Cross-Cultural Knowledge Development

The Case of Collaborative Urban Planning in Egypt

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DOCTORAL DISSERTATION

in Planning and Decision Analysis
With specialisation in
Urban and Regional Studies
To my lovely family

Mustafa, Yasmin & Yara

“When cultures are our own, they often go unnoticed – until we try to implement a new strategy or program which is incompatible with their central norms and values. Then we observe, first hand, the power of culture.”

(Kotter & Heskett 1992:3)
Preface

This work grew largely from practice-oriented research carried out in an Egyptian context. The insights gained from this practical learning experience provided the theoretical and intellectual inspiration to develop a doctoral thesis that aims to demonstrate the potential for jointly developing planning knowledge across contexts. The question that motivated everything that follows is: How can the institutional context and cultural values of a place or city be integrated into the planning process, thereby transforming that process from a one-way transfer of knowledge to the joint creation of innovative planning ideas?

In carrying out any cross-cultural planning research, the identity of the researcher forms a relevant consideration within that research. As such, my identity, cultural background, language and academic situation have all contributed in one way or another to this work. My choice to undertake doctoral research in Egypt was shaped by a combination of personal interests, opportunity and experience. When I began doctoral studies in 2005, I had the great fortune to be involved in a GOPP1/Sida project that was to be implemented by SIPU International in Egypt. The project aimed to introduce new planning thinking with collaborative and participatory characteristics into the Egyptian context as a means to achieve appropriate planning in established urban environments in Egypt. With the support of the Team Leader from SIPU International, Tim Greenhow, I was given the unique opportunity to lead the Zifta Demonstration Project (a component of the broader GOPP/Sida project) and, therefore, to plan my fieldwork (and my PhD study more generally) around my role as an action researcher in that project. The experience improved my understanding of Egypt’s planning system, and the Zifta case in particular provided me with the empirical knowledge required to produce this thesis. Whilst the Zifta Strategic Plan, one of the formal outcomes of the Zifta Demonstration Project, was produced for the GOPP, the theoretical and analytical work was entirely associated with the production of academic knowledge within the Division of Urban and Regional Studies, within the Department of Urban Planning and Environment at the Royal Institute of Technology, Stockholm (KTH). The empirical material gathered from the Zifta case was, in line with the overall aim of this research, elaborated through the use of a series of relevant theories and concepts; namely drawn from the principles of collaborative planning approach and from Egyptian social philosophy.

My cultural background, having grown up in Lebanon, and my ability to speak the local language (Arabic) created some common ground with the people of Zifta. This strengthened my role as a planner, enabling me to build up a participative culture within the process and direct participants towards interpreting anew their assets and indigenous knowledge as bases for positive change. Finding common ground helps to overcome the challenge of identifying research methods appropriate to the culture in which the researcher is working, thereby allowing a better interpretation and understanding of the subject of the research (Minichiello et al. 1995). A researcher who has with a certain familiarity with the culture within which they are working is able to interpret the meaning of results in a reasonably accurate manner, because they understand how actions may be perceived (Brislin 1976; Zinn 1979). In a country like Egypt, a simple

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1 GOPP refers to the General Organisation for Physical Planning, a national government planning body in Egypt.
research method like “being interviewed” runs the risk of provoking a variety of distorting reactions, such as: “Is the interviewer from the authorities (e.g., a demographer or a tax officer)? Does he/she represent a donor agency that might provide some form of aid? Is he/she a government investigator or a journalist?” or, “Is the interview television coverage?” Few will probably ask if the interviewer is an academic carrying out research.

Each culture possesses its own definitions and practices of terms or concepts like gender, religion, politics, or even appropriate dress. Conformity or non-conformity with these definitions and practices may either facilitate or restrict access to the society that is the subject of research. The researcher’s identity and experience is therefore a crucial issue in cross-cultural research, influencing what he/she understands, the significance of what she/he looks for in answers to questions, and the knowledge brought to and acquired from the research. In cross-cultural research, the researcher has to cross the boundary between the outside and the inside of a community (Rubin & Rubin 1995). Language is also a major issue to be taken into account. Often the language of the subject of the study and that of related documents is different. Researchers who speak both relevant languages have a great advantage. Experience obtained from a number of different studies in the field of planning confirms that, “the ability to penetrate fully into the operation of the planning system of a country, to read community group literature as well as official documents, to understand the nuances of interpretation and analysis by practitioners, does require a knowledge of the appropriate language” (Masser & William 1986:35). The researcher’s identity therefore matters, as it governs his or her compatibility with the subject context, the shaping of his or her epistemic lens and, thereby, his or her interpretation of empirical findings. Thus, in this research, my epistemic lens was shaped by my familiarity with Egyptian society due to the frequent and long working visits that I made to Egypt. This familiarity also improved my understanding of the local planning system and its institutional and societal context.

Nevertheless, cultural bias is a concern. Whilst over-familiarity with a culture can induce bias, a lack of familiarity induces a double bias. From the outset, I was conscious that my role as project leader could conflict with my simultaneous functions as a researcher and author. Whilst I have exerted myself to separate these different functions in my thought processes and endeavoured to be objective in the preparation of this work, I recognise that cultural affinities and my necessary commitment to ensuring the success of the Zifta Demonstration Project could have introduced an element of bias into the output. However, I believe that I have been able to address these challenges within acceptable limits by seeking deeper insights through engagement in plural theoretical reflections.

As I entered the final stage of writing this thesis, Egypt experienced the most significant turning point in its recent history. On 25 January 2011, a popular uprising driven by the youth movement demanded political freedom. Due to the limitations of time and research scope, these events are not addressed in this thesis. However, my observations in Zifta were sufficient to indicate that change was unavoidable. Whilst the formal system was failing to provide quantitative development to society, it was also destroying the qualitative dimensions of life in Zifta. As such, most of the innovation in development was happening outside of the formal structures. Growing inequality has left the majority of Egyptians heavily dependent on the informal system for welfare services. From my observations, the various types of informal resources and mechanisms that
have been built up represent capital that can easily be mobilised, given the opportunity. In the Zifta Demonstration Project, when a window was opened to the citizens to express their views freely as part of the project implementation, innovative ideas could be generated and integrated into the planning process. Notably, the youth – as both participants and as planners – were the driving force behind most local initiatives. What was remarkable was the slogan developed by participants during the visioning process for the Zifta Strategic Plan: ‘Freedom, Dignity, and Leadership’. This provides a clear indication of the desire for freedom as a common factor among Egyptians. It was also observed that despite the difficulties that face the development of the city, achieving material wealth was not the prime objective of the desired planned development. This was not because material wealth does not attract the citizens of Zifta, but because it was a lack of freedom that was felt to be behind the deterioration of their city rather than a lack of knowledge or a shortage of financial resources. As their slogan reveals, Zifta’s citizens believe in their capacities. They aspire to freedom and human dignity, through which they wish to mobilise their institutional capacities to achieve a leadership role. I think that all those involved in this project (myself included) came to understand that the common concern among Egyptians is freedom and human dignity, and that change was unavoidable. As the youth of Zifta were the engine of the local initiatives of the Zifta Strategic Plan, so were the youth of Egypt the engine of the revolution.
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Over the lengthy period spent sporadically writing this doctoral thesis, the support and kindness of many people have made it possible for me to continue with, and to ultimately complete, this work. Looking back to the start of this research and tracing its progress has made me realise how many people I want to thank for inspiring me and providing me with all kinds of support along the way.

I first came to the Royal Institute of Technology (KTH) as a Masters student, and was brought into the academic research milieu by Emeritus Professor Dick Urban Vestbro and Professor Rolf Johansson. Later, in working at the Division of Urban and Regional Studies, I was supported by Professor Göran Cars. I therefore start my acknowledgements by expressing my appreciation for their great helpfulness at the beginning of my time as a PhD student.

When I began doctoral studies in 2005, I had the great fortune to be involved as a practitioner working for SIPU International in a project funded by Sida in Egypt. The opportunity to carry out practice-oriented research would never have happened without the support of Tim Greenhow, the Team Leader of that project. My gratitude goes first to you, Tim, as someone who contributed to this thesis and my career development by generously sharing with me your expert knowledge of the subject matter. Your encouragement to take the leading role in the Zifta demonstration project enabled me to carry out my action research and fulfil the requirements of my practitioner role. Thank you, Tim, for helping me to mobilise the effort needed to complete both works. My acknowledgements also extend to all the practitioners I worked with in Egypt and to SIPU International for including me in their wide professional network. My thanks to all members of the SIPU Project Team, in particular to Hans Norgren, Klas Klasson, and Ulrik Mårtensson for the time we had together working for GOPP. I am grateful to the staff of the GOPP for the invaluable discussions and background material they offered me about planning in Egypt. Many thanks to Mustafa Madbouly, Madiha Mahmoud Ali and Shawki Shabaan for all the support they gave me whilst I was working in Zifta. My thanks are also due to the planning team of the Zifta Demonstration Project: thank you, Alaa Abdelfatah, Mona Abdelrehman, Mona Sami, Mamdouh Abdelhalim, Eman El-Sheykh, Souzan Said, Jihan Sabri and Shaymaa Samir for your enthusiasm and commitment, which contributed to the accomplishment of the project. My great thanks must also go to the citizens of Zifta who have inspired me throughout my research journey. I found much inspiration in their interesting and intelligent discussions, reflections and enthusiasm.

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Abstract

Planning has lent legitimacy to the development of society through the application of different theories and practices. With its embodied concepts and values, planning influences the direction of change that a society may achieve. Given the great role that planning plays in shaping societies over long periods of time, in situations where it is planning knowledge that is subject to travel between nations, consideration of the context specificity is particularly essential. This thesis deals with the complex process of transferring collaborative planning knowledge to a different institutional and cultural context. The research adopts a proactive approach, examining the practical and theoretical potential imbued in a new context. It is argued, in this work, that an exogenous planning model has to be re-contextualized and landed in a new context through its assimilation with that context’s history and cultural values. The research focuses on Egypt and is directed towards understanding the specificities of the Egyptian institutional context and the cultural values inherited from the history of Egyptian society. The author’s interest lies in addressing the ways in which such an understanding can contribute to the development of collaborative planning knowledge. The research strategy is designed with reference to the cross-cultural transfer of knowledge and the study utilises an action research approach through which the author plays the dual role of practitioner and action researcher. Implementing collaborative planning in the Egyptian urban context of the city of Zifta provided a valuable opportunity to understand how planning knowledge may be transferred between different cultural contexts. The intellectual foundations for the collaborative principle is scrutinised, and complemented by an examination of Egyptian social philosophy. A conceptual framework for the joint development of knowledge in cross-cultural planning research is put forward, which derives from a combination of the practical and theoretical investigations carried out.

Keywords: Cross-cultural transfer of knowledge; Knowledge development; dual role action research/practitioner; social learning; Zifta context; Egyptians social philosophy; role of the planner.
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Photos are taken by the author and the planning team.
INTRODUCTION

I – FRAMING CROSS-CULTURAL PLANNING

Background

For thousands of years, civilisations have been characterised by different learning processes and by exchanges of knowledge; knowledge has enriched multiple civilisations by being transferred across the boundaries of culture, politics and time (Teresi 2002). In the last century, the intensification of international communication, as well as processes of Europeanisation, globalisation and (globalisation’s predecessor) colonisation have all combined to stimulate waves of policy making and institutional transfers that have led to the rise of practices of international benchmarking around the globe. As a result, the common expectation is that the success of a program or the efficiency of a model achieved in another country can be replicated at home (Rose 2005; Masser & Williams 1986; Olson & Guy 1996). Nowadays, in a world in which thoughts, capital and people increasingly move across countries’ boundaries, it is claimed that nations have more or less similar problems, and practitioners and scholars emphasise that decision makers can learn how development might be undertaken by looking at other places (Rose 2005). Despite this view, the cross-cultural transfer of knowledge remains a significant factor in the controversial relationship between universalisation and cultural specificity (see, for instance, Bayart 1996; Edelman & Haugerud 2006; Amin, G. 2006; Elmessiry 2006; Escobar 1992). Given the great role that planning plays in shaping societies over long periods of time, in situations where it is planning knowledge that is subject to travel between nations, consideration of the universal/specific dialectic is particularly essential. Looking to the field of planning, arguments therefore vary between those that emphasise the ‘similarities’ between nations with reference to cultural hybridity and common global trends. Thereby simply appreciating the international exchange of planning models and those that stress ‘differences’ and advocate the compulsory and explicit acknowledgement of these differences in any effort to internationalise planning. For the most part, the arguments that stress differences between nations are developed in particular relation to the transfer of planning models from the post-industrialised nations of the global North to the newly industrialised nations of the global South, and they emphasise differences in terms of culture, economy and planning institutions (Healey & Upton 2010; Hamdi 2010; Hamdi & Goethert 1997).

Planning knowledge plays a significant role not only in shaping society but also – as a values-led process – in assigning a social order within or between nations (a view expressed by Harvey (1978) and argued by Hamdi and Goethert (1997)). Evidently, however, the exchange of planning knowledge between nations is unavoidable; as such, the topic of cross-cultural transfers of knowledge remains open to debate. This study views the arguments that encourage the transfer of planning knowledge with reference to common global trends as potential oversimplifications of the process of knowledge transfer, and thus as probably leading to the adoption of models that are ineffective or even counterproductive. At the same time, arguments for stressing differences over similarities between nations may overcomplicate that process and most probably underestimate the advantages won from the exchange of planning ideas. For these reasons, the
consideration of both ‘similarities’ and ‘differences’ among nations has strong implications for planning when it is practised in a new context. The cross-cultural transfer of planning knowledge requires further investigation, in particular with respect to how such a transfer could support the co-existence of nations and become an opportunity for the joint development of planning knowledge without the deliberate destruction of difference.

General Views on the Cross-Cultural Transfer of Planning Knowledge

Planning has lent legitimacy to the development of society through the application of different theories and practices. With its embodied concepts and values, planning influences the direction of change that a society may achieve. Planning knowledge has largely been advanced in connection with the broad intellectual, philosophical and social transformations associated with the rise of western modernity and its geo-cultural world (Europe and the United States) (see, for instance, Healey 2006; Allmendinger 2002a; Freidman 1987). The scientific reason of the Enlightenment gave rise to a wide range of philosophies and theories in many disciplines that have shaped society according to the values of rationality and efficiency. The planning discipline has promoted a philosophy of scientific determinism that has been consistent with the history and needs of capitalism, industrialisation and modernity (Sachs 2007). In the postmodern period, however, planning shifted from a position of scientific determinism to philosophical indeterminism (Connell 2011:269), whereby the very notion of planning is increasingly questioned (Allmendinger 2002a:28).

The shift between these two extremes of philosophical thought within planning demonstrates planning’s continual efforts to relate concepts of social science theory to planning practice in order to meet the continuous challenges posed by changes in society (Healey 2006). This confirms the notion of planning as a social phenomenon (Connell 2011:270). In line with such a conception of planning, the context of a society becomes a central question to the cross-cultural transfer of planning knowledge. In particular, it becomes important to recognise that the stock of knowledge produced within the social science disciplines has not only been developed for use within the geo-cultural context where it was generated, but has influenced the spread of universal social, economic and political values across national borders despite differences in histories, contexts and cultures. According to Wallerstein (1997), social science – a field in which planning models are grounded – emerged in response to European problems at a point of history when Europe dominated the politics of the world system. Wallerstein (1997) refers to Western Europe as a geo-cultural rather than a cartographical entity. He identifies five ways in which social science expresses its “Eurocentrism”: 1) its historiography, which is explained by specifically European historical achievements in the last two centuries; 2) its universalism, which is based on the view that scientific truths are valid across all of time and space; 3) its assumptions about western civilisation as being defined by a set of social characteristics that are contrasted with primitiveness; 4) its Orientalism, constructed through abstracted statements of the characteristics of non-western civilisations; and 5) its attempts to impose the theory of progress upon others (1997:94).

Generally speaking, planning models – inspired by the social science disciplines – have been transferred in one direction to most of the countries that are paradoxically termed as third world, underdeveloped, developing, or less developed countries (LDCs) in comparison to the developed
countries (DCs). Furthermore, the transfer of planning knowledge has been used as a means to promote certain political ideologies (Harvey 1978). In different eras, this transfer has been driven by the influences and purposes of colonialism, independence and post-colonialism, rather than being driven by the purposes and values that characterised the local societies. The transfer of planning knowledge, with its associated values, has played a significant role in producing a certain social order that has served the two leading and opposing ideologies in modern history: capitalism and communism. The central idea that has dominated planning practices in the LDCs is to plan for development along the same path of progress and modernisation as that of the developed world (Sachs 2007). Due to differences in the histories and contexts of societies, experiences have demonstrated that the organisational forms of modernising urban planning to which LDC cities have seriously fallen behind the urban reality of those countries. For instance, plans imposing orderly rational spatial patterns intended to modernise African cities based on a western model have generally been overwhelmed by informal settlements (Sandercock 1998; Watson 2003). Such experiences demonstrate a one-way-traffic of vocabularies that describe issues of concern in the modern and industrialised societies, as well as their associated values (Wallerstein 1997). The transfer of knowledge upon the basis of an absolute ignorance of contextual differences has been further systematised through the growth of international development agencies and their stock of best practices that are to be exchanged between different contexts (Edelman & Haugerud 2006).

The appreciation of the history and the cultural values that characterise a new context, and the relevance of jointly developing knowledge that is of benefit to humankind, must be acknowledged. This study investigates the complex process of transferring the collaborative planning model to the Egyptian context, focusing on Zifta City as a case study. The point of departure here is to define ‘context’ for the purpose of this study, which I limit to the institutional structure of a society and the associated cultural values inherited from the history of that society and still guiding the function of its daily routine.

**Problem in Focus**

The transfer of planning theory and practice constitutes a topic of interest within contemporary planning research (see, for instance, Okalebo 2011; Healey & Upton 2010; Sanyal 2005; Watson 2003; Hubbard et al. 2004; Rakodi 2001; Sorensen 1999). Critical arguments against the effort to internationalise planning practice have evolved primarily in response to the harm that has resulted from the imposition of rigid models of political and economic development on newly independent nations by scholars and practitioners who did not appreciate differences between nations in terms of economic and political modernisation (Hamdi 2010; Watson 2003; Hamdi & Goethert 1997). For example, some argue that the traditional approaches to land-use planning in developing countries have produced plans on paper that have proved to be of limited value. As a result of differences in financial and institutional requirements for implementation, in many cases,

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2 Myrdal (1970) questions the concept of ‘development’ and the related concept of ‘underdevelopment’ as being ambiguous, posing that they can only be understood in relation to specific contexts. The terms ‘third world’, ‘underdeveloped’ and ‘developing’ are recognised as being controversial terms when describing different parts of the world according to its development stage. Therefore, they require more reflection. This falls, however, outside the scope of this thesis.
development has been unable to comply with plan proposals (Rakodi 2001). The international effort, for instance, to transfer the Japanese ‘land re-adjustment’ urban development model to several developing countries in Southeast Asia, was largely ignorant of the history of opposition to this model in Japan and the enormous commitments to local planning resources allocated to organise consent to projects – a commitment which is not comparable to what has been made available for the same purpose in the developing countries – (Sorensen 1999). In Kampala, as in many cities in Africa, a great deal of planning was undertaken in both the colonial and postcolonial eras. While planning ideas in the colonial period had substantial physical impact on the spatial structure of the city, the post-colonial era expressed little application and/or implementation of planning ideas. In addition to other factors like governance issues and a lack of financial and institutional capacity, this failure is attributed to the transfer of foreign planning models without reorienting them to the local context (Okalebo 2011).

Recently, a window on the transfer of planning ideas and their appropriateness for implementation in different institutional contexts has been opened for critical academic contributions in the form of the compilation Crossing Borders: International Exchange and Planning Practices, edited by Patsy Healey and Robert Upton (2010). Including multiple contributions with very different planning emphases, the book presents investigations of processes of interpretation, adaptation, and modification of planning ideas when they are practised in new contexts. The discussions are based on findings extracted from a wide selection of case studies drawn from all around the world. Conclusions stress the need for different ways of understanding people-place relations, but also call for a shared planning approach that intertwines the local with broader globalising tendencies. This shared planning approach goes beyond cultural differences, focusing upon the dynamics of cultural hybridity in local communities, and it is shaped by global trends with an aim to promote shared debate to address the planning challenges of our time. In this approach, the central notion of planning is defined as being the public interest of people living in one world, whereby “public” is “not confined to those belonging to one community, city, region, or even nation” (2010:345).

The exchange of planning practice seems to develop primarily around the one-way transfer of planning knowledge with little investigation being conducted into what potential a new context may possess in jointly developing that knowledge. I advocate a joint development of planning knowledge across contexts that could contribute innovative planning research to the world. As such, the present study is motivated by two problematic concerns that are associated with the cross-cultural transfer of planning.

First, despite acknowledgement of the significance of context when planning knowledge is to be cross-culturally transferred, little is done to investigate the potential of a new context to contribute to that knowledge. The significance of the role of the local context is further marginalised as a result of arguing for common global trends. Primarily, local contexts are discussed with reference to the cultural hybridity resulting from globalisation and the need to intertwine the local with global processes. The local context is dealt with quite passively, with limited proactive capacity to contribute to the received knowledge. It is my position that views which naively ignore the differences between nations by referring to globalisation trends in terms of increases in people’s interconnectedness, cultural hybridity, or the need to reduce the stresses and strains of the 20th century as a shared global goal, largely overlook the social role of cultural
differences not just in setting the degree of effectiveness and productivity of the received knowledge in a new context but even in addressing the global problems of the 20th century. Adopting such views will most probably lead, on the one hand, to an oversimplification of the process of knowledge transfer. This is mostly due to the lack of effort put into investigating the potential of such differences for enriching the incoming knowledge. On the other hand, such an approach will not contribute to eliminating differences, and might rather further contribute to deepening the gaps between, and within societies.

The second concern, which is in line with the position set out above, addresses the limited opportunity of social philosophers in non-western contexts to express their ideas and conceptions about the need for changes in their societies when international exchanges of planning ideas happen. Little attention has been paid to the potential of non-western social philosophy to, as a legitimate source of knowledge about non-western societies, contribute to the development of the intellectual foundations of planning knowledge. This contradicts the significant role played by modern and postmodern social philosophers who flourish in the western geo-cultural world (Europe and the USA) (see, for instance, Delanty & Strydom 2003; Wallerstein 1997) by describing the relation of the human being with its society through their generated social philosophy theories. Modern and postmodern social philosophers’ stock of social theory has always represented an essential source of inspiration for planning scholars and, therefore, for the development of planning theory and models (see Healey 2006, Allmendinger 2002a; Freidman 1987). However discussions around cross-cultural planning research have rarely included a theoretical consideration of the thoughts and ideas behind planning models; rather such discussions are generally limited to how these ideas are exchanged and practised across borders. The exclusion of the social philosophy element from the discussion of the international exchange of planning knowledge contradicts what we as planners have learned from the European experience of planning, which emphasises the continual incorporation of philosophical thoughts describing the human being in its social context.

In view of the problematic concerns discussed above, through this study I attempt to address the cross-cultural transfer of a planning knowledge that appreciates the society’s institutional structures and the cultural values of a new context – a transfer through which a joint development of planning knowledge could be obtained. The values of interest here are those derived from the history of a society, that are associated with the existing institutional structure, and that contribute to their functional settings as results of the daily communicative patterns and social practices of people in their physical environment. I further underline the potential of a non-western context – in this instance, using a specific case study selected from Egypt: Zifta City – to provide different practical and theoretical interpretations of collaborative planning ideas that originated elsewhere. The proactive approach adopted in this study is achieved practically through entering into dialogue with the local people performing social interaction in an Egyptian urban reality and theoretically through involving the ideas of Egyptian thinkers and philosophers about issues of concern in their society.

It should, however, be borne in mind that this thesis is not formed within a social science discipline. Whilst planning theory and practices form the central components of this work, it
attempts to involve the voices of local philosophers and social thinkers in the development of planning thinking in one of the LDCs - in this instance, Egypt.

**General Background of the Case Study**

Historically, Egypt has existed as a unified state for more than five thousand years, and Egyptian society dates back even further to the rule of the Pharaohs. It is one of the World’s most ancient civilisations, situated at the meeting point between two continents, and is strongly attached to the Nile River. The Egyptians long ago acquired the sense of being one people; they established a society that has been characterised by a strong social cohesiveness and traditional values. This historical position and continuity reinforced the development of Egyptian identity and sense of social unity, which led to a strengthening of state legitimacy (Jebb 2004:23-5).

Egyptian intellectual debate has flourished throughout history, and has been particularly successful in resisting the different political influences that have been exercised on Egypt since British colonisation and Egypt’s subsequent independence, including the successive influences of communist and capitalist ideologies. These influences, accompanied by society’s decline, have driven the dominant intellectual debate towards discussion of the impact of western hegemony on the Egyptian social context. The main question that has led this debate has been how to meet the challenges of modernisation without the deliberate destruction of the cultural and contextual features of Egyptian society (Hourani 1983). Regarding planning as a social phenomenon, this study acknowledges the role of Egyptian social philosophy as a legitimate source of knowledge that describes the Egyptians’ relationship with their society.

Moreover, culturally and politically Egypt has been the most influential country in the Arabic Region. Universities in Egypt, for instance, have long attracted students from the Gulf Region as well as Africa (Harrigan & El-Said 2009). Given the leading political role of Egypt in the Arab region and its cultural influence, the issues encountered whilst undertaking cross-cultural planning research in the Egyptian context may provide some guidance regarding similar research in the region of Arabic cultures.

The contemporary political condition of the State of Egypt has led to it being given the label ‘Soft State’ as an appropriate means of describing its political system. The concept of the ‘Soft State’ was first introduced by Myrdal in the context of development, describing the nature of South Asia States as “soft” compared with the emergence of the modern state in Europe. According to Myrdal (1970), a lack of adequate legislative and juridical institutions, and the presence of corruption and political patronage, imply that the state is weak even if it may be a dictatorship. It constitutes a crucial barrier to economic and social development (Myrdal 1970; see also Oldenburg 1987; Jackson & Rosberg 1982). In his book *Egypt and Egyptians in Mubarak’s Era 1981-2008*, Amin, G. (2009) points out the concept “Soft State” and its relevance to the current Egyptian governance system. Amin, G. believes that Egypt is a “totalitarian soft state” and it is now in a “state of ordeal” with regard to political, social as well as economic aspects. Corruption has become the code of the Egyptian administration. All these factors have resulted in an inefficient planning system, inefficient program implementation mechanisms and the increasing deterioration of economic conditions for the masses. Class divisions have sharpened to the point
where one can distinguish “two nations” in Egypt – one of the rich and the other of the poor. The middle class has undergone a decline in economic and political influence.

However, before the completion of this research, Egypt expressed its desire for freedom through the January 2011 Revolution. Now Egypt is in a transition period of eventful but ambiguous change that makes it difficult to identify which direction the Egyptian State may take. Within these circumstances, research addressing the joint development of collaborative planning that integrates the societal context of Egypt could be a productive element in the new political reality in Egypt. In fact, it becomes more relevant than at any other time.

**Challenges of Planning in Egypt – The Zifta Demonstration Project**

Egypt has the highest population growth rate and largest population in the Arab world, with about 85 million inhabitants. It covers about one million square kilometres. The country faces the challenges of rapid urbanisation and encroachment on the scarce and valuable agricultural land. The majority of people live on the limited arable land of the Nile Valley and the Delta, which represents only about 4% of the country’s total area. The Delta, in Lower Egypt, comprises the largest agricultural area but is threatened by rapid urban expansion and substantial rural-urban migration. The unplanned urban growth is estimated to have consumed about a sixth of the country’s traditional agricultural land in the past 20 years (CAPMAS 2007). Despite the unplanned nature of much urbanisation, the accumulated urban conditions of Egyptian cities should also be viewed as a result of salient aspects of the country’s planning think-tank and of the various historical development doctrines (Bayat & Denis 2000; El-Batran & Arendel 1998; Denis 1996). Studies show that the planning systems adopted in the Egyptian context were not able to cope with the significant changes experienced in the country’s urban environment (Körner 1995). Given the challenges of rapid urbanisation and the need to improve planning thinking to cope with these challenges, the organisation responsible for the development of planning policy at a national level, the General Organisation of Physical Planning (GOPP) has received international support to improve its planning capacity in decentralising planning functions to the local level (Madbouly 2005). Among other international projects, the Swedish
International Development Agency (Sida) agreed in 2004 to provide the GOPP with technical support in the field of urban planning, management and institutional development. It was in this context that I worked as an urban planning practitioner for SIPU International, the implementing agency of Sida/GOPP Project. The project aimed at supporting the GOPP with planning methodology, and was to be implemented over a three-year period. Zifta City – the empirical case analysed in this thesis – was selected by the GOPP as a demonstration project within the overall Sida/GOPP project (2005-2008). Zifta exhibits the urban challenges that face most Egyptian cities, with population of about 100,000 inhabitants. It is located in the Delta region, Egypt's most populous area, and faces challenges that are typical of many other cities, such as rapid urbanisation, building encroachment into scarce agriculture land, deterioration of urban conditions, a crumbling physical infrastructure and the development of informal sectors (see Figure 1).

Within my role in the overall Sida/GOPP project, working from September 2005 to November 2007, I was assigned to lead the Zifta Demonstration Project from January 2006 to August 2007. The purposes of the Zifta project were to support the GOPP in its efforts to decentralise planning functions to local levels; to test and develop new planning thinking with participatory and collaborative characteristics that aimed to replace the conventional top-down master plan; to give more emphasis to producing an implementable strategic plan to Zifta City; and to provide a learning-by-doing opportunity for GOPP planners. Thus the ultimate aim of the Zifta Demonstration Project was to change the way that both officials and policy makers thought about development planning. This change was to be grounded on explicit value commitments favouring people’s participation and a view of planning as a learning-oriented process. Within the interest of the GOPP to develop a planning approach that responded to the Egyptian urban reality and its institutional dynamics, and with the support of the Sida/GOPP Project Team Leader (Tim Greenhow, who also worked for SIPU International), I was given a unique opportunity to play a dual role as both researcher and practitioner, and to apply an action research methodology whereby collaborative planning knowledge was practised in Zifta City. My research interest in cross-cultural planning research provided me with pre-understanding and access to theoretical frameworks and vocabularies. This mutually benefited my dual role, in grasping the total dynamics of the urban reality in Zifta by gathering empirical material for my study as a researcher, and contributing to the on-going changes of planning thinking at the GOPP by leading a demonstration project.

Why the Collaborative Planning Model?

In 1997, Patsy Healey put forward her ideas about the collaborative planning model in a book entitled *Collaborative planning: Shaping Places in Fragmented Societies*, providing an alternative perspective on planning practices to meet the challenges emerging from neo-liberal policy and the expansion of social justice and environmental care. Her intellectual project combines a number of elements: a relational view of social interactions, a particular institutionalist view of the dynamics of social change, and an interpretive view of policy making and planning. Since that time, collaborative planning has experienced a highly debated journey typified by diverse views. Some were doubtful about Healey’s project and criticised it for its idealism and neglect of power relationships (Allmendinger 2002b; Huxley 2000; Harris 2002). Others have seen it as a
movement to promote participatory planning and collaborative policy-making (see, for instance, Watson 2003). In 2006, in the second edition of *Collaborative Planning, Shaping Places in Fragmented Societies*, Patsy Healey admits that collaborative planning is a contested practice still in evolution. She emphasises the need to bring in diverse forms of knowledge to enrich the understanding of planning practices in a complex relationship of space and time. To do this, according to Healey, we need to continue to think that there are alternatives to how things are done now (Healey 2006). It is, however, observed that collaborative planning is rarely been discussed in Patsy Healey’s recent books (see, for instance, Healey 2007; Healey & Upton 2010).

In general, the debate around collaborative planning has primarily been related to the implications of continuous political changes for planning and democracy, and has been undertaken mostly from a western perspective. It has been discussed in relation to the shift in governing modes, from strong welfare states to more neo-liberal modes of governing where collaboration becomes relatively difficult in uncollaborative world (Brand & Gaffikin 2007). Questions surrounding collaborative planning practices and democracy are further sharpening after the problems that it has encountered in neo-liberalism (see, for instance, Pugh’s (2009) reflections upon radical alternatives to neo-liberalism). In the analysis of an application of collaborative planning in Northern Ireland, criticism was posed not in relation to the range of problems with the concept itself as a conceptual tool for practitioners, but rather in relation to its lack of affinity with the un-collaborative world within which it has to operate. Collaborative planning was criticised due to its inconsistencies with the political requirements to accommodate both global competitiveness and local democratic collaboration (Brand & Gaffikin 2007). Nevertheless, the collaborative planning model represents an important advance over the previous universalised rational planning positions, albeit though it may in reality contain some universal assumptions - e.g., planning driven by democratic values, or the notion that collaborative planning can put pressure on the State to be more responsive (Watson 2003). For more effective community participation, collaborative planning provides a methodological framework that has the potential to promote inclusionary argumentation and increase stakeholders’ awareness of cultural relations and practices (Maginn 2007).

An essential view to stress in the beginning of this study is that collaborative planning is instrumental in the wider exploration of the conditions for the cross-cultural transfer of knowledge. The transfer of collaborative planning happens with a complete awareness and acknowledgement that the Egyptian context differs from the context in which Patsy Healey founded her approach. Moreover, it is argued here that collaborative ideas can be found in Egyptian society, which may provide the opportunity for the joint development of collaborative planning knowledge. Within the attempt to develop an interactive planning practice that reflects the urban reality of Zifta City, the pliable capacity of this model to be re-contextualised is an additional reason for its selection to be practiced to the Egyptian context.

**Collaborative Ideas in Different Contexts**

Beyond the significant attention paid by Egyptian decision makers to the importance of planning in collaboration as a way to improve the qualitative and quantitative environment in Egyptian cities, a number of other cultures have referred to collaborative ideas and practice as a means to achieve local mobilisation and solve common issues. For instance, collaborative ideas are evident
Collaborative ideas have been integrated in grassroots movements for local mobilisation in many countries and have contributed to a certain extent to the changes made in their societies. The ‘Ujamaa’ model elaborated by the late president of Tanzania, Julius Nyerere, provides an example of this. Nyerere tried to integrate, with limited success, the best of the ideas of Tanzanian society with those from the western world in order to elaborate a development model for post-colonial Tanzania (Stöger-Eising 2000). By attempting to build a bridge between indigenous African thought and modern political ideas, Nyerere tried to address the main challenges that faced the newly independent states in Africa, namely rapid economic development and the creation of new values according to the conditions of African society (Smith 2006:193). He emphasised three essential values – equality, freedom and unity – that can mobilise people towards achieving the common goals (Cliffe & Saul 1972). From a planning perspective, Ujamaa emphasised rural development in order to avoid the problematic gap between urban and rural areas. He identified effective participation and empowerment as instrumentally important in achieving people’s commitment to the common goals. For him, in order to provide resources, planning should follow hybrid principles: top-down for providing resources and bottom-up for local development based on people’s wills and collaborative capacity (Stöger-Eising 2000).

Mahatma Gandhi’s interpretation of the traditional village council system was based on the idea of ‘Panchayat’ as a broad deliberative system for the bottom-up development for Indian villages emphasising collaboration as a key factor (Prabhu & Rao 1960). ‘Panchayat Raj’ or the communitarian village concept was developed so as to forge community development based on indigenous conditions and traditions in India. This is another model through which collaborative elements rooted in the society had been practised. The theory of participatory democracy is central to this concept. Gandhi advocated self-reliant villages that maintained their independence even when cooperation and aid was needed from the higher authorities. Gandhi’s approach to participatory democracy was centred on the countless self-governing village communities wherein the individual is the unit and each village is a republic or ‘Panchayat’. In a constructive program of development, he emphasised the value of integration among different religions groups in a communal unit (Prabhu & Rao 1960).

The decline in Egypt’s state welfare system has opened up a space for alternative providers of such services. The faith-based organisations have moved in to provide welfare services to fill the gap left by the State, similarly to other collaborative ideas practised elsewhere. These organisations take some of their basic collaborative ideas from local values inherited from the history of Egyptian society, and the Islamic and Coptic religions (Harrigan & El-Said 2009). The policy of cutting back expenditure led to the reduction of the Egyptian welfare system. The restricted expenditure on welfare has not been able to keep pace with population growth and the demand for basic essentials. As a result, many Egyptians have experienced a decline in their living standards – as evidenced in school shortages, the deterioration of health services and more people living in informal settlements. The decline in state welfare has led to a strengthening of the relation between the two separated worlds of ‘faith’ and ‘development’, where the provision of social welfare and help for the needy is something that is undertaken in accord with religious values. The faith-based organisations provide efficient services, thereby earning the respect and
support of the majority of those in need of such services. Developers, however, have ignored – both in theory and practice – the important role that religion has played in the civil society of countries such as Egypt (Harrigan & El-Said 2009).

**The Pliable Capacity of Collaborative Planning to Be Re-Contextualised**

What strengthens the selection of the collaborative planning model in this thesis is the pliable capacity of this model due to its emphasis on both contents and processes. It combines three elements: interactions of people in places, an institutionalist view of the dynamics of social change in a specific context, and an ‘interpretive’ view of policy making and planning in that context (Healey 2006). In the context of Egypt, the model is appreciated because its process emphasises the interactions of people in places, a quality that supports the GOPP’s requirement to produce realistic and implementable plans that reflect the urban reality of Egyptian cities. The decision makers at the GOPP were aware of the importance of bringing in a planning process that could promote stakeholder participation, including that of stakeholders who are involved in development outside the formal sphere. Because the interactions of people include the added value of ‘learning-by-doing’, the purpose of the GOPP/SIPU project was to learn about how things are done in cities through social interaction and to train GOPP planners in the new planning approach for further application.

The institutionalist view of the dynamics of a society is a significant element of collaborative planning to build institutional capacity. Important aims for the Zifta Demonstration Project were to establish a link between formal and informal sectors, mobilise local resources and help program delivery. By linking the citizens to the planning process, an obvious result would be the participation of citizens in decision-making, so overcoming Egypt’s democratic deficit. The decision makers at the GOPP questioned the failure of previous plans and cautiously observed the expansion of development that occurred informally despite the formal planners’ wishes, thus confirming the irrelevance of their formal plans. Therefore, they wanted to understand how planning can improve knowledge about the Egyptian cities and to learn how to produce plans that respond to the Egyptian institutional context.

From a research perspective, the interpretive element is an important value of collaborative planning, which augments its ability to be communicated in a new context. The research standpoint of this thesis is not to make a practical adaptation of the core components of collaborative planning, but rather to communicate and reinterpret those components with reference to values derived from the context of the Egyptian society. Revisiting the core concepts and principles on which Healey has grounded the collaborative planning approach is of interest in achieving this objective.

**Research Aim and Research Questions**

The overall aim of this research is to contribute to planning research across contexts. My intention is to develop a conceptual framework for the analysis of the cross-cultural development of collaborative planning knowledge by focusing on the potential of a new institutional and cultural context to affect that knowledge. To achieve this aim, I argue that practising planning in a new context through a well designed, learning-oriented planning process could provide an opportunity for joint knowledge creation. I further argue that the specificities of the new context
can be understood within such a process through practice-based and theoretical investigations. The research aim is pursued in relation to two main positions that derive from these different types of investigation.

The practice position is achieved by setting collaborative planning knowledge into a dialogue with the people of the city of Zifta. Reflections are made during practice in order to identify the potential of the context of Zifta to provide a new interpretation of the core concepts of collaborative planning and to make such concepts more workable and more appropriate to that context. The context of Zifta is examined in relation to the institutional structure of the society and its associated cultural values. Cultural values are of interest when they can direct collective actions and contribute to the institutional function in a specific context (Garcia, Giuliani & Wiesenfeld 1999). For Egypt, values are defined as a blend of both cultural and religious notions inherited from the society’s history, which still guide its daily routine. The theoretical position is addressed by on the one hand revisiting the principles that underpin collaborative planning as developed by Patsy Healey in 1997, and on the other by reviewing Egyptian social philosophy so as to provide theoretical input to core concepts of collaborative planning that are inspired by the Egyptian context. The two positions have reciprocal relationships and feed back into one another. They are addressed through a research question, which responds to the overall research aim as follow:

What kind of conceptual framework is required in order to create an opportunity for the joint development of planning knowledge through cross-cultural planning research? This question complies with the overall aim of the research by requiring careful scrutiny of the practical and theoretical investigations carried out in the course of this work. This task is finalised in Chapter IX, The Conclusions. Addressing this research question relied on an articulated sequence of research operations that necessitated substantial theoretical and practical input and were guided by the following complementary research questions:

a) What potential does the context of Zifta offer for the task of building shared knowledge through collaborative planning when it is aligned with the cultural aspects of the society and is set into dialogue with people? From this, could learning-oriented planning practice build institutional planning capacity?

- In the course of practising collaborative planning in Zifta City, knowledge was produced through the process, which supplemented the practical and theoretical learning. This is presented in Chapters VI, Practising Collaborative Planning in Zifta, and in Chapter VII, The Re-contextualisation of Collaborative Planning in Zifta. The possibility to build institutional capacity by practising collaborative planning was analysed at the operational level (through planning practice), at the city level (when collective choices were made) and at the constitutional level (where formal procedures took place). Conclusions drawn from the analysis are presented at Chapter IX, The Conclusions.

b) What competence does Egyptian social philosophy have in providing a theoretical grounding to the situational knowledge of collaborative planning produced in the Zifta Demonstration Project?

- Here, I attempted to relate the fundamental theoretical basis of collaborative planning (namely Habermas’ communicative theory and Giddens’ structuration theory) with social theories developed over time in Egypt. In my view, referring to social theory’s
stock of knowledge in the new context is an important theme for a cross-cultural discussion in planning research. The investigation of Egyptian social theories does, however, possess certain limitation in this work due to the difficulties of finding categories of social theory that can directly inform a planning discussion. This requires an effort that could constitute a specific piece of research in its own right. This question was therefore addressed by making a limited overview of Egyptian social philosophy in order to examine the theoretical references for collaborative ideas found in the Zifta case. I then attempted to relate those references to the collaborative planning ideas developed by Patsy Healey. This analysis is presented at Chapter VIII, *The Intellectual Foundations of Collaborative Principles Inspired by Egyptian Social Philosophy*.

c) What influence has the dual role of researcher/practitioner had on the cross-cultural development of planning knowledge?
- My dual role is explored thoroughly in the empirical analysis of the Zifta case, in Chapter VI. In Chapter IX, *The Conclusions*, reflection is made on the influence of my dual role on the process of practising collaborative planning in a new context.

d) What is the new role of the planner in Egypt?
- The role of Egyptian planners is, as a consequence of working with them on the Zifta case, questioned. This is discussed at Chapter VII, *The Re-contextualisation of Collaborative Planning in Zifta*.

**Structure of the Thesis**

This thesis consists of three main parts, which each address a different set of research issues. In addition to the first two chapters, Chapter I, *Introduction*, frames the position of the whole work. It presents the problems to be focused upon, the factors motivating the research, the overall aim and objectives, and the research questions. Chapter II, *Research Design*, presents the strategy that guides the research with reference to the cross-cultural transfer of knowledge and action research. It describes the plurality of theories, mixing methodologies, and discusses the positioning of the researcher/practitioner dual role played by the author.

**Part One: Conceptualising and Theorising Collaborative Planning Knowledge**

This part includes two chapters: Chapter III, *Conceptualising the Transfer of Planning Knowledge*, it conceptualises knowledge and establishes a theoretical position in relation to epistemological questions surrounding ways of understanding ‘planning’ knowledge and the significance of the relationship between cultural awareness and knowledge transfer. Chapter IV, *Theoretical Principles of Healey’s Collaborative Planning Model*, examines the fundamental philosophical issues that define the nature of collaborative planning as developed by Patsy Healey in its original context.

**Part Two: Transfer and Practice of Collaborative Planning In a New Context**

This part deals with the process of transferring of collaborative planning to, and practicing it, Egypt context. It includes two chapters. Chapter V, *Evolution of Planning Thinking in Egypt*, illustrates the sequence of successive doctrines of development that have guided planning policy in Egypt and presents their accumulated impact on contemporary urban conditions in Egyptian
cities. Chapter VI, *Empirical Analysis of the Zifta Case*, includes the practice of collaborative planning knowledge in a new context, Zifta City. It also presents the local contextual elements that influenced the imported knowledge when practising collaborative planning in Zifta.

**Part Three: Developing Collaborative Planning Knowledge**

In this part, the findings in the empirical case of Zifta are analysed in light of the core concepts of collaborative planning model and with reference to the Egyptian social philosophy. It includes two chapters. Chapter VII, *The Re-contextualisation of Collaborative Planning*, presents the re-contextualisation of collaborative planning based on findings in the Zifta case, and includes reflections on the new role of the planner in Egypt. Chapter VIII, *The Intellectual Foundations of Collaborative Principles Inspired by Egyptian Social Philosophy*, establishes intellectual thoughts to ground collaborative planning principles in a manner that is appropriate to the Egyptian context. This chapter presents thoughts extracted from the interpretation of the contextual cultural values inherited from the history of Egyptian society with reference to the Egyptian thinkers.

The thesis is completed with Chapter VIII, *The Conclusions*, which revisits the research questions and the learning obtained from this endeavour and draws conclusions.
II – RESEARCH DESIGN

Strategy of the Research Design

The issue of contextual appreciation is one reason why a researcher needs a well thought-out strategy to guide the research design. Practice-oriented research in particular raises questions regarding knowledge construction as well as the positioning of a researcher; this provides another reason for the need to elaborate that strategy. The strategic argument behind the design of this research was that it should be possible to bring mixed-methodologies and a plurality of theory to the research (see Olsen 2004). Further, it was considered that the interplay between theory and the empirical material (see Alvesson and Kärreman 2007), in line with the research’s overall aim, should be attainable throughout the progress of the research. The design of this research incorporates theoretical references not just to help understand and explain empirical findings, but to broaden the methods used, as well to plan, to act and, thus, to create changes in a specific situation. Theory is thereby ‘practised’. Additionally, this study draws the attention of its readers to Egyptian social philosophy as a reasonable source of knowledge about the context of Egyptian society. In performing the research, I take on a dual role: both as action researcher (needing to write my thesis) and as a practitioner (carrying out the Zifta Demonstration Project). The empirical material was thoughtfully collected as a consequence of experiences, demands and insights arising from these two main lines of enquiry (see Figure 2 below).

