

The infrastructural evolution of Cairo and the impact it has on Maadi and its residents

THEME: SOCIAL ASPECTS OF INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT

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Figure 1: Workers load recently cut tree branches on a government vehicle, in Cairo, February 17, 2022 (The Arab Weekly)

Abstract:

In Cairo a great number of infrastructural developments are currently being organized and put into action in a relative short timespan. In Maadi, a neighbourhood well-known for being a green oasis of sorts within the urban landscape, the developments have caused dissatisfaction. It is projected that some of this green will be sacrificed with a new traffic axis crossing straight through the district. A street, famously boasting trees of more than a hundred years old, will be completely transformed into a highway. Some of the residents of Maadi are unhappy and have organised protest actions. Previous literature on social impact assessment (SIA) stresses the importance of regarding the social impacts of any large-scale project before putting it into action. This research aims to shed light on the developments unfolding around Maadi and their social impacts using the central research question: *How do the residents of Maadi experience the social impacts of current infrastructural projects in Cairo?* By attempting to shape an optimal image of the current situation in Maadi, this paper has tried providing a satisfactory answer to this question. This has been done by studying existing literature and information on the projects and through conducting qualitative research. Multiple interviews have been conducted; planners with deeper knowledge of the Egyptian context have been consulted and residents have been given the chance to broadcast their opinion, expanding on the opinions that the vocal minority had already shown. The planners have shed more light on the perspective on planning under the authoritarian Egyptian government, with findings including that public participation is only in place when it is crucial to prevent or bring a halt to protests, and that criticism on the government is not commonplace in the Egyptian culture. The residents have expressed opinions showing concern about negative effects, but have also shown more nuanced opinions, including putting negative effects into perspective against the national interest.



Figure 2: Location of Maadi on map of Cairo

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1: Background

From the perspective of a social geographer who has studied the qualities of cities that provide liveability to its residents, Cairo seems to be far from a perfect “green city”. Walkability seems to be a very low priority within the urban landscape, as almost all hardened roads are suited for – and dominated by – cars. To increase liveability, improving walkability by reducing the dominance of cars within the landscape could be the first step to take. This leads to the motivation of this research because Egypt is currently experiencing an infrastructure reform, including a great deal of projects in Cairo with the goal of increasing connectivity. This is relevant as these projects produce negative side-effects, such as the demolition of housing and amenities, and deforestation, which only lead to decreased liveability.

An area that has responded with significant resistance is the district of Maadi (Khaled, 2021). This is hardly surprising; Maadi boasts several qualities that define it as a unique neighbourhood within Cairo. Examples of this are the cleanliness of the district, and the relative wealth of its residents. Most importantly, the area proudly bears the title of “greenest district of Cairo” (Keleg et al., 2021), with trees and greenery being abundant in the streetscape, which is evident in Figure 3, which shows a contrast between the streets within and outside of Maadi. So far, the projects and their negative impacts on the defining qualities of the neighbourhood have led to uproar among Maadi residents (Khaled, 2021).

It is likely that thus far it has been a vocal minority that has been broadcasting their opinion on the developments. It is relevant to approach the silent majority of Maadi inhabitants to provide a more accurate picture of the public opinion. Furthermore, it is worth noting that contrary to conclusions from Hanna et al. (2016), the uproar did not seem to have an overwhelmingly positive effect. In advance of the interview, a respondent (resident D) reports that the state responded to protest actions by straining or stopping the distribution of information surrounding the projects, and the protests have diminished since then. This could lead to a situation of heightened social unrest and considerable uncertainty among the population, which makes research into the public perception of the current developments all the more relevant.



Figure 3: Location of construction sites of new highway (left) and bridge (right), both marked yellow, within Maadi, marked red.

2: Theoretical framework

2.1: Literature review

This thesis will be written in the theme of “social aspects of infrastructure development”. To build a theoretical framework to inform the research, several papers exploring multiple concepts and theories within this central theme will be analysed. A handbook has been written by Vanclay et al. (2015) which provides guidance for assessing and managing the social impacts of projects. It labels the process “SIA”, short for social impact assessment, and it describes how the phenomenon can be used in the different individual phases of a project. Within an earlier paper, Vanclay et al. (2003) define social impacts as “all ways in which people can be affected by events and projects”, and provide an extensive description of the different types of social impact. Moreover, attention is called to the necessity of taking a multitude of different types of social impact into account when planning developments, including often overlooked aspects such as social and spiritual wellbeing. Subsequent measures that can be taken to minimise negative social impacts are also described, so called mitigation and compensation measures. These measures are to be taken by the initiators of the project, often the government, but their effectiveness may be diminished when trust in the authorities and their handling of the social impacts is compromised (Van der Voort & Vanclay, 2015). Key concepts and abbreviations may be found in appendix A.

2.2: Case studies

Hanna et al. (2016) wrote a paper including an in-depth SIA of an indigenous group in Brazil that is heavily impacted by an infrastructure project. The paper extensively illustrates the importance of taking the aforementioned often overlooked concepts into account. The paper looks into information distribution, compensation and mitigation measures which are found to increase when protest and public unrest increases. The paper concludes that widespread social protest can be of critical importance for converting initial attention into actions by the acting governmental institutes.

A case study looking into SIA on a smaller scale has been done by Shafik et al. (2021). The research focuses on a specific neighbourhood of Cairo, Heliopolis, much closer to the context of Maadi. Social impacts of a large-scale infrastructure project on the independent mobility of children are researched, aiming to aid in developing a methodology for consistently and fairly evaluating hazards along routes to school, and providing a basis to increase the social wellbeing of this certain age group. Within this paper, children’s independent mobility is consistently used as a way to measure social impacts on children, which is essentially a context-specific term for walkability. Walkability may be defined as the measure of being able and comfortable to walk in a certain area or space. Within this definition of walkability, the concept is one that is vulnerable to social impacts, especially due to infrastructure projects.

A third case study is brought forth by a paper by Muhtar and Rusli (2021), which analyses the construction of toll roads in Majalengka, Indonesia and its impact on the community of the district. This paper differs drastically from the papers by Hanna et al. (2016) and Shafik et al. (2021) in that it mainly focuses on the benefits that the district has gained from the infrastructural development, concluding that crime and poverty have decreased and life expectancy has increased. Furthermore, the paper regards a relatively small-scale project, and there is no actual data collected, including only an analysis of data derived from other sources.

2.3: Comparing case studies to context Maadi

The research by Muhtar and Rusli (2021) is relevant for the framework as it provides a positive perspective on impacts of infrastructure projects. The research by Hanna et al. (2016) and Shafik et al. (2021) is more relevant in that they both assess a large-scale infrastructure project and include primary data. The scope of the research by Shafik et al. is also similar to the case study of Maadi in that it targets a specific district of Cairo, which means that their approach to analysing data and general context of the research is relevant to the analysis of the case study of Maadi. The data collection method and target

group contrasts with the case study of Maadi, as the study focuses on a certain age group and has collected quantitative data mainly on one specific aspect. The social nature of this specific aspect, the qualitative elements within the data collection, and the behavioural map created using data from participants increase relevance. These qualities have implications and similarities relevant for analysing the Egyptian and Cairene context, as well as for analysing data for the case study of Maadi.

The research by Hanna et al. is less relevant when considering general context as the research is conducted on a different continent and thus takes place in a different cultural setting. The method of data collection is more relevant though, as it targeted several stakeholders and thus researched a more diverse group, and solely relied on qualitative research for the acquisition of data. The types of stakeholders targeted are comparable with the case study in Maadi, which has great implications for the methods of data collection for this case study, acting as an inspiration in its qualitative nature and the general method of conducting interviews.

2.4: SIA in Egypt

Vanclay et al. (2015) theorise that information distribution is the first and minimal form of power to be given to the public in the public participation process. Following this theory, the lack of any readily available documents regarding current projects can be seen as an example of inadequate public participation. Research on previous projects in Egypt shows that for projects with stakeholders beyond the governmental project proponent, reports regarding SIA are more readily available. In most cases these stakeholders include international organisations. Examples of these projects are the expansion of the Cairo International Airport (CIA), the current development of the Cairo Monorail and the construction of Cairo Metro Line 2.

The expansion of CIA included foreign stakeholders in terms of investors (EHCAAN, 2003; GMWM, 2014) as well as beneficiaries, as the expansion increased the importance of the airport as an international transport hub, leading up to the growth making CIA the largest airport of Africa in terms of passengers by 2020 (Cairo Airport Company, 2018, EHCAAN, 2022; Statista, 2021). The SIA for the project was outsourced, and an extensive report including logical and appropriate mitigating measures to the social impacts has been published (EHCAAN, 2003).

The Cairo Monorail includes foreign investors (UKEF, 2021) as well as international institutions responsible for multiple levels of development (The Arab Contractors, 2019; Railwaypro, 2021). The SIA for the project was outsourced, and an extensive environmental and social impact assessment has been conducted (Environics Consulting, 2022).

The construction of Cairo Metro Line 2 includes an international contractor, being a joint venture of an Egyptian partner and seven French companies (Massoud, 2008). Reports on the socio-environmental and the human impact of the metro line are publicly available (Massoud, 2008; Massoud 2011), but were published well after the project was finished (Vinci Construction, 2022). The relevance of these reports for social impact in Maadi could increase as the most recent metro line planned will cross Maadi (Cairo Governorate, 2022).

The fact that for past projects information regarding SIA is publicly available whenever international stakeholders are involved could imply that the lack of information available for the projects surrounding Maadi is due to the lack of international stakeholders involved. This will be kept in mind when researching the state of SIA surrounding the context of Maadi.

2.5: Conceptual model

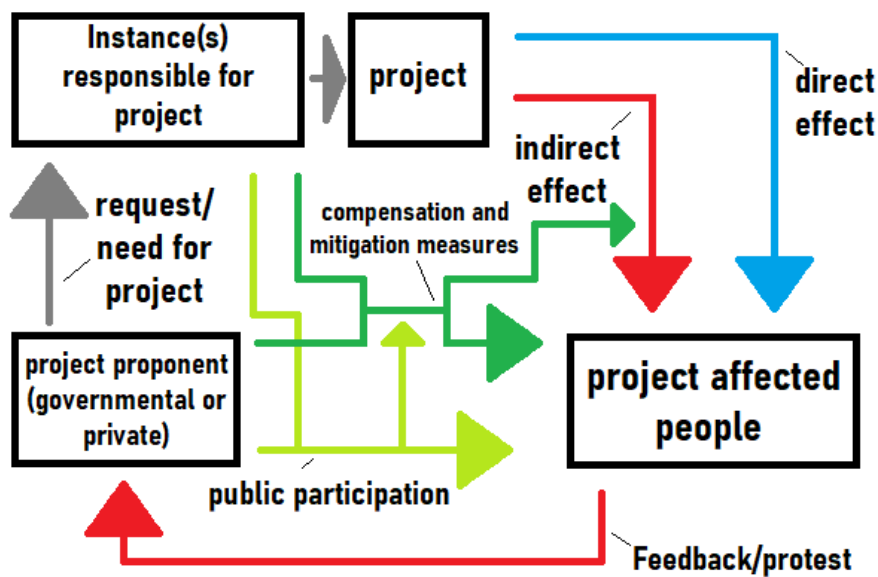


Figure 4: Conceptual model stakeholders project

Displayed on figure 4 are the most important concepts relating to the different stakeholders. Concepts mentioned may be found in appendix A. The most important effects or actions taken surrounding the project are displayed through arrows, originating from the responsible stakeholder or event and pointing to the affected group. The green arrows are effects/actions that have positive functions in relation to social impacts. The red arrows are effects/actions that relate to negative effects regarding social impacts. The blue arrow represents the main aimed effect of the project. Grey arrows are a standard indicator of a relation of responsibility. It is important to highlight that in the case study of Maadi, the project proponent is governmental, meaning that they are likely to exert more power and authority than a private project proponent would.

3: Research problem

3.1: Importance SIA

The importance of SIA and essential factors to keep in mind regarding projects described by Vanclay et al. (2015) make the necessity of proper research on the social impacts of infrastructure projects surrounding Maadi clear. For this goal, existing data to be found in academic literature and information distribution is currently insufficient, with the article by Shafik et al. (2021) being the main literature of reference. As illustrated by Hanna et al. (2016), there is a dire need to regard the broader socio-political context to find appropriate compensation arrangement and mitigation measures when considering large-scale infrastructure projects. In the pursuit of further exploration of the social impacts on Maadi by current projects it is important that the multiple stakeholders are all properly addressed, as existing academic literature fails to properly represent all stakeholders.

3.2: Problem case study

Apart from the specific age group and area researched by Shafik et al. (2021) no academic literature has focused on social impacts in Cairo by the recent infrastructural reform. This results in a need for all current knowledge on this subject to be retrieved from more informal and less reliable sources, such as newspaper articles. When looking at the social impacts, Maadi specifically is in need of further research, because, as mentioned earlier, current projects are projected to subject the area to deforestation (Mahmoud, 2021), including a motorway which will cross right through Maadi (Khaled, 2021). Several Egyptian and Middle Eastern media have reported that this has led to an uproar on social media (Dahaby, 2021; Khaled, 2021; Middle East Observer, 2021), including an online petition to stop developments. This increases the likelihood of usable findings regarding SIA, as previous literature propose that protests can advance consideration of social issues by governments and thus motivate proper compensation and mitigation measures (Hanna et al. 2016). Therefore, this thesis will explore the social impacts within the local and cultural context of the district of Maadi by utilising the following research questions:

3.3: Research questions:

Main research question:

How do the residents of Maadi experience the social impacts of current infrastructure projects in Cairo?

Subquestions:

How was the distribution of information about current developments to the residents of Maadi?

How are the residents of Maadi able to influence decision-making processes?

What is the reach and effectiveness of mitigation measures and compensation measures that have and will be implemented?

4: Research design

4.1: Structure

The research conducted will be introduced in the following chapters. First, the expectations can be found as they were constructed on the basis of theoretical findings before any data collection was conducted. Then, the methods in which data is collected can be found, followed by a paragraph on important ethics to be taken into consideration. Afterwards, the findings are presented, divided into several aspects. Then these findings are analysed altogether to answer the research questions, finishing with the main research question. Lastly a conclusion will follow, including strengths and weaknesses of the research, and recommendations for future research.

4.2: Hypotheses

Of the project, it is expected that the direct effects will have a positive effect on the overall traffic flow, safety and modernity of Cairo as well as the accessibility both within Cairo as to the neighbouring urban areas of the city of 6th of October and the New Administrative Capital. It is expected that the local population will perceive these direct effects as positive but will feel they are overshadowed by the indirect effects. It is expected that the indirect impacts of the project will include damaging of areas of Maadi to accommodate the infrastructural developments, which will subsequently result in a negative effect on the overall perceived liveability. Furthermore, it is expected that the local population will feel that the mitigation measures and compensation arrangements are insufficient and that the information distribution is limited, especially when projects are controversial or spark protests and uproar. It is also expected that the planners will be restricted in their comments on the projects and their effects. It is expected that heavily affected areas will need relocating of amenities and residences, with mitigation measures only extending to the resettlement process. It is expected that any compensation arrangements will be minimal and will only be in place in instances where Egyptian law requires it. It is expected that the affected population will perceive both the mitigation and compensation measures as unpleasant, insufficient, or non-existent.

4.3: Methodology

For this research, a qualitative approach has been selected as the main research question calls for an in-depth approach with personal opinions, in order to characterise the perception from the inhabitants the best. The data was collected through in-person interviews, video- and phone calls. Assessment of the context led to the assumption that through conversations, respondents would probably feel most comfortable to share personal opinions and be less likely to respond with only politically correct positive answers. Furthermore, as the full research has been conducted from the Netherlands, qualitative data was a better option than quantitative data regarding quality and accessibility of the data as, from a distance and without a widespread network, conducting a small amount of interviews is more feasible than collecting a large number of surveys.

4.4: Interviewees

[note: One of the interviewees requested to be anonymous in the final version of the paper. Any reference to them or their organisation has been replaced with: "Cairo based planning organisation".]

