do they see their role in light of the current political unrest?*

Question 2: *How are these initiatives structured?*

- *Do they follow the categorization of Harris to Peace education?*
- *What are the key goals of the developed programs?*
- *How were they created?*
- *Are they based on research or experience?*

- *Who is the target group of these programs?*

Question 3: *Why do the initiatives choose to belong to “Selmiyah” movement?*

- *What is the benefit of creating the movement?*
- *Are peace values promoted within the movement?*
- *How do they perceive the movement in the future?*

II. Literature Review

To understand the Egyptian context with regards to civil society, youth and peace education, one needs to understand the global and regional contexts first. Below review will provide global, regional (if available) and local contexts for the three frameworks of this research: youth, civil society and peace education. Some global models of civil society organizations (CSOs) contributing to peacebuilding in their communities will be presented as well. In the end, a comprehensive summary will be provided.

1. Overview on Youth Discourse:

a) Definitions of the “Youth” Phase:

Youth by definition is an intermediate or transition phase between childhood and adulthood. There are several definitions and perceptions related to this phase, below are only a few of them. The Oxford English dictionary has an unusual definition for "youth" that is not normally referred to, but is important to use in this research, it states that youth was once a romantic phase that was characterized by beauty and unlimited opportunities, however now youth is incorporated with darker traits such as, “*unemployed, disaffected, nuisance, and drunken* are some of the most common modifiers, while almost all of the verbs associated with **youths** are violent or threatening, with *attack, smash, vandalize, intimidate, and assault* all scoring highly. And **youths** cannot simply meet—they *congregate, gather, and even plague: intimidating gangs of baseball-capped youths congregating around the newsagents a shopping parade plagued by nuisance youths*” (Oxford, n.d.). According to the (UNESCO, n.d.), ““Youth” is best understood as a period of transition from the dependence of childhood to adulthood’s independence and awareness of our interdependence as members of a community. Youth is a more fluid category than a fixed age-group”. However UNSECO does identify an age group from 15 to 24, which is

in line with the UN guidelines and which is considered for statistics and research purposes.

According to the African Youth Charter (UNDESA), ““youth” means “every person between the ages of 15 and 35 years”.” (UNDESA, n.d.)

From the Oxford definition, it is clear that youth is now defined as a problematic phase that incorporates instability, impulsivity, trouble-making and many more negative traits that are associated with this phase. The impact of this narrative on youth policies and the community perception is also negative, where all ideas and actions stem from the fact that youth are a problem that needs to be handled carefully. Age range plays a key role in defining many things, it is not just statistics or numbers; it also defines the policies that will be put in place to address the needs and nature of this age range. From the age range defined by the UNESCO or UN, 15 to 24 is a nine year span, where youth in most of the developing countries would have started working already and producing income, in Egypt youth within this age range constitute almost 53% of the labor force. (ILO, CAPMAS, & IPEC, 2012)

New Youth Development Movement in the US:

In the 1980s, there was a shift in the narrative in the US affected by the new youth development movement. Some recent research was done to analyze the reasons behind these different narratives and how they are used at different times according to the agendas in mind, “To adopt terms used by Austin and Willard (1998, p. 2), youth have been widely constructed as ‘demons of culture’; but they have also long been promoted as ‘angels of history,’ viewed alternatively and/or simultaneously both ‘as a vicious, threatening sign of social decay and “our best hope for the future.”’ The mobilization of positive and negative images of youth is always linked to particular political projects and visions in the context of changing social and economic structures.” (Sukarieh & Tannock, 2011, p. 688). One of the key concepts that contributed to a

positive image of youth or seeing them as an opportunity or asset versus a problem is the concept of human capital, this neoliberal approach to addressing this issue dominated the literature and the research field for some time producing several policies and directions aiming at maximizing the utilization of youth as a resource in the global economy. “Positive youth development is saturated with the language of human capital: youth are constantly referred to as ‘assets’ and ‘resources.’” (Sukarieh & Tannock, 2011, p. 679). This approach translated into focusing on education, health and employment as the key issues related to youth so that they become productive members of the society; leading to the same image of youth being the helpless dependent stage that requires attention and support from the state either to become productive or to stay out of trouble.

From the UNESCO and the UN definitions, youth is allocated a certain age group, whether it is for statistical purposes or not is irrelevant as it does have huge impact on the quality of data produced and the policies that are developed based on the data. The concern here is the variation in developmental status, needs, interests, capabilities and possible contributions of a fifteen-year old and a twenty four year old. Furthermore, the concern grows bigger with the African Youth Charter categorization, where the gap is huge between fifteen years and thirty five years of age. These age categories pose many questions to the capability of these organizations to provide in depth analysis of youth status in the world, and even the reliability of the general data becomes at question due to the different natures of each sub-group. It also has huge impact on how the community and the State view these young people, to think of a thirty or a thirty-five year old as dependent or impulsive or trouble-maker is a big deficiency in the narrative.

Another aspect that needs to be explored is the globalization of youth narrative, to think that youth all around the world are the same and share the same experiences growing up, this is

of course not remotely true. It is undeniable that people around the world are coming closer together as a result of the digital age; youth might be listening to the same music, using the same social media tools, watching the same movies, and tweeting the same quotes. It is of absolute importance to note that the experiences of a fifteen year old in Egypt are very different from those in China, US, Brazil, India, Spain, Romania and Saudi Arabia. Each of these countries/regions has its own reality that makes the experiences very different. “The forms that adolescence takes within a given culture, let alone across cultures, are remarkable diverse and distinctive. Certainly there are some repeated themes in the biological, cognitive, and psychological imperatives of human development, and in common challenges brought on by the new global world of the 21st century. But these issues are adapted to the needs and exigencies of societies and are often transformed and given different meaning within distinctive cultural systems” (Brown & Larson, 2002, p. 2). Actually there is a huge difference in the experience of young people within the same country, factors such as rural or urban areas, socio-economic level, religious background, education status, and so on have various impacts on the experiences they undergo as young people and thus impacting to a great extent their decisions and who they become as adults.

Conclusion:

To conclude this part, there are several fallbacks to the youth narrative globally. First, there is a lack of a suitable definition to this phase, a definition that suits the nature of the developmental, biological, cognitive and psychosocial progress of each sub-group. Second, the tendency to portray this age-group or phase called youth in certain images depending on the agenda behind it, this tendency causes a lot of distortion to the real picture and thus more unclarity is added. Finally, the inclination to generalize the findings and the narrative which has

some impact on the policies to be applied across countries, regions, or the world; this inclination ignores all the factors that are specific to certain communities and circumstances. On top, of these issues there is the neoliberal approach to looking at this issue as an opportunity not as a problem which might seem as a positive change from the outside, however it adds more depth to the helpless, dependent image that this stage is portrayed in. Due to all these shortages, there is a need to conduct more qualitative research that gives more space for the voice of the youth. This research is trying to contribute to this work.

Overview of Egyptian Youth Discourse:

Most of the literature discussing Egyptian youth that the researcher could find was comprised of reports mainly prepared by International agencies in cooperation with Egyptian research institutions. While reports are informative and provide reliable information, they rely on quantitative methods to collect data which do not provide any in depth analysis or extensive data regarding certain issues. On top, most of the existing reports were issued before the revolution (see Abdelhay, 2005; El-Rouby, 2007; Handoussa, 2010; Popcouncil, 2011). For the reports that are dated 2011, the data was collected before the revolution (Popcouncil, 2011). Through the coming pages, some background of how youth are portrayed through these reports will be given. Also, a highlight of the Egyptian youth ministry's strategies and plans regarding youth will be discussed.

The age group of youth in Egypt is from 18 to 35 as defined by the youth policy, close to the age group of the African Youth Charter (UNDESA). However it is also interesting that there are overlaps between youth and children definition in some of the policies, "According to the

NDP² youth policy paper, young people are between the ages of 18 and 35 years old. However, it also mentions those who are between 6 and 18 years old. On the other hand, a document issued from the Supreme Council for Youth and Sport in May 1996 considered youth as being from 6-30 years old. The NCY³ differentiates between two groups: the age group from 6-18 years old (teenagers and children) and from 18-30 years old (Youth).” (Abdelhay, 2005, p. 7) With regards to the demographics of youth, according to the Egypt Human Development Report (2010), Egypt is experiencing the biggest youth population in the nation’s history (youth bulge) that began in 1995 and is expected to end in 2045. “This large cohort of young men and women in the age group 18 to 29 years is estimated at 23.5% of the total population in 2010, Or 19.8 million.” (Handoussa, 2010, p. 2) This can be perceived as a huge opportunity for Egypt or the biggest challenge the country is going through, and this perception depends on how youth are perceived, whether they are dependent or independent, whether they are unstable and need guidance or stable and can give back to the community and help in developing it.

The major challenges that Egyptian youth suffer from are poverty, unemployment, access to education and high dropout rate and huge differentiation in services based on location; around 60% of young people live in rural areas and the rest in urban or informal urban areas (Popcouncil, 2011). “27% of young people aged 18-29 have not completed basic education (17% have dropped out of school before completing basic education and 10% have never enrolled in school)” (Handoussa, 2010, p. 4) Several factors impact this data, such as socio-economic status, location whether in rural or urban areas and gender. Also, access to education doesn’t mean access to equal quality of education as there are huge gaps between public, experimental and

² NDP: National Democratic Party. Was the dominating party during Mubarak’s ruling time, and was dissolved in 2011 after the 25th of January revolution.

³ NCY: National Council of Youth. Was established in 2005 to focus on all youth-related issues and coordinate between the different involved ministries. It was dissolved in 2011 after the 25th of January revolution.

private schools in Egypt, higher education and vocational education suffer from quality issues as well. (Popcouncil, 2011) Poverty and unemployment are connected together, “youth unemployment is the dominant form of unemployment in Egypt and the most serious kind of youth exclusion. At least 90% of the unemployed are aged less than 30 years and many more are affected by underemployment.” (Handoussa, 2010, p. 6) There are definitely other issues that impact youth in Egypt, such as gender issues, corruption, social and cultural pressures ...etc.

When it comes to civic engagement and how youth participate in their community, several points need to be taken into consideration. First, according to several reports, the civic engagement of young people in Egypt was very low with only 2% of the youth population engaged in activities serving their communities; most of them are short-term volunteer work. According to the Survey of Young People in Egypt (2011), 40% of young people’s time is spent on personal maintenance, while 30% of their time is spent on leisure activities (watching television, meeting friends, talking on the phone, using the internet, reading and listening to music), 26% of their time is spent on schooling and commuting (Popcouncil, 2011). Second, some of the surveys showed that youth hold the state responsible for providing better services and resolving the issue of unemployment. Third, in the Egypt Human Development Report, the issue of youth’s voice is not heard was discussed briefly, “A related hurdle is the apathy among youth towards political participation, borne of the conviction that their voice will largely remain ignored.” (Handoussa, 2010, p. 16) And this issue is not just in the political arena but also related to civic engagement and reform suggestions, “Another problem that was revealed by doing this research was the missing voice of youth within the Egyptian society. Youth are not provided with the appropriate channels of communication and are not able to voice their ideas and their concerns towards their participation in the civil society. They are also not represented in

accordance to their large number, but rather treated as any other faction in the Egyptian society.” (Mahgoub & Morsi, 2013, p. 9)

While some of the above data might be applicable to youth in Egypt, it still doesn't come close to explain how the 25th of January revolution happened and the youth activities after the revolution. While youth before the revolution are described as non-willing to participate in the social and political life, however they were more than willing to spend nights in the street and to go through severe hardships in order to achieve their dreams. While the 25th of January events started with a few of the young political activists, thousands of young people joined them even from the first day and actively participated during the 18 days of the revolution and throughout the uprisings that occurred in 2012 and 2013. “The Population Council's Survey on Young People in Egypt (SYPE) 10 in 2009, which covered a nationally-representative sample of 15,029 young people (ages 10-29), concluded that young people in Egypt are disengaged and that only 2% of the youth population participate in volunteer work. This stands in contrast to the unprecedented citizen engagement by youth during and following the January 25 Revolution and to a gradual shift in the definition of volunteerism that had been taking place in the period leading up to it, which points to a gap in our understanding of volunteerism in Egypt.” (UNV, 2013, p. 6). What this report is suggesting is a very important point, there is a chance that many youth activities were not recorded by the reports issued before the revolution, there must have been some youth involvement within the community that can explain their understanding of the community needs, their capability to work with different sects of the community, and their experience with field work.

It is also important to note that after the revolution events, youth have become more engaged within the public life, not just in the political sector but also in the social sector.

“Participants underscored a spike in youth activism and citizen engagement through groups and initiatives that remain un-institutionalized.” (BritishCouncil & GerhartCenter, 2013, p. 39). This phenomenon in itself is an indicator that some of the barriers between youth and community participation were related to the corruption and marginalization that many sects in the country suffered from, not just youth. Also, the fact that many of the youth chose to operate outside of institutions is an indicator that there are barriers in the laws governing those institutions or there might be other factors, this in itself requires some research effort. What is clear here is that the Egyptian government needs to re-examine the structural issues that are really hindering youth from participating in public life. Another barrier was the cultural norms that youth were expected to follow, “The reason for non-participating is the absence of a role for the family or the school in political up-bringing. The role of the family is reduced to making a living and of the school to giving a certificate. The value of concern with collective welfare, public affairs and sense of responsibility ranks last among the concerns of the family, and naturally enough, of the youth too, while priority is given to economic values. Cabinet Information and Decision Support Center (2009)” (Handoussa, 2010, p. 109). However there was a significant shift in those norms after the revolution, where the sense of ownership was renewed and people wanted to do something, this was clear in the initiatives that focused on cleaning the streets for example, and it is clear in the spike in youth activism.

Within this context, it is important to examine the youth policies, legislations and institutions before and after the 25th of January revolution, to understand how policy makers and decision makers view the youth and the strategies they adopted. From an institutional perspective, there has been several changes in the public bodies that focus on youth, “In 1999 the Supreme Council for Youth and Sports (El-Maglis El-alla Lele-Shabab Weriada), which was

established in 1979, was closed when the Ministry of Youth was established. The latter was dissolved in 2005 when two national councils were established: one for youth and the other for sport.” (Abdelhay, 2005, p. 18). After the revolution, the NCY was dissolved and the Ministry of Youth and Sports was re-established again. The main reason behind that change was not announced, however since most of the work done in the youth sector was implemented through the National Democratic Party (NDP) representatives then the dissolving of the NCY can be understood from a political standpoint rather than a strategic decision. Having said that, there is no understanding yet how this decision has affected the work and focus on the youth sector. And despite the fact that one of the key goals of any government that came after the revolution was to focus on youth, there has been no mention of the reason behind this restructuring and there are no benefits seen so far, and as it will be shown later from the current Ministry of Youth strategy where there seems to be no focus at all and no work done to integrate or continue the efforts done before the revolution (if there were any). On top, there is no clear vision of how youth will be integrated into society.

From the legislative perspective, in the 2014 constitution, third chapter entitled “Rights, freedoms, and national duties”, Article No. 82 stipulates that: “The State shall guarantee the provision of care to the youth and youngsters, shall endeavor to discover their talents; develop their cultural, scientific, psychological, physical and creative abilities, encourage their engagement in group and volunteer activities and enable them to participate in public life.” It is also worth mentioning that in the same chapter, Article No. 81 defines the age group of children to be from zero until 18 years old. Besides the constitution, there are some legislations that regulate certain issues related to youth, “The main legislation that organizes some aspects of youth policy in Egypt is the law No 77 issued in 1975, known as the law of the Popular Bodies

Responsible for Caring for Youth and Sport (Elhye'atte Eshabie'a Elamela Fi Re'yatte Eshabab Wa Rieada) (Elgarieda Errasmeaa, No. 31, 1975). The republican decree 51 / 1978 in its first article modified the name of the law and replaced “the responsible bodies” by “public bodies”. The law defines these bodies as: «All groups that are constant, organized and non-profitable, whose aims are to care for youth and develop their skills through providing sport, national, social, spiritual and healthy services within the state public policy and the planning of the Supreme Council for Youth and Sports.” (Abdelhay, 2005, p. 17) The interesting thing about this law and the section in the constitution is that youth are portrayed as dependent beings that need care and support, with no mention of their contribution to the community or any other social roles, it is almost implying that Egyptians until the age of 35 do not have any role in society and the state is expected to provide all the services they need. This is a very misleading picture of life in Egypt, and it is destructive to maintain this perspective while drafting a youth policy and this will become very clear when the policies are discussed below. Abdelhay in his report concludes: “It is obvious that there is no well-defined legislation that looks at youth from a comprehensive perspective. During discussions among a number of officials in the National Council of Youth (Almaglis Elqaumy Leshabab), it was suggested that Egypt urgently needs a youth law like the “Child Law”, but the problem of overlapping between the jurisdiction of ministries and agencies was raised and hindered this proposal.” (Abdelhay, 2005, p. 17)

When looking at the youth policies before and after the 25th of January revolution, it is clear that the above confusion and lack of proper definition of youth is reflected in the policies. “A striking point in the formal definition of youth is that the confusion between youth and children. According to the NDP youth policy paper, young people are between the ages of 18 and 35 years old. However, it also mentions those who are between 6 and 18 years old. A document

issued from the Supreme Council for Youth and Sport in May 1996 considered youth as being from 6-30 years old, and they represent about 56.6% from the total population (The Shoura Council: 2000, P.10).” (Abdelhay, 2005, p. 19) While there is an argument that this confusion is due to the nature of the ministries that offer services to this age group, such as the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Higher Education, however it is also clear that there is no common vision that would guide the definitions, legislations and policies. Again, the approach seems to be problem-based not asset-based, meaning that the State perceives this youth bulge as a problem that needs to be fixed rather than an opportunity for Egypt to develop and prosper. Youth role in society is not mentioned clearly in any of the legislations/policies which reflect in public life. It is also undeniable that there were attempts to focus the efforts done in this area by creating the NCY, however these efforts were not properly documented, even though the policy developed by the NCY exists, the strategies and results achieved are not accessible. This is a key issue that was the concern of Abdelhay, the fluctuation in the institutions and policies focused on youth, “The national youth policy in Egypt is clearly echoed through several formal reports and documents that express the state’s policy. The most important one was the “National Youth policy” which was formulated in 2003-2004 by the National Democratic Party (NDP). Later, this policy was unfortunately neglected, though it was due to be adopted by the government and parliament. The other important documents are the ‘National Youth Plan for the Millennium’ (December 2000) and the documents on the establishment of youth higher institutions like the republican decree that established the National Council for Youth.” (Abdelhay, 2005, p. 6) In his report, there is a complaint from the lack of vision and cross-sectorial focus on youth issues from the different involved institutions, and this is clearly stated in his conclusion: “Youth policy in Egypt urgently needs a common vision and strategy, and without this strategy, every action or programme will

just have a limited impact. Egypt has specific ministries and institutions responsible for youth since a long time, and there is a considerable effort to formulate a national youth policy that has cross-sectorial policies. However, it is not obvious that Egypt has a cross-sectorial and decentralized NYP with effective action. It can be argued that there is a restricted sectorial NYP confined to the NCY responsible for Youth.” (Abdelhay, 2005, p. 32)

The current Ministry of Youth has published on its website the strategic framework, goals and initiatives. While the strategic framework is very much in line with the article in the constitution which is normal, the strategic goals require some attention as they explain a lot about how the State perceives youth. Some of the strategic goals of the ministry (2013-2017) are: Maximizing the benefit from free time - Guaranteeing freedoms - Developing the cultural and health awareness - Building the mental image of the ministry - Raising the professional, managerial and technical efficiency of workers (Ministry of Youth and Sports, n.d.). There are two major concerns on these goals; the first goal shows complete ignorance of the youth status in Egypt, who are not able to stay in school because they need to work, where reports in Egypt show that youth from the age of 15 to 24 comprise almost 53% of the labor force in Egypt (ILO, CAPMAS, & IPEC, 2012), youth in Egypt do not have free time, however even if they did it is very strange that the ministry would choose this wording, a more suitable and realistic wording could have been utilizing the unexplored capabilities and potentials within youth or something in that direction rather than just filling their time. The other concern is that the implementation of many of those goals requires the involvement of other ministries beside the ministry of youth, which basically means that the ministry of youth will act as a coordinator to ensure that these goals are achieved. On the website, there is no mention of how the partnerships with the other

ministries are developed and thus there are no indicators to prove that these goals will be achieved at all.

Other comments from observing the ministry's website are related to the function of the website and the information that is available:

- There is no definition of youth age or any information about youth in Egypt. Thus any organization/ministry that needs to know more about the youth sector in Egypt will never receive any information from the Ministry of Youth website.
- One of the targets of the website is for youth to use it to know more about the Ministry and its activities; however traffic on the website is almost zero.
- The organization structure section on the website is empty.
- The laws and regulations section on the website is empty.
- The biggest three initiatives that the ministry was planning on doing were: Developing youth centers and the facilities of the Ministry of Youth – Executing programs and activities within youth centers and activating the ministry's directions – The initiative of training and employment (Ministry of Youth and Sports, n.d.).
- There is no English translation on the website.
- The Facebook page is inactive, last post was in July 2013.

It is worth noting that there are over 4,000 youth centers across Egypt, when there is a key initiative that mentioned developing those centers, it is important to specify developing them in what sense and how and where the money will come from, and whether this is the proper time to spend a huge amount of money on buildings that are mainly not utilized.

Conclusion:

It is clear from all of the above that there are several challenges facing the youth sector in Egypt. On the ground, youth are suffering from difficult conditions in life on all levels. On the institution level, there hasn't been any consistency in terms of the governing body chosen to address youth issues, authorities have alternated between a national council and ministry for almost two decades now, and currently there is a Ministry for youth and sports. On the legislative level, there has been contradicting legislations that confuse the definition of youth in Egypt and confuse it partly with children; on the other hand there is no mention of how youth are expected to contribute to society in anyway. On a strategy level, the current Ministry of youth has not issued a new youth policy or strategic plan yet, however it has published on its websites some strategic goals and initiatives that indicate a direction towards infrastructure and an orientation towards training and capacity building. While these are understandable strategies, it does seem that the narrative of youth is still problem-based; there is no discussion of how they can add value into the society and how they can contribute to their own future and the future of the country. There is also a strong narrative that youth did not participate in public life, and did not engage in volunteer activities or any other form of civic engagement activities. This narrative changed after the revolution to reflect the reality on the street, recording a spike in the engagement of youth in all forms of public life.

From the above, it seems that there are structural issues that are causing youth marginalization and ignoring of their needs and added value, some of these issues are related to systems but others are related to culture and this is the reason behind presenting all this background on youth narrative. An important factor that does play a role in this context is civil society, where it does play a role in the culture aspect and can definitely support or fight unjust systems. The below section will focus on examining civil society, the global and local narrative.

2. Role of Civil Society in Peacebuilding:

In this section, the definition of civil society in general will be presented, then a discussion of the role of civil society in peacebuilding process, and an overview of Egyptian civil society will be shown. In the end a summary of this section is portrayed.