The first line of inquiry is represented by the academic demands on the researcher carrying out cross-cultural planning research. Where collaborative planning was practised in Zifta, empirical material was gathered and interpreted in light of theory and an appreciation of the Zifta context. While collaborative planning – and the theoretical principles which underpin it – guided the empirical analysis of this model in Zifta, I also refer to Schön’s (1983) Reflective Practitioner to frame my dual role as practitioner with research interests, by performing ‘reflection-in-action’. This helps me to design and carry out a learning-oriented planning process, which provides the Zifta case with an opportunity for social interaction, mutual learning and knowledge constructions. Learning-in-action and knowing-in-action are terms emphasised by Schön (1983) who identifies two dimensions of learning through action: single-loop learning, through which a task is performed within given parameters; and double-loop learning, the model performed by the reflective practitioner, which involves changing the conditions under which tasks are performed. Such double-loop learning can happen in social interaction through dialogue where problems, objectives, facts and values emerge through communicative processes. I also refer to other practical references relevant to guiding planning practices – such as Crosby and Bryson’s (2005) Leadership for the Common Good, Tackling the Public Problems in a Shared-Power World, which gives practical guidance on how to lead in a shared power environment and maintain collaboration among stakeholders.

The second line of inquiry is represented by the demands of the practitioner, which include the testing and development of planning with collaborative and participatory characteristics, whereby the ultimate goal is to produce a strategic plan for Zifta City using different methods to mobilise
stakeholders and plan collaboratively. Like any practitioner, I was equipped with manuals and guidance produced by the international organisations for practitioners working in less developed countries, for instance the City Development Strategy (CDS) (Cities Alliance 2006). Through reviewing the literature, I found that the CDS is inspired by the work of Porter (1995) on urban competitiveness, and has been developed to be more responsive to the World Bank’s economic development priorities (Mukhija 2006). I used these manuals and guidance in order to meet the practical requirements of being a practitioner – e.g., to outline planning stages, or to employ simple analytical tools such as SWOT analysis (comparing different urban conditions in relation to their strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats). My role as a practitioner was not limited to the Zifta Demonstration Project. By leading the demonstration project, I was also actively working in the overall Sida/GOPP Project, and participating in the overall project at the GOPP central level. This position allowed me to work at different institutional levels. As a practitioner with a research interest, during the project progress I had the opportunity to influence certain institutional changes. This is presented in Chapter IX, *The Conclusions.*

In Zifta, the process of practising collaborative planning involved a hybrid combination of research, learning and professional practice; a kind of learning therefore emerged from the project that was more interactive and that involved a societal context. This enabled me as a

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1 Documentation of the Zifta Strategic Plan Project was made on behalf of the GOPP as part of my terms of reference working for SIPU International within the overall Sida/GOPP Project.
researcher – through theory, practice and learning – to observe how knowledge was transferred in various directions and how social interactions constructed knowledge that acknowledged social characteristics. In view of this, a moderate constructivist approach forms the epistemological basis of the research. This is in tune with Alvesson and Kärreman’s (2007) advice regarding a moderate approach that combines the researcher’s pre-understanding and includes access to theoretical framework(s), vocabularies and the inspiration of empirical material. Additionally, the social constructivist approach is relevant for planning practice in Zifta as a new context, in that such an approach can assist in understanding the nature of an implementation process (Gonzalez & Healey 2005:2057). Gonzales and Healey argue for the social constructivist direction because of its sensitivity to analysing the embedded dynamics in institutional settings. However, despite the practice-oriented nature of this research, theory also contributed significantly to my understanding and explanation of the empirical findings. The plurality of theory provides reference points for learning and explaining empirical phenomena (Richardson & Kramer 2006:509).

**Plurality of Theory**

According to Gonzalez and Healey (2005), a theoretical framework consists of selected theory and concepts, which elucidate an interpretation of practice. In this research, the theories and concepts were not only selected through rational acts and choices, but were also selected with the aim of understanding the nature of the implementation of the planning process in Zifta and tracing cultural assumptions as embedded aspects in this process. Figure 3 illustrates the theoretical framework, which demonstrates the plurality of theory used at different stages of this thesis. The way in which these theories have served the research progress is summarised below.

Figure 3 - The function of the theoretical framework
The understanding of planning as a knowledge that was practised in Zifta is elaborated in Chapter III, where the cross-cultural transfer of knowledge is conceptualised, and planning’s role in universalising values across contexts is discussed. Chapter IV presents the fundamental philosophical theories that define the nature of collaborative planning model, by revisiting the theoretical foundations of this model as put forward by Patsy Healey in 1997.

Chapter VI sets out the empirical analysis of collaborative planning practice in Zifta. The theoretical principles and the core concepts underpinning collaborative planning serve as guidance to the practice of collaborative planning and as analytical references to understand and explain the nature of the implementation of this process. In Chapter VII, I refer to Egyptian social philosophy in order to identify theoretical references to the empirical findings in the Zifta case. This helps to establish intellectual foundations for collaborative planning, as interpreted in Zifta and inspired by the Egyptian context.

Mixing Methodologies

The practice of collaborative planning in Zifta City necessitated mixing the methodologies of case study and action research. According to Schön (1983), the exchange between research and practice enhances the practitioner’s capacity for reflection-in-action. In the Zifta Demonstration Project, the overlap between my role as an action researcher and as a practitioner required me to position myself with special attention to the demands of the dual role. In order to facilitate mutual social learning and understanding of the reality of the urban conditions, this task was carried out in a way that stimulated investigation outside the traditional boundaries of planning.

Case Study

The study of a planning process situated in a specific context and involving stakeholders from that context at that moment in time is well suited to case study methodology. Case study methodology is useful in empirical inquiry into a phenomenon within its context, especially when the boundary between the phenomenon and the context is fuzzy (Yin 2003). Gillham (2000), Patton (1990) and Yin (2003) argue that case studies are particularly useful when a researcher needs to understand a specific problem or situation in great depth, and has a desire to appreciate complex social phenomena. Case studies allow researchers to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events. Yin (2003:1) states that, “The case study is used in many situations to contribute to our knowledge of individual, group, and organisational, social, political, and related phenomena”. In line with this thinking, case study methodology provides me with an in-depth explanation of how and why social interactions happened in a certain way when practising planning in the Zifta context. It enables me to develop a situational understanding of the collaborative planning model, whereby contextual conditions are seen to shape a new interpretation of this model. From this perspective, this research rejects any aim to generalise results. The case offers an opportunity to advance understanding of the cross-cultural development of collaborative planning when it is practised in a new context. By relating the results of this research with the experience of other researchers with the same concern, this may contribute to an understanding of how the phenomenon in question varies across cases and contexts. This is can be considered to be in line with Stake’s (1995) argument, which supports the case as a sufficient approach for generalisations.
Stake (1995) sees case studies as not simply a methodological choice but also as a choice based on the opportunities provided to researchers to investigate their interests. The Zifta case was just that, because it provided me with such opportunities. The case was not deliberately selected by me but was an opportunity given to me. The strength of this case study is characterised by my dual role, as practitioner and action researcher, which enabled me to deal with a large variety of evidence that varied between having accessibility to documents, communicating with people, observing and documenting people’s daily practices and storytelling, to planning, reflecting and acting to influence change. The advantage of the Zifta case is that it provides a holistic understanding of an Egyptian reality, and opportunities to examine potential within a specific real-life context.

**Action Research**

Within the framework of a case study, ‘action research’ should help to place focus on knowledge production and community learning through interactive processes. Action research is useful in offering vivid and rich pictures of events, experiences and relationships; and in mapping the ways of practising theory (Dyer & Wilkins 1991). In this study, action research was a central methodological approach. It helped in the research and in learning through interaction and observing the process of change. This form of action corresponds to the implementation of a collaborative planning process in Zifta and contributes to the overall aim of the research. Reason and Bradbury (2008:4) define action research as, “A participatory process concerned with developing practical knowing in the pursuit of worthwhile human purposes. It seeks to bring together action and reflection, theory and practice, in participation with others, in pursuit of practical solutions to issues of processing concern to people, and more generally the flourishing of individual persons and their communities.”

Action research is described as a spiral of steps, as it involves a circular process of fact-finding, planning and action. Nevertheless, Reason and Bradbury (2008:3-4) emphasise that action research is full of choices as long as the action researcher is aware of the consequences of the selected approach. In Zifta the choice of actions took into consideration inquiries into the construction of local knowledge, thereby acknowledging social characteristics. This is in accordance with by Schön’s (1983) observation that action research intends to overcome positivism, with its reliance on technical rationality, through which scientific knowledge is the systematic, cumulative and standardised prototype. In action research, knowledge is a human construction, shaped by social patterns and continually modified through social interactions (a point stressed by Baburoglu and Ravn (1992)).

**Positioning of Researcher/Practitioner Dual Role**

The ‘exchange’ between research and practice enhances the practitioner’s capacity for reflection-in-action (Schön 1983). The practitioner may develop on-the-spot variations and benefit from the theory of phenomena and the methods of inquiry in the process of reflection-in-action. The development of “action science” cannot, according to Schön (1983:320), be achieved by researchers who keep themselves removed from contexts of action, or by practitioners who have limited time or competence for systematic reflection. The development requires new ways of integrating reflective research and practice. Schön (1983) identifies two forms of researcher/practitioner partnership:
1. The researcher as a consultant to the practitioner; or research as continuing education for the practitioner;
2. The practitioner taking time out to become a reflective researcher, moving in and out of researcher and practitioner careers.

My role in this work follows the second form. I move in and out of a researcher role (undertaking studies in planning) and a professional role (as urban planner pursuing a consultancy career).

The dual role of practitioner/researcher that I played in this research raises the question of the researcher's position as an outsider or insider. Herr and Anderson (2005:31) discuss the researcher/practitioner's positionality and the implications of each position for the validity of action research. According to Herr and Anderson, the degree to which researchers position themselves as insiders or outsiders will determine how they frame epistemological and methodological issues. These authors develop a continuum with respect to the different positioning possibilities. According to them, each of these positions affects action research. More insider positions contrast with positivist approaches. Thus they describe the continuum of positions and the different stances the researcher can take towards the participants as ranging between (Herr and Anderson 2005:31):

- Insider studying her/his own practice
- Insiders in collaboration with other insiders
- Insiders in collaboration with outsiders
- Insider/outside working in reciprocal collaboration
- Outsiders in collaboration with insiders
- Outsider working with insiders

In my study, “insider/outside working in reciprocal collaboration” forms the most appropriate description of my position. This is because it emphasises reciprocal collaboration between the researcher/practitioner as an outsider working in collaboration with the participants. This position provides an opportunity to the researcher to exert control over the action research process in order to understand how knowledge is created and to facilitate equal opportunities for stakeholders’ participation in the construction of local knowledge as the project progresses.

The Zifta case required an interactive process, progressing between research and practice in accordance with each enquiry. Those enquiries varied between getting in, on and out of the project, wherein the position of the researcher varied accordingly:

1. Getting in: included the introduction of the project, mobilising the community of Zifta, identification of the participants and obtaining their commitments, familiarisation with the urban conditions and the cultural context of the city.
2. Getting on: involved changing the relationships between the action researcher and the participants during various planning stages involving reflection-in-action, community practice and learning, and participants’ involvement in collaborative practices. Reciprocal collaboration among stakeholders and with the researcher/practitioner is required here.
3. Getting out: involved the creation of a shared understanding of the knowledge produced, accumulating the participants’ learning, and phasing out the researcher/practitioner dual role.
Each phase had its own conditions of reflection-in-action that provided a certain opportunity for learning-by-doing. This helped me to bring theory and practice together, and I sought to do this by putting the researcher in the role of practitioner, and vice versa, in regard to a specific planning issue. This provided me with the opportunity to revise the collaborative planning model via a new interpretation.

While the dual role provided me with the opportunity to play a proactive role in the process as designer and moderator, it also imposed on me the continuous challenge of complying with the research questions and the overall aim of my study throughout the progress of the project. I started as an outsider, however through the design process – with the theoretical and methodological settings of the thesis and the practical knowledge of being practitioner – together with the planning team we became actively engaged in:

- Outlining the project working program.
- Establishing dialogue between participants representing different interests; between the City Council and the city residents; between the group of stakeholders and technical experts; and between the informal sector in forms of interpersonal social network and its various informal activities (which included informal businesses, charities and locally based organisations etc.) and the formal sector that represents the City Council and the GOPP.
- Reporting to the planning group of the GOPP and SIPU teams, through which experiences from the Zifta Demonstration Project were extracted and fed back into the Sida/GOPP Project.
- Producing and documenting the Zifta Strategic Plan and obtaining the formal approval from the Governorate.

As an action researcher I became involved in:

- Maintaining a learning-oriented planning process.
- Setting collaborative planning into dialogue with the local people.
- Examining the institutional structure of Zifta and understanding the values associated with that structure. Incorporating such understanding in the planning process to mobilise people to work collaboratively and to make use of that in building upon the social network and the thematic development.
- Drawing a typology for the transfer of knowledge during the project’s progress. Associating locally constructed knowledge with expert’s knowledge.
- Examine the potential of the development of collaborative planning knowledge.

**Methods for Data Collection**

The methods for empirical analysis were selected to comply with the demands of my dual role: as a practitioner, methods were selected to help me in the planning process; as a researcher working in an action research milieu, they were selected to enable me to get access to different facets of the same social phenomena. Practising collaborative planning in Zifta implied the use of methods necessary to a planning process - e.g., appreciative inquiry (Elliott 1999), a visioning process (Kotter 1996) and using photos as visual techniques for communication with stakeholders (Sanoff 2000). Photographs of areas for potential development or problematic situations in the
city were taken as a means of stimulating discussions and achieving a good understanding of the planning requirements in order to set priorities with respect to the future development plan. Action research within the framework of a case study allows a range of methods for gathering data and information to be used, drawing upon multiple levels of perspectives and viewpoints (Reason & Bradbury 2008). Narrative inquiries involved site visits and informal discussions with residents of different social and economic status, in addition to organising and leading workshops, seminars, and the focus group. While this research was driven by qualitative methods, quantitative data was used when appropriate and in the form of statistics and field surveys undertaken by the experts. This data was necessary to assess the socio-economic assets in the city in order to formulate the thematic development in the strategic plan. The knowledge constructed during the planning progress fed into the formulation of the Zifta Strategic Plan and many of the empirical findings were gathered simultaneously for my research inquiry.

Qualitative methods were selected on the basis that they served the purpose of the study from the standpoints of: a) interpretation of the planning phenomenon under investigation; b) contextual understanding of the city; c) the epistemological position of the research, which challenges the nature of planning knowledge, and poses that meanings are social products constructed through interaction; and d) culture as an emergent reality in the continuous construction and reconstruction of society. The qualitative approach focused on capturing the interactive dimensions of people and their perception of the new planning knowledge, hence their involvements in the planning process. This method involved the analysis and interpretation of empirical material, policy and planning documents, cultural, historical texts, participants’ interactions, narrative stories, non-structured interviews, focus groups and observations (Denzin & Lincoln 2000; Yin 2003; Stake 1995; Patton 1990).

Additional efforts were made to note how people interactively participated, reacted and responded to the course of events during the project’s progress. Notes were taken about group dynamic features such as external disturbances, conflicts and negotiations during participatory meetings and workshops. Walking and talking with residents was also helpful in understanding their perception of positive and negative aspects of the project. As the project progressed, it proved less simple than it seemed to segregate my dual roles. To stand apart from the responsibilities of the job, I wrote my own memos and transcribed my thoughts in order to develop the ideas and interpret the various activities for the doctoral thesis, a process described by Maxwell (1996) and Corbin and Strauss (1998). This was done assiduously, by taking notes from workshops, meetings, and seminars and writing a diary at the end of the day, wherein I summarised the participants’ storytelling, as well as my own observations and reflections. Review of the official planning documents, and non-structured interviews targeting both the official and non-official actors in planning, were both undertaken in order to complete my understanding of the planning system in Egypt. Such actions provided a better understanding of the development in Zifta and enhanced the confidence and credibility of the qualitative interpretation of the research findings when triangulation was conducted (a process described by Bryman (2008) and Yin (2003)).
PART ONE

CONCEPTUALISING AND THEORISING COLLABORATIVE PLANNING KNOWLEDGE
The literature review is presented in two parts. The first part, presented in this chapter, defines ‘knowledge’ as a concept and investigates the epistemological questions surrounding planning knowledge in general. A short discussion of the relationship between the significance of the role of ‘cultural awareness’ and ‘knowledge transfer’ is also presented, wherein focus is placed upon the concept and role of culture in communicating new knowledge to people in different contexts. Special attention is also paid to the implications of planning knowledge when it is transferred to less developed countries (LDCs) without consideration of the history, context and culture of those countries. In tackling this issue, a definition of ‘what planning is’ is presented. The role of planning in universalising ‘values’ is questioned. Out of this theoretical review, a general understanding of the implications of transferring ‘planning’ knowledge to a new context is revealed, particularly with respect to knowledge transferred from developed countries (DCs) to LDCs that differ substantially in terms of their planning institutions, cultures and history. The second part of the literature review is presented at Chapter IV, which focuses on the particular knowledge subject of this study, ‘collaborative planning’ as developed by Patsy Healey. Chapter IV details a review of the fundamental philosophical issues that define the nature of this knowledge in its original context.

**What Is Knowledge?**

The term ‘knowledge’ has a broad set of definitions and can be defined in a number of ways, including as information applicable to problem solving (Woolf 1988:1-3) and as experiences and thoughts that guide actions and communication by and between people (van der Spek & Spijkervet 1997:1-3). Knowledge constitutes valuable information based on experience, context, interpretation and reflection – information that is available to decision makers (Amin, A. 2009). Amin, A. (2009) bases his argument on Boulding’s (1955) assertion that there is no direct relation between information and knowledge, and quotes the following lines from Boulding:

“We cannot regard knowledge as simply the accumulation of information as in a stockpile, even though all the messages that are retrieved by the brain may leave some sort of deposit here. Knowledge must itself be regarded as a structure, a very complex and quite loose pattern with its parts connected in various ways by ties of varying degrees of strength. Messages are continually shot into this structure; some of them pass right through its interstices without effecting any perceptible change in it. Sometimes messages ‘stick’ to the structure and become part of it. … Occasionally, however, a message which is inconsistent with the basic pattern of the mental structure, but which is of such nature that it cannot be disbelieved hits the structure, which is then forced to undergo a complete reorganisation” (Boulding 1955:103-4).

In view of this position, Amin, A. (2009) sees information as fragmented and transitory, while knowledge is structured, coherent and of significance, and can be acquired by thinking and doing. Thus, knowledge cannot result only from a one-way cumulative process, which means from information to knowledge, but rather necessitates continuous interactive feedback loops between the different main components involved – e.g., messages, short and long term memories, beliefs, judgments and values. Reducing knowledge to information leads to a view of knowledge as
messages and enables the thought that it is possible to transmit knowledge in a one-way direction to agents. For instance, the World Bank (1999:1) regards knowledge as “… like light. Weightless and intangible, it can easily travel the world, enlightening the lives of people everywhere.”

The main types of knowledge identified by Amin, A. (2009:2-3) are:

1. **Explicit knowledge**, which can exist either individually or collectively. It can be spelled out or formalised. It can be documented and transferred through rules, policies and procedures. For instance, several approaches in economics consider that knowledge is essentially explicit and held by individuals.

2. **Tacit knowledge**, which is associated with skills or know-how. This means that it is in the heads of individuals and is obtained through experience and repetitive actions. For instance, sociology of innovation considers that knowledge is understood essentially tacitly and is of a collective nature.

Planning involves sets of knowledge that combine both explicit and tacit types. These sets of knowledge can differ in relation to two main paradigms of rational and communicative planning. Rational planning deals with systemising social scientific knowledge and techniques to manage collective concerns. In the late 1970s, new planning thinking emerged to take over from the rational planning model. Scholars had to extend planning principles to thoughts in the field of social science and philosophy (Allmendinger 2002a; Healey 1991; Yiftachel 1989; Freidman 1987). This shift has implications for the kinds of knowledge generated within the planning process. Knowledge comes to be constructed through social and institutional interaction processes in which knowledge is seen not as neutral but as embedded in sets of social relations (Healey 2006). Furthermore, planning in collaboration, which is the concern of this work, supports a typology of knowledge that requires a variety of types of actions to handle the different methods of testing associated with each category of knowledge (Rydin 2007). The complex settings of planning knowledge, especially with respect to the collaborative planning model, will be explored in the next chapter.

In addition to understanding knowledge types, the transfer of knowledge across contexts involves investigation of two other dimensions. The first is the embodiment of knowledge: the examination of whether knowledge is embodied in individuals or processes in its original context. The second is the transformation of knowledge: the examination of potential measures for adapting knowledge to the new conditions. This dimension determines the appropriateness of knowledge and how it can be transferred to and institutionalised within the new environment (Amin, A. 2009). In my view, awareness of the new context and its associated cultural values is significant to the appropriate interpretation of new knowledge. Since knowledge is contextualised, the main concern for its cross-cultural transfers lies in understanding its inherent ambiguity or embodiment in the original context (Lucas 2006:259).

**Epistemological Questions of Planning Knowledge**

Epistemology or the theory of knowledge refers to the theory of the way in which knowledge is acquired. Strictly, it refers to a fundamental branch of philosophy that investigates the “possibility, limits, origin, structure, methods and validity or truth of knowledge” (Delanty & Strydom 2003:4-5). Planning knowledge has been influenced by epistemic shifts in the 20th century that not only led
to the termination of positivism but that also involved the re-contextualisation and reconstitution of preceding assumptions.

Attention is increasingly given to the question of differences in epistemology in planning literature (Healey & Hillier 1996; Sandercock 1998). Theories and models are increasingly developed to address the question of the interpretation of differences in the field of planning – e.g., theories that examine how different cultural contexts shape the meaning and design of space (Sandercock 1998; Rakodi 1991; Beall 1997); models for planning in multicultural societies (Forester 1998; Healy 2006; Innes & Booher 1999); models underlining the importance of cultural values for developing plans (Hamdi & Goethert 1997; Minerbi 1999); and models emphasising identity - especially in relation to problems facing women, ethnic minorities and the environment (Massey & Denton 1993; Sandercock 1998; Douglass & Freidman 1998).

In research addressing the cross-cultural transfer of knowledge, consideration of the epistemological questions around that knowledge is essential, particularly when the cultural context is placed at the centre of the inquiry. Cultural differences in norms and values remain among the most salient of the factors that contribute to epistemological differences (Umemoto 2001). The Zifta case study provided an opportunity to revise collaborative planning knowledge through its practice in a new cultural context. The articulation of ideas inspired by Egyptian social philosophy may help to address the epistemological questions around collaborative planning in the Egyptian society.

The Evolution of Planning Theory Driven by Social Philosophy

The historical evolution of planning knowledge can primarily be understood in relation to the evolution of philosophical theories within the western geo-cultural context, Europe and the USA. From the rational planning model of modernity to the shifts in planning theory necessitated by the subsequent crisis in the broader philosophy of the social sciences; shifts which emphasised plurality rather than rationality. Social philosophical principles have played a central role in inspiring planning scholars to address the transformation of societies and their associated values (Freidman 1987; Allmendinger 2002a; Healey 2006). Thus, planning theory – inspired by philosophical principles mostly generated in the western geo-cultural context (see, for instance, Wallerstein 1997) – developed its epistemology, methodology and a whole range of key concepts (see Allmendinger 2002b; Healey 2006; Freidman 1987; Yiftachel 1989). In fact, one can observe that the rise of diverse planning model has not improved planning for development in the developing world. The development efforts in most of the developing countries are implemented under different ideas taking the forms of fragmented development programs in different sectors rather than being integrated. From a glance at the international development agencies websites, it is easy to trace the fragmented ideas that guide these programs – e.g., decentralisation, governance, public participation, gender planning, health, nutrition and the replication of best practices.

Meanwhile, the LDCs’ own thinkers remain marginalised, despite their contributions in describing their societies and in expressing critical views regarding the uncontrolled flow of ideas into their societies. For instance, such thinkers critically examine the development programs supported by international aid agencies that are designed in accordance with social theory that
takes account of human concerns derived from contexts that differ from those of the societies in which they are applied (Hettne 1995; Escobar 1992). Some scholars argue that the reason behind the failure of development programs in the developing world is the influence of social science theory, research methodology and economic philosophy that is not rooted in the reality of the societies in which such ideas are applied (Streefen 1974). Despite their task of understanding the nature of reality and the issues of concern to their societies, LDC thinkers in social science and philosophy have rarely contributed to the universal school of thoughts (from which many planning ideas draw their inspiration). Rather, these thinkers have been marginalised from the development of the kind of knowledge suitable for the context of their countries in particular (Edelman & Haugerud 2006).

The Epistemological Bias Approach – Views from Egyptian Social Philosophy

Egyptian philosophers have questioned the epistemological issues in relation to the import of knowledge and science into the Egyptian society. The reasoning set out below is based upon the work developed by a group of Egyptian philosophers and thinkers⁴ (Elmessiri 2006) working in line with the Arabic word ‘fiqh’ (a word which implies the ‘understanding of knowledge’ or epistemology) and emphasising the power of the human mind to generate different dimensions of knowledge in a specific context. Collectively, they developed the ‘fiqh al-tahayyuz’ approach – which in English translates as the “Epistemological Bias” approach – and tested it across a range of different disciplines (2006:xvi, 127). They argue for Egyptian thinkers to play a role in the development of the knowledge when it is transferred from a different context to Egypt. They stress that this should be done with full awareness of the significance of cultural differences. Their concern is to develop the means to pull their knowledge and science out of the mimicking stage in order to overcome the hurdles which hinder their advancement, by stressing that what is good for others is not necessary good for them. As such, for them, imitation can never pass for an original achievement, but has become ineffective, serving only to prolong and even reinforce Egypt’s current state of backwardness. They emphasise the importance of eliminating the cultural biases of the original context from which the (new) knowledge originated. Once the foreign cultural bias is eliminated, the knowledge can then be domesticated and further typified with new sets of Egyptian cultural emphases. They conclude that many concepts and terms applied through programs for development have resulted in “the bias of our material reality against us”. Such a bias is apparent in the built environment, through the destruction of traditional organic cities and their replacement by modern cities characterised by values such as speed, competence and competitiveness; and houses that are built to maximise sunlight through the use of air conditioning, neglecting the local climate conditions in favour of the “necessities of modern life”

⁴The work is documented in Arabic, although a summary is available in English. The main contributors are: Abdelwahab M. Elmessiri (2006), Professor Emeritus of English Literature and Critical Theory at Ain Shams University, Cairo; Adel Hussein (d.2001), a leading Egyptian intellectual and economic theoretician of world renown; Nasr Mohamed Arif, Professor in Economics and Political Science, at Cairo University; Rafik Habib, senior researcher in psychology of religion, class struggle and westernisation; Hoda Hegazy, Professor Emeritus in the Philosophy and Sociology of Education at Ain Shams University, Cairo; Mahmoud Dhaoudi, Professor of Sociology at the University of Tunisia; Ferial J. Ghazoul, Professor of English and Comparative Literature at the American University, Cairo; Saad A. Al-Bazi, Professor of English and American literature at King Saud University; Abdelhalim I. Abdelhalim, Professor of Architectural Design and Theory, at Cairo University; Hamed Ibrahim El-Mously, Professor in Endogenous Development of Local Communities; and Mahjoob Taha (d. 2000), leading Sudanese specialist in theoretical physics. The conference was held in February 1987 in Cairo and a large number of scholars participated. Seven volumes comprising over eighty studies were produced as a result of these efforts.
Since materialism and reasoning have been the keystones of the modern cultural paradigm, salient characteristics have been associated with many types of knowledge transferred to the Egyptian context. Moral codes are given less value, since the ultimate purpose of life is profit and materialistic pleasure (2006:29).

In line with this thinking, this research advocates the proactive role of a new context. The research investigates the potential of the Egyptian context to contribute to the received planning knowledge through practice and through the competence of Egyptian social philosophy as a legitimate source of information about Egyptian society, able to appropriately interpret new knowledge. Such a step, I advocate through this research, may assist in the re-contextualisation of received knowledge in accordance with its new context.

**Cultural Awareness in Knowledge Transfer**

The increasing prevalence of the dialectical relationship between universalisation and the affirmation of specificities underlies most of the discussions addressing the concept of ‘culture’ (Bayart 1996; Freidman, Jonathan 1994). The cross-cultural transfer of knowledge has been a part of that dialectical concern. For the purpose of this thesis, I refer to Kluckhohn (1951:86) who defines ‘culture’ in the following manner:

> “Culture consists in patterned ways of thinking, feeling and reacting, acquired and transmitted mainly by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievements of human groups, including their embodiments in artefacts; the essential core of culture consists of traditional (i.e. historically derived and selected) ideas and especially their attached values.”

Cultural awareness becomes an advanced issue of analysis in the research of knowledge management to increase organisational performance and effectiveness. For instance, Flamholz and Randle (2011) consider culture to be the invisible strategic asset of critical importance to organisational success; Kotter and Heskett (1992) advocate the powerful role of practising organisational culture in increasing effectiveness, performance and winning loyalties; and McDermott and O’Dell (2001) argue for aligning knowledge with pre-existing core values and building on existing networks in order to make sharing knowledge consistent with people’s expectations. Cultural awareness therefore represents a key vehicle for the effective sharing of knowledge and collaboration, because it enables people by providing them with tools, resources and legitimation. Further, in the knowledge management disciplines, cultural values can be strategically aligned with the practices of an organisation to increase its performance.

Planning scholars take up the implications of cultural context for planning by aligning planning theory with the cultural aspects of a society. Sandercock (2003) develops an epistemology of multiplicity for the planning of multicultural cities. Her approach to planning includes communicative, collaborative and pragmatic ideas; and diverse ways of knowing culture, and mapping histories, including (2003:76-81):

- Knowing through dialogue
- Knowing from experiences
- Learning from local knowledge
- Learning to read symbolic and non-verbal evidence
- Learning through contemplative or appreciative knowledge
- Learning-by-doing, or action planning

Healey (2006:65) argues against the language of the modern period that relegated culture to a sector of social life. She urges that we recognise the cultural situatedness of our knowledge and its embeddedness in all social life. In her institutionalist analysis, “We are constituted through our culture … much of our culture resources are so deeply embedded in our consciousness.” She describes the path to face the challenges of collaborating across cultural differences as “firstly to recognise the potential cultural dimensions of differences, and secondly, actively to make new cultural conceptions, to build shares systems of meanings and ways of acting, to create an additional ‘layer’ of cultural formation. Local environmental planning thus becomes a project in the formation and transmission of cultural layers” (2003:64).

Planning theory offers insights for integrating cultural issues in planning. Such integration would increase the potential to build shared meanings, thus increasing planning’s connectivity to communities. In the cross-cultural transfer of planning ideas, culture is a foremost field of inquiry that influences ideas across contexts, reshapes themes and may contribute further to their development. In this regard, I argue that planners must foster the transfer, receipt and integration of planning ideas that are compatible with the existing local cultural values, and build on established social networks and institutional structures.

Cultural values are of significant importance in a country like Egypt where the nature of the social structure and institutions is dominated by strong cultural attributes. Egypt has been the cultural hub of Arab culture over history (Barakat 1993). Arabic is the main (classical) language, despite differences in local dialect, and Arabic formal written text is used in official documents, books and magazines, which play a central role in broadening the cultural influence of Egypt. Religion is another important attribute of culture in Egypt; Egyptian society, with both its Muslim and Coptic communities is considered a religious society and is characterised by the influence of Islamic values. Collectivist attributes and the culture of relatedness underline the interdependence and cohesion of social networks, in which the family (rather than the individual) is the core of the society (Zaharna 2009). Hofstede (2001) positions the Arab world, including Egypt, as a collectivist society manifested through close, long-term commitment to a member’s ‘group’, that being a family, extended family or extended relationships. Individuality is rooted within the social context or group association, in which individual dignity and honour are socially defined attributes. Thus, the structure of collective society is driven by group interest rather than by self-interest. A number of scholars have argued that the cultural differences between individualistic and collectivist societies form the major distinguishing characteristics in the way various societies of the world analyse social behaviour and processes of knowledge transfer (see, for instance, Earley & Gibson 1998; Erez & Earley 1993).

What Is Planning?

In this discussion, my aim is to untangle how planning is generally defined with reference to the work of a number of planning scholars. The definition of planning has varied in accordance with planning approaches – whilst from a technocratic perspective, planning is “the application of scientific method – however – to policy making” (Faludi 1973:1), others see planning as an instrumental way to achieve better outcomes (Davidoff & Reiner 1962) or as an anticipatory coordination of action
(Alexander 1998). Healey (2006) recently defined planning as a form of governance practised through processes that enable or constrain action in a society. She sees planning as a process that promotes positive synergies in order to manage co-existence in a shared place and to achieve human wellbeing, social justice and environmental sustainability. It is a “governance endeavour, which focuses policy attention on the ways social and natural forces shape the qualities of places” (2006:336). Planning, from Healey’s perspective, seeks diverse forms of knowledge in order to enrich the understanding of ways of acting through complex relations in space and time. Planning, in this view, is “an open field of ideas and practices, but defining its character and qualities has always presented problems” (2010:1). The English word ‘planning’ has a wide translation and does not necessarily only refer to city planning, town planning or urban and regional planning; it also has the meaning of the intention to do something, or it indicates policy that is followed by action (Healey 2010). In Arabic, the same problem is presented when defining planning, or ‘takhtit’. The word can indicate planning a city, planning a program, or simply planning a holiday. Another word must be added to define the type of planning, for instance ‘takhtit modon’ for city planning, and ‘takhtit badary/rify’ for urban/rural planning.

However, the normative definitions of planning are generally abstract and implicitly based upon different ideological presumptions. This reveals a difficulty in formulating a unified answer to the question of what planning is. Therefore, according to Alexander (2009), planning should be defined with reference to realistic performance criteria, context-specific norms and institutional design. From the perspective of the cross-cultural transfer of planning knowledge, it is relevant to pay attention to Healey’s (2003:4) argument about whether planning is system-maintaining, which is merely action to reinforce and maintain the established practices; or system-transformative, which requires us to examine what direction and when transformative potential may be released, and the path dependency of transformative energy placed in a specific context. The work in this thesis stands for a planning that is defined according to the latter. The social interaction of the collaborative planning process in a new context such as an Egyptian one may create an opportunity for producing a transformative energy that influences the local context and contributes to a new interpretation of the core concepts and theory of the collaborative planning model. It may change local participants’ initial preferences and motivate them towards a collective effort in addressing their common concerns. It will provide new learning about how to deal with peoples’ concerns and collectively make use of their cultural values.

'Travel' of Planning Ideas Universalises Values

Planning ideas have usually been associated with values grounded in either science or in broad ideas of social theory and philosophy. Generally speaking, planning theory and practice has been connected with the rise of western modernity, the broader intellectual, philosophical and social transformation of which inspired planning scholars (Healey 2006).

Planning theory, through ‘travels’ by practice, thus spreads its associated values across the rest of the world. According to Said (1983), the ‘travel’ of a theory is a model for control over place and space. The result is that the geographical space is constructed beyond its physical territory to reproduce a social order with little attention to the realities of the local built environment. Theory – in terms of theorists, schools of criticism, ideas or philosophical thoughts – is characterised by and developed within particular socio-historical contexts; when theories travel, they are
‘domesticated’ in other geographical contexts, losing their fundamental prerequisite weight. Therefore, it is important to reconstitute an imported theory in a new political situation by suggesting an ideological standpoint that implies self-critical knowledge, and which is entered into dialogue with the people of the new context (Said 1983; Hubbard et al. 2004).

The role of planning in the production of an unbalanced social order is discussed by Harvey (1978), who sees planning as a task that attempts to achieve a ‘successful’ ordering and ‘proper’ location of the built environment for ‘better’ and ‘useful’ function. Rhetorically, planning is motivated by certain values centred on improving place-based conditions (Healey & Upton 2010), but in practice, as Harvey (1978) points out, these values are not always centred on the context of a place. He confirms that we all live in a society founded on capitalist values, which presupposes certain social relationships masked by the “scientisation” of social science and its role in transforming the relations between people into relations between things in line with production and consumption patterns. Harvey highlights the influence of the universal capitalist ideology on the creation of social class order, and he emphasises the role of planning in considering a balance in social class relations in the built environment. This has placed the planner in the context of re-socialising social science, in order to bring harmony back to society. As such, according to Harvey, the planner has to be armed with a new ‘ideology’ of planning that is able to reproduce a balanced social order. Harvey (1978) argues that if planners step aside and reflect, they might come to see that the domination of capital and the reproduction of unbalanced social order are products of a planners’ commitment to “an alien ideology which chains our thoughts and understanding in order to legitimate a social practice that preserves, in a deep sense, the domination of capital over labour” (Harvey 1978:231). A relatively similar standpoint is taken by Freidman (1992), who argues for people’s collective empowerment in order to break the dominant mainstream models of economic development, so that an alternative development might emerge that includes democracy, appropriate economic growth, gender equality and intergenerational equity. He calls for planning associated with moral values that express a bias for people’s own history, and planning for hope out of existent failures. These values can be found in any region of the world, are shared by most of the members of a society, and are structured by class, religion, language, regional identity, culture, or any social order that arises from values and interests.

**Planning Practices in LDC Contexts**

Since planning is strongly linked to reality and results in actions, its quantifiable and qualitative outputs create gradual changes that affect the real world. But the response of the real world to the planning system is generally slow and the lessons to be learned are developed over time. One can conclude that the costs of direct experimentation in planning are very high, which necessitates a careful transfer across contexts. For instance, the dominant technocratic ideology was blamed for its incapacity to solve new problems resulting from desired economic growth (Freidman 1987).

The failure of rational planning thinking has become more evident in the LDCs, where such failure has been attributed to the approach’s ignorance of local culture, history and context. Planning brings sets of knowledge to bear on one another in such a way that it leads to interactions and changes in a society over time. To practise these sets of knowledge with an attempt to achieve a better future, planning generally comprises a number of stages, each of
which involves types of practical solutions that deal with a specific reality. Political, economic and institutional reasons rooted in the LDCs, in addition to the dominance exerted by various dictators who needed to emphasise their autocracy, have combined to produce what are arguably some of the worst planning outcomes possible.

The broad vision of planning ideas – when transferred to LDCs – has been gradually replaced by a narrow and one-dimensional view of development doctrines, built on concepts like economic growth and economic transformation. Questions of political, cultural or societal concern have rarely been considered and, as a result, planning knowledge has been practised predominantly according to economic parameters. As expressed by Myrdal (1970) a long time ago: planning has been limited to production, incomes and standards of living, whilst the preconditions for these sectors in their wider sense have been ignored. This view remains valid in the opinion of many contemporary planning scholars (see, for instance, Hamdi & Goethert 1997).

In LDCs, the rational model has dominated planning thinking and led to the implementation of a range of development programs that have operated primarily within economic parameters. Hamdi and Goethert (1997) describe the rational planning model by referring to what is called the "orthodox" model. Orthodox development policy is, pursuant to their definition, closely aligned to definitions that favour the market. It is, for instance, focused on international trade and deregulation, whereby success is measured by growth in Gross National Product (GNP) and levels of consumption of goods and services. As the dominant model was centralist and hierarchical, it was assumed by its advocates that fuelling the economy in its centre would create benefits which would then filter down to the poorest in the form of jobs, utilities and the provision and improvement of services. But the orthodox planning model failed to alleviate poverty, promoting dependency over self-sufficiency, and (in contrast to the developers’ assumption) benefits did not reach the poor (Hamdi & Goethert 1997). Hamdi (2010) discusses the evolution of development and the placemaker’s tools since the modernisation of the 1950s, an era in which planning ideas for modernising the developing world were exported as simple assumptions. He presents a simple illustration of each phase of development in our short history, coinciding with the evolution of ideals and policies that were invented in pursuit of development (see Figure 4).
Conclusion

The conceptualisation of ‘knowledge’ reveals that it is embodied in its original context and cannot be de-contextualised when it travels across contexts unless certain transformative dimensions are applied for its adaptation in that new context. The determination of these dimensions necessitates an understanding of the cultural specificities of a new context and investigation of the epistemological differences of this knowledge. The successful re-contextualisation of knowledge to make it more appropriate to a new context is likely to depend on understanding the cultural specificities of a new context and aligning the introduced knowledge with the existing core cultural values to make the knowledge consistent with people’s expectations. The merging of cultural values through the production of new knowledge is of critical importance and represents the key vehicle for the transfer of knowledge across contexts.

Planning as knowledge has evolved through much broader philosophical and social transformations in the history of the western geo-cultural world. Through the period labelled “The Enlightenment”, the whole body of science, philosophy, economics and, thus, planning seemed to develop together, emphasising the value of scientific knowledge that was considered universal and capable of ‘travelling’ around the world in order to spread the benefits of the industrial revolution. The application of planning perhaps brought wealth to the western countries, but it was accompanied by social inequalities. When planning ideas ‘travelled’ across contexts, it was applied in ignorance of the history, context and institutional conditions of the new context. As a result, the broad vision of planning was narrowed down to form different development doctrines to deal with different realities. Planning has played an essential role in universalising specific values that have contributed to the creation of a social order favouring the rich and the industrialised world.

Epistemic shifts in social philosophy in the 20th century were accompanied by the inherent ambiguity of context, labelled ‘postmodernism’. This led to the termination of positivism, a move that affected planning knowledge by increasing the significance of questions of differences in the epistemology of planning across contexts. Because planning involves sets of knowledge, understanding of the inherent features and the core concepts embodied in the original context where that knowledge was developed is, according to Patsy Healey, an integral stage in the process of the cross-cultural transfer of the collaborative planning model. Collaborative planning is explored in the next chapter through a review of the core concepts of this model and the theoretical principles that underpin it.
IV – THEORETICAL PRINCIPLES OF HEALEY’S COLLABORATIVE PLANNING MODEL

This chapter provides an overview of the collaborative planning model developed by Patsy Healey in the late 1990s, and revisits the fundamental philosophical ideas that characterised this model. Healey’s definition of the model is presented, and the prerequisite conditions that led to the development of collaborative ideas are also examined. This work is undertaken with an awareness of the critiques that have followed the journey of collaborative planning. The core concepts of collaborative planning are identified and examined in relation to the different theoretical principles on which it is grounded. As such, Habermas’ communicative (1987) and Giddens’ (1984) structuration theories are briefly introduced, in addition to the institutionalist approach. I also include a discussion of other theories and concepts relevant to the purpose of practising collaboration in the context of Zifta and formulating the required analytical framework.

The Prerequisite Conditions of Collaborative Planning

In the 1990s, many planning scholars drew attention to the theory of communicative rationality as a way to overcome the decline of rational planning theory (e.g., Healey, Forester, Freidman and Innes). First criticising the legacy of object-oriented, Euclidean concepts of planning theory and practice, they then drew on a wide range of advanced social theories in order to construct a new vocabulary for planning theory and practice. The objective was to equip planning practice with a robust theory that could adequately conceptualise highly controversial planning issues (Graham & Healey 1999; Healy 2006). Healey, among others, launched the collaborative planning approach with the aim of breaking out of traditional hierarchical and bureaucratically dominated planning processes. Other terms in the same vein have been introduced to describe collaborative planning – e.g., “consensus building” (Innes & Booher 1999); “shared decision-making” (Gunton & Day 2003); “co-management” (Rao & Geisler 1990); and “deliberative planning” (Forester 1999).

Collaborative planning is associated with the theory of communicative action and communicative rationality (Harris 2002:22), which formed the central elements in planning debates of that time. It aims to solve problems and draw up plans through a process wherein stakeholders’ participation is a central feature.

Across Europe and the USA, a movement has emerged over the last two decades that promotes collaborative and participatory planning to address environmental conflict management. In the UK, collaborative planning appeared in the experience of partnerships between residents, public agencies and private sector interests in local development areas. Across Europe, it was experienced through multi-stakeholder processes in strategic planning and local environmental management. In Amsterdam, residents play a major role in discussions among stakeholders to frame urban development projects. In Northern Ireland, a collaborative planning model has been used to enhance the integration of the peace process (Healey 2006).

The use of different collaborative planning terms might have contributed to a multiple understanding of its central meaning, but it also provides an opportunity for various contextual interpretations. In general, this opportunity came about due to the shift in planning theory from technical instrumental planning to relational conceptions of rationality out of which collaborative
planning has emerged. This shift is helpful in understanding the relevance of contemporary planning theory to different contexts, thus its potential to be contextualised in and by a new context.

**Defining Collaborative Planning**

Due to its multiple meanings, Healey does not provide a strict definition of collaborative planning, rather employing a set of social theories to address social questions around how to improve the quality of shared places. She stresses the importance of social, economic and environmental policy in the spatial change of a region and explains collaborative planning as a process that is practically oriented and by which a society controls and directs itself. Healey emphasises that planning is “not just about technique and procedure” to produce master plans and their related technical analysis of particular issues; and it is not about procedural practice of value-neutral experts, set apart from context and stakeholders. Planning rather constitutes “a social process built up from the particular relations of a place”, one that interrelates techniques with an array of values and which involves active collaboration between those who co-exist in shared places (Healey 2006:86-87).

Healey defines collaborative planning as, “A conscious policy-driven effort to insert a strategic, long-term, interrelating viewpoint into governance processes, has the capacity to assist the task of relational capacity-building by its role in informing political communities about the range of stakeholders and about how they like to discuss issues; by its role in helping to shape arenas where stakeholders can meet; and by helping those involved work out what it means to build new collective ways of thinking and acting, to re-frame and re-structure their ways of proceeding.” She calls for a new role for planners by stressing that, “Those involved as experts in such processes should have an ethical duty to attend to all stakeholders as the interactive process develops” (2006:312). For her, the result of such a process is collaborative planning. This definition implies that collaborative planning provides a framework for understanding and interpreting the spatial structure for practical actions. Healey thereby emphasises the complex interplay between the content and context of planning, arguing that the particularity of institutional histories and geographies in any country reflect its particular organisational set up and legal framework.

This way of defining and interpreting collaborative planning provides it, as planning knowledge, with a certain flexibility that enables it to be reshaped and re-contextualised, thus improving its capacity to be transferred to a different context. To do that, a further understanding of the core concepts of collaborative planning is needed. I therefore have extended my investigation to the theoretical foundations of the core concepts that inspired Healey to formulate collaborative planning in theory and to put it into practice.

**Critics of the Collaborative Planning Model**

The collaborative planning model has been criticised for its idealism, its neglect of power relationships and its impracticality. Some claim that the approach does not challenge the existing structural order; while others say that the approach relies too much on consensus making rather than working with conflicts (Allmendinger 2002a; Huxley 2000; Harris 2002). Some planning scholars base their criticism of collaborative planning on its core concepts and related values. They claim that weaknesses and inconsistencies exist in it because of, for example, the power component and the way in which the dominant feature of consensus building is the shifting away
from competitive interest bargaining. They further argue that planning has to go beyond reaching consensus and rather identify the problems of its application in a governmental context. They highlight the problem of individualism in society and collaborative planning’s potential weakness as a naïve attempt to promote inclusive participation. They refer to the Habermasian concern to finish the “unfinished project of modernity”, an idea in which Healey’s ideas are firmly rooted; and the paradoxical role of the individual planner who mostly works for clients with little room for collective goals (see, for instance, Allmendinger & Tewder-Jones 2002; Huxley 2000). The emerging critics of collaborative planning, however, do not deny its importance in a number of roles – e.g., the usefulness of its approach for analysis – as a prescription for how to undertake planning.

