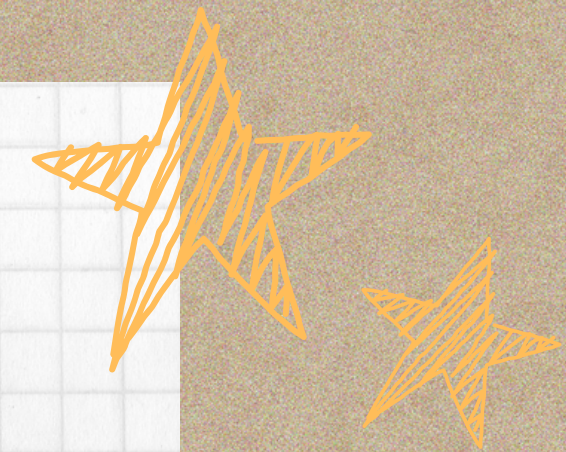
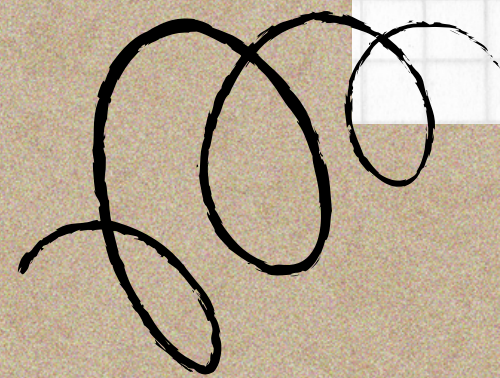




Reflections

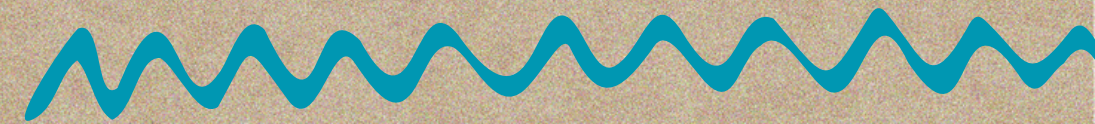


In this booklet we reflect back on the LINES project. We use as a guideline thinking points from the 'A Critical Resource for Ethical International Partnerships' made available by our colleagues at the Sustainable Futures in Africa Network (UofG). We use the resource to reflect on: partnerships, capacity building, power dynamics, time, money, extraction, language(s). We consider partnership a cross-cutting point, one that relates to all the others but also includes the relationships that are established and the pleasure that comes from the interpersonal encounters, connections and emotions that projects such as LINES can allow





Capacity building



"What does the North have to learn?" (Eade, 2010: 209)

- This was not a goal but participant expected 'training': were they disappointed they did not get 'real' training?
- We did not have the 'capacity' to do capacity building work, but also capacity already exists in the contexts, without the need for us to 'capacitate' anyone
- We have access to more resources and, as staff working in a School of Education we can advise on education and pedagogy.
- Overall, We learnt more than we taught, especially about stepping back and facilitating rather than capacitating

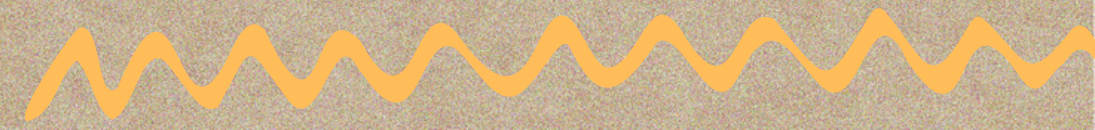
Our teachers always want and need more training so they surely will be interested in attending this (Sawiyah's co-director)

We are not here to provide a training, but we just want to reflect with you on what being teachers mean. [...] You are the experts of your contexts, and we will actually learn from you. [...] Maybe what you tell us can be useful to other teachers in similar contexts too (Project team)





Power dynamics



"When someone comes with money, and others are at the recipient end, no partnerships can be equitable" (Imperiale and Phipps, 2022)