The original plan was to divide the interviewees into three categories: resident, planner and governmental. Contacting Egyptian governmental institutions proved to be unfeasible so only the resident and planner category received representation, with two interviewees each. For the planning representation the interview with a high-ranking member of [Cairo based planning organisation] was especially notable. [Omitted explanation of the organisation]. The expertise of the local planning context derived from the input from this interview makes the acquisition of this interviewee invaluable. The value is amplified by the fact that acquiring respondents from Egypt proved difficult in general, with [Cairo based planning organisation] being the only planning organisation from Egypt that has reacted

in any form to invitations for an interview. This interviewee shall henceforth be referred to as "[CBPO]". The other planner is active for an organisation based in the Netherlands, and shall be referred to as "planner D". For the residents, a similar difference in perspective is to be expected, as one of the residents is Egyptian and lived in Maadi for 44 years, and the other resident is Dutch and lived there for only 4 years. They shall henceforth be referred to as "resident E" and "resident D" respectively. The choice for referring to the interviewees with letters is to efficiently help the reader place opinions and views by the interviewees into perspective, with the additional "E" indicating an Egyptian perspective and the additional "D" indicating a partly Dutch perspective; a perspective where contrasts with the European or Dutch context are more likely to have been taken into consideration.

CBPO: "We tried to develop an alternative mode of governance, to bring to the table the difference, channel the voices and the interests of the various stakeholders, and then try to find a middle ground between these conflicting interests."

4.5: Limitations

The difficulty in contacting potential interviewees led to a relatively small number of interviewees, diminishing the credibility of the findings, but can have its own useful implications which are explored within the findings. The lack of governmental interviewees, as well as the fact that both respondents from the planning perspective have no a priori knowledge about the specific context of Maadi leads to the findings regarding planning context remaining overall relatively general, diminishing their quality. This means that findings for the research question regarding SIA and public participation remain general, only regarding Cairene and Egyptian context.

4.6: Ethics

It is important to keep in mind that the research area is placed in a different context than the Dutch or European context regarding several aspects, including cultural, lingual, governmental, social and geographical. The most important aspect to be taken into consideration is that criticism of the government and governmental decisions is not normalised in Egyptian society. This has implications for ethical conduct of the research. For conducting the interviews, measures taken include being cautious when phrasing questions which might implicate criticism on the Egyptian government. For the subsequent analysis of the data, it is important to keep in mind that logical points of view on ethical matters from a Dutch or European perspective can differ from the Egyptian perspective. To attempt to deal with this, opinions and views expressed in the interviews are viewed in the most objective manner possible. This subject will be more thoroughly explored within the results chapter.

5: Findings

The findings are divided into several topics, the first being context, which will provide a better general view of the national and local context on a number of aspects. The second topic is perceived impact, which will be divided in the negative and positive sides. The next topic is the state of information distribution, going into the measure of difficulty in finding it and the sources available to the public. After this, the topic of public participation and compensation- and mitigation measures is discussed, including examples or lack thereof. The last topic will be the perceptions of the interviewees on expressing opinion or criticism on projects.

5.1: Context

Maadi is described by Egyptian interviewees without deeper knowledge of Maadi as a higher-class neighbourhood. The residents (E+D) of Maadi itself express pride in the abundance of greenery and the pleasant community feeling, as well as the presence of beautiful buildings such as villas. The contrast to the high-rise buildings generally abundant in the rest of Cairo is mentioned. The neighbourhood is described as consisting of several parts, the most important of which are Maadi Sarayat and Maadi Degla, comprising the westernmost area.

Dutch resident: "Also a lot of people drive against traffic, or people drive backwards. And nobody has lights on their car, so you have to be very careful. And there are also people with donkey carts or mopeds with 6 people on it, walking, crossing the motorway on foot."

Resident D mentioned, from her expertise as a local realtor, that property prices are dropping, partly due to a shift in population distribution, with the focus of the upper class shifting to gated communities and newly built areas, including the new administrative capital. The population density has risen immensely over the past 20 years, resulting in traffic flow and congestion problems within the neighbourhood, which resident E perceives as an important incentive for current infrastructural developments. Further traffic problems include general unsafe road behaviour, of which resident D mentioned several startling examples. Due to an insufficient number of schools within Maadi, some children have to travel outside of Maadi for their education. Resident E expressed concern about the commute for children, both because of dangers of traffic and the commuting times which are "daily for an hour or more". Furthermore, according to resident D, the streets are not well-kept in general, followed by examples of construction work leaving damage which is subsequently neglected, as well as an abundance of domestic waste on the street. According to her, this is a trait shared with other areas of Cairo, and is generally accepted and maintained as a status quo because cleaning it up is an important source of labour for a certain group of lower-class citizens.

Dutch resident (realtor): "The most important part, let's say the upmarket part is Maadi Sarayat and Maadi Degla [...] you also have Maadi Arab, and that's very local, the streets are very close together [...] then you have new Maadi, which is upcoming but very local, then you have Maadi gardens."

For the national context, it is important to note that the society is hierarchical, with planner D and resident D noting that it seems that you have more rights in Egypt when you are more powerful. Furthermore, according to two independent statements from resident E and [CBPO], Cairo has seen a period of around 50 years of next to no development, effectively leading to neglect of infrastructure. This leads to the next topic, the positive impacts of the current projects around Maadi.

CBPO: "Cairo needed some radical interventions, because of almost, I wouldn't say complete, absence of comprehensive planning over the last four decades. There was very little done, but mostly as sort of immediate solutions to crisis management, right? There was no comprehensive, let's say, traffic plan for the city."

5.2: Positive impacts

The current trend of rapid infrastructural development is perceived as overdue with resident E saying; "We really needed them 20 years ago, not now - 20 years ago, we are outdated.", which in turn illustrates the dire need for these projects and thus the positive changes they will bring about. The overdue developments include several infrastructure developments around Maadi which improve or will improve both the accessibility of Maadi and flowthrough of traffic, greatly reducing risk of traffic jams. Resident E perceived the national interest of the projects as an important positive impact as well, repeatedly mentioning it proudly. The national interest of the projects include

Egyptian resident: "... percentage of people impacted - badly impacted is 1% or less than a percentage. For people - that this project was useful for them it's 99%."

improving the overall traffic flow by improving the road network across the entire Cairo metropolitan area. When confronted with questions regarding negative impacts, resident E often used national interest as an argument to place them in perspective. The newly constructed bridge across the highway ‘‘El Nasr Road’’ which crosses Maadi (See figure 3, page 3), is perceived by both residents (E+D) as positive and having greatly improved accessibility. Furthermore, the development of the bridge was perceived as efficient and straightforward, with resident D saying that it was being worked on 24/7 during its construction without closing down the road, avoiding road blockage but negatively impacting safety. The bridge was to be constructed within the timeframe of November 2021 until March 10th, 2022, and this goal was reached. Resident D perceived the timeframe as very ambitious and she was thoroughly impressed that the bridge was finished and functioning at the target date. She perceived it as the only current project with a positive impact, which leads to the following topic.

Dutch resident: ‘‘Well, I think, in the end, it’s very positive, there is more and more of a natural or flowing inflow into Maadi and the traffic is more easily handled so you don’t have endless traffic jams’’

5.3: Negative impacts

Resident D states that as opposed to the bridge, the new highway which will replace road 250 (See figure 3, page 1) will only have positive effects on the flowthrough through Maadi and no positive effects on the residents of Maadi itself. She imagines it will damage surrounding infrastructure and will not renovate the damage nor properly link the roads up to the highway, only hurting the accessibility of Maadi. Both residents (E+D) agree on a number of negative effects of the highway, including a loss of greenery, an increase in pollution and noise pollution. Furthermore, it will greatly decrease walkability within the neighbourhood, which resident D predicts is going to divide the community, and affect the community feeling of the area as a whole. Resident E recognises the increased social impacts it might have on the residents in the direct proximity, with the pavements in front of their homes getting smaller, greenery on their property getting demolished and the new highway lacking parking spots for them. Furthermore, he mentioned that certain shops located on road 250 have already heard they are expected to relocate.

Dutch resident: ‘‘I think the charming thing about Maadi was that it was a bit of an isolated bubble of greenery and where you can walk anywhere, [...] that’s now going to be prevented if there’s going to be such a big road running through it.’’

5.4: Information distribution

The residents (E+D) do not perceive proper information distribution prior to commencing of any projects, as they often learn of the existence of planned developments only when construction starts. Furthermore, any information regarding the projects is received from non-governmental sources, which are most often protest groups, which are noticeably active on social media. Because of protests, resident D said to have experienced information distribution around the time when the current projects were announced, but that this has diminished since then: ‘‘Because there are so many protests against it, it is now being done quietly.’’. Around the time when the protest groups were still active, the social media groups have received reaction from the government in the form of a statement which could be seen on the Facebook group up until around March 2022, but the group seems to have changed function and any important messages have been removed and replaced with advertisements, implying restrictions on the information that was previously being distributed on this page. Fragmentally, information can be found online, with government channels having posted two independent videos on Facebook and YouTube in early 2022 during development, one of which shows a map of larger current infrastructure projects projected to affect Maadi and the president inspecting this map on a construction location (See figure 4).



Figure 4: Abdel Fattah El-Sisi, president of Egypt inspecting construction area

Both CBPO and planner D have said that information distribution surrounding projects is not common practice in Egypt, with planner D bringing up the large contrast to the Netherlands, where information distribution and proper access to sources is expected. The society is hierarchical, as according to CBPO, almost all decisions are made top-down, and have become increasingly top-down over the last decade.

He went on to say that information about this can be found through statements made by politicians, published in newspapers. Planner D mentioned that public discussion is less common in Egypt, because no opportunities are created by the government, and the society is less likely to participate, being more focused on their own business. Public discussion could be promoted by organisations like CBPO as they distribute public opinion. Furthermore, it is found that proper information distribution is only done when the risk of protest due to public dissatisfaction is large, either because influential people are affected, or a vast number of people in general. Instances of information distribution like this will consist of one-way communication, though in the largest cases, meetings or events are organised. At these events, a group of around 20 people is invited to represent the affected community, and is informed about the relevant developments.

CBPO: "[the authorities] can also rely on an organisation like us to get the views from local communities, that could be an alternative way in absence of institutional governance, local governance."

5.5: Public participation

In general, public participation is regarded by resident D as non-existent. She feels like there are not any opportunities for dialogue or criticism regarding developments. Resident E also mentions not knowing of an official way to express any opinion, and illustrates the contrast with other governments: "It's not like in Europe where you have a town hall and then you do really elect your representatives.". Both residents (E+D) did not experience any mitigation measures, but are also not the most affected inhabitants of Maadi, which means that other inhabitants might experience this differently. Resident E mentioned that new trees are being planted, replacing some of the old trees, an example of a compensation measure. Furthermore, a video sent by both residents (E+D) shows the relocation of trees affected by developments, and both residents are pleased with the initiative, though Resident D added that she had not yet seen this activity herself.

Dutch resident: "I think it's a nice initiative, I did not see it happen yet, but it could very well have happened."

In principle, findings through the planners regarding public participation are mentioned before. Representatives for the affected people can express their opinion about the developments being presented. In practice, this seems to be a grievance mechanism though, as planner D does not think that their input will actually influence the developments. Attendees of the event will be offered their compensation measures, and could be given a choice for example between being either permanently or temporarily relocated, and receiving money. The compensation measures usually given are described by planner D as insufficient and even condescending. Moreover, the people invited most often do not represent the affected people properly, with only the most powerful and rich individuals being invited. Mitigation measures are generally rare, with both planners, upon being asked, only bringing forward the example of the time of evacuation for affected people being negotiated.

Planner in NL: "Usually it's belittling, condescending [...] That's usually why they get unhappy, they are not compensated fairly."

5.6: Expressing opinion

Overall, three of the four residents have talked about citizens expressing concern or speaking out against

governmental plans, and the citizens mentioned were influential and powerful people. Both resident D and planner D suspect that status influences the amount of criticism you are allowed to have. Resident D goes on to say that for expressing your dissatisfaction too strongly or too openly, it is possible to be arrested without being given a reason. Furthermore, it can be dangerous to talk to certain media. Both CBPO and planner D said that there are known anti-government media; media instances that are generally critical to the Egyptian government. An example of this is Al Jazeera, a media source that is allegedly funded by Qatar. These anti-government media are blacklisted, so reporters are generally undercover. This could have implications for the difficulty in finding respondents for this research, as planner D suggests that the lack of response could be because respondents are worried that the premises for contact are not genuine and could be a facade from an undercover blacklisted journalist. As several of the respondents contacted had already openly expressed dissatisfaction and attempted protest online, this could imply that it is more dangerous for residents to talk to blacklisted media than it would be to express the opinions openly themselves.

Dutch resident: "Any criticism is dangerous. Not only dangerous for yourself but also for your family, there is no rule of law, you are not represented by a lawyer, you are just gone."

Planner in NL: "Even if they are influential, sometimes they are not put in jail, of course, but they are being harassed. They'll say like: Hey, watch out, [...] You can lose your job, you can not have this advantage anymore."

6: Results

Based on the findings we can formulate answers of differing accuracy and credibility to the subquestions formulated.

6.1: Results subquestions

How was the distribution of information about current developments to the residents of Maadi?

The state of information distribution is minimal, and it is not uncommon for residents to learn about large-scale projects through action- and protest groups. After initial protests and the subsequent diminishing of these protests, the information distribution is perceived to have been diminished as well, which is likely to be correlated. For this reason, it can be suspected that the protests have been stopped or hindered by the government to bring a halt to the function of information distribution it fulfilled. This suspicion can be strengthened by the fact that the online protest group ‘‘Save Maadi’’ on Facebook has completely changed function and all of the original messages of protest have been replaced by advertisements. Further methods of information distribution may include reports by media on statements done by politicians. Official methods of information distribution readily available to the public are fragmented and are mainly comprised of videos by official government channels showcasing parts of current developments. The shopkeepers at road 250 receive some information, such as expectations of relocation, earlier. It can be presumed that other residents that are directly and heavily affected also receive more information. Context provided by the interviewees from the planning perspective indicate that it is likely that a group of more influential and powerful residents of Maadi have received more information regarding developments.

How are the residents of Maadi able to influence decision-making processes?

It is found that no official ways to express opinions are known to the residents of Maadi. Exerting influence is not perceived as an option, which interviewees say is due to the authoritarian and top-down approach by the government, in contrast to democratic countries with elected councils. An unofficial way of expressing opinion is stating your opinion on Facebook. The initial protest group on Facebook ‘‘Save Maadi’’ did evoke a governmental reaction in the form of a statement, letting protesters feel heard, though this sentiment can be diminished due to all opinions stated within the group have been deleted since. The fact that the loss of greenery was a factor of reason for most of the protests may indicate that these protests did influence the decision-making process as the government has started relocating and replanting trees. The matter of influencing government decisions has to be seen within the national context, as it is found that the culture does not lend well for expressing concern. Residents are generally more focused on their day-to-day practice. Furthermore, criticism of the government can be dangerous, with the measure of danger of criticism largely influenced by status and power.

What is the reach and effectiveness of mitigation measures and compensation measures that have and will be implemented?

Due to the amount of influential people that live in Maadi it is possible that some form of public participation meeting has taken place including information on mitigation and compensation measures. Based on examples of similar contexts it is probable that after this proved inadequate due to the protests, further SIA has been conducted which have led to the relocation of trees as a compensation measure. This measure has been broadcasted online and residents are content with the initiative, but do not perceive it as having a large influence yet. Findings imply that only residents that are heavily affected receive compensation, and it is also insufficient. The fact that only these examples are found means that

mitigation and compensation measures are very scarce. Context provided by the interviews imply that the goal of the government may be minimising protest as opposed to minimising the factors leading to protest. So, as the current measures in place do not lead to a state of protest, they can be perceived as effective.

6.2: Results main research question

How do the residents of Maadi experience the social impacts of current infrastructure projects in Cairo?