Healey acknowledges the utopian nature of such an approach due to the prevalence of power relations and social order. But she stresses that there should be the possibility of finding an opportunity to construct a public sphere in which one can debate and manage the collective concerns of a diverse society (2006). Nevertheless, most critics of collaborative planning have their origins in the western geo-cultural context (e.g. the urban regeneration in the UK, private partnerships in local development in several European countries, or multi-stakeholder processes in strategic environmental management in the USA and Canada). The application of collaborative planning in South Africa reveal, despite the attempt of recent planning theories to move beyond the assumptions of universality and to take account of social differences and multiculturalism, that such planning ideas in turn are highly compatible with a more citizen-oriented and responsive political system, though this may not be the case in many developing countries (Watson 2003). Generally speaking, collaborative planning is criticised from the point of view of western contexts for its embedded ideology of value-driven planning in a world requiring a policy endorsing market mechanisms for social efficiency (Barry & Ellis 2011). Further, it is criticised in non-western contexts for its compatibility with democratic political systems and its conformity to particular rules that ensure that participation is fair, equal and empowering (Watson 2003). Planning scholars, however, assume that the critical debate around collaborative planning should encourage the engagement of that model with other ideas and schools of thought to address, for instance, questions of power relations (Allmendinger & Tewder-Jones 2002).

The attempt of this work to re-contextualise collaborative planning in an Egyptian context represents a new opportunity to challenge a different urban reality. The practice of collaborative planning may take another direction in a country like Egypt, especially when problems are so different – for instance, the goal of being a competitive country globally is less important than the goal of efficiently using scarce resources and achieving self-dependent development. For example, about 50% of the people in Cairo live in informal settlements. One may certainly expect certain difficulties in practising participatory planning in developing countries, the greatest of which is the lack of democracy. However, the transfer of collaborative planning to the Egyptian context is being combined with an effort to incorporate local cultural values with collaborative characteristics that still function in the society. This effort takes into consideration the common concerns of the Egyptian social philosophers about their society in relation to planning and development. This may provide a new insight that could support or contradict those criticisms, or give rise to an entirely different perception of collaborative planning. I therefore decided to not limit my review to the core concepts of collaborative planning, but also include the
theoretical principles on which these core concepts are based. I believe that such an investigation expands the understanding of collaborative planning, by locating ways to modify its core of concepts and make a new interpretation that is more appropriate to the Egyptian context. These core concepts are outlined below.

Core Concepts of the Collaborative Planning Model

To comply with the overall aim of my research, from my review of Patsy Healey’s collaborative planning model I here identify the core concepts that underpin the collaborative planning model. I also refer to other theories and concepts that are of relevance to the empirical analysis of Zifta case study. The core concepts identified are:

- Stakeholders, rights and duties
  - Practical guide on how to lead in a shared-power environment
  - Learning-by-doing generate local knowledge
  - Appreciative inquiry
- Rules of communication – Habermasian ideas
  - Consensus building
  - The role of religion – A recent reflection from Habermas
- Understanding the social system - Giddens’ theory
  - Building capacity for institutional change
- The role of planner

Stakeholders, Rights and Duties

The collaborative model involves as many people as possible in the planning process. Planning actors in the traditional model were limited to public planners, decision makers and developers. The collaborative model, in contrast, includes all people as planning actors since they have a stake in society’s development. Stakeholders in the collaborative process, according to Healey, are prepared for power sharing and mutual understanding, through which collective learning and innovative capacity are generated. The collaborative process is inclusive only if all stakeholders are provided with an equal opportunity to participate (Healey 2006). According to Crosby and Bryson (2005:22), stakeholders could be “individuals, groups, or organisations that are affected by a public problem, have partial responsibility to act on it, or control important resources”. Mapping of stakeholders is required in order to identify those who could have a “stake” in the strategy-making process. The identified stakeholders include a wide variety of people – e.g., residents, developers, business people, and NGOs who have territorial and functional reasons for participating in the planning process. The political, administrative and legal systems should create places where participants can be represented and heard. A key role of leadership is to mobilise stakeholders and recognise moments of opportunity that lead to potential social changes. The task of community mobilisation should not be limited to formal leadership positions but initiators may come from different social positions. Stakeholder analysis should be explicitly conducted and should promote flexibility during the progress of the planning process. To conduct analysis of stakeholders, according to Crosby and Bryson (2005:203-5), extensive information should be obtained about potential stakeholders who have significant resources that can be used to resolve or exacerbate the problem and to identify their potential influences on the process.
‘participation planning matrix’ may be developed to sort out the level of engagement of stakeholders – this may vary between informing, consulting, involving, collaborating or empowering. Strategic interventions may be formulated accordingly to solve problems, building coalitions and implement and monitor the participation process. However, it is recommended that such a matrix be revised during the planning process. Collaborative practice requires an inclusionary ethic that emphasises the recognition of the validity of all points of view and ensures that all voices are heard. The interaction between diverse ideas and interests often leads to conflicts. The critical challenge is to find ways of collaborative agenda setting to build an inclusionary policy approach that is informed by a locally relevant understanding of the issues at stake (Healey 2006).

The consensus building is undertaken on the basis of a clear understanding of the right to challenge the consensus. The relation between rights and duties or obligations with respect to laws and moral principles is a reciprocal one. To ensure a collaborative and inclusionary planning process, consideration of broadly based rights to a voice and to influence decisions is required. All stakeholders should have the opportunity to challenge decisions, have access to information, and the right to register failures using a formal or informal governance agency. On the other hand, duties involve acceptance of different interpretations of concerns in a diverse society; that agreed policies and programs be carried out effectively; that the process operates openly; and that actions are reported back to members of the political community. Duties, if followed effectively, contribute to improving governance capacity, promoting public confidence and legitimacy, and contributing towards collaborative spatial strategy-making (Healey 2006).

**Practical guidance on how to lead in a shared-power environment**

Healey’s (2006) effort to put stakeholder participation into practice in planning and strategy making was influenced by Bryson and Crosby (1992). They present their research on strategy making as an effort conducted in a shared-power world. Thus strategy making is an innovative effort that is achieved through critical interactions among key leaders and players with the aim of changing structures and reworking power relations. This effort occurs in three phases: forums, arenas and courts. The creation and communication of meaning takes place in the forum, arenas are concerned with policy making and implementation, and courts ensure the management of residual conflicts and enforcement of underlying norms. In this process, outsiders are brought into the process with the aim of transforming structures and changing power relations.

A shared problem is defined as one that “affects diverse stakeholders, cannot be solved by single organisations likely to demand extensive collaboration; it resists short-term piecemeal solution” (Crosby & Bryson 2005:22). In this respect, shared power arrangements should include partnerships, coalitions and collaborations. The work of leadership requires an understanding of social, political and economic contexts to identify opportunities and potential for possible changes in which shared arrangements take place. Many aspects of human, social, political and economic systems are not about an “alien race on an alien planet” (2005:39) and, as such, specific practices taken for granted in one context may not enjoy the same appreciation in another context. This an issue of importance in cross-cultural planning research. For instance, the market economy is taken for granted in the USA, while informal economic activities might be the dominant tradition in another context. Therefore, to tackle major social problem such as planning, differences in
systems across contexts cannot be ignored. According to Crosby and Bryson (2005:44), leaders in a particular context should also "seek insights from history, trends, analysis, personal experiences, and cultural anthropology"; the authors thereby emphasise the understanding of culture as a series of shared assumptions about reality and truth, time, space and human nature, which across contexts could form different worldviews (Crosby & Bryson 2005). In cross-cultural planning research, understanding cultural differences may be helpful because a society’s worldview affects what kind of change is valued.

**Learning-by-Doing Generates Local Knowledge**

Learning about collaborative planning by practising it at community level is integral to the model of collaborative planning. In an Egyptian context, this was undertaken in Zifta City through the Zifta Demonstration Project. Through interaction, people find values; share information; discuss situations, aspirations and needs; explore ideas; and help each other in solving problems. Lave and Wenger (1991) address this process through the notion of ‘community of practice’. Community practice however is not a new phenomena – it has been evident probably since the beginning of humanity when people lived in caves and gathered around the fire to discuss their strategies for surviving. It is known that in ancient Rome, various categories of craftsmen combined their social interactions with business functions, and that this continued in the Middle Ages in Europe where guilds fulfilled similar roles for artisans. During the Industrial Revolution, guilds lost their influence but communities of practice remained visible in every aspect of daily life at work, at school, at home and through hobbies (Wenger 1998). Wenger sees learning as being grounded in structured social interactions supported by an infrastructure of learning modes – e.g., mutual engagement: through people involving and establishing mutual relationships; alignment: as facilitated by shared values and procedures and rules; and imagination: which facilitates orientation, reflection and exploration. These aspects of learning are of particular value to collaborative planning it is from these notions that a localisation of planning knowledge that reflects the Egyptian context becomes possible.

Healey (2006) argues that theory should be developed in the context of practice and that emphasis should be placed on the particularities of a situation. In arguing that the practice of collaborative planning must be combined with learning, Healey makes use of Schön’s (1983) model for developing the capacity for critical reflexivity – the ‘reflective practitioner’. Schön argues in favour of a social learning tradition, recognising that knowledge is produced through social interaction. This represents a shift towards epistemological criticism that challenges the separation of facts and values and stands against the dominance of the instrumental rationalist and positivist social science. Consensus about values, in the collaborative model, is to be discovered by group members through reflective interaction. This requires processes that are able to frame the stakeholders’ efforts in a public sphere with complex power relations. Schön identifies two dimensions of such learning: the first is single-loop learning, through which people improve the task within given parameters; and the second is double-loop learning, through which people improve the task and re-set the parameters for subsequent actions. By engaging in double-loop learning, problems, objectives, facts and values emerge from the process as social learning, rather than being discovered through objective scientific inquiry (1983).
The interactive process involves interplay between social classes, the State and the community, and formal and informal institutions, with the emphasis on different conceptions shaped according to culturally framed systems of meaning. The notion of a social construction of reality rejects the generalisation of knowledge across contexts, thus knowledge represents a worldview that is situated in place and time in the context of a particular community. During an interactive process, knowledge, arguments and ideas – which are filtered through cultural frames of references and communicated through a dialogue – play a vital role in working out strategies of common interests. In a collaborative planning approach, facts and cultural values are expressed through different modes of thought. This, according to Healey (2006:38), represents a “shift from a materialist to a phenomenological understanding of the nature of being (ontology) and the nature of knowing (epistemology)”. Interaction and the forging of social links between diverse cultural groups are carried out in many ways during the planning process. The creation of social and intellectual capital is an important outcome of such interactions. According to Healey (2006:71), spatial planning efforts should be judged by “the qualities of process, whether they build up relations between stakeholders in urban region space, and whether the relations enable trust and understanding to flow among the stakeholders and generate sufficient support for policies and strategies to enable these to be relevant to the material opportunities available and the cultural values of those involved, and have the capacity to endure over time.”

Appreciative Inquiry

In practising collaborative planning in the Egyptian context, the appreciative inquiry approach was employed in order to promote positive change by focusing on experiences of success drawn from the past. This approach emphasises consideration of local capacity, local assets and social networks and draws attention to the positive aspects of a situation, enhancing individuals’ and organisations’ relationships so as to create a desired future. It is known that most experts working in international organisations or as officials in local government seek solutions to the retarded development in many parts of the developing world by following a path that starts with focusing on a community’s needs, problems and deficiencies (Cooperrider & Witney 2005; Ludema 2001; Ludema, Wilmot & Srivastva 1997). From the fieldwork of this study, another path to be examined is driven by what is called an appreciative inquiry approach that emphasises a clear commitment to discovering Zifta’s assets and capacity at the beginning of the process, a move which provided the direction that guided the formulation of the Zifta Strategic Plan. The process acknowledged and embraced the strongly rooted socio-economic and cultural traditions of Zifta’s institutional structures, which provided valuable resources for inspiration to internalise the collaborative planning in the new context.

The problem-solving mental model, which is commonly used by most of the international organisations, draws attention to the current situation and is presented as the only guide available to poor communities. The problem-driven approach has several negative effects. Firstly, it fosters a leadership that denigrates the community and plays up the severity of problems as a means to attract resources. A good leader, for instance, will under such a view be judged by the quantity of resources they are able to attract, not how self-reliant the community has become. Secondly, the local people begin to rely on external institutions rather than on groups from their own community, which reinforces the notion that only experts can provide help and weakens local citizens’ interrelationships. Thirdly, funds are made available on the basis of categories of need rather than for integrated approaches, which leads to a much-fragmented effort that does not
result in integrated development (Mathie & Cunningham 2002). An appreciative inquiry, in contrast, which considers reality to be socially constructed and sees communication as the vehicle for reinforcing the shared meaning attributed to this reality, is an anchor for asset-based community development. In Elliott’s (1999:12) words, as a practitioner of appreciative inquiry:

“What the appreciative approach seeks to achieve is the transformation of a culture from one that sees itself in largely negative terms – and therefore is inclined to become mocked in its own negative construction of itself – to one that sees itself as having within it the capacity to enrich and enhance the quality of life of all its stakeholders – and therefore move towards this appreciative construction of itself.”

**Rules of Communication – Habermasian Ideas**

When Healey developed her thoughts, she reflected on the conflict between modernity and post-modernity and understood this conflict to represent a shift in the intellectual roots from scientific rationalism to a phenomenological and interpretative approach. In her attempt to formulate a theoretical framework for a planning approach that is adapted to those significant changes, she was inspired by critical theory as an alternative to instrumental rationality. Her problem was to find an exit from the crisis in planning theory that dominated the 1980s by developing an alternative planning theory that enabled the interrelation of diverse concerns; learning new ways of thinking and thereby constructing new types of knowledge were legitimate and relevant. This necessitated a new type of rationality to legitimise this knowledge. One of the major theoretical strands that Healey grounded her collaborative planning approach on for that purpose was Jurgen Habermas’ (1987) theory of communicative action, which comes from the German tradition of critical social theory. Healey found Habermas’ thoughts helpful in meeting her concerns about the management of co-existence in shared spaces in a diverse society. Addressing these issues required her to deal with potential conflicts that were generated not just at the level of individuals or groups but also at the level of the dominant power structures, which might well be biased toward maintaining the dominance of the existing economic order, promoting certain lifestyles choices, or even organising governance through the control of state entities. Therefore, she found that Habermas’ thoughts provided the underlying principles for collaborative planning through a normative philosophy for the reconstitution of the public realm based on a conception of inter-subjective consciousness and the continual interplay of the lifeworld and the system world (Healey 2006; Harris 2002).

The idea of the ‘lifeworld’ is introduced by Habermas (1987) as a step away from the subjectivist biases of modern social theory and as an essential complement to the concept of communicative action. Habermas distinguishes the concept of the lifeworld, which refers to the daily life of personal experience from that of the ‘system world’, which identifies the economic and political structures that constrain daily life. This presents a distinction between two fundamentally different ways of approaching the study of society. Habermas considers that the theory of science is two-sided, by which he considers society to be a system that has to underwrite the conditions of maintaining the socio-cultural lifeworlds. Both system world and lifeworld are interconnected. The system world – which aims at enhancing the capacity of society to steer itself – must be anchored in the lifeworld. He adds that the failure of capitalist modernisation is the decoupling of system world and lifeworld. He argues for the re-coupling of system and lifeworld as a necessary condition for institutionalisation of a new mechanism of social integration in the purposive-
rational system. This can be done by a reconstitution of the public realm characterised by world systems that are more sensitive to our lifeworlds. In a traditional society, there is an interlocking of system world and lifeworld through institutions that are linked to social integration - for instance, the circulation of assets via marriage relations, or the reciprocity of services embedded within the normative requirements of social roles. Habermas argues that in the course of social evolution this interlocking of system and social integration has gradually been weakened in order to serve the institutionalised organisations of the modern State (Habermas 1987).

Habermas (1987:119-123) argues that in the process of communication, participants correlate their mutual understanding to their interpretations, their standpoints, and their critical view of the validity claims. This provides an opportunity for learning progress recapitulated from the perspective of participants. Habermas sees that through the form of language and culture the actors are supplied with a reservoir of implicit knowledge which provides a particular segment of the lifeworld relevant to defining a given action situation. This process of reaching understanding takes place alongside the participants’ pre-understanding of their embedded culture to the extent that each new definition of a situation is negotiated among the participants themselves to interpret each others’ views with reference to an identified segment of the lifeworld. Apparently, the interpretation of other’s views doesn’t necessarily lead to stability and absence of ambiguity; actually, it leads more often to divergent situation definitions. Thus, Habermas emphasises that communicative action is not exhausted by the act of reaching understanding. The concept rather addresses the types and mechanisms of interactions that are coordinated via speech acts and does not necessarily coincide with them. It is not a matter of agreed or disagreed upon positions, but rather the conditions for a communicative action that makes what is said clearly understood.

Healey (2006) acknowledges the critics of Habermas’ notion of achieving consensus in situations of cultural diversity. Therefore, Healey argues for a combination between Giddens’ (1984) structuration and Habermas’ (1987) theories by stating that: “the contribution of Giddens and Habermas, the one emphasising active agency in the power of structures, and the other focusing attention on the processes of collective dialogue and how to confront the distortion of dialogue by the powerful, highlight both the cultural boundedness of ways of thinking and acting, and the possibilities for learning, for development, and for transformative action” (Healey 2006:51). She realises that the collaborative planning model appears to risk being unable to reconcile the demands imposed by communicative planning theory with the accomplishment of collaborative forms of planning in practice. Those who choose to apply collaborative planning combine Habermasian communication rationality with a Foucauldian awareness of power (Allmendinger & Tewdwr-Jones 2002:57-8). While this study focuses on the process of transferring the collaborative planning model to a new context in which this model has primarily an instrumental role, the issue of power relations is also touched upon in several instances. In addition to specific measures taken during the implementation of the planning process in Zifta to ensure accurate representation of different interest groups and the incorporation of cultural values, the model goes beyond the planning event to emphasise self-sufficient development.

Consensus Building

Inspired by Habermas’ thoughts on the rules of communication, Healey (2006) develops a new practice in planning that challenges traditional technocratic governance where experts are
separated from other stakeholders. She argues for an effective process for collaboration that enables consensus building in problem solving and strategy formulation. Collaborative planning advocates ways of addressing interest groups’ conflicts on the basis of principles of conflict mediation and consensus building. This assumes that collaborative discussion between stakeholders sharing common concerns will provide an opportunity for people to learn about each other and their different standpoints. Through such a process, they should come to learn about possible ways of sharing views, values and concerns. This requires an ability to reflect on participation in consensus-building activities, and ask questions such as: “Who is involved?” “Who should be involved?” and “Who may be left out?” Additionally, this practice should build an institutional capacity for collaboration and coordination so as to collectively address shared problems (Innes 1994; Healey 2006).

Once a consensus is established, Healey (2006) points out the need to formalise and maintain it. Ensuring the existence of means of appeal that protect the right to challenge the consensus can do this. The legal institutions might provide such a possibility. In a collaborative process, alternative principles can be adopted so as to define specific means of appeal quite early in the process. It is important to make clear to the participants that an effective consensus building should acknowledge the rights of stakeholders to challenge the consensus and set the conditions of such rights.

In planning practice, consensus building has been criticised because it appears unrealistic in a world of diversity and conflicts where power relations play a central role in the decision-making process. Thus consensus building could be regarded as a superficial mask and a craft of cosmetic conflict suspension (Allmendinger 2002a; Huxley 2000; Harris 2002). Healey (2006) admits that consensus building by itself is not enough to confront the power of traditional economic and political bastions. She argues that the power of discourse needs to be supported by the power of law. She relies on the existence of robust ‘rights and duties’ mechanisms in order to force all stakeholders to take account of issues of conflicts. In the second edition of her book Collaborative Planning (2006), Healey acknowledges that she placed too much emphasis on the role and capacity of collaborative planning to reach consensus when she developed her planning approach in the 1990s. But she claims that she did not mean a consensus that eliminated conflicts or neutralised power relations. She clarifies that what she had in mind regarding building consensus, describing it as a “kind of shared appreciation of the parameters of a problem situation, the values and ways of understanding at stake, the distributive consequences and how to address them, and a recognition that decisions reached were legitimately arrived at, at least by those involved in collaborative processes” (2006:320). Healey makes it clear that collaborative policy making is not a simple recipe, but is an intellectual and practical site of contestation and struggle. She emphasises the continuation of the argument between those who advocate an inclusive approach to the governance of collective concerns about co-existence in shared space and those who advocate rationalist and corporatist ways.

The criticism of collaborative planning, which is posed mostly in relation to communicative action rationality and consensus building, motivated me to not limit the review to the core concepts of collaborative planning, but to review its theoretical underpinnings as well in order to recall the fundamental thoughts of communicative action. In undertaking such a task, I find the lifeworld to be an essential complement to the concept of communicative action, which forms the contextual markers for processes of communication. The incorporation of contextual values
in the planning process that are inspired by Zifta’s society may help in defining a set of references that ensure quality of interaction and legitimise communicative action through a situational definition of the lifeworld. Because the social values in Zifta constitute a blend of cultural and religious ideas, I refer to Habermas’ recent reflection on the role of religion in communicative action.

**The Role of Religion – A Recent Reflection from Habermas**

In attempting to make use of Egyptian social values – values that contribute to the society’s institutional structure and that constitute a blend of cultural and religious ideas – I found Habermas’ (2010) recent consideration of the role of religion in social development interesting. He says that in a post-secular age, reason needs to include reflection on religion. Religion plays an essential role in many societies and has the potential for shaping cultural life in different ways. It shapes attitudes and currently is an important aspect of public discourse and political process. According to Habermas, religion represents an important factor that merits consideration when discussing social development in different parts of the world.

In his book *Faith and Knowledge* (2003), Habermas discusses the faith in reason in relation to Weber’s definition of modernity. Rationality or, more precisely, purposive means/ends rationality forms the basis for the definition of modernity. In turn, modernity has shaped the world in the service of human interests. The objectification of the world has led to the instrumental, purposive and rational pursuit of interests. According to Habermas, instrumental reasoning has resulted in the domination of impersonal economic forces, and bureaucratic administrations that determine people’s lifestyles. While the aim of the Enlightenment was to release people from religious dogmas, it has turned out to be an iron cage in which the people are condemned to live (Habermas 2003).

Until the 1990s, Habermas paid little attention to religion. His work on the theory of communicative action had been influenced by secularisation. According to Habermas (1987:77) “the socially integrative and expressive functions that were at first fulfilled by ritual practice pass over to communicative action; the authority of the holy is gradually replaced by the authority of an achieved consensus.” In this sense, the communicative action is free from sacredly protected normative aspects. In his recent publication, Habermas (2010) recognises that secular reason lacks what he calls “self-awareness”. He recalls the importance of religion to modern societies, which build upon ideas that in many cases have developed out of religious convictions (Habermas 2010:6).

Habermas addresses the topic of religion explicitly by considering the relation between the basic assumptions in his own social theory. He acknowledges that the secularisation hypothesis has now lost its explanatory power; and it stands in a reciprocal and constructive coexistence with religion, especially in addressing social questions (2003). He thinks that religions have proved to be an important resource to justify moral questions, providing an ethical basis for public discourse (Habermas 2010).

Religion is an important source of motivation for citizens to participate in the collaborative processes; the collaborative process requires that religious and secular citizens demonstrate willingness to learn from each other and translate arguments from their respective perspectives. However, Habermas’ desire to include religious communities is subject to the acknowledgement
of all religious communities of certain demands. As such, he says: “the religious side must accept the authority of ‘natural’ reason as the fallible results of the institutionalised sciences and the basic principles of universalistic egalitarianism in law and morality” (Habermas 2010:32). Habermas argues that a similar complementary learning process might also be required of the secular side, whereby secular citizens must put aside their reservations about religious people in order to balance shared citizenship and mutual recognition of cultural differences.

**Understanding the Social System – Giddens’ Theory**

For an analytical understanding of social system mechanisms, Healey refers to Giddens’ (1984) theory of structuration to understand the institutional specificities and to interpret individual ways of being in the context of constraints. From Healey’s (2006) perspective, the structuration theory provides planners with an insight into the particular historical, cultural and geographical relations that bind the structure of a society. Healey emphasises the relevance of Giddens’ work by acknowledging that “planners not only bring power relations into being as Foucault describes. For Giddens, they also have the choice to change them. Thus the practice of planning, even in the details, involves delicate day-to-day choices about whether to follow the rules, or whether to change them, to transform the structure” (2006:47).

Structuration theory holds that people are embedded within structures in which the inherited pasts are active forces and carry power relations that form the rules of behaviour and drive the material resources. Thus to study a social system is to study the application of generative rules, as power that enables or constrains action and resources. Giddens distinguishes between system and structure, considering system to be the stable patterns of production and reproduction. While structure means rules and resources used by agents in the production of interaction, it is also thereby reproduced through such interaction.

Giddens re-examined the works of Marx, Durkheim and Weber in order to remove the dominance of functionalism and argue that social practice is “neither the experience of the individual actors, nor the existence of any form of societal totality, but social practices ordered across space and time” (1984:2). The social system in Zifta – in terms of, for instance, conditions and consequences of what actors do in their day-to-day life, the reproduction of institutionalised practices and the contestualities of interaction – was, in this study, explored across space and time. As such, the research considered both social practice (in space) and the common concerns of Egyptian society as examined from the perspective of its thinkers and philosophers over a certain historical period.

**Building Capacity for Institutional Change**

Healey defines an institutional context as: “ways of seeing and knowing the world, and ways of acting in it,” going on to say that these “are understood as constituted in social relations with others, and, through these relations, as embedded in particular social contexts. Through the particular geographies and histories of these contexts, attitudes and values are framed” (2006:55). She elaborates further that collaborative planning efforts involve attention to two levels of institutional design:

1. ‘Soft infrastructure’ represents the informal institutions built through relational networks and mutual learning to develop social, intellectual and political capital that promote knowledge and competence among the diverse social relationships. Paying attention to soft infrastructure constitutes a kind of institutional audit of “how we do things here just now” (Healey 2006:269). This includes consideration of social relations and their influence on the structures of power;
and taking inventory of habits, values, notions of legitimate reasoning, terms of communication, interactions and ways of governances. This is the terrain of planning practices.

2. ‘Hard infrastructure’ represents the formal institutions embedded in the abstract systems of the current governance. It constrains and modifies through the regulatory frameworks of the dominant centres of power; it is the rules and resources of policy systems; it is the power of the traditional economic and political bastions; and broadly it is the political and policy arenas. Healey draws attention to hard infrastructures because consensus building by itself is not enough to confront the power of traditional economic and political structure. This is the terrain of planning systems.

The key challenges of collaborative practice lie in the combination of the design of hard and soft infrastructure. To meet this challenge, Healey (2006) argues that while “there are no standard answers to the specification of the systematic institutional design of governance systems for inclusionary participatory democratic practice” (2006:294), it is universally advisable to ensure that the design of the hard infrastructure creates a “structure of challenges” (2006:200) to modify the dominant centres of power. Further, this should be combined with soft infrastructure that is locally designed and collaborative.

In addition to positioning Giddens’ ideas at the heart of the institutionalist conception of social life in Healey model, I draw on additional institutionalist in defining the institutional design. I consider the work of Ostrom in defining institutions broadly as, “prescriptions that humans use to organise all forms of repetitive and structured interactions including within families, neighbourhoods, markets, firms, sports leagues, churches, private associations and governments at all scales” (2005:3). To analyse how institutional change can take place when practising collaborative planning in Zifta, I refer to Ostrom’s (2005) Institutional Analysis and Development Framework. Ostrom states that whenever one addresses questions about institutional change, it is necessary to recognise that “changes in the rules used to order action at one level occur within a currently ‘fixed’ set of rules at a deeper level” (2005:58), adding that, “changes in deeper-level rules usually are more difficult and more costly to accomplish” (2005:58). In her framework – which I use to analyse institutional changes in the Zifta project as presented in Chapter IX – she distinguishes three of levels of rules that cumulatively affect the actions taken and outcomes obtained in any setting:

1) “Operational rules: directly affect day-to-day decisions made by the participant in any setting and affect the world directly. These can change relatively rapidly.

2) Collective-choice rules: taken by decision makers to affect operational activities and results through their effects in determining who is eligible to be a participant and the specific rules to be used in changing operational rules. These change at a much slower pace.

3) Constitutional-choice rules: where decision makers determine rules that impact collective-choice activities by determining who is eligible to be a participant and the rules to be used in crafting the set of collective-choice rules that, in turn, affect the set of operational rules” (Ostrom 2005:58).

The outcomes of institutional change are affected not only by rules that create incentives or constraints for certain actions, but also by: attributes of the physical world wherein individuals – including participants in positions to decide in the light of information and linked to potential outcome of cost and benefits – interact; and attributes of the community and interactions with
other individuals – including generally accepted norms and behaviour and the level of common understanding about action arenas and preferences – (Ostrom 2005).

Ostrom (2005:63) stresses that the costs of shifting levels of decision may vary dramatically from one setting to another. In some political systems, shifting levels of decision entails high transaction costs; therefore, the only way available for the participants is by developing de facto rules outside the formal channels, as this may be less costly than trying to use the formal channels available to them. She highlights that in some settings, shifting levels may be accomplished at a low cost (for instance, if the same individuals are involved at constitutional, collective-choice and operational levels).

**The Role of the Planner**

The role of the planner in collaborative planning is that of facilitator as well as participant in processes involving other stakeholders. Planners have to combine an understanding of both processes of collaborative planning practice as well as governance systems. They have to relate knowledge about particular planning issues to the social context of the governance relations of the community they serve. This entails an ethical challenge that planners should meet by defining a clear boundary between what they know and how their knowledge is used. In doing so, the planners become knowledgeable mediators and derive solutions from an understanding of the dynamics of the governance situation and the resources of local knowledge (Healey 2006).

Communication skills are important for a skilled planner. Planning practice is “structured by a framework of rules and the patterns of resource allocation. But how these are realised depends on the ways in which opportunities and constrains are perceived, debated and confronted in daily practice” (Hillier & Healey 2008:87). For this purpose, Healey calls for a new role for planners, in order to “engage with understanding of the social processes through which concerns about spaces, place and biosphere are generated, and with the political processes, or processes of governance, through which societies develop ways of managing their common affairs” (2006:4). She considers that the planner can play a key role in helping the political communities of a place in managing their collective affairs regarding the qualities of shared spaces. This study traced the challenges facing Egyptian planners, by practising collaborative planning in the city of Zifta in which those planners are involved.

**Conclusion**

Collaborative planning was developed to overcome the decline of rational planning theory and to address a global economic interest in social quality and environmental concerns. Understanding collaborative planning in its original context (as it was developed by Patsy Healey) is an important step towards practising that knowledge in a new context. In this overview, the core ideas of collaborative planning, and their theoretical principles, are identified. Such core ideas were taken into consideration both in practising this model in the context of the Zifta Demonstration Project, and in the analysis of the Zifta project as a case study within this research. In order to examine the relevance of collaborative planning to an Egyptian context, an overview of the planning thinking and contemporary urban conditions of Egyptian cities was undertaken. This review is presented in the next chapter.
PART TWO

TRANSFER AND PRACTICE OF COLLABORATIVE PLANNING IN A NEW CONTEXT
V – EVOLUTION OF PLANNING THINKING IN EGYPT

This chapter presents an historical overview of the evolution of planning thinking in the Egyptian context. This overview is undertaken in relation to specific episodes that have influenced the planning policies applied in Egypt. The overview summarises the period between the first step in modernising Egypt (taken by Muhammad Ali) and the present. The accumulated urban conditions can be read as resulting from the different development doctrines applied through history. The overview contributes to the frame of references for the epistemic standpoints that inform notions of planning as knowledge that is appropriate to the Egyptian context. The chapter also describes the role of planning as a means to achieve the development of Egyptian society. The contemporary formal planning system is also evaluated and the challenges that face planning in Egypt are examined.

Historical Overview of Planning Thinking in Egypt

The current urban development conditions in Egyptian cities are a result of the salient aspects of the country’s development history since the 19th century. Our perception of Egyptian planning within the urban domain will be distorted if we fail to recognise specific periods of historical change in Egypt. Whilst the evolution of urban planning and its impact are not uniform throughout Egypt – differences, for instance, are apparent between urban and rural areas, as well as between major and minor cities – there are sufficient similarities among the major Egyptian cities to provide us with some opportunity for generalisation. This section illustrates the sequence of successive doctrines of development that have been applied to planning and policy making and presents their impact on the urban domain. I have identified three significant periods in Egyptian history when significant changes occurred and accumulated to form the current condition of Egyptian cities. These changes coincided with the evolution of Egyptian planning thinking. Table 1 summarises the historical overview of planning thinking and policy applied in Egypt.

The first period (1805-1882), is associated with the influence of Muhammad Ali who came to power in Egypt during the Ottoman Empire following the end of the French Campaign in Egypt (1798-1801). The development doctrine during this period was characterised by the modernisation of Egypt along the lines of European cities. Muhammad Ali was inspired by the utopian ideals of development introduced by Saint-Simon and his followers, who spent some years in Egypt during the 1830s (Hourani 1983). Freidman (1987:51) has described Saint-Simon as the “father of scientific planning”, in the sense that his ideas about planning were based on scientific observation and measurement. The followers of Saint-Simon worked in Egypt as doctors, teachers and engineers, and helped Muhammad Ali to develop his vision of a dynamic Egyptian society by exploiting resources rationally and managing socio-economic development with the help of laws and policy reforms. During this period, Egypt was opened up more widely than before to European travellers, residents, traders, and missionaries. This led to the growth of a new class of urban citizens with first-hand knowledge of European life, citizens who were able to influence urban development (by, for instance, acquiring monopolies over land and crop production) (Hourani et al. 2004). However, Muhammad Ali and his successors met with many difficulties in implementing the plan, and ultimately the financial costs of the development paved
the way to extending European influence and leading to the occupation of Egypt by the British in 1882 (Hourani et al. 2004; Abdelhamid 1987).

The second period (1882-1907) coincides with the occupation of Egypt by Great Britain between 1882 and the beginning of the 20th century. The colonial development doctrine of this period emphasised dualism and social segregation against the interests of the majority of Egyptians. Economic activity was planned to focus on the production of cash crops such as cotton for the British market, as well as the import of British consumer goods. The colonial rulers expressed no motivation to improve the education system and, as such, the development of the education system initiated during Muhammad Ali’s period almost collapsed (Abdelhamid 1987). The requirement to exercise military control led to the streets in Cairo and other major cities being widened to facilitate the deployment of troops to suppress any public disorder or uprising. This was also achieved through demolition of indigenous quarters. Social segregation was evident and European residential quarters were often surrounded by gardens, cultural facilities like opera houses, schools for European children, and exclusive shops. Many Egyptian immigrants from rural areas lived in slums or in overcrowded housing in the old parts of cities, which suffered from deteriorating infrastructure and a lack of basic services (Sherif 2002).

The third period (1952-1970) is known for the struggle of Egyptians for their independence. This was associated with the awakening of Arab Nationalism, which eventually lead to Nasser’s revolution of 1952. Nasser’s doctrine of development influenced by nationalism and communist ideas was driven by a vision that is based on three main pillars: self-reliance, industrial growth and social welfare. Planning for this vision was undertaken centrally through a five-year economic plan. During this period industrial activities owned by the government were established, large-scale infrastructure was built, a free education system was provided equally to all people and, in addition, land owned by wealthy landlords was redistributed to the ‘fallabin’ (rural peasantry) (Abdelhamid 1984). President Nasser’s policy, which reflected the main objective of the revolution, aimed at: “establishing agricultural co-operatives, improving social conditions in the villages, and diverting both foreign and Egyptian capital from investment in land and building into investment in industry” (Hourani 1983:358). In this respect, the communist ideology originating from the wide class differences that in turn arose from the effects of colonialism on society dominated his thinking. Egypt’s struggles for independence were exacerbated by the World Bank’s preconditions for financing development projects, particularly the building of a large dam on the Nile. During this period, several wars took place that put a stop to Nasser’s plans to develop the Egyptian economy and society (Rodenbeck 1999; Botman 1988).

‘Infitah’ Policy Dominated Planning Thinking since the 1970

Following the death of President Nasser, the new president Anwar Sadat started the ‘de-Nasserisation’ of Egypt and which led to dramatic changes in the country’s social economic and political conditions. While the social welfare program was kept in place during this period, instead of being based on economic self-reliance and local resources as it had under Nasser, the economy shifted towards a dependence on aid, migrant remittances, oil and Suez Canal revenues which were insufficient in relation to expenditures. The consequent increase in external debt led to cutbacks in public expenditures including the social welfare system (Harrigan & El-Said 2009).
Sadat’s doctrine of development was characterised by economic policies, called ‘infitah’, aimed at liberalising the economy and attracting foreign investment (Botman 1988). He welcomed foreign investments and tourism. Private investment in the construction of luxurious buildings and hotels boomed. Sadat’s policies faced many problems including those of rapid urbanisation as Cairo’s rapid growth in population expanded it into a mega city and the country experienced a simultaneous expansion of illegal urban settlements and a deterioration of agricultural land resources due to the development of arable land. Sadat proposed the redistribution of population from cities through the construction of new towns. The planning of new towns was, in particular, intended to relieve pressures on Cairo and improve the urban environment and living conditions of the poor. The new towns policy remained dominant throughout the period as a means of solving social problems. Due to the construction boom and population growth, public services such as sewage and roads became overwhelmed; cities became more polluted and the infrastructure in general could not cope. State services lacked policies and, following the advice of the World Bank and IMF, they were privatised. The new cities were designed as modern settlements and the implementation of planning was handed over to the private sector; the poor were excluded from these ‘new gated communities’ (Rodenbeck 1999). These actions saw the creation of a traffic problem resulting from the road network that was built to connect the new towns with the centre of Cairo. This is an unresolved problem, the solution to which continues to be debated. Greater Cairo suffers from congestion to the extent that it is almost impossible to identify a rush hour because traffic-jams exist throughout the metropolis from early morning to late evening (El-Araby 2002, and my personal experience).

This period was characterised by the act of opening the door to massive amounts of foreign aid, through which Egypt experienced an inward transfer of knowledge in different disciplines. The wide range of international technical assistance included e.g., economic development, national administration, urban and regional planning and housing management, with the application of different ideas through development models. According to several authors, the motives behind the development project aid and the donations were political with the aim of consolidating the divorce of Egypt from Russia and cementing peace with Israel; economic to promote American trade and developmental. However, the dominance of the first two objectives led to a distortion in the prioritisation of the country’s development and an increase in its dependency on foreign aid (Zetter & Hamza 1997). Following the assassination of Sadat in 1981, Hosni Mubarak continued the same path of development doctrine, favouring the free market and liberal economy with intensive privatisation programs. Development was carried out with little attention to the social, institutional, cultural and historical conditions of the country. Under increasing pressure for democratic reform, the authoritarian regime in Egypt made cautious political reforms towards democracy to the extent that it did not threaten the strategic stability of the regime, such measures reflecting both national and international concerns (Dunne, Hamzawy & Brown, 2007). Mubarak initially introduced legislation to allow limited participation for the Egyptian political parties. From a planning perspective, the internationally funded projects have promoted public participation in development aid projects. This has to lead to increasing awareness in the GOPP, the central department of planning in Egypt, of the role of stakeholders (Khalifa & Connelly 2009) and participation has been encouraged officially in ‘non-political’ areas such as town planning (Shahin 2005).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key period</th>
<th>Key event</th>
<th>Imported planning ideas</th>
<th>State policy</th>
<th>Urban planning thinking</th>
<th>Urban domain – accumulation of the impact of planning ideas</th>
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<tr>
<td>1805-1866</td>
<td>Muhammad Ali and his successors – Ottoman Empire</td>
<td>Disorder following Bonaparte’s occupation of Egypt First transfer of western ideas by Ottoman rulers Saint Simon ideas on ‘universal scientistic faith’ Spread of industrial system required expanding markets</td>
<td>Modernisation along European lines Policy reform and weakening of Islam’s role in the society and with decision makers Students sent to Europe for education Welcoming of European travellers &amp; missionaries High financial costs led to borrowing from Europe for development Plan implementation Bankruptcy led to occupation of Egypt</td>
<td>Development doctrine: ‘modernisation’ Engineering knowledge for better world Planning for exploiting resources Administrative reform to decrease al-Azhar influence on decision makers Liberalisation of Islamic laws and administration Establishing of dual economic system with Europe Development of educational system</td>
<td>Large scale infrastructure system for agricultural production Increased exports Growth of new social class with first-hand knowledge of European life Monopoly of land and crop production Cities planned in line with European models Increased taxes on farmers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1882-1907</td>
<td>British occupation</td>
<td>Colonialism Extract local resources Expand local markets for consumers of British goods Military control No motivation for local learning</td>
<td>Control of labour and administration for the maximisation of agricultural production No motivation for developing education Extract resources Create conflicts to keep control of indigenous people Emphasis on social class Domination of specific business enterprises by elites and foreigners Exclusion of indigenous people from the modern private sector</td>
<td>Development doctrine emphasised ‘dualism &amp; social segregation’ Re-making cities in European styles Control rural/urban migration Less attention to original urban fabric Introduce of ‘yorkie city’ model for elites Deterioration of indigenous quarters Expansion of crop production and irrigation system Deliberate deterioration in the education system Modern private sector limited to elites</td>
<td>Poverty; illiteracy; elite class; political conflicts among local parties Extensive agricultural production for export to Britain Local consumption of British goods Collapse of education system New Europeans quarters enforced social segregation Overcrowded houses in the old city and slums in the surroundings Lack opportunities for Egyptians to learn</td>
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<td>1952-1967</td>
<td>Revolution</td>
<td>Communist ideas International political pressure to replace communism with capitalism Policy reform</td>
<td>Nationalism within Egypt and the Arab Region Less development policy favouring investment in armies due to international political pressure on Nasser Regime Wars led to half of Nasser’s plan Response to the World Bank and IMF conditions</td>
<td>Development doctrines driven by vision: ‘self-reliance, industrial growth and social welfare’ Planning for industrial development Housing subsidies Free education system Struggle for independence Decrease in economic development Military investment favoured Decline in welfare service provision</td>
<td>Public industries &amp; large-scale infrastructure Free education system to all people Redistribution of land to the majority of ‘fallahin’ Less interest in agriculture Urbanisation Wars led to population displacement and expansions of slums</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970-1980</td>
<td>Political aid programs to promote the process of eradication from communism, favouring capitalist policy and ideas World Bank &amp; IMF policies lead to structural adjustments ‘De-Nazification’ &amp; structural adjustment ‘Initial policy’ to facilitate foreign investments Cut-backs in public expenditures Inflation punished workers and enriched investors Economic dependence on Foreign Aid, migrant remittances; oil and Suez Canal revenue Inadequate policy to address the challenges of rapid urban changes</td>
<td>Development doctrine: ‘liberalise the economy’ Planning to attract private investment Massive aid programs and technical assistance Privatisation of industrial public sectors Modern cities handed to private sector to build luxurious houses Poor excluded from the ‘new communities’ Upgrading of slums International development agencies promote fashionable and fragmented development ‘ideas’, Including occasionally participatory planning</td>
<td>New round of social segregation Rapid urbanisation Increase in gap between rich and poor Gated communities for rich people Increase of trade deficit Mega city; pollution and deterioration in infrastructure and basic services Expansion of slums as belt of poverty round cities providing alternative housing for poor Growth of faith-based welfare system to fill the gap left by the government</td>
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**Table 1 – An overview of planning thinking and policy in Egypt**

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<th>Transfer of foreign planning ideas</th>
<th>Accumulated results of the direct application of foreign planning ideas</th>
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Urban Conditions in the Egyptian Cities

Egypt’s cities are the product of the planning approaches adopted by the rulers of Egypt throughout history. They reflect the different doctrines of development that have been characterised by powerful social contradictions and inequalities, with highly centralised authority and modern planning. The heart of the planning policy applied during Sadat’s and Mubarak’s regimes centred on a full shift to the private sector and a market-driven economy – a sharp contrast to the welfare planning policy of social justice and public ownership established during Nasser’s period (Zetter & Hamza 1997). The economic liberalisation and structural adjustment have favoured speculation, which has led to accelerated wealth creation amongst property owners and has reinforced the social gaps and inequalities between rich and poor. Simultaneously, the policy reform and structural adjustments have contributed to the reduction of public spending on basic needs and products (Denis 1996), which led to the increased poverty rate (Sabry 2009). This policy has led to the increase of Egypt’s trade deficit and a rise in the country’s debt to about US$30 billion in 2010. In terms of importing foodstuffs, the country depends heavily on the USA and Russia for imports of wheat (CIA 2011). Further expansion of informal settlements on the periphery of Cairo and other cities was the major result that manifested from the application of the policies of the “Infitah” period (Denis 1996; El-Batran & Arandel 1998; Bayat & Denis 2000).

People have had to solve their housing problem through the construction of illegal housing in the older quarters of the cities or on the perimeter. These informal settlements do not reflect any modern plan prepared by the government. In fact until recently, they were not even shown in the official maps. The informal settlements are relatively densely populated neighbourhoods, with residents ranging from very poor to middle-income groups including civil servants, highly educated people such as doctors, lawyers and business people as well as young unemployed university graduates. These neighbourhoods are not passive pockets of poverty; as more people gather in them; new activities are created which in turn attract more residents. These settlements thereby provide an alternative development solution to official formal planning (Denis 1996; Bayat & Denis 2000).

In addition to the doctrines of development that have guided planning policy in different historical periods in Egypt, both the non-democratic regimes and the political order that have dominated the country for decades have shaped the capabilities of the government to deal with the issues of development faced by Egyptian society. Egypt being a relatively ‘soft’ state means that it is both dominating and ineffective (Amin, G. 2009; Waterbury 1985). Thus, the State/society relationship in Egypt, as with any other authoritarian regime, functions in three ways: 1) by using indirect rule techniques to control society; 2) through effective clientism and personal rule to enhance subordination to the state; and 3) by avoiding the provocation of bottom-up opposition (Dorman 2007:21). This has resulted in a failure to foster an administratively competent state that is able to address the challenges of urban development faced by Egyptian cities.
The Contemporary Formal Planning System in Egypt

The government institutions of the planning system were not able to cope with the significant changes in the urban environment documented above (Körner 1995). According to Madbouly\(^5\) (2005:11-13), the current head of the General Organisation of Physical Planning (GOPP), several entities within different government ministries are involved in parallel in urban planning at the national and regional level, none of which have a clear mandate regarding their roles, responsibilities or coordination mechanisms. These institutions are:

- The GOPP and its seven regional centres, which exists within the Ministry of Housing, Utilities and Urban Communities (MHUUC). The GOPP is involved in preparing development plans at national, regional and local levels. The organisation has been responsible for refurbishing inhabited areas, the upgrading of slum areas, and planning for new development areas. It is also responsible for drawing up regional policies and strategies for urban and rural settlements. In connection to this task, the GOPP has the legal authority to produce, amend and legally approve the development plans of villages and cities. Since its establishment in 1973, the GOPP has prepared 86 master plans, 25 regional plans and numerous detailed development plans in collaboration with local authorities.