Definition of Civil Society:

It is not easy to define civil society, however in a broad sense some define it as the “the web of social relations that exist in the space between the state, the market, and the private life of families and individuals” (Barnes, 2005, p. 7). Other definitions include ideas like, civil society is all the entities and organizations and communities that are not state governed, that civil society comprises of all the non-governmental and not-for profit organizations. (Rucht, 2014) These definitions raise a question of, so what are the organizations included within civil society? Some argue that it should include representations of all elements within society; with the foundation based upon non-governmental organizations (NGOs), voluntary charities, community-based organizations; and includes several other organizations such as: youth and student unions organizations, women’s groups and associations, environmental and human rights movements, political parties and movements, religious institutions and faith-based organizations, private foundations and philanthropy, media, cultural associations, and educational institutes (Barnes, 2005). Some might not agree to include some of the above mentioned entities within civil society; it remains an academic and a social debate. Another debate is related to the actual boundaries that exist within society to have such clear cut definitions, societies are more complex and the inter-relations between different organizations is countless, “there are many

overlaps between CSOs and the state, be they direct (financial, personnel) or indirect (through political parties)” (Kopecký & Mudde , 2010, p. 8)

The rise of civil society and its role in the state nations was in the 1990’s, and it was in response to International NGOs support to the civil society in hope that it can help nations transition from authoritarian rule to a more democratic state. One example of the support of INGOs to civil society was in the World Conference on Education For All (WCEFA) that took place in 1990, where NGOs and other institutions from civil society were invited and asked to be involved in the conference and in the decision making process, up to that moment in time INGOs and International agencies were the key players in developing and enforcing global policies of education. (Kendall, 2009)

Another way to define civil society is through its function within society, some see that its function is “cultivating civic values and practices” (Barnes, 2005, p. 8), others see that it has a political role in providing the space for citizens to engage in public life and voice their interests through certain channels of communication with the state. Another perspective is based on the wider view of society and the sub-systems that operate within it, where civil society with the social dimension it represents can balance the power of the capitalist market-based economies and the authoritarian states. (Rucht, 2014) Based on that, civil society can exercise its right to impact state policies, the communication channel being the Parliament and its representatives. It also can act as a monitoring and evaluation entity over the work of the state executive bodies and even private sector corporations.

An important concept that must be brought up when discussing civil society is the values and principles upon which it operates. This has led many researchers to debate the link between

civil society and “civility”, what happens when part of the society is “uncivil”, and what happens to a “civil” society in an “uncivil” state or economy? Here Rucht invites scholars to adopt a paradigm shift, “a shift from the concept of civil society (defined as a distinct space or sub-system) to practices of civility in society as a whole” (Rucht, 2014, p. 18). This idea shifts our attention from counting the number of organizations within a given civil society to actually observing their practices and its impact on society in general, and these practices reflect the values and principles for which they stand for; thus shifting the criteria from quantitative to qualitative. An important question must be asked here, what defines “civility”? What are the key values and principles that can form a foundation for a peaceful society? How can these values be practiced in all the sub-systems of the society, on the economic, legislative, and policy levels?

Role of Civil Society in Peace Building:

The idea of “civility” comes to mind when thinking of the role of civil society during times of conflict. Choosing to handle any conflict, whether internal or external, in a peaceful or violent way is partially the responsibility of civil society, and sometimes is led by civil society groups. ‘While most would argue that armed groups are not a part of civil society per se, these groups are often supported by elements in civil society that champion the cause and view armed struggle as legitimate – further indicating the fuzzy lines of civility around CSOs.’ (Barnes, 2005, p. 10). This does not deny the fact that CSOs are a powerful mass that can impact peacebuilding, especially at this time in the world where conflicts are not just on state levels, but exist between communities and groups within the same nation. “The Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict developed this idea into the distinction between structural prevention (strategies to address root causes) and the operational prevention (strategies to impede the emergence, escalation and spread of violence).” (Barnes, 2005, p. 12) This kind of distinction

between structural prevention and operational prevention allows for the emergence of a framework that defines the structural issues promoting violence within each community and how to address these structural issues. This kind of work requires partnerships between different civil society actors on a local level, and on a regional and global level as well.

The Global civil society that is forming due to the above awareness that is spreading and due to technology advancement, is a growing power that can have impact on global policies, it has enough power balance to negotiate with states and corporations who do understand the power of the people. This can be seen in the rising global movements addressing environmental issues, health issues, human rights issues and so on; for example the climate changes movement and the HIV/AIDS awareness campaign. And the success of these movements and campaigns is not only in gaining popularity and people support but also in being able to negotiate better terms for the causes they are defending.

While acknowledging the global factor that is powerful, it is important to maintain focus on local CSOs because they are the key players in their own societies, especially during time of conflict. NGOs and other civil society groups can have significant impact during time of conflict, due to many reasons; they may be respected in the community for their experience and services, they may have more creative ways of addressing the issue and convincing the conflicting parties, they may be able to interfere in a more non-formal way that can facilitate dialogue between the two groups. In Barnes' paper, several interventions that can be done by CSOs during all stages of conflict are mentioned; they will be listed below as examples of how CSOs can have influence in their society. Based on the paper, there are several stages of conflict and for each stage there is a role that CSOs can play, for the sake of this research the focus is mainly on structural prevention which is in the first stage. Before the conflict arises, there is need for Structural prevention

interventions to ensure conflict is not reached. CSOs role could be to address issues that promote structural violence in the community; such as discrimination, prejudice, exclusion, marginalization and any form of injustice. This can be done by promoting dialogue and understanding and providing alternatives to conflict resolution, such as mediation. The remaining stages include escalation of violence where the role is to highlight this (early warning) and lobby for support to prevent it; during the conflict where the role is related to negotiations and providing safe spaces for conflicting parties; and towards the end of conflict, the role becomes more about consolidating peace efforts and putting measures to prevent reoccurrence of war or violence.

While CSOs have a viable role in peace building, it is important to remember that they cannot achieve peace on their own, there are other players like governments and politicians and military leaders, who need to be on board the process to reach positive outcomes. CSOs need to be able to persuade these parties to come to the table and negotiate, and need to ensure people support all the time to maintain power balance. From here comes the importance of forming partnerships and networks on a local, regional and global level; “the effectiveness of local grassroots/community-based organizations working on the ground can be enhanced when they are supported by wider regional CSO networks” (Serbin, 2005, p. 52) The combination of local CSOs who have experience and knowledge on the ground, and regional or global organizations who have connections and can communicate with some global actors, can be a powerful combination towards an effective intervention in times of conflict and violence. Serbin in his paper is inviting for structured partnerships that are planned and done strategically rather than ad-hoc partnerships or collaborations that might not be as effective.

Overview of Civil Society in Egypt:

In 2007, it was estimated that there are 21,500 CSOs that are registered with the Ministry of Social Solidarity (MOSS), this Ministry is in charge of managing the NGOs in Egypt and ensuring that they abide by the governing law number 84 of 2002. (Khallaf, 2010). In 2011, it was indicated in the CSO sustainability index that, “there are over 45,000 registered CSOs with approximately 30,000 civic associations; 13,000 agricultural, housing, and water cooperatives; 5,400 youth and sports centers; 115 trade and industry chambers; 24 professional syndicates; and 22 unions” (USAID, 2011, p. 9) Regarding the law, it seems to be rather strict, imposing penalties and fines on NGOs for non-compliance with the law, and enforcing some restrictions on foreign funds to NGOs. Currently, there seems to be some concerns on whether this law will change and what implications these changes will have on the current NGO sector, which is resulting in the fact that many unregistered groups are moving towards other forms of registration other than NGO, this is mainly after the government announced that the deadline for civil organizations to register under the MOSS was November 10, 2014. (ICNL, 2014)

Some research shows that the organizational capacity of the NGOs in Egypt is not high; there are variations between the urban and rural capacities, and between NGOs in Cairo and upper Egypt, also there are variations between representation offices of International NGOs and the local NGOs; “In many associations, board members do not understand their roles, and assume executive functions and manage day-to-day operations. Claims of nepotism and corruption are common, including favoring family members, relatives, and friends for employment opportunities and/or service provision, as well as using restricted project funding for non-project purposes.” (USAID, 2011, pp. 11-12) Most of the time, NGOs cannot maintain full-time employees due to irregularity and unpredictable funds.

Regarding financial capabilities, most CSOs receive funding from INGOs, international agencies, local and international corporations and community members; the funds are inconsistent and short-term which leads to many challenges and obstacles. Over and above, the Law 84 of 2002 prohibits any organization from receiving any money from foreign organizations without prior approval from the Ministry of Insurance and Social Affairs (MISA) (USAID, 2011); however the process of approval is a very long process that can take years which poses a threat on the financial resources of some CSOs. With regards to creating relations and bonds among the CSOs, there were several federations, councils, and unions formed, their effectiveness is under question, and cross-sectorial cooperation is not high. With regards to the relations with government and business, “there is a need to expand, multiply and improve the channels of dialogue between the government and CSOs, whose relations are based on unequal power. The level of cooperation between civil society and business remains fairly weak, with a few exceptions” (CIVICUS, 2005, p. 2), however the report does recognize the rise of the concept of corporate social responsibility (CSR) in Egypt which indicates an increase in cooperation between CSOs and the business sector. Also, there is a mention in the reports of a rising tendency to form coalitions, especially after the 25th of January revolution, to advocate for or against certain laws and policies, for example: “The Egyptian Organization for Human Rights formed a network of approximately 127 CSOs composed of political and human rights activists, representatives of CSOs, political parties, and law professors to actively lobby for reforms to a new draft law that would nationalize the civil society sector” (USAID, 2011, p. 13).

When it comes to public image, many small and medium size CSOs do not have the capability or resources to manage media campaigns or any other marketing campaign; while the big local CSOs such as The Food Bank or Misr El Kheir Foundation and others have been able to

sustain a rather good image of CSOs in Egypt. However towards the end of 2011, the government launched an aggressive campaign against NGOs in general with accusations of foreign agendas and treason, which confused the Egyptian community about the whole sector and raised a lot of questions on the corruption level within civil society. (USAID, 2011)

Conclusion:

In conclusion, civil society is a complex term that has several definitions; that try to define its form, whether it is a subsystem in society or a cross-cutting system, that try to define its role in society, and to define the values that govern it. From that concept of values, the idea of “civil” rises to question, where scholars have debated the part that civility plays in this scope, and what to do with uncivil societies or groups. From all this debate, it is safe to conclude that civil society is an important component in any society, especially in this region where CSOs are increasing and gaining strength more and more. Research shows that civil society can have a role during conflict times and can contribute to the peace building process. Its role as well is essentially related to structural prevention which is working within the community to eradicate all the causes of structural violence, such as unequal distribution of resources, human rights issues, discrimination and prejudice. The role of local CSOs is essential, however it can be strengthened through partnerships and building networks with regional and global CSOs as well. The civil society in Egypt is suffering from many challenges related to legal status, to funding constraints, to organizational sustainability and public image issues. These challenges are impeding the progress of civil society in Egypt. Now, some examples of CSOs across the world that have contributed to the peace building process in their context will be presented below.

3. Global Case Studies of CSOs Contributing to Peace Building Process:

Below two case studies will be presented about two CSOs that were formed during conflict times and were able to contribute to the peace building process and voice the needs of the groups they were representing.

The case of The Kosovar Youth Council:

In the 1990s, the former Yugoslavia was disbanded and the republic of Kosovo suffered from this war. In 1999, a terrible war went on and almost 850,000 people mainly of Albanian ethnicity fled their homes, thousands were killed or went missing, hundreds were imprisoned, the country was at a great shock. With all these tragic events, the majority of the country's population was youth, young people between the ages of fifteen and twenty were almost 50% of the population. This is when the Kosovo Youth Council (KYC) was established, "some twenty thousand of these youth, in six Albanian refugee camps, got together and formed their own youth councils to improve conditions in these camps by organizing sports and music events, improving safety and cleanliness, distributing landmine-awareness information, and providing psychosocial counseling for younger children" (Kurhasani, 2005, p. 168). KYC continued to function even after the youth were sent back to their home villages, they maintained a strong network and continued to offer services and support to the youth in Kosovo. KYC was open to all ethnicities and thus it was perceived as a neutral body, which included young and adult members, and served many people who were suffering from the trauma of war.

One of the most important things they did was conduct a research on the status of young people in Kosovo, which revealed many of the hardships that youth were facing. That research showed that youth were not involved in the decision-making and policy making process, which resulted in their marginalization, which led to frustration and thus use of violence by the youth

against each other. Based on that KYC started several initiatives trying to understand and address the problems that youth are facing. One of the key initiatives that evolved was a project called “Strengthening Youth Advocacy in Kosovo”, the main idea was to bring youth together to formulate issues that mattered to them and advocate for them, “such links crossed gender, rural/urban, and ethnic lines” (Kurhasani, 2005, p. 171). This was one of the few projects planned to bring Albanians and Serbs together since the war, however they were able to work together and develop youth advocacy campaigns. Even though these efforts did not affect the political process which remained difficult, it did lay a foundation towards peace-building and reconciliation in areas that suffered from extreme violence. “The experience of KYC in these activities has shown that young people have a lot to say and can be leading actors to improve their own lives and situations, and that of people in their communities. When given the chance, they have participated with enthusiasm, pointing to the need for these extended activities.” (Kurhasani, 2005, p. 172)

The Case of Children’s Learning Services in Sierra Leone:

In 2002, the civil war in Sierra Leone ended, leaving behind many citizens severely traumatized from the violence they were subjected to. A citizen decided to start working with children teaching them different subjects and faith-building songs. In 2001, she was able to found the Children’s Learning Service (CLS) “as a Christian community-based organization focused on child development. The aim was to give support in three key areas: quality basic education, peacebuilding, and nutrition security” (Kamara & Neal, 2005, p. 258). They introduced basic concepts like numeracy and literacy, integrating peace education and teaching skills needed for resolving daily conflicts. They provided trainings for teachers and parents as well. The program founder resigned from her job and started working full-time in the project.

After some research done through other organizations, they found out that many children were involved in the violence that occurred against their will; “once they had gone through the processes of demobilization, disarmament, and reintegration, it was official policy to return them to school or come other training institution” (Kamara & Neal, 2005, p. 258). Therefore the schools were filled with ex-soldiers, who were traumatized and lost all their self-esteem. The schools faced the challenge of maintaining discipline and promoting a culture of coexistence and tolerance. CLS started with stress management and trauma healing activities, before moving to peacebuilding and coexistence.

CLS has collaborated with several partners, including local CBOs, the ministry of education, and also regional networks or CBOs, such as the National Collaborative Network for Peace Building in Sierra Leone (NCP-SL) and West African Network for Peace Building (WANEP). Through these partners, they were introduced to a peace building program that included peer mediation⁴ component. In 2003, CLS was invited to work in a town where violent outbreaks occurred between students of two secondary schools. They trained students, teachers and administrators on active nonviolence and peer mediation. “CLS and education officials alike are now determined to give every school the opportunity to set up a Peace Club and sign a students’ peace accord” (Kamara & Neal, 2005, p. 260) It is worth noting that right after the war, all the efforts of peace building were directed towards adults, no one was thinking of schools, it was only the founder of this program who saw a need for children to transform their experiences into positive fuel towards building and maintaining peace. CLS also is unique in the holistic approach to the issue, where food is linked to peace building, they see that food shortage can cause violence, and thus they do work on resolving these issues in the schools they work in

⁴ Peer Mediation: is a form of conflict resolution, where student leaders are trained to help their peers on working out their problems and resolving the conflicts.

before starting the peace building program. Peace Clubs and peer mediation have become very popular and have the full support of school administrators and principals, of students and of teachers. The impact is clear on the community and the violence outbreaks have decreased.

(Kamara & Neal, 2005)

Conclusion:

These two cases were shown to demonstrate the possibility of deep impact in society to occur because of CSOs and their work on peace building. The world is full of violent conflicts; it is not possible for governments to be able to handle not only the conflict but also the implications of violence on society. It is of absolute necessity for the CSOs to take part in the healing process and rebuilding trust and communication, and the above two examples show that peace education is a very powerful tool to accomplish that. Education here is meant in a broader sense of the word so not only related to literacy and sciences, not only within formal context, not only to children and young people. Peace education can help the world not only in surviving the conflict and what happens after it, it can help in preventing the conflict from ever happening. “Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defenses of peace must be constructed⁵” (Jones, 2005, p. 245)

4. Overview of Peace Education:

Definition of Peace Education:

There are several definitions to peace education, UNICEF defines it as: “the process of promoting the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values needed to bring about behavior changes that will enable children, youth and adults to prevent conflict and violence, both overt and structural; to resolve conflict peacefully; and to create the conditions conducive to peace,

⁵ Permeable of the Constitution of the United Nations, Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

whether at an intrapersonal, interpersonal, intergroup, national or international level” (Fountain, 1999, p. 1). It is clear from the above definition that there are different layers or levels within Peace Education; first level is related to understanding the roots of the conflict, second level is related to understanding the alternatives to conflict and learning new skills of conflict resolution and dialogue, third level is related to learning more about human rights, international and local laws and environment friendly approaches to promote a more peaceful approach to life in general. Another close categorization is done by “Gavriel Salomon (2002) summarizes current peace education activities under four categories: peace education ‘mainly as a matter of changing mindset’, peace education ‘mainly as a matter of cultivating a set of skills’, peace education as ‘mainly a matter of promoting human rights (particularly in the Third World countries), and finally, peace education as a ‘matter of environmentalism, disarmament, and the promotion of a culture of peace’” (Danesh, 2006, p. 56).

Another categorization of Peace Education is related to how peace is perceived whether it is inner or outer peace, “Inner peace concerns a state of being and thinking about others, e.g. holding them in reverence, while outer peace processes apply to the natural environment, the culture, international relations, civic communities, families and individuals.” (Harris, 2007, p. 7) Harris also argues that there are different perspectives to peace, from international or social or inter-cultural or civil society or psychological or environmental aspects, all these aspects focus on the peace process from their own perspective and together they form an integrated image of how the peace process is formed: “Within the international sphere it can be construed as a peace treaty, a ceasefire or a balance of power. Sociologists study cultural norms that legitimize non-violence and condemn violence. Intercultural peace implies interfaith dialogue, multicultural communication and so forth. Peace within civic society depends upon full employment,

affordable housing, ready access to health care, quality educational opportunities and fair legal proceedings. Psychologists concerned with interpersonal conflict provide awareness of positive interpersonal communication skills used to resolve differences. Environmentalists point to sustainable practices used by native cultures for thousands of years.” (Harris, 2007, p. 7).

Another dimension that is very important is the “negative peace” and “positive peace”, where negative peace is only related to the cease of fire or the stop of violence, while positive peace is concerned about removing all the root causes of violence within a given society (Fountain, 1999). This perspective explains why Peace education is concerned with human rights and social justice, because they are the main components to achieving true peace within the community, addressing the root causes of violence. This will be explained further in the components of Peace education.

These are all perspectives stemming from the definition of peace and how it is perceived through the lenses of the different sciences and the peace activists, from the perspective of education there has been continuous emphasis from the prominent figures of progressive education that “education is the fundamental method of social progress and reform” (Dewey, 1897, pp. 77-80). Dewey continues on “I believe that education is a regulation of the process of coming to share in the social consciousness; and that the adjustment of individual activity on the basis of this social consciousness is the only sure method of social reconstruction.” (Dewey, 1897, pp. 77-80). Realizing that education is the medium to achieve long-term social impact that becomes deeply rooted within the community, the question remains what kind of education is needed to promote peaceful values and build the required skills? Paulo Freire puts it simply in his book, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, “Any situation in which some individuals prevent others from engaging in the process of inquiry is one of violence. The means used are not important; to

alienate human beings from their own decision-making is to change them into objects.” (Freire, 1921, p. 85). This understanding of the impact of the education process and setting on the students is powerful, and is a call for all nations to really re-assess the values they are promoting implicitly within their education systems. As per the UNICEF report, it is recommended that peace education is integrated within the education system rather than becoming a separate subject: “Peace education, then, is best thought of not as a distinct ‘subject’ in the curriculum, nor as an initiative separate from basic education, but as process to be mainstreamed into all quality educational experiences (although the actual approach used to introduce peace education will be determined by local circumstances)” (Fountain, 1999, p. 2). That is also in line with the holistic approach to education which is adopted by the progressive school of thought, where it is believed that the student learns best when their natural development process is respected, when knowledge is not forced upon them but rather developed with them according to their interests, and when learning happens within social contexts that are relevant to their daily lives.

Therefore, Peace education combines knowledge that is constructed with the participation of the students, skills that are needed to progress through life without violence, and attitudes that are a natural product of the interactive and contextualized process that students undergo. This pedagogical approach rejects by nature the teacher-centered set-up because it is by design promoting violence as explained earlier by Freire. As an alternative, student-centered approaches are needed and encouraged: “Peace education theories of change include the following: peace education requires a pedagogical shift to more child-centered and shared-leadership methods; peace education permeates the systems within which it is taught” (Ashton, 2007, p. 42). A lot of work has been done in the area of student-centered approaches; Maria Montessori is one of the prominent figures in this field, with regards to this she has “urged the teachers to abandon all

authoritarian educative form, replacing these by a dynamic curriculum from which they could choose what to study. She was seeing that peace depend on an education that would free children's spirit, promote love to others and remove the climate of compulsory restriction.”

(Guetta, 2013, p. 167). This approach is also recommended within the UNICEF report:

“According to the 1990 Jomtien Declaration, “Active and participatory approaches are particularly valuable in assuring learning acquisition and allowing learner to reach their fullest potential.” Encouraging the use of interactive, learner-centered methods is a priority in the promotion of quality basic education.” (Fountain, 1999, p. 30).