Based on the interviews, only the positive impact of improved reachability and accessibility because of the construction of the bridge are currently felt, though negative effects in the form of noise pollution and traffic congestion were perceived during its construction. Current social impacts are most heavily characterised by the initial protests, which included the complaints of anticipated loss of greenery and general damage to the image of Maadi. The most heavy social impacts are the number of anticipated negative impacts as perceived by the residents living closest to street 250. Expected impacts include traffic congestion, negligence, damage to the community feeling, and damage to greenery to a certain degree, depending on the success of the government effort to relocate and replant trees. The national context does have to be kept in mind. It is likely that residents will put negative aspects in perspective with any positive (national) impacts that the projects are prospected to have, both because Egyptians tend to be proud of prestigious projects which were not experienced for multiple decades, as illustrated by the enthusiasm of the Egyptian resident that was interviewed, and also because it is less commonplace in the Egyptian culture to express criticism. It is important to note that this tendency to not express criticism has a logical correlation with the finding that expressing your opinion can be dangerous as these aspects can strengthen and sustain each other. This could mean that a lack of criticism can also have the underlying meaning that residents are simultaneously dissatisfied and afraid of expressing their opinion.

7: Conclusion

7.1: Overview

In conclusion, mostly the least powerful and least influential population group are prone to being negatively impacted by the projects. The perceived positive effects for Maadi include the increased connectivity by the bridge, and the improvement of connectivity in the regional and national context. The perceived negative effects include traffic congestion, pollution, noise pollution, and anticipated removal of greenery, division of the local community and loss of property value. As the population of Maadi is comprised of a substantial number of influential inhabitants, it is probable that SIA has taken place, with relocation and replanting trees being compensation measures taken. The residents that were interviewed were of varying backgrounds and complemented each other. Both of them provided substantial insight and were well-acquainted with the developments occurring, and kept contact to provide further insight whenever possible, enthusiastically providing additional insights and information beyond the interview. The importance of widespread social protest discussed by Hanna et al. (2016) can be contested by the findings within this research, as protests did not fulfil the goal of stopping the development of the highway, but could have led to SIA and the measure of replanting trees, though no official source confirms this. Further comparison of the case study to findings by Hanna et al. (2016) and Vanclay et al. (2003, 2015) stressing the importance of SIA and proper compensation, discussed in the theoretical framework, make the government approach seem unacceptable. This is mainly because public participation has such a low priority and expressing opinion is not only perceived as ineffective, but also dangerous. To put matters into perspective, the findings should be placed within the Egyptian context described by the interviewees, which improves understanding for the status quo on some level. This is mainly because the community is less prone to desire influence on governmental decisions.

7.2: Limitations

This research does not have direct data collected from a policy-maker, or governmental institution. Furthermore, the planners interviewed did not have direct knowledge about the context of Maadi. Overall this has led to this research providing an overview about the general national context of the subjects of social impact and public participation, but lacking specific insight into Maadi, diminishing the credibility of some of the results.

7.3: Future research

For future research it would be interesting to do broader or more in-depth research on perceived social impacts by using a larger number of interviewees, perhaps combined with quantitative data with a representative set of respondents from around Maadi. Furthermore, future research could expand immensely on existing information regarding general SIA and public participation in Egypt. This could be done by successfully including a policy-maker or government official to provide information about the process of infrastructure projects and projects in general, and within this context how much effort and priority is given to SIA and what is the threshold for social impacts to be taken into consideration. Policy recommendations include incorporating public participation more in the process of project development, especially encouraging less powerful and influential people to express opinions. This could in turn lead to a shift in the society from the normalisation of accepting negative effects, to negative effects being discussed by the public.

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Appendices:

Appendix A: Key concepts

Compensation measures/arrangements: Arrangements, often organised by the government, made to compensate interest groups that are negatively affected by projects or events conducted by the government.

Direct effect: An effect created by a project, which is the main goal of the project.

Indirect effect: An effect created by a project, which was not the main goal of the project. This can be on any scale and can be positive, as well as negative.

Information distribution: The information distributed regarding the project and all its positive/negative effects to the (affected) population. A large factor in the concept of public participation.

Liveability: The measure of an area being regarded as pleasant to spend time and perform activities in.

Mitigation measures: Measures taken to mitigate between different interest groups.

Project affected people: The population which is affected, either direct or indirect, by the effects of a project.

Public participation/stakeholder engagement: The act of project developers informing PAP's on aspects of the project and potentially corresponding on compensation arrangements and mitigation measures.

SIA (Social impact assessment): The measurement/prediction of the social impacts of an event or project.

Social impacts: The impacts that an event or project can have on a broad number of factors within the lives of either the general population or specific interest groups, depending on what it is that is being researched.

Walkability: The perceived possibility and safety for individuals to walk to amenities and locations in their direct environment. An important factor contributing to an area's measure of liveability.

Appendix B: Data collection instrument

Main research question:

How do the residents of Maadi experience the social impacts of current infrastructure projects in Cairo?

Subquestions (3):

How was the distribution of information about current developments to the residents of Maadi?

How are the residents of Maadi able to influence decision-making processes?

What is the reach and effectiveness of mitigation measures and compensation measures that have and will be implemented?

Interview guides:

Notes about questions, indicated by an asterisk () can be found at the bottom of the respective interview guide.*

Questions preceded by an arrow (>) are asked only if the preceding question did not evoke a response yet answering this subquestion.

Important concepts included in questions are indicated by quotation marks (‘’) and will be explained or elaborated on when the interviewee is not familiar (enough) with them.

Stakeholder 1 (resident):

Context interviewee:

What is your name & age?

What is your place of residence?
(Respondents can answer with whatever scale they are comfortable with)

What is your profession?

Taking the qualities you mentioned into account, why is Maadi a good district to live in?

How liveable would you consider Maadi in a broader context? Other countries or areas?

Liveability:

Are you familiar with the concept of liveability?

What makes an area “liveable” do you think?

Examples could include:

- The state of the general exterior
- The flora
- The amenities
- The connectivity
- The traffic
- The sense of community

Current developments

What do you consider the most important projects in and around Maadi? *

What are the most important effects of these projects?

What are the most important positive/negative effects of these projects? **

What kind of impact do, or could these projects have on the environment of Maadi? (amenities, street scene, flora, etc.)

What kind of impact do, or could these projects have on you?

How do inhabitants of Maadi generally react to these projects?

What are characteristics of the local culture and people that might influence how they react?

Are you content with the current projects and how they are being conducted?

Public participation:

Have you heard of “public participation” (as a part of the process of a project)?

In what way have you experienced public participation before? ***

In what way do you experience public participation for current developments?

Are you content with the current developments and how they are being conducted?

Do you feel like the institutions responsible for these developments have taken you, or the inhabitants in general, into account?

What do you think they do well?

What do you think they could do better?

Do you feel like you could exercise influence on the projects?

Summarising:

Is there anything else you would like to share?

Stakeholder 2 (Planner):

Context interviewee:

Can you tell me a bit about the activities of (organisation) and your function within (organisation)?

Planning - Egypt:

What are the most important factors taken into consideration in Egypt/Cairo when planning an infrastructure project?

- ☐ *How important is: Connectivity, Beauty/Prestige, Walkability, Noise pollution, Construction and consequent dangers/pollution?*

How important is "social or environmental impact assessment" in the context of Egyptian planning?

Public participation - Egypt:

How is "public participation" generally done?

- ☐ *How well are the affected citizens informed or consulted?*
- ☐ *What are examples of "mitigation measures"?*
- ☐ *What are examples of "compensation measures"?*

Are affected citizens generally satisfied with projects and measures?

***If the interviewee is not aware of the most important developments the interviewer will inform them in an impartial manner.**

****Extra question when the previous answer did not evoke a response including both a positive and a negative effect.**

*****An example outside of the context of the research is acceptable and will lead to a question specifying experiences within the context of the research.**

Consent terms:

The interviewee knows:

The general subject of the research.

That all data collected is done for research purposes at the university of Groningen.

Liveability:

Would you say Maadi is a "liveable" place, a pleasant place to live in?

- ☐ *Considering a broader context?*

Do you think the liveability of Maadi is currently being impacted? *

Public participation - Maadi:

Do you know what SIA or EIA has been conducted?

Has public participation taken place?

- ☐ *How well are the affected citizens informed or consulted?*
- ☐ *What are examples of compensation measures?*

How satisfied do you think the affected citizens are with the way the projects are done?

Do you have any recommendations on how to improve current practice?

Summarising:

Is there anything else you would like to share?

That participation is voluntary, whenever you want to stop you are free to do so, and after the interview, if you decide that you would prefer if parts or the entirety of the interview are scrapped from the record you are entitled to this.

That the data collected will be stored for the shortest time possible, and the audio will only be heard by the interviewer and possibly his supervisor.

Appendix C: Interview 1 - Resident D

(translated Dutch to English by deepl)

Interviewer:

To begin with. What is your name and age?

Interviewee:

My name is and Aimee Bentinck. And I am 57 years old.

Interviewer:

Where do you live?

Interviewee:

I live in Maadi. In Cairo, Egypt.

Interviewer:

Yes, exactly. And what is your job?

Interviewee:

I am both a teacher and a real estate agent in Maadi and in New Cairo.

Interviewer:

OK. Yes. In Maadi and in Cairo as a whole?

Interviewee:

Yes, in New Cairo. That is a certain part of Cairo.

Interviewer:

Yes, exactly. And as a real estate agent, do you notice anything of these developments that are taking place now? That house prices are going down or maybe even up?

Interviewee:

Uhm. Well not in that sense. I don't know if the projects have an impact. Well, if I'm very honest uhm I think uhm the house prices in Maadi do go down, but that's because there's a huge shift to new Cairo or to New Capitol because there's a lot of construction there. And actually new cities and new - So to speak the centre of government is being shifted there. So from the inner city. But Maadi is not the inner city, it's a suburb. Uhm, but it is a very popular suburb for people in high positions and a lot of foreigners. But because the centre for politics and the centre for commerce and the economy are actually shifting, fewer people are going to

live in Maadi. So as far as that is concerned, the house prices are going down. Yes, there is a lot of building going on outside the city, actually.

Interviewer:

Yes exactly so there is less demand then.

Interviewee:

There's less demand than - there's less demand and it's also a bit outdated so there's a lot of renewal all over town. Uh is a lot of renewal and uh, Cairo is very big. So you can see that both foreigners and the higher segment of the population are moving out to the new compounds and of course the good access roads have an influence on that. And the good accessibility between work, living, traffic. Uhm, so yes at the moment. Uh, Maadi's house price is going downhill. That has to do with the economy, but it's also very much due to the shifting of the weight. Uh where the rich people want to live.

Interviewer:

Yes, exactly. OK. And you say, um, that the whole thing is new. Is it OK if I infer from that that then ma that is relatively less innovative? Uh than the rest of Cairo?

Interviewee:

Yes, because Maadi is old. Maadi is a part of Cairo. What originated around 1920 is, uhm, what used to be the old villa district where mainly the English uh lived, very green along the Nile, those villas, which have gradually, not all, but been exchanged for apartment complexes. But that's why we're also thinking of, well, I guess it's 1990/2000, so those apartment buildings aren't very new anymore. Maybe it's later, I don't know exactly. But gradually the old villas are giving way to more modern apartment complexes. But of course it is full. There is not much land left to develop.

Interviewer:

Yes, exactly. And do you live in his apartment building or in one of those villas? If you are talking about the dichotomy of these types of homes.

Interviewee:

I live in an apartment building. Yes, exactly.

Interviewer:

Yes. Super! Thank you very much.

Interviewee:

Well, in the place where falls used to be, of course.

Interviewer:

Yes. Yes, good. Well, I understand. OK, then. Uh, we're talking about the next topic is livability. Uh, do you know what livability is?

Interviewee:

Well I suppose we mean that. Uh the quality of life in the particular neighbourhood.

Interviewer:

Yes, exactly, so in a neighbourhood, how well you can live there, how comfortable you feel there, and that can be, actually all aspects can be. Yes. And what do you think contributes to that, or a place or a neighbourhood, being liveable?

Interviewee:

Well um, I don't want to talk about Maadi, but in general?

Interviewer:

First, I want you to share your main opinion.

Interviewee:

Well, I think that a good input infrastructure, that you can reach it and that you can get out again. I think that, yes, what people need. That it should be there. Uh shops, several uhm yes restaurants. Something that adds to the entertainment. Perhaps parks, where people can go outside and relax. Apart from the restaurants, of course, there are cinemas or theatres. Transport, different means of transport that provides that access to the area that can be from tram to metro to train, bus.... Employment close by. The commute between work and home and then few bottlenecks so few traffic jams. I also think maintenance, maintenance of roads, but also maintenance of rubbish. And yes, how people think about their neighbourhood, renewal, care. Yes. Anti pollution actually. Uhm yes, I also think it has to do with the renewal of a neighbourhood. So that something is up to date that people also have the idea that, uh, it won't end up in a dilapidated state. Yes, something like that.

Interviewer:

Yes, exactly. And then, well then we go to Maadi. How would you then see Maadi as liveable if you think about all those things you just mentioned? What is it better at, what is it less good at?

Interviewee:

Well, I think Maadi is very popular mainly because it is very green. And uh, I haven't actually mentioned that yet. But yes, could say parks. It's not so much parks in Maadi, but because it used to be an old villa district, the streets or lanes are, yes, lined with very old trees. So there is a lot of greenery there and there are a lot of trees that are very much in bloom, so it looks very beautiful. So you're actually in a kind of city but still in a very green environment. For the rest, I think the old buildings are very charming to many people because you don't have that in Cairo, you mainly have high-rise buildings in Cairo, and very close together but in

Maadi you still have the villas with the gardens. And then indeed an apartment complex and then again a villa with a garden. There are also a lot of restaurants and a lot of coffee shops. There's a lot of hustle and bustle, there are a lot of people doing something in the street - going somewhere for a coffee, yes, there's a lot going on. The fact that it is very close to the river is very nice, it is a bit like nature. I think that's what makes it liveable. It's also very unlivable, should I go on about that now?

Interviewer:

Yes, if you want.

Interviewee:

Yes, it is also very unlivable. Because the roads are a big put-hole, not, there's no maintenance, that's a big problem in Maadi, actually in Cairo, that something is built and then it's not maintained. An example of this is that we all got new cables, cables for the computer, new viber things, then they make gutters in the road surface, all about 20 centimetres wide, and they put the cables in there, but these gutters are never filled up again, they are filled up with just some sand, but you only have roads with 20 centimetres of gutter punched in, and that is never filled up again. It's a big pile of big holes in the roads, and thresholds that are half broken. And it's very dirty, because everyone throws everything on the ground, and there's a culture that a certain population group cleans up everything, and there are no bins anywhere. So it is very dirty.

Interviewer:

And you say a certain population group cleans up everything?

Interviewee:

Yes, they are the Zabbaleen'as, or the Zabbalini. That comes from the word rubbish; Zaballa. They are a certain group of Christians who live on a mountain close to the Citadel in the centre. That is a certain area. And they collect and sort all the rubbish. So there is no rubbish collection in Cairo at all, so everything is just thrown on the street corner, and then they come and they collect everything and then 90% is completely sorted. But there is a system that if they would use the rubbish truck and organise a normal rubbish collection system then these people would not have a job anymore. So from this theory it just keeps on going, so there is no renewal.

Interviewer:

Ah okay, and is this also a certain ethnic group?

Interviewee:

Yes, they are Christians, but they are ordinary Egyptians, they are not guest workers or refugees. But it is the bottom of society, the bottom edge.

Interviewer:

Coming back to earlier, I forgot to say, how long have you been living in Egypt or in Maadi?

Interviewee:

Three and a half years.

Interviewer:

Three and a half years, and only lived in Maadi?

Interviewee:

Yes, I have only lived in Maadi.

Interviewer:

Ah, that's some useful context to have. Let's see, what do you think are the most important projects currently underway in Maadi?