- The Ministry of Planning prepares sectoral development studies and, accordingly, financial plans that determine at a central level the five-year budget in all development sectors – e.g., the economy, public services, social development and infrastructure.

- The Ministry of Tourism prepares plans for tourism areas such as those in coastal zones.

- The Ministry of Agriculture exercises influences on urban planning because it is the legal authority that grants permission for urban development on agriculture land.

- The Governorate\(^6\) has the key power to intervene in the output of the plan but this is mostly dependent on the power of the Governor. Due to a lack of planning capacity at governorate level, the Governor commonly asks the GOPP to prepare plans. Under the governorate, there are several actors at the local level:

  - The Local Popular Council is the monitoring body at a local level in the executive authorities. This council is supposed to be a key actor in the planning process as it reflects the needs and demands of the citizens. It is mandatory that the plan is subject to the legal approval of the Local Popular Council; and the Council is required to monitor the implementation of the planned projects. Due to the centralisation of planning and financing procedures, the Popular Council seldom practises these roles (Serag & Verschure 2006).

  - The City Council represents the executive authorities through representing the lines of different sectoral ministries. Each ministry is represented by a unit within the city council, which follows the specific ministry regardless of the demands of Local Popular Councils. The role of the City Council is unclear when it comes to planning; this reflects, however,

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\(^5\) Madbouly M. became Head of the GOPP during the Sida/SIPU project (2007). He has advanced a policy aimed to improve local participation and decentralisation at GOPP since 2005. He is a member of the Political Committee of the National Party. This membership has provided him with certain power to lead such change.

\(^6\) Egypt is divided for administrative purposes into 27 Governorates, ‘Muhafazah’, each governorate is administrated by a Governor who is appointed by the President, thus politically the Governor should be loyal to the ruling party, at present the National Party.
the lack of coordination at the central level between the sectoral ministries (Serag & Verschure 2006).

Plans produced by these institutions are undertaken in parallel with no clear coordinating mechanism between them. According to Madbouly (2005), the financial plans do not necessarily reflect what is detailed in the development plans, and the same is true of the Ministry of Tourism’s plans and the decisions of the Agricultural Ministry regarding urban development. The lack of coordination during the planning process leads to duplication of solutions in the prepared plans which delays legal approval, and at later stages complicates the implementation mechanisms of these plans. However, delay in legal approval and the duplication of tasks are not the only reasons behind the difficulty faced in the task of implementing plans. It is observed that the actual developments in Egyptian cities have in many cases deviated from the development plans approved by the authorities, and plans produced rarely reflect the urban reality of the subject areas. This is demonstrated by the large growth and presence of the informal sector (Sabry 2009; Körner 1995).

In addition to the above, a number of other constraints and problems exist; these problems were identified by Madbouly (2005) and confirmed by the result of the assessment phase carried out by the SIPU Consultants team of urban planners in collaboration with GOPP staff in the first phase of the SIDA/GOPP project. First, the planning models followed when master and structure plans are prepared reflect the traditional top-down approach. The resultant plans lack realistic vision in terms of their conformity with the urban reality – for instance, they ignore informal development which has already taken place. Second, from a financial perspective, due to the lack of coordination among the various organisations responsible for planning, there is no clear link between the fiscal budget and those projects proposed in the master plans for the same community. The lack of capacity of local government to mobilise local financial resources and its great dependency on central government’s fiscal budget distribution hinders the implementation of the projects proposed. Third, there is a lack of technical capacity at local authority level to prepare, follow up and monitor the implementation of such plans. Fourth, there is an absence of active participation from the local community, which is limited to approval by the Local Popular Council rather than involving stakeholders from different interest groups in the decision-making process.

These problems were confirmed in interviews with planners at GOPP regional offices and within the Governorates, who admitted to existence of such issues in response to the question, “Why were development plans never implemented, and why did those implemented plans fail to achieve their objectives?” The assessment shows that the Egyptian planning is hierarchal and emphasises technical aspects without paying sufficient attention to the economic, administrative and urban realities. Plans proposed several infrastructure projects without specifying how these would be financed or what their impact would be on the existing settlements. The lack of fiscal specification, administrative and technical know-how in the local authorities makes the

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7 I was involved with the SIPU Consultants team in carrying out the assessment phase of the Sida/GOPP Project in 2006. The assessment was the first phase of that project and it involved reviewing the planning models used by the GOPP, as well as the institutional planning capacity at GOPP and Governorate levels. The results, which were documented and presented to GOPP decision makers, supported the need to develop a planning approach that deals with the urban reality of Egyptian cities.
implementation of plans extremely difficult. The master/structural plans that were produced and approved are kept in the governorate until they are out-dated. In the case of a sufficient budget being allocated, a detailed plan is carried out by a group of consultants assigned to the task.

Given the challenges of coping with changes in the planning system, the GOPP and its regional offices have received both national and international technical support to improve their planning capacity. In this context, the Ministry of Housing, Utilities and Urban Communities via the GOPP has made multilateral technical agreements with several international donor agencies such as UNDP (United Nation Development Program), CIDA (Canadian International Development Agency), UN-Habitat, the World Bank and Cities Alliances. These agreements cover the fields of urban planning, management and the institutional development of the GOPP and its regional centres. Technical support includes proposals for new organisational structures for the GOPP; building the capacity of local staff in planning, data management and GIS (Geographic Information System); and the production of manuals and guidelines. One of these agreements was made with the Swedish International Development Agency (Sida) in 2004. Sida funded a three-year project to support the GOPP in planning and GIS, where the Swedish SIPU International was the implementing agency for that project in Egypt. The overall aim of the Sida/GOPP project was to improve the planning process so that it would consider public participation, and to make it more responsive to the full range of sustainable development concerns. This was to be achieved through improving the capacity of GOPP’s staff to train local planning authorities in modern planning technologies, to raise information management capabilities, to improve human resource management and to introduce effective monitoring, evaluation and feedback mechanisms. The Zifta case study presented in this thesis was a ‘demonstration project’, a component of the Sida/GOPP Project aimed at development of the ‘planning methodology and tools’ used by the GOPP.

**Conclusion**

Planning thinking in Egypt has been guided by different development doctrines, each of which was formulated in accordance with the political interest of each episode in Egypt’s history. Since the first stone was laid by Muhamad Ali for the modernisation of Egypt, the country has faced different and contradictory planning thinking and development policies: dualism and social segregation during colonialism; communism and socialism during the nationalist phase; and the liberalisation of the economy since Sadat. These dualisms have dominated development doctrines and policy in Egypt. Both capitalist and socialist ideologies, in addition to Egypt’s various political regimes, have at times provided elements of positive input, but in general they have not contributed much to Egypt’s wellbeing. The contemporary urban conditions are the product of planning and policies adopted by all the different rulers of Egypt in addition to the challenges of rapid urbanisation. The formal institutions of the planning system have not been able to cope with the significance changes witnessed by the urban environment. National and international efforts have been provided to develop the planning system in Egypt. The next chapter presents the Zifta Demonstration Project, an attempt within the international technical support program provided by Sida to the GOPP to improve and test a new planning approach incorporating participatory and collaborative characteristics.
VI – EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS OF THE ZIFTA CASE

This chapter presents the practice of collaborative planning as it was performed in Zifta City. The chapter also describes the learning process, which was designed to communicate that knowledge with the local people and to guide the learning of the researcher. An analytical framework is outlined to guide the empirical analysis of the Zifta Demonstration Project. The different sections of the chapter are ordered thematically, and accompanied by an interpersonal discussion of the findings. The discussion is based upon the theoretical principles of collaborative planning as developed by Healey, and is conducted in line with the analytical framework and in compliance with the research question of the thesis. This chapter is structured around specific themes within the planning process in Zifta that are of relevance to this research. The design of the learning process is presented in order to show the progress of the Zifta project in response to the demands of the researcher. Planning actions are summarised with a view to presenting the reciprocal relationship between my dual role of researcher and practitioner. The getting-started stage includes the actions taken to encourage Zifta’s citizens to commit to the project. The implications of stakeholder identification are discussed, as are the various actions taken in approaching Zifta’s citizens in a straightforward manner and in subsequently getting to know them. Those characteristics of Zifta’s context that may have influenced the practice of collaborative planning are also identified and analysed in light of the theoretical principles that underpin the collaborative planning model. I also examine and analyse the incorporation of these characteristics in the planning process and their influence on practising the planning model, and present the methods used to communicate with and mobilise the stakeholders. Knowledge is transferred in various ways – from theory to practice, among stakeholders, and between experts and citizens – and the combination of different types of knowledge contributed to the vision and to the production of the Zifta Strategic Plan.

Urban Development Challenges in Zifta

Zifta is one of the oldest towns in the el-Gharbieh Governorate, in the Delta Region. The city is located about 150 kilometres from Cairo City, at the eastern border of the Governorate, with a long view from its east side to the Damiatt Branch of the Nile River. With a population of about 100,000, it is the third largest city of the Governorate. Zifta is the administrative centre of 54 satellite villages that are located outside its geographical area. As a traditional Egyptian city in the Delta region, the major employment sectors are agriculture, industrial food processing and trade in items related to those activities. As is the case with many cities in Egypt, Zifta has also experienced the impact of the successive national urban policies applied by Egyptian governments in different periods. The city faces the challenge of rapid population growth, which has led to encroachment on the scarce agriculture land. The city’s geographical location in the middle of the Delta means that it lacks any desert area within its boundaries that might accommodate further urbanisation, which makes the agricultural land the only available land for expansion (Zifta City Council 2005).

The urban development of Zifta represents a typical example that mirrors the accumulated results of different development doctrines that have been applied in Egypt (see Figure 5). Between 1846 and 1882, Zifta experienced rapid population growth due to the tremendous
agricultural expansion in cotton, which furthered the development of small agricultural mercantile centres in the city. Zifta, along with other cities in the region, became the principle area of cotton plantations in Egypt. The rapid development in the agricultural sector continued throughout the colonial period but without industrial development. During Nasser’s regime, considerable industrial development took place in Zifta with the establishment of spinning, weaving and dyeing plants as well as oil and soap plants. The growth of agriculture and small-scale and large-scale processing industries resulted in growth in employment in other sectors, such as retail trade. The rapid growth of population continued during the Sadat and Mubarak ‘‘infitah’’ periods, although it was not accompanied by the development of a planning system to cope with it. This lack of planning has led to a dramatic expansion of the urbanisation of agricultural land owned by the people (that is not sanctioned for building construction). Privatisation of the public industries established during Nasser’s period, deterioration in living conditions, inefficient infrastructure and public services, and increased informal housing and economic activities have combined to bring about a progressive deterioration in the urban environment (Ministry of Development 1982; and discussion with the Zifta City Council staff).

The administration system in Zifta is managed by the City Council, which consists of sectoral units that represent different ministries to form the executive authorities at the local level. The role of the executive authorities is to follow the implementation of the projects decided by their respective ministries. The Chairman of the City Council is appointed by the Governor; during the Mubarak Regime, the Chairman often belonged to the National Party. Another body that should represent the interests of Zifta’s people at the planning and implementation process is the Popular Council, which is supposed to play a monitoring role to ensure that the views of Zifta’s people are considered in the development plans and the implementation of development projects. The legal approval of the Popular Council is a mandatory requirement for any issued development plan according to the planning law. The members of this council are supposed to be elected by
the local people; however in reality the majority of the members also belong to the National Party. The role of the Popular Council has been performed in a limited manner due to the lack of consideration of stakeholder consultation (information extracted from the discussions with the Zifta City Council staff).

**Analytical Framework for the Practice of Collaborative Planning in Zifta**

The context of Zifta is here examined in relation to the institutional structure of the society and its associated cultural values. The social interaction constituted by the planning process reflects dynamic relations of place and space and can thus be expected to uncover the institutional structure of the society. For the purpose of my study, I delimited cultural values to those that constitute the distinctive achievements of human groups (here, Zifta’s citizens) and placed special emphasis on values that carry collaborative characteristics. These achievements could represent important events achieved by the society in its common history, or contemporary collective achievements that are associated with the institutional structure of the society and its daily routine. I became inspired by the literature addressing the significance of culture in organisational management, and its role in increasing organisational performance and loyalty. Culture is considered by some scholars in this discipline as an invisible strategic asset and the key vehicle for an effective sharing of knowledge, especially when new knowledge is aligned with pre-existing core values and builds on existing social networks (Flamholz & Randle 2011; Kotter & Heskett 1992; McDermott & O’Dell 2001). I tried, through planning practice, to identify the cultural values in the Zifta context that are associated with the society’s institutional structure, guide its daily routine and (importantly) carry collaborative ideas. The aim was to incorporate these values in the process of developing new planning knowledge; this was both in order to be consistent with the expectations of Zifta’s people and try to enhance their performance in participating in that process.

As a researcher, I engaged in working with this analytical framework during the empirical case (which formed an essential part of my thesis). This engagement benefitted from my second role – being a practitioner and leading the Zifta Demonstration Project, designing the planning process, making good spaces to involve stakeholders, managing meetings, solving problems, and producing a strategic plan for Zifta. While my dual roles – researcher and practitioner – overlapped and fed into each other through their reciprocal relationship, as a researcher guided by the analytical framework I tried to step back at various points in the implementation of the Zifta project, reflect on events and analyse them in relation to relevant theories. The distinction between my dual roles, reflect on events and analyse them in relation to relevant theories. The distinction between my dual roles, reflect on events and analyse them in relation to relevant theories. The distinction between my dual roles, reflect on events and analyse them in relation to relevant theories. The distinction between my dual roles, reflect on events and analyse them in relation to relevant theories. The distinction between my dual roles, reflect on events and analyse them in relation to relevant theories. The distinction between my dual roles helped me to make attentive observations of specific practices, connect them with scholars’ debates and build a wider understanding of those practices, which in turn enabled me to answer my research questions and contribute to the overall aim of this study. During the progress of the project, my dual roles became increasingly interrelated. As a practitioner, the types of knowledge generated from this process fed back into the formulation of an implementable strategic plan for the city that was rooted in its urban reality. As a researcher, I examined the process of transferring collaborative planning knowledge to the Zifta context and the potential that this context had to contribute to that knowledge. In particular, the incorporation of local cultural values in the planning process created an opportunity for a new interpretation of collaborative planning that was localised within the Zifta context.
The empirical analysis of collaborative planning in Zifta concludes in an interpretation of this model as re-contextualised in Zifta. The interpretive view of collaborative planning stressed by Healey (2006) strengthens the ability of such planning to be transferred, as well as its capacity to be re-contextualised in a new context. Therefore, because it is not a rigidly prescribed planning model, the empirical case of Zifta provided an opportunity to set collaborative planning knowledge into dialogue with the people and to design a value-led process of planning that favoured the Zifta context.

It is important to note that while the planning process was designed by the author, the progress and implementation of the Zifta project would not have been possible without collaboration with the planning team of the GOPP Tanta office. Thus, the personal voice of the author used in this text describes the actions implemented by the planning team led by the author. The observations, reflections and analysis made in light of the theoretical principles of collaborative planning, however, represent the sole work of the author, and were undertaken for the purpose of the research set out in this thesis.

The Zifta Demonstration Project

Prior to the selection of Zifta as the site for a demonstration project to test and develop new planning thinking with collaborative and participative characters, an assessment phase was carried out by the Sida/GOPP Technical Assistance Project planning team in collaboration with GOPP planners. The aim was to review and evaluate the existing planning models used by the GOPP, as well as the planning skills of the GOPP and the local authorities. The assessment focused on understanding the planning models and guidelines used at the GOPP, looking at them with regard to the questions: What are the planning processes applied? Who takes the initiative for planning? Who is responsible? Who coordinates? Who are the actors? Who participates? And, how are processes carried out?

Workshops were organised for planners from the planning directorates of different governorates in order to discuss difficulties and problems in planning, and in-depth studies were made of a number of selected plans in order to understand the types of knowledge produced and the implementation mechanisms employed. Assessment was undertaken using the following methods:

- Questionnaires sent to eight directorates of planning at the governorates.
- Questionnaires sent to the seven regional centres of the GOPP.
- Open-ended interviews with the heads of the departments and planners at the GOPP.
- Workshop to discuss the results with the representatives from 27 Governorates as well as GOPP staff.

My involvement in the assessment phase – which was undertaken prior to taking up the role of action researcher in Zifta – introduced me to the urban concerns of Egyptian cities, and enhanced my understanding of the dynamics of the planning system in which I was to carry out my research and to work as a practitioner. I learned that the top-down approach of master

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8 The knowledge produced during the assessment phase has contributed to my understanding on the implications of the institutional planning system in Egypt.
planning was the dominant model applied by the GOPP. I see such a model as being static rather than flexible in coping with rapid urban changes. Plans are generally not implementation-oriented due to ambitious development projects that lack clear financial mechanisms, an identification of roles and responsibilities, timeframes and monitoring systems. As a result, most of the plans were not implemented and development proceeded on the basis of unplanned decisions and resulted in a variety of informal developments. This was perceived as a major problem by the GOPP who, in response, tried to promote a new planning approach that involved the stakeholders and enhanced collaboration between the institutions concerned in order to develop plans that responded to the reality of Egyptian cities. During the course of the implementation of the Sida/GOPP project, a new planning law was issued to the Parliament for approval, in order to incorporate these changes. At the end of the assessment phase, Zifta City was selected as a ‘demonstration project’ to test and develop new planning thinking. The selection was based on a request coming from the Governor to produce a strategic plan for the city as well as his appreciation of the need to develop a new planning methodology. The assessment phase created awareness among the governorates about the attempt to examine a new planning approach in Zifta. Later, it helped in obtaining the commitment of the El-Gharbieh Governor to support the Zifta Demonstration Project. Additionally, Zifta typifies the major type of urban challenge to face Egypt: it is located in the midst of the most valuable agriculture land and has experienced the impact of rapid urbanisation accompanied by inappropriate planning thinking.

My role as practitioner was to lead the Zifta Demonstration Project within the Sida/GOPP Technical Assistance Project, whereby I was to examine and develop new planning knowledge that stressed collaboration among different stakeholders and decentralisation of the planning system at the GOPP. I had also to apply the learning-by-doing approach, so as to encourage local planners participating in the planning process to learn by practising this new planning knowledge in Zifta. In the course of the demonstration project, a strategic plan for the city had to be produced and training material documented. As a researcher, my goal was to investigate how knowledge developed in a different context can be transferred across cultures and to set it into a dialogue with the people in new institutional and cultural contexts. I also aimed at identifying what potential the Zifta context had to contribute to an exogenous planning model.

**New Planning Thinking – Strategic versus Master Planning**

The new planning thinking to be examined in Zifta emphasised the participation of local stakeholders, the establishment of a dialogue between the City Council and the citizens, collaboration between different governmental sectoral departments, the transformation of the plan from a product to a progressive process that reflected the urban reality, and the preparation of a strategic plan that was implementation-oriented. The strategic plan was described by the Sida/GOPP Team Leader, Tim Greenhow, in the following terms, “While the master plan uses its long-term planning horizon as a framework for detailed physical plans for specific parts of the growing town, the strategic plan creates a long-term vision for the town that is to be achieved by a series of programmes and activities, setting out the principles and strategic interventions that the town’s authorities will apply in decision making” (2007:3). In order to produce the Zifta Strategic Plan, the plan had to be transformed from a master plan (a static product) to a plan that comprised more of a process and integrated urban development issues through a spatial planning framework. In practice, an extensive urban situation analysis of the city was made, which identified the main development themes based on
mapping of the existing local assets within the formal and informal sectors. Thus the Zifta Strategic Plan consisted of the thematic strategies necessary to achieve the set of goals for the future of Zifta, including land use regulations that defined the direction of the physical development and set the urban boundary to protect the agriculture land. The strategic plan was documented as a technical report in two volumes including maps, thematic development strategies, and other technical descriptions. Here, for the purpose of my study and in order to comply with my overall research aim, I place little emphasis on the Strategic Plan as a product – my focus is rather on the process of transferring and practising planning of a collaborative and participatory character.

Considering that the assessment phase resulted in the need to improve planning thinking, as a practitioner I had to keep in mind the key planning issues arising from the difficulties in implementing the previous plans. In addition to the deficiencies already mentioned, the plans were characterised by a heavy statistical and quantitative approach in analysing the city’s urban situation. They reflected the physical aspects of development, with little attention given to integration within the social context of the city. Plans were described technically, with little information to indicate how implementation was to be undertaken. Additional difficulties arose from the declining role of the formal sector in providing services as a result of a lack of finance – a decline that implies increased emphasis on the role of actors in the ‘informal’ sector, who play the leading role in the reality of city development.

The key planning considerations to be taken into account in the Zifta Demonstration Project were: that the planning process was to be based on the participation of local actors, that the strategic plan was to be produced collaboratively with the city’s stakeholders, and that it that was to be implementation-oriented and reflect the urban reality of the city. I holistically outlined the planning process so that it would be developed progressively, through the Zifta Demonstration Project. The process itself, when put into action, constituted a learning experience for me as a practitioner needing to fulfil the requirements of the project, and as an action researcher needing to ensure that my work with the project contributed to the overall research aim. It also incorporated learning-by-doing for the local planners participating in the planning team, the staff of the Zifta City Council and the citizens. In brief, the planning process was designed to be learning-oriented in order to both understand how things were done in Zifta and to produce a plan that responded to that reality.

**The Zifta Planning Team**

The planning team (see Figure 6) included planners and engineers from: the Tanta Regional Office (TRO), the el-Gharbieh Governorate, Zifta City Council and a representative from the Popular Council. The team comprised two planners and three engineers from the Tanta office. Whilst effectively only three were involved in the beginning due to other daily duties in the office, later the team was expanded to eight. The team was composed of young planners and engineers and the purpose of their participation in the project was to be trained in the new planning model by practising it. In addition to the eight, two planners from el-Gharbieh Governorate, three participants from Zifta City Council, and one representative from the City Popular Council joined the team. As building capacity was an integral component of the Zifta project, my work throughout the process was undertaken together with the planning team. The ultimate goal was not only to develop the Zifta Strategic Plan, but to do so in a learning-oriented way so that
planners could continue to develop further plans on their own. The scope of the planning team’s task was to:

- Participate in the Demonstration Project as a team, through a dynamic and learning-oriented process.
- Develop a joint understanding within the GOPP of the new urban planning approach and communicate it with the local stakeholders.
- Be responsible to and regularly report back to the Tanta Regional Office Manager.
- Undertake the special components identified by team members, as well as planning and managing the stakeholders’ workshops.
- Produce training material for dissemination amongst other planners at the GOPP for training in the new methods.

At the beginning of the project, planners met often in order to discuss the approach, the outlined working program and the criteria for stakeholder identification. It should be noted that some of the planners belonged to the same Governorate so they readily understood the particularities of Zihta. The discussions helped team members to become acquainted with various theoretical perspectives and analytical concepts, and these set the basis for the interaction process. Meetings were quite informal and helped to break down stereotyped professional relations. Once the scope of each team member’s contribution was understood, the team started to work creatively and conscientiously. In addition to the planning team, the GOPP uses contract specialist consultants to carry out different sectoral development studies. Various consultants with complementary competences were contracted by the GOPP to provide multidisciplinary inputs to the Zihta project. The specialists included inter alia an urban planner, a regional specialist, an economist, a demographer, a social developer, an agriculture specialist, an industrial specialist and an environmentalist. Many of them were academics and ran their own private consultancies. Working with these consultants in a collaborative manner in the project gave rise to many difficulties, which provided a good insight into the traditional role played by the local planners and the planning education in Egypt.

The Design of a Learning-Oriented Planning Process

The design of the learning-oriented process reflected the deliverables I needed to produce during the progress of the project in response to the demands of my dual role (see Figure 7). As a practitioner, the purpose was solely to guide the working plan to ensure the delivery of Zihta Strategic Plan in accordance with the stated timeline – from January 2006 to August 2007. As a researcher, observations and reflections on planning actions were developed throughout the process in accordance with my research questions and the overall aim of my study. The design of the process therefore developed gradually, according to the project’s progress and my empirical findings, in order to fulfil the demands of being both a researcher and practitioner. The design
was guided by three artificially demarcated phases that were progressively explored. The ‘getting in’ phase was to familiarise myself with the place as an outsider. It included a kick-off to the project and the identification and mobilisation of the stakeholders. The ‘getting on’ phase applied a mutual learning process among stakeholders. The interactive process was intensified to understand the context of Zifta, discover its assets and build consensus around a vision. The transfer of knowledge in various directions created a typology of knowledge that contributed to the development of the Zifta Strategic Plan as well as to the overall research aim. ‘Getting out’ was the point where I had to terminate my inquiries and prepare the Zifta Strategic Plan in collaboration with the stakeholders whilst thinking about gradually transferring responsibility to local planners. The final approval of the project was obtained and local initiatives were formalised.

The getting in phase required particular time from me as an outsider to build reciprocal collaborative relationships with the society, making use of theory to understand the Zifta context and reflect on its issues and specificities. This phase started by introducing the project to the City Council; establishing the planning team; familiarising myself with the city and the society; preliminary identification of stakeholders and ascertaining the balances of power; appreciating participants’ values and mobilising the community; and obtaining their commitment and starting to sustain it. In other words, to establish the conditions from which an inquiry can emerge as a pattern of social relations rather than as an issue coming from the outside (Reason & Goodwin 1999).

The getting on phase involved active interaction practices, whereby the collaborative planning knowledge was set into the dialogue with Zifta’s people through different spaces of social interaction and learning. This phase witnessed a transfer of knowledge in various ways, from the West to Egypt, between local people and technical experts, and among participants from different backgrounds. As a practising planner, my positionality during the progress of the planning project had varied between leading the project, handling problems and facilitating the process. The participants became more active, agreed and disagreed on issues, achieved consensus and discussed differences; their love-hate relationship with the City Council turned gradually into a cautious but peaceful relationship with better collaboration in specific situations. Initiatives were taken and implemented in collaboration with both formal and informal systems. As a researcher observing certain events and reflecting upon the reasons behind the practices associated with those events led me to undertake a deeper analysis of the context of Zifta. In line with my research aim, I identified the institutional structure and a set of associated cultural values inherited from the history of the society that still functioned in the daily practices of the people. Practical difficulties appeared during this phase, which led me to question the role of the Egyptian planner and expert. While a few of the experts contributed significantly to the project, it was difficult to convince others to coordinate with and apply the collaborative process, or to include local knowledge in their technical studies. To overcome such difficulties, I had to have a contingency plan; with the help of the planning team, we carried out these processes and ensured that local knowledge was included in their technical studies.
Where is Zifta now?

What does Zifta Want?

How to get there?

Getting in

Getting out

Getting in

Getting on

Getting out

Figure 7 - Learning-oriented planning process elaborated for the purpose of the thesis
The getting out phase included the completion of the planning documents (two volumes), sharing the knowledge constructed, institutionalising the changes and getting the approval. The involvement of local people and the local planning team throughout the whole process created a learning-by-doing opportunity for them. I gradually withdrew from leading actions, where the local planning team took over responsibilities of the project. For instance, at the Governor's office, the planners from Tanta – with the participation of the elected Zifta Strategic Plan Committee – led the seminar and presented the plan before the final approval. The Head of the Tanta Regional Office, who was against the project in the beginning, became a supporter of the planning concept, putting Zifta forward as a best practice example to learn from. Additionally, training of the planners was enhanced later on by an extensive training course after the accomplishment of the Zifta project. I was involved in a one-week workshop for the training of trainers, where the experience obtained from the Zifta Demonstration Project was discussed through exercises and training material. Planners from the eight regional offices of the GOPP participated in the workshop. The learning-by-doing dimension of the Zifta project contributed to the ‘getting out’ strategy. A celebration of the approval took place at the regional office of the GOPP in Tanta, in which the Zifta planning team and representatives of the stakeholders participated. This was the moment when my role as a practitioner ended, however for the participants it was the moment when they took over responsibility. The dissemination of information about the planning process was undertaken in collaboration with the City Council and the core group of stakeholders formulated during the progress of the project. Regular newsletters providing a summary of activities; announcements about upcoming events were delivered on a monthly basis to households, shops and companies in the city; and, in addition, information was placed on a notice board at the entrance to the city council building.

Planning Actions to Fulfil the Purposes of the Dual Role

The reciprocal relationship between my dual researcher and practitioner roles was guided by planning, acting, observing and reflecting – skills that were developed simultaneously in order to contribute to both the formulation of the Zifta Strategic Plan and the writing of my doctoral thesis. Table 2 summarises the different planning actions taken during specific episodes in the project, and presents the observations and reflections that were made accordingly in order to fulfil the demands of my dual role. I made pragmatic decisions to sort out the process and make use of the existing institutional structure and its associated values, which were manifested in the practices of the people. Working at different institutional levels – at city level, with its formal and informal system, and at GOPP level, by being involved in the overall Sida/GOPP project – provided a possibility to build institutional planning capacity. The decision to involve planners from the GOPP and the Tanta office aimed to apply the learning-by-doing approach, however learning was not limited to planners but applied to all participants (including the researcher). The different forums provided the stakeholders with spaces to discuss issues of concern build local knowledge and participate in decisions about their future. The analysis of the empirical findings was undertaken in relation to relevant theories and in connection with scholars’ debate, in order to understand the reasons behind these practices and the specificities of the associated values. To place the empirical findings extracted from the case of Zifta in a wider context, an attempt was made to establish an intellectual foundation inspired by Egyptian social philosophy.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Planning Process</th>
<th>Plan &amp; Act</th>
<th>Observe &amp; Reflect</th>
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</table>
| **Getting Started** | Design of learning-oriented planning process  
- Zifta Project initiation, concretisation and mobilisation.  
- Stakeholders’ identification. | Design of analytical framework  
- Local epistemological definition of planning knowledge.  
- Potential of Zifta context for a situational interpretation of collaborative planning. |
| **Contextual illustration of Ziifta and urban conditions** | Urban situational analysis  
- Urban conditions  
- Geographic location and historical role of Ziifta  
- Social and economic conditions  
- Arenas for formal/informal interaction | What we can learn from Ziifta’s urban conditions?  
- Ziifta is a simple illustration of the international economic development mainstream.  
- The local epistemic standpoints about planning knowledge.  
What potential does the Ziifta context possess?  
- Reflection on Giddens’ structuration theory to examine how rules, resources and social relationships shape the institutional structure in Ziifta  
- Observation and identification of the values associated with the existing institutional structure, which guide its daily function |
| **Fundamental characteristics** | Visioning process  
- Shared meaning to build consensus  
- Vision formulation | Incorporate the identified values in the planning process  
- Role of the representations of important memory in the society to build shared meanings  
- Reflecting on collaborative planning theoretical principles  
- Situational definition of lifeworld |
| **Institutional context** | Knowledge transfer in various directions to contribute to the formulation of Ziifta Strategic Plan  
- Exchange of local/expert knowledge  
- Accumulation of local knowledge: integrated from personal roles, storytelling, professionals; social network of local economic activities based on indigenous knowledge, etc.  
- Technical knowledge (cross-sectoral experts)  
- Social interaction created local initiatives that built up citizen power | Mapping of the typology of generated knowledge  
- Process-oriented knowledge: generate a social agreement about people shared values  
- Action-oriented knowledge: constructed from mutual learning among participants acting collaboratively in an action research milieu |
| **Socio-economic, physical, and infrastructural development** | Various planning stages support citizens empowerment and create institutional changes at different levels, bridging between the fragmented capital | Benefiting from my role as practitioner, working at different level of rules to support some institutional changes at low cost  
- Formal/informal interaction arenas reproduce new forms of rules and resources |
| **Building institutional capacity** | Participants interaction creates mutual learning opportunity  
- People learn from what they do in the process  
- Participants’ own terms guide their collaboration in the planning process  
- Local planners from Tanta office become members of the Zifta planning team and learn new ways of planning thinking by doing  
- Compiling training material for training sessions for local planners at the GOPP  
- Feedback to the GOPP and the SIPU team as input in the planning guideline prepared by the SIPU team for the use of GOPP planners | Re-contextualisation of collaborative planning  
- I learn about ways of forming local interpretations of collaborative planning, from what people know and want. The reflection on people’s social fabric of knowledge helps me to re-contextualise collaborative planning to make a new interpretation inspired from the context of Zifta in relation to:  
  - Epistemological concerns  
  - Practical concerns, and  
  - Theoretical concerns |
| **Learning-by-doing** | The practice of collaborative planning requires a new role for planners in Egypt to:  
- Shift from a technocratic master planning process to more a collaborative and participatory planning process | Reflection on the role of planners in Ziifta point out the role of planners (practitioners and academics) is not just to practice collaborative planning but to play an integral role in facing the challenges of rapid urbanisation in Egyptian cities |

Table 2 - Planning actions taken, observations and reflections made at specific phases
Getting Started on the Planning Process

In getting the planning process started, it was particularly important to mobilise the support and interest of stakeholders. It was necessary to invest a large amount of time and energy in the initial process phase, because without such an investment all parties were likely to face tremendous difficulty in subsequent phases (an observation confirmed by Crosby and Bryson (2005:197)). In so doing, the ‘getting started’ phase went through three steps, the first of which was to identify the purpose of the Zifta Demonstration Project and to obtain commitments to that purpose. The assessment phase, which was completed before the initiation of the Zifta project, revealed a common interest among officials at the GOPP, as well as at the Governorate, about examining the collaborative planning process at a local level in terms of the development of Egyptian cities. It happened that the City Council in Zifta had already sent a formal request to El-Gharbieh Governor asking for technical support to plan their city. The Zifta Demonstration Project benefited from being initiated by the GOPP and supported by the Governor. Their efforts to decentralise the planning of development recognised the need to break up the planning exercise into GOPP, Governorate and City Council responsibilities. This meant that these actors had to work collaboratively for the first time, and my role as a planner involved multilevel bases that moved between city, governorate and GOPP levels. The integral part of this step was to identify the stakeholders at the city level and obtain their commitment to the project. Visiting the city started later and involved numerous actions in order to obtain the commitment of the people. The second step constituted the concretisation of that commitment by formalising a planning team, engaging in the initial identification of stakeholders and organising a kick-off seminar at which the project was introduced and the process outlined and discussed. The third step was to mobilise the people. The most important factor here was to get the city and popular councils, together with the local stakeholders, into the process. This was not an easy matter and a large amount of time was invested in achieving this objective, which contributed positively later in the planning process.

The City Council Is the Entry Point into Zifta

As outsider, my entry into the city was through the City Council, which made the first round of stakeholder identification significantly difficult. This drew our attention as a planning team to the existing power relations, which necessitated a clear elaboration of stakeholder identification criteria and a set of actions to re-balance power relations at this stage in the process. The key issues that remained valid during the entire process were: What criteria are to be referred to when identifying stakeholders? How are stakeholders from outside the public sector to be involved? And, how are the stakeholders’ commitments to be sustained throughout the project?

As a practitioner working on the Sida/GOPP project, I was introduced to the Governorate during the assessment phase. This phase increased the awareness of public officers regarding the need for change, thus paving the way to obtaining their commitment to the Zifta Demonstration Project. Additionally, El-Gharbieh’s Governorate supported the new approach and encouraged its staff to both facilitate and participate in the planning process in order to learn. It was observed at the outset that the representatives of the authority were committed to the project, but unless some power-balancing measures were undertaken to include non-official stakeholders representing the different interest groups in Zifta City, a large power imbalance in the group
might disturb the free exchange of ideas and prevent the building of mutual trust, a quality that is emphasised by Crosby and Bryson (2005). Therefore, power-balancing measures had to be considered when identifying stakeholders so as to include representatives from both the formal as well as the informal sectors in the city. These measures were incorporated through the criteria for identifying stakeholders, and were thought through at each round of the planning stage.

As a researcher interested in practising collaborative planning and investigating the potentialities a new context has to contribute to this knowledge, my attention was drawn to Healey (2006:69) when I started to put her collaborative planning model into practice in the Zifta context. She sees the collaborative process as a practice of building relational capacity to address collective concerns about qualities of places. In the case of Zifta, this required the identification of a wide range of people with ‘stakes’ in the city. Thus the basic criteria of identifying who is a stakeholder, required recognition of the representatives of the directly affected groups in the context of various development issues – in Zifta, the different groups of interest in the society – who were also community leaders, decision makers and those who had access to or control over resources (financial, technical and intellectual). I also had in mind that not necessarily everybody should be included, and stakeholders may vary during the project’s progress according to specific issues. From a practitioner perspective, these actions ensured the representation of various interest groups for the benefit of the Zifta Demonstration Project. However, as a researcher I considered these principles to be very general, and felt that a deeper understanding of how things were done in Zifta was required in order to explore the institutional context of the city and the cultural values associated with that context. As such, additional actions were taken in subsequent stages. I did however have to start acting, and to do that from my entry point in the City Council, so I planned a kick-off seminar in order to get into the project and the city as well.

The Kick-off Seminar

The planning team (myself included) held several meetings with the City Council in Zifta to introduce the outlined working program and to prepare for the kick-off seminar. This preparation included discussions as to who should be invited to the kick-off seminar and the criteria for stakeholder selection. Groups of interests from Zifta and their possible representatives were listed and presented to us by the City Council. This list included representatives from local civil society, different groups of interests from amongst Zifta’s residents (e.g. farmers, workshop owners, brick makers, vehicle maintenance, and the business community), as well as official representatives from sectoral departments at the City Council and the el-Gharbieh Governorate. In the beginning, as an outsider I had to rely first on information given to us from Deputy of the Mayor and the Head of the City Council, who promised to make the arrangements. A seminar was held on 6 January 2007 at the City Council, involving about 45 people. The participants at the workshop were mostly citizens of Zifta, but I realised that most of them were employees of the City Council or members of the Popular Council and some worked at the Governorate. While I appreciated the effort made by the staff at the City Council, it was clear to me and the planning team that the seminar failed to achieve its objective and ended up being held only for official staff. Despite the failure of this seminar, this action revealed the City Council’s views in relation to their attempt to manipulate the process. I kept this fact in mind during the project, and it motivated me to play a proactive role in approaching the citizens of Zifta in a straightforward manner and getting to know them.
Re-Setting Conditions and Acting to Balance Power

What was supposed to be considered a failure was a great learning experience for me as an outsider and for the City Council, which was involved for the first time in this type of process. The kick-off seminar led to a reflection on alternative courses of action to counter the obstruction posed by the established power structure. I planned, with the planning team, other sets of actions to be taken informally, so as to get to know the city and make contact with its citizens, but we needed some preliminary information to lead us. Knowing the Egyptian social culture and ways of socialising, and after being well received by the City Council staff, we were able to hold several informal and individual conversations. We learnt some of the names of key figures that played a leading role in the community e.g. those with a voluntary social role leading NGOs. We got to know some leaders of local NGOs. This was despite the general reluctance of the City Council and the Popular Council to involve people in the process, because according to them this would just have created conflict. It was enough for me to develop informal discussions about the city with some of the staff to get across the relevant information needed to lead my investigation further. The Head of the Popular Council developed a positive impression of the idea of the project, and provided me with concrete information about key figures from the city that were working actively in locally based charity organisations and were well known by the people. He mentioned some names that he considered to be potential stakeholders. Later on, through direct contact by phone and by informal visits to these key people, we were able to benefit from their social network, and further examine their potential roles according to the criteria and principles of stakeholder identification. A stakeholder is, according to Freeman (1984:46) in Mitchell et al. (1997), “any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the organisation’s objectives”. Thus, the criteria that guided the identification of stakeholders – as inspired by the work of Freeman (1984) and Mitchell et al. (1997) on defining the principle of who and what really counts as stakeholder – consisted of:

- The stakeholder’s power to influence and impose their will on the planning process.
- The legitimacy of the stakeholder’s relation to the Zifta Strategic Plan – i.e., a relation that is socially accepted and provides them with implicit power in the process (e.g., by playing a leading social role that is legitimate in the eyes of the community).
- The need of a stakeholder for the planning project, either as a potential beneficiary or as one who is adversely impacted.

This framework of understanding how stakeholders can be identified was discussed within the planning team as a preliminary starting point – as such, it was not applied objectively. It was, however, constructed through the process, through which power was understood to be transitory and thus able to be acquired as well as lost. Further, it was considered that legitimacy depends upon the interaction with the criteria of power and people’s need, and that it is therefore socially constructed and sustained.

We were able to complete the first round of stakeholder identification by drawing on different interest groups and backgrounds, even getting some of those identified involved in the next round of actions. The preliminary list of stakeholders was a preparatory step towards what are respectively termed by Crosby and Bryson (2005) the stakeholder analysis and the participation matrix. The next actions were to arrange several field visits to the city, not just to familiarise us
(the planning team) with the city’s urban conditions but also to get to know its citizens, but to document life experiences we either observed or learned from speaking to the citizens during their daily routine.

**City Field Visits**

The planning team, the City Council and a number of the newly identified stakeholders carried out five visits to the city (see Figure 8). We conducted additional visits solely for the planning team, to be able to communicate with the people who we got to know without the influence of the staff of the City Council. The general aims of these visits were:

- To become familiar with the physical and environmental conditions of the city, and further understand its contextual setting.
- To conduct informal discussion with the people in need of the project output, with the aim of increasing awareness about the project and getting them into the process.
- To document our observations in collaboration with the stakeholders and the City Council in order to prepare the urban situational analysis of Zifta.

Most of the visits initiated debate among the participants that went further than merely familiarising the team with city conditions but also extended into discovering issues and opportunities for urban development. The communication between the city council staff with different technical backgrounds, the planning team and the stakeholders with different socio-economic status in the city (e.g. workshop owners, land owners and official employees) provided an opportunity for informative discussion where knowledge about urban issues was exchanged to form new perspectives on these issues. The visits identified the physical problems – e.g., the overcrowding of roads due to heavy car traffic and the lack of traffic management; the informal economic activities distributed around the streets, which contributed to the bad condition of the sidewalk and roads but seemed to also contribute to the economic income of the citizens; and the encroachment of housing onto agricultural land. At
the same time, opportunities were also discussed – e.g., vacant land within the built areas with potential for development; the opportunity provided by the medium height of buildings to increase the density within the city and thereby protect agricultural land; and the city’s long Nile bank, which has great potential for various types of development. The large-scale, dispersed distribution of informal economic activities – e.g., vendors selling goods, workshops for vehicle maintenance, workshops for metal moulding, and plant nurseries – was also discussed. Photos and video films were taken by the planning team to document physical conditions and to stimulate discussion among the groups of stakeholders during the workshops.

In the additional visits made solely by us as a planning team, I wanted to understand the type of relationship that existed between the City Council and the people and to familiarise myself with the conditions of the social network interrelationships. I also aimed to examine the way in which the social roles of the identified stakeholders were viewed by the citizens, in order to check their legitimacy where possible and identify other stakeholders as beneficiaries from my understanding of their needs in terms of the project’s output. This helped me as a practitioner to accomplish the stakeholder analysis and prepare the participation planning matrix, and as a researcher to identify the institutional structure of the society and cultural values associated with it, in order to understand the context of Zifta.

Over two weeks, we made daily visits to the city. Our informal conversations covered 39 persons selected deliberately to represent certain categories of stakeholders. Each day started with a planning team meeting, a visit to the City Council for briefing, and then going out for a field visit. The day ended with a summary of findings on which to build new actions for the planning team. Writing my own diary and memorising my daily observations formed a point of reference for the analysis that I made in relation to the findings of practising collaborative planning in Zifta.

**The Problems of Zifta, as Described by the City’s Citizens**

The conversations had during the field visits covered seven taxi drivers, five workshop owners, two vegetable vendors, two pharmacy owners, two doctors, three female teachers, three housewives, a businesswoman, five school-age boys and girls at a school, five farmers, three earth brick makers, three elderly people, and two labourers working in building construction. These conversations helped us to formulate the final list of stakeholders to be included in the stakeholder analysis, and gave us very different views of the urban conditions in the Zifta (Figure 9 and 10 illustrate different aspects of Zifta’s built environment). General questions prepared to guide the conversations were as follows:

- “What are the main problems of a specific urban issue in the city?” Our aim here was to start from a general question about a specific urban issue (that varied according to the person) to guide the discussion. This would later be used to reorient the conversation, which was mostly steered by the people we met and their will to communicate.
- “How are basic needs provided for by the City Council?” Our aim was to touch upon the role of City Council, the role of civil society and other alternative sources of support that poor people depend on.
- “We can continue our conversation to ask about the key stakeholders … ” Our aim was to examine the role of these people in the society, how this role functioned in reality, and whether there were other active social channels in the city that we could later include.

A number of particularly informative conversations, including some quotations, are reproduced below; they have been selected on the basis that I found them representative of views that were shared by many of those interviewed.

Life Experiences Have a Lot to Tell

**Taxi Driver Views Go Beyond the City’s Traffic Problem**

Talking to people of different social and economic status provided us with different types of life experiences. Taxi drivers were among those who provided us with valuable information about the city. Generally speaking, one of the most important and accessible sources of information in Egypt lies in the country's taxi driver.9 One can find all levels of education amongst them, from the illiterate to school graduates, to those with Masters degrees and doctorates. Their daily working routine provides the taxi drivers with a broad knowledge of society. Through their humour and easy way of conversation, which is actually an Egyptian attitude in general, they reflect a mixture of views in terms of political, social and sometimes even economic analysis (al-Khamiss (2007), and my own observation during the assignment period and during several long stays in Egypt). We decided to take make several tours by taxi in the city. An informative conversation with a taxi driver proceeded as follows.

Without bargaining over the price, as is standard when taking a taxi in Egypt, we asked the driver to take us for a drive around the city. The driver was about 60 years old, perhaps younger. We introduced ourselves and talked briefly and simply about our role in the preparation of the Zifta Strategic Plan. He welcomed us

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9 In Summer 2010, I was talking to a friend in Egypt about Egyptian taxi drivers, remarking on their humour, sharp observations, and their fruitful and knowledgeable comments on the surrounding problems at social, economic and political levels. This friend advised me to read the K. al Khamiss book Taxi (2007), which over two years documented stories from taxi drivers in Cairo. The author considers them to be the barometers of the unruly Egyptian street, which is characterised by vital and honest language quite different from the formal language used by the elite and educated people. It comes as no surprise to me that during the Egyptian revolution in January and February 2011, taxi drivers played a vital role in driving the demonstrators, free of charge, from different parts of Cairo to the gathering point “Midan el-Tahrir”.
with a little interest, and was willing to talk to us as strangers especially with my Lebanese accent in Arabic; this was reflected by some curiosity in his eyes, which I observed when he looked back at us through the rear view mirror of the car. We exchanged a few words about the heavy traffic that day and he responded, “Traffic is always like that, what you expect? When the number of people increases, the number of cars increases … while the streets are still the same since I have been driving, since the 1980s … adding to our misery we also have the toctoc.” He pointed out the problem of toctoc, which is a new and small imported vehicle. I was informed by one of the planners that these vehicles are not yet authorised for formal use in the country, however despite this, millions have already been imported by Egyptian businessmen and are used widely in cities outside Cairo.