Because of the social context nature of this approach, it is only natural that Peace education would differ from country to country, from region to region, even from one district or city to another. “Whereas the content of traditional subjects is well defined (i.e. pupils in every part of the world identify the subject from its content), the content of peace education is of a wider scope and is less defined. Even though their objectives may be similar, each society will set up a different form of peace education that is dependent on the issues at large, conditions, and culture, as well as the views and creativity of the educators (Bar-Tal, 2002, pp. 34–35).” (Harris, 2007, pp. 6,7). It is important to note that the above is applicable to all forms of education from public to informal to non-formal education settings. It is also important to note that many aspects of Peace education are mentioned in the 1990 World Declaration on Education for All which states: “Every person – child, youth and adult – shall be able to benefit from educational opportunities designed to meet their basic learning needs. These needs comprise both essential learning tools (such as literacy, oral expression, numeracy, and problem solving) and the basic learning content (such as knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes) required by human beings to be able to survive, to develop their full capacities, to live and work in dignity, to participate fully

in development, to improve the quality of their lives, to make informed decisions, and to continue learning ... The satisfaction of these needs empowers individuals in any society and confers upon them a responsibility to ... further the cause of social justice, ... to be tolerant towards social political and religious systems which differ from their own, ensuring that commonly accepted humanistic values and human rights are upheld, and to work for international peace and solidarity in an interdependent world.” (Fountain, 1999, p. 2)

Based on that, the UNICEF considers Peace education as an essential component of basic education, and thus is not only necessary in countries where there is conflict but everywhere: “It is UNICEF’s position that peace education has a place in all societies – not only in countries undergoing armed conflict or emergencies. Because lasting behavior change in children and adults only occurs over time, effective peace education is necessarily a long-term process, not a short-term intervention. While often based in schools and other learning environments, peace education should ideally involve the entire community.” (Fountain, 1999, p. 1). This statement postulates that the instilling of peace values and constructing a peaceful community is a long-term process. That is partly because of the nature of the peace building process and the fact that it requires tremendous work to address all the aspects mentioned above. Another important part as well is the nature of conflict, “sociologists have pointed out that conflicts are a necessary ingredient in social change (Simmel, 1956). Some social theorists, like Dahrendorf (1959), believe that conflict resolution is a myth because social conflicts are inherent in the very nature of social organization and structure.” (Harris, 2007, p. 7). While this is partially true, peace educators often view conflict as an opportunity for further growth within the community, they also realize that “unattended conflicts can become conflagrations, as happened in Rwanda in 1994, whereas conflicts that are managed non-violently can be the source of growth and positive

change, as in the case of Gandhi's salt march in India in 1948." (Harris, 2007, p. 7). Therefore, conflict from peace educators' perspective is seen as a benefit, an opportunity to learn more, and a risk to society if left unattended.

In conclusion, peace education has several definitions depending on the definition of peace that it is based upon, and based upon the role of education in society. It has been proved so far that peace education requires a pedagogical shift from teacher-centered approach to student-centered approach which would have great impact on how curricula were developed and practices within the classroom. There is a call to transform education systems into peace education systems where the peace component is integrated in all curricula, so it is more of a paradigm shift. To explore this idea further, some scholars and International agencies created models of peace education introducing the framework that could be the foundation of a curriculum. Below one model will be presented with all its components, this model will form the theoretical framework that will be used in analyzing this case study.

Ian Harris Model of Peace Education:

"Ian Harris (2002) identifies ten goals for effective peace education: to appreciate the richness of the concept of peace; to address fears; to provide information about security systems; to understand violent behavior; to develop intercultural understanding; to provide for a future orientation; to teach peace as a process; to promote a concept of peace accompanied by social justice; to stimulate a respect for life; and to end violence (p. 20)." (Danesh, 2006, p. 56). Based on these goals, there have been several models of Peace Education; each model is formed of a set of modules. For this research, the model proposed by Harris will be adopted, "At the beginning of the twenty-first century controversies surrounding the word 'peace' in conjunction with concerns about a multitude of different forms of violence have led to five separate types of peace

education: international education, human rights education, development education, environmental education and conflict resolution education. Each branch of this peace education family has different theoretical assumptions about the problems of violence it addresses, different peace strategies it recommends and different goals it hopes to achieve.” (Harris, 2007, p. 8). The reason behind choosing this model is the fact that the key components highlighted are in line with most of the other models, however Harris has done considerable efforts in clarifying the components and linking them, for example in the UNICEF report similar families or fields are highlighted “A number of educational initiatives have areas of overlap with peace education, and with each other. These include children’s rights/human rights education, education for development, gender training, global education, life skills education, landmine awareness, and psychosocial rehabilitation. Each can be thought of as providing another lens or perspective through which to examine how peace can be ‘mainstreamed’ in basic education.” (Fountain, 1999, p. 7).

a) *International Education:*

There are two main aspects to this field within Peace education, the first is related to understanding international laws, the inter-state divisions and how they impact the world peace situation, and the state laws that regulate security and interstate peace. These studies are important to understand how wars start over territory divisions and imaginary man-made borders, and it would also help in constructing a new narrative of the “other”, whether it is a neighboring country or a country in conflict with the students’ country. “Global peace educators provide an understanding of how nation states construct security for their citizens. This type of peace education is also known as world order studies (Diaz et al., 1999).” (Harris, 2007, p. 9).

Within this context, one of the important topics is the power dynamics and how they are used to

manipulate people's emotions and generate more violence, "Power is sought to ensure safety and peace for oneself and one's group. However, because power at best provides limited peace based on the dichotomous concepts of otherness and contention, it is usually open to abuse and gives rise to new conflicts and wars." (Danesh, 2006, p. 65)

The second aspect of International education is globalization, to understand the positive and negative dimensions of globalization, and again how it impacts the power dynamics of national states. "There are three types of globalization: economic (particularly transnational corporations and the creation of a consumer-dominated global middle class), public order (governments working together on common problems such as health and environmental problems) and popular (campaigns by grassroots organizations such as Amnesty International, Greenpeace and Medecins sans Frontieres)." (Harris, 2007, p. 9). While globalization can be one of the key factors of the spread of Peace education, however it is also playing a major role in increasing religious extremism, violence and discrimination. So the real question becomes, how can it be used to drive the momentum towards building peaceful communities? Another important question is how to define the global citizen, what are the main characteristics of this type of citizenship?

b) Human Rights Education:

"This approach to peace is known as 'peace through justice'" (Harris, 2007, p. 11). And its main goal is to accept and respect others, realize the human commonalities shared by all different groups, and adopt a caring approach towards all these groups based on the values of human rights. There is a human tendency to label anyone who is different or holds a different opinion or approach as the "enemy", there is also a tendency to label groups in general and generate stereotypes that are usually not realistic or true. "Peace educators in these contexts

attempt to replace enemy images with understandings of common heritage and break through a process of numbing and denial about atrocities committed in intractable conflicts (Feuerverger, 2001).” (Harris, 2007, p. 11). The target is to reduce all ethnic, religious, political, ideological and gender-based forms of discrimination. This is achieved through understanding commonalities and differences, engaging in dialogue, sharing human experiences and finally creating new solutions for co-existence. It is also essential to understand that “abuse of rights and the struggle to eliminate that abuse lie at the heart of many violent conflicts.” (Harris, 2007, p. 11).

c) Development Education:

This field in Peace education focuses on positive peace, the root causes of its absence and how it can be achieved. Johan Galtung, a Norwegian peace researcher who started the intellectual work done in the field in the 1960s, defines positive peace as: “Positive peace is a condition where non-violence, ecological sustainability and social justice remove the causes of violence. Positive peace requires both the adoption of a set of beliefs by individuals and the presence of social institutions that provide for an equitable distribution of resources and peaceful resolution of conflicts. Galtung also pointed out how structural violence, the inequitable denial of resources, causes violence.” (Harris, 2007, p. 12). Based on this definition, the development education focuses on poverty, equal distribution of resources and eliminating all forms of social injustice. “The goal is to build peaceful communities by promoting an active democratic citizenry interested in equitably sharing the world’s resources.” (Harris, 2007, p. 12). Students study and discuss the above components of social injustice and create new development strategies to eliminate these components. A major concern is also to include the people suffering from social injustice in the planning and implementation process, to avoid issues of social

marginalization and monopoly of resources by the “elites”. “Peace educators promote a vision of positive peace that motivates people to struggle against injustice.” (Harris, 2007, p. 12)

d) *Environmental Education:*

“The goals of environmental peace education include teaching environmental understanding so that a peace literate person can become aware of the planet’s plight, its social and ecological problems, and has a commitment to do something about them.” (Harris, 2007, p. 13). This field hopes to create a holistic approach to peace where the environment and all living creatures are included and respected. While eliminating all root causes of human violence is an important and pressing issue, it is also important to remember that the environment deserves the same approach based on the same values adopted by all the other fields. “Such studies can contribute to an ecological world outlook that contains basic knowledge of the environment, develops strong personal convictions about protecting natural resources and provides dynamic experiences conserving natural resources.” (Harris, 2007, p. 14). Students are encouraged to create and develop different solutions to protect their own environment and habitat and also contribute to the world pollution issues.

e) *Conflict Resolution Education:*

This field within the Peace education is concerned with building the needed skills to promote peaceful resolutions to conflict, “Children need formal training in anger management, social perspective taking, decision-making, social problem solving, peer negotiation, conflict management, valuing diversity, social resistance skills, active listening and effective communication in order to play these roles in school.” (Harris, 2007, pp. 15,16). These skills are not just targeting children, they are needed by youth and adults as well, and they can be used within the education institutions and within any social contexts in personal or public life.

“Teaching students to be peacemakers involves creating a cooperative context that encourages disputants to reach mutually acceptable compromises and not dominate each other.” (Harris, 2007, p. 15). Conflict resolution education provides peaceful effective alternatives for students, teachers and the community in general to the normal violent techniques used to resolve conflicts. On top, this approach defies by design the power abuse that is dominant in education institutions which promotes further violence, when teachers abuse their position or when supervisors oppress teachers or so on, it becomes a vicious cycle. Freire explains how to break this cycle, “sooner or later being less human leads the oppressed to struggle against those who made them so. In order for this struggle to have meaning, the oppressed must not, in seeking to regain their humanity (which is a way to create it), become in turn oppressors of the oppressors, but rather restorers of the humanity of both.” (Freire, 1921, p. 44).

Conclusion:

It is clear by now that constructing effective Peace education is very complex, it requires eliminating the root-causes of violence in the education institutions, pedagogy, curriculums and approach to learning, so a complete paradigm shift. It also requires developing content that is relevant, engaging and inspiring. An important factor is the community and how it impacts the students and their attitudes and behaviors: “The focus on behavioral change in the UNICEF definition of peace education reflects the fact that behavior does not occur in a vacuum; it is nested within the context of the family, peer group, the community and the larger society. Behavior development is intrinsically linked to and interdependent with the values and norms of those groups. Existing values and norms can either contribute to or hinder behavior that promotes peace.” (Fountain, 1999, pp. 4,5). There is also the challenge of expecting instantaneous results to the interventions, promoting a culture of peace as an alternative means to

living rather than a solution to all issues requires huge efforts. “The challenge is to promote the ability and willingness of peace educators and learners regarding self- criticism and critical thinking. People also expect instant solutions to problems of peacelessness. Peace education is a continuing process; the challenge is to nurture patience and perseverance in peace work.”

(Bacani, 2004, p. 510).

Through this literature review, the researcher tried to present the challenges facing civil society in Egypt in general, and challenges facing CSOs that are trying to contribute to peace building and spreading the culture of peace. On top of that, the youth narrative on a global and local level was presented which leads to some challenges again related to youth positioning themselves today as active citizens in the community who can be productive and of added-value rather than just be receptive all the time. This would raise a question of whether youth are really active within society and whether they do contribute with their ideas or efforts or time. The last part of this piece presented an overview of peace education, its definition, whether it is an extra-curricular or integrated part of the education system, and even whether it can become an alternative system to the current systems. In the end, a peace education model was presented to be used as the theoretical framework that will be used to analyze this case study.

Egypt is going through a transformational time, and there are many questions related to the future, many people are still not be able to think of the future because they did not recover from the past three years and all what happened during those years and before. The Egyptian society has witnessed extensive violence and has lost its sense of safety. This research presents a

model of Egyptian youth-led initiatives that are attempting to spread the culture of peace and help the Egyptian society discover alternatives to violent behavior.

III. Research Design and Methodology

This research is exploring the potential benefits and challenges to developing a peace education model that is suitable to Egyptian context in an informal set-up. It uses the case study design, to study a specific movement in Egypt called “Selmiyah” that is working towards spreading the culture of peace. Case studies have several definitions; for the sake of this research the definition proposed by John Gerring will be used: “an intensive study of a single unit for the purpose of understanding a larger class of (similar) units. A unit connotes a spatially bounded phenomenon—e.g., a nation-state, revolution, political party, election, or person observed at a single point in time or over some delimited period of time. (Although the temporal boundaries of a unit are not always explicit, they are at least implicit.)” (Gerring, 2004, p. 342)

In essence this is a critical-constructivist piece, where the researcher is building the research tools and constantly modifying and revisiting throughout the research journey, while maintaining focus on social change and the impact of the work being done on society. This combination of methodologies fits perfectly the topic and nature of the research, having done the field work with people who are categorized as social activists and who are striving towards social transformation. Many concepts will be discussed within this research project, such as inequality or oppression which is core to critical research; “Criticalists find contemporary society to be unfair, unequal, and both subtly and overtly oppressive for many people. We do not like it and we want to change it.” (Carspecken, 1996, p. 7). This concept is one of the drives of all of the initiatives within this research sample and the drive of creating the movement under study. At the same time, the researcher did consult with some of the participants in the design phase of this research, and did invite their suggestions throughout the research journey; this is in hope that

both researcher and participants can construct the reality together. (Guido, Chavez, & Lincoln, 2010).

1. Case Selection:

This research focuses on a network and movement in Egypt called “Selmiyah” as a case or single unit as per above definition, this movement includes over forty initiatives and organizations and over one thousand individuals. To achieve a deep understanding of the case, fifteen initiatives⁶ were selected for participation, based on a selection criteria that took into consideration many factors; first some of these initiatives started before the movement launch, Selmiyah was officially launched in June 2012. Second there are different organization structures within the movement, such as registered non-governmental Organizations (NGOs), companies and unregistered initiatives. Third, the age group of the participants and the leaders or founders of these initiatives varies from 18 to 40 years. Therefore the selection criteria were designed to maintain the following:

- A balanced mix between old and new initiatives in terms of launching their activities.
- A balanced mix between old and new initiatives in terms of joining the movement.
- A balanced mix between the different structures that exist within the movement.
- A coverage of the whole age group included, while there might be different roles assumed by the different age groups, the sample included different combinations.

There was one criterion added to the above criteria during the course of the research. This criterion had to do with Ian Harris model, the researcher thought it was appropriate to add the field of work that the initiatives focused on, to include diverse fields and types of work, this

⁶ More background on the initiatives is available in Appendix A and a summary is shown below in Table 1.

would help in reflecting on the variety of fields available within the network in relation to the Harris model, which will be shared further in the analysis and conclusion chapters. Researcher tried to maintain balance between the different fields; a list of all the projects was developed along with their categories and other criteria mentioned above, then the selection was made, final sample table is shown in Table 1⁷. However there were cases where several initiatives would be working on different issues but would still fit within the same pillar definition by Harris; this was particularly true for the Development Education pillar that addressed structural violence within the community. There was one pillar that could not be found within the network as per the definition of Harris, this was the International Education pillar, though some of the initiatives touched upon some aspects of it. For some initiatives, researcher couldn't fit them with any of the pillars that Harris talked about and this will be further discussed in the conclusion chapter.

Also among the sample selected were the co-founders of the Selmiyah movement and all the individuals who were involved in the coordination of the movement throughout the past three years. There are many volunteers handling different tasks within Selmiyah network but the researcher chose to include only the individuals involved in coordination and in strategic decision making to achieve more focus in the data collection.

⁷ It is important to note here that the names in Table 1 are Pseudonyms to maintain confidentiality of participants.

Table 1

Summary of Initiatives Included in the Study

Name of Group	NGO/ Company?	Year of Establishing	Registration Date in Selmiyah?	Categorization according to Ian Harris Model
Initiative A	Initiative	2002	Sep-13	Art for Social change
Initiative B	Company	2004	Sep-13	Conflict Resolution Education/Human Rights Education
Initiative C	NGO	2007	Sep-13	Development Education
Initiative D	NGO	2008	Sep-13	Conflict Resolution Education
Initiative E	Company	2009	Sep-13	IT integration
Initiative F	NGO	2011	Dec-13	Cultural Exchange
Initiative G	Company	2012	Sep-13	Development Education/Human Rights Education
Initiative H	Initiative	2012	Sep-13	Development Education/Human Rights Education
Initiative I	NGO	2005	May-14	Art for Social change
Initiative J	Initiative	2011	NA	Environmental Education
Initiative K	Company	2009	Sep-13	Development Education/ Art for Social Change
Initiative L	NGO	2007	Sep-13	Development Education
Initiative M	Company	2007	Sep-13	Art for Social change
Initiative N	NGO	2005	Sep-13	Development Education
Initiative O	Initiative	2011	Sep-13	Development Education/Human Rights Education

Based on the above criteria, the final sample included 23 people, 43% of whom were women; average age was 32 ranging between 21 to 50 years of age. The researcher found it important during the course of the research to include one initiative within the sample that was slightly involved in the movement but not officially registered as part of Selmiyah, the nature of work the initiative did and the relationship with the network was intriguing and researcher believed it would bring more insight into the nature of the dynamics guiding how and why initiatives join the network.

The researcher used the data base of the network as reference; all official registrations are kept on a google document that was shared by the coordinator. All updates until end of November were shared with the researcher.

2. Data Collection:

For this study, data was collected in the forms of semi-structured interviews, non-participant observation and documents' review.

Semi-Structured Interviews: Interviews were carried out with one founding member of each selected initiative; for one initiative that was a student activity four members of the initiative were interviewed together. There were interviews conducted with the two co-founders of "Selmiyah" movement, the current coordinator of the movement and three other members of the coordination board that was in charge of coordination for some time early this year. Each interview was from 45-75 minutes and was conducted in the language of the interviewee's preference, English or Arabic. All interviews were audio-recorded. Also, during the interview, the researcher took notes. Each participant was provided with a consent form in English and

Arabic and was told that they might withdraw from the study at any point told that they may withdraw from the study at any point with no repercussions.

Two interview protocols were developed for this study. The first is the version for the initiative founders and the second for the founders and coordinators of the movement.⁸ The interview with the initiatives asked about the experience of the initiative in developing their idea and structuring their interventions. The protocol included fifteen questions divided into three sections, section one asked about the reason behind choosing Peace education as the focus of their work, section two asked how the initiative was formed, and section three asked about the reason behind joining the movement. It is important to note that these questions were developed as guiding questions to help steer the conversation, however since this is a constructivist-based research, there were questions added or omitted from the interview protocol based on how the conversation went and what the researcher felt was necessary or appropriate during the interview. Sometimes it was necessary to pursue a certain idea and clarify it further; sometimes questions in the protocol were not applicable or relevant to the interviewee. Some participants, for example, were requested to reflect on the Ian Harris model and to identify whether there were missing pillars whether in the model or in the network.

The interview protocol for the movement co-founders and coordination team asked about the experience of creating the movement, sustaining it and developing it further. The protocol included ten questions divided into three sections, section one asked about the reason behind creating the movement, section two asked how the movement was created and its structure and section three asked about the future of the movement. It is important to note that these questions were developed as guiding questions to help steer the conversation, however since this is a

⁸ The interview questions are shared in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2

constructivist-based research, there were questions added or omitted from the interview protocol based on how the conversation went and what the researcher felt was necessary or appropriate during the interview. Some participants, for example, were requested to reflect on the Ian Harris model and to identify whether there were missing pillars whether in the model or in the network.

Participant Observation: The purpose of the observation is to gain additional insight into the implementation part and to see some workshops or trainings of some of the initiatives. Main points of focus were the relationship between team member as facilitators during preparation and facilitation, their relationship with the participants throughout the workshops and camps, and the methods of delivering the content. The observations were done according to availability, many of the workshops and camps were done outside of Cairo; two of the observations included in this research were done outside of Cairo. Another factor for selecting observations was based on willingness of the initiative to invite the researcher to their activities. During all observations researcher took notes, none of the observations was audio-recorded.

Documents: The documents gathered for this study included any documents that the initiatives could provide describing their activities, theoretical framework and/or curriculum. The same applied to the movement. To maintain anonymity and confidentiality, the initiatives' names were coded and so was the documents' details as well, a list of these documents is shared in Appendix 3. For the purpose of data analysis, the documents were scanned if there were no soft copies available. The consent of the initiative members was taken to use the documents as part of the data base for this research.

3. Location of the Researcher:

It is important to note that the researcher is part of the Selmiyah network as an individual, and has volunteered to assist in coordination and maintaining coherence within the network. This made accessibility to many of the participants easier, even though researcher did not know almost 35% of the sample and was meeting them for the first time for the interview; however researcher was able to access them through contacts within the network. Being in the same network had an impact on the trust factor, and thus participants may have been willing to share more insights and reflections during interviews. On the other hand, because coordination is not very clear at this moment, not many knew how involved the researcher was, and so many of them were taking the liberty of criticizing what they saw wrong in the network coordination, and the researcher did not engage in any conversations during the interviews. Having said that, some of ideas that were suggested by participants in the interviews were used to enhance the coordination of the network, and some processes are being developed currently based on the feedback the participants shared. At the same time, this involvement led to some limitations within the research which will be discussed further in the interpretation and conclusion chapter.

4. Data Analysis:

Before the data was analyzed, the researcher time-stamped all interviews, observations, and field notes. The process of listening to the interviews allows the researcher to become acquainted with the data (Reissman, 1993). The researcher created Microsoft Word files for the interviews, observations, documents, and field notes. All files are protected by setting a password. All files are saved in the researcher's portable computer for which she only has access to. The researcher used the typological technique for analysis and coding, which means that the researcher was "dividing everything observed into groups or categories on the basis of some

canon for disaggregating the whole phenomenon under study” (Hatch, 2002, p. 152). The researcher followed the steps identified by Hatch for conducting a Typology analysis which are:

1. Identify typologies to be analyzed;
2. Read the data, marking entries related to your typologies;
3. Read entries by typology, recording the main ideas in entries on a summary sheet;
4. Look for patterns, relationships, themes within typologies;
5. Read data, coding entries according to patterns identified and keeping a record of what entries go with which elements of your patterns,
6. Decide if your patterns are supported by the data, and search the data for nonexamples of your patterns;
7. Look for relationships among the patterns identified;
8. Write your patterns as one-sentence generalizations;
9. Select data excerpts that support your generalizations. (Hatch, 2002, p. 153)

As this research follows the constructivist paradigm, it is important to note that there were some new typologies developed during the analysis different phases, thus combining the typology and inductive analysis methods, where the inductive analysis indicates that “categories emerge from the analysis of the data set as a whole.” (Hatch, 2002, p. 152) The reason behind choosing the typological analysis method is that many typologies already existed within the interview questions design; however the researcher found new typologies surfacing during the analysis due to the nature of the topic which has several dimensions and can be perceived from different aspects.

Validation Strategies:

As the area of qualitative research increases, social and behavioral scientists critique on the validity of studies that use such methodology. Thus, qualitative researchers utilize various validation strategies to make their studies credible and rigorous. (Creswell & Miller, 2000)

Credibility for this study was achieved using the validation strategies of triangulation. The data

was triangulated with the various forms of data that were collected in this study; i.e., interviews, observations, documents, and field notes.

IV. Data Findings

1. Introduction:

This research is a qualitative case-study analysis of an Egyptian network and movement called “Selmiyah” that aims at promoting and spreading the culture of peace in Egypt. This in-depth view on some of the initiatives included in the network as well as the founders and coordinators of the network, hopes to provide some insight on the feasibility of applying such a model in Egypt. It plans to shed some light on the structures of these initiatives, their challenges and lessons learnt; as well as the benefit and challenges from creating a network and movement for peacebuilding. Due to the exploratory nature of this research, the data below will be shown based on themes related to the research questions as well as themes emerging from the discussions with participants. Data shared below is coming mainly from the interviews conducted, whenever data is coming from observations or documents’ review it will be clearly stated. The three research questions were:

- Question 1: Why are youth involved in initiatives related to Peace education?
- Question 2: How are these initiatives structured?
- Question 3: Why do the initiatives choose to belong to Selmiyah movement?