Interviewee:

Well there is a lot of construction going on, roads. The president is changing the whole infrastructure, there were huge bottlenecks to get in and out of Maadi. One of the projects is that a bridge has been built, first there was a tunnel and now there is a bridge to get in and out of Maadi, and from there you can immediately get back on the ring road or you can go on to another area, and that project started, I think in the beginning of November and he had a target that it had to be finished by the 10th of March, that means that the tunnel had to go and a whole new highway had to be built and there had to be a bridge across the road and then two of those exits. And then kilometres on with that motorway, and it just happened, it was just finished on 10 March. Now it is so, in Cairo, that even though they are still working, and even though they are still driving with big trucks and dumping sand, that there is still no guardrail, so that if you look to your right, if you drive the wrong way for a moment, you will plunge 15 metres down with your car onto the other motorway, projects like this, they are still under construction, but they will be opened, so everyone will drive nicely over a road that is two thirds finished, but it was 10 March, you could take this route, that went very fast.

Interviewer:

Yes exactly, that was very fast, but I understand that it is very unsafe.

Interviewee:

Very unsafe, very unsafe. Because they also say, you have this road, this motorway, but they have fenced it off with concrete blocks in the middle, but at certain points concrete blocks have been removed, and people just do u-turns there, or they just cross, they drive the wrong way down the slip road, so that - as you go from the motorway, they come in the other direction, they come out against the traffic, but near there two concrete blocks have been removed and then they look to the left and to the right and then they cross very quickly and then they end up on the other side of the road and then it just goes on, that's very dangerous. Also a lot of people drive against traffic, or people drive backwards. And nobody has lights

on their car, so you have to be very careful. And there are also people with donkey carts or mopeds with 6 people on it, walking, crossing the motorway on foot.

Interviewer:

Yes exactly, and just to be clear, you mean November 2021 to March 2022 right?

Interviewee:

Yes.

Interviewer:

Okay, and besides being unsafe within the traffic itself, what are some other important effects of these projects? Let's start with the positive goals the projects are trying to achieve.

Interviewee:

Well, I think, in the end, it's very positive, there is more and more of a natural or flowing inflow into Maadi and the traffic is more easily handled so you don't have endless traffic jams that sometimes lasted three quarters of an hour over two kilometres so it just keeps on going now, there are also a lot of roundabouts, a lot of police who also supervise the roundabouts. Yes, it's mainly to do with the quick entry and exit of people, I think.

Interviewer:

Exactly. And what are the negative effects besides insecurity?

Interviewee:

The negative effects are that in the preliminary phase, there are, of course, enormous traffic jams and no alternative route is offered, so there are enormous traffic jams, but because he is doing it all very quickly, I think that people can accept that because you know that it will be finished at some point. The whole army is involved, because the people who do the project, the workmen, that's the army. Of course there is noise and inconvenience. They are hammering and hammering and driving big trucks back and forth 24 hours a day, but it is manageable, because it is not a project that lasts years.

Interviewer:

And are we talking about the project with the tunnel and the bridge, or are we also talking about other...

Interviewee:

Yes there is another project coming up, there has been a lot of resistance because that project is going right through Maadi, Maadi is being divided between Maadi Sarayat and Maadi Degla, and Sarayat is the part where most of the villas were, kind of the up-market side of Maadi, it is separated by a train, by a track. On the right side is then Sarayat and on the left side is then Degla. And on that spot, there will now be an arterial road that cuts across - that

really cuts Maadi in two. There is a lot of protest against that. Because there are so many protests against it, it is now being done quietly. Plans used to be put forward in the beginning. Because I think it has been going on since maybe June of last year, 2021. Then a lot of high-ranking people were interviewed or took part in that resistance. Because there are a lot of Egyptians, influential Egyptians who live in Maadi or have lived in Maadi from way back, and they were very vocal against these plans. But the plans are still going on, but there's just not as much publicity about them anymore. So these plans are being worked on quietly.

Interviewer:

Okay, and you say it has been playing since June '21, and then you mean....

Interviewee:

I think so, I'll have to ask around, maybe earlier, maybe April or so.

Interviewer:

Okay, and then you mean that when the news came out that this would happen.

Interviewee:

Yes, and then there were action groups against these plans, but there is now, in fact, no publication about it, it just goes on.

Interviewer:

And have you noticed any developments?

Interviewee:

Not yet, because they haven't really arrived in Maadi yet, but I have heard that work is going on. Maadi consists of different parts, the most important part, let's say the upmarket part is Maadi Sarayat and Maadi Degla, that's where most of the rich people and most of the expats live, if they want to live there, but you also have Maadi Arab, and that's very local, the streets are very close together, you can almost touch the balcony of the neighbours, the roads are not paved either, then you have new Maadi, which is upcoming but very local, then you have Maadi gardens, which is Zahra el Maadi, but the main thing here, what people are discussing is Maadi Degla and Maadi Sarayat.

Interviewer:

So those two are the most affected.

Interviewee:

These two also define the face of Maadi.

Interviewer:

Okay. So let's move on to the next question, how can Maadi's environment be most affected by these projects? Maadi in general, what Maadi looked like before and what it will look like now.

Interviewee:

I think the charming thing about Maadi was that it was a bit of an isolated bubble of greenery and where you can walk anywhere, you walk from one side to the other, it's not that big. I think you can walk from one side to the other in 30 minutes. And of course, that's now going to be prevented if there's going to be such a big road running through it. Now I don't know exactly if that will be just a bridge. But if you have a very big motorway running right through the heart, you can't get from one side to the other. So the whole easy-going thing, a bit of the green, it also has a very alternative vibe, very ecologically aware people live there. I think that's going to go, and there's also going to be a lot of noise pollution if you have a motorway running through the heart. A lot of pollution as well, I suppose. A lot of trees will have to be felled to make way for the road, so I think that they're only going to put the road through, but not all the roads, all the streets, so that they're not going to renovate them, so you'll still have all those potholes, all those, what do you call them, speed bumps that are half-broken. It will become more accessible, better drainage through the centre, but through the small streets it will remain just as difficult, less passable.

Interviewer:

Then I understand that the direct positive influence is that this road will make it more accessible in general.

Interviewee:

Well, that bridge has provided accessibility, I don't think that highway through Maadi will bring accessibility, from that bridge you can get there, it is more that the runoff from A to C, and let's say Maadi is B, that it is easier.

Interviewer:

Yes, so accessibility as a positive effect is especially for the...

Interviewee:

Yes, for the transit.

Interviewer:

Let's see, what impact does it have on people? We're talking about the environment, but...

Interviewee:

What is happening in Maadi is that it is becoming more and more local, and from a - in the past, Maadi was an expat enclave, that's how it all started, when the British started building all that, on the Nile, very green, a lot of those villas, also a bit in the British style, later on other styles came in between, often related to the country nature, and it didn't have so much to do

with Egypt, so to speak, it was really a suburb that catered for the foreign elite. Then it became a mixture of foreign elite and actually Egyptian elite, the Egyptians who came also bought those houses and when the English left and more foreigners came. So now you see that those villas, a lot of villas are gone, still you have very expensive flats, buildings, which are still for the elite, whether they are foreigners who are paid by their companies to live there, or by Egyptians who just have a lot of money, because there is a very rich upper class in Egypt. But there are also, are coming more and more, are already there, neighbourhoods on the outskirts, which have small flats and are also not very well maintained, so you get - it's still expensive hey, it's still, Maadi and Sarayat is still expensive to rent or buy but it gives access to the middle class so to speak, and the foreign middle class as well, the teachers, or the people with lesser salaries, they can still rent there, but because there is a green happening, you also see a lot of influx of lower educated Egyptians who experience it as a getaway. So you get - it also becomes a kind of walking area for mainly young couples, who also come very much to the religious and the politically correct or incorrect part, because, I am now thinking out loud, it is still a freer area with influence of foreign, and also the higher segment of the population who also have a freer view, It has a freer atmosphere, which means that a lot of young people, who are maybe controlled from home, experience a kind of freedom in this area, so you have a lot of couples walking around, you have a lot of, I'm talking, young people between 16 and 32. And they all come into Maadi, and they come with cars, and they park there, boys and girls, and they have a good time there, but also a forbidden time there, because it's not controlled. It's a bit of a hangout, you could say.

Interviewer:

Exactly, that is just because of the status of Maadi in general, but is not necessarily influenced by current developments.

Interviewee:

No, it - it is, it is affected by developments.

Interviewer:

Perhaps because it is becoming more accessible?

Interviewee:

Well, because it is becoming more and more accessible, then we go back to the house prices, which are dropping anyway, and because everything that is really rich is now moving to New Cairo or Shekh Zahet (?), which is a different district, or to New Capital, but there are no people living there yet, but there are very large compounds, but they are closed off, you can't get in as a young person. So it shifts, it shifts, who determines the population of this area. It is becoming very Egyptian, it is becoming more and more Egyptian. On the one hand, that's positive, because it's their area, but I don't know if we should go into that very deeply.

Interviewer:

Maybe not, but it is indeed interesting. About Maadi in general, it's an interesting addition. Then I wanted to go into - what are some characteristics of the local culture that may influence how they react to those projects, to such a road that passes right through the...

Interviewee:

Features of the local culture.

Interviewer:

Yes, if you look at other cultures, at the Netherlands for example, if there is a village or a neighbourhood right through the middle...

Interviewee:

Are they going to protest, you mean.

Interviewer:

What is typical of the culture there, that can influence how they react.

Interviewee:

Well, you shouldn't stick your neck out too much. So, I don't think that you, that there is a, the influence is how people react, is that there is little counter- how do you call it, contradiction tolerated. Yes, it depends on how high you are on the ladder whether you can argue at all, I don't think that a - and of course it's a very poor country where many people - earn very little money, then other things are more important than the common good, I think that few people will jump into the breach except those who are very afflicted with nature or are very high in esteem.

Interviewer:

Okay, if I understand correctly, it is also very much influenced by status how much contradiction the government tolerates from you.

Interviewee:

I think so, because you can be arrested for nothing, so they won't, yes, they will think about it.

Interviewer:

So then I can well understand that someone might get caught up in severe criticism.

Interviewee:

Yes, definitely yes.

Interviewer:

And how fast would that be, do you think, how much criticism, how far do you have to go?

Interviewee:

That is an interesting one, is my name mentioned?

Interviewer:

Certainly not, oh I didn't add that? It is anonymous.

Interviewee:

How much contradiction is needed?

Interviewer:

Yes, do you have to be interviewed, and speak out openly there?

Interviewee:

You know, there doesn't have to be any reason at all, that - any criticism is dangerous. Not only dangerous for yourself but also for your family, and there is no - no rule of law hey, you are not represented by a lawyer, you are just gone.

Interviewer:

So one, as was said earlier, there are people who openly speak out against it, there are also people who, for example, make a film and in that film it is clearly shown that they speak out. In that case they must fear, and their family must also fear?

Interviewee:

It depends, you know, some people are very much driven for the greater good, and some people think very much - it's very much the culture of fear, fear is a bad advisor, but when it comes to a street, people are less willing, or a cut down tree, people are less willing to stick their necks out than for women's rights.

Interviewer:

Then, the last topic, public participation, people's involvement in making the decision, have you ever heard of the English term in a project?

Interviewee:

I think they make enquiries or interview people and then distil the general opinion and maybe bring that forward in a municipal council, should I think in that direction?

Interviewer:

Yes, exactly, you should think about that.

Interviewee:

I think that is just not there. It's just conceived and it's just implemented. I don't think there's some huge investigation - and then a decision is made that people can still argue about.

Interviewer:

Okay, and public participation also has - informing people is actually public participation too, if you think about that, informing people, that happens in the projects.

Interviewee:

I think there was information, but only from those protest groups, so people who had received that information and then brought it out as a protest, I think that went like that.

Interviewer:

So if I understand correctly, the information that you have heard about this is also from those protest groups.

Interviewee:

Yes, and logical thinking. And what I see. I experience it myself, I drive over the bridge every day and I have seen it. It is not only negative, people find that bridge, there is a lot of work on the road, this man certainly leaves his legend behind, his legacy.

Interviewer:

And by this man you mean Sisi.

Interviewee:

You can make nice comparisons with other world leaders who have just set up such an infrastructure. We still have our fruits - we are reaping them. He does put Egypt on the map. A lot of debt left and right, but I think - a country with a good infrastructure helps for all kinds of different purposes.

Interviewer:

Yes, exactly, from that I deduce that the second development we talked about, which goes right through Maadi and cuts across the two parts of Sarayat and Degla, is also a very good development in view of that major infrastructural reform.

Interviewee:

Well, because we were just talking about public participation, well I don't think other solutions were considered, he could have put it around it as well, or maybe done more account for the general cultural good, yeah well. So, he could have taken that into account. He's not going to put a motorway right through the three great pyramids of Giza either. Haha, he will to that close to them.

Interviewer:

How could they have organised public participation better?

Interviewee:

I think public participation does not exist at all, it is a dictatorship. Of course, he is advised. You know, I don't know much about politics, he is advised and he does have a vision. But of course, what he decides is how it is done. A strong leader, that's how it's seen. I do notice, I've been living here for three and a half years now, that I can also see the underlying thoughts or underlying statements are not always just negative. When I first arrived, I had the idea that what was decided was very - people don't support him, but now I also see that people, of course, disapprove of certain things but also disapprove of certain things - also support him. Of course, the economy is very bad, a lot of money is spent on this.

Interviewer:

What could they have done better in terms of social impact?

Interviewee:

To keep the people happy, you mean?

Interviewer:

Yes, they come up with a project, and normally you have impact assessment, you see what kind of influence it has on people, how could they have done that better do you think?

Interviewee:

It's not a democracy, you have to remember that, it's not a democracy. So you don't have a meeting where everyone has their points and then we decide what has the most votes, it just doesn't work that way. I think people are already very satisfied with the fact that it happens. But people are so used to "Zagma", that's what it is called, congestion, traffic, it's a completely different culture, people are very patient, but also very hot-headed, so there is a lot of shouting and fighting, people have a completely different mentality, it's partly culture and partly religion, much more acceptance. I think that in such an unstructured culture, community, society, that democratic decision making is still in its infancy, and in some cases, maybe a strong leader who just pushes this through, has a faster effect in any case, there is no endless loitering, things are just done. And he has all the strings, and the army works for him, so it happens.

Interviewer:

Yes! I think that's it then, is there anything else you would like to share about the projects, about the social situation in general in Maadi that might be relevant to this.

Interviewee:

I wouldn't know, I think it would be nice for you to see it, because you saw it last year and then it wasn't there and suddenly it is, so that's really quite - yes that's quite amazing that something can be set up so quickly.

Interviewer:

Yes indeed, I think that if I can find something online, a before and after picture, what you say from November to March, that there is such a big difference, that is something very visual that I can use. Yes, that's the end of this interview, thank you for your participation, and I would just like to point out that if you think afterwards that there is something - or a part of the interview that you would rather not see in the study, then you are always free to do so. And I should have told you beforehand, but the data will be used anonymously.

Interviewee:

Absolutely right.

Interviewer:

Super, thank you.

Appendix D: Interview 2 - Resident E

Interviewer:

Okay, firstly, I have to ask, are you aware of the subject and the goal of the research? And that all the data that is collected is only for research purposes at the University of Groningen?

Interviewee:

Yeah, I do understand this.

Interviewer:

And that the participation is voluntary and you can stop whenever you want. And you don't have to explain this.

Interviewee:

Yeah, yeah. Okay. I agree.

Interviewer:

Okay, perfect. Well, let's start. What is your age?

Interviewee:

I am 44.

Interviewer:

44 years old. Okay. And what is your place of residence?

Interviewee:

It's in Maadi. Cairo, Egypt.

Interviewer:

Oh, yeah. Perfect. And what's your current profession?

Interviewee:

I work in an airport in the operation department.

Interviewer:

Okay, so what is it that you generally do in the operation department?

Interviewee:

We didn't really like we manage all the traffic in the airport. Not not flight traffic's but passengers and maintenances and all the calls all the timings and so on.