I found the discussion interesting and he provided me, voluntarily, with interesting information. I asked him, “But how is it that the government doesn’t give permission to toctocs to be used in the cities yet and it gives permission to import them?” He said, “I have no idea why. … But I am sure that it is not poor drivers who import toctocs … rich businessmen do it … they are the “Pharaohs” of our Egypt nowadays … they import toctocs and all other commodities from mobile phones, TV’s, cars etc. … and sell to people. … Look around you, people are poor but each has a mobile phone, a TV and a satellite system.”

I said, to stimulate the discussion, “But mobile phones have become important now, do you not agree with that?” He answered, “‘Ya fendem’, it is important for those who have business not for those who cannot afford to pay their bills. … We do not need it, is just a fashion, each family member has a mobile it means five mobiles per family at least, can you imagine the burden on the family to afford that?” He kept quiet a little, and then turned back to the traffic problems; another toctoc passed by, trying to find its way between the cars. “As toctocs become a fact, should they be permitted to be used in the cities or not?” I asked him.

He answered without doubt, “Forget about permission! Who cares about that? Most people build their own houses, their own workshops, without permission; do you think if we ask for permission we will get it? ‘Heleneh ba’aa’ (Egyptian slang, meaning this will take endless time). … We are in Egypt madam, not in Europe. Toctocs are a fact, poor people invest in that; how can we just forbid people from using toctocs? The poor here live from hand to mouth. … It is not only toctocs on the street, there are also heavy vehicles, cars, donkeys or horses pulling carts, and pedestrians, each trying to win their way through”. I said, “If you see toctocs as a fact that it is not possible to forbid anymore … then why are you annoyed by them?” He said, simply, “Now everyone who drives a toctoc should just service areas of narrow streets, like slums, because we cannot enter such areas with our taxies, so it is good to have them there. But leave the wide streets for us!” I think he cared more about developing the management of traffic rather than bureaucratic process of formalising the traffic system, which was not within his priority. It is an interesting view.

As we were about to leave the car, I heard a mobile phone signal, and the driver answered. I found myself spontaneously saying, “But you have a mobile!” He answered, smiling, “I have a few credits, I made a missed call to my brother earlier this morning, now he called me back. … I leave a few credits to allow missed calls, as it is the way used by people for communication here.”10 We left the car with more questions to address. What makes the views of the taxi driver more relevant is that most of the

10 I want to note here that this was the way that I used my own mobile during the project when communicating with Tanta planners. I respected that norm and planned to always call them back instead of answering their calls, as I did not want to add to the amount of their monthly phone bills.
taxi journeys we made in the city and the spontaneous conversations held with people on different occasions, reflected more or less similar views regarding the traffic situation.

A Workshop Owner Tells Of his Experiences of the Ineffectiveness of the City Council

Another representative conversation took place with the owner of a metalworking and welding business. We entered his workshop and introduced ourselves and talked about our aim to prepare development plans for the city. In the beginning, he was suspicious about the plan, saying, “Abbaa … nothing will be done. … Here, we see politicians just before the election covering the walls with their photos, making speeches … making promises … and then they disappear and leave the walls covered with their photos … with no interest even to clean the wall after them.” He added, “Does the project provide job opportunities for the young people? There are a lot of young graduated people who are looking for a job in Zifta.” I answered, “Our role is to prepare a plan that will propose certain projects to be implemented by Egyptians, these projects shall provide job opportunities for young people, and improve the economic sector and the living conditions as well.”

He replied, “My experience with the officials at the City Council has taught me that they just promise and do nothing.” He took me out of his shop and showed me what he considered an innovation. He pointed to a small red machine, and said, “This is used by all farmers in Zifta nowadays; they find it useful and that it simplifies the irrigation for their lands located far away from the river. I made it myself, and I presented it to the City Council and asked for their support to improve it for the use of Zifta. They promised me, but I never heard from them since that.” I said to him, “We will listen more to the citizens when we are preparing the plan, and try to incorporate their views … if you are interested, you may participate with us and see if there will be any interest in your project to develop it further… . What do you think? We are planning a workshop on the second of February at the city council hall. Will you learn more about what we do?” He said, “I have been there several times until I gave up … now, I feel I have nothing to do with that place. But anyway, I will come… .” Later on, I pointed out his project with the City Council; they confirmed to me his story about the machine, and admitted that they found it interesting; however nothing has been done in this regard.
Women Vendors Depend On Welfare Services Provided By Locally Based Organisations

Another conversation with two vendor women illustrated the relation between the ineffectiveness of the City Council in providing welfare services to the people and the role of the alternative system in filling the gap left by the government. In addition to this, the conversation also made apparent the contribution of informal economic activities to the living conditions of poor people. The women were selling vegetables and sponges on the side of the street. We approached them and introduced ourselves, and asked them about how they manage their work. They replied, “We live nearby in Santa village, we come daily to sell what is grown in our small gardens.” I asked the women, “Is the income enough to cover the expenses of your family? What about your husband?” One of the women said that her husband was sick, and she is obliged to go daily for that work just to feed her children, although it is not enough. She also received some support from ‘faeeleen kebyr’ or individual donors. She added that, “Despite my poverty, the security officers do not allow me to put my stuff on the street; they can come at any time and ask me to leave … so I have to collect my things and find somewhere else.” She added, “Some of them know me and my situation, so they let me do my work.” I asked her how she managed the medical treatment for her husband; she referred to a clinic led by faith-based organisations that provided her husband with medical services.

Identification of the Stakeholders

As is proposed by Crosby and Bryson (2005), informal conversations are a means to find out whether stakeholders share the same concerns, a commonality that can pave the way for developing a commitment among the stakeholders towards a given project. We learned from the kick-off seminar that the City Council wanted to manipulate the process, and as such we (the planning team) had to react in a reasonable way to sustain their support and the commitment we gained at the initial stage from the Governorate. Our challenge was then to open up a space into which we could invite the stakeholders who played crucial role in the daily routine of the city of Zifta, without creating conflict with the City Council.

Our formal and informal conversations, which covered 39 selected persons, provided us with important information about who might have had a ‘stake’ in the Zifta project. It was important that those actors actively working in Zifta outside the formal sphere of the City Council were represented. We got to know that people’s relationship with locally based charity organisations seemed to function well in terms of the provision of welfare services to the citizens; these organisations seemed to a certain extent to fill the gap left by the formal system. We asked the people we met about the names of the most active organisations and their role. These organisations seem to play a central social role among the people when it comes to regular support for the poor, health services via their clinics, education via their schools and nurseries for children, in addition to other occasional support for vulnerable groups in the case of crisis such as death of a family member or a wedding and its related expenses. We were also informed of a few prominent individuals that played essential social roles in the city, and we came to understand that the citizens we met trusted them; they were seen as kind of community leaders. As a planning team, we considered ourselves as facilitators of the process rather than having a stake in the project. I put the technical experts in the same category as the planning team, because their role was supposed to be to communicate their knowledge to the stakeholders in order to produce the Zifta Strategic Plan.
At this stage, I was able to identify five main categories of stakeholders, each of which represented a certain group of people with a special interest. The members were selected in relation to their interest in being involved in the process, their capacity to contribute with knowledge about the city or with their social network to involve more people at later stage, and their time availability. This last factor also required certain flexibility from our side, as we tried to organise workshops on weekends and sometimes held seminars in the evenings. It should be noted that progress in the selection of members was also made according to the requirements of the planning process. The five categories were organised as follows:

**The Citizens of Zifta**

This category included representatives from different groups of interests – e.g., women (some of whom were teachers and others who engaged in small-scale economic activities, and had interest in the project). During the project’s progress, members of this group came up with a number of significant local initiatives. In particular, the youth group had a great impact in mobilising the local people and participating in the process, developing initiatives and implementing them during the planning process. The school boys and girls group contributed their views on non-spatial aspects of development to the planning process, and had interesting ideas in relation to the education system in their school. They, together with the youth group, drew attention to the significant role of a family as the core of society in the city. The vulnerable group comprised people with special needs; the poor were the most vulnerable of this group. Whilst they needed their views to be considered, they did not trust the City Council and had little power to make changes. Empowerment of the vulnerable group was made with the support of community leaders who knew about Zifta’s problems and had access to different social groups (the poor as well as the rich). Elderly people were not considered to be vulnerable as, due to the existing traditions extracted from local social values, the family had a kind of social obligation towards its elderly members. This also emphasised the position of a family as the unit of the society. The elderly participated proactively in the process, playing a significant role in creating shared meaning and values by telling the younger participants stories about important events in the shared history of their city, an act which later contributed to building consensus. They also contributed their indigenous traditional knowledge.

**Community Leaders**

The community leaders were selected as key figures trusted by both the people and the politicians. This trust provided them with a kind of legitimacy to play a leadership role. This was clear from their ability to articulate their views with the participants and the staff in the City Council and the members of the Popular Council. We got to know five representative figures that played a crucial role during the project’s progress. The Head of the Popular Council was active in articulating the people’s views in the decisions taken by the City Council. He had good relations with the National Party, being a member of it, but also had the trust of most of the citizens. He gained his leadership from his commitment to respond to people’s requests and his old age. Another member of the group was a doctor, who seemed to have a strong relation with the charity organisations. He was well known among the citizens as a consequence of his active social role. He played a crucial role in building the larger network of source experts from Zifta that contributed later to the different planning stages. A woman teacher was very active in organising
women, school-age boys and girls, and people with special needs to be actively involved in the planning process. Her husband, who is an owner of a gold shop, played a role in initiating participatory budget mechanisms through the collection of local taxes from shop owners during the progress of the project. Another key figure was a pharmacist, who had good information about the city with respect to economic activities, physical problems, key figures in the city, and the types and efficiency of social programs carried out by different charity organisations. While the pharmacist was not invited by the City Council for the kick-off seminar, he seemed to be well known by them. In the planning team, we observed that the City Council staff despite their distancing themselves from him in the beginning appreciated him. I believed that the reason might be his close relation with the local faith-based organisations, which were not easily welcomed by the formal authority to participate in decision-making processes. However, I considered his twofold relation with the City Council on one side, and the faith-based organisation and economic actors in the informal sector on the other side, in addition to his social legitimacy, all to be assets that helped me to bridge the gap between the representatives from the formal and informal systems. During the project’s progress, the leadership of this group was confirmed as a result of their practices and reactions from the participants (Figure 11 shows an informal conversation between community leaders and citizens and youth participation). Here, I recall Ostrom’s (1999:507) argument, whereby she notes that “individuals are able to engage in problem solving to increase payoffs, to make promises, to build reputations for trustworthiness, to reciprocate trustworthiness with trust, and to punish those who are not trustworthy.” Thus the leadership of these people was legitimised by Zifta’s citizens and not by us (the planning team) or by the City Council. The Zifta project benefited from these community leaders and their social network and relationships.

Private Sector

The interest of members of the private sector category in the project varied from low to high according to the position of each member of the group. It included land owners, who played an interesting role (with the investors) in engaging in the allocation of development projects; the earth brick makers who opposed the activity aimed at relocating some of their activities outside the housing areas; the workshops owners, who played an integral role in preparing a participatory budget as a local initiative; the farmers, who contributed indigenous knowledge in farming and food processing and played a role in the relation between Zifta and the surrounding villages; and the business community and investors,
had good standing in the city and are involved in various activities including commercial enterprises, handicrafts and agriculture. Some business people play roles in local organisations and have good relationships with the City Council, which helped to improve the relationship between the formal and informal sectors at a later stage. Some investors took their participation as an opportunity to solve pending problems with the City Council (e.g., an investor took the opportunity offered by participating in a workshop to complain publicly about a delay in receiving permission for a project that would be of benefit to the city, after that discussion received a permit from the City Council to establish a poultry processing plant in Zifta). Others were involved in discussions with the consultant for local economic development about potential projects in cotton and food processing for investments in collaboration with landowners. The taxi drivers represented an interesting group that provided local knowledge, and the Friday Market representatives provided valuable information about the complex social and economic relationships between Zifta City and its surrounding villages.

**Locally Based Organisations**

In Zifta, most charity organisations carry out faith-based social programs. The first impression I had of these organisations (which I gained from informal discussions with the citizens) was that they were quite active and played a significant role in supporting the poor. This was not a surprise because it is known that faith-based organisations have become more effective in providing welfare services after the decline in social welfare associated with extensive economic liberalisation (Harrigan & El-Said 2009). Once in contact with one of these organisations, I was able to get to know more people who were active in these organisations and known among the citizens. By such means we as planning team obtained enough information about a number of organisations that played different but significant roles in providing welfare services to the citizens of Zifta. These organisations combined Islamic moral values with social and economic concerns. They worked with motivating competence efficiently to attract both volunteers to work with them and also donations supporting their social programs. They referred to religious language to communicate with the people, and were visible in the city under different names that specified their social role; some of them were active at the national level as well. Formally, the City Council should not recognise these organisations, but the staff employed by the City Council and a number of the Popular Council members, whom are mostly citizens in Zifta, seemed to benefit personally from the services provided by these organisations. I tried to take advantage of this fact to open up a space – despite the continuous control exercised by the City Council to limit their participation – to invite representatives from these organisations and understand their role in the urban reality of Zifta.

**Official Stakeholders**

This category included, namely, official representatives from the City Council, the Popular Council and the heads of sectoral departments from the Governorate. The role of these stakeholders was mostly technical, to support the planning process and provide technical information about different sectors. The aim of their participation was to enhance coordination between the sectoral departments and create institutional capacity in planning by applying the learning-by-doing approach. However, I observed that some employees in the city and popular councils are citizens of Zifta and appreciated the planning approach and contributed with
significant support during the project’s progress. Being from the city, they were able to provide me with valuable information about the society, organisations, key figures, and local assets that enriched the planning process.

**Analysis of Stakeholders**

Seeking inputs from citizens, politicians and different groups of interests was significant in the Zifta Demonstration Project, not only to achieve my goals as a practitioner (which was to implement good practice) but also to achieve my goals as a researcher (to learn under what conditions these stakeholders could work collaboratively despite their differences). With reference to the knowledge I gained from my reading in relation to the different groups of interests, and using Crosely and Bryson’s (2005) work, during the project I developed a relatively complete typology – the ‘stakeholder analysis matrix’ – which is illustrated in Table 3. This matrix outlines the stakeholders’ interests in the project and their potential roles, thus indicating their level of participation in relation to the needs of the planning process. The matrix also details the strategies required to gain their support and to reduce obstacles in the planning process. The roles played by the identified stakeholders were a little complex and overlapped in different areas - e.g., a businessman who was looking for investing in cotton processing had a crucial role in social welfare programs; the Head of the Popular Council was a member of the National party, had good credibility in the city and played a leading role in the community; staff from the City Council showed great support for including citizens from Zifta in the process, thereby opposing the general policy of the City Council in this regard; taxi drivers had their own plots for small farming activities; and some farmers were involved in food processing or selling their goods at the Friday Market. These categories of stakeholders participated in the main workshops that led to the formulation of the city vision. After that, they were divided into small groups according to their interest and competences to participate in the formulation of the different thematic developments.

The initial landscape of the stakeholders illustrates certain differences between the groups, and in addition to my observation of the complicated relation between the faith-based organisations and the City Council, gender sensitivity is also an issue to be managed carefully when women participate in such processes in a traditional society. Taking advantage of being a woman provided me with an easy access to speak with local women and ensure that spaces were given to them to participate and voice their views. In an extreme case, I was obliged to react quite strongly when a man tried to limit a woman from given her views during a discussion in a workshop. An added value in being woman was that conservative women felt more comfortable in communicating with me and discussing further roles to play. I remember that a Muslim conservative woman, who used to cover her face with what is called locally ‘borq’oa’ when she was participating in the workshops, came to the first workshop without covering her face. At the last stage when we had built a quite good relationship, I was curious and asked her why she did so, she explained that to me by saying that, “The first time, you had the right to see my face and recognise my voice, this doesn’t contradict with my religion, and then I think you were able to recognise me by just hearing my voice.” This woman was very active in the process and was able to mobilise a number of women with several initiatives e.g. a group of teachers initiated private lessons to be given for students in need of free of charge education; she was also involved in the local initiatives of cleaning and greening of Zifta.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Groups of interests</th>
<th>Role in the project/inputs</th>
<th>Level of participation and potential strategies to gain support and reduce obstacles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Zifta's citizens</td>
<td>Teachers. Educated youth. School-age boys and girls. Taxi drivers. Elderly people. Vulnerable (slum dwellers). People with special needs.</td>
<td>Gradual development of their role and inputs. They created initiatives and implemented them. The youth mobilised more people and attracted wider support, distributing questionnaires. The elderly shared experiences and memories with the younger group and provided them with indigenous local knowledge – in e.g., agriculture, food processing and artisanal work.</td>
<td>Improve gradually to become key actors in the process. Ensure balance in power relations. Sustain their enthusiasm and consider their interests. Turn discussions from problem-oriented to assets-based and opportunity-oriented. Combine their local knowledge with technical knowledge.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community leaders</td>
<td>Key figures in the city.</td>
<td>Bridge between capitals: formal/ informal. Provided some knowledge about the reality of the city. Able to articulate ideas between different categories of stakeholders. Supported the implementation of local initiatives. Contributed to sustaining stakeholders' commitment.</td>
<td>Work collaboratively. Ensure legitimacy. Benefit from their role to bridge the formal/informal gap.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private sector</td>
<td>Business people and investors; land owners Friday Market vendors; small-scale food-processing industries; workshop owners; car and lorry maintenance; earth brick makers; scattered workshops.</td>
<td>Represent the capital that mostly exists outside the formal sector. Looking for opportunities to maximise their benefits. Some established development projects within the umbrella of the Zifta Strategic Plan. Contributed with important knowledge about the local assets in the city. Some played observers’ roles with little interest in making changes, and were too busy and worried about the impact of any possible changes on their existing situations.</td>
<td>Level of participation varies between: Active (due to personal interest in benefiting from the project output) and reluctant (those who participate occasionally due to their worries from the adverse impact of the project). Combine local and expert knowledge and create opportunities. Minimise worry when possible, by providing with alternative solutions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local organisations</td>
<td>Organisations that provide welfare services: Clinics, nurseries, social programs for poor people, food bank, women's saving groups, Righteousness and piety; Community Development Association; care for people with special needs and orphans.</td>
<td>Represent the alternative welfare system in the city. Provide valuable information about how things are done in the reality and inform about the existing gap left by the government in social services to the poorest groups. Local knowledge about incorporating local cultural values to maximise the performance of these organisations.</td>
<td>Work collaboratively. Bridge the gap between them and the City Council, and maximise their inputs in the plan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Official Stakeholders</td>
<td>City Council; Popular Council; Sectoral Departments at El-Gharbieh Governorate</td>
<td>Their interest was to maintain control on the process. Provided with some technical information about the city but with little reliability. Benefit from staff's indirect information about the city</td>
<td>High level of participation to control the process and ensure that suitability of the output. Keep them satisfied. Change their attitude about the collaboration with informal system by supporting the implementation of collaborative initiatives. Maintain their commitment. Provide feedback, listen to their views, and convince them about the importance of informal system. Balanced relation with them to sustain their inputs.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 - The stakeholder typology as it evolved during the progress of the project
Urban Situational Analysis

Analysis of the information obtained from social interactions with the stakeholders through field visits, informal meetings and focus groups was prepared and discussed openly with stakeholders during the ‘City Profile Workshop’ held at the City Council Hall in May 2006. The daylong workshop included presentations about the urban conditions in Zifta according to existing data obtained from the City Council. Photos and videos that were taken during our city visits were presented to the participants as visual illustration of the urban reality of the city to stimulate discussions. The urban issues discussed covered both the role of the major economic activities that contribute to Zifta’s development, and socio-economic relationships in the city and their relation to the built environment and contemporary urban conditions. We prepared flipcharts to be used for simple and free hand sketching for illustrations of Zifta’s relation to its surroundings, and provided coloured sheets to distinguish between the participants’ views about various urban issues. The aim was to obtain qualitative views about the factors influencing contemporary urban conditions in Zifta – factors that emerged from the history and the geography of the city, and determined its relational network with the surroundings (Figure 12, 13, and 14 show some aspects of the urban conditions in Zifta).

Historically, Zifta was once an important centre for agriculture and agricultural industries in the El-Gharbieh Governorate. The most important agricultural products were cotton and flax. Since the ‘Infitab’ economic policy, industrial production has declined owing to a lack of a proper industrial development strategy, an inability to compete in international markets and poor technology.
Privatisation has resulted in a shift in the production of strategic crops to the production of fruit and vegetables for the local market as well as for export. Many industries have been closed down. The vacant industrial sites are sold to the private sector for different types of commercial construction. The few public sector industries that are still functioning face an economic deficit due to the lack of interest from policy makers in making improvements. The jobs of several thousands of workers employed by these factories are consequently threatened. In 2004, large demonstrations were organised in Tanta by workers from different cities including Zifta, to protest the government’s privatisation policy.

Agricultural production and its related activities, however, remain the main economic source of income for the majority of low and middle-income citizens in Zifta and the surrounding villages. The development policy applied over the last five decades has been inadequate to cope with the challenge of rapid urbanisation. This has led to wide encroachment on scarce and valuable agricultural land and increases in other types of economic activities that serve the building construction sector. These fragmented activities replaced the industrial processing sector that was based on agricultural production. These activities vary from plumbing, metalworking, welding, electrical services, car maintenance and the repair of locomotives and lorries, the manufacture of agricultural machinery, brick clay mixing for earth brick production, to small-scale food production industries. Many of these activities are undertaken within the informal system – a finding that proved inconsistent with the data obtained from the City Council when compared with our own information, data and observations; and the survey of economic activities undertaken by the technical experts at a later stage.

Zifta is located on the Nile River and is connected by road to its surrounding villages, and the cities of Tanta, Benha and Zagazig. The existing road network, despite its poor condition, is useful for the economic and social exchange between the city and the surrounding
villages. Rapid urbanisation remains a major challenge for the protection of Zifta’s valuable arable land. The current building construction law restricts the height of buildings and prevents vertical expansion, but can contribute instead to horizontal expansion. This law was considered an obstacle to increasing the density of the existing urban area of the city. The most deteriorated network in the city is the wastewater management system, although the garbage collection also functions poorly. Both create severe environmental impacts in poor neighbourhoods of the city and pollute the Nile River. The phone network, in contrast, functions very well and private mobile phone operators provide quite a good quality of service. The housing stock is in reasonable shape with the exception of housing located within the slums on the city’s southern edge, though significant differences exist between affluent and poor neighbourhoods.

The major strengths of the city are its geographical location on the Nile River, which links the East and the West of the Delta; fertile and high quality agriculture land, which facilitates the production of strategic crops such as flax and cotton, in addition to the production of grapes, citrus fruits, rice, etc.; the existence of livestock and poultry; the informal economic system that contributes greatly to the general income; the social network, which provides an alternative welfare system that consists of faith-based organisations, individual donors, clubs, assemblies and associations; and its human resources, namely the existence of thousands of young graduates that are unemployed and living in the city, who have are willing to play a role in the development of their city.

These factors can be associated with a number of opportunities, which in turn need to be considered when undertaking planning. These opportunities include: the availability of vacant urban spaces and agricultural areas within the city; the non-developed islands in the Nile with strong potential for development; the socio-economic integration and mutual benefits between Zifta and the surrounding villages; the interest of business people from Zifta and the surrounding villages in the city’s development; and local awareness of the capacity of existing capital, despite its fragmentation. Collaborative planning provides an opportunity to Zifta’s citizens to decide priorities. This opportunity was strengthened by the support offered by the Head of the Popular Council for the participation of local stakeholders in the project, and the support of both the Governor and the GOPP, who saw the
Zifta project as an important demonstration project. An additional opportunity to be considered is the motivation at the central level to support the changes created by applying new planning knowledge through the Zifta project.

Parallel to these summarised strengths and opportunities, there also a number of weaknesses and threats to be addressed in the Zifta Strategic Plan. These include: the encroachment of urban development on agricultural land, which led to the decline of the agricultural sector in favour of other sectors such as building construction; poorly functioning basic infrastructure, in particular the wastewater system (namely in slum areas), the traffic system and environmental management; increases in poverty; a lack of skills among employees of the City Council; a lack of coordination among the various sectoral departments, which has decreased the efficiency of service provision; a lack of financial resources allocated to the city from the central level; popular council members who did not represent the local people, and the absence of citizen’s participation in the decision-making process in the city; fragmented local capital sources and tension in the relations between formal and informal systems in the city; a national economic (liberal market) policy that doesn’t protect small-scale farmers from the power of competition of large companies; an export of crops and fruit that has been manipulated by one large firm, which left little marginal profit to the farmers; and a lack of job opportunities that has led to an increase in migration among the educated and skilled people to bigger cities or foreign countries. A lack of shared confidence between the people and the authority forms an additional obstacle to collaborative planning and implementation.
Within its regional context, Zifta has strong economic and social relations with its surrounding villages. The city and the surrounding villages mutually benefit from each other. The villagers contribute their agricultural production, and the city provides them with marketing opportunities, industrial and food processing, and services. Job opportunities are of mutual benefit to the city and the villages. We were, however, told a very different story when it comes to the city’s relation with the neighbouring cities, for instance with Mitt Ghamr city, which is bigger and has a larger market that attracts the city’s financial capital.

Economically, people in Zifta claimed that Mitt-Ghamr and Cairo were magnets that attracted the financial capital of the citizens instead of it being spent within Zifta and thus contributing to the city’s development. In the City Profile Workshop, I presented a map of Zifta showing the surrounding villages and main cities, to initiate a discussion about the relationship of Zifta with its surroundings in order to understand the factors that shape the socio-economical relational network in Zifta and the surrounding built environment (Figure 15 shows workshop where knowledge obtained from the stakeholders’ views about their city). The discussion concluded that despite the fact that Zifta’s citizens appreciated the mutual benefit between them and the villagers, they have different views when they explained their relation with Mitt Ghamr and other bigger cities. They expressed their worry about the deficit position they had with the larger neighbouring city. This deficit was explained by stakeholder’s words, who said, “We depend on Mitt-Ghamr to buy our goods e.g. clothes, furniture and technical commodities, we spend our money there instead of spending it here and contributing to the development of Zifta, and we buy goods from Mitt-Ghamr or many times from Cairo as well.” The citizens claim that money flowed out of Zifta and into Mitt-Ghamr, and they concluded that Zifta’s trade with Mitt-Ghamr is characterised by deficit.

Simple Illustration of Mainstream Economic Development – Lessons Learned

Zifta provided a very simple illustration of the impact of different development doctrines within a less developed country (LDC). Hamdi (2010) argues that the evolution of development ideals invented in pursuit of development in the LDCs in our short history have promoted dependency and not self-sufficiency, and that (in contrast to the developers’ assumptions) the benefits do not enrich the poor. Freidman (1992) calls for an alternative economic model to replace the mainstream economic development models, the starting point for which would be the locality and its self-reliance. He calls for planning for ‘hope’ out of ‘failure’. The scholars’ debate focuses on the failure of economists’ claims that have favoured development guided by market–efficient economic growth. They argue against the economists’ views of economic growth as the main solution to poverty problems. The urban reality of Zifta presents a local illustration of the failure of the dominant economic model as explained by its citizens. The trade deficit of Zifta in relation to Mitt Ghamr provides an example of the general trend of rural/urban or poor/rich commodity transactions under the liberal market economy, or ‘infitah’ in Egyptian. Such trade deficits characterise most poor cities in the developing world – Zifta is not an exception.

We, as planners and stakeholders, had learned about the reasons behind the contemporary failure of a city like Zifta. The people believed that the flow of the financial capital out of Zifta to the larger neighbouring cities, and misplaced development priorities, had contributed to that failure. Some of them considered that the accessibility to mobile phones and TV satellite systems was not more important than securing food or improving the livelihood of a household. This is in line
with the critical views of Egyptian economist Amin, G. (2006) regarding the illusion of progress he observes in general in the whole Arabic region.

As planners, we learned that the challenge lay not only in how planning would work but that also in what ends planning knowledge could provide. This can be examined in connection with Harvey’s (1978) debate about planning’s attempts to achieve better and useful functions in respect to locations, and his question: For whom should such functions be useful and better? The discussion of the outflow of money from Zifta and the issue of misplaced development priorities are real challenges that face the city, and the whole country according to Amin, G. (2006). Planners, according to Harvey (1978), are responsible for bringing about a new ideology of planning that is able to reproduce a balanced social order. The challenge is how to better place priorities and plan for development that is rooted in the reality of Zifta, that is based on its assets, and that is in harmony with its context. How to translate these thoughts into development goals and projects? This is not an easy question to answer, as it is related to national and international factors and definitely falls outside the scope of this study. But in relation to Zifta, understanding priorities from the people’s perspectives was a necessity in order to plan for development that was useful (for them), well placed and rooted in the institutional reality of their city.

The Characteristics of Zifta’s Context

Zifta provided an opportunity to examine what potential a new context has to influence the practices of collaborative planning and make it more appropriate to that context. Understanding how things are done in Zifta was necessary to ensure that the planning process would deal with the urban reality of the city and its institutional settings, and would produce an implementable strategic plan for Zifta. But to catch what potential the Zifta context offered, it was essential to untangle the institutional structure of the city and investigate its associated values, values inherited from the history of the society and still functioning in that society. In doing this, I made use (as a researcher) of the strands of thought underpinning collaborative planning – particularly, Giddensian institutionalist sociology and Habermasian communicative action. This was achieved firstly by identifying the characteristics of Zifta’s context through examining the institutional structure of the society, with its formal and informal systems; and secondly, through the investigating the associated cultural values of that structure, the society’s interrelationships, and its communication patterns. Out of this analysis, local dimensions that may influence collaborative planning practices in Zifta were identified.

Formal System

The existing top-down planning approach applied by the government for a long time has a bureaucratic form that engages in a one-way communication with the people. Knowledge in such a system rests exclusively at the top of the hierarchy and avoids any possible interaction with the local knowledge that leads to real changes in a city. In this context, planners play the role of technical experts or physical planners in making a plan. The private sector and investors (who play a significant role in development) do not participate in planning processes. While they may take advantage of an approved plan, their work is mostly based on their own initiatives and does not follow any plan. The citizens have no role in the formal planning process; the local Popular
Council is supposed to be the body that represents their interests, replacing the direct participation of the citizens.

There is some emphasis legally on the role of the City Council to decide priorities in terms of infrastructural sectors. But in reality, what happens in Zifta outside the formal process is clearly divorced from this role. The city and popular councils in Zifta mirror the Egyptian ‘Soft State’, which is characterised by corruption and inefficiency.

All major projects, and the allocation of economic resources, are decided centrally. Furthermore, it is recognised among planners and staff at the GOPP, the Governorate, and the city and popular councils of Zifta that the allocation of funds for implementation of the planned projects is not just centralised but is generally also insufficient. For political reasons, this is usually combined with exaggerated figures from the authorities in the presentation of future plans, goals, or even achieved progress. This was clearly observed in the data obtained from the City Council of Zifta, which presents the achieved progress in terms of services provision, development and infrastructure projects in an exaggerated way.

Additionally, the formal system's decision-making process is applied in isolation from the involvement of citizens, the private sector, and the locally based organisations that are the real developers in Zifta. The result of this system has been the improper implementation of planned projects, which has led to the people’s lack of confidence in politicians and increased the lack of realism amongst the officials in the City Council, taking them further away from the real development that has occurred locally in the city. This was remarkably observed when the Head of the City Council was surprised when he discovered that the largest fleet of lorries for heavy transport in Egypt is owned by the private sector in Zifta, and is not documented in the formal economic figures of the city.

With reference to Giddens (1984), one can understand that in Zifta, the formal rules – e.g., laws and regulations in Zifta in relation to local development – are seldom implemented and have a minimal role in the exercise of control over on-going informal development. The resources for the implementation of development and infrastructure projects are allocated centrally and are insufficient for achieving the planned objectives. For instance, a large waste management project initiated few years ago was never completed due to lack of finance. The informal system has developed to solve the problems left by the formal system, making use of the rules assigned by the social values and distributing the produced resources accordingly. Thus, against the backdrop of the formal system, local informal actions are strengthened by the strong social relationships and structured in line with the collective characters of Zifta’s society and its cultural values.
Informal System

The existing institutional structure in Zifta informs the ability to apply informal rules that offer alternative ways and means for an individual to exert control over his/her own life. As such, the informal sector in economic activities, welfare programs and housing settlements has grown, replacing and filling the gaps left by the City Council. A large part of the current development of Zifta is a result of the accumulation of the local people’s initiatives over time. These initiatives are produced by informal institutions, in accordance with their rules and available resources. In fact, most of the urbanisation and development progress in Zifta have been initiated by local actions (see Figure 16).

This can be seen in the development of the economic sector. Many of the occupied spaces for small workshops have been created in open spaces beside the streets, on the sidewalk, or on any other vacant land within the built area. These activities secure incomes for thousands of families. These workshops deal with vehicle maintenance, and selling goods, vegetables and local traditional fast food – e.g., ‘tameyeh’ and ‘koshary’. An open market day organised by villagers and citizens in Zifta became a weekly event at the weekend (Friday in Egypt). On Fridays, villagers and citizens gather in the centre of the city to sell the milk, cheese and vegetables that they have produced, together with vendors of clothes and domestic goods. During this event, the centre is turned into a pedestrian-only zone. At the end of the day, the sellers collect what is left, clean the place and leave. This market attracts thousands of people, generating substantial economic activity and strengthening the existing socio-economic network between Zifta and the surrounding villages.

The importance of informal activities can also be seen in their contribution to the provision of welfare services. In Zifta, a range of social programs was built with reference to a number of cultural principles practised in the community. These varied from a group of women organising ‘Gameyay’, saving money to be paid to each of them on a rotating basis, to large associations providing welfare services. The poverty level in Egypt, as well as in Zifta, has increased dramatically in the last
few decades (Harrigan & El-Said 2009). The number of charitable organisations has also increased. Most of these organisations work actively to provide different kinds of services to the poor. The main financial source for these organisations is donations from individuals, families or business people according to principles of solidarity and the collective spirit manifested in the responsibility towards the less fortunate people that is practised in the society. The activities of these organisations are diverse and cover residences for orphans, the blind, the deaf, mute and others with special needs; literacy and schools; organising the collection of used clothes for the poor; regular visits to poor families and the elderly to investigate their needs and arrange help accordingly; the recycling and reuse of discarded domestic goods; the organising of food programs to secure daily meals for poor families; in addition to other health and clinical services. These organisations vary in scale and have established an alternative welfare system with the purpose of filling the gap left by the formal system in providing services to society. The contribution of such organisations is, however, limited when compared to the enormous needs of the society.

Informal settlements, built on agricultural land owned by the people, represent a large segment of both the growth from urbanisation and the housing stock. These settlements are informal because the law restricts construction on this land. The rules stated by the formal sector to control the rapid expansion and protect agricultural land lacked the resources required to make them implementable. The absence of affordable housing for low and middle income people and the decrease in agricultural crop production as a result of the deterioration of related industrial activities have together have created an opportunity for the informal rules to function and fill the gaps left by the formal sector. This is visible in the expansion of housing areas located on agriculture land, which has been considered the only way to obtain affordable shelter. Encroachment has also invaded the centre of the city, where commercial and small-scale manufacturing activities were established largely on vacant land owned by the government. The irregular distribution of activities created considerable traffic movement and acute congestion at a number of points. Informal housing has not only emerged at the edges of the city but also in the centre, through the rapid modification of low-rise buildings, for instance through additions and alterations to the existing building in the form of balconies or additional floors without permits or built informally on any vacant land. While the population of the city has grown, the rapid expansion has continued; with no recognition of this by the formal system, the infrastructure in the city has become heavily overburdened, creating malfunctions.

The Structure of Zifta’s Society – A Discussion Based on Giddens

The different components of the structure of Zifta’s society demonstrate its institutional settings and provide an understanding of the role of associated cultural values in keeping this structure functioning. Reflecting on Giddens’ (1984) theory of structuration, society structure constitutes a continuing pattern of actions structured along certain lines established by rules and resources; human agency is constrained by these rules and resources and the possession of certain kinds of power agency affects the ability of an actor to create change and reproduce the system. I tried to analyse this institutional structure, with its formal and informal patterns, and identify which lines of rules and resources are practised in that pattern. This helped me to understand the potentialities of the existing relational network capacity of Zifta’s society, and provided a new interpretation of collaborative planning as it was practised in Zifta. For Giddens, ‘structures’ can
be market exchange, political organisation, institutions, etc.; ‘rules’ can be, for example, procedural, law, languages, cultural practices, moral rules, etc.; and ‘resources’ are, for example, the means of production, commodities, income, capital goods, or related to time and space such as formal organisation, production and reproduction, social mobility, legitimacy, authority, etc.

Here, the social system of Zifta is characterised by types of rules that are formally stated by the City Council (e.g., through laws and regulations); resources are allocated by this formal system (e.g., through services, production means, etc.). These rules are rarely implemented, due to the lack of an implementation mechanism and the limitation of resources. Other rules, which are inherited from the norms and values of the society, are implemented. These are informally instituted in the society and regulate the use of available resources. These types of formal and informal rules and resources create a social structure that shows asymmetrical social relationships. This asymmetry is shaped by three (interrelated) dimensions:

1. The gap left by the government in terms of the provision of social welfare services.
2. The existence of a shadow and parallel welfare system rooted in the profound ideological value of the large number of (mostly Islamic) faith-based organisations in Zifta, as well as other forms of donations from society’s collective spirit of solidarity and mutual responsibility.
3. The official policies applied by the formal system that led to an increased poverty rate and widened the gap between rich and poor, thus strengthening the relationship between the people and the informal system.

The relationship between the city and the popular councils, and the faith-based organisations mirrors the neglect of these organisations by the Egyptian regime, despite their significant role in social welfare service provision and the formation of social assets. This ignorance contributes further to the asymmetry of social relationships in Zifta.

The existing relational network in Zifta establishes a context in which human agency (on the behalf of citizens) is not strongly constrained by rules and is never without resources. As such, citizens never absolutely lack the ability to exert influence or to make

[Figure 17 – Asymmetric relationship shapes the society’s structure

*Inspired by Crosby and Bryson (2005:8) and developed by the author*]
changes. But the asymmetrical character of this relational network has created inequality in citizen’s access to resources. This means that the citizens in the social structure web of Zifta are not positioned equally in relation to available resources. Some – business people, wealthy people and educated groups – have greater access to resources in terms of knowledge, finance or information. Others – like poor people who rely on the efforts of charity and cannot afford their daily expenses – have less access to resources on the same terms. The asymmetrical positioning of individuals creates different interaction routines, which lead to a reproduction of social practices that strengthens the asymmetry in social relations. On the one hand, asymmetry is manifested through the increased gap between rich and poor, but on the other hand it is illustrated in the mutual relations inspired by the collective spirit of the society, which do not allow the poor to absolutely lack accessibility to resources. This was clearly visible in the role played by the charity organisations and the individual donations that provide regular supports to families in need. Thus, the interaction of the daily routines that form the institutional structures of Zifta society is the visible object of the duality and asymmetry of human agency (see Figure 17). These interactions vary between:

- The formal interactions practised by the city and popular councils (characterised by inefficiency, non-implementable rules, reductions in welfare services provisions, limited resources and corruption); and,
- The informal interactions practised by locally based organisations (characterised by collective economic activities such as the Friday Market, different charitable forms, family-based economic activities, and interdependence that provides mutual support among the actors of the informal sectors). The functioning mechanism of the informal is guided by the society’s cultural values, which determine the rules and the ways of distributing resources in charitable forms or basic welfare services as practised by the citizens.

Social Values Associated with Zifta’s Institutional Structure

The values associated with Zifta’s society – namely those that carry collaborative characteristics – have strength and blend socio-cultural and religious influences. One can observe a common thread of values running through the social fabric of the city. From my observation of social interrelationships on the ground, and with reference to Arabic scholars addressing Egyptian socio-cultural values, I was able to identify two main aspects that may strengthen collaborative actions:

- The reciprocal and mutual role of the individual, the family and the society; and,
- The social terms associated with communication patterns, and their role in establishing and fostering dialogue between the members of the society.

These aspects are reflected in the society’s interrelationships, language and practices. The intercultural communication competence within Arabic societies (including Egypt) is discussed by Zaharna (2009) and Ayish (2003). Zaharna (2009) notes that in Arabic society, building social relations paves the way for getting things done. For the purpose of practising collaborative planning in Zifta, the values that characterised such relations may provide a reference that contributes to a situational definition of lifeworld, a concept that, according to Habermas (1987), guides communicative actions.
During the workshops, the roles of participants reflected the mutual responsibility of an individual in relation to his/her own family and to his/her society; this was clearly demonstrated in the views expressed by the participants. Several examples were raised of families where the older son had left his higher education to work to secure income for the other members of the family and provided support for the education of his younger brothers or sisters. The elderly are rarely left without the support of their sons or daughters in Zifta. In many cases, they are not left alone in their houses but move to their children’s homes. Moreover, it is considered shameful and against society’s values not to take responsibility for the elderly members of a family. Through the participation of a group of elderly stakeholders, I was informed that there were no care homes for the elderly in Zifta, as it was said that there was no need for them. Elderly people lived permanently with their son or daughter’s family, and special care was given to them when needed. It is rare for elderly people to move to care homes in Egypt in general, even if this is affordable.

It was also observed that the views of the youth represented not just their own needs but their positions in society as well. The youth, especially the educated and graduated (e.g., the engineers) played a central role in providing support to different initiatives (e.g., those created by the women’s groups like the planting of balconies, which the young engineers supported by providing technical information about how to insulate the ground before plantation to avoid water leakage). The school-age boys and girls were encouraged by their parents to regularly participate in the family enterprises. The extended family network played in some cases an important role in allocating a job to the newly graduated son or daughter. In the artistic and traditional handicraft activities, young boys were trained in preparation for taking over the economic activities established by their parents to keep the activity within the family. The family-based economic activities, such as some agricultural production and food processing, took the form of small-scale family enterprises.

The strong role of agricultural activities in Zifta’s economy allows children to contribute to the family economy, a relation through which the child’s economic value contributes to the family livelihood. The independence of a growing child is not valued because it may be considered as threat to the family livelihood in addition to other religious values that emphasise the responsibility of children towards their families. This is clearly visible in a range of different types of family enterprises, which vary from agricultural production and processing to and art/craft activities. The collective character of the society strengthens a culture of family relatedness. The collective actions taken by groups of producers, vendors and business people to create and manage the Friday Market regularly in the centre of the city emphasise the role of the existing social network. In Zifta, the social network – with its sequential order of individual and mutual responsibility towards the family and thus towards the society – is an asset that provides mutual benefit which members can cultivate. The importance of maintaining family relationships and an extended social network plays a central role in reducing conflict between individuals where social interventions are considered important to mediate conflict and sustain relationships.

From the discussion set out above, it seems that the inherited values of the Egyptian society in general have helped to resist shifts from being a pro-family society to being a pro-individual
society. The society in Zifta supports the central role of the family and prioritises group goals over individual ones. Furthermore, the official policy, which in many cases is influenced by traditional principles, favours the rights and responsibilities of the family over the rights of the individual. The dominant gender norms encourage and reward motherhood. The establishment of a family is supported by the values of society, which encourage marriage as a traditional and religious obligation. The culture advocates the complementary roles of family members as important for the family’s optimal successes. In addition to the economic factors that determine the family relationship, the dominant social norm is influenced by religion as well and the parent’s home remains the place where family members are protected and supported by each other until each member has established their own family after marriage. In this respect, the majority of children, male and female, live together with their parents until they get married, even if they reach adulthood and achieve certain independent economic status and regardless of the livelihood conditions of the family. The family interaction is characterised by interdependence between generations in both material and emotional realms. This character can also be viewed from the perspective of collectivism that characterises Egyptian society according to Hofstede’s (2001) scale.

**Social Terms Shaped Communication Patterns in Zifta**

I observed that the communication between the participants, members of the planning team and GOPP staff reflected a certain concern to sustain social interrelations, not just as colleagues working in the same milieu, but also to strengthen certain levels of relationship between each other. Social greetings were extended to emphasise closeness and support the interest of a pro-family society, especially when touching upon families and private matters. For example, after being invited to have a cup of coffee, people do not merely express ‘thanks’ but they extend their thanks into congratulating their host’s son’s or daughter’s special event or wishing the success of the children in exams – such greetings show that people know each other’s family members and their private events. The ‘we’ consciousness is clear in expressing matters of common interest, problems and even sharing limited resources. The mutual roles and responsibilities of the individual, family and society form the social relationships associated with the socio-cultural values that have shaped communication patterns in Zifta. It is important to become familiar with these social terms in establishing communication, carrying out a dialogue and further cultivating consensus.

Understanding the communication routines of the people in Zifta was important to me as an outsider. In workshops, focus groups and meetings much time was spent on social greetings because this is an important feature of the society. For example, when people met, one could observe that they spoke to each other warmly and their conversations could take quite a long time (sometimes, it was even embarrassing to interrupt) – greetings could even take quite a long time, integrating unlimited blessings and questions about family, children and health conditions. As an Arab language native and having grown up in Lebanon, I had the competence to communicate with these people linguistically and socially; this was important in order to be accepted by them and to be able to identify their social relationships. As a planning team, we tried to momentarily be a part of these social interactions, as much as was appropriate to the working conditions – e.g., through greetings on occasion of illness, by arranging frequent meetings outside the City Council to add more informality to our conversations, and by taking the initiative to
celebrate the approval of the plan with the Zifta Strategic Plan Committee in the Tanta office at the end of the project.

**A Situational Definition of the Lifeworld in Zifta – A Discussion Based on Habermas**

Habermas’ (1987) communicative theory is conceptually linked to the textually based speech of a society. Habermas suggests that speakers and listeners will refer to certain criteria, or a ‘lifeworld’, in order to judge and complement communication actions. The lifeworld can be internally constructed in the process of communication, through which participants correlate their mutual understanding and interpretations, their standpoints and their critical views towards the validation of their communication. For the society in Zifta, the validation of communication action is judged by its accordance with the values of the society, values that are reflected in daily practices and manifested in different forms of actions. Thus, I think the values that people practice in their daily routine may build the benchmark on which a society agrees upon to judge an ideal speech situation. Reference to these values was frequently made by participants in the Zifta Demonstration Project, when they discussed common concerns – e.g., the reasons behind their contributions to a charitable organisation, the collective actions based on solidarity value and a culture of relatedness and the mutual responsibility between Zifta’s inhabitants. In the Zifta context, the lifeworld of Zifta’s society can be defined with reference to values that are culturally inherited from the history of the society, blended with religious values. These values include: solidarity, mutual responsibility between the individual and society, the collective spirit influenced by the society’s shared history, individual interdependence which emphasises collective interests, and the influence of cultural relatedness on societal practices. These altogether can be considered as local references to measure truth, rightness, and sincerity; or, more precisely, references to validate communication actions and thus to potentially build consensus on common concerns. Additionally, the references of the situational definition of lifeworld in Zifta raise the question of religion in relation to its influence on forging local values and its role in the development of Zifta, for instance through faith-based organisations. Religion therefore plays a crucial role in motivating collaborative actions within a community. It is also noted that Habermas (2010) draws attention to religions as they contain moral resources that motivate citizens, and are necessary in justifying the principle of consensus in many societies.