2. Question 1: Why are youth involved in initiatives related to Peace education?

Background and Motives for founders of the initiatives and movement:

The interviews were conducted with the founders of the selected fifteen initiatives, two co-founders of the network and three coordinators of the network. They were asked to talk about their backgrounds and experiences that led to their involvement in civil society work and in these

specific fields they work in. Also they were asked to provide their own definition of the word “Peace”. From their responses emerged the following themes:

a) Trigger in Career choice:

The participants had different career orientations, some were working in the initiatives as volunteers and some were working full time or part time in their initiatives. Some started working in the development field from the beginning of their careers, and found their way to peacebuilding throughout the years. Some started volunteering while working in the private sector, then shifted career at a certain point to be fully dedicated to their projects. Some began to get involved in the development field after the revolution and started working in areas related to peacebuilding right away. There were a couple of different cases from above two categories as well. Below I will share the key experiences that triggered each group to choose that path, based on the data shared throughout the interviews.

Some participants started working in the field of development right after their graduation. Some of whom were interested in a certain field from their childhood, such as education, environment, and youth development. Others were interested and studied the field of Arts and started working in that field after graduation. For all participants, due to their interest, they became more attentive and observant of issues related to their field of interest growing up, and then they went through different experiences throughout their lives that led to their involvement in these current initiatives they are in. One of the participants mentioned that the origin of her interests came from childhood experiences in the family and school. Another one discovered her passion towards certain causes after working in the development field, not before. All of these participants are working either full time or part time in development field in general and in their projects specifically. It is worth noting that most of this group has an enormous amount of

experience in their areas of interest, where they have been working for almost thirteen to fourteen years. These years of experience have helped them in identifying their areas of passion, being able to articulate it and getting the relevant experience.

Some of the participants started their career working in the private sector in areas related to their studies, and then they felt that they were not satisfied in that line of work and that they needed to do more with their lives. There was a feeling that they would add more value in the field of civil society. So they shifted their careers to the civil society work, quitting their jobs, and dedicating their time to the initiatives they wanted to start, making a living through part time jobs within the development sector. They all started out by volunteering in activities while working in the private sector, one of the participants started her initiative while working and continued to work and volunteer for almost five years until she decided to quit her job and dedicate more time to the project.

The 25th of January revolution was a turning point for a group of participants, where they got more involved in civil society initiatives after the revolution. They all started with political awareness campaigns or projects, and evolved to become more about the community and its needs, as one participant puts it: “Before the revolution I wasn’t involved in anything ... after the revolution I got involved in several activities and I was enthusiastic about some of them ... one was related to political awareness and empowerment in Doweika”. It is worth mentioning that for one participant, the relationship with civil society started in 2009, through a powerful learning experience, however she got motivated to actually participate and volunteer and even dedicate her full time to what she believes in after the revolution.

Outliers: There are three outliers to the above three categories, first the student activity initiative that does not fit within any of the above categories since the members are still students and the idea of career shift never came up during the discussion. More understanding of their motive for joining the activity will be mentioned in the coming section. Another participant who was volunteering in a project he started while working in the private sector, however he was involved in civic service before the revolution and since his graduation. The revolution had a great impact on the nature of the activities he initiated, yet it did not affect his level of engagement which was always high. Last outlier didn't change her field, she was part of a workshop about peace values and it was a powerful experience to her that she decided to incorporate it in her field and now she is a trainer on peace journalism.

b) Reasons behind choosing field of work:

In this part, participants were asked about the reasons behind choosing certain fields of interest to focus on; such as education, environment, arts, and so on; and deciding to start projects in these fields. So part of the reasons below should explain the information shared above, however participants focused on the current projects they are working on when answering, so the reasons below might not capture the beginnings.

Some participants created their current projects, to fill a gap they identified within the Egyptian society. Most of them started getting involved in this area after the revolution. One of the gaps identified was ability of community to participate in public life, which stems from lack of awareness of the rights and duties of citizens, it also stems from not knowing the channels through which they can demand their rights. Another gap that was identified in society was about education, mostly participants talked about higher education, and they talked about quality of education in terms of content and methods, they also talked about the system itself

and how it was promoting oppression, as one of the participants who is a teacher assistant describes: “I became part of the oppressive system, I am oppressing the student and I am being oppressed by the professor, so when I started breaking these chains of oppression, there was no real resources to do that”. One of the participants within this category started his project years before the revolution; the gap identified was lack of spaces for creative and artistic expression for people in general, regardless of their social class or education background or age or gender or any other factors.

Social responsibility and passion were the core reasons for another group of participants. For some of them, it was either the sense of responsibility or passion that was the main drive, for others it was both factors affecting their level of involvement and the field they were involved in. Their passion varied in terms of scope from youth development to women’s rights to improvement of quality of life in marginalized areas to dialogue and promotion of understanding among communities. It is worth noting that all of this group are fully dedicated now to their projects and have been for years, except for the participants who are part of the student activity. For one of the participants, when asked why he was interested in the field of social entrepreneurship replied: “Passion, I enjoy working with people and with seeing the change occurring in front of me and feeling it”. Regarding the sense of responsibility, it was linked also to adding value and feeling the role of the person is effective and needed. Many of them who had worked in private sector before, stressed on this point, one of the participants confirmed stating:

“You can be an added value anywhere regardless of the names, so the civil society was not the target for me, my target was not to work in civil society, rather

my target was to feel that I am doing something that will change society even to a fraction of a million”

For some participants, their interest and passion towards a specific topic were developed during childhood, and they did not explain why or where it came from. However, they mentioned that they were observant and critical of these topics growing up, until they were able to study it either in undergraduate or graduate or independent studies; this was their first turning point. Here is one of the participants sharing her experience growing up:

“observing the dynamics happening within the school, all the time I was observing how there were certain teachers who made things easy and others who were terrifying and causing you to be unhappy ... I was building in my mind my own model of education”

Then they continue to explain how practice brought such richness to their ideas which allowed them to develop more and more, how they were constantly observing and studying and reflecting on their practices. Some of them mentioned several turning point experiences in their lives.

There is one outlier to the above categories, who started her career in development and civil society, but this wasn't based on strong motivations, rather it was a job opportunity more or less. However the participant explains that after joining and getting involved, she realized that working with people is powerful and expressed joy in being able to play a role in people's lives.

c) Definition of peace:

All participants agreed that peace is a big word that includes many layers, and cannot be easily defined. Below the researcher will try to include the main points they all mentioned, they were categorized into three areas: inner peace, external peace (peace with the other) and societal peace (which includes nature). There were two other points raised by some participants, the point of the values included within peace and the idea of culture of peace. They will be mentioned in the end. It is important to note that below is a synthesis of all the points that the participants mentioned during their articulation of the definition of peace, and it doesn't include any external sources of definitions to peace. Some mentioned that peace is more of a state, however not a state that lasts all the time, it is rather a journey. Another said that: "it is not a utopian picture where there is no violence, there is violence".

Regarding inner peace, many acknowledged that it is the starting point to reach social peace and global peace. Inner peace includes several components: knowing and understanding myself, accepting myself and respecting my capabilities and limitations, learning how to deal with myself and coexist with the multiple layers within me, ability to reconcile with myself and reach gratification, and to love myself. This helps the person, as one of the participants puts it, "for the person to feel from inside that he can interact with life, to feel satisfied, ... has internal serenity that allows him to face the external factors in a constructive way". For the person to be able to develop him/her-self without pushing it too far or imitating someone or caring about what people say or do. One of the participants saw that inner peace comes also from having the basic needs met, he continues "conflict is about needs not met"; another participant related his understanding to Egyptian context: "In Egypt, the crisis is the person is always in a state of conflict to get the basic needs, to sleep to walk to eat so any Egyptian has a very small

opportunity to reach inner peace”. Another participant says it in a more general way: “Not to feel any threat to my being at any time, to me that is peace, which includes feeling my humanity, being able to live without feeling grudge or burden or fear at any time”.

Regarding external peace (peace with the other), there were several concepts mentioned related to dealing with diversity. There was a mention of a coexistence component that includes dealing with difference, accepting difference, accepting the existence of a different person, and accepting that we live together. That includes a level of respect, respecting others, trying to understand them, tolerating and embracing them. With regards to judging other people, they talked about avoiding prejudice, when you see someone you categorize him/her, just because you don't know him/her, and act based on that. To accept that there is more than one truth. Not to judge the other without facts or evidence or research. Then some of them talked about the fact that each one is unique, that there is no competition but everyone is needed and is of added value. One of the participants used a quote they use in their initiative: “Each of us has his own impact and way of thinking, each effort has a value and each opinion is considered, what makes us special is not what we own, but what we can offer and share with others”. Another participant explained it as:

“The effort exerted all the time so that whatever the condition we are living in, we make sure it's the best for all the people around us. So it can be at some points an effort, it can be a choice, it can be time allocated to a certain area, it can be a way of interaction; all this to have all the people living around me feeling respected, welcomed, included, capable of living life to its maximum”

On the other hand, one participant explains that conflict is a normal thing:

“Conflict is a normal thing in many times ... we need to know how to deal with it, important thing is to reach a point where everyone is happy and satisfied, not forced or beaten, because that means that the next day he will try to win”

Societal peace was seen as providing structures that help include all people, and having a culture that promotes inclusion as well, a safe environment for people to grow within it. When people realize how interconnected they are, that core human concepts are constant, and how illogical it is to think of your own needs only. When people realize that they can benefit from a certain situation or solve a problem and other people can benefit as well from that same solution (mutual benefit). Societal peace can be achieved when people accept each other which would lead to coexistence and culture of dialogue and respecting the law and the government. A participant said, thinking of Egyptian context:

“it is very simple, peace is when a girl doesn't think about what she will wear when she wants to leave her house,, when a father looking at his children at dinner is not thinking of whether he should travel to make a living”

A few participants mentioned harmony with nature and the natural order of things, one participant said, “to be in a non-threatening enclosing relationship with the surrounding environment”.

Regarding the values included within the concept of peace, one participant mentioned equality and the perception of equality, “because we don't have to be equal on every single level, but we are overall equal”. Another mentioned transparency and sharing knowledge as well. One participant mentioned culture of Peace, which she explained as:

“culture includes the things that affect my choices and attitudes that make me see that this is the right behavior and this is the wrong behavior and this is my automatic behavior. So if I come from a culture of peace, then this means that my choices and attitudes and behaviors don’t include violence towards the other, either verbal or physical, and search for solutions that don’t include violence ... tries all the time to reach a better condition for everybody”

Violence: two participants provided their definition of violence. One participant saw that violence is not just physical; it has many types, starting from verbal to violence of ideas, to prejudice to exclusion. The other participant saw violence as dehumanizing the person who practices violence, he explains:

“I see he is a person who was dehumanized, so he is practicing a non-human thing, and it isn’t even animalistic, it is more of chaotic practices that have no logic except for some evil tendencies ... could be based on theories or people who told him that this is the right thing to do ... I see the violent person as a sick person”

In the end he concludes that “I see violence as a sick environment that is lethal to creativity, humanity, manhood and womanhood”. It is worth noting that this participant is an artist who has developed an initiative that attempts to heal all society illnesses through art. One of the founders of Selmiyah defined violence as, “any act that makes the person doesn’t discover him/her-self and the capabilities within him/her, any kind of disempowerment”.

Background and motives for starting the initiatives:*a) How did the idea develop?*

In the beginning, it is important to highlight that the initiatives shared many stories with the researcher regarding their beginnings and how their ideas and activities developed, below is an attempt to summarize what was shared in a structured and comprehensive manner. The researcher hopes to be able to develop further papers based on the findings of this research and to motivate other researchers to conduct further research in the area, for each of these initiatives requires more in depth understanding and analysis. For the sake of this study, the researcher tried to inquire about the basic data needed to provide a comprehensive view of the set-up and that serves the research questions. It is also important to note that there are more details shared about each initiative, main goals and activities, in Appendix 4.

Two of the participants shared that the trigger for the projects they are working on was a phenomenon in society that indicated intolerance and prejudice. One of these incidents was an international incident and the other was on a national level. Both were related to religious discrimination and led to physical and verbal violence within the community. Founders of these initiatives were able to identify that these were indicators of societal issues that needed to be addressed; both chose to work in the conflict resolution zone and have developed their own methodology and curriculum. One is working specifically on dialogue and communication, because the team believes that it is an important tool for the Egyptian context, the participant concludes in her story: “for the international dimension, dialogue is always a target, ..., but on the national dimension it is a tool to reach a better community for all of us, how to coexist”. The other focused on conflict management in general, the participant describes their journey of development:

“we were working in the beginning just from the perspective of difference and accepting the other, ... all the time when we are working our concepts become deeper, then we started working on violence, ... so with a new understanding of violence, you find that it is on all the levels of the culture, so we want to work on alternatives to violence, so non-violent communication is an alternative, peaceful conflict resolution is an alternative, and so on. And all the time we are expanding ...”

This shows how the concepts and thus services evolve within this initiative.

For some initiatives, they started with an international dimension, either that the idea started in another country or on a global level and an Egyptian team decided to bring it to Egypt, or the idea started in Egypt and they decided to make it global, or the idea of the initiatives started with a cultural exchange between Egypt and other countries. In all these cases, the dynamics are different than the pure national initiatives, and the experiences are different. Some of the initiatives have cultural exchange activities, which started after they developed. For one initiative which is part of a global movement, working on the ground in the beginning was not as easy because they were two Egyptians basically and they didn't have experience in organizing events, and it took time to build a team in Egypt. Now they are developing a strategic plan for the movement globally to focus their efforts, and Egypt is on board that plan because of the involvement of this participant. For another, even though they started with cultural exchange, they have developed many national programs and cultural exchange has become one of the activities and that's it. For another initiative that is the only one that has global dimensions and was initiated in Egypt, the team wanted to mobilize people to work on peace issues in their countries, when asked why they thought of that, the founder said that they didn't plan all what

they have reached so far and that they started working with just a big event in mind, when asked why, he said: “peace is more meaningful when it is big”.

A few initiatives were part of an already existing national network or project, so the team did not develop the idea but they made it more relevant to their context. One of the initiatives, which is related to community organizing, decided to shift focus from the priorities of the bigger network and to focus more on the priorities they saw were needed on the ground; that was after they started visiting the marginalized areas within their district. Another initiative, which is part of a big student activities’ network, maintained the goals of the national network and also added the goals that were relevant to their context, when asked about this they said: “when there are events, when there is a project that we can offer, for example during the constitution voting period, we did a seminar about the constitution, without any political direction”.

Most of the initiatives share the feature of developing their ideas across time, based on the experiences they gain from working on the ground, and based on their constant readings and observations. One example is that of the initiatives that wanted to work with the border areas, they didn’t know what kind of work is needed or how the people there would react to their presence, but they had some ideas of what trainings or workshops they wanted to do there. So they visited the cities and met the people, then they decided on which area they will focus on, then they came up with the types of work that they will do there, focusing primarily on knowing the people and understanding their culture and learning from them. So their goal switched completely from conducting trainings and workshops to learning and sharing knowledge, the participant explains:

“We wanted to tell people about the revolution and talk about our rights as Egyptians... when we went to Nubia we found that the people there are not far from the events, but also they have a huge depth culturally, and history is alive in the place, so our passion grew towards living with the people and understanding them”

b) Impact of 25th of January revolution:

The 25th of January revolution had impact on the founders and their initiatives. For some participants, it was an eye-opener on how different the reactions were from people regarding the old regime. For others, it was more eye-opening on the youth movement, and how they were able to express themselves in different ways. Some initiatives had to slow down their activities because they could not cope with the fast changes and the dynamics that were occurring during the first period of the revolution. For some initiatives, as mentioned earlier, these same dynamics were the force that gave birth to the idea and pushed the people to work. The participants also shared some core differences between the times before and after the revolution related to freedoms, mobility, awareness of society and position towards civil society. The researcher summarized them in the following points; before the revolution, the participants shared that these were the following conditions:

- People didn't really see each other and didn't want to talk or to discover their differences, so it was very hard getting people to engage in dialogue or finding people who request that.
- People didn't see the need to work on coexistence and conflict resolution so it was very hard to find work in that area.

- People didn't understand the terminologies; like Peace, it had a political connotation and it meant normalization with Israel, now they understand that it is on a society level. Before the revolution, words like non-violence and alternatives to violence didn't have any meaning or relevance to reality.
- The access to public spaces and government-owned spaces was limited, there were many permissions needed, and people were not used to seeing shows in the street.
- For one initiative, it was not approved by state security to mention human rights in their name.

After the revolution, the participants shared that the following changes occurred in reference to freedoms, mobility, awareness of society and position towards civil society:

- People wanted to discover each other and to engage in dialogue, but they did not know how, so they requested help from some of the initiatives. Nowadays, the state of not wanting to engage in dialogue is returning especially after the political polarization that occurred.
- People saw the need for dialogue in the community and the awareness was much higher, so requests increased for dialogue, consensus building, dealing with difference, and conflict resolution.
- Regarding the terminologies, people experienced both violence and non-violence, so all the terms became familiar.
- Certain concepts and terms that were not allowed before the revolution became accepted to talk about within the university and in the streets.

- The revolution deepened the idea of public ownership, so people started feeling that they own the public spaces, activists and artists were the first people to use that, they were able to utilize all public spaces.
- Meeting all the people who were working on the ground but didn't know each other, the revolution brought them together. So the networks and connections grew, which had huge impact on the work done on the ground, and the outreach that initiatives were able to do.
- The revolution made people work together and collaborate.
- There was also a struggle during 2011 & 2012 for some initiatives, of how to stay relevant while there was a lot of violence and people dying every month.
- Right after the revolution, the Egyptian society was very supportive of civil society and there were a lot of donations and volunteers. Nowadays, there is a lot of attack on NGOs, accusations of foreign funding and treason, and this impacted the way the community looks at civil society.
- Some initiatives received grants after the revolution based on the wave of supporting youth initiatives.

c) Link to Peace building:

All participants in the interviews were able to see the link between their work and peace building; some saw a direct link and others saw an indirect link. Many of them were familiar with the term peace education. Many of the participants saw that it was essential for the peacebuilding process to provide peaceful alternatives to the usual violent ways, one participant said: "I think this is what (name of initiative) is all about, showing the youth alternatives. We live in a society that does things in one way only, and unfortunately that way is not the best of ways". They saw that their role was to make sure these alternatives are solid and strong and

clear to people, and to help them practice it; practice was a key component. One of the participants saw that encouraging participation of people and collaboration in benefiting themselves and their area or community encourages peace, because it helps diverse people work together. And this helps people see the commonalities as they work together; “you see someone who is completely different from you, but when there is a problem in a service, he is affected as much as you, so at the end you realize he isn’t that different from you after all”. He concluded by: “Reaching societal peace or peace in general doesn’t have to be only through raising awareness about peace, it can come more through practice”. Another dimension is providing valid tools for communities to be able to fight for their rights and fight injustice in their society. This is achieved through different initiatives, each addressing a different type of injustice. Some of these alternative tools include community organizing and realizing the power of people, some use arts and media, some use divestment campaigns, and so on. Providing these alternatives reduces violence in society for sure because it opens up channels to express objection and disagreement with government actions.

Some participants saw that an important path for peace building included different learning experiences that would have deep impact on the learner and would motivate him/her to engage more in peaceful processes in different aspects of their lives. One participant saw that, even if these learning experiences included skills that were essential to the process, the knowledge component is very important and is needed to fully understand the skill. Another participant saw that the experience component is the most important and that people need to relate it to their lives and that is how the culture spreads. Both have many knowledge and experience components integrated in their programs which will be discussed further below. One participant mentioned that they use experiential methodology in their initiative as they are

learning about other communities through coexistence, she says, “we live with them in their lives, and learn from them their living style and rituals, we learn from them everything, as much as we can, ..., instead of learning a craft or profession, you learn from them ethics, and this is what we do across the year”. Another participant saw that their role is to help people see things from different perspective, that they don’t judge right away, to wait and search for facts.

One of the participants saw that all the initiatives within Selmiyah were complementing each other to reach the same goal, “so I see that all the initiatives within Selmiyah are like the specialized doctors who are working on the same society to change parts of it, in the end the target is for this body to be a healthy body and aware and active and fruitful”. In order for this integration to happen, it requires a lot of coordination, which could be accomplished by IT tools as per one of the participants’ point of view. He saw that coordination and communication between people working in the same field in the same location is necessary to ensure that they work together and expand scope in terms of number and location. He also saw that providing virtual peace spaces for people is important, since many people today are spending time on virtual spaces in social media and other information websites, most of which have become violent where people accuse each other and use violent verbal language. So this website can provide spaces where there is a celebration of diversity and this builds towards peace as well.

When the founders of Selmiyah and the coordinators were asked whether they saw the link between the initiatives within the network and peace building, they had varying answers. One of the founders was sure that there was a link, because he saw a broad view of what peace means and what peacebuilding would take, he saw that it is relevant to all the fields of life. Another participant saw that the links are also relevant to the definition, however he saw that as a challenge, he says:

“for me definition of peace is very inclusive and wide, so I can see the link between an initiative in arts’ field and creating the culture of peace, it depends on the person’s definition of peace, if our definition is limited then the links with the initiatives would differ. But this creates a difficulty though, difficulty in whether the initiatives that join Selmiyah network realize the link between Selmiyah and what they do, or they just joined because of the good company ... not sure this exists, exists for many initiatives”

Another participant shared the concern of whether the initiatives do realize the links or not, she said that until a certain stage, this un-clarity can be accepted because the network is in the process growing; however at a certain point clarity must be obtained.

When founders of initiatives were asked about the importance of their work specifically in these difficult times in Egypt; one participant saw that the work they do is important all the time, not just now, their work was to help “a child to be able to think, analyze, not to accept any information blindly and to challenge it”, and this is important in any stage the country is at. However, she did acknowledge that these times, especially now require a sense of tolerance and acceptance that is not abundant in society, and thus she concludes, “so the important role now is to work more on accepting the other, understanding and listening to the other, it’s not my way or the high way, there are other ways, there are other opinions, and not just to see things from my perspective”. Another initiative saw that, because they didn’t have political or religious orientation, they were able to provide space for people to understand others and engage in dialogue, not to judge the other and to listen to their perspective. Another participant says about the importance of their work, “important today in Egypt because all the political, security, speech solutions, if we go to politicians and security people, there are no available solutions to heal

violence within Egyptian community”; he continues to explain why he thinks art can be a way, “so we need to go to another solution that all people can agree upon, because music if it is chosen, along with the words, the theatre, the movement, and the poetry, in a way that is pure human, that speaks to the Egyptian masses, I believe that it will have an impact, especially that we have an amazing background among Egyptians of telling stories, popular heritage, dancing, festivals, puppets ... we have an art heritage to build upon”.