Interviewer:

Okay, and this is in Sharm el Sheikh. So as as we talked before, you don't - you also have residence in Sharm el Sheikh sometimes instead of Maadi?

Interviewee:

Yeah, I'm half, half, two weeks here two weeks. Okay. All my life. I've lived all my life in Maadi, 44 years.

Interviewer:

Okay, and if we talk about Maadi, what do you think it's important for an area to be liveable - to be pleasant to live in?

Interviewee:

Pleasant to live in. Firstly, I guess it depends on what age and so on. But generally, it's important to have a few beginning to live there. It's really important to have school very close to you. Within a walking distance. It's nice to have map shopping areas, also within five minutes, walking areas. And so it's very important also to have like, some greenery around. I can't say that it's, it's available everywhere in Egypt. But in some places, you could find some greenery, it's also, it's somehow important to have work not so far from where you live. But that's not available for everybody. It's very, also good to have like, I mean, I mean, public transportations, which is something that is available in Maadi, we do have the metro, and also some buses, public buses and so... Yes, that's what comes to my mind now.

Interviewer:

Okay, and you are satisfied with the, the metro and the buses that are available in Maadi?

Interviewee:

The thing is that, for me, personally, the Metro is very good, you know, because the thing is the Metro is that it's always there, and you're expecting the next metro to be used in five to 10 minutes and so on. So you don't lose time waiting. And you know, that if you can calculate that from this station to that next station or from 10 stations after you this will take 15 minutes or 30 minutes, you can calculate your timings you know. So, this is a good thing about metro systems or underground systems, but public buses, it's somehow tricky, because, you know, the traffic is not always clear, you know, so you can wait for a bus for like, five minutes or maybe an hour, you know, so it's not very, you can't depend on it. 100% you know,

Interviewer:

Okay. Yeah. Yes. And you feel like the Metro is always on time, and it's always it's always good to depend on.

Interviewee:

If it ever gets late. This will be five minutes more, you know, but because it's like continuous you know? It goes five minutes after each other. There's nothing that you wait for It doesn't have a and it opens like 5am in the morning and it closes like 1am at night. Midnight, just after midnight. So it's almost almost done in like 20 hours per day. Yeah. Yeah, it has always been very, and it's the metro system that goes in Maadi. This was established or was built from like 18, maybe 1880 or something. 18 something, you know, but firstly, it was a train line, and then they made it into like a metro line, and then in the 1980s, the dark like an underground tunnel in downtown Cairo. So he connected all these lines together, and then they made the first line of the metro line in Cairo.

Interviewer:

Okay. And is it always pleasant to travel by Metro?

Interviewee:

I can't say it's pleasant that you feel happy in going to the metro, you know, but (Arabic). It's, I mean, sorry, for the record, but...

Interviewer:

Is it safe for example?

Interviewee:

It's very safe? Yes. Okay, I'll say it's not safe. It's very safe. 90% - 99% You know, okay, but the rush hours, it's very, very crowded, especially if it's summer times, then it will be really really hot. But recently was, I mean, in the last 10 years or eight years or something, we began I mean, putting on the line from air conditions materials, but it's not 100% of the metros yet trains not 100% of the trains, but they are going on changing them to newer Metro Metro, new trains which will only be air conditioned, maybe it was in two three years. So 100% of the

metro or the trains will be air conditioned, then then it will be okay. You can manage or you as a European can help them Metro in time in Cairo in the summer.

Interviewer:

Okay yeah (laughter).

Interviewee:

But, but generally in the daytime, there are other times of the day then it will it's very, you can find the seat and you can be - I mean you can travel safely.

Interviewer:

Okay, and how many stations for the metro are there in Maadi?

Interviewee:

There are three metro stations in Maadi. 3, one is called I mean from south to north, then it will be Sakanat El-Maadi. This is the closest to my, my my home. Then the main Maadi station. And then there is another station called Hadayeq El-Maadi, the Maadi gardens, these are the three metro stations named after Maadi.

Interviewer:

Okay, perfect. And they're all all very easily accessible?

Interviewee:

Yeah, very very walking – I mean both of them are like, one minute by Metro from each other. Okay, like 10 minutes walking from each other. Maybe less than 10 minutes, around 10 minutes.

Interviewer:

Well that's good. And about the other qualities that you mentioned in terms of greenery and shopping areas. How would you say Maadi - How good is Maadi at that?

Interviewee:

Firstly, the greenery: Maadi is number one, is the number one place or how can I say it? Yeah, in a town or whatever it's called the most green town? Not if not in Cairo, then it will be all over Egypt, you know, okay. It's full of trees and villas or I mean, maybe not all the villas are still existing up till now, but you know, when it was originally built, Maadi it was 100% villas and big villas. Yeah, and you know with big gardens, okay. So it was 100% Green, and nice and so on. Now, I know that not all of the villas are still existent, but some of the villas are now high rises are like five storey building buildings, you know, blocks, but still some, there are still some trees around the buildings. I actually, you know, my wife was from Denmark and when she first came to Maadi, she called it the rainforest because it's full of high trees and so on. In the summer you can walk under the trees without feeling the sun hitting your head.

Interviewer:

That's nice. Where was your wife from again?

Interviewee:

She was from Denmark. Denmark, yes.

Interviewer:

Oh really? Okay. That's nice. And why did she decide to move to Maadi to Cairo?

Interviewee:

No, she was originally working here in Sharm el Sheikh as a tour agent or a tour leader and then we met and then we got married. Yeah. But she still she's now living back in Denmark. She was my wife, but we're still very good friends.

Interviewer:

That's good. Yeah. And have you been to Denmark yourself?

Interviewee:

Yeah. I've been. I've been to many cities there, to many places.

Interviewer:

And if you if you would compare Maadi to a city or, or a neighbourhood in Denmark, what do you think are the are the most positive things about Maadi? In comparison?

Interviewee:

The most positive thing? I can't really, because they're totally different. You know? Okay, so in Europe generally, 100% - I mean, in Europe, generally, especially in, in Denmark, everything is like 100% organized. For me, it's like coming out of the catalogue, you know? 100% perfect. You know, you can't you can't find anything that you can, you can, like complain about in Denmark, except that people are very few in the streets. You know, you can't find - except for Copenhagen, you know, which is in downtown Copenhagen. But otherwise you can you will hardly find people. So, so, in Cairo, you know, we are, it's very highly populated city, you know, so the comparison will not be fair, you know, city was 25 million people to the whole country of Denmark is not even 5 million, or almost 5 million. So I can't compare, I mean it's different.

Interviewer:

And if you compare it in terms of other qualities that you think are important for liveability, that you mentioned before, like availability of schools, or shopping areas, or that there's work close by, how do you think that would compare?

Interviewee:

Oh, okay. I will, I will tell you, because, originally when Maadi was built, I guess, I guess, there was like around three or four main schools there. Okay. So now when we grew up the number of schools or maybe the reach within Maadi or inside Maadi. Maybe they are now 10 or something or maybe 15. Let's say Okay, for the population of Maadi this is not enough anymore, you know, so people not 100% of this kids are the students of Maadi are now studying in schools inside Maadi. In also some of them has to take buses up to new Cairo or Giza or so on. So they have to take long bus rides to reach the schools. And what it is that happened because of the area there is no enough areas inside Maadi to build new schools. Yes. And why is Maadi being highly popular? Because it's, as I mentioned before, it's one of the - it was and still somehow is one of the fancy places in Cairo to live in, you know, so people try to move into Maadi to live a higher standard of living. So it's getting high, more popular, you know, with more population. So, I mean, regarding schools, not 100% of the Maadi kids are now studying inside Maadi. I myself, I started in it my kindergarten or my school firstly was right next to my home. I just crossed the street. When I grew up, I went to another school which was like seven minutes walking with my from my home. So that was easy, but this is not the issue is every other kid in Maadi.

Interviewer:

Okay, and what do you think about this, that not every kid in Maadi is able to actually go to school there?

Interviewee:

Myself, I think it's not fair for a kid to stay in a bus daily for like an hour more or to have to drive a ride on a highway you know especially if it's the ring road around Cairo and with heavy traffic and so on is not 100% safe you know? Yeah, but this is the issue when you have a limited area with very few schools - not very few but you know this this is a number that already exists from around 20 or less or more schools in this town, so they can't handle 100% of the kids this is not a good idea. The kid will feel I mean we lose a lot of power going to the school he will reach the school or she will reach the school already bit tired, you know, our capacity to do Okay, so I'm not with this happy, but if what for my I mean, talking about myself I had my school was me and my sisters we were studying inside Maadi which was very very good, easy for us to reach school.

Interviewer:

Yeah, well that's nice. But that means that nowadays there may be not enough schools, and what if we talk about shopping areas or workplaces, are there enough of those in Maadi?

Interviewee:

Yes, shopping areas we actually do have shopping areas one of the good things about it is that when it was it was originally designed they separated the residential places from the shopping places. So in the old Maadi you will only find villas and so on or buildings, residential buildings, maybe a school or something but you will not find shops and those buildings you know, except for one or two streets, the older shops were there originally which is if we can say a street 9 in Maadi, it was the main shopping street in Maadi. Actually, it was the only

shopping street in Maadi, and this was like also five to 10 minutes walking from from anybody living in Maadi, originally. But then Maadi became bigger and bigger and bigger. So, so there are now a mall. The mall, this was built like 25 years ago. And also now in some some I mean, there is now a Carrefour not very far, the hypermarket, you know, it's like 15 minutes by car from it. If we talk now, you know, if we talk about the last 15 years, so it's - shopping areas is very accessible also to Maadi people you know.

Interviewer:

Okay. Yeah. Well, that's nice. And and if we talk about, for example, the sense of community, would you say that is good in Maadi? The sense of community, and how people treat each other - how people talk to each other on the street?

Interviewee:

Yeah, I guess my idea is, except for the new compounds in the new cities in new Cairo, sixth of October city and so on, these are closed compounds. So people are from the same class and so on, you know, so they are generally good to each other and smiley and so on. Or snobbish. But in Maadi generally we were, we were the high class or the middle class, and they are all mixed together. So generally people are, we're very calm, very helpful. Okay. If you know much about it, the map of mind is like, his little bit hard, you know, it's like a maze. Not everybody can go in and then can easily come out of mind if he's not from Maadi, you know? So you will always almost daily find someone coming to ask - so you can hear me?

Interviewer:

Yeah, I'm sorry. You fell away for a second.

Interviewee:

Oh, someone tried to call, I'm afraid he will try to call again. Okay. Sorry. So I was I was saying that you will always find someone coming to ask you; How can I go from this point to that point, or how can I go out of Maadi and you will always find people trying to help you. Yeah, I generally, whenever I'm in my car, and then I find someone in a car or walking asking me how to get out of Maadi, I will always come, it will always be hard for me to explain how to go from that point to that point because many of them streets in Maadi are one way streets and then you will go into a roundabout and from one unknown roundabout to another and so on, he will get lost. So I will just tell him follow me in my car. And then or even I can drive him. Let's drive you to that place your to the nearest point to where you need to go. Because so generally in mind, you will always find somebody to help you and smile to you. This is a very common thing in Maadi. You may ask (name other contact) about that, or maybe you can come and try that yourself.

Interviewer:

No, I think that's, that's nice. And if we talk in general, the liveability of Maadi would you say Maadi, as a neighbourhood, how nice is it to live there in comparison to another neighbourhood such as maybe close to Sharm el Sheikh? Or maybe in Denmark? How nice is it to live in Maadi compared to those?

Interviewee:

Actually, it's the thing is, it's I can't compare because living in Maadi; for me, it's better than living in Sharm el Sheikh for sure. 100% better, because Sharm el Sheikh is only like a resort. So you can live here for a month. But you will not find all your necessities, you know, okay, I mean, shopping wise or so on? Or even if you found your stuff on this will be expensive. It somehow for me structure is somehow boring. I mean, because there are like 2, 3 or 4 places to see or go at night. And then you have been there twice then you're bored you know, but in Maadi it's very - it's in Cairo, you know, and Cairo is a very big city so you if you're even born in Maadi and it will go to Heliopolis you go to Zamalek you go to any of the big malls all around Cairo and so on, you know, 100 Museum to visit, you have monuments and so on. So this is a good thing about Maadi you know, living in Denmark is very, very different, you know, but at least in Maadi it's warmer than in Denmark.

Interviewer:

Okay. And if we talk about greenery, how does Maadi compare in greenery to the neighbourhoods in Denmark, for example?

Interviewee:

The difference between Maadi and Denmark, you know, both are green, but in Denmark, I guess everything is also organized, everything is calculated, you know, everything is managed. So they know that this tree has always - should always be two meters high. And here the trees should be red, there they should be pink and so on. You know, it's like everything is managed and calculated, you know, in Maadi it's not like this, you know, some of the trees were planted 100 years ago and they are as big as you can expect, you know? So they are not 100% managed or planned. In the old times, yes, 100 years ago or when they were planted around 100 years ago, they were organized, you know. I'm not sure if you know but Maadi was mainly planned and designed by a Canadian architect. Okay, so it has like so and it was also mainly targeting the Westerners. I'm not sure if you know not that Egypt was almost occupied by Britain 32 years, So the rich Brits or French people or Italians and so on they mainly used to live in Maadi. Also, some of the princes and princesses of the Egyptian royal family used to live in it. So it was originally very well planned, very well designed and each street had some certain type of trees or plants to be planted in. If you ever came one day, I will show you some traces of this we still have some streets that has only one type of tree. But for sure the rest of the streets are a lot more original. So it's like - the difference is the nice chaotic thing you know, it's a little bit of a chaos, but it's you enjoy this kind of chaos, the forest type of chaos, you know, some small trees some big trees and so on, you know, they are intersecting they are (?), and so on, you know, yeah, this is a good thing about Maadi. I can't say that it's now 100% Fully green, because there are new places in Maadi. So, but it's it still has, you can feel that this was a nice place once upon a time. Or a wonderful, wonderful place. It is still nice place but I mean, not 100% wonderful as it used to be.

Interviewer:

Okay, so what is the most important change that it does become maybe less wonderful?

Interviewee:

Okay, it's the most important change is it's very very very very highly populated now - Maadi compared to before, because if you can understand if, if it was, let's say, let's say just roughly, it used to have 1000 villas, and each Villa will have a family out of six or even 10. These 10 People will have some servants and drivers and let's say for so are five, so each Villa will have 15 people living in this villa, and you can multiply these 15 people with 1000 villas, and this will be how many 15,000 people living inside Maadi? Yeah, okay, with one or two cars for each villa, this will be 2000 cars, manoeuvring or riding around night. Yeah. Okay. So this will, this is how it was originally designed. The situation now is that, let's say half or more than half of the villa's are now made into buildings. And each building, let's say, say each floor will have four apartments by four. This is 16 apartments in one building that was originally a villa, the 16, let's say multiply by four, which is the people living the each apartment, then 16 by four is how many? This is 64 instead of 15. Okay, yeah, so 64 people living in a place 50 Is No, it's 64, 64 people instead of 15. So this is for each Villa that was made into a building, this is one thing, the other thing is now it's very attractive place for companies to move in, okay, make like, like an office and so on, in in some of the apartments, or even banks in the ground floor of private buildings. Okay, so each bank, or each, or each, let's say, if it's an office, then there will not be a full living in an apartment, it will be like 20 or even 40 in one apartment, you know, this is if it's, if it's an office with no visitors, you know, if it's a bank then you will have like 10 or 20 people working in the bank, and 100 or 200 people visiting the bank a day, you know, and all these people who have cars and traffic and people using the public transportations and so on. So then you can imagine the population. So it's not only multiplied by one or two or three, you can easily multiply it by 30 or something, you know, the population you know. So all this will have impact on parking spaces and, and gardens being converted into parking lots. Even the pavements where people used to walk or (?), it's now made into like parking places for cars, and so on. So it's very, it's very, very impacted by rising of population. And also, also I can, we can mention the population of Egypt when it was originally built. The population of Egypt was around, let's say five to 10 million now we are talking 110 million almost. So it's multiplied by the general population if it was 10 million but I guess it was less than 10 million originally when it was.