**Incorporating the Identified Values in the Process Helped to Build Consensus**

The praxis of cultural values was materialised through three planning actions intended to build consensus on the Zifta Vision. These actions were: memory of successful events in history; assets kept to the forefront of participants’ minds; and imagination for hope, which helped the building of self-confidence in the city’s capacity and created the inspiration for positive change. The practical actions of this stage included an Asset Mapping Workshop (see Figure 18), which aimed to strengthen the capacity of the people in discovering their city, and a Visioning Workshop (see Figures 19, 20, 21, 22). At the Visioning Workshop, I used simple visualisation techniques to explain what was meant by the ‘Zifta Vision’ (a new concept in the city’s planning) and engaged in vision formulation using a simple version of the Delphi method (which comprises several rounds of questions in which stakeholders and experts participated, in addition to questionnaires designed to obtain resident views and visions of their city and to quantify the value of the vision).
In carrying out these actions, my dual role became more and more integrated, where my capacity as a researcher to reflect on each action helped me as a practitioner to improve the performance of actions.

The planning process benefited from the praxis of cultural values by generating knowledge from the participants’ experiences. This furthermore demonstrated the significant role of these values in daily routines and reflected importance of events in the shared history of the people. The participants contributed during the process with relevant narratives – stories were told, historical events were highlighted and participants exchanged life experiences – which created shared meanings that helped in building consensus.

**Zifta Citizens Discovered ‘Themselves’ – ‘Hope’ Out of ‘Failure’**

To discover the assets of the city of Zifta, I applied what is called an appreciative inquiry approach to shift the discussion about development from a problem-driven orientation to an asset-driven one. I experienced the influence of this approach in the positive transformation of the attitudes of citizens, officials, local planners and experts with respect to the capacity of their city. The stakeholders became inspired to formulate a vision with positive actions for change, rather than placing an exclusive focus on needs and problems. Making this shift did not mean ignoring the current problems in Zifta, which were obviously numerous; rather, I wanted to turn the negative effects of that approach into an approach that would build the confidence of the people in their city. This did not imply that Zifta did not need additional resources from outside to make development changes, but rather was about mobilising Zifta’s people in mapping their existing assets in order to set the agenda regarding the additional resources that needed to be obtained. The experience of learning about their capacity through their interaction with historical,

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11 I learned about the appreciative inquiry approach from SIPU Consultant’s leader in the Zifta Demonstration Project, Tim Greenhow, who encourages the idea of shifting discussions from being problem-based to being asset-based.
cultural, social, economic and political occurrences created energy for change amongst the people of Zifta. Such a source of energy was needed to enable Zifta’s people to grow beyond the current problems of their city.

The asset mapping included social, economic, physical, environmental, and natural resources. Participants were encouraged to tell success stories, discovering the assets of the city in all development sectors, so as to provide a platform from which to move towards formulating the ‘City Vision’. Shifting the discussion towards the consideration of assets did not hide the existence of problems, which also came up in discussions throughout the process (namely, in relation to the relationships between formal and informal actors). Fraught discussions between representatives from the City Council and the stakeholders reflected a difficult relationship. Similar to the views obtained from the people that were randomly selected and interviewed during the city visits, the discussion also stressed the failure of the City Council to deliver services. Evidence was provided that demonstrated the failure in the relationship between the formal and informal systems in the city; this represented the core of the debate, through which the citizens expressed their desires in relation to the future of their city. For the people, the problem is their relation with the formal system, which has (over the years) failed to provide efficient services. For them, the formal system was not able to mobilise the city’s assets for the benefit of its citizens.

Focusing on Zifta’s strengths in the asset mapping exercise increased awareness of the city’s capacity amongst both the people and officials. Stakeholders’ experience of the work of the faith-based social programs was put forward as an example that demonstrated mutual responsibility among people based on their social values. This was compared with the lengthy bureaucracy and neglect of the poor’s dignity when seeking services from the City Council. The staff of the City Council defended themselves by citing their limitations due to central decisions, and their insufficient resources. The participants were able to present, in factual terms, the social and economic capacity of the city. That discussion fostered dialogue between officials and the different categories of stakeholders, and pointed out the need to enhance the relationship from both sides.

The participants questioned the absence of their role in the decision-making process. They asked for the direct election of the Head of the City Council. One participant said, “It is important that we who live in Zifta decide who will manage the city, we never know who is going to be assigned as Head of the City Council – the change happens without us being informed. When the Head is from Zifta and is elected by us, we will be able to communicate with him better, to work with him, and to judge his capacity to rule the City Council or not. At the same time, when the Head is aware of Zifta’s conditions, he can contribute to its development”. This view was accepted by representatives of Zifta’s citizens and, surprisingly, the staff of the City Council, who were also unhappy about the unexpected changes of Head.

This discussion provided an opportunity for the stakeholders and the City Council to examine ways to improve their relationship. Some examples of possible collaboration were discussed; one of which was concretised at a later stage of the planning process. The collaboration constituted an initiative led by a group of stakeholders to refurbish an area in which they would provide financial and labour support, and the City Council would contribute technical equipment. Representatives of the city’s shop owners suggested a ‘Zifta Fund’ for development – a contribution from the private sector, to be placed under the joint control of the City Council and
representatives from the city. Such discussions provided a source of motivation for stakeholders to show solidarity in the negotiation process, by finding a turning point that supported consensus.

**Collective Memory Contributed to Building Consensus**

Memories from the society’s history in building consensus were important for enhancing shared meanings among the stakeholders. The discussants came across several stories to support their arguments during this part of the process. Some of these examples stressed success stories in the history of Zifta, which were to be taken into account when any change was to be implemented. A discussion in this context took place between an elderly group and youth participants regarding the name of the city. The youth group wanted to change the name ‘Zifta’, because its meaning in Arabic is not attractive (it refers to the bitumen used in paving the roads). What was interesting was the argument of the elderly people who were against such change. Their argument was drawn from the historical role of Zifta in the resistance during the British colonial period. The elderly were proud of the city’s role and did not want to change its name, which they saw as diminishing the successful role once played by Zifta’s people. They said, “Zifta was the first city that was declared an independent republic by its citizens who led the resistance against British colonisation at that time.” From this perspective, “we should be proud of Zifta and not change its name despite its linguistic meaning. We should not underestimate our historical leading role in Egypt”, the elderly people stressed. The youth of Zifta seemed unaware of this fact, and on hearing it turned to support the views of the elderly. Zifta’s declaration of independence occurred when mass protests broke out in Cairo and Alexandria demanding independence and British withdrawal from Egypt during the colonial period. Workers, students, professionals, men, women, and children participated in this movement and “famously, the leaders of Zifta in the Delta boldly declared their town an independent republic” (Colla 2007:200). This story created a positive atmosphere and energy among the participants, not just regarding the name of the city, but towards constructing a shared meaning of their common successful history. This influenced their way of thinking and how they moved towards building a consensus on their desired vision.

*Visualise Future Photos to Explain What Is Meant By “Vision”*

The Zifta Vision was a new concept to be introduced into the planning process in Zifta.

**Figure 19 - Introduction of visioning process**
(See Figure 19). It was also new to the GOPP planning models. It was therefore important to start the process by communicating with the participants what it was that was meant by the term ‘vision’. The planning culture within the GOPP and many international organisations practising in Egypt had, up until now, been mostly oriented towards addressing the endless problems of failed development. As such, it was necessary to explain what was meant by a vision that is driven by the city’s capacity and assets. The vision should play an important role in guiding the formulation of Zifta’s strategic plan, allowing Zifta’s people to look positively upon and share a common view of their future so that they can work towards achieving it (a position emphasised by Healey (2010)).

In explaining the concept, I used a simple visual technique that compared photos from different places in contemporary Zifta with a visualised future, based on photos of anonymous cities with some common features but slightly better conditions. Visualisation is an effective tool to stimulate discussions (Sanoff 2000). It was used in Zifta to provide a common language through which different participants (e.g., literate, illiterate, technical, and non-technical) were able to communicate. The comparison I made was aimed at stimulating dialogue with the participants about different, realistic ideas about development (Figure 20 shows the photos used).

The presentation included many photos and, applying the same concept of comparison, each group of photos intending to stimulate discussion on a specific urban issue. For instance, Photo 1A from el-Jeys Street shows existing physical and environmental conditions there. This photo stimulated discussion on the existing modes of transport, the physical conditions of the buildings, and commercial activities that partly occupied the sidewalks. Photo 1B shows an unknown area with some similar features, but better environmental and physical conditions. It shows more trees and better management of traffic (emphasising pedestrians). Another example, Photo 2A, shows a non-developed area on the Nile side that has certain potential to be developed. This was compared
Questions guide the discussion

Participants' Views during the Workshop

Slogan & Vision are formulated

Figure 21 - exercise to formulate the vision
(Delphi method)

with Photo 2B which presents an entertainment place. Photo 3A shows a backyard in Zifta that could easily be transformed into an urban agriculture niche, the inspiration for which was given in Photo 3B. Other urban issues were presented using different sets of photos. These types of photos and similar provided different sources of inspiration for what Zifta could look like in the future. Comparing Zifta’s current conditions with different potential development scenarios drawn from anonymous places – whilst keeping in mind the local assets and the realistic conditions – allowed the participants to discuss how they could develop a vision that is achievable, and a plan that would be able to be implemented based on their city’s capacity.

**Vision Formulation**

After explaining what was meant by a vision, I used a simple version of the Delphi method to involve stakeholders in brainstorming exercises. The participants had to answer a number of questions in several rounds (Figure 21 shows the questions and answers collected during the visioning workshop and the vision formulated in Arabic). The vision formulation took place on the weekend during a two-day Visioning Workshop. During the workshop, the range of answers decreased and participants’ views converged towards a consensus on the Zifta Vision. The three questions that guided the brainstorming exercise throughout the two days were:

- What do you like about Zifta?
- What do you dislike about Zifta?
- If you saved what you do like and eliminated what you do not like, what would Zifta look like?

Within this process, participants worked in groups to identify factors behind what to change and what to leave and shared their ideas about socio-economic, physical and urban development. A facilitator from the planning team collected the answers from each group at each round, identifying common factors and arguments which then formed sources of information for the debate in order to reach correct and common answers. The two-day workshop on the weekend provided time for us, as a team in collaboration with the physical planning and local economic experts who joined us, to analyse and interpret the information and give participants the opportunity to reflect and return the following day with constructive ideas. During these processes, stories were told, pros and cons discussed, and arguments developed; the pattern of communication played a role in getting stakeholders together to stimulate formal and informal interactions. The number of answers decreased after each round, and the process...
narrowed options down, reaching common sense answers and moving towards building consensus.

This process was undertaken in combination with a significant engagement from the youth stakeholders’ category, who took responsibility for the initiative to distribute questionnaires to 2000 households and various commercial and craft shops, in order to investigate how the residents saw the future vision of their city. They collected and summarised answers with the support of the planning team. The answers covered a number of socio-economic and physical issues in the city, which in sum added quantitative value to the formulated vision. The majority of the answers focused on the need to improve the efficiency of the City Council, for the free local election of people’s representatives to the City Council, public participation, poverty alleviation, the equal provision of welfare services for all inhabitants, better use of the existing assets in terms of the skills and assets of Zifta’s people, the geographical location of Zifta on the Nile River, the need to make use of and improve local knowledge in agricultural production and poultry by providing vocational training, and the need to improve industrial processing based on crop production and food processing. Most of the answers were formulated as problem-based issues, some were stated in terms of desired projects, others in terms of recommendations, and many as criticisms of the non-functional formal system and the lack of public participation.

The dialogue was attentive to local values, which guided the discussion of potential development. In the stakeholders’ view, it was neither the lack of local financial resources nor the lack of local knowledge that had led to the deterioration of the city’s urban conditions, but rather it was the different development policies and their total ignorance of the existing social, physical and cultural assets inherited by the city over time. In this discussion, the participants marked the role of the formal system as a cause of contemporary problems. Referring to the informal system, they provided the discussion with successful examples that had functioned well, in order to justify their views.

In accordance with the views of the participants in the asset mapping and visioning workshops, in addition to the data obtained from responses to the 2000 questionnaires, it was concluded that development in Zifta was achievable when society was free to maximise the advantage of their capacity to play a leading role in development. The vision process resulted in the formulation of a slogan and a vision (see Figure 22). The Zifta Slogan as formulated by the stakeholders – Zifta is a place for Freedom, Dignity and Leadership – demonstrated the citizens’ wishes, defined with reference to the vocabularies of the lifeworlds and in relation to the common values that had proved to be successful in their shared memory.

As planners, we interpreted the slogan to mean that the citizens of Zifta saw their development as a result of their freedom. This interpretation was communicated to the stakeholders. For them, material wealth was achievable because they trusted their capacity and they were aware of their resources; their lack of freedom constituted the main retarding obstacle.

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12 A long time ago, Zifta announced its independence from the colonial government before the independence of Egypt in 1922. In 2006, Zifta did it once again; the citizens announced their freedom five years before the revolution of freedom in Egypt on January 2011- I was fortunate to witness this.
According to the stakeholders, once the formal and informal systems shift towards interaction (rather than the current impasse) then the collective will of the citizens and the efficient use of their own socio-economic assets will drive the development of their city. This approach will increase the efficiency of existing and obtained resources, thereby achieving a self-dependent development. The effective management of available resources is described in the ‘Zifta Vision’, which was formulated by the participants as: ‘Zifta is a Green Industrial City, and Great Through its Creative Citizens’.

The vision was also interpreted and communicated with the stakeholders to form the base of the thematic development in the planning process. The statement ‘green industrial’ indicates the desires and ambitions of the stakeholders to combine the economic activities of crop production and the processing of agricultural products. This statement motivated people’s ambitions for a green city by planning for urban agricultural activities that sustain the socio-economic relationships between Zifta and its surrounding villages. Zifta’s citizens recalled shared success stories from their history and they discovered their capacities by becoming aware of their assets. They desired to base the development drawn in the Zifta Strategic Plan on the capacity of the city’s ‘creative citizens’. This is to be done by mobilising the values of the society to empower the people and improve their performance, emphasising the role of citizens in decision, planning and implementation stages of the strategic plan.

The formulation of the Zifta Vision played an interesting role in motivating further the stakeholders’ contribution. We (the planning team in collaboration with the experts) prepared the technical interpretation of the vision and communicated this to the stakeholders. This technical interpretation guided the development of the thematic development goals and, as expressed by
Kotter (1996), motivated change by keeping the plan creatively aligned in a certain direction. Such an interpretation helps to spark motivation and makes it easy to communicate when needed, unifying stakeholders through a common understanding of the future of their city.

The processes of asset mapping and vision formulation also contributed to the empowerment of stakeholders to elect a committee that represented the interest of Zifta’s citizens to work closely and effectively with the planning team and to represent the views of the stakeholders in any discussion in formal arenas (e.g., the Governorate and the GOPP) or with experts. The committee members represented the different categories of stakeholder. They worked actively in building a larger network of stakeholders in the city. The members of this network were involved in the thematic planning groups later. The committee was named the ‘Zifta Strategic Plan Committee’ and was legally assigned by the Governor, through the approval of the plan, to represent Zifta’s citizens in the implementation phase of the Zifta Strategic Plan.

**Knowledge Transfers in Various Ways – A Joint Development of Knowledge**

The practice of collaborative planning through a process that incorporated local cultural values increased the people’s performance in participating and actively contributing to the project. Participants were inspired by their shared history and reflected on bringing together their fragmented capital and assets. Out of this process, the participants learned about their social, economic and cultural assets and became actively engaged in generating local knowledge that reflected the reality of their city. Their knowledge provided the technical consultants with qualitative and sometimes quantitative information about the city’s assets. The result was a transfer of knowledge in various ways that involved planners, experts and formal and informal stakeholder representatives. The local knowledge was generated without an apparent system, which required that it be sorted out to improve its legibility. Here again, my role as a researcher helped me to make use of those narratives told by the participants, and incorporate them into the technical knowledge. I drew a typology of the types of process-oriented and empirically generated knowledge.

The generation of knowledge took place during the workshops and focus groups, where stakeholders were consistently given the opportunity to be briefed on what had been achieved so far, to reflect on the current tasks, to be given feedback on their views, and to take related actions. The generated knowledge was most often related to stakeholders’ shared everyday experience, which in many cases was not formally known by the City Council or even by the local experts. A number of workshops and focus group meetings were organised by the planning team to address each thematic group, wherein discussions and exchanges of knowledge were carried out between the technical experts and the participants. The planning team had to intensify our role to compensate for the lack of commitment from some local experts assigned by the GOPP. This experience also raised questions in relation to the role of Egyptian planners in carrying out a collaborative planning process, which will be discussed further.

**Knowledge Transferred Between Participants Who Integrated Their Personal Roles**

The participants in the Zifta project brought their personal roles to the table and integrated them through the discussions of Zifta’s future development (see Figure 23). A knowledge platform,
comprising the thematic development goals, was constructed on the basis of the ideas exchanged between participants with respect to various thematic developments. The exchange of information between representatives from the formal and informal sectors played a role in validating the data obtained from both sides. The formal data obtained shows little information about the socio-economic relationship between Zifta and the surrounding villages compared with the insights provided by participants. The stakeholders provided information about the types of crops produced in the neighbouring villages and the benefits of Zifta in terms of labour, industrial processing and marketing. They pointed out the problems of the garbage collection system and alternative solutions that are practised in disorganised ways by the local people of the city. They denied the claims of the City Council that a lack of financial resources was the main reason behind the inefficient garbage collection services provided by the City Council. The discussion led to the initiation of collaboration between the City Council and groups of residents to call for a clean day in a district as a demonstration area.

The participation of people with social needs – e.g., the group of deaf and mute people – added interesting information about their capacity. With the help of a sister who was able to communicate with the group using their special language, they presented their skills (being educated and having knowledge in handcraft). They stressed the proactive nature of their role in the development of their city and refused to be considered a non-productive or passive group of people. The unemployed youth also considered themselves to be an asset to their city, asking for opportunities to participate in its development. They participated actively in the planning process, during which they established and formally registered a NGO for youth initiatives. They supported the planning team in organising the workshops, were responsible for documenting the results on a regular basis and disseminating them to the stakeholders, and also led several initiatives in collaboration with other groups’ initiatives (illustrated below). The planning process developed an interesting interaction between the formal and informal sectors that had never before been united for a common purpose. This spirit provided an easy-going consensus process that helped to build local institutional capacity for planning. The consensus issue was not about conflictual matters that required negotiated consensual solutions, but was rather about accepting formal/informal interactions and
making use of the learning process in such a way as to formulate a strategic plan for the city’s
development.

The participants transferred stories and knowledge amongst themselves through discussions,
arguments, humour and full engagement. Stories were told and accumulated to express an
opinion in a certain development sector. A 14-year-old schoolboy pointed out the difficulty he
faces in school, saying, “We do not understand most of the subjects, we want to study but the teachers do not
explain them well to us, therefore we ask the teacher to give us private lessons ‘derss khoussosy’ and then he
explains the same topic very well. He does this on purpose because he wants to be paid for private lessons. The
school is ok, but the teachers are not.” A woman commented, “‘Drouss khossoussiaah’ requires an additional
budget from us, teachers make a business from this and the education system does not provide any solution. When
a child of ours has a national test, it is a struggle for the family to afford the payment for private lessons; this is a
disease in the education in Egypt.” A mother spoke about the need to have a safe yard for children to
play in, saying, “The children have no safe place to play, the existing gardens are close to traffic, and there is a
need improve safety for children.” In Egyptian society, this aspect can only be observed by a mother
who experiences the lack of safety for her child. Another participant stressed the need for better
quality in the health system, saying, “There is a hospital that was built a long time ago but is not yet
functioning. I know that the medical equipment is there, but not the doctors or nurses. Therefore, it is still closed,
we do not need to build a new hospital, but we need the one we have to function.”

In brief, the personal roles of the participants contributed to the construction of local knowledge
that elaborated the focus on the city’s future development. The people’s interest was in non-
spatial as well as spatial development, by which the participants meant that the development
should focus on quality not just quantity. They emphasised the need to improve the education
system and health services, build local capacity, introduce efficient regulation systems, manage
traffic, and improve the quality of services provided by the City Council. They also stressed the
importance of their participation in the decision-making process. Thus, they saw the strategic
plan as a document that formulated ways for development to achieve better physical conditions
based on building upon existing human resources and using local assets. They expressed this in
Arabic by using the traditional term “Benaa el-hajar wa el-bashar”, in English “to build physical
structure as well as human capacity”.

Combination of Local and Technical Knowledge

Despite the difficulty we faced in getting the technical experts contracted by the GOPP to
integrate their sectoral technical studies with the collaborative planning process, in a few cases
there was a significant collaboration between the experts and the local participants. This led to
the construction of technical knowledge from the locally generated input.

Among those experts was the local economic consultant, Dr. Hamed El-Mously, who advocates
economic development rooted in the context of Egypt. He was interested in the collaborative
planning process for the development of Zifta and devoted a lot of time to working together
with the ‘Local Economic Development Group’ to generate ideas for local economic

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13 Hamed Ibrahim El-Mously is a professor at the Faculty of Engineering, Ain Shams University; Director of Small-
Scale Industries and Local Technologies; and Chairman of the Egyptian Society for the Endogenous Development
of Local Communities.
development (see Figure 24). Several workshops and focus group discussions were carried out in collaboration with him; he appreciated local initiatives and considered them to be the dynamic of the local economic development in Zifta.

Despite the significance of agricultural production and industrial crops-based processing in the local economic development of the city, this sector lacks a clear government policy to support its development. This has led to a decline in the economic viability of agricultural production. The local participants, being farmers or business community members, exchanged their experiences in this regard. A businessman working with the trade in agricultural crops stressed the strategic value of wheat crops, noting that, “During Nasser’s period Egypt used to export wheat, but now, unfortunately, we import the wheat to feed Egyptians. Last year, the prices were very high in the international market; the country paid a higher price to buy the wheat from outside while they pay less to the farmers for the same amount of wheat. Therefore, farmers are not interested in this crop. Will the farmer cultivate wheat next year if there is no guarantee of a good price at the end? We are depending on imports when it comes to basic food. We know that our country is rich but its resources are badly managed. Instead of investing in our land to create jobs and secure food, our money is paid to farmers in other countries.” A farmer added, in the same vein, “We have a long experience in cultivating crops and processing them into food, oil, soap, and cotton … but we need support from the government to secure a market and good prices.” Other views suggested that the trend of development supported by the government be followed instead and that investment in the tourism industry should occur. An investor said, “We have a long beach on the Nile that has not yet been developed, let us provide opportunities for tourist activities and for investors to develop this sector.” While members of the City Council supported this idea, other participants did not value such projects and did not believe that they would create real economic development, because – in their view – the city could not compete with other tourist cities in the country. El-Mously exchanged his views with the participants and tried to incorporate the different ideas by discussing the ranking of development priorities. Referring to the result of his technical survey for Zifta's local economic development, he exchanged arguments with the participants regarding prioritising agriculture and the industrial crop-based processing sector, or the tourism for local development economy. He said that in a city like Zifta, a combination of agricultural production and industrial processing may provide added value to the

Figure 24 - Focus group discussions
agricultural crops produced, and that this income would spread widely through many economic sectors and provide job opportunities, as well as protecting arable land as a national concern. These views were in line with those of the farmers, and people engaged in small-scale family enterprises relating to food processing and the manufacture of related agricultural tools. The discussion resulted in prioritising investment in agriculture and industrial activities in planning for economic development.

**Incorporation of Expert/Local Knowledge in Local Economic Development**

Drawing upon the combination of expert and local knowledge, below I explain the strategic model for local economic development, which suggested making use of the institutional structure of the city and its associated values. The local economic development of Zifta should benefit from the existing social network; the mutual role of individual, family and society; and the mutual relationships between Zifta and its surrounding villages, using the existence of agricultural resources and indigenous knowledge. These views were also in line with the prioritisation of agriculture production and industrial processing over the tourism sector, which is in line with the Zifta Vision of being a ‘green industrial’ city.

The combination of expert and local and knowledge demonstrated the potentialities of building up traditional endogenous technical capabilities in the city. This approach suggested emphasising the integration of the socio-economic relations of Zifta with the surrounding villages, in order to benefit from their interrelationships. The institutional structure, the mutual relation between the individual and the society, and the role of a family as a core of the society are all to be considered parts of a structural network that be built upon in order to achieve small and medium scale industrial processing and related economic activities. In this way, the hierarchal spatial relation of Zifta and its surrounding villages, and the socio-economic territorial logic of their interaction, might form a platform for building industrial economic activity chains. Figures 25 explains how the industrial chain concept can make use of and strengthen existing socio-economic mutual relationships between:

- The ‘family’, as the core of an economic activity based on agricultural production and crop processing.
- The ‘village’, based on a number of family activities contributing to a larger scale of production. Small-scale services should be provided to improve production, such as vocational training and a local market.
- The ‘city’, a larger scale

![Figure 25 - Illustration of a strategy for local economic development](image)
of economic activities where chains from families and villages are collected to contribute to different types of larger productions. At this scale, different services are required, such as research centres, small and medium scale investments, regulations to facilitate marketing, and larger exports as final products or inputs to larger production scales.

The expert, El-Mously, explained to the stakeholders via examples how the chain of small-scale industrial processing activities based on agricultural crops is able to expand from a smaller to a larger geographical area – e.g., from a household to a village, a district and a city. In this mechanism, local initiatives with local cultural values play a self-motivated role and become the dynamic behind local economic development. This could be achieved by building economic projects on the basis of existing social networks and for various production structures, and through the promotion of different types of crop production, processing and services. These kinds of projects would be based on local raw materials and would not need large amounts of capital or large infrastructure, or a high skill level through technical training or education. They would be flexible, and able to change in case of crisis, with little impact on the family’s livelihood as the result of their small scale. Such projects could also benefit from different types of labour within the family (students, mothers, or any extended member in the family) according to flexible working time (e.g., weekends or holidays). Further, they would play an integral role in self-dependant economic development due to being rooted in local resources and satisfying the local needs. These small chains of projects could be connected to each other, and in aggregate such projects might be able to constitute a larger-scale industrial production.

These ideas are known and experienced in some cases, but are perhaps not institutionalised to form an integrated economic system. Demiyatt City in Egypt is considered a furniture hub city for Egypt and relies on its key local assets. The city is known for furniture manufacturing that is based on its social network and existing know-how in hand-made furniture production (through a pool of skilled labour). The production mechanism constitutes a cluster of small-scale furniture manufacturers that in aggregate create one of the largest centres for furniture production in the country, which is concentrated around an easily accessible geographical centre. The city serves its own local needs, but has also increased its exports to foreign markets. Another example is found in the nucleus of the traditional community in Arich City, where “families are characterised by their craft activities, that include weaving, pottery and the making of palm-leaf products”, El-Mously explained to the participants in the local economic development thematic group. In the same vein, he proposed a series of different projects that would apply various techniques within a unified production pattern of crops such as rice, cotton, palm trees and flax. Some of these projects were to rely on renewable natural resources.

The economic development to be achieved in such cases does not only result from the production pattern but it is built on the city’s assets, which makes it realistic and self-sufficient, and in harmony with the community’s social-cultural lifestyle. The interaction between El-Mously’s approach and the citizens’ vision cultivated enthusiasm and the commitment of the participants to implementing decisions. The initiative was taken by a group of businessmen to prepare a feasibility study on a fabric production line based on cotton processing. The expert-citizen interaction led to the discovery of other complementary themes with non-spatial characters such as the need for a research centre to develop the production lines, vocational training and marketing.
Knowledge Interaction Created Actions That Built Up Citizens’ Power

One example of a new interaction between citizens and the formal planning institutions to emerge from the Zifta project was a collective initiative to refurbish a locality. This initiative was developed and undertaken by a number of stakeholders, together with some residents, in collaboration with the City Council, to demonstrate the constructive result of working together (see Figure 26). This was a step towards further strengthening the relationship between the City Council and the citizens. Local residents contributed cash for buying building materials and equipment, or by hiring labour, or else contributed in kind (with their own work). The City Council provided the specialist equipment for paving the street. It was observed that the claimed lack of resources on behalf of the City Council staff was not an issue in this activity, when together with the stakeholders they collaboratively took responsibility for improving the condition of the area.

Another example was a campaign of ‘Greening of Zifta’, that was announced under the term of ‘sadakat jurib’, or in English ‘voluntary alms’. The idea of this campaign demonstrated a combination of moral and empirical arguments, whereby local values that enhance charity influenced practical solutions for greening the city. This was outlined by a doctor, who proposed that, “Planting palm trees on the side of the streets will provide passing pedestrians and residents who

Figure 26 – Local initiative to refurbish the ‘Zawyet el-Masry’ quarter
might be hungry with dates, and will increase the greening of the city.” Other similar initiatives took place through gardening on roofs and balconies and in backyards by families with the help of engineers from the youth stakeholders’ group, who provided technical advice about waterproofing roofs and balconies before planting.

The interactive process resulted in the progressive engagement of the stakeholders in that process, and they established a larger network of participants from the city. They became actively engaged and took actions in preparing and organising workshops. To facilitate their participation, we considered other suitable dates for workshops, such as on the weekends or in the evenings (see Figure 27). Representatives from different stakeholder categories, especially the youth and women, carried out (with the support of community leaders and in collaboration with us as the planning team) various actions that contributed to the realisation of the project, for instance distributing a regular newsletter to the city’s inhabitants to disseminate information more widely about the outcomes of the planning process. They also prepared and distributed questionnaires about the formulation of the Zifta vision; investigated the number and ownership conditions of available vacant plots for potential development or for the planting of trees and the establishment of plant nurseries as job opportunities for the youth; and established a participatory budget through funds collected from taxes on local shops subject to the condition that the fund was placed under the co-supervision of both the City Council and the Zifta Strategic Plan Committee. A number of teachers in the women’s stakeholder group initiated an ‘educational program’, whereby each of them dedicated two hours per week to participate in a nucleus group that teaches students eligible for the baccalaureate.

These examples show that the latent asset of the social values present in Zifta, which created reciprocal relations of mutual responsibility among citizens and the City Council and strengthened the formal/informal interaction arenas. This interaction helped the stakeholder’s ideas to
be transformed into actions to be carried out collaboratively by both Zifta’s people and the City Council. The practice of collaborative planning has transformative potential, as is stressed by Healey (2006:265). When the model was set into dialogue with the Zifta people, a re-contextualisation of the model occurred, which allowed for the maintenance of a transformative potential and the appreciation of the new context. Hence, one can conclude that the interaction processes has contributed to transform power relations between different actors and to restructure the existing institutional settings. Table 4 summarises the local initiatives taken by stakeholders in line with the planning process.

Table 4 – Local initiatives taken during the planning process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Initiatives</th>
<th>Collaborative stakeholders</th>
<th>Planning stage</th>
<th>Transformative dimensions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Questionnaires on Zifta Vision</td>
<td>Youth group</td>
<td>Getting started – visioning process</td>
<td>Building consensus on Zifta Vision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organising workshops in weekends and evenings</td>
<td>Different stakeholder groups</td>
<td>Throughout the planning process</td>
<td>Widening the stakeholders network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greening of Zifta “Sadakah jarieh” campaign</td>
<td>Doctor’s initiative based on shared value</td>
<td>Thematic development goals (environmental goal)</td>
<td>Combination of moral and empirical arguments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gardening roofs, balconies and back yards</td>
<td>Families, youth, City Council, business community, and elderly people</td>
<td>Thematic development goals (local economic development goal)</td>
<td>Strengthening the existing socio-economic role of the family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Old stories told by elderly turned to be more concrete to vocational training for old handicrafts</td>
<td>Elderly group in collaboration with youth group</td>
<td>Visioning process and continuation of the thematic development (local economic development goal)</td>
<td>Creation of shared meaning to build consensus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical study of water isolation before planting</td>
<td>Graduated youth group</td>
<td>Thematic development (local economic development goal)</td>
<td>Contribution to experts’ knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investigation of the number of vacant plots</td>
<td>Youth group</td>
<td>Thematic development (local economic development goal)</td>
<td>Provision of reliable data from local people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiative to study the feasibility of industrial processing activity</td>
<td>Businessmen group, and technical expert</td>
<td>Thematic development (local economic development goal)</td>
<td>Combination of local and expert knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participatory budgeting</td>
<td>Representatives of shop owners and the City Council</td>
<td>Will contribute to the implementation of the plan</td>
<td>Support participation in decision making and transparency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refurbishing of a district</td>
<td>Citizens, City Council, businessmen community and youth group</td>
<td>Thematic development – improving the physical conditions of the city</td>
<td>Restructuring institutional settings - Formal/informal interaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free Education program</td>
<td>Teachers (female) in collaboration with families, youth and schools</td>
<td>Thematic development (educational development goal)</td>
<td>Significant positive role of women in the Egyptian society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establishing of Youth NGO for youth initiatives</td>
<td>Youth in collaboration with the formal authority</td>
<td>Thematic development – social development</td>
<td>Formal/informal interaction built trust in formal actions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Zifta Strategic Committee’ that represents the interest of Zifta’s citizens during planning and implementation</td>
<td>Representative committee elected by the stakeholders group</td>
<td>Visioning, continued during the planning process and became legalised by the Governor to continue during implementation</td>
<td>Building institutional capacity “formalise the informal”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

‘Vision’ and ‘Knowledge’ Guide Zifta’s Development Directions

The formulation of the development directions of Zifta was guided by the interpretation of the vision. The planning team, in collaboration with the sectoral technical experts, grounded this interpretation on knowledge obtained during the planning process. At this stage, the local sectoral experts needed to intensify their work to combine their knowledge with knowledge that was constructed locally. This happened in some cases (such as the case of local economic
development discussed above) however in many others this did not proceed well, due to the
reluctance of some experts to invest time in participating in the workshops or visiting the city to
talk with its people. As an alternative solution, the planning team played a significant role in
bridging the gap between the knowledge of the people and that of the experts, ensuring the
integration of stakeholders’ views in Zifta’s strategic plan. Eventually, the knowledge that we
gained about the city’s capacity – knowledge drawn from the information given by the
participants about the different potential skills in the city – led to the establishment of a network
of local professionals and skilled labour from the city that was larger than the number of
stakeholders who attended the workshops and seminars. The Zifta Strategic Plan Committee,
elected during the visioning workshop, organised and maintained contact with that network.
Thematic groups of stakeholders were organised to coordinate various types of expertise and
interests. Each group was led by a planner from the planning team. The groups were:

1. Group for human and social development: This group discussed the potential of the existing
   social relational structure in contributing to the development of Zifta. A crosscutting analysis
   of the possible benefits of this structure with respect to socio-economic development was
   also undertaken. Different scales of economic projects were proposed, and awareness
   programs were suggested within each development sector. The strategy discussed by this
   group related to how to benefit from the existing social relational structure and how to
   incorporate the cultural values associated with that structure in future actions in order to
   enhance mutual responsibility between individual and community in developing the city.
   Further, the group aimed to build public awareness about the development of Zifta for the
   implementation stage.

2. Group for local economic development: The discussion in this group focused on how social
   and economic assets can be used for the ‘better’ economic development of Zifta. This was
   discussed with regard to agriculture production and food processing, manufacturing, the
   marketing of products, the management of the heavy transport sector and vehicle
   maintenance.

3. Group for urban and infrastructural development: The strategic ideas discussed related to an
   urban boundary; the upgrading of slums; traffic management and roads network; garbage
   collection; potable water and wastewater management; and the management of public service
   buildings

4. Group for capacity building: This group addressed the task of building local capacity in areas
   of need such as vocational training and education. The strategic ideas raised by the group
   focused on how to improve the provision of services and what skills were needed for city
   council staff to follow up the implementation phase.

The continuous incorporation of local and technical knowledge made it possible to transform the
development ideas into a set of strategic goals and objectives that pointed to the central
principles of how to achieve Zifta Vision 2022. Four overall strategic goals were formulated, and
where can be summarised, with reference to the Zifta Strategic Plan approved by El-Gharbieh Governor in September 2007\textsuperscript{14} (MHUUC 2007), as follows:

1. **Protection of the valuable agricultural land and increases in the efficiency of the existing built environment:** The protection of the valuable agricultural land is a significant concern at the national level. Therefore, adding value to the agriculture production and the efficient use of the existing urban structure became the starting points for the planning of Zifta. To regularise urban expansion, the plan defines the urban boundary of the city and promotes different alternatives for urban expansion. The development plan illustrates proposals to increase the density of urban corridors in line with compact city principles. This will create many different urban functions that will benefit from increases in the vertical density of the existing urban structure and from the efficient use of existing vacant land. Within the existing urban area, the plan promotes the placement of new housing areas close to old ones and specifies locations for promoting local economic development.

2. **Integrated socio-economic development with the surrounding villages:** The strategy of local economic development benefits from the existing institutional structure and its associated values. It is therefore based on a chain of crop-based processing industries, which add economic value to agriculture production. The chain industries will strengthen the socio-economic relationships with the surrounding villages. The Zifta Strategic Plan should not only generate future development but also address the challenges of the existing urban conditions.

3. **The efficient use of the central urban structure will include managing the current challenges of scattered economic activities:** The plan provides options for re-organising and relocating existing economic activities. Slum upgrading is an important step towards the efficient use of the existing urban structure and providing equal development opportunities. This will generate small and medium-scale investments and interests within the existing built areas. A denser city should provide an opportunity for the development of profitable public transport, and the transformation of traffic routes according to the conditions of the roads and the types and size of available transport means.

4. **Development built on the existing institutional structure of the society and its associated values, “Binaa el hajar wa el-bahsar” in other words.** The plan advocates planning that addresses both the society and physical development. This strategic goal is based on the assumption that Zifta’s development should be carried out by its citizens. To achieve that, the development plan should emphasise spatial and non-spatial characters, which combine physical development projects and public awareness, vocational training and educational programs. Development should enhance, and benefit from, the existing social structure and its associated values (MHUUC 2007).

\textsuperscript{14} The Zifta Strategic Plan was documented by the planning team, including myself working as a practitioner, during the progress of the Zifta project. It was approved in September 2007. It consists of two volumes, Volume I is for the use of the City Council for the daily urban management of the city, while Volume II is more technical and consists of the detailed thematic technical studies. Volume I includes a summary of the thematic development, a list of the goals and objectives, and a summary of the action plan for the first five years. It includes physical maps of the land use and urban boundaries. It illustrates the implementation mechanism including participation, evaluation and updating of the plan. It includes the names and the role of the Zifta Strategic Committee members that were elected during the planning process. Volume II comprises a detailed technical study of the thematic development, goals and objectives of each development theme, in addition to physical maps and a detailed Action Plan for the first five years. It includes the implementation, participatory, evaluation and updating mechanisms of the plan (MHUUC 2007).
The strategic plan provided comprehensive guidelines to achieve Zifta Vision 2022, which were elaborated through a series of strategic thematic goals, objectives and implementation mechanisms. It was documented in two volumes and approved by the Governor in September 2007. The role of stakeholders in the implementation stage was stressed in the plan, wherein the Strategic Plan Committee and the Thematic Development Groups elected during the planning stage were legalised as an integral part of the Strategic Plan to play a representative role on behalf of Zifta’s citizens during the plan’s implementation. Figure 28 shows the two Volumes produced, the approval of the Plan and the celebration. Figure 29 shows a map of Zifta that illustrates the proposed urban boundary and land use, and reflects spatially the thematic strategic goals for the development in Zifta (MHUUC 2007). For the purpose of this thesis, I have added my analytical comments to the figure.
Figure 29 – The physical layout of the Zifta Strategic Plan
(Source MHUUC 2007)

The explanation are made for the purpose of the thesis
Conclusion

Zifta’s potential for formulating a situational interpretation of collaborative planning was examined by practising this model in Zifta for a period of about 20 months. The Zifta Demonstration Project created arenas for people to uncover their epistemic standpoints and provide meanings to define what planning meant in relation to the development of their city. The ability of the collaborative planning model to be re-contextualised refers to its emphasis on process, content and context; it is “a contested practice in evolution” (Healey 2006:315) because it is “not a simple recipe” (Healey 2006:320). This ability has contributed to the evolution of a new way of practising this model in Zifta, where 1) the process was designed as learning-oriented; 2) the content was directed towards drawing a plan based on the existing citizens’ resources and socio-economic assets of the city and linking the formal and informal activities to bind their fragmented capitals; and 3) the context was understood by untangling the city’s institutional structure and its associated values. During the practice of collaborative planning, cultural values were integrated as an invisible strategic asset to mobilise people’s participation, and important events were recalled from the common history of the people and their significance used to build shared meanings of common contemporary problems. Further, values (such as the mutual responsibility of individuals) reduced the tension between an individual’s interest and the collective’s questions. The interactive process created by the project led to the construction of a typology of knowledge that was built by gathering the knowledge that was transferred in various directions.

The social interaction among the stakeholders allowed debate with moral, emotive and life experience dimensions that were influenced by the cultural values rooted in, and inherited from, the history of the society. These dimensions blended socio-cultural and religious characteristics and influenced the social network and its communication patterns. Understanding these dimensions was integral in making a new interpretation of the collaborative planning model and served several purposes – e.g., communicating the model to participants; developing a situational definition of a lifeworld that legitimised communication among these participants; developing ways of knowing about and valuing the urban conditions and local assets; and defining the epistemic standpoints relevant to planning in Zifta. During the planning process, the stakeholders questioned the influence of the dominant planning thinking applied by the formal planning system on the accumulated deterioration of the urban conditions in the city. The arenas constructed for social interaction and the integration of social values in the planning processes empowered people and motivated them to examine different ways to achieve change. This was demonstrated in the initiatives taken collectively during the planning process, which bound existing fragmented capitals (for instance, whereby formal and informal actors decided together to refurbish a district in the city, demonstrating their collaboration). The interaction between different types of knowledge concluded with the production of the Zifta Strategic Plan, the map from which is presented in this chapter.
PART THREE

DEVELOPING COLLABORATIVE PLANNING KNOWLEDGE
VII: THE RE-CONTEXTUALISATION OF COLLABORATIVE PLANNING

Based upon the findings obtained from the Zifta case, this chapter presents the re-contextualisation of the collaborative planning model. A new interpretation of this model is presented below, with reference to epistemological, practical and theoretical concerns. The role of planners emerges as a key issue of concern, both specifically in terms of the experiences obtained from the case of Zifta and more broadly in terms of the (new) challenges faced by planners in relation to the collaborative planning process in general.

The Re-Contextualisation of Collaborative Planning – A New Interpretation

The Zifta case study provided me with the opportunity to examine Zifta’s potential to give rise to a situational interpretation of collaborative planning as it was practised. This was done in line with the emphasis that this thesis places upon the significance of epistemological, practical and theoretical concerns when knowledge is to be practised across contexts. It is advocated in this work that the key weakness of the cross-cultural transfer of knowledge lies in its failure to incorporate the epistemological questions that concern a new context. Planning of a modernist conception categorises ‘knowledge’ as an entity to be transferred and used across contexts. However, the breakdown of this consensus in planning knowledge has shifted the conceptualisation of knowledge to recognise it as being based upon values, and therefore constructed through social processes and institutional settings. Collaborative planning belongs to this shifting paradigm of planning which emphasises the contextualisation of planning knowledge. Practising collaborative planning in the Zifta context created arenas for the testing and recognition of this model within the institutional arrangements of this context, by working from local epistemological and practical concerns, wherein theoretical concerns were examined in relation to the social debate shared by Egyptian philosophers and thinkers (set out in Chapter VIII). Table 5, below, summarises the interpretation of collaborative planning in the context of Zifta from the perspectives of the three main concerns.

Epistemological Concerns

The epistemological challenges of transferring planning knowledge in context of Zifta were found to relate to a set of worldviews rooted in the history and culture of the society. The dialogue gave the people forums to express their views and preferences, uncovering their epistemic standpoints with regard to what was meant by planning for the development of Zifta. The dialogue also created opportunities to address the accumulated urban problems that have resulted from past failures in the application of planning knowledge; and, moreover, it revealed the capacities, assets and shared values of the people that have helped their society to function despite that failure. The people of Zifta saw the development of their city through their own interpretive lenses; a view that legitimised which planning approach could be taken.

In the Egyptian context, planning is seen as an opportunity to express moral values that reflect a bias towards Egypt’s own history, and to plan for hope out of the existing failures. These failures namely comprise mainstreamed economic development and an unbalanced social structure, and are seen as consequences of the implementation of planning thinking over a long period that has
derived from values that have not been centred upon the context of Egypt. The different
development doctrines of planning thinking (and their associated values) that have been
implemented in Egypt throughout the different episodes of Egyptian modern history (described
at Chapter V) have created a social order that has favoured the elites and has generated relations
between people that are based on production and consumptions patterns. As a result, planning is
interpreted as needing to challenge power that is imposed remotely by the global free-market
economy, by emphasising self-sufficient development. The collaborative process used in the Zifta
process was able to transcend the planning event to create a power for change that operated at
the level of the basic norms of peoples’ lives in Zifta.

My own origins, being from the same region, have also shaped my epistemological lens,
equipping me with certain familiarity with the societal context. This provided me with an
additional competence as a researcher and a practitioner, not only because I speak the same
language as the people of Zifta but also because I possess an adequate knowledge of the history
of their society. This capacity was strengthened by my review of the evolution of planning
thinking in the Egyptian context, an exercise which also helped me to grasp the reasons behind
the accumulated problems in Zifta, to understand the society’s cultural values, to be able to
comprehend the communicative patterns that shaped the dialogue among Zifta citizens, and to
communicate the ideas of Egyptian philosophers and thinkers on the development of Egyptian
society. This last task encouraged me to further investigate the role of such philosophers in the
evolution of planning thinking (an investigation detailed in Chapter VIII) and to try to establish
an intellectual foundations for collaborative planning as it is interpreted in the context of Zifta.

**Practical Concerns**

Collaborative planning is defined as a social process, built up from the particular relations of a
place (Healey 2006:86). As such, it can be reshaped and re-contextualised when practised in a
new context. In Zifta, collaborative planning knowledge was set into a dialogue with the people
in an action research milieu. The social dynamic of this process revealed the institutional
structure of the society and the associated values that guide the interrelationship of the society
and have been inherited from the history of that society. The incorporation of these values led to
the adaption of collaborative planning practice and reconstituted a new interpretation that made
such a practice more appropriate to the Zifta context. The resultant practice stressed the role of
culture as an invisible strategic asset that could increase the performance of the people in
practising planning. The role of history demonstrated the significance of recalling important
events from the common history of the people, so as to build a shared meaning of the
contemporary social life. The role of cultural values and the collective spirit of the society were
also considered crucial in, for instance, the task of building an alternative welfare system. The
mutual responsibility of individuals in a socio-centric culture reduces the tension between an
individual’s interests and the collective’s questions. Communicative patterns are shaped by the
socio-cultural values and maintain the social interrelationships. Mastering the skills of that
communication and the social meaning of its language are significant factors in carrying out
dialogue, cultivating consensus and achieving outcomes. The debating process was facilitated by a
culture of relatedness and social interdependence. Local values of solidarity, mutual responsibility,
sympathy with less fortunate people, and a recognition of the influence of elderly people together
constituted values that have the potential to manage conflict. Because, generally, few people in
Zifta have benefited from the global free market, self interpretation of how planning should be
done was an issue of common concern among the participants.