3. Question 2: How are these initiatives structured?

As shown above, the initiatives included in this sample vary in focus in terms of field of interest and also in terms of addressing individual or community aspects. By community aspects I mean the external skills and awareness needed to behave in a peaceful way within the surrounding community, whether by providing alternatives to violent behavior, or by providing spaces or activities where people practice these concepts. In this section, the researcher will demonstrate three key dimensions, one related to the goals and target group of the initiatives, one related to the sustainability and structure of the initiatives, and one related to the framework and curriculum and training of the team members. The target of this section is to understand the structure of these initiatives, whether it is sustainable or not, and the methodology they follow to develop their content and to implement their activities.

Goals and Framework:

a) Goals of the initiatives:

Each participant shared the goals of their initiative during the interviews; below the researcher grouped the goals and categorized them into three parts according to the collective definition of peace that the participants shared during interviews as well. The three categories

are: goals related to achieving peace on an individual level, goals related to achieving peace on the skills and behavior of an individual within the surrounding communities, goals related to achieving peace on a society level.

Peace on an Individual Level:

- Achieving personal transformation.
- Creating spaces for communication and knowing people.
- People know what peaceful coexistence is, that there is this option, and to have the skills and tools to practice it.
- The person works to develop him/her-self, the community surrounding him/her and the entire society.

Peace on a small community level (skills and practice):

- Spreading culture of dialogue for youth groups, among themselves and internally within each group.
- Creating enabling spaces for people to discover themselves and meet the other. Through that they achieve forgiveness and creativity and peace.
- Increasing the participation of citizens in decision making.
- Enabling the communities in solving their own problems. Building on the human resources in a certain area to make their lives better.
- Creating a model on how to resolve conflicts without violence, for example using mediation in conflict resolution.
- Exchanging knowledge with people, getting to know them on a deeper level, their culture and heritage.

- Coordination: people who want to work today can build on what has been done already and benefit from other people's experience in this field or in this location. Also, can collaborate with existing groups in the area or in the field.
- Providing spaces for people to discuss different topics and documenting the discussions and opinions shared.

Peace on a Society level:

- Creating an alternative community for people who want to live according to peaceful values.
- Building partnerships between different communities and creating space for working together.
- Raising awareness on the importance of art for social change, and how arts can contribute to the community's prospering.
- Building people powered movements.
- Documentation of the models and work that is being done within the civil society. The field, the people, the steps, the impact, who is trained. Because this can be a source of learning for all the other members of civil society.
- Providing an art service that speaks to the people which helps in bringing art to the street.

For some initiatives, they developed these goals after a few years of working on the ground; this helped them to see the actual need based on first-hand experience in the field, to be able to choose which area they will focus on, and to be able to articulate their targets clearly.

Others knew their area of focus from the beginning and they worked on refining their articulation of it through the years, as one participant explains: "we are different socially and culturally ... on

all levels, and refusing to adjust with these differences, refusing to acknowledge these differences and each one is trying to impose his/her vision ... we are obliterating all the expressions of difference”.

b) Target group:

There are different target groups according to the initiative activities and scope of work, target groups can be defined by age or community or a certain group of people. Two initiatives deal with children from three to fifteen years old, and all initiatives target youth from 15 to 35 years old and older as well. One participant explains why there is a need to focus on youth:

“because youth represent 60% of society, soon enough they will be 75%, so if I am looking for any change or anything, this will be my focus, and their dialogue is with members of the community, we work sometimes on intergenerational dialogue, we work sometime on dialogue within administrations, ...”

Some initiatives target communities; like marginalized communities and rural areas within Cairo and outside, like communities that live on border lines of Egypt, like communities affected by climate change. Some initiatives target youth, women and refugees as they represent most of the marginalized sects of society. Some initiatives target all groups of society, like the initiatives working on arts and self-expression, and the initiative working on online tool for coordination and documentation. One initiative started with a focus on youth and adults and civil society organizations, then is currently widening their scope to include education institutions, corporate sector and families as well.

Institutional Sustainability:*a) Legal Status and Financial Sustainability:*

A summary of the legal and financial resources for all initiatives within this case study is shown in below table, Table 2:

Name of Group	Year of Establishing	Legal Status	Financial Model
Initiative A	2002	Initiative	Minimum Costs
Initiative H	2012	Initiative	No need for money, self-funded
Initiative J	2011	Initiative	No need for money, self-funded
Initiative O	2011	Initiative	No need for money, self-funded
Initiative C	2007	NGO	Donations from community members
Initiative D	2008	NGO	Providing Services and local Partnerships - Facing difficulty in receiving any foreign funds
Initiative F	2011	NGO	Fund by local NGO for part of the project
Initiative I	2005	NGO	Funds, donations and provide paid services
Initiative L	2007	NGO	Member fees
Initiative N	2005	NGO	Donations from community members
Initiative B	2004	Company	Service-based model, no funds accepted
Initiative E	2009	Company	Based on human capital: mostly all work is done by volunteers
Initiative G	2012	Company	Key partners with some international NGOs that have offices in Egypt
Initiative K	2009	Company	Service-based model
Initiative M	2007	Company	Mostly self-funded - Received one grant through a local NGO

Regarding the legal status, there are three initiatives that are not registered at all; one of them is considering registering as a company. There are five non-governmental organizations (NGO), one that has a global dimension. One initiative has an NGO based in Holland while in Egypt there is a project management company that supports the global activities. One initiative operates under a university umbrella. There are three initiatives that are registered as companies (Limited Liability Company), another initiative is registered as an individual company; one of these initiatives was not registered for years until they registered the company.

Regarding the financial sustainability, for the unregistered initiatives, two noted that they don't need money and if they did need it, they collect money from the team members. For the companies, they have different models, one doesn't accept any funding, their model is service based and they are trying to self-sustain. Another builds on human capital, there has been many volunteers to develop the portal and design it, some costs were self-funded by the founder. For the third company, they have a key partnership, and they were able to develop a client portfolio that includes several INGOs. One company received fund from an Egyptian donor organization after the revolution, but mostly it is self-funded.

For the NGOs, some of them rely on Egyptian donors; some have International donors as well, some have income generating activities, such as making note books and products and selling them, or getting contracted by organizations and NGOs to provide their activities. For one of the initiatives under the umbrella of an international NGO, they have been trying to receive foreign funds for three years but haven't succeeded yet, therefore they have sustained themselves through their services and local partnerships. One of the initiatives (the student activity) has members' fees. For the initiatives that rely on donations from the local community and

connections, they need to build trust with their donors through their work, as a participant explains: “we were able to build trust and good reputation ...our reputation is good, people know we do real work on the ground, even if it is on small scale, and this is what I tried to really focus on”. One initiative has a set-up where the NGO is outside of Egypt, they handle the fundraising and all the expenses, they operate through the concept of founding fathers, so they approached organizations to sign a five-year contract for commitment in providing donations, they have now six founding fathers and they provide services for those donors as part of their contract.

b) Organizational Sustainability:

For the unregistered initiatives, all of the team is volunteers, either the founding members or new members. For the companies, one of them compensates some of their staff as part-time employees, another has fixed full-time staff and they recruit volunteers for each task needed, usually they are short-term, and they hire some consultants for certain projects as part-time staff. For another, they have three to five 5 staff members at any given point, and they recruit volunteers, mainly from the area where the company exists which is positive. Another company has all volunteers except for certain services. For NGO's, there are different models:

- A mix between full time and part time members, almost 50% of the team is from the marginalized area they are working inside. Flat management system, there is no hierarchy, and decision making process is done collectively. There are part-time trainers who come to do activities according to the agreed schedules.
- Recruitment campaign is conducted every year, to recruit new member. There is a clear system that governs the path of the members, their commitments and their rights.
- Full-time staff members, and they include youth in all the phases of the work from planning to evaluation, and they work as volunteers.

- All members are volunteers, including the founding members.

Framework, Curriculum and Capacity Building:

This section provides data related to how the initiatives ensured the quality of their content and team members and the continuous improvement of these areas as well. Also some information will be presented about how the curriculums and frameworks are structured. In this section data from the interviews, participant observations and documents' review will be used.

a) Framework and Curriculum:

Many of the initiatives have developed material that explains the theoretical framework that guides their work and the different activities or steps they follow. Most of them have developed this document across time based on research, experiences on the ground and readings. For initiatives that are focused on documentation because they want to encourage people to reapply the model, they are creating different documentation products, such as handbooks, books, documentaries and videos. For the initiatives that have a global dimension, they have made their material available on-line for free or even published and distributed. A few initiatives are still starting to create documents that include their framework and activities, but they are working on it as they realize how important it is. For initiatives that are focused on facilitation and training, their material is tailored according to the client based on: the needs of the client and the situation and cultural appropriateness, so content adjustments are done according to nature of audience and context. For the sake of this section, the researcher will focus only on four initiatives sharing the structure of their available content; data shown below comes from two sources: the data from the interviews and content review of the documents shared by the initiatives.

The first initiative is Initiative D, which is focused on dialogue and they have published a book that is considered as a guidebook for anyone who is interested to learn more about the topic or to organize dialogue workshops. The book is divided into five chapters; the first two chapters cover theoretical foundation for dialogue and some examples as well, the third chapter focuses on planning workshops, the fourth chapter focuses on the role of workshop leader and facilitator, and the fifth chapter focuses on the structure of the workshop and the activities. It seems as a comprehensive guide regarding this topic and is available in three languages; this is how the book is described in the introduction: “In this book, you can read about the principles for dialogue and get ideas for planning. You can also get inspiration for exercises that create dialogue. And you gain understanding of the role of the workshop leader and facilitator”. The Handbook talks in the beginning about the values or principles of dialogue and defines them, according to it, there are four: trust – openness – honesty – equality. The participant during the interview explained the process of creating this handbook:

“The process by which this handbook was written is completely dialogical. We could have done it in three months ... it took above a year because we had to make sure that it was a dialogical process that integrates everyone and that we all kind of reach some level of consensus on everything that was written ... I am super proud of how this handbook was written, because it was more about the process rather than the content”

It is clear from the book that all activities are interactive, inviting participants to think critically, to revisit their ideals and habits, and to reflect on their experiences.

The second initiative focuses on youth and children and this Initiative N, the participant who was interviewed was in charge of youth so that will be the focus here. The document is the yearly report of the NGO for the year 2013. The document starts with the vision and mission that led to the three programs they are currently working on, which are: cultural exchange program, foundation program, volunteer and initiative program. The methodology they use for managing these programs is mentioned: “the method of managing activities in this sector (meaning the youth sector) is from the most important methods used to achieve youth participation ... the management structure depends on the participation of youth in all the stages starting from planning ... also in the execution stage and monitoring and evaluation. And this is achieved through an activity committee formed from 6-8 youth members”. The report includes details of the activities carried out, why they were carried out and feedback from participants.

The third initiative is Initiative B which is focused on youth, adults and organizations. This initiative shared several documents. From the documents it is clear that the foundation of their work is the values, which they have included in one document, the document starts with: “Our team values are the determining factors shaping our conducts with each other, with people and organizations outside the team and with the program’s participants. They are our guides in decision making and actions”; the document states the values the team sees are essential to their lives and work, they are: Respecting differences, Demonstrating integrity, Striving for peace, Having fun, Freedom, and Proactivity and hope. Each value is defined and the application of it is indicated in three areas; application within the team, application with externals, application in the program. For the value of Striving for peace, the definition used for example is: “We recognize and learn from each other the individual interpretations of Peace. We believe that Peace is a holistic state and way of living and Nonviolence is the optimum way of reaching solutions and

transcending conflicts. We aim to achieve Peace at all levels, demonstrating this through our programs and activities”. In another document, there is an explanation of the theoretical framework and methodology that their curriculum is based upon, their curriculum includes five modules that were developed across the years: “5 complementary modules addressing various peace related topics: (1) Culture of peace (2) Diversity (3) Conflict Resolution (4) Communication (5) Non Violence. These modules are conceived as an organic product, growing and evolving as the team gains in experience and as new needs arise”; their methodology for developing curriculum and delivering workshops includes the following characteristics:

- The relevance of the content to the lives of the participants and their experiences;
- Activities are diverse, interactive and strongly based on participants’ experience, whether simulated on site or borrowed from real life events;
- The knowledge is built – rather than transmitted - through the awareness, sharing and evaluation of the participants’ experiences and their exposure to new or different ones;
- Emphasis is put on the process of learning together and through each other in a climate of openness and respect;
- Individual differences in learning, experiences, opinions and values are acknowledged and respected.

The researcher attended some workshops with this initiative as an observer, one of them was a train of the trainers’ workshop that lasted for four days, the trainees were all from Upper Egypt, there were three facilitators working in this workshop. The researcher observed that the level of cooperation and unity between the team of facilitators was high, to the extent that they come across as one person. This is not just an indicator of the personal relationships & good bonds

between the team members, it's also an indicator of the co-design & training efforts that happen within the team to reach this level of synchronization, comfort with the material & activities, & ability to alternate in roles. This only comes from deep digestion of the material & concepts that are beyond the workshop.

The fourth initiative, Initiative I, works mainly with children and youth, they base all their work on Arts for development concepts, again the mention of values is in the beginning of the document with the definitions, they have six core values: Equality (Non-Discrimination), Respect, Freedom, Participation, Commitment/Responsibility, and Celebrating Diversity. The definition of the value of Celebrating Diversity for example is: "We believe that diversity is a fact of life and we perceive it as enriching and as a source of creativity in society. We understand and value children's personal experiences and encourage them to be themselves. We always provide space for personal choices in our activities and curricula". Their framework is based on a desired change that they would like to see which can be also considered the vision: "A society of free, responsible and creative individuals where everyone is accepted for who they are and encouraged to engage in continuous self-development"; based on this desired change they have two main strategies, one related to change on the individual level and another that is related to change on the collective level. For change on the individual level, their main target is: "developing and strengthening individuals with the knowledge, skills and values needed for them to create their own desired change, as well as become active agents of change in their communities"; this reflects on their programs in the fact that they work on two levels, one is related to building the capacity through educational programs and cultural activities that help participants develop their self-identity and intellectual and social skills needed to become an active member of the community, the second level is in creating learning spaces where children

and youth develop their own projects and decide what their learning paths should be like. For change on a community level, this strategy targets “the wider community members that influence and are influenced by the children & youth, essentially parents, schools, peers ,neighbors and organizations with similar visions for change”; they hope to develop a common vision for change with all the stakeholders within the community they are working in and society at large. In the document, they share testimonials of the children and youth, who have been part of the program, the researcher has selected two samples of these testimonials:

- A female participant who has been in the program for six years and is now working in the NGO, says: “The most important thing I believe (name of NGO) does for the community is that it teaches people to treat one another with equality and respect. I see a lot of change in the personalities of those around me, especially in how they interact with one another. There is violence in the schools here, between the kids and even sometimes from the teachers. Here we teach the children an alternative way of thinking, an approach that avoids violence.”
- A male participant who has been in the program for seven years and is currently working in the NGO, says: “I like this place because it’s a space where I can get out all my energy, and a space where I can express myself. It also introduced me to so many things, for example I was introduced to theatre for the first time at (name of NGO). The staff and the people here also treated me well, and that along with the activities made me want to come to the center frequently.”

It is worth noting, that this NGO faced some issues with the governorate officials, in attempt to help their position, the parents of the children and youth in this community wrote a letter and

sent it to the officials requesting that they do not harm the NGO, the participant mentioned in the interview that in the end of this letter they wrote: “save (NGO name), save the values and principles that (NGO name) is instilling in us, us the parents before the children”.

b) Capacity Building of the Organization:

Most of the initiatives differentiated between trainings related to new volunteers or new team members who are recruited and the existing staff members. Therefore the data will be shown accordingly:

Trainings to new members or volunteers:

Some initiatives have a training process to introduce the key concepts and theoretical framework that their work is based upon, their training also includes several skills, thus it requires a long time and effort, and usually are done once per year or maybe less often. For others they have a clear training process that is short and covers the basic data they need, then staff/volunteers learn more on the job training and coaching that could go on for some time as well. One of the initiatives doesn't train new volunteers and only provides the information needed, this is the initiative that works with community organizing. For the art initiative it is different as the members are in constant training with regards to the art tools, and since they recruit youth who are not necessarily artists and didn't study art, they provide trainings on all levels and the founder and director makes the judgment on who is ready or not to participate in performances.

Trainings to existing members or volunteers:

Some initiatives have a set of ongoing processes that include periodic trainings, monthly team meetings and individual meetings. There are also other tools used like self-study groups,

coaching, job shadowing and trainings conducted by team members. Most of the initiatives shared that they value continuous learning and do look for opportunities to attend any relevant trainings, some provide opportunities for their staff to attend trainings conducted by partners or other organizations, and some even offer international training opportunities through their networks. Some initiatives have a mentor or coach with whom they meet regularly; many as well value the idea of the on-job training and use it for new and old members. Almost all of them do not have a structured training program but have willingness to attend trainings and encourage their members to attend. It was mentioned several times, that team members attend trainings that are relevant to their area of work. Only one initiative mentioned that they encourage and support members to develop their capacities, in any field that they are passionate about even it isn't relevant to their work in the company.

4. Question 3: Why do the initiatives choose to belong to Selmiyah movement?

Before reviewing the feedback of the initiatives on the reasons behind joining the movement and the added value they see in being part of it, it is important to understand the movement; how it was created and why and what it hopes to achieve. In this section, more background on the movement will be provided based on the interviews conducted with the founders and coordinators of the movement, and based on the documents they shared with the researcher. After that, the feedback of the initiatives that was shared during the interviews will be shown. In the end, the summary of ideas and vision shared by the founders and coordinators of the movement regarding its future will be shared.

Creating Selmiyah:**a) *How was it created?***

Based on the interviews with the two co-founders of the movement, it seems that the birth of the idea was after the 25th of January revolution and during the course of 2011 where many violent incidents occurred. In the beginning the founders joined an initiative⁹ that aimed at stopping the violence and promoting the value of dignity. After a while, the question of what is next arose, and one of the co-founders was more interested in addressing the root of violence rather than the symptom, this came from his involvement in other activities that worked on promoting the culture of peace and promoting dialogue in specific, he had seen the impact of such experiences on the participants. So the idea was born, to create a non-political and decentralized movement, that is based on values such as peace, respecting others, participation, taking initiative, and hope. They decided to organize a series of workshops related to the culture of peace, to create a core mass that adopts the philosophy of non-violence, and they used many of the activities and concepts developed by members of initiative B.

They organized a series of eight workshops during the period from June 2012 to December 2012; two of these workshops were done outside Cairo. The community that was created from these workshops was the strong base they needed, with almost 160 individuals who were enthusiastic to work and change; as time passed they realized that this community included members working in different initiatives and that this network is powerful. A turning point experience for everyone was after organizing a festival that was very successful in terms of organization and richness of participants and attendees, the reason behind that was the variety of the resources that each initiative had and the number of volunteers they were able to recruit

⁹ This is initiative B which is included in the sample of this research; one of the founding members was interviewed.

collectively. From here, they restructured the movement from partnership of individuals to partnership between initiatives and invited all the individuals and their initiatives to join.

In February 2013, the movement organized its first forum, and invited all partners to join to create dialogue on goals and aspirations of Selmiyah. Before that forum, a document was created that includes the following components and requests initiatives to officially sign it and register their information in a google document:

- Introduction to Selmiyah movement that includes vision, mission and goals.
- Philosophy and principles of Selimiyah which include ten values that Selmiyah is based upon.
- Strategy of work and activities.
- The movement structure that explains the concept of decentralized movement, coordination bodies, responsibility of members, and legal status.
- How to join Selmiyah movement which explains the process of joining and provides the link to the google document.

This document and the report after the first forum are the only communications in the form of documents that the coordinators of the movement have circulated. Remaining communication is either done through Facebook posts, telephone calls or face to face meetings. One of the founders, who was the general coordinator, is the one who created both documents. This same person expressed a broad view for the movement, he says, “when I look at Selmiyah, I don’t see Selmiyah as just the groups who are within the movement, it is about anyone who adopts these values”, this triggered the question of whether it was a political or religious movement or not, his reply was that anything that has a political orientation means by design

excluding people who are not within this orientation, and the same applies for religion orientation. He said that the values of Selmiyah are human, they are not derived from any political or religious ideology, however they can exist in some ideologies and religions, the goals of the movement are not religious or political specific, they try to work or address different fields.

b) Is it a network or movement?

This is a question that raised a lot of discussion with all interviewees, it was asked only to the co-founders and coordinators of the movement, researcher tried to summarize the different perspectives in the coming few lines, and in the interpretation section researcher will provide further analysis of this particular point. Most of the interviewees saw it was a network; however they had different reasons for that and different analysis of whether or not Selmiyah should become a movement and how. One interviewee saw that Selmiyah is currently a network bringing different partners to work together on the basis of peace values, when asked what the network needs to become a movement, the interviewee said: “First, transforming into a movement will happen through stages, I think that the first stage and this is what we are working on, how to develop practical yearly plans or projects among all the partners, ... based on the targets of the network”. She goes on to explain that after this is achieved and implemented which will take a couple of years, “I think this will be the beginning of forming what it means to be a movement that has a philosophy and this philosophy is being implemented on the ground”. Another interviewee sees that a movement is an entity whose target is to bring about social change in a certain area. While a network is an opportunity for different organizations to be in the same space, to share knowledge, to share resources, but it’s not necessary for people within the same network to agree on a certain stand or position or value or action. This is his argument

for considering Selmiyah a network, “agreeing on principles and values and understanding these common values is what creates the difference between a network and a movement”. He goes to confirm that this is his opinion, that there might not be agreement or common understanding of values among Selmiyans and that he is not sure, he proposes:

“I am not certain, we can be in agreement on the values and have very good understanding of it and similar understanding of it in Selmiyah, but I am not certain, we have to be sure of that, and we put these values in action so it has impact on society”

When asked what the network needs to become a movement, he raised the idea that there needs to be a discussion of whether the network wants to do that or not, there might not be a will to do that, or it might not be the right time, or there might not be enough capacity. Another interviewee, who is also one of the founders, saw the difference between a network and movement is in centralization, that movements are more centralized which creates obstacles to working on different levels and dimensions, while decentralization helps people work in different areas and coordinate together better.

One interviewee saw that Selmiyah is currently in a middle stage between network and movement, his argument was that it has some work being done on the ground and thus it was a movement. At the same time, it is trying to become a network through coordinating the efforts of organizations, and that there are some initiatives and individuals who are able to collaborate and work together. Another interviewee, who is also one of the co-founders of Selmiyah, saw that Selmiyah is a movement. First he defined network as a simple structure where people connect and have some relations based on these connections, in the end they are a closed community,

while a movement is more advanced because it is based on the idea of values and has clear targets that it wants to achieve. Then he concludes: “Therefore I think the more accurate word is movement because there is a desire to change, there are targets that we want to achieve, and there are values that we want to spread in our society, not just a closed community”.

c) Goals of Selmiyah:

Below the goals of Selmiyah will be listed based on two sources: what was shared during the interviews, and the introduction document that was referenced earlier¹⁰. The goals were split into two clear categories, one is general and the other is related to changing state policies. The latter category did not come up in the discussion, the researcher probed for it with a question during the interview. The participants explained also what it means to spread the culture of peace so this is summarized as well in the below lines.