Interviewer:

Yeah, it really grew. And what are currently the most important projects - the most important developments in and around Maadi what's currently happening what changes?

Interviewee:

- Nervous laughter - (Reaction from interviewee seems to maybe indicate that he is slightly taken aback by this question. In terms of context: he knew about the question beforehand and was slightly defensive regarding the developments during introductory talks.)

It's actually a big story but that I don't know that's - and I don't even knows in which page of the story are we in regarding development you know? Because you know I'm not sure if you know or not, because of some reasons, we didn't have big developments in Cairo or generally in Egypt in the last 50 years, project wise or popular projects and so on. But recently in the last eight years from 2014, a lot is happening in Egypt, one of the big things or that can very easily be noticed in all over Egypt are the public transportation sector and the road sector and the bridges sectors and so on, it's like we are opening or building like the veins you know, the blood veins in the body yeah, so they are trying to build blood veins in the whole body of Egypt so that life could be easier for you know, this old body you know, this heavily

populated body, we really needed wide roads, wide streets a lot of bridges all over the Nile the length of the Nile now they're building a bridge I guess every 25 kilometres on the Nile from Aswan to the Mediterranean. So this is generally in Egypt, you know, about Maadi, you're really doing a lot of projects now they have connected because Maadi was a little bit like a compound, you know, it's between the Nile from one side and a main road that is called Autostrad. This connects Helwan. - Hello, are you there?

Interviewer:

I'm still there.

Interviewee:

Yeah, yes. Okay, this road is called Autostrad. It connects south to the east, somehow. So we go so Maadi is between like two lines, one line is the Nile and the other line is this Autostrad. And if you want, in the old times, or even until now maybe if you wanted to go from the Nile to the Autostrad, you will have to go through Maadi, even if you don't really need anything in Maadi, you know, if you're not resident in Maadi - anything, if you wanted to go from the Nile side to the Autostrad side, you have to go into inside it and be stuck in the traffic for like 15 to 20 minutes or even more in the heavy - in the vacations or like celebrations or anything. So now they're trying to like open some roads. I don't think it's 100% done yet, or not even 50% of what's planned. But I don't really know, 100% of the plans, you know, but no, guess a lot is going to happen, a lot is going to happen. I actually think I actually, you know, I used to - when there was a like when we were stuck on the ring road or something, I would say they should build a bridge here or a tunnel to you know, like, make it smoother to go from this side to that side and so on. I have always been like, over the last 10 years I was saying so. But then recently, all of a sudden, they began building a bridge connecting one side to another side to make it much easier and smoother in the same exact days that I was expecting or that I was asking this. This should happen. You know, I was talking to myself, you know.

Interviewer:

Okay, and in a case like this, you say this to yourself? Is there any way for you? Is there any way for you to express your opinion to the government?

Interviewee:

To express my opinion? I don't, I don't know if there is any official way, but people write their opinions on the Facebook and so on, you know, but a lot of people do, they do use the Facebook pages, maybe my Facebook page or so on. But not in an official way.

Interviewer:

Okay, so the government does not ask you.

Interviewee:

It's not it's not it's not like, it's not like an it's not like in Europe where you have like a town hall and then you can, and then that you do really elect your representatives, and they are from

the normal people from you, you know, and so on, it's different here, the system here is different, you know? So it's mainly over the Facebook.

Interviewer:

Okay, so do you feel like the people of Maadi or their interests are being taken into account when they have these projects?

Interviewee:

I can see very easily that - it's very interesting. For our it's, it's, it's an interest to anybody to reach from one place to another in five minutes, instead of an hour. Yeah, so reaching from one place to another in in an easier and faster way, this is 100% in the interest for everybody. Yeah, but then you can talk about from the other side of the coin, then you will look, as the people living right on the road that is being built, how they were impacted during the building of the road. How they were impacted if they used to park their cars right in front of their homes, and now this is a highway so they can't park their cars. The noise of the high speed cars, if you can talk about that. Also crossing the road, that was two lanes, now it's five lanes or six lanes, so it's more dangerous to cross a road that is a high speed road. All of a sudden, that was last year was a very normal route. Today, it's high speed road, so they can't really cross the road or the street or whatever you call it. Okay, so so they were (Arabic) badly affected by this, if they are really, for the people that were living right on this road that was of the streets that were made into a big road, or an access road and so on. Yeah, also talking about trees or old trees or a little bit of, like 10 meters garden in front of each building, or some grass in front of the buildings. This was also affected. Not anymore 10 meters, it's like two meters now shorter so, like you will have a short strip of, of grass in front of the building instead of a garden. Okay. I understand that this affects view, especially now that the replanted trees are still small also, you know, so there is no big shade, because they were newly planted, you know, maybe by time this tree will grow. And then there will be a green view, you know, smaller, smaller green view, but the impact, as we just said, you know, when we made an access for millions of people, and quick access and so on, so it made life easy for everybody. Everybody, you know, yeah, percentage of people impacted - badly impacted is 1% or less as a percentage that for people that were really - that this project was useful for them is 99%.

Interviewer:

Okay. And how are you affected in any way by these projects?

(Difficulty in communication and short dialogue concerning this)

Interviewee:

No, me personally, I'm very happy of these products. You know, Yeah, maybe I just told you that I can't, I can't say in which page of the story, are we yet. But maybe, maybe I will also be affected, but I'm not sure you know, but up 'till now I'm very happy with these projects, you know, everybody around Cairo is very happy. Even if someone is living now, in a road that was, I mean, in the streets that was affected by a road, I guess if he goes to another place, let's say Heliopolis or Nasser city in Cairo and so on. Also, big roads or big access road or big highways are made there. So they get use of these places, and they are happy that they can

reach from one place to another in a very quick way, and also in a safe way. Even if they are impacted here in Maadi, but they are being they are using another project somewhere else in Cairo or somewhere else all over Egypt, you know, that is very, very useful. Very useful.

Interviewer:

Okay. Yeah. Yeah, of course,

Interviewee:

I can tell you, I can tell you believe, me a lot, most of the Egyptians are not believing their eyes, that we are having these projects in our country. Okay. Over beyond, beyond our expectations is beyond our expectation. You can't imagine.

Interviewer:

You're very, very positive about these developments. They're very, you're very happy with them.

Interviewee:

It's beyond are not in a 500 years. Okay. Not in 500 years, you know, yeah, I know, I know that the impact is bad for some for the greeneries, and so on. I know, you know, but the, it's, it's hard, it's hard to when you when you come and talk to somebody that lived 40 years of his life now 44 years of my life complaining about traffic jams, or is that my head is being impacted badly by people moving in. And a lot of traffic going in or through Maadi. And these people does not belong to Maadi at all, they're only going from one point to another point, most of the points are outside Maadi. Now, by building all these accesses, it's making it easy for people to go from that point to another point. To that other point, without going into Maadi you know, yeah, so by time, or if all the projects that I'm expecting, or I am wishing to happen - but if these - all projects happened, the traffic will go less into Maadi, you know, yeah, so this will have better impact on the Maadi people or later on in the greenery? And so on.

Interviewer:

Yeah. Okay, that sounds good. Yes, yes. And about what you said before about the greenery of Maadi will be affected. How do you feel about this, that the greenery might be diminished by these projects?

Interviewee:

Up 'till now, there is only one inside Maadi, and there is only one access road or big roads that was built in Maadi. Its impact on the greenery is, is not so big, because this place is not from old Maadi, you know, Maadi was, was like getting larger and larger by time, you know. So the original Maadi, which is called Sarayat, where I originally grew up, is not affected at all by this. This is the old Maadi that was designed by the Canadian guy I told you about this is the old Maadi that was full of green areas. And so this was not affected. This was this up till now has zero effect, you know, that place that were had, the road I was talking about is it only went through a place that was only built 30 years ago. It was not - doesn't have the same type or the same feeling of the old Maadi, is not full of green areas or the old trees as in old Maadi.

But I can easily say that it used to have some trees, you know, some trees, not so big trees, not very amazing gardens. But what I can say is that instead, I'm not, I'm not 100% sure of what I'm saying now, but let's say if the pavement in front of each building was eight meters, and that was a pavement, went down to two meters, so six meters went, where it was taken into the road onto the asphalt, you know, so, so let's say, let's say roughly 60%, or 50% of the greenery was demolished, if it was greenery, but it was not 100% green. So, so this was the impact, you know.

Interviewee (cont'd):

There was another project that was planned or expected to happen or go through into, through Maadi. Maadi had until now our train tracks that goes through Maadi. These train tracks had like, some trees that grew around the tracks. Nobody planted these trees, you know, these just grew like by the rain, and you know. So this test, some of these trees went high, up to like 10/15 meters high. And they are old now, I can't say they're 50 years old, but let's say 20/30 years old. But you can count them, you know, they won't be more than 50 trees all the way from the beginning of Maadi, the end of Maadi these are the old trees or the high trees. Behind under these trees, on the side of the tracks that were like, landscape places, I mean, like kiosks that sell flowers and plants and so on. Some of these places were noticed that I'm not noticed they were like - I can't get the word now. But they were told that they were expected to be moved out. There was a, there was a road that was going to be around these tracks on the both - on both sides of these tracks. Yeah, going into Maadi. But up till now this road is being built until the beginning of Maadi, did not go into Maadi. You know, they were talking that they will stop this access or this highway at the beginning of Maadi and then the roads, the streets, the cars will go into the normal streets of Maadi, maybe you will repave the old streets of Maadi saying that they will not cut any of the old trees or anything they will just make it smoother to go in the normal streets of Maadi. This is what they were talking about. Because when they planned the when they said that they will make this access road inside Maadi. A lot of the people that all residences of Maadi said that - no, we need to, we don't want a highway going through Maadi and this will not be safe for us walking around or crossing the streets or walking our dogs or so on. This will not be very safe to have a highway inside the residential area. So then as I told you the government listened to them or at least up till now they said that we will not make a highway.

Interviewer:

Yeah. Okay. That's good. Yeah. And we've, we've talked about a lot is there anything else that you would like to share on this topic?

Interviewee:

There is nothing tangible that I can say but I can - The only thing I want to talk about is to mention the priorities you know, the priorities is where not everybody can value or can feel the shade of a tree if they are hungry or if they are stuck in the traffic and they missed an exam or they missed an interview or so on because they were enjoying the shade, you know, of the tree, you know? So, with a heavily populated city, or country like Egypt, the priorities are now different, you know, now they need roads more than they need trees, and so on. Because a lot of people are living in a very small area, or plot of land. You know, we because we only live on 6% of the country, you know, I don't know if you studied this or not. Yeah, we hold all the residents of Egypt, only living on 6% of the whole size of Egypt, you know?

Yeah. So and this is because of the Nile you know, because Egypt has one of the, of the very dry deserts of earth, you know, so, so we, we tend to live right beside the Nile, even, not, not even 200 meters, or one kilometre away from the Nile. If you went up Upper Egypt, up to Upper Egypt, you will if you went to in a Nile cruise or something, you will sometimes see that people are only living, not even 50 meters away from the Nile. And then there is a desert begins, you know? So we all live around the water. So we have to do everything around the water, the roads, bridges, tunnels, and so on, you know, you have to manage to live in a very small area.

Interviewer:

Yeah. And you feel that it's, it's more important to have proper roads now than - That that's the priority. And that's a priority over having trees.

Interviewee:

This is not a priority, but this is the solution. Yeah, this is the solution of the question you have this is trying to solve the problem you have, yeah, we are not talking in a neutral environment, you know, we do have a very big problem, we have to we do have a big issue we are trying to solve, you know, so it's not, it's not a leisure thing, you know, it's not at leisure that we want to just build a five lane road or six lane road, out of leisure out of a lot of money. No, we're building them, because we really, we really needed them 20 years ago, not now - 20 years ago, we are outdated. Actually, we are we are, we are slow you know, we are trying - But on the other side, what I have to mention is that they are trying to solve the problems of the old cities, but they're all also now trying to build whole new big cities, you know, I'm not sure if you know or not, we are now building a new capital, we are also building a new summer capital, we are building many new cities on the Mediterranean and also Upper Egypt. So they are trying to take a lot of circulation out of the old cities. Not this is about talking about the existing population, you know, but we are also grown by each to each one year we grow by 2 million people, you know, more, even more, you know, so that the new generations will have newer places to move on to. And in these new cities, you know, there are gardens designed, and also the roads are very wide and so on. I'm not sure - not really sure, if you went if you walk in Europe, in the old cities of Europe, if you will find the big roads with a lot of greenery or you will find small alleys. Yeah, if I remember, when I worked in Italy, in Rome, the streets were very, very narrow, you know, because they were designed for only for people walking or some horses and so on, you know, there is no - there is not enough place to be to plant a tree or to have a big garden in front of your house, and so on. If you know a lot if you, I guess (?) that some of the old cities of Europe you know. So it's not always the garden should not always be the first priority. If you're not able to move from one place to another.

Interviewer:

I think what you'll see in in European cities and the old cities that you will have big parks next to urban areas, so you will have a lot of buildings very close to each other, but they will compensate it by having special parks, big areas with a lot of trees. So the normal streets won't have that many trees maybe but there will be parks.

Interviewee:

Yeah I understand this is this is this, but, you know, this thing grew by time, you know? Yeah, but we didn't we didn't have this originally here, you know, we didn't have the idea of having a big park beside a residential area. It's not the main. It's not, it was not in the master plan of our cities, you know, because, because originally, you know, in Europe, the - all the gardens are, are watered by rain, you know, or maybe 90% of the gardens are watered by rain, not by irrigation systems, you know, here we have to build irrigation systems to have our irrigation systems, you know, so, so having a garden just for the fancy of having a garden, this was not in the in I mean, if I go 200 years ago, you know, this was not a thing in the Egyptian mind, you know, to have a garden for leisure. Because generally we were, most of the Egyptians were only farmers, you know, maybe more than 90% of the population were farmers. So they already have the farm to have greenery around, you know. Yeah. So as you were not really thinking about having a garden, you know, with flowers around and so on. In Europe, I guess, it's a little bit different. Because in Europe, I know, I know that you are 100 - I mean, 500 years ahead of us, regarding having public, green areas, and so on, was always the statues around and flowers and so on. But the effort of doing this is much less, because you only have to plant the tree and then the water rain will take care of the tree.

Interviewer:

Yeah, that's true. It's a big difference. Yeah. Yeah. Well, (name interviewee), you've got me some, some great insights into, into the mindset of people from Maadi and, and how, what effects you feel from these projects. So I'm really grateful for this interview. And I hope you feel that you've said everything about the subject that you want to say.

Interviewee:

Almost everything you know, but these things are always too big to talk about. So there will always be a lot of talking about these things, you know, because it's, it can differ from one person to another, if you can see the big picture, or you're only looking about the small picture right in front of your home also.

Interviewer:

Yeah, well, I'll make sure to, I'm going to interview more people. And I'm going to interview a wide variety of people to get a good, good sense of what it is like, and what people feel - how people feel about it. So if anything pops into your mind that you that you want to share with me, you can always send me a message. And if there's some, if there's something in the interview that you'd rather have me leave out, then you can also send me a message and just say it to me.

Interviewee:

It's the same to you. If you want to ask about anything more, if your professors asked you about any other thing, maybe you can return to me and we'll talk about it. No need to hesitate to ask.

Interviewer:

Okay. Perfect! Okay, well, thank you so much.

Interviewee:

You're welcome. You're welcome. And enjoy your time. Good luck. Good luck!

Interviewer:

Perfect. Thank you, you good luck with the work.

Interviewee:

I'm looking forward to see you one day in Cairo. Maybe in Sharm el Sheikh.

Interviewer:

Me too. Yeah. Yeah, maybe in Sharm el Sheikh. Well, good luck with your work. Good evening.

Interviewee:

Thank you. Thank you very much. Goodbye, evening. See you.