Arenas were constructed to bring together representatives from the formal and informal
institutions, to bind fragmented capital, make use of local values and to institutionalise
collaboration. Such collaboration in turn started with, and went beyond, the planning event, and
arenas were also important in discussing local initiatives and the role of people during the
implementation stage. Methods that helped people to discover themselves were essential to
building self-confidence and shifting the discussion from one that was problem-driven to one
that was asset-driven. When collaborative planning was set into dialogue with local people, an
opportunity was created to transfer knowledge in various directions: transferring Healey’s
collaborative planning model to Zifta, and transferring knowledge amongst experts and between
the participants. Such a milieu enhanced the local interpretation of collaborative planning and
turned its process into practical outcomes through the collective initiatives of the stakeholders.

Reflecting upon history allows shared success stories, the suffering from the deterioration of
living conditions, and the meaning of cultural practices and their importance in mobilising and
binding their resources to be fore grounded. Altogether such reflection provides a way to build
connections between the norms and definitions of social life, which results in consensus building.
This reflection on history and the connection between cultural aspects and their role in sustaining
social life provided an opportunity to explore more profound effects of collaboration – those
which articulated the basic norms of people.

Collaborative planning necessitates a new role for the planner, as an actor who facilitates the
process of mutual learning and helps those involved to build new ways of thinking and acting
(Healey 2006). In addition, Egyptian planners also need to engage in supplementary efforts to
contribute to solving the enormous urbanisation problems faced by the country and to become
an integral part of the evolution of a planning culture in Egypt.

**Theoretical Concerns**

The interpretation of collaborative planning in Zifta was extracted from an understanding of the
Zifta context developed through a process of social interaction. In practising collaborative
planning, attention was paid to the theoretical principles that inform the model. The empirical
analysis of the planning process in Zifta was drawn in relation to relevant theories, namely
Habermasian communicative action (Habermas 1987) and Giddens’ structuration theory
(Giddens 1984). The concern within communicative rationality is its lifeworld of values.
Therefore, such rationality should contain clear preferences towards certain sets of values in
specific situations. In Zifta, a set of values were identified and provided a reference for a
situational definition of lifeworld that was shared by Zifta’s people. These values were
incorporated into the process, in order to enhance communication and achieve consensus.
### Table 5 - Interpretation of the collaborative planning (CP) in the context of Zifta

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core concepts of CP:</th>
<th>Core concepts of CP to be associated with set of values inspired from the society – Egyptian social philosophy as source of knowledge about the Egyptian society</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Stakeholders, rights and duties based on 'democratic'-context.</td>
<td>1. Stakeholders engaged in planning with reference to right and duties in a socio-centric culture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Rules of communication to build consensus. Lifeworld definition based on normative and communicative understandings. Building consensus is based on argumentation and the force of the better argument.</td>
<td>2. Rules of communication to build consensus - a. Situational definition of 'lifeworld' extracted from common spiritual values.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Social structure and building capacity for institutional change. Giddens' structuration theory about rules and resources used to understand the structure of the social system. CP builds institutional capacity. The social world is not constituted of autonomous individuals and interests but is constructed through interaction.</td>
<td>b. Shared meanings as rules for communication: freedom and human equality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Key role of planner to be ethically committed.</td>
<td>c. The culture of relatedness and communication patterns maintain social relationships. d. ‘Shura’, or consultation, as a means for people’s participation, well known mechanism yet to be practised.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Epistemological Concerns</th>
<th>Re-contextualisation of CP in Zifta</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. CP is a socially constructed process.</td>
<td>1. Because CP is socially constructed, the practice of CP in Zifta built a value-laden planning process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. CP challenges the conception of rational planning.</td>
<td>2. CP in Zifta challenges the failures of mainstream development doctrines. Reflection on history, and the connection between cultural values and the meaning of social life shaped people’s interpretive lens, which in turn described their epistemic standpoints about what is planning for in Zifta.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. In a UK context, CP is about drawing strategies that are conscious of the neo-liberal imperatives to address global economic interests and social quality and environmental concerns.</td>
<td>3. For the Zifta context, CP (when incorporating cultural values) goes beyond the planning event to emphasises self-sufficient development and to challenge power that is distanty imposed by a global free-market economy.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Practical Concerns – An opportunity to develop knowledge</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Participatory discursive democracy directs the CP exercise.</td>
<td>1. The invisible strategic asset of the shared cultural values directed the CP exercise and increased the performance of people in participation. The stakeholders’ engagement filled the gap of the democratic deficit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Stakeholders’ participation, rights and duties are driven by democracy as a universal value.</td>
<td>2. The stakeholders’ analysis and citizens’ representation was driven by values of trust that was socially constructed and validated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. CP has the ability to meet global economic restructuring, whilst acknowledging local responses.</td>
<td>3. Zifta’s urban conditions illustrated the failure of the development doctrines in Zifta/Egypt; the alternative welfare system functions outside the formal system, and is motivated by the society’s rules and resources. a. The rules and the use of resources are guided by a strong blend of socio-cultural and religious influences that need further investigation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Communicative and socialisation of individuals involve intersubjectivity and interplay between 'system world' and 'lifeworld' and underlying principles of sincerity, legitimacy, truth and openness.</td>
<td>4. A situational definition of lifeworld in Zifta was built with reference to shared values - a. Communication patterns were guided by shared values and maintained social networks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Consensus building through a debating process that is facilitated by universal principles such as justice and democracy. Arenas to re-frame conflict and shift bargaining to negotiation that leads to consensus.</td>
<td>5. Consensus building was made possible because - a. Collective memory of representative events built confidence and motivated common concern.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Tension between 'individual' rights and 'collective' questions.</td>
<td>b. The debating process was facilitated by a culture of relatedness and confirmed by values of solidarity, mutual responsibility, compassion for unfortunate people (translated in charity initiatives), and the influence of the elderly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Knowledge is locally constructed is constructed through social interaction and learning.</td>
<td>c. Arenas brought together formal/informal and bridged fragmented capital.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Planner role in CP is facilitator and has to combine both governance and process.</td>
<td>6. Zifta as a collective society emphasises individual and collective mutual responsibility.</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Theoretical Concerns – Egyptian social philosophy may contribute to planning knowledge</th>
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</tr>
</tbody>
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1.23
Giddens’ structuration theory was used to explain the structural features of Egyptian social collectives through identification of the specific rules and resources that reproduce the social system. These rules and resources – whereby the rules constitute the implicit and explicit laws, and the formal and informal procedures that guide social interactions, and the resources constitute the means and capacity to harness the actions of human beings – together control, shape and facilitate social interactions. Within the Zifta context, a third dimension, the morality and normative standards driven by the spiritual value of Islam’s influence, brings legitimacy to social interactions. Spiritual values have motivated many faith-based organisations and voluntary initiatives in society to contribute to alternative welfare activities that have replaced the inadequate official welfare system. The role of planners is discussed below, from the point of view of the concerns of Egyptian society and the enormous challenges presented by rapid urbanisation, challenges which planners should play an additional role in proactively meeting.

The Role of the Planner

In general, the shift from planning project to planning process creates a new challenge for the planners (Healey 2006). This challenge, which is continuous throughout the planning process, lies in the ability to take on a variety of roles in accordance with the specificities of each situation (Healey 2010:213). Planning in collaboration requires continual attention from the planner, and an ability to play different kinds of roles that enable the building of a participative culture for managing change. In Zifta, the planning process brought representatives from the residents and the authority to work together with local planners and diverse technical experts – perhaps for the first time. The project therefore provided an opportunity to examine the new role required of the Egyptian planners in a collaborative planning exercise, as such an exercise differs from the exercise of technocratic planning and the top-down master planning that Egyptian planners are more used to. The collaborative planning process turned Zifta’s planning project into a complex exercise which required multiple forms of knowledge, reflecting those posed by Healey (2010:221): 1) technical skills; 2) institutional grasp; 3) ethical conduct; and 4) an attitude that understands the value of creating public realm resources that allow people to get on.

The planning process of the Zifta Demonstration Project encountered various difficulties as it progressed, namely through questions posed about the role of planner in a collaborative planning exercise. At the initiation stage of the project, the Head of the Tanta Regional Office was reluctant to change the way planning was usually carried out at the regional office. Because GOPP Headquarters supported the project, he had to provide a number of planners to be in the planning team and learn the planning approach by doing it. His reluctance was demonstrated when only two planners were allowed to participate in the Zifta project. The project was considered to be an additional task, because they still had to prioritise their daily working routine at the regional office. This fact created other related detailed problems at the beginning of the project – e.g., transport from Tanta to Zifta and payment for planners when they worked overtime (namely when we had to prepare for workshops that suited the working hours of the stakeholders to increase the number of the participants). Such problems constituted an obstacle in the beginning, which I had to deal with pragmatically (for instance, by using my car for transport and discussing the matter of payment with GOPP Headquarters). However these difficulties decreased over time and the commitment of planners from Tanta Office (particularly the young official planners) improved progressively. The change from traditional planning to a
more participatory and collaborative planning approach turned out to be considered a learning opportunity for the young planners, which motivated them to offer more time for working on the project. This was not the case with respect to the Head of Tanta Office who belongs to a high-ranking class of official planners. He was sceptical about making any changes to the traditional planning approach, and this scepticism manifested itself in attempts to create obstacles that could disturb the implementation process of the new approach. However at the end of the project, when changes were made and the Zifta Strategic Plan was approved by the Governor and the GOPP, the Head of Tanta Regional Office reversed his position and came to consider the Zifta Demonstration Project to be an achievement made with the support of his office. This can, however, be considered one of the transformative dimensions to come out of the Zifta project and affect the planning culture at the GOPP.

Another major difficulty lay in coordinating the sectoral experts assigned by the GOPP to carry out sectoral technical studies of Zifta. As was mentioned before, during the planning progress many of the technical experts declined to participate in the collaborative planning exercise or pay attention to the stakeholders’ views, and instead limited their work to preparing sectoral technical studies about the city. This however created an additional burden on us as a planning team to ensure the inclusion of the local knowledge produced by the people in the technical studies prepared by the experts. On the other hand, a few of these experts were dedicated to the process and enjoyed the planning in collaboration to communicate their ideas about the development of the city. Figure 30 describes different roles played by the planning team including seminars held for coordination between planning team and the experts. Drawing on the lessons learned from working on the Zifta project, it is observed that the planners’ role in the process was influenced by the positions that planners occupy within both the public and the private sector. To be able to analyse that role, I identify three groups of planners, according to their positions (Figure 29 also shows coordination between different experts and planners).
Higher-ranking official planners: This group is characterised by relatively old planners who occupy high positions in the public sector (at the GOPP), which allows them to make decisions. The senior people of this group represent the traditional planners in the GOPP that belong to the old planning policy. They had some concerns about the change initiated by younger planners from the same group who stepped into the GOPP and took over high positions with the aim of creating change in the planning policy. These young planners belong to the young generation of the National Party led by Jamal Mubarak (the son of the former president who planned to take over the presidency before the revolution in Egypt on January 2011). At the time of the project, the young planners were the most powerful group. During the progress of the Zifta Demonstration Project, one of them took over the primary position and became Head of the GOPP. The new planning thinking drawn up by that group includes a new planning approach that strengthens decentralisation and collaboration, and has a new organisational structure. In parallel with the Sida/SIPU project, it is noted that UN-Habitat and the World Bank were also carrying out projects that aimed at contributing to change within planning. Planners from the City Council can also be categorised as belonging to this group, although they were more involved in the daily routine of the urban management of the city and had less access to decision-making processes at a central level.

Junior official planners: This group comprises the young planners, who are newly graduated as civil engineers, urban planners, wastewater engineers, and road and transport engineers. They occupy lower positions in the public sector, at the GOPP’s central and regional offices. They are more often assigned to the heavy work in the field that is required to supervise the planning process – surveying, cross-checking and analysing data, as well as drawing basic GIS maps. While they have little influence over decision-making processes, they play an integral role in the implementation of GOPP planning policy. They work with the local authorities, supervise and follow up on the implementation of planning projects and supply the decision makers with reports and evaluations. A group of them was selected to work with the Zifta Demonstration Project as a learning opportunity. They become more involved in the on-going change by participating in training programs and became trainers to the rest of the planners later. To a certain extent, the junior group is overwhelmed by the work required of them from their bosses and they are rarely in the picture when decisions are made or rewards are given. The Zifta planning team was drawn from this group, and they enjoyed participating in the collaborative planning exercise and considered it an opportunity to change the dominant planning culture at the GOPP.

Planning-oriented expert planners: This term is borrowed from Healey (2010:199-223) and is used to describe planners in different areas of expertise working in the private sector, such as economy, environment, industrial development, agriculture, roads and transport, social development, demography, wastewater management and physical planning. According to the GOPP, the assigned physical planner is supposed to be the main coordinator among the planning-oriented experts. They complete such work in addition to their work in the private sector (namely in their own consultancy firms through which they are contracted by the GOPP to prepare sectoral studies for the city plan). They are mostly academics and are professors or lecturers in the Egyptian universities. Working with these experts was the most difficult part of the project, because of their position of considering the participatory process a waste of time.
What Is Being Missed By Egyptian Planners?

These three identified groups of Egyptian planners played contradictory roles in the planning process, reflecting the tensions caused by on-going changes in planning thinking in Egypt. At the GOPP, the younger higher-ranking planners, who were supported by the National Party, were pushing hard in the direction of change. The new Head of the GOPP, a member of the National Party Political Committee, wanted to implement changes in GOPP policy through rapid moves, mostly for political reason. This happened with little attention to the lack of capacity of GOPP staff, and the ambiguity among the consultants about the new planning thinking. He contracted about 40 cities for strategic planning in parallel to the demonstration project. The senior higher-ranking planners, who are often blamed for past failures in planning, had little influence on the on-going changes at the GOPP and were, in certain cases, sceptical of collaborating with regard to those changes. In the case of Zifta, the Head of the Tanta office did not support the Zifta project at the beginning. He contracted the experts according to the old conditions with little reference to the new approach. At the beginning he did not encourage the members of the planning team to actively participate in the project. However, his attitude changed totally over time, and when the Zifta project garnered praise he adopted it as a demonstration undertaken by the Tanta office with his consent.

At the City Council level, the planners supported the decentralisation of planning because of the new role such a move would give them. They were, however, aware of their limitations in terms of a lack of resources and skills and as a result they asked for training to enable them to fully contribute to their new role. Due to their limited resources, their power was limited to granting permission to small-scale development projects, or to solving conflicts due to informal development. They were also involved in supervising the implementation of infrastructure projects within the five-year plan budget, which provided them with only limited power because decisions on the distribution of this budget were decided at a central level. Given that interaction and negotiation with the city’s citizens was not within their culture, planners at the City Council were sceptical of the facilitation of stakeholder participation and tried to manipulate the selection of representatives at the kick-off seminar. Various actions were taken to overcome these difficulties and balance existing power relations. It was, however, also observed that some employees had quite acceptable relations with the city’s citizens, which helped the planning team to bring in more stakeholders.

The planning team was drawn mostly from the Tanta office, and belonged to the junior planners group; they were enthusiastic throughout the project process. Their role progressively turned into one of mediating and facilitating the planning process, and they played a crucial role in combining local and technical knowledge – a task necessitated by the lack of collaboration from some of the planning-oriented experts.

Working with the planning-oriented expert planners was the most difficult part of the Zifta project, which reflects the problem surrounding the planner’s role in Egypt. The expert planners are supposed to carry out development plans for Egyptian cities under the new policy through contractual agreements. Their role is crucial in the production of development plans. The case of Zifta was a trial for them, through which they were supposed to be introduced to their new role.
and to practice the new planning approach. During the project’s progress, many of them demonstrated little interest in working collaboratively with the stakeholders. While some actively participated – such as El-Mously, the local economic development expert who proactively joined the collaborative planning process – many followed the old planning thinking which was based on intensive technical survey followed by sectoral technical studies with little attention to participation and collaboration. In principle they considered participation with the people as time-consuming and of little technical value. They put little emphasis on bridging gaps between different development sectors, rarely coordinated their efforts to fit into the selected development themes, and their technical reports turned out to be a number of different sectoral reports that were difficult to integrate. Many of the reports did not reflect what was coming from the stakeholders’ workshop, despite all material being regularly sent to the expert planners.

I concluded at a certain stage that a radical step needed to be taken: a workshop was arranged to communicate to the experts both the new approach that was to be applied and the outcomes that were expected. This workshop was undertaken with the participation of the Zifta Strategic Plan Committee. The workshop activity focused on the need to prepare for thematic workshops, with the participation of the thematic groups, to obtain the local knowledge. We organized regular meetings with the experts to communicate the workshops’ outputs in order to maintain coordination among the different sectors. Despite this, some of them were not committed to the project, which led to the need for another radical solution. I formed what we called it at the time the shadow experts’ team to play the role of the missing experts. The task of the team was to communicate the technical knowledge produced by the planning-oriented expert planners with the local stakeholders, integrate the local knowledge with the technical studies, and accomplish the documentation of the strategic plan.

The planning-oriented expert planners were in many cases quite powerful. Some of them had quite good and sometime excellent relationships with the high-ranking planners at the GOPP, to a point that might have encouraged them to just ignore the evaluation of their inputs in the ongoing planning projects made by the junior planners. It is important to mention here that there is quite a large budget allocated for planning Egyptian cities at the national level. As such a task includes defining urban boundaries, this kind of planning was considered very important in controlling the urbanisation process and protecting agricultural land. The rush to complete the plans for the cities led to the production of a number of plans that shared similar problems to previous master plans, preventing them from being either realistic or implementable. About forty cities were planned, assuming the use of a participatory and collaborative approach, within a span of less than two years, in parallel to the Zifta project. The planning-oriented expert planners were the main producers of these plans.

To clarify the role played by this group of planners, I will refer to a conversation that I had during my work in Zifta project in June 2007 at GOPP Headquarters in Cairo, with a planning-oriented expert planner who is a professor at a university in Cairo, with whom I had previously participated in an international academic conference. I asked him about his views as a professor on the mass planning of 40 cities within a short time. He pointed out his concern about the contradictory policy applied by the GOPP, which seeks participatory and collaborative planning as a new approach on the one hand but on the other comes under pressure from politicians demanding the mass production of cities and villages plans within short period of time. I asked
him about what role academic and professional planners could play in meeting the accumulated problems in the Egyptian cities. He reflected upon this question and expressed his dissatisfaction with the urban reality of the cities, but at the same time he emphasised the limitation of academic influence on the decision makers. Professional planners, according to him, they become more interested in looking for their own job opportunities, even if sometimes they go against their academic principles. One cannot, however, ignore the interest of professional planners in benefitting from on-going projects contracted by the GOPP.

But the question remains, as the opportunity to make changes to planning thinking is supported politically, why are planners playing a passive role regarding that change? Why do they not participate more actively? Considering the fact that Egypt faces a lot of challenges in terms of urbanisation, I believe that Egyptian planners have an ethical responsibility to contribute to the development of their country despite difficulties that that they may face to apply planning principles. One can imagine the assets that Egypt might have if the country’s urban planning education turned to producing advocacy planners to meet the current challenge of urbanisation in the Egyptian cities.

Working on the Zifta Demonstration Project showed that planners reacted differently when they were introduced to the collaborative planning approach. It was observed that some of the planning-oriented experts based their legitimacy as a planner, as is explained by Healey (2010:219), on “a mixture of professional commitment and personal commitment to a specific moral principle concern”. El-Mously, for instance, based his legitimacy on his interest in a self-dependent development rooted in the Egyptian reality. His technical skills were combined with ethical conduct characterised by “an attitude that understand the values of creating a public realm that allows people to get on,” a requirement for collaborative planning in Healey’s view (2010:213). He was ethically committed during the planning process and was able to combine local knowledge with technical knowledge, in order to propose local economic strategic goals for the development of Zifta.

Some of Zifta’s planners limited their contribution to the technical skills they have, and lacked the ethical conduct to stand for the values they should hold as professional planners. It was, however, remarkable to observe that the junior planners developed their own ethics of conduct when collaborating with the participants; their interaction during the planning process with project stakeholders was a learning process that later became a commitment that tied them ethically to the Zifta project. One can conclude that what were missing in the actions of some planning-oriented expert planners were ethical conduct and an attitude that requires more than technical skills in order to become an integral part of the evolution of planning culture in Egypt. Due to planners’ lack of influence on the decision makers, the type of planning education at the universities remains stagnant and separated from the urban reality of Egypt, and planners have become superficial and passive in solving the problems of the complex urban reality of Egyptian cities. Professional planners have lost their interest in the moral and ethical dimensions of planning work. Despite their awareness of the challenges facing their cities, and the window of opportunity provided to them by the politicians, planners currently seem to struggle with the ethical challenges of regaining the source of legitimacy for their planning work, participating actively in on-going change and affecting future outcomes in Egypt.
Conclusion

The interpretation of the collaborative planning model presented in this chapter results from the practice of this model in the new context of Zifta, with reference to epistemological, theoretical and practical concerns that this work advocates as critical to the cross-cultural transfer of planning knowledge. The practice of a new planning knowledge in Zifta placed new requirements on the Egyptian planners. Collaborative planning in general creates new challenges for planning, and in pursuing such an approach, Egyptian planners should be equipped with more than just technical skills. Despite the awareness among them about the challenges that face their cities, they do little to face those challenges. It is considered, however, that the development of planning knowledge in the Egyptian context also requires further investigation of ideas about Egyptian society coming from the perspectives of Egyptian philosophers and thinkers. Such an investigation is in line with the argument advocated through this work that planning ideas in general are grounded on theories that describe society in a specific context. I therefore consider that the ideas of Egyptian philosophers and thinkers can provide theoretical grounds for the empirical findings that have been drawn from the empirical analysis of the Zifta Demonstration Project. The next chapter represents an attempt to integrate the intellectual input of the Egyptian philosophers over time in relation to planning knowledge.
VIII – THE INTELLECTUAL FOUNDATIONS OF COLLABORATIVE PRINCIPLES INSPIRED BY EGYPTIAN SOCIAL PHILOSOPHY

Chapter VI and VII have illustrated the interpretation of collaborative planning as it was practised within the institutional context of Zifta. This chapter, in contrast, details a theoretical line of inquiry into the development of collaborative planning knowledge in the Egyptian context. Figure 31, below, illustrates the practical and theoretical inputs for the re-contextualisation of collaborative planning. In this chapter, I will scrutinise the potential of the Egyptian context – taking inspiration from Egyptian social thinkers – in order to provide an intellectual foundation for the interpretation and practice of collaborative planning in Egypt. This will be achieved through articulating the findings of the Zifta case within the context of a discussion of the ideas of Egyptian philosophers regarding issues of concern within their society. Special attention will be given to their views in relation to the transfer of foreign knowledge to Egypt.

In the western context, planning scholars – including Patsy Healey – have derived their ideas from social science traditions rooted in the western geo-cultural world (that is, Europe and the USA) (see, for instance, Freidman 1987; Yiftachel 1989; Healey 2006; Allmendinger 2002b). However, the philosophical inputs of Egyptian social scientists have never been regarded as part of the evolution of planning thinking in Egypt. An overview of the historical evolution of Egyptian social philosophical ideas is presented here in relation to the development of their society. This investigation of the thoughts of Egyptian intellectuals may, therefore, constitute the first attempt to incorporate their ideas into planning thinking. By referring to their ideas, I aim to build a theoretical reference for the interpretation of collaborative planning as it was practised in Zifta.

Overview of Egyptian Social Philosophy

Egyptian social philosophy has generated concepts and ideas that describe the concerns of their society during various historical periods. Social thinkers and philosophers have thus given guidance on the accumulated reasons that have led to various urban realities in Egypt. Figure 32 presents a brief overview of the evolution of Egyptian social philosophy, relating those ideas to the historical evolution of planning thinking and its accumulated impacts. In Chapter V, I briefly
discussed the different doctrines of development that guided the application of various planning models in Egypt. I also discussed the impacts of those models on the physical and social environment of the urban domain of Egypt. Using the same time span (encompassing four significant periods of Egyptian history), the evolution of Egyptian social philosophy is reviewed below. From this review, I endeavour to integrate the ideas of social thinkers and philosophers regarding the characteristics of Egyptian society and articulate them in relation to the empirical findings from my fieldwork in Zifta, in order to establish a theoretical ground for collaborative planning that is more appropriate to the Egyptian context.

The First Perception of European Thoughts – Modernising Egypt (1830-1882): This period witnessed the expression of the first views on European thoughts by Egyptian social scientists and philosophers, who intertwined these thoughts with ideas that derived from the culture and traditions of Egyptian society. The Egyptian ideas were directed at general societal questions, such as, “What is the good society, what are the norms which should direct the work of reform?” (Hourani 1983:67). European thoughts were articulated and carefully interpreted with reference to Islamic values by the philosophers, but from the limited influence that these ideas had on decision makers one can conclude that the rulers were in a greater hurry to apply development principles and paid less attention to the ideas provided by Egyptian philosophers. As for the decision makers, they were more concerned with applying the norms and values of scientific reasoning imported from the Enlightenment, and they did so without considering the caution expressed by Egyptian thinkers with regard to the importance of firstly understanding the imported ideas in the light of local cultural and traditional values and secondly combining such an understanding with the advanced education system necessary to build a civilized community (Hourani 1983). Tahtawi (1801-73) led the Egyptian intellectual movement during this period and, according to Hourani (1983), suggested that the development of Egyptian society could be achieved on the bases of both its moral virtues (which were to sustain the society) and a welfare system (that was to bring prosperity). Reflecting on Habermas’ (1987) concept of the relation between lifeworld and system world, one could conclude that similar views were expressed by Tahtawi who saw civilisation as having two anchoring foundations: scientific reasoning, which aims to provide development and material prosperity to the people, and moral virtue. Tahtawi was conscious of the importance of linking what he described as the moral virtue world and the welfare world. These views were not acknowledged by the decision makers of that time. Under the impulse of western missions in the Arab Region, centralised learning through imported western education was established from which a new class of educated laymen grew. The educated laymen became the officials that Muhammad Ali and other later rulers in Egypt made use of in the administrative system and planning thinking in Egypt (Hourani 1983).

Resistance to the Increasing Influence of Europe – Colonialism (1882-1907): Further development of the ideas of Egyptian thinkers was diverted from concepts of social development by the British colonisation of Egypt. Political concerns dominated the ideas produced by social philosophers in this period. The new movement was based on a mix of ideas that generated a national consciousness against colonialism. Planning thinking was driven by colonialism’s priorities, demonstrated in the segregation and social exclusion of ‘natives’ except for small elite. An increasing disparity in life quality and social resource availability between the colonists and the majority of Egyptians took place. Muhammad Abduh (1849-1905) who led young students in the
Al-Azhar school became a thinker who applied systematic thought achieving lasting influence on the philosophical discourse, not only in Egypt but far beyond in the Arabic Region. A resistant public opinion was formed through the influence of Abduh and his followers, who advocated the need to unify the people so as to limit the ruler's power. Abduh believed in a democratic state; he called it ‘Dawlab Madeniah’ or ‘Civil State’ in English, where all Egyptians were to live together and exercise equally their rights and responsibilities in order to build their country (Hourani 1983). He developed two main streams of thought: commitment to Islam, and admiration of European thoughts. But his followers gradually shifted his ideas, inverting the balance that Abduh had created between the western and the Egyptian streams of thought. This divided society into two spheres of cultural practice; some built a new, alienated ideology influenced by educated youth who favoured Marxists ideas. Others developed an Islamic fundamentalist basis to their thoughts, claiming it to be rooted in the context of Egypt – e.g., Rachid Rida (1865-1935) (Hourani 1983). National liberation, however, became the main struggle for Egyptians of all classes. The period witnessed an increasing political engagement amongst the majority of thinkers and the emergence of diverse opinions (ranging from a commitment to Islam to the admiration of western thought) prior to the revolution of 1952 (Botman 1988).

Modernity is the Ingredient of the Nationalist – Nationalism (1952-1970): After the 1952 revolution, development again became an ingredient in nationalist thinking and influenced the policies of decision makers in a further modernisation of Egypt through a social welfare program (Rodenbeck 1999:176). Planning, which was decided centrally, was largely influenced by communism where ideas of self-reliance, industrial growth and social welfare formed the first vision of the development of Egypt (Abdelhamid 1984). The desire for self-reliance was manifested in resistance to the foreign aid policy of the West and decreased interest in the private sector. The period was characterised by a large-scale, publicly owned industrial sector; a decrease in unemployment; and the development of free education, health care and social services. The reforms aimed at social welfare played a central role in gaining the support of public opinion. In the beginning, Egyptian thinkers had influence in society and played a role in the decision-making process, predominantly in the area of education, by occupying ministry positions (e.g. Taha Hussein, Minister of Education during the Nasser period) (Hourani 1983). But the authoritarian nature of the regime over time contributed to a further marginalisation of the thinkers’ role, which led to an increasing gap between their ideas and planning for development. The nationalist political leaders became more inspired by communist ideas to develop national welfare programs. With communism gaining more influence, the relationship between nationalism and Islamism was disputed. The clear distinction between religion and politics made by the nationalists’ leaders for political reasons to protect their authoritarian regime led to a revival of religious extremism in Egyptian society and which spread at the local level (Botman 1988). The cracks in the Egyptian intellectual community widened between those who still argued for promoting Islam as the solution for a modern utopia and those who advocated Marx and Bertrand Russell’s ideas for the same reason (Rodenbeck 1999).

Contemporary Social Philosophy: Egyptian thinkers have continued in their effort to critically debate modernity and its implications for the development of Egyptian society. They continue to discuss contemporary issues of interest to Egyptian society (e.g., Elmessiri 2006; Zakariyya 2005; Amin, G. 2005, 2006, 2007, 2009; El Bishree 2007, 1996; Hamdan 1984). Their ideas have
evolved around how to filter imported knowledge through a framework that attributes importance to local cultural references. Their ideas have become more multifaceted and embody widely divergent thoughts, which can be classified in three categories.

One group advocates liberal modernisation as represented by the westernised educated elite. This group has become adherents of a trend of thought that considers western knowledge to be the only way to achieve development. But they have little influence on public opinion. They include Fouad Zakariyya (1927-2010) who was a leading advocate of secular and democratic society (2005) and Nasr Hamid Abu Zaid (1943-2010) who called for religious reform as an essential move in achieving an Arabian renaissance based on contemporary methods, including hermeneutics, discourse analysis, linguistics and sociology of knowledge (Abu Zaid & Nelson 2004).

Another group of thinkers supports the conditional transfer of knowledge and appreciates the scientific developments of the West. But they argue that the adoption of imported alien paradigms have proved to hold adverse implications for society arising from the local existential and historical situations. These thinkers advocate an understanding of the institutional context of Egypt as a prerequisite condition for the practice of a new knowledge. Among these thinkers are Abdel-wahab Elmessiri (1938 – 2008) who outlines an epistemological bias model that could be applied to the knowledge transferred to the Egyptian context, in addition to his inputs into social and political thought (Elmessiri 1987, 2006). Gamal Hamdan (1923-1993), a geographer, argues for redefining liberation on the basis of ‘turath’ or intellectual heritage that is inspired by the Egyptian context. He articulates the history, geography and economic output in which agriculture is the main productivity line, as well as the distribution of population in Egypt, in order to describe holistically in four volumes what he calls (and entitles his book as) ‘The Personality of Egypt’ (Hamdan 1984). Adel Husseyn’s work focuses on the self-sufficiency of the Egyptian development (Elmessiri 2006). Finally, Galal Amin is a professor of economics who discusses the negative effect of economic liberalisation, the rise of social conservatism and the problems of globalisation. He uses the term ‘Soft State’ to describe the Egyptian State under Mubarak. He criticises the economic growth of the Arab Region, describing it as an illusion of progress rather than real development (Amin, G. 2005, 2006, 2007, 2009).

A third group advocates a conservative response and takes an extreme stance in calling for an ‘Islamic State’ as the solution to achieving a just country. Many in this group follow Sayed Qutb and Hassan al-Banna, the founders of Muslim Brotherhoods, the most influential modern political Islamic movement in the Arabic Region. The Islamic movement has perceived the Islamic identity as a source of political mobilisation (El Bishree 2007, 1996).
Figure 32 - Summary of the Egyptian Social Philosophy

1805-1866 Foundation of Modern Egypt First View of European Ideas

- Laying The First Stone in Modernizing Egypt: Adoption of the 'universal scientific faith' or Saint Simon the father of scientific planning.

1882-1907 Colonialism

- Colonialism Planning For Social Segregation & Nationalism against the interest of majority of Egyptians.

- Modernity is the ingredient of Nationalist thinking Widening of cracks within the intellectual community.

- A turn to Capitalist Thoughts - Infitah: Three broad strands of thought are developed.

- Despite gradual diffusion of foreign ideas, thinkers continue their critical discussion.

1970 - Present, Economic Liberalization Policy Reform

- Liberal modernization Import models from the West with little reflection.

- Epistemological Bias Approach to adapt foreign model.

- Liberalization Epistemological Bias Approach to adapt foreign model.

- Conditional modernization Epistemological Bias Approach to adapt foreign model.

- Conservative Response Defending Islamic values as major source for inspiration.

- Despite gradual diffusion of foreign ideas, thinkers continue their critical discussion.

- How to develop Egypt whilst preserving its cultural distinction

- Conditional transfer of knowledge is the dominant debate among thinkers.

Figure 32 - Summary of the Egyptian Social Philosophy
Intellectual Foundation of Collaborative Principles in the Egyptian Context

Despite the diversity of recent Egyptian thinkers’ views about issues of development in their society, the most influential and shared social debate among them addresses the self-reliance of their society with respect to development. Means for realising such a development strategy are based on a concept of social action that seek to mobilise diverse sources of competence in Egypt via appropriate institutions. Their concern is to assign greater weight to the social aspect of development – of which I see planning as a part. Re-socialising planning knowledge with reference to Egyptian social values may counter Egyptian social thinkers’ concerns about their society. Many of them argue that a successful application of new knowledge in a community is an outcome of the full utilisation of the social potential to meet the needs of that community (see, for instance, Amin, G. 2006, 2009; Elmessiri 2006, El-Said 2002, Hamdan 1984). The adaptation of foreign ideas in tune with the Egyptian context is advocated by Elmessiri (2006), who proposes the epistemological bias model, by which new knowledge is to be filtered through a cultural frame of reference to make it more appropriate to the Egyptian context.

In line with the social debate outlined by Egyptian thinkers, and with references to theories and principles that describe the collaborative potentialities within Egyptian society; I am here trying to build a theoretical foundation for collaborative planning that is more appropriate to the Egyptian context. A greater weight is assigned to Egyptian social values with collaborative characteristics in which the identified values blend of cultural, historical and religious principles.

The Culture of Relatedness – Means of Mediating Conflict

For Healey, collaborative planning efforts look for conflict management strategies that seek to reframe how people think about winning and losing (Healey 2006:312). To meet Healey’s explanation of the resolution of disputes between those co-existing in shared spaces and to underline the interdependence and common features of the Egyptian social network, I refer to the culture of relatedness. Whilst ideas around the culture of relatedness have been discussed by Egyptian thinkers in various terms (see, for instance, Abdalla 2002; Elmessiri 2006), the notion is defined by the Turkish psychologist Kagitcibasi (2005) as referring to the family culture and interpersonal relational patterns characterised by dependent-interdependent relations with overlapping personal boundaries.

Out of the understanding of the Egyptian culture of relatedness, important means can be elaborated for defining stakeholders’ rights and duties, by putting the mutual responsibilities of individuals into practice and making use of this in mediating conflict.

Egyptian society still holds strong collective characteristics as described by scholars like Hamdan (1984) and Elmessiri (2006), and as expressed by Hofstede’s (2001) approach to conceptualisation and measuring of cultures and consequences for Egypt. This collective aspect influences the structure of the society and is driven by a group-interest value that is strengthened by religious beliefs. One can identify certain implications that result from the burden placed on the individual to comply with various types of social requirements – for instance, those related to financial limitations. But it is observed that the culture of relatedness and interdependence is still able to involve mandatory duties and rights of individuals through activating their social and
economic mutual responsibilities. The interdependence of individuals can be identified at two levels: a) at family level, where self-sacrifice within the members’ relationships can be mobilised to contribute to the wellbeing of the family; and b) within the extended social network, wherein the diverse competencies and energies of the society are mobilised to make a collective contribution. Abdalla (2002) develops a model of conflict intervention that benefits from Islamic principles and the strengths associated with the culture of relatedness. For Abdalla, individualism and the interests of individual autonomy are of significance to western literatures on dispute resolution rather than the interests of members’ relationships. In an individualistic society, each individual is autonomous and free to identify their needs, interests or goals based on their own standards of fairness. He argues for situational definitions of conflict negotiation and resolution that are more suitable for the Egyptian setting and which assume a great deal of social interdependence and community involvement, even in interpersonal matters. The culture of relatedness that Egyptian society emphasises helps in identifying a sense of self-sacrifice and solidarity among individuals. Tolerance and acceptance of others are emphasised between Egyptians within different groups of interests. Hamdan’s (1984) ideas about the commonalities among Egyptians due to specific geographic and historical reasons that influence production patterns and the distribution of population are aspects that may reinforce the notion of group inclusion rather than exclusion. Thus, in relation to practising collaborative planning in Egypt one can see a potential to solve conflict with reference to Egyptian social values as they operate on the notion that self-interest is subservient to the common good. An appropriate collaborative planning process in the Egyptian context could build upon the strength of the community and its cultural relatedness, in order to benefit from such characteristics in solving possible conflicts of interest.

**Shared Meanings for Consensus Building**

The collective memory of a population is rich with representative events that include success stories achieved because of local assets, shared meanings and common values. The recalling of these events is an important factor in building the people’s confidence and motivating consensus building around common concerns. For instance, the Zifta case demonstrated the importance of the stories told during the planning process in motivating the people to build up a shared meaning about their common vision. In practising collaborative planning in Zifta, it was observed that the values associated with the institutional structure of the society and inherited from its history assisted in developing these shared meanings and helped in building consensus among the stakeholders about common issues. These values contain a strong blend of religious and cultural principles, which can be demonstrated in the social actions of individuals towards their society. These principles lie in various intra-personal, as well as inter-personal, acts extending from the individual to the entire community. Principles are relevant across the community and may provide references to validate communication between different actors in a society.

The Zifta case also proved that religion played a role in defending people’s needs by creating a cooperative society against the failure of the state system to provide welfare services. The role of religion was seen as influential in Zifta, and it is also significant in Egyptian society as a whole. Religious factors remain one of the important features of Egyptian society and play a proactive role in its development. Both Islamic and Coptic private voluntary organisations have
contributed to socioeconomic development (Harrigan & El-Said 2009; Sullivan 1994). In this regard, it is necessary to highlight the philosophical principles of religion, and to avoid misuse of their role in society. Emphasising a proper interpretation of religious values, in order to redefine their pure message, could be a way to achieve this. Whilst this task falls outside the scope of my study, I should point out that some attention to this matter is expressed by a number of scholars. For instance, a differentiation can made which recognises that the pure messages of Islamic theory that advocates values of justice, freedom and equality, whilst supposedly valid to all members of the society, is practise differently in many parts of the world (Abdalla 2002:158).

There is a commonality between Copt and Muslim Egyptians as a consequence of their shared historical experience of their integration into an Egyptian Society with a particular frame of common cultural references. For instance, Rafiq Habib (2001), a Coptic intellectual, argues against the blind transfer of knowledge and emphasises the need for adaptation based on local heritage with its cultural values, thereby rejecting the notion of global melting pot. The Coptic religion contributes significantly to the cultural values of Egyptian society. Whilst Copts and Islamists certainly differ on a number of issues, there are considerable commonalities that underline their social and cultural integration rather than approaching the issue as a ‘minority versus majority’ group relationship (White 2011).

Nowadays, the rediscovery of ethical principles, including religious values, becomes an issue of interest in understanding the collaborative faith-based praxis that addresses the challenges of resources scarcity (Beaumont & Baker 2011). Thus the advantages of the blend of cultural values and religion in planning can be of value to society, not just in fostering collaboration among people to achieve a better future, but also in mitigating an economic downturn. Moreover, Habermas (2010) has recently discussed the role of religion in the creating robust and inclusive public space, directing attention towards both the contribution and the obstacles that religion brings to debate around the democratic/public sphere. On the one hand, he sees the contribution of true faiths as not only a doctrine but as a source of energy that enhances the performance of a person and nurtures his/her entire life. On the other hand, he highlights the obstacles of the cultural norms within religious communities that can sometimes act against the rights of minorities. But in a society such as Egypt's, where religion plays a significant role in the development of the society, references to religious values are expected. A framework of references, leading to a situational definition of Habermas’ (1987) concept of ‘lifeworld’ may benefit from the shared memory of the society, and the spiritual values of a pure message of religion. A situational definition of the lifeworld in the Egyptian context could include principles of justice, freedom and human equality as criteria that legitimise communicative action and measure its quality of comprehensibility, sincerity, legitimacy and truth; and as a step away from the material biases of the system world. Habermas also expresses concern about the suppression by the secular power structure of religious traditions, a suppression arising from the dominance of secularist culture favouring to modernise principles. He concludes that both religious and secular epistemologies have limitations in addressing optimal solutions for the robust inclusiveness of public space. As such, he argues for the need to establish mutual dialogue between secular and religious cultures and the sharing of cognitive tasks to understand each others’ “thoughtfully arrived at” positions in various disciplines.
In a country like Egypt, where religion remains a significant factor in social interaction, collaborative planning could represent an opportunity to foster a mutual dialogue between Egyptians. The spirituality of religion may play a role in the re-socialising of planning and encourage people to participate in its process, although in this respect the religious dimension requires further investigation to explore the shared pure message of its philosophical principles.

The Communication Pattern

A combination of socio-cultural and religious influences informs the prevailing view of communication in Egyptian society. A preview of the interconnected patterns that play a role in the communication competence of the Egyptian society may help in the design of the process of communicative action, by identifying the common thread that interlinks the social fabric as it is placed in relationships and in context. The communication competence in Egyptian society is built by social norms, cultural beliefs and behaviours. Language, religion and social norms are the main features associated with communication. The communication competence is emphasised by the culture of relatedness but also maintains social interrelationships (Zaharna 2009). As such, understanding the role of communication in society’s interaction routines is a precondition to building an effective communication process. I summarise below some aspects that characterise the communication pattern in Egyptian society, which are extracted from work about the intercultural communication competence in the Arab World (Zaharna 2009) and beyond, through the western-oriented communication theories of Ayish (2003).

- Networks of human relationships serve as an important intercultural communication competence. Communication in the society is actively associated with building and maintaining social networks and strengthening social organisations. The social ritual is important for acceptance of the communicated information and for its internalisation by the other partner. Establishing positive personal relationships is a prerequisite for conducting business (Zaharna 2009).

- The reciprocal relationships between the individual and its society – due to the extensive family ties and extended relationships – play a central role in formulating the communication terms and their interconnected patterns between individuals (Ayish 2003).

- The communication pattern can be explained in light of the language. The Arabic language is rich with social greetings and ritualised responses. The language is an instrument to promote social relationships. Zaharna (2009) stresses that the Arabic language remains a powerful feature in communication competence in addition to relationships, customs and manners in the society.

‘Shura’ As Means for Public Participation

The collaborative planning process requires methods to facilitate people’s participation in the decision-making process. ‘Shura’ is institutionalised in the Egyptian governmental system in what is called ‘Majlis al-Shura’ or the consultative assembly at the central level, and also through the Popular Councils at city level as a mechanism for participation. The concept of ‘Shura’, or consultation at all decision-making levels, is a popular initiative emphasised by Islamic theory to ensure a shared ownership and thus the legitimacy of the decision. Shura is a participatory feature that provides guidelines to assess and address different opinions in society. Through shura’s
principles, strict limits to the power of a ruler or a decision maker are set in accordance with the requirements of consultation with the people (Suleiman 1999).

Shura represents the Islamic participatory political system wherein members of a community can participate in the decision-making process concerning common interests through mutual consultation. Majlis al-Shura is expected to be an integral part of the participatory structure of society. It is expected that consultation is be practised at all levels of society from interpersonal relations (e.g., at a family and community level) up to the highest decision-making institutions. Shura principles emphasise three basic criteria (Suleiman 1999):

- All people in a society are equal with respect to human and civil rights.
- Common issues are best decided through dialogue to obtain consensus.
- Shura governance process should realise the principles of justice, equality and human dignity.

Shura provides the framework of governance based on popular consent, collective deliberation and shared responsibility (Suleiman 1999). But it is assumed that someone leads the decision-making process, and that person must to fulfil certain requirements. According to Tahtawi (1801-73), leadership should consider the principle of justice as the basis of civilisation (Hourani 1983).

**An Opportunity to “Spark the Public into Being”... Could This Be Done Again?**

I have tried in this thesis to bring out the empirical and intellectual process of transferring the collaborative planning model to the Egyptian context by making use of the theory and concepts associated with this model. The connection of the model’s core concepts with the spatial reality and the social ideas of the new context helped in developing ways to articulate the model through the capacity of citizens. The Zifta Demonstration Project opened up spaces and new opportunities for the citizens to participate and plan collaboratively in the development of their city. The project took the advantages that resulted from an opportunity similar to that described evocatively by Noortje Marres (2005) as “sparking a public into being”. The energetic actions of sparking the public of Zifta into actively participating in the planning process improved their capacity to work as an ensemble rather than as number of stakeholders with diverse interests. This fact and the role of cultural values in building shared meanings minimised challenges in implementing collaborative planning that may have arisen from the conjunction of diverse stakeholders and the articulation of their differences.

Instead of discussing the challenges of idealism, impracticality and the neglect of power issues that are posed by scholars critical of collaborative planning (see, e.g., Harris 2002; Allmendinger 2002a; Huxley 2000), my thesis’ attempts have been directed towards the wider exploration of the conditions for cross-cultural research of planning to illustrate the various potentialities that a new context contains. For instance, ‘stakeholders’ were treated as skilled people with their own knowledge of practices, and thus their participation went beyond the cosmetic requirement to appear to empower according to the dominant motivation behind public participation (Cooke & Kothari 2001). The life experiences of the stakeholders generated collective competences that were manifested in their initiatives during the process and contributed to new knowledge. This was associated with the GOPP’s political support for the Zifta project, which was ultimately considered a demonstration to learn from. This was a major factor that made this event possible.
The interest of the GOPP in the Zifta Demonstration Project as a learning model remains noticeable even after its completion. An evaluation of the project prepared by independent consultants for the GOPP appraised the community response in the planning process and the participation of different stakeholders. The evaluators describe the plan by saying that it is “fine-tuned in the light of feedback and experience. The guidelines provided are highly appreciated by the local authorities. It also fulfilled stakeholders’ expectations and raised their awareness” (Bastawissi & Sherbini 2008:6).