General Goals:

- Spreading the culture of peace: The goal of Selmiyah is to build peace between the different groups in the Egyptian society in the daily life with all its details.
- Building bridges of trust among different groups of people within society.
- Documenting all the success stories, efforts and initiatives, and creating new success stories as well.
- Coordination between groups working on the ground to promote collaboration is important, because many of the initiatives even within Selmiyah, have limited resources and capacity, so when people come together they are able to do more and encourage each other to continue working.

¹⁰ This document is shared with all initiatives that joined or would like to join the network, and they need to sign it before joining.

- For the right of peaceful demonstration and expression to be available for all people.

Even though spreading the culture of peace was not mentioned in the document, it was mentioned in all the interviews, so researcher asked the interviewees to define what that term meant to them, one of the interviewees summarized it in:

“In the end the goal is to create a critical mass capable of creating impact, where? In all the fields, on the level of the society and spreading the culture among people, because culture is something that people get used to by time, but people want to see models and want to see people adopting this culture and to see the benefit of ... these new practices ...”

Another participant confirms that the idea is not just in spreading the culture of peace but also putting it in action, so not just on an intellectual level but to reflect to actions. So once people have adopted the culture and the values, then they start looking at the challenges they face and they start thinking of how to face it and deal with it in a different way.

Goals related to Impacting State Policies:

Some saw that Selmiyah can have impact on state policies, as one interviewee puts it: “by time you see that in order to spread this new culture, you don’t just need to work on societal issues, the policies also must change”. This same person saw that in order for this to happen Selmiyah needs to include not only civil society, but also governmental entities, private sector, and other representatives of the society. However another interviewee saw that changing nation policies is a secondary point, that Selmiyah will not work to achieve it, however it can happen as an outcome when the society starts demanding this, so the work that needs to be done is with the society.

d) Benefit from creating Selmiyah:

Interviewees saw diverse benefits from creating a network and movement, specifically one that is focused on peace culture. Below is a list of their collective replies:

- Timing in which it started was crucial, which was the beginning of shaping the awareness of Egyptians on how diverse Egyptians are. Selmiyah can provide a roadmap on how to merge and deal with all these diverse groups on a daily basis. So Selmiyah's added value can be to bring all the different people to come together and find a common ground and be able to work towards Egypt's interest.
- Provide success stories and models that are close to the Egyptian society. Peace is always perceived as Gandhi or mother Teresa, who are models far from the community, or political process.
- Plays an important role for groups working in the civil society, they need to have their efforts coordinated, united and focused. This is one of the reasons why it has been working on the ground for years without clear impact.
- Connecting and creating communication channels for all the initiatives and individuals who are interested in the culture of peace.
- Providing opportunities for youth to participate and engage in an area that he/she likes if they really want to serve the community.

One of the interviewees concludes that this is just an attempt: “at least we are trying, we are trying to fix something, we might succeed and might not succeed, at least we know we tried”

Structure of the Network or Movement:***a) Legal existence and coordination efforts:***

Regarding legal status, all of interviewees said there is no legal status for Selmiyah. Most of them didn't see a need to register Selmiyah under any legal coverage. The argument of one of them was that to register Selmiyah means that there is an organizational structure and founders, and this is not required for Selmiyah, it is planned to be owned by everybody. One interviewee saw that it would be helpful if Selmiyah was able to get legal coverage, however he did acknowledge that the legal structures within the Egyptian law are lagging behind the movement happening within civil society nowadays. He continues to conclude that there are no legal statuses for network organizations, for not-for-profit companies, for trans-boundary networks and so on.

Regarding organization structure, below data is based on the interviews and participant observations of the researcher. Currently there is one coordinator, this was the set-up also at the beginning of the creation of Selmiyah until February 2013, during the first forum it was agreed that a coordination board that includes four people will take over, however this didn't work out due to time and location constraints of some of the members, yet most of the members of coordination board are involved in certain aspects within Selmiyah. When asked about the role of the coordinator, one interviewee said: "role of coordinator is to create links between the different nodes that exist within Selmiyah, and to communicate with other Selmiyans outside the movement and tries to help them join". One interviewee said that the benefit of having a coordination board was to make it easier as a load, because it is a demanding and tiring job, also he saw it as a leap towards decentralization, yet he could see that the board was slow and that this speed was causing frustration within the network and slower impact on the ground.

When asked whether initiatives can be in charge of coordination one day, one interviewee saw that it is a possibility if coordination was a strong characteristic of the initiative or if an initiative was formed in the network like Takween team¹¹ and volunteered to manage the coordination, the aim is for everyone to participate: “I wish that each one in Selmiyah becomes a coordinator”. Another interviewee thought that it is also possible, and also mentioned other options that can occur: there can be one coordinator, which he thinks is the most suitable for this stage, or a coordination board that includes representatives from the initiatives, it can be a rotating role, it can be per governorate, it can be per file or field; however it is very important in all cases to set a clear job description of the role and criteria for selection.

One interviewee added two more bodies besides the coordination body when explaining the structure of Selmiyah. The first is a team called “ambassadors of Selmiyah”, this team includes mainly all the people who participated in the Selmiyah workshops in 2012 and were not part of any initiative, they are working on spreading the values of Selmiyah socially and considered core team of Selmiyah, according to that interviewee. Second a team called “takween team” which means formation or development team, one of the co-founders started this team and is still part of the team today, they work on creating relations between all partners and individuals within Selmiyah; “our vision is for the individual within Selmiyah to discover him/her-self, discover the other individual in Selmiyah, and gets introduced to all the initiatives within the network and what is his/her role in the network, where he/she can add value”. In the beginning they focused on people within Selmiyah, but now they have widened their scope to people from outside the network, especially that the activities they organize are now varied, some people join Selmiyah after attending an event with Takween.

¹¹ This initiative will be explained in the following paragraph.

b) Internal Processes: selection, planning, conflict management:

Regarding the selection criteria for individuals and initiatives joining Selmiyah, all of the interviewees agreed that there are no selection criteria written, and there is no clear process for people joining the network. One interviewee said that this was mainly because the network is still growing, and that there was a plan set by the coordination board to have three levels for anyone joining the movement; first they become Selmiyah friends, then member in Selmiyah movement, then ambassador of Selmiyah. Each stage has its privileges, its needs and conditions; however this system is not implemented yet. One of the founders said that it is challenging, how to decide on whom to join, who says that the people within the network are in line with the values that they claim that they want to reach? He says:

“signing the document of Selmiyah means that they adopt this and are convinced, but in many times this doesn’t mean that these are people who live fully the values, and they are at the end of the road and don’t have challenges to live according to these values, no we all have that”

Another interviewee stresses on the fact that there has to be a will to commit to living according to certain values, “I cannot force my value on someone who doesn’t think that this value is important, ... I look for the social circles that are in need and have the passion to deal in peace”.

Regarding planning of strategies and yearly plans, they all agreed that there was no clear process to address this issue. The previous coordinator did some work on his own, the coordination board did not come up with any process, any strategies, they were able to identify some priorities for Selmiyah. The current coordinator has initiated an attempt to create a strategic plan for the network by inviting all the members to a general meeting, in this meeting they

discussed plans for the next year, after the meeting a follow-up committee was appointed, including a group of members of ambassadors of Selmiyah, and they are in charge of follow-ups on the teams.

Regarding resolving conflicts, all co-founders and coordinators interviewed agreed that there was no process owner or a process. However most of them saw that there was work being done in this areas, mainly the fact that the people who are committed and active within the network are people who want to promote culture of peace, so they are able to manage their conflicts. There are different techniques used such as creating spaces for people to talk and express what upset them, agree on what happened and share the facts, what was heard and done, and then each one can talk about their interpretation of the facts and how that made him/her feel. As one interviewee puts it: “there is no one technique, there are different skills and techniques, it depends whether the conflict is personal or between initiatives, whether the conflict is around the values or practices”

Joining the Network or Movement:

In this section, the views of the participants from the initiatives regarding Selmiyah are presented. Added to them are some of the points shared by the co-founders and coordinators of the movement, wherever it is fit to do that. There are two key themes here, which are the reasons behind joining and whether the team is aligned to this or not, and whether they see the importance of creating a network or movement in Egypt nowadays.

a) Why did the initiatives join?

For all initiatives, all team members were aligned, either to the idea of joining Selmiyah specifically or to the idea of collaborating in general. Only one initiative mentioned that their

current team might not all be aligned because the team changes a lot but the team that was active during taking the decision of joining was aligned. Regarding attending events organized by Selmiyah, only one initiative confirmed that all the members attended several events within Selmiyah. A few initiatives had all team members attend an event except for the newest members in the team; one even had the international team attend one event. All the other initiatives were not sure if all members attended any event in Selmiyah, and had different engagement levels within their teams. One initiative the interviewee herself hadn't attended any event that is related to Selmiyah.

The reasons for joining varied between the initiatives, only one initiative was not sure what was expected of them or even how they should join, this was the initiative that is still not officially part of Selmiyah yet. For the rest of the participants, the main motives were:

- Finding common values between Selmiyah and the initiative, such as promoting culture of peace, coexistence and accepting diversity. Some initiatives were willing to integrate the values of Selmiyah within the organization.
- Supporting the idea of collaboration and believing in it strongly.
- Being trustful of the community due to common people within Selmiyah circles.
- Having one of the co-founders as part of the team, or knowing the founder on a personal level.
- Sharing the goal of creating a network but didn't know how to do it.
- People within the network have real passion.
- Worked with some partners within Selmiyah and was comfortable, thus decided to join.
- Seeing the added value that the initiative can bring to Selmiyah and that Selmiyah can bring to the initiative.

- Liked the concept of decentralized movement
- Wanted to be part of this network because it includes many initiatives and projects that are rich in terms of experience and content.

b) Value of creating Selmiyah:

Even though there were a few participants who were skeptic of the success of this network, not based on current observations, but based on past experiences, however all participants shared several reasons that argue the importance of creating Selmiyah at this point:

- There is a dire need to create a mainstream that is working for the improvement of the country.
- It is crucial to spread the awareness that there is no one initiative that can do everything, thus there is a need for collaboration and coordination within civil society.
- Even though people know each other on a personal level and are friends, the networking was not done. It is important to have an umbrella that puts people in certain environment which promotes collaboration and cooperation further which leads to working together on the ground that leads to further collaboration. So it's like the catalyst for this momentum.
- It is important for people who are working on the ground and have similar values and ideas to support each other and to give each other the needed energy to continue.
- People challenging each other's ideas and thoughts in a constructive way.
- Network improves reachability and access to more people on the ground.
- Connecting with people who have more knowledge and experience in the field of peace which is an added value.
- Safe environment for all the partners to work together.

- In Selmiyah, there is seriousness in the will of people to work together on the ground.
- The fact that the network is not owned by someone makes it easy for people to contribute and to be part of it.

Dynamics within the Network:

a) Mutual added value:

All participants in interviews were asked to identify the added value that they think they can bring into the network and the added value that they see Selmiyah can bring to them. All of the initiatives saw their added value within the network is to bring the component that they are strong at, such as dialogue, creating a values-oriented culture, creating opportunities for practicing on the ground with different communities, and so on. However, some were able to articulate certain ideas of contribution to the network, they are listed below. On the other hand, all the initiatives saw that the key added value for them within Selmiyah is networking, meeting people who work in the same area or in the same field, and the connections made from that, one participant put it as: “Selmiyah is a window on the change makers in Egypt”. Lists are split according to the question:

Added-value of initiatives to the Selmiyah (based on what was shared during interviews):

- Strength is dialogue so they can work on promoting internal dialogue within the network, how to instill the values of dialogue, creating clear internal channels of communication that are transparent and avoiding exclusion.
- Transfer the experience of the initiative’s travels to border cities to members of Selmiyah, either their own personal experiences or the experience of interacting with the people there. Also can open a channel for Selmiyah to do activities with the people there.

- Support for the advocacy of what Selmiyah stands for, on the ground with all their art tools.
- Gain access for Selmiyah in the university they operate in and can connect Selmiyah to the organization that can provide access to all universities.
- Can provide IT services to all the partners within Selmiyah, tailor services to some partners.
- Can connect Selmiyah with their networks on national and international levels.

Some core competencies available within the network:

- Access to large numbers of volunteers in Cairo and governorates, and marginalized areas.
- Can support with locations to conduct workshops and camps.
- Documented the experience of working with municipalities and the field work and experienced in dealing with the government.
- Experience in branding, marketing and sales, and business world.
- Linking partners together and encouraging collaboration to work on the ground.
- Proposal writing is a strength and project management.

Added-value of Selmiyah to initiatives:

- Existence in itself achieves one of the goals of a few initiatives which is related to spreading the culture of peace.
- Access to trainings through partners and individuals within the network.
- Meeting people who are working in the same field, meeting the people who complement their work, and cooperating with partners who can help them build trust and communicate in certain communities.

- Networking and opportunities created from meeting people who have the same goal and work to achieve common goals.
- Selmiyah can provide opportunities to junior facilitators to gain experience.
- Benefiting from the experiences within the community.
- Access to a community that can use the services of the IT services offered.
- Access to rich content related to peace and the philosophy of non-violence.
- Spreading the initiative's idea and advocating for it.

b) Promotion of Peace Values within the Network:

Some participants saw that it is being done on an individual level, reflected in relationships between people within collaboration context, and reflected in the relationships between the coordinators, however one participant saw that it was not being promoted on a network level. Many participants agreed with that view, that there was little being done on a network level, one participant was not sure that all members were on the same line when it came to values, she said:

“to what extent do we all agree with the values, do we all see the values and its importance, ... this is normal, we are too many, and the network developed quickly, so to me it's very important to stop and put a plan of how to become consistent with these principles”

Another participant acknowledged that there are opportunities within the network that promote the culture of peace, such as workshops of Selmiyah, the yearly forum, the activities organized by Takween team including retreats for inner peace, however she explains how this is not enough:

“what I feel is missing is agreement on the definitions of the values and how we live according to them and so on, and how as Selmiyah we help each other to live according to them, I feel that this is missing and requires effort to be directed to it, this is the next step, ... to have a very clear process for how we will bring these values to depth instead of the haphazard activities”

On the other hand, the co-founders and coordinators of the network were asked the same question, there were two different views, one was in line with what most of the participants from initiatives thought, that there was no focus on this issue; that there were some efforts to support that through the activities of Takween team especially the inner peace retreats, the discussions that sometimes happen on Facebook, he concluded by saying that the Selmiyah workshops should become more periodical and should target the members of the initiatives. There was another opinion that confirmed that there was a yearly plan put in place for this issue according to the strategic planning meeting that was held and that it was decided that the plan will work on three levels: inner peace, peace with the other and social peace in a form of a developmental plan in society. As far as the researcher knows, no such plan was announced in any of the communication channels of Selmiyah.

Recommendations to Selmiyah:

These are the recommendations that were suggested from the founders of the initiatives within the interviews. They were grouped according to three themes: recommendations related to creating harmony among partners, recommendations related to how to organize the movement in terms of coordination and goals, recommendations related to the processes and how the coordination is conducted, and recommendations related to Selmiyah values and how to create alignment on them and to create continuing processes to instill them within the movement.

a) To create more harmony among partners:

- Encourage collaboration through different channels, so the initiatives work together on the ground. This will lead to the spread of Selmiyah's existence on the ground. This issue has been mentioned by the majority of the participants. Collaboration can be achieved by creating smaller circles, because it is difficult to work with a large number, so divide people in projects, and create interactions between the small circles as well.
- Work has to transcend the class of activists who are all like each other.
- Understanding the available resources to do resource matching, and be able to coordinate between the partners based on the needs and who can fill in these needs.
- Involving people from branding and marketing background is beneficial and important for sustainability.
- Finding other networks like Selmiyah.
- Inviting one initiative to talk about itself and in that meeting a joint activity can come out.
- Forums are important, but the forum should have a theme and all partners should contribute to this theme. The idea of having partners work together on the ground during the forum is a very good idea.
- Create a periodic newsletter.
- Selmiyah to organize events in different areas by inviting all the partners to collaborate.
- To have a yearly schedule of activities with the partners in different areas and governorates.

b) To improve organization structure:

- There is a need for the coordinator to connect things together and create a path and clear steps. There should be rotation and ownership, but that is after reaching a certain level of maturity as a network.
- The way of choosing a coordinator was wrong, there has to be a criteria for selection, job description, clarity of roles. The coordinator needs project management skills, strategic planning and planning.
- Reservations on having one coordinator: several participants didn't prefer a single person to coordinate but more a collective effort, even if one person will decide in the end and will be held accountable. Some saw that there has to be a coordinator but it can be rotating among the partners to guarantee decentralization and ownership. Can be an individual coordinator and has a support team from ambassadors of Selmiyah who have clear roles. And it depends on the duties that the coordinator should do, and whether the coordinator is willing to do it.
- It is useful that the current coordinators can explain what their role is, for people to know, to set expectations, and to realize the gaps.
- The founder did a structure that was not implemented, it included: events, media watch, workshops, IT. There can be a core team who's focused on these topics.

c) To optimize processes within Selmiyah:

- To have conditions of who joins not aiming for exclusion but for the purpose of being strong, conditions can be: 1) To join a Selmiyah workshop 2) To have common values with Selmiyah 3) You provide some sort of added value (could be your own work which is a perfect fit with vision of Selmiyah, could be advocacy work towards the values).

- Create a structure of periodic meetings, for all partners; this creates dynamics that are very effective. As one participant said: “Any meeting for Selmiyans will lead to joint work, this has to be built upon and invested”. These periodic meetings can follow up on the plan and adjust the plan according to what was done. After each meeting, someone needs to provide feedback on what happened in the meeting.
- To organize a meeting soon and clarify all these things to the initiatives. To agree on a joint plan in this meeting with a clear action plan.
- The annual forum, it has to produce several groups to follow up on what happened in it.
- To have direct relationship with the people, not just through Face Book. Regular visits to the different partners for follow-ups and clarification.
- Activities have to be more organized, more systematic, from project management perspective, according to a strategy for execution.
- To invite all partners and individuals to document all their work on the online portal that was created (Initiative E), this will facilitate the coordination.
- Being gender sensitive, there are working mothers who want to contribute more but are not able to participate in most events because they are scheduled in weekends and afternoons which are not suitable.

d) To develop a process for the values:

- Values of the network need to be highlighted, because focusing only on peace doesn't represent all the ideas within it.
- If all partners agree on six values, and agree on definitions of what it means to everyone on a personal level, and with people, and within the network, a missing step is to help each initiative come up with steps to ensure that these values are practiced within the

initiative, this helps also the initiatives that don't agree with these values to decide to leave. This will not be dealt with as interference, but rather offering help to the initiative of how to achieve these values, and this is based on the choice of the initiative.

- Focused trainings that happen periodically and their basic targets are values, and include a large number of the members of initiatives. Values cannot be disseminated through meetings and planning sessions. Members & initiatives that claim they can handle such trainings can lead them.
- How to position the value system as the reference for this network. How it is integrated in the induction of new members. Process of how this value system is done should be transparent and open, but once it's done it becomes the sole reference.
- To have more dialogue or conversations on the FB group, to learn through this how to practice peaceful values, to have a moderator who focuses on this and helps make this a learning experience.

Future of the Network or Movement:

Data within this section is coming from interviews of the co-founders of the movement and the people who were involved in the coordination. They were asked at the end of their interviews to talk more about how they see the future of the movement in terms of impact and structure.

a) Future in five and ten years:

In five years, one interviewee saw that Selmiyah will transform from a network to a movement. Another saw that in one or two years, Selmiyah can be a very big movement that works on spreading the culture of peace, and the success stories can be documented and shared, which will attract more people to join increasing resources and capacity. This progress depends

on what people will decide on doing for the coming period. International partnerships and alliances with other movements would be created. So Selmiyah can have real critical mass that can bring impact in their communities and he sees that within five years it would bring impact on a policy level as well. Another agrees with the previous opinion about how this period is a turning point for Selmiyah, and that if they are not able to find the common ground for the principles and values, then the network will be diluted and it will become like the term “development”, a wide word that includes anything. Thus it will become a network that includes anything, having the width but not the depth. If they are able to align on the values and create a rigorous process, then the network would be appealing to many initiatives that have strong work on the ground. Another factor that impacts the future of the network is the umbrella that will be chosen, if it stays a network then the initiatives will be handling all the coordination, if it becomes a movement then partnerships will be a key. The interviewee’s vision is to have lots of interaction with other movements, and the strength of the movement will be in partnerships done with other movements or institutions. He would like it to remain a network with a cause, so through the network a movement is created and to become part of global movements, there is a lot to learn from other countries. Another interviewee mentioned two key features: network is maintaining its decentralization and having selmiyah in governorates.

In ten years, one interviewee hopes that Selmiyah is able to affect the decision making process, that Selmiyah would have been able to reach all governorates, that Selmiyah would build a peaceful life style within the network itself. Two interviewees saw that in ten years, the culture would be changing in the community, in companies, in initiatives, in networks; that can impact all policies in education, environment and health, networks that have impact on the municipalities. Also Selmiyah would be part of an International movement that creates same

impact in different countries. One of them saw that in 20 years, he sees Selmiyah impacting global policies in the UN. The other saw that there would be impact on a transnational level, so inside the network you would find international mediators who are working on regional issues.

b) Future of Coordination structure:

They all suggested different coordination methods for the future which included: maintaining one coordinator with a supporting team, coordination board, initiatives to coordinate, several coordinators for each file, for each governorate, and for each area. One suggested that they would research the best ways to manage a decentralized network and decide based on that. Some other suggestions were shared regarding the selection of the coordinator; there was a suggestion to organize elections, another suggestion was to include the following points in the selection criteria: readiness to work on themselves in relation to the ten values of Selmiyah, effectiveness in terms of work within civil society, leadership capabilities. Two interviewees agreed that the challenges will be high in terms of alignment on values and principles since the number of people will be much higher, suggesting that the team who is working on this should be replicated in different locations.

V. Discussion and Conclusion

This research aims at exploring and studying the model of Selmiyah; a grass-roots movement and network that targets spreading the culture of peace within the Egyptian community. This network that comprises of many initiatives and organizations who are mostly working in the non-formal sector, with all age groups from children to adults, in different parts of Egypt, with groups of diverse socioeconomic levels; provides a model that can offer several solutions and insight to any group interested in non-formal education sector in Egypt. It can also provide insight to educators and school administrations on how to integrate peace education as part of their system. Throughout this chapter the following key themes will be further discussed and analyzed based on the findings in this research:

1. Methodology of Developing Frameworks: Ability of the initiatives themselves to develop and articulate frameworks and even handbooks based on passion and deep faith, practice and experience, and extensive research.
2. Harris Model vs Selmiyah Model: These initiatives address different aspects of peace culture in society; these aspects integrate and form a comprehensive model comparable with the model designed by Ian Harris.
3. Selmiyah's Added Value: The sustainability of these projects with limited resources directs attention to the dynamics of the need and necessity of creating a network.
4. Selmiyah in the Future: The potential that this network and movement possesses is huge based on the human capital and resources it includes. However, it is clear that it is going through a turning point that will define how its future will look like. The researcher in this part will provide recommendations based on the findings and observation.