Appendix E: Interview 3 – CBPO [Omitted from final version on request from interviewee]

Appendix F: Interview 4 - Planner D

Researcher 0:01

Okay, perfect. So this is just a general consent form, I will, as we said, I will keep the data for the shortest time possible. It will only be seen by me, the researcher and my supervisor, and perhaps I'm recording it for transcription. And this is just a consent form that the interviewee knows that it's voluntary, that you can also always contact me after the interview, if you want to scrap a part of the interview. And you can also say during the interview, without any reason, like you won't stop with it. The data collected is purely for research purposes. And yeah, and it's - if you don't want it otherwise, it's generally anonymous. So, yeah, so is that okay?

Interviewee 0:57

Yes, it is. Okay.

Researcher 0:58

Perfect. Thank you so much. Okay. So if we're talking about the approach of urban projects, from the context of Egypt, in contrast, with maybe the context of the Netherlands, what would you say are the biggest differences?

Interviewee 1:18

Well, the approach is very general word, of course, just being someone - a specialist. So I would just try to be as general as possible and say, the difference is, between there is that: The majority of work is done according to technical sort of procedures, so how to arrive as urban developments through legal means, as in the drawings and the actual actual interventions that they're doing. And usually, it's being processed from the top down. So the decisions are taken from the top down, unless there is really need to make the thing the participation of the inhabitants, they do it. But it's not the majority of work. It's only if it's really needed, and it will create a you know, great conflict, if the don't do it, then they do it. But here is a difference is the difference is the main approach is the communicative approach, as compared - opposite almost to the technical approach, because communication here (in NL) in urban development is takes the highest priority. So unless it's not, for example, something like building a bridge or, or safety measure for, I don't know, handling crises, or disasters and so on those things that government just do it without - because he just necessary - but any other work that is done for neighborhood or for city development, and so on they are taking the opinions of people. And that's, that's the biggest general difference.

Researcher 3:12

Okay. And in this difference, what do you think the difference is, in the perception of people on these projects, of the affected people?

Interviewee 3:28

Well, it's very tricky, because sometimes when you know, your rights, you can ask for them. Right. So if you don't know your rights, yeah, if I'm, if you're not informed that you have the right to say something, you feel like it's okay. That we do this. That's, that's, that's the norm, right? So it's a normalized lack of recognition, for the Agency for those for the views, so people don't know about it. But then some other people are really harmed sometimes by the top down, because you have to be displaced from the houses they have to be for example - even their lands have sometimes be to be cut smaller, because of some highway has to pass and so on. It's always - it's always necessary - must have been done. And then you just need to give and just need to adapt to it. But here (NL) people know, for example, like if you have if you continue on a comparison, if some people know that the rights are not to complain or to or to be included in the decision making, then they are usually angry if they don't exercise this right. Yeah. So over there, the people who are aware of the rights are very few and usually like activist or academics or In just civil society groups, which is usually the minorities, and those are the ones who are aware, and they are trying to create awareness and so on. But then the rest of the people sometimes don't even know when the government says so because you just you just, you know, accepted? It's not it's the norm not to discuss with. Yeah. Okay.

Researcher 5:24

And if we're talking about, we're talking about for, like a boundary where project has so much impact that they do have to take people into that, that I do have to take measures to accommodate for these people. Okay, well, what how big an impact as projects have to have before the government considers these procedures?

Interviewee 5:51

What you mean procedures of what participation? Or they're taking opinions?

Researcher 5:54

Yeah, taking opinions? Participation?

Interviewee 5:58

I would say this difficult for me to say to be honest, because I don't know many cases, I only know few cases in which this was implemented, sometimes. Even. Okay, well, the complaints are that the in majority of like I said, because, you know, this top down general orientation the government doesn't even feel the need to discuss this. So they know that they're going to be conflict, they know that there'll be people are kind of losing the interest and obviously becoming unhappy or maybe even protesting and so on. So the in advance the taking measures will say, well, here, we gotta compensate, you gotta give you this other housing unit somewhere else, we're going to do this. So they already put in, put it put in their plan, in advance the compensation of the people that would become harmed by the project.

Researcher 7:09

And they also inform these people then?

Interviewee 7:11

Of course, but it's informative as in like, it's what it is, yeah, it's what it's, this is what it is. So, you know, this is gonna happen. As if already, they already know, this is how it goes, you know, it's gonna happen, is necessary is the, you know, the public, not public. So the national interest usually is always framed as a national interest. And unless one people don't know exactly the bank, the backstory, of course, people as in the comments, you know, ordinarily did not, not not those, you know, either groups like professionals or civic society groups, and so on. So the con people just don't know, you know, what's going on sometimes it's it's not national, on its national, its business, businessman, networks, and lobbies and so on, to get certain access to lands that developments, you know, I don't know, five star hotel or something like that. Or sometimes it's really the national because you just want to get like a highway that will reduce the congestion congestion traffic and then well, the cut off the participation we call it as sort of almost like an obstacles on the way to get the shortest road to this decision to implementation, which, which is what is top down is so you have the decision coming from the top and just the down for me to just deal with it. Yeah, yeah. But then of course, so, you said how big it is that they need to do that make the presentation right. So, of course, the urban urban developments are mostly handled by the government, as in just setting up the lands and so on, and then later on businessman intravenous, so if there is so, it's in the interest of the government not to create sort of, you know, mass protests and these kinds of things. You want to avoid this, you know, disruptions part of their, because if you if you tease this response too much, the backlash can be hard to deal with. So they will, in this sense, in this situation, hire consultancies to make participation, public participation, assessments and so on. To make sure: Okay, so the needs are met or which is something that this is happening a lot in, in less central areas not really like city center or high value lands and so on in within the city, when it comes to the fringes, the slums or the informal areas or small towns and so on, they usually need the people that the government need the people to be on board with the plan, so that they will help the process. So, they immediately ask the participation anyway

because they just want them to be interested to know and to be involved in the in the development and not, yeah.

Researcher 10:52

And which specific areas or groups was this? That they needed them to be involved, this was in the city center or?

Interviewee 11:00

Oh, for example? Well, no, no, not in a city center city center is usually seen as off limits, sort of, it's just the experts knows and the experts execute, okay, so kind of - that's a technical approach, it's, you know, you have technical knowledge, and then your technical knowledge is basically superior to this opinions. Okay, so but then there's some sometimes those those people who have the opinions that are needed in the development, for example, they are creating new housing, that was better conditions for the same people. But this housing for example, can be maybe having better conditions to attract even further people. So they need those people stay here and then populate the developments or make them busy with for example, their commercial activities and no cost. If they are the customers, or the customers, the clients of this, so they need them on board. So that then they will the it's by default, they take their opinions because you want eventually to make them interested and make them belong to this land. So so experts are aware of the you know, the differences but so some lands are off offs, you no discussion. Okay. Yeah, it comes to something that is central and some, some some some places are because it's not for you know. It's not a conflict of who take it and who doesn't take it just they going to stay in the land somehow doing something as we live in it. Yeah. Business.

Researcher 12:54

And how will this process go when they have to take these people into account where they have to? Because they're also customers? But then how does the process go? How do they take their opinion?

Interviewee 13:08

Well, this part, I'm not I did not practice myself, so I don't know it's details to be honest, I cannot tell you exactly, I could just give you an impression of what I hear but that's the you cannot take this as the the steps being taken. But usually it's informed we make an event then they invite certain people in which they already think that those people matter. So, they don't just say to everyone come whatever is interested normally you just target certain people in which they feel like Okay, those are the influential people. So, they keep it limited also, because of the you know, the high population, you know, talking about Carew's above 20 million people, and if the keep it up, and sometimes you it becomes endless plus, it's not practical from that sense. So, the the the invite certain people and then the Okay, the mega event for them, and then the event is about so really structured, there is an agenda for it. And then they just first educate them, like tell them what it is they need to take their opinion on. So, in that in this part is always, of course, there is you know, the intentions can be to reveal certain things and keep certain other things, you know, concealed. Yeah, you know, so it's not completely so because they are already happy that they are being taken into account. Yeah. So I'm going to inform you about this kind of part of the things not the long term effect, not this

not that sounds so good. Basically the informant, the target, people are narrowed down, and what is being viewed to them also is narrowed down to what they think is enough. And then you tell them, Okay, well, you have Option A or Option B, Option C, or tell us your highest risk or highest fears of this things that we'll have on you. And basically the report those things, and they're on summarize them into a statement, and then the basically try to use it in the decision making, but it's not binding in any way they can, they can still do something else, and then try to access those people later on in the negotiate. Yeah, so. So, that's that is what I hear about the process, how it goes, I was not part of it and not make it as part of a planning, consultancy in Egypt to say to speak about this. So because I was in a working in neighboring carrier, which is architecture. So focusing only on buildings, or sometimes blocks. So we, in that sense, you know, we interact with, you know, we are aware of the work of planners, and I taught in university in which the courses are being taught in about urban urban planning, but I did not teach those courses myself. So now, that's why I cannot tell you in detail, or at least was 100%. Surety. Yeah. Of what how it goes. That's my impression of what I what you what you get by interacting with the, with the field.

Researcher 16:44

Okay. And is it feasible that on basis of these conversations they propose mitigation and compensation measures?

Interviewee 16:54

Compensation you mean? Yeah, sure. So they, but it's usually it's not enough. Usually the it's belittling, yeah, what could have been condescending? And then there's, but that's usually what they get unhappy, like they are not compensated fairly? Because for example, it's - .Yeah, the budget being put for this kind of development is in total, not not, not good. Considering this as the main the main cost, the compensation, they just look at what do you need to spend? And it's usually very limited, particularly because it comes from ministry and so on. So it's already a set limit. So they already have this limit, and then they just: okay, well, we can distribute it on the people. But it's usually not enough. For the, you know, what, they're what they're giving, instead. Yeah, so yeah.

Researcher 18:04

Okay. Yeah. And how about is it - I sort of already know the answer, but is it feasible that they change the plans on the basis of the people reacting really badly to a decision - that they would change a road that we redirect it?

Interviewee 18:33

You said the road, right?

Researcher 18:35

Yeah, a road or bridge?

Interviewee 18:37

No. Okay. Well, those things? I don't think so. I don't believe they are affected by the opinions of people, usually, okay. They do give them compensations. and negotiate, for example, the time of the, you know, the evacuation or something. But, but, and usually, usually the case is that if it's a road or you know, bridge and those things, and it's bridges, you could also be bridges, because you have the stands. The people being affected, whose lands are being chosen for this, like effect that will take place is not the lands of any powerful people. So it's also, you know, but also it's mainly question of, who are those people? Yeah, so the other powerful people, the, the already, you know, have a protection. Yeah. So it's this and this is everywhere. This is not Egypt only, but in Egypt, kind of because it's hierarchical society in that sense. So, if they are powerful, either certain employees sort of thing or businessmen. Well, the land is off-discussion, they will have to buy it from them was very high prices, and then the we're not going to do so they're just going to throw the land if it passes by some sort of informal housing or farm lands that are owned by, you know, kind of fragmented farmers and Kay was gonna give a little bit of each to each of them or something like that. Or some lands that are under some conflict, because nobody really habits at hand on it. So there is this ambiguous situation in which someone used to own it, and someone is inheriting it, and someone is like this, well, they can easily come and seize it. Try to compensate the the most legitimate part of the conflict with some of its value. And another usually, usually that's the thing, because it's very crowded city and and developments are they have very high revenue, if, if they are being seized, so we - I'm talking for business, not for roads and stuff. But for roads, sometimes it's just pure necessity, they have to do it. But then the way to get there couldn't could could be different, of course, more more inclusive.

Researcher 21:27

Yeah, because I think I'm talking in different context, because my context is urban, it's through the neighborhood of Maadi. And then well, it's bound to go - to affect influential people as well. If not, if not by cutting through their lands, it could be because of changes in accessibility during construction or noise pollution, general pollution, so then these people will be affected without their land directly being taken. How could this influence any compensation measures that the government would distribute?

Interviewee 22:11

Okay. So, what you just said is it differs now, we will speak about in general, which is general as in the majority areas, but when it comes to places like Maadi, people can assemble simply, and then they will file certain official complaints that are probably going to be taking into account because if you said they are influential in a certain way, they can have access to high officials, they will they will make their voice heard in the sense of: Okay, changing the possible interventions, but also if they can negotiate if they can also, how do you say this. So you're talking about changes being done by the government or changing being done by other - like so for example, private player developers?

Researcher 22:16

No that would be by the government.

Interviewee 23:16

By the government? Yeah. So yeah, I don't I don't know I don't live in Cairo or in Maadi particular but just knowing about this kind of neighborhoods. As an Egyptian you know, living in Egypt, like I said, I will not practice urban planning there. They definitely can have a can can have an influence, but then it's still the government will keep on pushing until we eventually apply the project, but it will be in such neighborhood a long process as opposite to somewhere else in which they can just do it. There they will, they will take a lot - it will take a long time to apply because then they will have to watch out from this, you know, person. I don't know, for example, complaint or something and they will fight in court and then they will okay. You wait until the permit is being sort of allowed again. Yes, those people can't afford to make this official document sometimes it's not efficient as in on paper, but it's just because of you know, like I said, accessing the person in charge himself and then having to negotiate certain interest or whatever between them. They can stop the process just because of the accessibility to that. But then that The quality of life in general, in this in this, in this neighborhoods are seen as also priority because the government, and it's sort of, we say influential people in there, they are always going to be somehow connected to the government interest. So the are their interest is also the government interest, let's put this way. So the other kind of people that that, you know, on the same page, yeah, more or less. So, in places in which they live, sometimes it's also kind of residents from other - for example from embassies from, from other countries and so on. So they are seen as guests, you know, it's not, they're not treated, so, they have to be deliberate, dealt with sensitivity. So, the, because here, the, you know, we don't want to make the life horrible, because we need them to stay for the investment or for the population population to their countries or something like that. So, there is people that live in this neighborhood that are you know, sensitive cases, for example, so like, it's like I said, from European country, Western countries or general or for example, Arab Gulf countries or so, and so, you know, so, they are they are sensitive as in like, we don't want those to leave on the angry as in the see this critical on the on the whole you know, country in general just because of this situation, and then for example, that will create problems for the the investment that you're putting or the you know, the relation to certain countries and organizations and other countries. And then so, they will, they will have to say, Okay, well, the quality of life here is like in exchange or in front of the project interest must be must have some influence, so, they will just negotiate, I assume, because by knowing how the society and the hierarchy of power relations and so on works, they will they will they will take their opinions.

Researcher 27:27

And is it feasible that there is a big difference in public participation between the people within the neighborhood, because if we're talking that their information distribution is to these influential people from Maadi. So, I've talked to two residents and they experience - even though positive about the plans - they experience little public participation. So, could it be that? Yeah, how is this, is it that these people are taken into account and the information will be distributed to the these influential people?

Interviewee 28:12

The thing is that you're you're speaking very general, right now, I, because I would, for example, need from you to see, because sometimes to see on the on a map, for example, yeah, because sometimes, when you speak about an intervention, it's really an improvement, like, seriously, this thing is, was problem, something was infrastructure or something like that. And it's for the or for the benefit, actually, of the neighborhood, government is doing it because it's

just risky to leave it as it is, or, for example, bad, bad in terms of low quality, aesthetics, just doesn't doesn't, you know, look any, any good for the level of this neighborhood, at least. And then they just do it for improvement. So, the again, just because like I said, it's normalized there that the participation is only when it's necessary. So they the experts see it as an improvement and then they already send it to a consultancy and then you make the make the plan and they announce it it's only it's only the the participants say the opinions will will stop like what I was talking about, you know, the voice or possible influence because only when they are being harmed really harm like something is going to affect their businesses, they block the client their customers to come to something or whatever or horrible noise or pollution next to their balcony or something like that. Then there is some -

Researcher 29:50

Well that is one of the problems of Maadi that there is a road nine which is an important street for Maadi where a lot of shops were a lot of flower shops, other boutiques which is turned into an axis. So this is something that really influenced these people. And this is people that are really affected. So what you're saying is they would get compensation.