The realignment of political energies with planners’ efforts turned the Zifta project into a space for the transfer of knowledge in various directions, wherein collaborative planning both affected and was affected by local knowledge constructed in the Zifta context. The support given to the implementation of collaborative planning in Zifta demonstrates the potential of undertaking planning in collaboration. Egyptian social thinkers also stress that a development strategy of self-reliance requires balance between political, economic and social forces to prevent planning from being an academic endeavour (see, for instance, Amin, G. 2006, 2009; Elmessiri 2006; El-Said 2002; Hamdan 1984). In this respect, the repetition of collaborative planning in similar cases in Egypt may face challenges arising from political, economic and social factors.

In Zifta’s case, the GOPP’s political commitments permitted collaboration between citizens and the formal and informal actors in preparing the plan for their city. However more broadly it is also acknowledged that the general rules that define the political system in Egypt have played an essential role in the distribution of power across different government organisational levels and have contributed to the struggle among different social classes in the wider context. This was observed in the limited authority given to the City Council in Zifta and their inefficiency in delivering services to the citizens. This social struggle was also observed in the asymmetric relationships that characterise Zifta’s social structure as a result of the tension between the formal and informal rules and the unequal distribution of resources in the city. The change towards an appropriate collaborative planning process necessitates political commitments that support its institutionalisation in the planning system in Egypt. Despite the will for changes in planning thinking expressed by planners at the GOPP, there is no policy in place that gives support to such changes. The absence of political will may constrain the functioning of any planning model in a real sense.

The review of the different doctrines of development that have driven planning thinking in Egypt in the last century, presented at Chapter V, concluded that planning ideas were narrowed down to a one-dimensional view of development that related primarily to economic growth. The dominant economic model was a centralised one that assumed, as expressed by Hamdi and Goethert (1997) that by fuelling the economy in the centre benefits would be created that would then filter down to the poorest in the form of welfare services. But the urban conditions in Zifta, as in many other cities in Egypt, demonstrate the failure of such thinking. The ‘infitah’ economic policy has created a shift towards a market-driven economy in sharp contrast with the welfare system. The elimination of the traditional economy, the reduction of agricultural activity in favour of urbanisation and the privatisation of publically owned industries have contributed to the increased poverty level and trade deficit. Approaches to and methods of economic development should also differ across contexts. Combining social values and methods for economic development, according to Arif in Elmessiri (2006:119), could moderate economic extremes and assert a balance between production and consumption.
A profound understanding of the potentialities of the Egyptian social context is required in order to determine the most influential and effective mechanisms to bring people together to plan collaboratively. I have tried in this thesis to deepen my understanding of Egyptian society by advocating an epistemological bias model, making reference to Egyptian thinkers in this regard. One limitation of this work emerged, however, from the fact that the epistemological projects discussed among Egyptian thinkers are still in their formative stages. Despite the intellectual production of such projects, they have not yet been developed into a theoretical framework with methods and tools for conducting research (Elmessiri 2006:37). Moreover, some inherited values face certain challenges in response to financial pressures. For instance, values that strengthened the family as a unified structure in the society have for a long time become more vulnerable. Some reasons behind the validation of social values have been discussed by some Egyptian thinkers (Amin, G. 2007; Alaam 2007; El-Mously in Elmessiri 2006:227-270; El-Said 2002) in relation to financial limitations and changes to the production and consumptions patterns of the society. For instance, the reductions in agriculture and other traditional economic activities have decreased the contribution of an individual to the family livelihood and often turned a family member into a burden instead of an asset. The limitation of financial resources creates more pressure on individuals to fulfil their social obligations. It is observed that this has become a core debate among Egyptians and is prominent in the local media. A profound understanding of Egyptian society therefore requires collaborative research efforts between Egyptian social thinkers and planners.

Additionally, the development problem is an important question that is associated with all Egyptian planning models. The historical development of planning thinking in Egypt was guided by certain development doctrines that were influenced by either socialist or capitalist ideologies. Both forms, in addition to the structural adjustment policies that accompanied the ‘infitab’ or free market economy, have not served the development of Egypt well. Watson (2003) discusses this matter in relation to a parallel case, arguing that it is not possible to think about planning in Africa outside of the issue of development. She stresses that planning positions are inevitably strengthened by assumptions relating to the wider economic context of a society. In this respect, a new development paradigm that is defined in relation to the economic conditions of the country and supported politically should be the ultimate aim of what planning does in Egypt. The collaborative planning model – enhanced by local cultural, social and historical values – could become the means to mobilise the institutional capacities of the society in order to achieve development that responds to the particular demands of the Egyptian context.
IX – THE CONCLUSIONS

‘Don’t Curse the Darkness, Light a Candle’

Research addressing the practice of collaborative planning in a country like Egypt may be expected to conclude with criticism of the country’s lack of democracy, weak institutional capacity, poor governance and corruption – criticism which concisely summarises the difficulties of practising collaborative planning in such a country. Obviously, a set of recommendations embodying institutional changes and the adjustment of regulations may be required in order to introduce a new planning approach like collaborative planning. This study does not deny such difficulties, however – following the Chinese proverb, don’t curse the darkness, light a candle – it adopts an approach that makes use of the existing institutional setting by recognising the difficulties of that setting and integrating its values. Thus, the practical and theoretical re-contextualisation of the collaborative planning model – realised by way of setting that model into a dialogue with the Egyptian context – demonstrates that advantage can be taken of collaborative planning’s flexible characteristics. This was achieved in the Zifta case through a process of filtration, using epistemological lenses based upon local cultural values, which allowed a new explanation to be provided that involved both practical and theoretical inputs. Additionally, the ability to adopt a dual role of both researcher and practitioner contributed to achieving the overall aim of the research. I tried in the course of this study to develop a conceptual framework for a cross-cultural joint development of planning knowledge that goes beyond the discussion of how planning is practised in different contexts.

As a research process comes to an end, it is common to revisit the research questions in order to delineate what has been learned from the endeavour. The findings of this study, which ended up serving practical and the theoretical lines of research, form a conceptual framework for the cross-cultural development of planning knowledge. The primary limitation of the study lies in the research’s exclusive reference to the case of Zifta as the only source of evidence. However, evaluating the quality of the work as a whole, it is considered that the way in which the study takes advantage of relevant research methods and provides a comprehensive analysis of the Egyptian context may compensate for this limitation. Another limitation is the fact that the researcher/practitioner is the same person which situation induces difficulties in keeping a critical distance to findings and conclusions. This has been addressed, to certain extent, by looking at the planning process of Zifta case in light with the conceptual and theoretical standpoints of this research.

Conceptual Framework for the Cross-Cultural Development of Planning Knowledge

This thesis argues that planning knowledge is developed in a certain institutional and cultural context, in response to the needs and the evolution of that context. The application of processes from elsewhere that integrate with the cultural specificities of a new context must, however, also be recognised. By means of a well-designed and executed case study, this thesis shows that new planning knowledge can be brought to bear upon a context other than the one in which that knowledge was originally developed. By pursuing an epistemological, practical and theoretical understanding of differences across contexts, the study demonstrates that the joint development of planning knowledge is possible. In the Zifta case, such processes of understanding required a conceptual framework in which collaborative planning knowledge utilised both external and
Egyptian learning in combination with locally derived insights. This theoretical synthesis was developed and applied through practice within the Egyptian context. These processes created a joint production of planning knowledge in Zifta, wherein the cultural context of Egypt was placed at the centre of the analysis. The conceptual framework comprises of two cycles and is illustrated at Figure 33.

The insights gained through practice are illustrated in the larger cycle on the right of the figure. This cycle shows how collaborative planning knowledge was set into an explicitly social process to be practised at a micro level. The articulation of this planning knowledge took place by way of the meanings accorded to it within the local language. In this way, collaborative planning was set into an interactive social process to build shared knowledge, and this legitimised it within the new context. The articulation of the imported planning knowledge created situations for discussions, argumentations and multiple interpretations of that knowledge. When the planning model was communicated, negotiated, clarified and understood, it became socially established in the new cultural context. The model also incorporated empirical evidence drawn from already established knowledge and such processes legitimised the produced knowledge.

This model is not, however, intended represent an ‘absolute truth’, but rather should be read as knowledge that is always subject to reinterpretation in another new context where another opportunity for knowledge production may arise. The cycle of insights gained from practice includes the social interaction process, which should be designed in accordance with a specific context. When the planning model is practised, practical knowledge is produced, which then supplements theoretical learning. Work progress in this cycle leads to an understanding of the
societal context in which local cultural values with a collaborative characteristic might be located; such cultural values contribute to certain interpretations of collaborative planning when it is practised. Theoretical exploration is needed to ground identified collaborative ideas in an intellectual platform that is also inspired by the Egyptian context.

Theoretical insights are illustrated in the smaller cycle on the left of Figure 33. The cycle shows the attempt to ground the interpretation of collaborative planning obtained from practice by establishing an intellectual foundation that reflects the concerns of the society of the new context. Theoretical references to collaborative ideas are established in this work cycle, by reviewing social philosophy in order to understand the issues of concern in the society. The core components of the new model are attributed to those collaborative ideas.

The two cycles (practical and theoretical) have a reciprocal relationship; each feeds back into the other and neither can alone build complete knowledge. The theoretical side is vital to the practical side, as it provides a source of theoretical understanding of the way in which the model is, in practice, interpreted in a wider context; it provides justified means to decide which components are of relevance to the new context. The practical side provides the identification of the collaboratively constructed and legitimised knowledge that affects the planning model in practice, thereby informing the theoretical exploration. The importance of the practical side lies in localising the imported knowledge in the new context.

**A New International Cultural Theory in Planning Research**

The conceptual framework developed in this thesis, with its theoretical and practice-based insights, lights the path to the cross-cultural joint development of planning knowledge. To achieve such a development, the institutional context and its associated cultural values must be placed at the centre of the analysis. The evidence gathered throughout the progress of this research informs us of the relevance of integrating contextual differences in the development of planning knowledge across contexts. Perhaps a new international cultural theory in planning research could thereby be formed. The articulated sequences of practice-oriented research – used in this study to elaborate an understanding of the institutional context and cultural values of Zifta – may constitute one element of that theory. However, it should also be acknowledged that planning research derives its force from the interaction between three general concerns – the economic, the political and the societal context. A new international cultural theory in planning research must therefore include elements that respond to those three concerns. Such an international cultural theory could bring forward the cross-cultural transfer of planning knowledge wherein societal, political and economic differences across contexts are considered as potential sources of knowledge for the joint development of innovative planning.

In this research, investigation was limited to the Zifta case and focus was placed on the societal context element (defined by the society’s institutional structure and associated cultural values). Whilst the economic and political contexts have been discussed briefly in Chapter VIII, further elaboration with respect to these contexts is required. The in-depth investigation of the societal context in Egypt presented in this thesis reveals that the social interests and values have been institutionalised informally and resist changes imposed by the government’s formal policy. Major innovations in Egyptian cities tend to be the outcome of the people’s demands and represent a mobilisation of their own response. This is demonstrated in the substantial welfare system.
provided by local charitable organisations, as well as the large expansion of the informal development sector. Whilst this research is focused on the societal context, it also recognises that a development strategy achieved through means of planning knowledge depends on the mobilisation of political, economic and social forces. An international cultural theory, if it is to be applied to planning research in Egypt, must therefore encompass the influence of the political, economic as well as societal contexts. It might have been beneficial if this research had included in-depth investigations of the political and economic context of Egypt. Such an account would have broadened the knowledge developed about the core concepts of collaborative planning, as elaborated in Chapters VII and VIII. The future elaboration of an international cultural theory – incorporating societal, economic and political elements – could be of relevance to the task of further developing a collaborative planning model that ensures balance among the political, economic and social forces in planning. Such a model would productively serve the new political reality in Egypt.

**Typology of Knowing-in-Action**

Healey (2006) argues that collaborative planning involves recognising that knowledge is constructed through social and institutional interaction processes; knowledge is thereby not seen as neutral but as embedded in sets of social relations. In practising collaborative planning in Zifta, different types of knowledge were constructed as a result of the institutional interaction at work and in the sets of social relations encountered. The collaborative planning process became characterised by types of knowledge that were socially constructed and cultural values that were locally biased. This assisted in facilitating a local interpretation of collaborative planning, which was also undertaken in accordance with the ‘epistemological bias’ model developed by the Egyptian thinkers. The epistemological model emphasised full awareness of the significance of cultural differences when knowledge is to be practised in Egypt (Elmessiri 2006). The process of transferring, practising and re-contextualising collaborative planning in Zifta held implications for the kinds of knowledge generated within the planning process. The typology of planning knowledge produced in Zifta includes: 1) socially oriented knowledge, constructed as a result of the social agreement whereby the people shared local values and history, and the relevant knowledge obtained from the people’s lived experiences; and 2) process and action-oriented knowledge, produced in a milieu wherein experts’ knowledge relevant to an issue was combined with local knowledge. The planning process and the various types of actions and methods used revealed the development of joint knowledge out of the transfer of knowledge in various directions. This joint development occurred in the following ways:

1. **Knowledge transferred to Zifta via the application of the collaborative planning process (Healey’s Model) by the action researcher, using relevant methods and tools.**
2. **The collaborative planning theoretical foundations transferred for practical application and used as references to analyse and interpret certain practices.**
3. **Knowledge transferred from the stakeholders to the researcher in her attempts to learn about the context of Zifta in relation to its institutional structure and associated values.**
4. **Knowledge transferred between local people and experts, which contributed to the formulation of strategies for the development of Zifta.**
5. **Knowledge transferred between the local residents, the city and popular councils (informal/formal) to build institutional planning capacity.**
Zifta Context Influences the Practice of Collaborative Planning

Incorporating of social values in collaborative planning processes enables communication, fosters interactions & builds consensus

Construction of different types of knowledge that transferred in various directions – interaction with the new planning knowledge

**Zifta Context Influences the Practice of Collaborative Planning**

**Getting Started**
- How are things done in reality?
- Design learning-oriented planning process;
- Identify the characteristics of Zifta context; situational definition of lifeworld; structure of the society and the type of relation between rules, sources and agency
- Set conditions to balance existing power relation; analysis of stakeholders’ matrix

**Where is Zifta now?**
- Appreciative inquiry, Zifta Asset mapping
- Financial Capital flow out of Zifta

**What does Zifta Want?**
- Zifta Vision
- Visualisation techniques; Delphi method Visionning Process
- Planning challenges; Zifta is ‘better’ for ‘whom’; reset development priorities
- Technical interpretation of Zifta Vision – Incorporate local knowledge in technical study
- Zifta Vision formulated by its citizens Election of ‘Zifta Strategic Plan Committee’

**How to get there?**
- Assets Mapping
- Assets Mapping
- Integration of local/Expert knowledge in Zifta Strategic Plan
- Questioning Planners’ role – Shadow Experts
- Vision and Knowledge guide the formulation of thematic development
- Building institutional capacity – advantage of planner working at multilevel of rules

**Milieu of Practice oriented research**
- Action Researcher’s & Experts’ Knowledge
- Joint development of local Knowledge
- Building of local institutional capacity
- Transformative dimensions demonstrated through different Local Initiatives
- Participants Integrate Personal roles

**Time Line**

**Figure 34 – Typology of transfer of knowledge in various direction**

- Important memories; live experiences created sense of Shared meaning
- Citizens discovered themselves
- Social values shape the communicative patterns
- Characters of reciprocal trustworthiness between citizens
- Mutual role between the ‘individual’, ‘family’ & the society
- Informal system (economic, housing; welfare services, etc…) filled the gap left by the formal system. Local assets & associated values guide Zifta to plan for “hope out of failure”
- City council from citizens’ views Non-efficient formal system
- Development priorities are questioned
- Zifta socio-economic relation with the surrounding villages
- Building of local institutional capacity

**What does Zifta Want?**
- Identification of Potential focus areas for technical surveys
- Zifta Vision formulated by its citizens Election of ‘Zifta Strategic Plan Committee’
- Vision and Knowledge guide the formulation of thematic development

**How to get there?**
- Participants Integrate Personal roles
- Building of local institutional capacity
- Transformative dimensions demonstrated through different Local Initiatives
- Participants Integrate Personal roles
- Building of local institutional capacity

**Time Line**

**Figure 34 – Typology of transfer of knowledge in various direction**
The practice of collaborative planning in Zifta dealt with the interaction between process-oriented and action-oriented knowledge, from which a typology of knowledge was mapped. Figure 34 illustrates the types of knowledge produced during the collaborative planning process in an action research milieu, as well as the contribution of those types of knowledge to each stage of the planning process.

**The Planning Process Built Institutional Capacity**

Healey (2006) emphasises the promotion of institutional change as a prerequisite to a good understanding of the directions of local political culture and identification of windows of opportunity for changes. In the Zifta Demonstration Project, planning addressed changes in formal/informal relationships, and took the advantage of working at multiple levels of rules at both the city and the GOPP levels.

It is concluded that in Zifta two forms of institution function in parallel: the formal and the informal. According to Healey (2006), a planner should become skilled in advising on appropriate process forms that ‘fit’ particular governance situations, in order to make changes in the way things happen. For Healey, the collaborative planning process is a unique construction in a specific situation, in which innovations of process design build capacities for change. The planning process in Zifta was controlled in such a way so as to provide arenas for formal and informal interactions. The participants from the City Council and the city reviewed their rules through communication in order to apply them, and mobilised their resources for each action situation. The outcomes of each operational situation were accumulated to form the local knowledge that was combined with technical information from the sectoral consultants (see Figure 35).

The institutional capacity of planning was built through the formal/informal interaction arenas wherein new forms of rules and resources were produced. The interaction process created planning capacity at the Zifta level, which allowed more collaboration between formal and informal institutions. For Giddens, changes are created by what he calls ‘human agency’ (1984). In Zifta, at various levels of planning, the process enabled four categories of human agency to contribute to change: the citizens of Zifta; the community of Zifta, which is formed by larger numbers of participants who worked collaboratively for change; the GOPP, representing the decision makers at the central level that supported the process; and myself as an outsider action researcher acting through the existing social system to facilitate change. All interactions involved
rules and resources of formal and informal types and enabled the different categories of human agency to contribute to the change as follows:

- Citizens participating in the planning process created expectations for change. In the course of their participation in the interaction arenas at a city level, stories from their personal roles and experiences were formulated and integrated into the knowledge produced.
- The community gained advantages when the expectations of citizens to create change were accumulated via the larger network of participants. Some of the expectations for change were achieved through realistic examples when local initiatives were created and implemented involving formal and informal rules and resources (see local initiatives in Chapter VI).
- The action researcher, an external agent, led the planning process and built (together with the other categories of human agencies) a platform for change. By encouraging the participation of individuals, the researcher enabled changes in rules and resources to occur for instance by supporting individuals by providing them with legitimate means to participate, act and contribute to change.
- The GOPP supported the Zifta Demonstration Project and the decentralisation of planning in Egypt, and took advantage of the researcher/practitioner opportunity. Working at GOPP level as well, other institutional changes became possible (discussed below).

**The Advantage of Working at Multiple Levels of Rules**

According to Ostrom (2005:58-64), whenever one address questions about institutional change, it is necessary to refer to the three levels of rules. Ostrom states that the operational, collective-choice and constitutional levels of rules cumulatively affect the action taken and outcomes obtained in any setting. Thus, whenever institutional change is addressed, it is necessary to recognise that what can be done at one level will depend on the capabilities and limits of the rules at that level and at a deeper level. Changes to the deeper-level rules are usually more difficult and more costly to accomplish. As such, Ostrom emphasises that the costs of institutional change vary dramatically from one setting to another. She argues that the involvement of the same individuals in operational situations, collective-choice and constitution will contribute to an institutional change at a lower cost.

The Zifta Demonstration Project was applied locally but supported centrally by the GOPP. This provided quite a unique opportunity for the individuals working on the project – e.g., the action researcher/practitioner, the local experts, and the Zifta Strategic Plan Committee elected by the stakeholders – to work at the three levels of rules. Consequently, it provided an opportunity to shift levels of decision making for change at reduced cost. The project was considered to constitute ‘good practice’ (Bastawissi & Sherbini 2008) and the material produced in practice was used at a later stage for the training of local planners for other applications. Figure 36 elaborates upon the outcomes of the formal/informal interaction during the planning process, which led to the following changes at three levels of rules:

- Level 1): The operational situation level represents arenas of planning practice at the city level, including workshops, actions taken and interactions between formal and informal rules. The new planning practice provided the opportunity for the participants to impose their views in relation to the future of their city against the City Council’s decision-making rules, which had
previously acted to the participants’ disadvantage. At this level, the core of stakeholders from the City Council, as well as the citizens – both of whom had different interests – agreed to change the rules, provide the resources and perhaps even convince the other to shift the constraints that were in effect. Changes occurred quite rapidly here. The planning process contributed to changes in different aspects – e.g., a) in the attitude of the city council staff, who became involved in calling, organising and documenting the planning practices and supporting initiatives; and b) the stakeholders, who – once they had ensured that their voices would be heard – became more involved in taking actions and in communicating regularly to larger interest groups at the society level, and in exchanging their local knowledge with the local experts.

Level 2: The accumulation of the outcomes of the first level influenced the collective-choice situation level; this was reflected in the collective initiatives (see Table 4 in Chapter VI) taken to initiate changes in the city, and the contribution of the larger network in the thematic groups. Change happened more slowly here than at the operational situation level.

Level 3: The participation of the stakeholders in formal arenas at the GOPP (here, the constitutional level) in discussing their views with the local experts and the sectoral departments empowered them and created a dialogue about how to effect changes to the formal rules. Decision makers at the GOPP level took note of the unobserved rules embedded in the community and makes reference to them when discussing possibilities for change. The GOPP’s formal decision rethinks the rights and duties of the participants in the planning process by authorising participation. Work at the constitutional level produced outcomes at the slowest pace, at the end of the project when the results were clearly

Figure 36 - Working at three levels of rules support making institutional changes

- Level 2: The accumulation of the outcomes of the first level influenced the collective-choice situation level; this was reflected in the collective initiatives (see Table 4 in Chapter VI) taken to initiate changes in the city, and the contribution of the larger network in the thematic groups. Change happened more slowly here than at the operational situation level.
- Level 3: The participation of the stakeholders in formal arenas at the GOPP (here, the constitutional level) in discussing their views with the local experts and the sectoral departments empowered them and created a dialogue about how to effect changes to the formal rules. Decision makers at the GOPP level took note of the unobserved rules embedded in the community and makes reference to them when discussing possibilities for change. The GOPP’s formal decision rethinks the rights and duties of the participants in the planning process by authorising participation. Work at the constitutional level produced outcomes at the slowest pace, at the end of the project when the results were clearly
substantial. The changes were demonstrated in the approval given to the Zifta Strategic Plan (ZSP) by the Governor and the GOPP, and the legal status accorded for the first time to the Zifta Strategic Plan Committee (ZSPC). The ZSPC was elected by the stakeholders to represent the citizens’ interests and control the implementation process of the plan. Another outcome at the constitutional level was that the GOPP considered the Zifta Strategic Plan as best practice, and therefore a model to be used for the planning of other cities. At a later stage – as a consultant to the Sida/GOPP Project – I used the material produced during the Zifta process for vocational training for the planners at GOPP regional offices, which provided an additional opportunity to disseminate the change through other forms of planning practices.

Working at three levels of rules provided an opportunity to integrate some of the informal rules into the formal system. Building the institutional capacity of planning focused on enhancing the formal/informal interaction when changes took place.

**Intellectual Foundation Inspired By Egyptian Social Philosophy**

This study argues that the transfer of planning ‘theory’ to a new context requires an effort to understand the particular socio-historical context of the new geographical area where the theory is to be applied. Throughout this research, I have tried to imbue the core concepts of collaborative planning with local social values; values that were identified through my experience in Zifta and founded on theory inspired from Egyptian social philosophy. My argument in referring to Egyptian social philosophy follows what is already confirmed by many planning scholars who emphasise the theoretical roots of planning models as being founded on social science and philosophy as a legitimate source of knowledge that describes a society in a specific context (Friedman 1987; Allmendinger 2002b; Healey 2006). Moreover, when Healey (2006) developed her thoughts on collaborative planning, she reflected on the conflict between modernity and post-modernity and was inspired by critical theory as an alternative to instrumental rationality. In order to practice collaborative planning in the Egyptian context and in line with Healey’s thinking and that of other planning scholars on the role of social philosophy in planning knowledge, I investigated the core of the social debate in relation to planning thinking and urban development as it is formulated by the Egyptian philosophers. This investigation revealed an assortment of principles of a collaborative nature, which could then be incorporated within the core concepts of the collaborative planning model in order to render that model more appropriate to the Zifta context. The intellectual foundation of these collaborative principles was addressed in two steps:

- I unpacked the collaborative planning model by revisiting its theoretical strands of thought. In the course of applying the model in Zifta, this exercise enabled me to examine the potential that the Zifta context exhibited in terms of developing a new interpretation of the collaborative planning model in light of its theoretical requirements. Revisiting Habermas’ (1987) notion of communicative action helped in developing a situational definition of lifeworld with reference to the local values identified in Zifta. The incorporation of these values in the planning process helped foster a dialogue and build consensus on common issues. By means of Giddens’ (1984) structuration theory and the institutionalist approach, this thesis aspires to advance the understanding of how formal and informal actor choices
relate to the structures of rules within which they are embedded. Thus, revisiting structuration theory and the institutionalist approach helped in designing a learning-oriented planning process, wherein interactive processes took place to build shared knowledge and institutional capacity.

I then reviewed Egyptian social philosophy, in order to identify theoretical references to the empirical findings extracted from the Zifta case. In doing this, it was possible to ground the interpretation of the core concepts of the collaborative planning model applied in Zifta in a wider theoretical basis rooted in the Egyptian context. The Egyptian philosophers pointed out the moral virtues of Egyptian society as inherited cultural values blended with religion. The re-coupling of the lifeworld with the system world would, in my view, be of benefit to Egyptian society and may provide a sphere for exercising dialogue and citizens’ participation, leading to a strengthening of civil society and an empowerment of the community. The core concept of stakeholders’ rights and duties are defined in the Egyptian context in relation to the culture of relatedness and its character of mutual responsibility among the members of a community. Further, ‘shura’ as means of public participation could be a mechanism for participation in the decision-making process. Rules of communication to build consensus are defined with reference to the situational definition of the lifeworld and in relation to an understanding of the communication patterns of the Egyptian society. Finally, the social structure and building of institutional capacity in the Egyptian context depends heavily on bridging the gap between formal and informal institutions, a move that requires changes in their rules and resources dimensions. The normative standards associated with Egyptian social values may represent the third dimension that brings legitimacy to the social interaction and helps in making changes.

Reflection on the Research Design

The interrelationship between theory and practice led me to examine the implementation of the collaborative planning model in the Zifta context. Reflection on the exchanges between theory and practice has been demonstrated at different planning stages – for instance, it has been used to reset the conditions of stakeholders’ participation to ensure the balance of power, to understand the institutional structure of the formal and informal settings and their associated values, and to understand the local conditions in a way that necessitated a new interpretation of collaborative planning when it was practised in Zifta.

Given that practice focuses on solving specific problems and that research is more concerned with questioning planning practices, this project would have not been possible to achieve if I had worked solely as either a researcher or practitioner. The dual position I had provided me with a multi-strand awareness, which was reflected in the practical and the theoretical strands of the research that I carried out. The conceptual framework for the joint development of planning knowledge generated through this study represents an effort that can potentially serve to narrow the gap between practice and theory in planning research. When undertaking this thesis, I examined issues with both practical and theoretical dimensions:

Whilst I responded to questions of general interest related to intellectual problems within my research focus, I also at the same time responded to specific and concrete issues that needed to be addressed when preparing the strategic plan for Zifta.
I built my research on previous work undertaken on the same subject and placed it in the Egyptian context, but I also made use of my practice in Zifta to improve that understanding.

I designed my research strategy not as a straightforward application of a set of well-developed methods and theory, but as an iterative process and as such the research progressed from theoretical reflections to model application and knowledge production. The research strategy also made reference to the cross-cultural transfer of knowledge, incorporating methods and theory that supported the examination of collaborative planning in Zifta as well as the interpretation of the results of the study.

My academic work has contributed to knowledge in the field of planning. Additionally, during the implementation of Zifta project, together with the planning team, I was responsible for the technical documentation of the Zifta Strategic Plan 2007-2022 and its delivery to the Egyptian Government. This plan contributed to solving planning issues in the city and to the development of planning knowledge at the GOPP.

‘Learning-by-doing’ was the main product of the Zifta Demonstration Project, through which the researcher/practitioner, experts and people in Zifta worked together sharing their expertise for the common interest of the project. Moreover, apart from this research, as a practitioner I led a training workshop at GOPP Headquarters at the end of the project to disseminate planning knowledge obtained from Zifta to other GOPP planners.

Being both a researcher (and therefore equipped with theory to address questions of institutional change) and a practitioner working at a different level of rules (e.g., preparing the plan for Zifta City, testing a new planning model, and supporting the GOPP with the lessons learned from the Zifta Demonstration Project) allowed me to address institutional changes at a low cost at the GOPP level. This also contributed to building institutional capacity and people empowerment at the city level.

My dual role facilitated greater understanding of the Zifta context when carrying out planning in the Egyptian context. However, due to the complex nature of cross-cultural planning research and the fact that planning research in general focuses on understanding the relationship between people and urban space, investigations outside of the traditional planning boundaries become necessary to assist in building an understanding of the total dynamics of the real urban conditions in the new context. To competently address that broader picture, a transdisciplinary approach could have been particularly suited to this type of practice-oriented research.

According to Dunin-Woyseth and Nilsson (2011), transdisciplinary approaches involve researchers and practitioners working collaboratively across disciplines, academic and non-academic communities in order to provide solutions at several levels of reality at once. Employing such an approach in this research could have, on the one hand, minimised the bias of each perspective tackled in the course of this research (Thompson Klein et al. 2001:7 in Dunin-Woyseth and Nilsson 2011) and, on the other, it could have helped in articulating findings across different disciplines. As such, a transdisciplinary approach would have better tackled the complexity of this research from a number of perspectives. For instance, involving the discipline of social science could have supported the epistemological position taken in this study and its emphasis on the interconnectedness of various aspects, in order to grasp the total dynamics of the reality of the new context. Further, the re-contextualisation of collaborative planning
according to the Egyptian context could have achieved better coherence if transcending its core of concepts, and extending across socio-economic and political disciplines.

This research draws heavily upon theory and learning gained through the practice of action research. The task of formulating development goals for Zifta City involved a wide range of stakeholders – e.g., planners, cross-sectoral technical experts, entrepreneurs, civil servants, NGOs and citizens. However, despite this methodological inheritance, the level of stakeholder involvement, the participatory and collaborative characteristics applied in the project, and the sum of knowledge produced – all factors which may give this research certain transdisciplinary indications – the researcher still played the central role in managing the whole research process. The research outcomes could, therefore, have been enhanced if researchers and practitioners across the relevant disciplines had been equally involved in providing solutions at different levels of the reality. It is however acknowledged that transdisciplinary research constitutes a new approach. A discussion is going on at present with regard to the academic recognition of more practice-based research approaches – approaches, that is, whereby knowledge is produced in a transdisciplinary and creative practice milieu (see, for instance, Building Transdisciplinary Architectural Research, edited by Dunin-Woyseth and Nilsson (2011)). Additionally, transdisciplinary research poses complex challenges in terms of the high expenses required to involve researchers and practitioners across disciplines and the time needed to carry out the implementation process (Ramadier 2004).

**New Role for Egyptian Planners – Linking Academia with Reality**

During the planning process, some of the local experts in Zifta assumed that their technical knowledge alone would be sufficient to formulate strategic plans for the city. As a result, they were reluctant to participate in the collaboration and kept their distance from interactions with the local people. A few, despite their adequate technical skills, were convinced that relevant knowledge also existed among local people as well and therefore considered the Zifta Demonstration Project a means of learning. This type of expert seeks out discussions with the population, looking for knowledge that is embedded in the context of day-to-day existence. In turn, people were encouraged to discover themselves and give form to their knowledge so that it could be merged with the experts’ technical capabilities.

Findings from the Zifta case identified a new competence that Egyptian planners need to acquire. The Zifta case demonstrated that planners become planning-oriented experts working in the market, where they practice little of what they have learned in urban planning schools. Even the schools’ urban planning programs, which are mostly imported from western universities through bilateral agreements, do not necessarily reflect solutions appropriate to the Egyptian urban reality. As a result, graduate planners become segregated from their society. They replicate what they consider to be the best in urban planning models particularly in building new communities, using models with housing designs comprised of villas and the provision of entertainment.

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15 The author gains some additional knowledge about urban planning education in Egypt from her involvement in a Tempus project representing KTH (2007-2009) with Lund University as main partner, together with ITC Netherlands and two Egyptian universities, Alexandria and Banha and GOPP. The project entitled with “Integration of Environment Aspects and Modern technology (GIS and RS) and Pedagogic (eLearning) in Egyptian Higher Education with Special Focus on Planning”.
facilities for the wealthy. A country like Egypt, with its huge urban problems, should clearly be making better use of its human resources and in particular the large number of planners graduating annually and who have difficulties in locating job opportunities. This thesis suggests that greater attention be paid to linking planning academia with the urban reality of Egypt, and that more collaboration be undertaken between the Egyptian urban planning schools with the objective of maximising the relevance of their academic research to the Egyptian urban reality. It is therefore recommended that a campaign be initiated at university level that seeks to promote an education that is more directly useful to the country.

Educating planners, who can practice planning in the Egyptian reality and articulate that practice within an assembly of planning theory that is socially, culturally and politically relevant to the country’s conditions, will contribute to solving the urbanisation problems of Egyptian cities. Cities in Egypt face great urbanisation challenges that need to be managed. In this regard, a new curriculum in urban planning that reflects and responds to the country’s urban realities and challenges is recommended for the education of competent planners committed to the changes in Egypt. This can be developed in line with the theoretical and practical perspectives outlined below.

From a theoretical perspective, an urban planning curriculum should consider the following:

- The field of planning in Egypt should be developed in a way that takes more inspiration from local realities as well as learning from international experiences.
- The critical lines of thinking of the Egyptian social scientists and philosophers form a good theoretical platform that should be merged into planning thinking.
- Such an educational approach requires the collective efforts of academia, thinkers and institutions to work in collaboration in producing such material. By doing this, planning education may produce an improved planning knowledge that is better connected to the Egyptian reality, with qualified planners producing their best for their country.

From a practical perspective, an urban planning curriculum may consider the followings:

- Universities should play a crucial role in the development of Egypt. It is the turn of qualified planners to show their capacity to change the existing social order – an order that favours the wealthy. They should act as advocates of the rights of the poorest groups, and be ethically committed to be accountable so as to ensure fair development in the country.
- Planners have to understand the broad picture of planning and development for Egypt. A new definition of the term ‘development’ should be based on local assets and be sensitive to its impact on social change and local values. Referring to the strands of thought of the Egyptian philosophers will lead to a better definition of development. Planners should practise their knowledge not merely to answer simple sectoral questions such as housing design; rather, they should contribute to the overall development of their country.

The urban planning curriculum could be constructed in collaboration with students, through their participation in real projects, by applying learning-by-doing approaches and linking theory with practice. This would mean that education should respond to the needs of local communities within the general framework of the public interest. Learning-through-doing will sharpen
planners’ knowledge of the socio-cultural environment of their country and thus universities will educate planners that are allied with their society. The social values in the Egyptian context may have the power to reform planning thinking and foster collaboration practice. Planning education should be sensitive to social values, in order to assist planners to reflect upon societal, cultural and historical values and to connect up these values through planning practice. A typology of social values may be developed as a part of such a planning education. Such a typology may refer to what has already been developed by the Egyptian philosophers, with references drawn from, for example: geography and the built environment, the history and its role in building self-confidence, and the ways of life of the society and the attributes that guide the function of the institutional structure of the society.

Further Research

This thesis raises questions related to the cross-cultural transfer of planning knowledge, questions which are of particular importance to a world experiencing an accelerated interconnectivity. Planning ideas are formed in response to very particular problems in very specific contexts, because they are built up through a mixture of institutional practice and academic knowledge within that specific context. The transfer of knowledge across contexts with different histories, institutional capacities and cultural values underlines the complexity of this process. More and more literature advocates the adaptation of planning models when applied to a new context. But there is no overarching framework that explains how practising and developing planning in a new context should be scientifically guided. In this thesis, I argue for a cross-cultural transfer of knowledge that appreciates the potentiality of a new context to contribute, in practice and theory, to an exogenous idea.

The dimensions that determine the appropriateness of knowledge to a new institutional context are embodied in the original context from which that knowledge came. The act of revisiting the theoretical principles behind collaborative planning emphasises that research in planning knowledge cannot be disconnected from social theory. As a result, further research into the potentiality of social philosophy produced in non-western contexts may be of relevance when planning knowledge is to be developed for use in such contexts. The advantage of action research is that it facilitates the localising of the new knowledge by setting it into a dialogue with the people. This highlights the importance of professional and academic joint-research inquiries that involve transdisciplinary methodology within planning research.

In a wider context, this thesis suggests reciprocal South-North research inquiry into theories and practices that bring together researchers from different intellectual traditions. Such an inquiry should be centred on the planning field and involve South-North universities. Research in the cross-cultural transfer of knowledge should make use of the stock of knowledge produced by the social scientists of LDCs, and focus on ways in which the joint development of knowledge could contribute to innovative planning ideas by involving theoretical competence developed outside of the traditional western schools of thought. This may be done through research collaboration between social scientists, economists and planners on topics that concern the relationships between the development of social theories and planning. Research collaboration between social philosophers and planners may, in this way, develop new intellectual foundations, where new theory evolves through an exchange loop of shared knowledge and experience.
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**References in Arabic**


APPENDIX I: WORKING PLAN OF ZIFTA DEMONSTRATION PROJECT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>From January 2006 to September 2007</th>
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<tbody>
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<td><strong>ZIFTA Strategic Planning Project - Working Program</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Tanta Regional Centre</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Where is Zifta Now? Getting Started</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Activities</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Introduction of New Planning Approach</td>
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<td>Zifta Planning Project activities based on the New Planning Approach</td>
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<td>Administrative arrangements</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prepare basic GIS database - It has been discussed with TRC Staff</td>
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<tr>
<td>Introduction of New Planning Approach &amp; mobilizing the stakeholders</td>
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<tr>
<td>Seminar with TRC Staff and the Consultants at COVDP HQ - discussion on the new approach</td>
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<tr>
<td>Meeting with the Governor &amp; managers of sectional departments &amp; Popular Councils</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gut &amp; City Level</td>
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<tr>
<td>Zifta city kick off seminar - introduce Planning Approach concept to City Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>Design of Working Program - to be updated during the progress of the project</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Objectives, activities, tools and expected outputs</td>
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<td>Phases &amp; time table</td>
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<td>Participatory mechanisms</td>
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<td>Zifta Planning Team TOR</td>
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<td>Coordination with the Project Consultants</td>
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<tr>
<td>Review their work at this stage</td>
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<td>Zifta Profile - Urban situation analysis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Identify factors that shape Zifta profile</td>
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<td>Identification of Zifta urban status and advantages benchmark</td>
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<tr>
<td>Compiling Zifta profile report</td>
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<tr>
<td>Field Visit - photo of specific areas to be used to stimulate discussion</td>
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<td>Criteria of stakeholders’ identification</td>
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<tr>
<td>Organize meetings to involved more stakeholders - plus those identified previously</td>
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<tr>
<td>Analysis of stakeholders</td>
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<td>Stakeholders Matrix</td>
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<td>Stakeholders Report - Public &amp; Private sector - Civil society - (women, youth, elderly)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Two Days Workshop at Zifta City Council with the Stakeholders - Asset Mapping</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Discover zifta assets</td>
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<td>Categorize assets into main topics that summarize community assets</td>
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<td>Dream about future. Link assets with possible areas of development</td>
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<tr>
<td>Identify and categorize deficiencies and what is required to achieve dreams</td>
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<tr>
<td>Compiling the materials collected at the workshop</td>
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<td>Compiling Zifta Assets report</td>
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<tr>
<td>Coordination with the Project Consultants</td>
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<td>Investigation on the obstacles, and deficiencies - coordinate with Project Consultants</td>
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<td>Data and concrete information to be collected on the assets that have been identified</td>
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<tr>
<td>Review ongoing development projects in Zifta city</td>
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<td><strong>Field visit to the areas of concern</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Meet and discuss with experts and skilled people from Zifta</td>
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<td>Compile report on the data, information and photos, information from local experts etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Organize a meetings with the stakeholders to review &amp; discuss the outputs</td>
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<td>Weekly report to the Planning Group at COVDP-HQ</td>
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<td>Preparation for a workshop with the Stakeholders to define Zifta Vision</td>
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<tr>
<td>Focus group meetings with: NGOs - Private sector - Women - Youth - Vulnerable groups</td>
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<td>Ferrall the stakeholders with the obtained information</td>
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<td>Meetings with the stakeholders</td>
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<tr>
<td>Update Zifta City Profile - First Draft (Profile prepared by Planning Team &amp; Experts)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Define Zifta Vision</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Two Days Workshop with City Council and Stakeholders to define Zifta Vision</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Present Zifta Urban Profile - get comments &amp; information from the stakeholders</td>
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<tr>
<td>Present Zifta Assets and dreams</td>
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<tr>
<td>Visioning process - exercises, pictures, presentation of vision examples</td>
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<tr>
<td>Preliminary identification of the development priorities</td>
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<td>Preliminary approval from the Popular Council</td>
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Phase 2: What Does Zitra Want?

Activities

Unpack the Vision into development sectors: human, environment, economic, urban etc.

Zitra city Workshop

Zitra Development Goals

Technical thematic studies

Criteria for the selection of Development Goals

Common interest among the stakeholders & the Zitra role in the region

Within the national development goals

Contribute to the City Vision

Based on existing assets

Clear, specific, measurable, challenging & realistic

to be elaborated with the participation of the stakeholders & the experts

Themes for future development

Human & social development

Urban and infrastructural development including slum upgrading

capacity building

Local economic development: Agricultural, Industrial, and local economic activities

Thematic Workshops - Focus Studies

Collection of necessary data for the selected themes

Analyse each theme status using the SWOT method

Compiling SWOT results report

Prepare Zitra Urban Thematic Status Report

Zitra city Workshop - Present and discuss outputs

Presenting the outputs of the second phase

Discussion of the outputs among the Stakeholders and Phase 3 preparation

Identify consultants needs for the next phase

Identify Training needs for the next phase

Compiling Stakeholders Report and group stakeholders according to thematic working groups

Phase 3: How to get there?

Activities

Formulate strategies – how we can achieve the stated goals?

Classification, survey, spatial analysis on each theme

Zitra City Workshop

organize focus groups

Each working group develop, review and assess strategic options for each theme

Bring together different views and outlooks - Negotiation

Each working group builds consensus on the thematic strategic vision

Comprehensive Urban Plan

Translate the development themes into physical plan, land uses, projects locations, etc...

Identify key projects

Extensive negotiation to get clear commitment from Actors

Identity key projects and programs - Focus Areas of development

Formulate the integrated Development Strategies of Zitra

The Strategy of Zitra is developed through the participation and commitment of

Multi-sectoral departments, councilors & officials

Zitra Strategic Plan Committee

Local based organizations & special interests groups


LFA for each project - objectives, activities, resources, and outputs

Define actions to be taken (by concerned organization or actors etc.)

Define roles and responsibilities and contributions of stakeholders

Implementation Programs

Financing Programs

Institutional capacities

participatory mechanisms

Final Approval
APPENDIX II: AGENDA OF THE VISIONING WORKSHOP

Workshop Preparation – (Example)

**Materials**

- A1 sheets of paper
- Tape & glue sticks
- Coloured paper and pens
- Flip chart on which to draw the outline map of Zifta
- Digital Camera

**Sketches on A1 Sheets Paper**

- Outline Zifta map in relation to the surrounding villages and main cities
- Draw squares to glue in the collected papers that include group ideas for vision formulation (ideas should include aspects of development e.g. physical, socio-economical, building capacity, and infrastructural, Zifta role in the surrounding built environment)

**Place Preparation**

Planners should come at least 30 min before commencement to do the following:

- Tape the Zifta outline map on the wall
- Tape the sketch of the community assets map concept
- Group colour papers in preparation for the assets groups for use during the workshop
- Draw all necessary sketches to illustrate ideas for discussion

**Focus group formulation should consider the followings:**

- Gender aspect, representation of elderly in each group, school ages and people with special needs should be included; each group should include a variety of expertise and interests to enrich the range and aspects discussed.

**Camera**

- Photos will be taken at each stage to document the process for training material.

*Documentation of the process (four staff from Tanta office), Planners to facilitate the focus groups’ discussions. All material produced should be collected for further analysis at the end of the day.*
The First Day

10:30 11:00

Introduction
- Welcoming words -
- The participants introduce themselves (e new comers state their interest in the project), enter their names, state their expertise, tel, email address, etc.
- Briefing on the previous meeting, brief on the planning concept to new comers
- Introduction to the activities of the day

11:00 11:45

Presentation 1 – Zifta Urban Profile (Summarised from City profile workshop)
- Discussion
- Feedback
Including break and prayers

12:15 to 12:45

Presentation 2 – Zifta’s Assets (Summarised from Asset mapping workshop)
- Discussion
- Feedback

12:45 to 13:45

What is meant by ‘Vision’? Visualisation of the future (using photos to stimulate discussion)
- Discussion
- Feedback
Lunch – Sandwiches & cold drink

14:30 to 16:30

Vision exercise 2 (group work)
- What do you like most in Zifta?
  - Including historical perspective about experiences of success in the shared history of Zifta City
- What would you like to change in Zifta?
- If you change what you want! Zifta will look like…..

Including break for prayer

16:30 to 16:45

Presentation of each group

17:00 End of the first day
The Second Day

10:30 11:00
- Welcoming words
- Briefing on the previous day

11:00 13:00
Presentation of the participant responses from the first day; a representative from the youth group presents the main ideas summarised from the 2000 questionnaires distributed by the group in the city
- Focus groups’ discussions (each group led by a planner to moderate the discussion)
Including Break and Prayer

13:00 to 13:45
Presenting group work and filtering of common ideas
- Discussion and feedback
Lunch – Sandwiches & cold drink

14:30 to 15:45
Presentation of the common ideas
- Discussion and Feedback

15:45 to 16:30
A committee elected by the participants to present publicly the common ideas identified and sorted out by the whole process (ensure representation of women, school age participants, people with special needs)
Including Prayer

Formulation and public presentation of
Zifta Slogan
Zifta vision

16:30 to 17:00
Refreshment and few words about the next stage