1. Methodology of Developing Frameworks:

It is clear from the interviews, the observations and the documents, that there are several factors affecting how the frameworks and curricula are developed; the researcher sees that there are three key factors: orientation towards values, experiences through practice, research and readings. All of these factors play different roles for each initiative, their weight within each initiative varies as well, thus the order in which they are written doesn't represent any priority or importance. In the following section each factor will be discussed in further details.

Orientation towards values:

To understand this point completely, one must look deeper at the definitions of peace provided by the participants, and to see the link between these definitions collectively and the overall goals of the initiatives as shared by the participants. It is quite interesting to see that the same categories were used for both; these categories reflect the three dimensions of peace: inner peace, external peace and societal peace, there may be a fourth dimension argued which is peace with nature and the universe. This consistency in understanding shows a commitment to these values and practicing them within the community. It is equally interesting to see the links for some people who used certain definitions and their corresponding field of work. For example, for someone who is working in community organizing and helping people participate in obtaining their rightful services and collaborating as a neighborhood or community to do that, when defining peace he says:

“any situation in my life has several ways to deal with, there are ways that include hostility and harshness and wrongfully taking the rights of someone else for example to achieve a personal benefit, and there is a way that is win-win situation

... where you benefit and let other people benefit from it, so you provide useful stuff to other people, even if it's a simple thing like a piece of information”

Another example is for someone who is working on environmental issues and mobilizing people to start getting involved because this is a common problem that affects all humans, in the peace definition she says, “I think peace has to do with harmony, coexistence and interconnection, people realizing how interconnected they are and how illogical it is to think of your own selfish needs”. These examples show that there is real consistency between what the participants believe in and what they are working on. The only challenge to this point is to make sure that everyone within the network can come to an agreement on what peace means for them so they can move forward together, this will be discussed further in the recommendations to the network section.

Values and principles is a key term that is used in the documents of all the initiatives, it is usually mentioned in the beginning and the values are defined. Based on these values and principles the framework is built and this forms the foundation for the activities and practices within the workshops or trainings. It also forms the foundation for the methodology of action within the community for initiatives working on interventions within the community. This also defines how the team themselves would interact with one another, based on observations, for teams working together in workshops or camps, there were always communication channels for the team members to discuss, reflect and give or receive feedback. These channels were daily or even twice a day meetings, providing a space for the team to share their reflections on the experience and any challenges or opportunities they faced. Therefore, there is consistency on the practice level as well. It is therefore understandable that many participants raised concerns related to the fact that values were not communicated and discussed properly within Selmiyah, there were several recommendations on how to improve that and make sure that values become

the reference system. Again this will be discussed further in the recommendations to the network section.

Experiences through practice:

It was common feedback among participants that many of their work and their concepts developed over time and with practice. This idea was repeated among all the groups, whether working in training and workshops, in community organizing and participation, in arts for social change activities either in workshops or in shows, in working with children, in environmental mobilization, in working with remote or marginalized areas. All types of initiatives had the same input; that they are in constant revision of their material based on the experiences they gain on the ground. This experiential approach to developing the curricula promotes further flexibility and ability to adapt to the context and the audience, and this addresses a core concept in curricula development, that Dewey talks about when he says, “the essence of education is the continual reforming and reshaping of activities, and this requires plasticity – the ability to reach new and more complex adjustments” (Dewey, Lectures in the Philosophy of Education, 1899, pp. 32-33). It also helps the teams involved develop continuously and this will be discussed in the coming section. What is more important is acknowledging that the process of creating the material is also very important and that it has great impact not only on the material but also on the people involved. It promotes ownership and true inclusion, and again it links back to the values and how committed the team is to practicing these values. As one participant puts it:

“The process by which this handbook was written is completely dialogical. We could have done it in three months ... it took above a year because we had to make sure that it was a dialogical process that integrates everyone and that we all kind of reach some level of consensus on everything that was written ... I am

super proud of how this handbook was written, because it was more about the process rather than the content”

The concept of documentation is another interesting aspect of the initiatives included in this case study, while documentation is a weak link within civil society in Egypt; it seems that people are learning from their mistakes. So it seems that not only people want to document their frameworks and curricula, they also want to document their work on the ground, hoping that other people might find it beneficial and can build on it. This in itself is a fascinating phenomenon because this culture did not exist within civil society a few years ago. And they explained through the interviews, they realize that the process of documentation in itself is a learning process as explained above.

Research and readings:

Another common feedback among groups was the factor of research, readings and trainings that had an impact on developing their framework and curricula. For some initiatives members joined graduate studies related to the field, for others they were looking for any training related to their field available. One initiative had several university professors involved in their work and mentoring the team on different aspects. This passion for learning and developing their ideas shows a commitment to the value of openness, which is one of the underlying values of peace. Another dimension that was mentioned by some participants was reflections, that there were organized and periodic sessions for reflection, this develops the cognitive skills of the members and also helps them articulate the experiences and lessons learnt. The combination between research and experiences on the ground and reflections is powerful, and this is why the documents that have been developed so far are very rich and comprehensive. Not only that, but

the participants as well seem to be able to articulate their ideas very well, create different links and provide insights on their experiences.

From the above it is clear that the above factors had great impact on the methodology with which the framework and curricula were written, the cognitive and intellectual development of the team members involved and the methods that are followed either to deliver the material or to engage the people.

In conclusion, the above methodologies represent a clear pedagogical shift, where the essence of the learning process is dependent not only on the interaction with the learner but also the experiences of the facilitators; this way the learning process does become a two way flow where both the educator and learner are developing their understanding of a given topic and their skills as well. This process has great respect for the learner's capabilities, interests and thinking process; allowing for a safe space of processing the topic and coming up with their own synthesis of it based on their experiences and background. Furthermore, this motivates the learner to practice the concepts and skills because he/she was part of the synthesis process, not just on the receiving end. This is very much in line with Dewey's definition of education, "I define education as the process of remaking, or reconstituting, experience so as to give it a more socialized content, through the medium of increase of control of experience" (Dewey, Lectures in the Philosophy of Education, 1899, p. 113).

2. Harris Model Vs Selmiyah Model:

As explained in chapter two, Ian Harris built a model for peace education that would address the different dimensions within society that cause violence, and to promote alternatives to violent conflict resolution. The Harris model was formed of the following components:

International education, human rights education, development education, environmental education and conflict resolution education. The initiatives that were studied during this sample addressed different parts of these components. In this section, the researcher will present which aspects of the initiatives addressed each pillar or component in the model, whether there is any missing component within Selmiyah or within Harris' model. It is important to note that these initiatives were and still are working separately on the ground, the fact that they are all in the same network happened organically without the co-founders or coordinators targeting certain groups, it was shown in the previous chapter that there was almost no criteria for selection within Selmiyah except to be in line with the basic values of openness and inclusion. Therefore it is interesting to see how comprehensive the Selmiyah model is, even though it was not intentional. Another important point here is that even though the Harris model is addressing education within formal settings and for children, the Selmiyah model has various target groups in terms of age and setting, mostly within non-formal settings.

International Education:

There was no initiative within Selmiyah dedicated to this particular pillar, while there were initiatives dedicated to other pillars. Some initiatives included within their framework and curricula aspects of this dimension. For example one initiative had a concept and activity related to identity circles, their philosophy is that it is very important for a person to know his/her identity and all the complexities within it to be able to operate within a diverse society, so they ask people to identify all the levels or circles of identity they have. Other initiatives had exchange programs with Arab and western countries. Other initiatives had a global dimension to their work, whether they operated within different countries, or organized activities among several countries or were part of a global network. This aspect is building on how globalization can have positive impacts on the peace building process and promoting the culture of peace.

A crucial missing concept here is diversity, which was not highlighted within Harris model, but was mentioned several times by participants as a key concept. Maybe this is relevant to Egyptian context where there is a need to stress on the idea of accepting and celebrating diversity. Many participants expressed concern related to this value within society and that there is a need to address it; therefore it was an integral part of their framework and activities. And added to that, they weren't just thinking of diversity among nations or states; they also were keen to address diversity within the same nation, where there are diverse cultures and ideas. One initiative was based on that idea (Initiative F), where the team travelled to border cities and lived with the people to learn more about their culture and their ways. They were hoping that that would be a base for further communication between the people living in the capital and the people living in border areas, where the culture and backgrounds are completely different from each other, in a hope of bringing Egyptian people closer to each other. One of the participants when asked to critique Harris model and to identify whether there was anything missing said, "I feel what is really missing is diversity which is not just international education so I know who is outside, I need to first understand who is inside .. we¹² have a concept called social dynamics which most probably we invented, inside the community how the different groups deal with each other and why .. dealing with diversity within society and the dynamics of diversity within society".

Human Rights Education:

There are no initiatives within Selmiyah that are dedicated to human rights' issues, there are some human rights organizations on their potential partners' list, this list includes organizations that they have connections with and might have worked with before. Having said

¹² "We" refers to the initiative she co-founded and is working in which is initiative B.

that; many initiatives within this research sample included human rights' dimensions within their framework, especially the groups targeting marginalized sects within society; such as youth, women and refugees. Also the groups addressing community organizing to improve services within a specific area included some ideas about rights from a citizenship perspective. Other participants mentioned that they do not follow a rights-based approach in their framework and thus do not include human rights dimensions within their work, however they do mention rights to being different and expressing opinion and culture.

Development Education:

There are many initiatives within Selmiyah that are operating within this pillar, can be the majority of the initiatives. The scope of these initiatives varies from raising awareness to actual interventions. For example, there are groups raising awareness and providing tools for youth to start their own projects within the community to address structural violence, in whatever way they see appropriate, some chose to create projects related to media or arts and so on. Other groups are actually empowering and organizing groups of people from different communities to negotiate with, monitor and put pressure on the municipalities' officials, to provide the appropriate services to their area. Other groups are working with underprivileged and poor areas to receive the basic services needed for their areas, to improve their income and to provide assistance with their basic expenses. All of these groups are addressing structural violence through eliminating or diluting social inequalities, encouraging people to participate in resolving their own problems through providing alternative channels, and encouraging youth specifically to participate in bettering their community. It is worth noting that all these groups follow the methodology of engaging and enabling the communities or sects that are suffering from

inequality and providing all the needed support for them to resolve their issues, this is very much in line with the concepts discussed by Harris (Harris, 2007).

In this pillar, the researcher sees that there are an important issue that was not highlighted by Harris; the contribution of the education system to the social inequalities and the need to address this issue to eliminate social inequality and injustice from the root. Acknowledging that efforts are needed in all areas related to structural violence within the community, it is of absolute importance to acknowledge the culture of violence that is being promoted within Egyptian education institutions which mirrors the same approach within society (Naguib, 2006). There are several initiatives within Selmiyah trying to address the issue of education, however they are only able to function in the non-formal sector and have limited access to public education institutions. This is to the researcher considered a limitation to the scope and impact of these initiatives, however these initiatives have just started within the past decade and might need some more time and experience to access the formal education sector. This also reflects the awareness within the Egyptian community, where there is a pressing realization that poverty and poor infrastructure is a very important issue for Egypt, however the realization of the role of education in breaking these systems promoting inequality and unfair distribution of resources has not sunk in yet. There are initiatives that realize that working with children is important; however this is a long-term project that requires sustainability across the years which is a challenge to these types of initiatives as will be discussed in point number three. The researcher sees the

importance of focusing on this area which can break the cycle of oppression from the beginning, as Freire explains: “because it is a distortion of being fully human, sooner or later being less human leads the oppressed to struggle against those who made them so. In order for this struggle to have meaning, the oppressed must not, in seeking to regain their humanity (which is a way to create it), become in turn oppressors of the oppressors, but rather restorers of the humanity of both” (Freire, 1921, p. 44). So it is equally important to work with teachers, students and administrators to break all these cycles of oppression.

Environmental Education:

None of the initiatives within Selmiyah had an environmental approach to their work, except for the initiative that was not yet formally part of Selmiyah network (initiative J). Even for this initiative, their work was more related to campaigning and mobilizing people to support environmental issues. It included a dimension of raising the awareness of people about the importance of the environmental issues and their direct impact on their daily lives. It is interesting to observe that this initiative used visual arts and social media for their campaigns and it has positive results so far. From an intervention stand point, the initiative doesn't have any intervention side, whether by supporting communities suffering from environmental changes or by promoting alternatives to polluting methods. They did create an alliance that includes some of the initiatives working within the environmental field, to campaign against a certain cause. From all this, it can be concluded that further work is needed in the environmental field, even on just the education and awareness level. One of the participants did mention that she was involved

years ago in an initiative that provided camps for children related to environmental sustainability, however this initiative has stopped.

Conflict resolution Education:

Many of the initiatives within Selmiyah are working within this pillar. Many participants shared that they saw the value of providing alternatives to resolving conflict and handling diversity. Conflict in itself is usually perceived as a negative thing, however it entails revealing real issues and contradictions among people that cause their suffering in their daily lives if they don't resolve it, "the way people respond to conflict makes the difference between it becoming a force for destruction or being a catalyst for constructive change" (Barnes, 2005, p. 11).

Sometimes people respond to conflict by suppression, ignoring, fighting and using violence.

However, conflict can be a great source of transformation, either on an individual level or a social level, if managed in the proper way. These ideas seem to be clear to some initiatives that have decided to dedicate all their effort and time to providing peaceful alternatives to conflict management and resolution. One of the participants says while explaining the goals of the initiative, "to see how to resolve conflicts through mediation instead of resolving it through fighting or vengeance or through courts that decide that you are right and you are wrong, how mediation will help us reconcile instead of the courts that will make us fight", this idea of reconciliation sheds light on the deep understanding they have which matches that of the book authors quoted above, where the solution is not just in resolving the conflict, it is in reaching a

state of satisfaction from both sides, otherwise the conflict will resurface again and again and again, and one day it might explode into extreme violent acts.

Other initiatives decided to focus more on one tool, for example the initiative working on dialogue (initiative D). Dialogue is another alternative that is essential to manage our diverse nature, any person in a social setting needs dialogue skills to be able to communicate, understand the other, and express their point of view clearly. Many conversations in this country seem like a conversation between deaf people, where no one is listening, everyone is advocating their point of view, and no conclusion is possibly reached. This is the kind of conversations that can be seen on the streets, in the media, and even in the parliament. With this culture, how can people reach agreements in a calm manner, how can children and youth learn to behave differently and how can decision makers reach decisions. Even though it seems like a simple issue, in Egypt it is a big issue from the researcher's perspective that is allowing more violence, "dialogue is considered an option towards choosing to act more reasonably rather than violating, imposing by force an destroying one another" (Helde, 2013, p. 23). This is clear from the example shared by one of the participants who was deeply moved by an activity they did in the Square where they formed dialogue circles around hot political topics, people from different backgrounds participated and were able to discuss calmly and people were thrilled by the experience. These circles continued for a while because they were such a success. This goes to show that there is a need for this kind of shift in culture and behavior in Egypt.

Some participants were asked to critique the Harris model. The founders and coordinators of Selmiyah were asked to identify whether there were missing pillars from the model, or whether there were missing dimensions within Selmiyah. The coordinators acknowledged that

there were some missing dimensions from Selmiyah, which were attributed to the fact that the network is still growing. The researcher would add to that the fact that this is an organic movement, and that even though it was done unintentionally, it managed to include many aspects of the pillars, which is an indicator of how conscious some people are in this field. Another comment from the coordinators is that there is unequal weight for each pillar within the network which is completely true; some pillars are more represented than other in Selmiyah.

3. Selmiyah's Added Value:

As it was demonstrated in the Findings chapter, the sustainability of these initiatives, including the companies is not stable. The reasons behind that are varying, there are reasons related to financials, there are reasons related to legal status and there are reasons related to organizational stability. Regarding the financials, the initiatives seem to mainly rely on donations and grants, for donations from the local community they need a lot of work but they might be the most sustainable, as for the grants there seems to be difficulty in finalizing the paper work related to international funds and grants that could take up to three years as shared by one of the participants. Adding to that the issue of shrinking funds on a global level, then it is clear that sustainability is not guaranteed from this source. Some initiatives, especially the companies are more inclined towards a service-based approach, however the situation is also challenging because the services offered are unique and there is not a lot of demand on conflict management and coexistence consultancies or trainings. Therefore there is the challenge of raising the awareness of the society towards the need for such services and educating people regarding the terminologies and concepts to create enough demand.

Regarding organizational stability, the majority of all initiatives operate on volunteer basis, with a few ones who are able to sustain with full-time and part-time staff. This creates a

huge issue in sustainability of human capital, because people might have to reduce their contribution to the initiatives for financial reasons. One of the participants mentioned that the whole team changed since the time they decided to join Slemiyah and that was the reason why this current team is not fully aligned, because they are new, the period of time here is slightly over a year. This is a challenging situation to cope with, where even if the founding members are constant, the rest of the team changes periodically. Another challenge is to maintain talents, with the above mentioned financial challenges, this sector cannot compete with the private sector that is offering very good compensations to talented youth, one of the participants explains after having gone through several experiences in social entrepreneurship:

“I felt the importance of the business tools to be used in social entrepreneurship because it broke a big barrier, and gave access to a category of people that were hard to reach because of the brand itself, social entrepreneurship .. has an image .. there are many reasons we don't depend on good business skills in social entrepreneurship for change or generally in development .. so talents work temporarily then they move to business”

Again this issue goes back to raising awareness among community to shift their perception of the development or social entrepreneurship field to attract talents and donors.

From all of the above, it is clear that the added value of Selmiah is high to all the initiatives within it, as it can be a channel through which people can collaborate to overcome some of the above challenges, it can also create a support system, especially to the new initiatives who might get frustrated at the beginning of their road and might give up. Another key added value is that each of these initiatives on its own doesn't have enough resources to work on

some of the above mentioned challenges, like raising awareness of the idea of conflict management and coexistence, or changing the image of the development field to attract new talents or donors, or even challenging the current perceptions of the term “peace education” in this region. The term “peace education” has very negative connotations in this region, linked to the political situation in Palestine and normalizing with Israel. This image in itself needs to be changed, for people to see that peace is not just related to war, it has a significant impact on their daily lives. These campaigns require branding and marketing skills that most of initiatives within Selmiyah do not have. However together they might find available resources within the network that have experience in this area, or they might find agencies that can help them create a national plan through connections, and there might be even more ideas. So being together with a readiness to collaborate and partner, and a commitment to support each other is a substantial asset that might help each initiative maintain its sustainability and develop further and expand their scope. What is needed to capitalize on this asset is to put these problems together and start finding common problems that will add value to all initiatives.

4. Selmiyah in the Future:

Based on all that has been shared during the course of this case-study, the researcher has come up with recommendations for Selmiyah based on what was shared from the initiatives’ side, from the founders and coordinators’ side, and based on the future vision that was shared as well. The recommendations are split into three levels:

Network vs Movement:

This was a very controversial topic among interviews and there were different opinions among the coordinators. While some saw that Selmiyah is a network that has a cause, others saw that Selmiyah is a movement. Regardless of this debate that was triggered by a question from the

researcher, it revealed an underlying disagreement among the group of people who contributed to the spark of Selmiyah and would like to exert effort to sustain it; there are some key points of agreement among them regardless of the terms. They all saw that Selmiyah should be based on common values that all partners agree upon and have the same definitions for, that it should promote collaboration among partners, that there should be work done on the ground, that it should remain decentralized, and that one day Selmiyah should have impact on the State policies. For these aspirations the following points must be kept in mind.

One definition that the researcher found differentiated between “active” networks and “passive” networks, where active networks are focused on the outside world and passive networks are focused internally, mainly sharing information and resources. Following that definition, Selmiyah would qualify as an active network (Serbin, 2005). Serbin goes on to explain the key challenges that networks face, first choosing the suitable coordination body, he explains “even in widely distributed, informal, decentralized networks, there needs to be a delineation of authority and responsibility, or some tasks will be left undone, while others may be duplicated” (Serbin, 2005, p. 56). Second, deciding on a public voice or image is difficult because of the variety and decentralized nature of the network, so as reaching a common stand or position towards a certain issue, another challenge is that the network public presence might grow to an extent that it diminishes the presence of the individual organizations which can be a problem. Third and most important challenge is size limitation, Serbin does suggest that the network need to have a size limitation to have maximum effectiveness, he does acknowledge that it is difficult for the network coordinators to do that, however his reasons for suggesting this are, “if a network is so broad that virtually nothing distinguishes those who join from those who remain outside, there is not likely to be much depth of commitment or much of a common

agenda to which all can agree” (Serbin, 2005, p. 57). Fourth challenge is the cost required to sustain a network; this cost is in the form of money, time, and effort.

From the above it is clear that there are many challenges to creating and sustaining a network, and it is obvious that there are many things expected of the coordinators of Selmiyah. Therefore, it is the recommendation of the researcher to provide great attention to building strong internal processes and alignment in this stage to achieve the proper strength required to sustain this network and help it grow. In the coming section, more recommendations are presented, based on the findings and the literature.

Recommendations regarding internal processes:

From what was shared by initiatives and some of the concerns raised by the coordinators, the researcher suggests the following process to pass this turning point that the network is facing. The first thing is for the co-founders and all coordinators (past and current) to meet together and discuss all their different views about how things should move forward. They should be able to decide within this meeting on key milestones or building blocks towards the vision they want to reach. That vision doesn't have to be the overall vision for Selmiyah, just how to move forward and take Selmiyah to the next step, these meetings should be periodic for the next year at least until a roadmap is clearly defined.

There needs to be three parallel paths moving at the same time, and this is why it is suggested that the above core group remains connected until this process is over, because this is a long and demanding process. The first path is for a small group of coordinators to meet with all the initiatives, introduce Selmiyah to them, understand more about their initiative, explain the communication channels available and to listen to their ideas about how to collaborate. The

second path is for a small group of coordinators to create a process for how to define the values of Selmiyah and ensure that all the initiatives are aligned and willing to embark on this journey. This group can request assistance from some of the founders of initiatives as they showed great interest and passion in this area. The idea is to have all existing initiatives confirm alignment and create a joint plan to spread these values and also to practice them on a daily basis. The third path is for a small group of coordinators to collect all the challenges that the initiatives are facing, this research offers some insights related to this issue, then they will need to come up with ideas of how these challenges can be collectively resolved.

All these teams can meet periodically as well to share insights and support each other through this process. In the end, the outcome should be the following:

- Clear definitions of values and what they mean to members of this community on a personal level and on a society level and within their teams.
- Based on these values, collectively agree on a coordination system that fits the needs and capacities of the people involved. A selection criteria and process should be identified as well. Participants in this research suggested different forms of coordination which could all work, what is being suggested here is to agree on a system that is comfortable for all current members.
- A Collective vision for Selmiyah for the coming five years.
- Based on the vision and values, a collective plan of how to reach this vision and the key projects or areas that require attention.
- Selection/rejection criteria for the individuals and groups.