Interviewee 30:28

Not compensation, but they can complain and then well, okay, I think I think you can see this everywhere. Where there is something some something I can see I also see it here in Europe, for example, that you see, in places in which there's always this constant construction for for improving something sort of like a long term projects to do, for example, underground metro or something like that. And then this thing has to, it has to pass through important street for a neighborhood, the people will just deal with it as a temporary thing. So seriously, we have to, you know, deal with this for I don't know, when two, three years until it's done. But you're saying it's something that it will become an axis for good company changing, completely changing the function of the street.

Researcher 31:29

Yeah, and dividing a part of Cairo in two - not a part of Cairo, a part of Maadi, so cutting that community.

Interviewee 31:43

So eventually - Okay, well, it's not the it's not the it's not usual procedure to take the opinions, if it's something that is seeing as national interest, like, for example, this road might be seen as like, say, saving the, you know, the city certain cost of something or fixing the problem for the whole city, but the it will come at the expense of those local people. But that's almost normalized over there, in either Cairo and Alexandria or other also the big cities. So, what will happen is usually either people will just, you know, deal with it, I think, or you know, sometimes when it happens once or twice, then it will be the case that the try to change it for the future. So, but yeah, but this is speculation, I don't know, I don't know what it is for a future changing for the future as in, okay, if some project like this happen from in the future, then, you know, people are more aware, more alert, basically, okay, such things that because they've seen the bad effects. So that now this one has, you know, the kind of, beyond the power anymore, really being implemented and so on. So it's just reality. And then for the future, if something else is about to be done, the maybe going to be more quick, yes, to protest

to, you know, to form like urgent alliances of, you know, the inhabitants to, you know, to act and so on and create potentials or whatever. So, use the resources, basically, whatever it is, either as a network or money or something to prevent, like I said, a split of community, which is something that you can - the thing is that people are in Egypt, their participation in public life in general is minimized Yeah, you know, that's, that's something goes on to political and also cultural things. So here, for example, people in public life, you know, like when it's something that has to do to do to be able to deal with the public, people are speaking about it and they feel that they're speaking somehow can make a difference if they are consistent and persistent enough to to stop something or, you know, promote something that can happen, or the government can listen, at least to this and, you know, respond, act with it. But there everyone is just busy because of them. The density of the people, amount of people, and then, of course, the struggles of, you know, economical, you know, survival, sometimes people are just busy with their, you know, their own work. So that, you know, you're speaking about the community, you know, dividing the communities, these kind of things are always seen by the advisor, either, you know, people like you interviewed, you know, like those, those are professional who read, for example, the theories and the know that the best practices from, you know, the, you know, the the know, the all the good cases from the Netherlands and the the read the books, and all the all the, you know, how he called them, you know, state of the art approaches, and then they will have this reflection, that is dividing the communities, but the people there themselves living in the community, they might not care or even think about, but then they will feel it after 10 years, they will feel because it's free, right? It's not just theory, you know, but the don't think about it, because it's not in the public discussion, there is no, there's no public domain to make them continuously engaged with such issue, that they know that if something called, you know, community on the street can affect the community and so on. They will just say, okay, my business, how's my business doing? How's my house? My, because there's room to participate in the public, the public domain is, is sometimes, like, prevented? Because, you know, you don't want too much. Because, you know, was, you know, this discussion, so on, they want to -

Researcher 36:28

Prevented by whom?

Interviewee 36:31

Sort of prevented as in by the decision makers. Yeah, basically, is if you don't want people to be too engaged, and prevented by not creating a platform to speak about things simply as that, for example. Like I said, when it's really needed the make public hearing to tell the people at this, we're going to do about this, we're going to we are about to do this changes, and it's going to affect you in this ways, and so on. So sometimes you do this. Yeah. But when it comes to roads and bridges, usually not. Yeah, they just tell them, eventually, this is going to affect you. Like, like a notice. Just give you a note. It's not your one way communication, but two ways. You know, I tell you what's going on, and you hear it? Yeah. Not not like I will hear back from you. And so, so yeah, so.

Researcher 37:27

Would you say for these people, especially if they're not very influential? Could it also be dangerous to express your opinion? Because I've heard about this.

Interviewee 37:36

Sure, yes. It depends on how you express it of course, if you express it in certain ways, then you you face sometimes illegal consequences sort of people you you're either going to be blacklisted in certain way or blacklisted as then you know, people are likely to be marked, you know, you're troublemaker or something like this. Or even worse, because of you know, lack of awareness of how things works, you know, they will say certain things that will get you in prison or so people because of the notice it's just act as in like kind of, you know, like read like an alarm you know, the the the already alarm that this could happen. So, better not to just, you know, just keep you know, that's what I said by preventing so because the no such things are possible. If you're not connected well or you're not diplomatic in your way of communicating well, then you can get into this severe harm.

Researcher 38:59

And then what ways of expressing opinion are we talking now?

Interviewee 39:03

I'm talking about for example, like going on the media, sort of like too public, you know, too public, so going to media, posting pictures, speaking about certain figures with the names and, and then you know, of course, sometimes the language itself it's like we're using to to describe it's not just reporting but attacking, you know, which is sometimes just comes out of emotion, right? So just emotional. People just, you know, opening up too much, you know, of the of the real feelings, but then seen as a threat to the keep security and stability and so on. So do you want to prevent this voice from spreading out maybe bringing other voices and to become a big fuss? So they made the might, like I said, the the severe consequences will affect one person or tippers, and then this one person is known to have this, you know, jail time or whatever happening, then the other people will be there. So, yeah, just keep the size, keep it, keep it silent, live with it, and so on. Even even if they are influential, sometimes they are not put in jail, of course, but they are being harassed. And I say like, Hey, watch how this can happen to you. You can lose your job, you can, you know, you can not have this advantage anymore. And so I was like, Okay, well, sorry, sorry, I don't want

Researcher 40:32

And policemen would do this or guardsmen, military.

Interviewee 40:36

I would say I would say it's usually depends on situation. I don't know, like, no, no, no, but this none of this policeman is like, no, no, this is like the last last resort comes with police. And this is the last thing. But usually it comes as in letters, you know, I'm sending like a warning certain things, or we'll call you out to come to the office, you know, hey, we're doing this thing. It's not your advantage. So kind of pre warnings. And then if the person is really, like I said, seen as troublemaker, then please come.

Researcher 41:11

Yeah, yeah. Okay. Yeah. Yeah, that makes sense. Yeah. Because there are people who go on Facebook, and they express their opinion, maybe even make groups that will be dangerous with how dangerous would, for example, be to talk to me as a researcher, because I've reached out to these people who are already taking the risk of going on to mediate protests. And it's possible that it's even more dangerous to talk to people abroad? To make it even bigger problem abroad?

Interviewee 41:56

I will have to say, I cannot speak on their behalf. I don't know. No, because speaking from inside to outside, is a completely different perception. And then they also of course, in touch with the real effects or sometimes even the fear of the effect, not just the effect itself, because can be just the possibility of you know, this happening, why to risk it, and then was to prevent it entirely. Because yeah, I didn't know that so they perceive it as they can perceive it as too risky to speak because, because for them, for example, I know, I know what, for example, that you are really in this university, and you are part of this course and you so but then you are this anonymous person with a foreign name and a foreign face? And who is this coming from where they are afraid of? What's behind this? unknown person? Yeah, so this, you know, fear of, you know, like, the unknown thing, I assume that those are, I'm just trying to get myself in the shoes. But okay. But then, but I know this I am from the same institution I am. So it's basically if almost, I'd say this internal, almost internal sort of communication, but for them, it's way too much unknown. And then if it's revealed later on, if this person for example, working for I'm just giving like even the least this is the least and still this one is very harmful, okay. This is the least kind of potential risk, which is the person for example is working for I see a network a network of TV sort of news, something like that, that the government is really kind of in conflict with so basically, so basically, an official informant and in formal or informal for a certain you know, Al Jazeera or something like that, you know, the the government is not okay with Al Jazeera because they think they see them as they are the causing, you know, disruptions and so on and the they are banned in a certain way. So they cannot come with an official microphone and so on. So, but they can send someone - act like a researcher, and so on and so on. So people say okay, he might be from El Jazeera. Okay, if he turned out to be from Al Jazeera, and I'm the one who gave them the information, I better be the person saying it on the media then be the helper of the already banned ones. Yeah. So I will be already blacklisted for sure. Because they are already, you know, all of the employees and so on. So they will they just see you as anything can be you, whatever your whatever you say they cannot believe it. Yeah. So.

Researcher 45:06

No, that makes make sense. And Al Jazeera, it's banned. So they're not allowed to?

Interviewee 45:14

I don't know. That was that was has been in since 2013 or 15. I don't know, what's the situation now? Maybe the reduced the restriction a little bit.

Researcher 45:26

But they were very critical about this (Projects Maadi) as well, so.

Interviewee 45:30

Because I can tell you that it's not just out of nothing. They really exaggerate everything. Like, I know that for sure. Because, you know, we know I was part of the, you know - they exaggerate stuff. And then the put - they have an agenda for sure, and then they are funded by government - funded by another government, they are not business private, they are funded by another government, which also known for having certain contradicting allies to us and so on. So they really are you know -

Researcher 46:07

They are funded by?

Interviewee 46:08

Qatar. So, but that's an off topic, of course, you know, but but then of course, the reporters might be good people for example, that the person themselves, but how the data or material is being used and frame in the TV itself. It's always done with an aim. There is an aim to do it. It's not just to honestly say what's going on, ya know, the exaggerate certain things they can they can turn a blind eye to other things and stuff like that. And it's very obvious when you're living in a country where you can see okay, so but that's not my media media media is always like this, but but those ones are known for because of the you know, that since the Arab Spring and so on. So people are the government's are all very extra alert to the influence influence and what what, what material can we get? Because you need to counter some facts, you just take some facts and then blow it up certain ways.

Researcher 47:25

Yes. Okay. Got a lot of one. I was wondering to consultancy groups, are they always Egyptian? Or is it sometimes outsourced to -

Interviewee 47:41

I would say yeah, it's usually usually, of course, in Cairo, Cairo is international city. So there is no open market? No. Companies can be in collaboration, but usually, it's collaborations. So, but recently, it's becoming all within the government. So if you have, you have to, if it's something like the road and this kind of public projects, it's the government hiring someone from within so it's not completely given to a foreign company. If it was given because it's relatively rare thing, for example, if it's like expert, the only only the actually it happens I know about I know what this one this is completely another region is it the Dutch were being hired to do the Suez Canal, for example, that company was hired to do the Suez Canal Expansion things that they were doing. And then the other you know, knows to be the rest in this expertise. So they hired to do in order to to make because they offered the best bet for you know, the speed and the cost, the speed and time of completion and then the cost of them and then they just give him the job. So I imagine other consultancies having the same thing if they are like really good at something in business, okay. Give them the job, for example, could be from Arab countries. China, for example, maybe, I don't know.

Researcher 49:25

And I had another question about - We were talking about information day and influential people were invited. Are we talking 1, 2, 3 or 50? How many people are we talking? We were talking before that that they will pick certain people out of the people affected?

Interviewee 49:53

It's usually no not two three people of course, it's it's an event you know, because any event is high density neighborhoods. So, they will just pick for example, the the key key figures of for example, certain businesses, okay. The heads of certain associations or recording with Association and when you have a profession and then the representative body of this profession. They have a name, forgot it in English. So, we call it niqab. Anyway. So, key figures that the the that behind them, there is a structure basically because in Egypt there is you know, the hierarchical, it's almost like a mini pyramids everywhere. So, so there is always a one in the top or three and the top of each hierarchy. So they will get those three, there's those two was one and so on then usually cannot see a number but maybe 20. Minimum or something.

Researcher 51:16

Yeah, just to get a little bit of context for that. Yeah. As the last question, I would like to ask, do you Would you have any recommendation to improve current practice urban practice in, in Egypt, in terms of what we've talked about public participation?

Interviewee 51:35

All urban practice? I don't know where to start. No it's really - it's too broad, you have to be very specific.

Researcher 51:49

I would say for public participation. What's both feasible of course, and necessary?

Interviewee 52:01

Okay, well, I would I would speak from my point of view of just being realistic, okay. There is like, there is, you know, can be idealistic, and you know, or think all the way until the countries in which for example, they have really people educated on the you know, the participation and there is already smaller number of people, a lot of many different conditions. But over there, they need to have, you know, hubs or centers, which people themselves if they want to know and be involved, they can come to it. Because if the, if you want to access everyone for everything and so on in Egypt, you're not gonna get anything done according to the current culture and level of awareness and also the intensity of orchestrated complexity of you know, forces and actors and, and history layers and all kinds of things like so, basically, the main hubs for participations, places play could be digital, also, you know, make it easier for people or less costly, could be digital hubs in which things are being announced and votes have been taking and so on. So, like handling this in a in a still a central way, because, you know, there is a centralization and decentralization, so, this is always a two approach. So, a centralizing there is there is a place everyone needs to refer to, so, there is a center for participation on infrastructure projects. So, there will be become like a platform and structure for example, and for infrastructure for housing and so on, so, on types and then when it comes

to any new any new developments being being just plan can be transparently at least what is it whatever is relevant for the public to know, of course, not, not all the details can be announced there. And then whatever is going to affect certain people, they can, I don't know sent they themselves not the government have to target them, but they can contact you say like, I am this person and I have this land in this development that you announced and then I want to be part, yeah, you know, this, this right does not exist, so that you can just say I want to report and you'll be poor. No, it does not exist and it's really out of the discussion. So, okay. And so it can be like this and then and then you go it can be physical center, that have a website that is developed as an interactive website, not just news website, you can go there, put an entry on something. And then this entry is being it is like statistics being done on it by some experts on. And we have those experts, urban analysts, doing, for example, you know, big data analysis on certain opinions of sensor, could they vote yes or no good or bad, you know, high low degrees, certain certain thing that you get to put on the things, and then those things are being analyzed. And if you want to have the say, you can say your, your, your, your legitimacy to have a saying, and then you'll be invited, for example, to provide proofs for this, and then become part of the put you in the loop, you know, we put you in the, okay, we'll contact you when we have something to take your opinion. And then you will really contact those people. Yeah, that'll be great. And then it will be very adaptive and flexible, and it can be, you know, but then it's always, you know.

Researcher 56:06

Yeah, that would be a really big change.

Interviewee 56:09

Yes, it will be a big change, but there's always the fear niche, like, actually, the government will do such things, and it will become dysfunctional people will not actually go on it. That's what I'm saying that there is another big another problem, which is, comes from other places, like I said, cultural and so on, that the involvement and the state allowed or even even interesting, it's based on specific interests of people in the public domain is so out, how can they be? Really? And the government also does it for a good reason, because people don't have yet the awareness. They know, like, okay, the public interest, and my interest, you know, this thing is because of the certain framework of things, okay, I want to get some stuff and then please the interest of my city, this is way a bit too far. So, so because the government knows that this, this lack exist, they are always fearful that, you know, that if we open the discussion, we will, will come with all of this selfish demands, you know, and experts already know what's good for the city. So we just apply that, you know, and then they just understand that later. This is the level of like, lack of education, basic public education, but how to participate in the public. And what is your role and it's but this idealistic, but what I said is actually realistic. It can be done and platform. Yeah, but it requires a genuine interest in it from the structure. And then it can be really useful, because people can feel belonging to the projects.

Researcher 57:59

Yeah, of course, if it's successful, you can expand on it. Okay. Well, that's, that's a great. Yeah. Great interview. Thank you for the insights.

Interviewee 58:13

You're welcome.

Researcher 58:14

Is there anything else you want to add on? What data we collected?

Interviewee 58:20

No, I'm curious about the other experts that you interviewed and so on. So yeah, I would like to read what you have. What's your reflection at the end?

Researcher 58:30

Yeah. As before, I will send it of course. Yeah.

Interviewee 58:36

Great, thank you very much.