- A clear process for managing internal conflicts within the network that are related to collaboration efforts. It would be a plus if conflict resolution services are offered to members on a personal basis as well.
- A communication plan that suits all the members.

It is of crucial importance to focus on the communication part, the frequency, clarity and the channels to be used. This might require some effort that will take attention from other work, but it is of importance from researcher stand point to restore trust relations and strengthen them, which will motivate all initiatives to invest more resources within the network. Even though the above might seem too big for a handful number of people to manage, it is important to note that they only need to coordinate the plan, they can definitely build on the competency of the partners within the network. Some partners were willing to help and add value to the network, some of the competencies mentioned were:

- Access to large numbers of volunteers in Cairo and governorates, and marginalized areas.
- Can support with locations to conduct workshops and camps.
- Experience in branding, marketing and sales, and business world.
- Linking partners together and encouraging collaboration to work on the ground.
- Proposal writing is a strength and project management.

These are all key competencies that are needed to follow through with the above plan, and they are available within the initiatives.

There are more recommendations that were not mentioned in the above synthesis, participants proposed diverse thing, such as making sure that all initiatives are practicing the values on an

organizational level through providing support to them, another suggestion was to be sensitive to working mothers' conditions when organizing meetings and events.

Of course, all of the above recommendations or suggestions from the researcher are based on the observations and what has been shared, none of it is obligatory to the coordinators or co-founders of the movement.

5. Conclusion

This study looked at a model of Egyptian youth-led initiatives that are working in the field of peace-building through a variety of activities and interventions, with different age groups from children to adults and in different communities. These initiatives address different aspects of the peace education; such as conflict resolution skills, environmental issues, community organizing, development-related projects and cultural interaction. They adopt a value-based methodology in approaching these topics, based on extensive research and experiences on the ground. Furthermore, a group of youth had the initiative to create a movement that includes all the groups and individuals who believe in and are actively working within the peacebuilding field; the movement is called “Selmiyah” and includes now more than forty groups and a thousand individuals. This is a qualitative case-study that focused on a sample of initiatives within Selmiyah movement. Using interviews, participant observations and document reviews; the researcher was able to provide a deeper view of the background and perceptions of the founders of these initiatives and the movement, the methodology and philosophy of the initiatives, the financial and organizational sustainability and the added value behind the movement. In the end, the researcher provided some recommendations to the movement coordinators based on the data shared within the study and her own observations as well.

The study found that the methodology of developing frameworks and curricula that is adapted by the initiatives is very progressive and structured; it is mainly based on well-thought and clearly articulated values, practice and experience, and extensive research. This in itself is highly in line with the recommendations of the philosophers and educators of the progressive school of thought. The idea of involving the subjects of their attention in the learning process from planning to implementation, no matter what the age is particularly in line with Freire’s

ideology. Another interesting finding is the unintentional organic way in which Selmiyah movement was created and the fact that all the initiatives within the movement address different aspects of peace culture in society, these aspects integrate and form a comprehensive model comparable with the model designed by Ian Harris¹³. It is without doubt very clear the added value that Selmiyah offers to ensure the sustainability of the projects within the network that suffer from limited human and monetary resources. It is such a fascinating thing to see how these initiatives are willing to collaborate and partner together to support their cause and to support each other. The potential that this network and movement possesses is huge based on the human capital and resources it includes. However, it is clear that it is going through a turning point that will define how its future will look like. A lot of work needs to be done right now to ensure the sustainability of Selmiyah itself.

Peace education offers a pedagogical shift on the curriculum and teaching method levels, not only that, it offers a different perspective of the world and on how to integrate the different components to today's society to create more harmony and compassion. It offers a solution to the diverse nature of our societies today across the world, and specifically in Egypt. It also offers an alternative to most of the current education institutions that are promoting an oppressive culture, a culture that has objectified all life elements to a great extent which promotes further oppression and violence; "the oppressor consciousness tends to transform everything surrounding it into an object of its domination. The earth, property, production, the creations of people, people themselves, time – everything is reduced to the status of objects at its disposal" (Freire, 1921, p. 58). This further leads to the ridiculing of issues related to the environment which leads to negligence and more consumption attitude and thus more climate and environmental

¹³ Ian Harris Model explains the key components that should be included in a peace education model, it is explained in details in Chapter II, section 4.

catastrophes. These issues require a transformation in awareness, way of thinking and tools used to address local and global issues; peace education offers this transformative view of the world that can initiate the momentum to such a change.

The Egyptian community is facing many challenges with managing the diverse groups within it, on political, religious and ideological levels. In the past four years, Egypt has witnessed violence on all levels; physical violence, verbal violence, and violence on the level of ideas. This is an indicator that there are more problems rooted within the Egyptian society and the culture. On the same note, exclusion and marginalization of certain sects of society such as youth for example (Popcouncil, 2011), has led to great frustration within society and promotion of violence. To really encourage these sects to engage back in society and adopt a constructive approach, there has to be a mindset shift of how they are perceived and what they can offer within society. Also, civil society plays an important part of this equation, while social transformation is something that can be achieved through education, civil society is another powerful arm that can support and accelerate societal transformation. Through this research a model was shown that integrates all three elements; youth, civil society and peace education.

From the findings a number of things can be concluded, first peace is a comprehensive value that addresses different levels of the human life, on an inner level, individual level and societal level. Second, accordingly peace education work addresses different aspects of society, on awareness, skills and practice levels. Third, there is a need within society for the concepts and tools that are being introduced by the initiatives working to promote peace culture. Fourth, the initiatives that are working on the ground have spent extensive time and effort on structuring their theoretical frameworks and curricula to provide good quality, if not high quality, services to their communities. Fifth, while the initiatives are doing their best to maintain their quality and

become sustainable, it is a challenging task for civil society organizations in Egypt in general to achieve that with limited human and monetary resources. Sixth, the organic way that Selmiyah was created by and is expanding by shows a growing trend of awareness increase within the Egyptian civil society, it also poses a big challenge on the sustainability of the movement. Seventh, it is interesting to find a strong connection between the theoretical model that Ian Harris created for peace education, and the practical model of Selmiyah that exists on the ground.

The initiatives within Selmiyah offer several lessons from the structure of their framework and methodology of practice. All initiatives, adopt a participatory experiential approach; whether working with children, youth, adults, and communities; whether they are working within a learning framework or community organizing framework, or arts for social change framework. This in itself proves that this approach is a change in perception rather than just a shift of methodology; it is a change in how they perceive “the other” and how his/her role in the process and outcome needs to be; as Paulo Freire puts it: “education as the practice of freedom – as opposed to education as the practice of domination – denies that man is abstract, isolated, independent, and unattached to the world. Authentic reflection considers neither abstract man nor the world without people, but people in their relations with the world. In these relations consciousness and world are simultaneous: consciousness neither precedes the world nor follows it” (Freire, 1921, p. 81).

Selmiyah offers a unique model of association between CSOs, this collaboration and partnership model can generate great achievements on the ground and can also motivate other CSOs to develop a similar structure. Such bonds within civil society are highly needed to improve the coordination among them, minimize redundancy, maximize the benefit of resources and produce great impact and sustain it. Right now, Selmiyah is at a cross-road and the

coordinators have a big burden to ensure that it moves towards the proper path that is most suitable for its nature. For this, the researcher has provided some recommendations based on the shared feedback from all of the initiatives and the observations of the researcher throughout this journey. It is without a doubt, based on the feedback of the initiatives and the literature, a very important step towards strengthening the movement of promoting a culture of peace in Egypt. Faced with many challenges, Selmiyah also has a huge pool of resources and potential, coming from all the initiatives within the movement, also from the possible partnerships and cooperation that can happen between Selmiyah and other movements on a local and global level.

It is the opinion of the researcher that this model should receive more attention from the Egyptian society, as more lessons can be learnt from it, and further research can reveal other dimensions that might add more enriching insight into this context.

Limitations of Research:

This research studied only fifteen initiatives within the Selmiyah movement that includes more than forty initiatives, this was based on the selection criteria mentioned in the research design section (chapter III), even though this sample is representative of most of the initiatives within Selmiyah in terms of scope of work and targets, it is important to note that there are other initiatives that have unique setups and address certain issues with a different approach. For example, there are initiatives within Selmiyah that use gamification and simulation experiences to deliver concepts like participation, tolerance and openness to other cultures.

As mentioned in the research design section, the researcher is part of Selmiyah network and has been involved in some aspects of the coordination. As much as this has been a positive point in terms of accessibility, trust and insider insights, it has also been challenging during the

interviews where the interviewees would be willing to share a lot of information; this led to deviation off the topic in many times which led to not answering the questions as needed. When the researcher was reviewing the records of the interviews, in some cases some questions were not asked or not answered due to these issues.

None of the initiatives included in this sample have implemented any of their programs inside schools or education institutions, except for the student activity that operates within a University. This limits the ability of this research to provide analysis or conclusion on how to integrate such programs within educational institutions. The question here is whether there is a will to integrate these programs or not from both sides, some of the initiatives mentioned that they wanted to stay within the non-formal sector because it is not possible to operate within a system that resists the conceptual framework. One initiative were working on putting together an education program aiming to provide services to schools to promote culture of peace within them, such as trainings to teachers, workshops with students and teacher-student relations workshops.

Opportunities for Further Research:

This research hopefully opens the door for a lot more research to be done in this area. This research was a descriptive review of the status of the initiatives, their beginnings, structure and challenges related to sustainability. The same review was provided for Selmiyah movement. Further research can look into the other initiatives that have unique models within Selmiyah, can also look into the dimension of the individuals, while Selmiyah includes over forty initiatives, it also includes more than one thousand individuals who believe in the values and goal of Selmiyah, further research is needed to understand the motives of joining the movement for these individuals and to understand what added value they bring into the network.

There is also the opportunity to further research in the comparison between Selmiyah model and the Harris model, it was indicated in the interviews that there are components missing in the Harris model, some were indicated in this study, and others weren't due to lack of available data. One example is the art for social change component, some participants saw that it is an independent field that should be a pillar or component, and is not a tool that cannot be included in any pillars. Further comparison can be done with other international models as well.

Another need is to analyze further the dynamics between the coordinators and the initiatives, is there a need for more individual or group discussions? How do they motivate the initiatives to get involved and support the coordination efforts? Further models of coordination needs to be explored by Selmiyah coordinators and partners to create a model of participatory approach for the management of the movement. One last thing is the joint projects, through the years 2013 and 2014; several projects were implemented through a group of partners of Selmiyah. The projects were co-designed and co-facilitated by several partners. The method of contracting and coordinating, the process of co-design and co-implementation, and even the way of handling the financials is interesting and can provide a lot of insight on how collaboration between CSOs can be taken to the next level. These projects have stopped now since September 2014, the question whether they will resume or not is still unanswered.

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VII. Appendix

Appendix 1

Interview Questions for Initiatives:

- Understanding the reason behind choosing Peace education as the focus of their work:
 1. Please introduce yourself, your education background & experiences (whether personal or professional).
 2. In general, why are you interested in engaging in civic work?
 3. Why are you interested in this specific field (Art, dialogue, development...)? How did you choose it?
 4. Why do you think this topic is important? Why now?
 5. When did you start thinking about this topic? When did you start actual activities?
 6. How do you see your role in light of the current political unrest?
 7. Do you see the link between your work & Peace education or the Peace field? What is it?
 8. What is the meaning of peace to you personally?
- Understanding how the initiatives are created and structured:
 1. What are the key goals of the initiative/project/program you are working on?
 2. How were they created?
 3. Are they based on research or experience?
 4. Who is the target group of these programs?
 5. Is there a fixed curriculum/intervention or more tailored material/intervention?
 6. What is your legal status?
 7. Do you have a source of consistent funding? Is the initiative/project sustainable?
 8. Do you have constant staff/volunteers?

9. How do you train your team? Is it periodical?
- Understanding the reason behind joining the movement:
 1. What is the benefit of joining the movement?
 2. Are all your team members aligned to joining the movement? If not, why?
 3. Have you attended as a team any Selmiyah event?
 4. Do you see that peace values are promoted within the movement?
 5. What is the added value to the movement from your initiative? And vice versa?
 6. Do you personally believe in the importance of creating a network?
 7. What are your suggestions to create more cohesiveness and momentum within the network?
 8. Do you have any suggestions to the network?

Appendix 2

Interview Questions for Movement:

- Understanding the reason behind creating the movement:
 1. What is the benefit of creating the movement from your point of view?
 2. How did the idea start?
 3. What does the network hope to accomplish?
 4. Is it more a movement or network?
 5. What are the goals of the movement?
 6. How was the network created?
 7. Do you see the link between all the initiatives/ projects within the movement & Peace?
- Understanding how the movement is structured:
 8. What is the legal position of the movement?
 9. How is the management structured?
 10. How are members/partners in the movement chosen? Is there criteria for selection?
 11. Are peace values promoted within the movement? How?
 12. How are conflicts handled within the movement?
 13. How are plans or strategies created? How is the implementation managed?
- Understanding the future of the movement:
 14. How do you perceive the movement in the future?
 15. How do you see the impact of “Selmiyah” five years from now?
 16. Are there any long-terms developed? What are they?
 17. How will the management/coordination system continue or evolve?

Appendix 3

List of documents that were used in this study and the corresponding initiatives they belong to:

Pseudonym	NGO/Company?	Year of Establishing	Registration Date in Selmiyah?	Categorization according to Ian Harris Model	Documents Used
Initiative B	Company	2004	Sep-13	Conflict Resolution Education/Human Rights Education	Document A – 2012
Initiative B	Company	2004	Sep-13	Conflict Resolution Education/Human Rights Education	Document B – 2011
Initiative D	NGO	2008	Sep-13	Conflict Resolution Education	Handbook C – 2013
Initiative I	NGO	2005	May-14	Art for Social change	Document D - 2013
Initiative N	NGO	2005	Sep-13	Development Education	Report E - 2013

Appendix 4

Background Information on Initiatives Included within Study

1. Initiative A:

This is an independent arts troupe that was founded in 2002, is comprised of a group of artists specialized in different fields; such as theatre, cinema, visual arts, poetry and music; and psychologists. The troupe aims to spread the values of humanity through arts as a peaceful way to heal people and society in general. It is an attempt to break the barriers of racism and prejudice in the Egyptian society and all around the world.

2. Initiative B:

This project started in 2004, and aims to for the Egyptian society to know about principles of peaceful living and nonviolent ways of dealing with conflicts, and apply those principles in its daily life. It does so through three main pillars:

a) Providing the knowledge about peaceful living: creating spaces where the knowledge (ideas, experiences, skills...) of peaceful living can be explored, shared and created together.

b) Providing Peace Services: encouraging actions that are congruent with peace values. To support such action, they provide peace services that make it easier for individuals or groups to opt for the peaceful option on the ground. Peace services include mediation services, facilitation of dialogues and consensus processes, as well as providing any support needed to strengthen peace action. The long term outcome is creating success stories of peaceful living in Egypt.

c) Cultivating a peace living community: The peace living community refers both to people - i.e. network of individuals sharing the same values and ideals – and spaces, physical or virtual, where people agree to uphold peace living values.

3. Initiative C:

This is an NGO that was registered in 2007, with a target to work on community development through developing the individuals and transforming them from dependent to independent people. To achieve this they do not only offer aid, they also follow a methodology to develop the community and enable it to solve its own problems. They have four programs: 1) economic development program; 2) infrastructure development program; 3) cultural and social development program; 4) health and education development program.

4. Initiative D:

The project seeks to foster understanding between young people from Denmark and the Middle East, and to spread knowledge of dialogue as a value and a method. Founded in 2009, they aim to foster a dialogical culture among youth and to enhance mutual understanding between youth in Egypt, Jordan and Denmark. Foster a dialogical culture by inspiring youth in Egypt, Jordan and Denmark to be and become more dialogical – and practice dialogue more – in their daily lives. Enhance mutual understanding by enhancing mutual understanding between youth across geographical, ideological, religious and other divides; between youth in Denmark and the Arab world (Egypt and Jordan), between youth in Egypt and Jordan, and between youth internally in these three countries.

5. Initiative E:

This is a social enterprise where social impact is the main component of its vision, mission and projects. Founded in 2009, its main aim is to provide technological support to activists who work in political and social fields. Its vision is to create the largest information network in Egypt for organizations, initiatives and individuals working in the field of social development; and to document all the projects and activities related to this field. It aims at creating a space for communication and coordination among civil community activists, through documenting all the information related to activities in the field, and connecting those of common interests or goals.

6. Initiative F:

It is a youth-based initiative that is working under the umbrella of Cairo University, and it comprises of several young activists from different fields of specialization. The idea of this initiative is working in isolated and marginalized areas, basically communities that are in border areas in Egypt, aiming for increasing interaction between the capital and these border areas. These young people embark on a journey of self-discovery and discovering the other, to create bonds and fill the gaps which lead to further understanding and ability to handle diversity, to finally create a society that is in more harmony and able to coexist. This initiative started in April 2011.

7. Initiative G:

This is a private development entrepreneurial venture that uses innovative approaches to mobilize technical and financial support for development endeavors in Egypt and the Middle East. It is comprised of a group of young development professionals that have a passion for promoting participatory development action and empowering youth. Their mission is to enable individuals and organizations to realize and utilize their full potential and cultivate sustainable change on the personal, professional, and societal realm. One of the core areas of focus is youth

empowerment and human capital development. Civic engagement is at the core of all programs implemented using participatory development action guided by a set of values that entail responsibility towards what they do, responsiveness to local contexts, flexibility, diversity and inclusivity, and working towards a meaningful cause.

8. Initiative H:

An initiative that aims at creating a local community that is based on cooperation of citizens with the official representatives. They work on three levels, first enabling citizens and communities, through creating popular committees that are capable of: defining the needs of the neighborhood they reside in, negotiating and pressuring the governmental institutions that are concerned with these needs, to follow up on the execution of the requests of the neighborhood, and to monitor the performance of governmental work in this area in general. Second, they work on connecting these popular committees from different areas to create a more powerful front to negotiate and pressure for bigger issues within a district or even governorate with the government. Third, they work on participating in the legislative and representative aspect of municipalities.

9. Initiative I:

This is an Egyptian non-governmental organization (NGO) that aims at providing a safe haven where children can nurture their artistic senses, develop their creativity and intellectual abilities and experience self-discovery in a stimulating nonjudgmental environment. Situated in the heart of the community they serve, this NGO's programs help children access artistic and cultural activities, as well as interactive educational activities promoting love of learning and self-development. The NGO targets children and youth in marginalized communities who have little or no access to after-school activities, let alone visual and performing arts. The organization offers an innovative setting that combines art and non-formal education; a setting designed to

enrich the learning experience of children. Children embark upon a learning journey that both inspires and informs them, providing them with tools that develop their thinking skills and eventually lead to a brighter future. Their creative method of learning has proven to be very successful, for not only do the children learn, but also have great fun in the process. They become enthusiastic and are eager for more knowledge. They continue to be guided by their beneficiaries and the local community, focusing on the priorities they set and feel are most important.

10. Initiative J:

This is a global initiative building a global climate movement. They coordinate online campaigns, grassroots organizing, and mass public actions by a global network active in over 188 countries. This initiative believes that a global grassroots movement can hold leaders accountable to the realities of science and the principles of justice. That movement is rising from the bottom up all over the world, and is uniting to create the solutions that will ensure a better future for all. They started organizing events in 2008 because they saw climate change as the most important issue facing humanity. So they started organizing coordinated days of action that linked activists and organizations around the world, including the International Day of Climate Action in 2009, the Global Work Party in 2010, Moving Planet in 2011, and Climate Impacts Day in 2012. They held the “world’s biggest art installation” and “the most widespread day of political action in the planet’s history.” Today, this movement works in almost every country in the world on campaigns like fighting coal power plants in India, stopping the Keystone XL pipeline in the U.S, and divesting public institutions everywhere from fossil fuels. All of their work leverages people power to dismantle the influence and infrastructure of the fossil fuel industry, and to develop people-centric solutions to the climate crisis.

11. Initiative K:

This is an initiative that aims to inspire everyone to use their talent and energy for building peace and togetherness. They will help lead the way to a more sustainable world with less armed conflict. It is also the fastest growing grass-roots peace movement of the world, with the ambition to reach out to millions and mobilize at least 400,000 new peace builders by 2020. This initiative started in Egypt and is a partnership between an Egyptian and Dutch entrepreneurs, most of the operations are managed in the Egyptian office. They created an exciting community of social entrepreneurs, volunteers, bloggers, musicians, businesses and other active citizens who connect and work together to fuel peace-building and intercultural understanding. They are impartial and open for each and every one, as they believe that “Minds are like parachutes, they function much better when open.” They combine global thinking with local acting and local leadership, to obtain the best possible impact for communities.

12. Initiative L:

This is a non-profit association managed by volunteer medical students and is independent from the Students Union, In November 2010, they became a full member of a global association. Their mission is to enhance students’ awareness of and performance towards the community and public health issues and involving them in the social, moral and ethical obligations of the profession of medicine. They also aim to promote active improvement in medical education, promoting and facilitating professional and scientific exchanges as well as extracurricular training for medical students, thereby introducing them to other cultures and societies and the related health problems. They provide a link between members, medical students and international organizations; provide students with hands-on experience in the medical field and

to encourage the co-operation between them for the ultimate benefit of society; and promote scientific and personal skills (e.g.: communication and leadership skills).

13. Initiative M:

This initiative aims at improving people who hadn't got the chance to participate within artistic and cultural frames in marginalized and disadvantaged regions, opening up new horizons for innovation, and building a new generation which can contribute in building a new mass base for the means of innovation and development. It is an independent center which adopts the idea of generally spreading arts and culture in the society, specifically in the region of Shubra El Kheima, because it suffers from artistic and cultural marginalization and deprivation, also it targets children and youth who are relatively not related to artistic and cultural field, or the beginners who have a passion to learn. The center's key goals are: supporting the artistic field by a new generation of artists and intellectuals; developing skills in many kinds of arts for all ages and both genders, that within regions other than artists and intellectuals; spreading the artistic and cultural activities in Shubra Al Kheima region for all youth and children of both genders; spreading activities to the street, and focus on interactive activities in Shubra El Kheima region; networking with individuals or other communities – if any, to activate the activities if the center - still under preparation and execution.

14. Initiative N:

This is a non-governmental organization (NGO) that was registered in 2005, but started its activities since 1982. It was more focused on working on the categories that are most in need. Its vision is to achieve more awareness from different community categories of their capabilities and energy and to help them be more active towards their social responsibilities. They have two

main focus areas, youth and children. They mainly focus on capacity building, exchange of experiences, participatory work, taking initiative, volunteer opportunities and assets mapping.

15. Initiative O:

This initiative was founded in 2011 with a target to make the Egyptian citizen an essential partner in decision-making process through achieving effective communication between community and both the legislative and executive authorities. They believe in the importance of participation in the public life, and that dictators are created because of non-participation of the people.