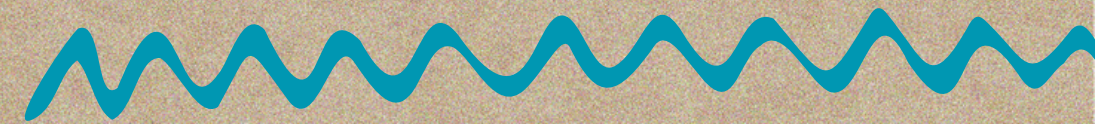
- We used Community Based Participatory Research as our overall model
- We strived to understand the context, including becoming aware of the heterogeneity of refugee communities and the relative access to resources of different groups
- We made space for academic and community knowledge
- We did our job as 'researchers' but as a service to the community
- We have not redressed structural hierarchies and oppressive realities, but we believe that the teachers we worked with will do

We are going to solve something that society, the economic crisis, the war destroyed. We may not be able to create doctors or professionals but at least we can teach the children to participate in society. (U., teacher and leader of the already established community school, Lebanon)





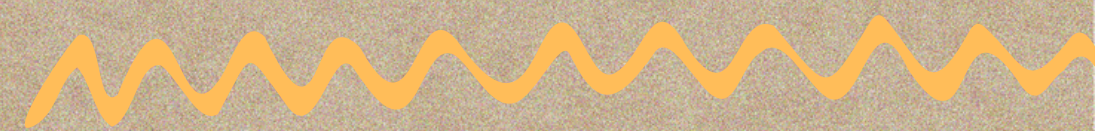
Money



"Why is there no acknowledgement in the literature of the financial aspects of international research projects [...]?"
(Fassetta and Imperiale, 2021)

- This is the project budget and how it was destined to different activities. We acknowledge that allocating funding to partners who are struggling financially can lead to difficult situations
- Only one organisation received funding (jointly agreed) as the second organisation was not a partner from the start of the project
- Transparency is our way to strengthen relationships and hold ourselves accountable

- staff costs £8,801
- travel £3,600
- accommodation £1,000
- subsistence £700
- participant incentives £1,200
- flexible funding £1,000
- workshops in Jordan £400
- Mishwar £3,060 (consumables and hosting of field visit)
- (From the initial project budget)



Languages

"We argue that researchers need to account for the research spaces and the relationships these spaces engender, and recognise developing researcher awareness when researching multilingually" (Holmes et al., 2013: 285)

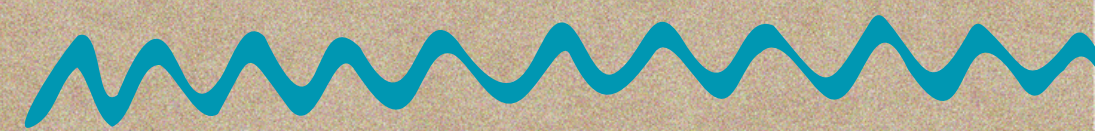
- The languages of the project were Arabic and English, but also academic language, Arabic dialects and international English (plus different forms of literacy)
- Arabic was the main focus in Lebanon, but English was seen in both contexts as the language for a better future
- In Lebanon we needed to translate everything, while in Jordan we only used English
- Forms required by institutional ethics required clarifications (linguistically, but also as a practice)
- Similarly, explaining the project's aims and objectives required translation from 'academic-ese' into a language that would make sense in the context, as well as from English into Arabic

Now that we have signed these forms with this strange language, will you take our homes away? Ahah. Ah wait, we don't have a house anyway [everybody laughs] (K., teacher, Lebanon)





Time



'Slow scholarship' and an 'ethics of care' can resist "high productivity in compressed time frames" (Moutz et al., 2015: 1236)

- Time was little: the project lasted for 7 months; the researcher was employed for 5 months; fieldwork took 12 days
- An ethics of care was crucial to making the most of the little time we had
- We also built on 'past time', the time two team members had spent in each context years previously
- We have also committed to 'future time', the time after the end of the project in which we keep in touch with the teachers (via WhatsApp and social media)
- We also commit to investing more time to plan for projects in the future that can build on the LINEs project
- While slow scholarship is what we wish for, we accomplished a lot in such little time

"I am afraid we are losing momentum if we don't get things done now"

"We will need to wait for another two weeks..."

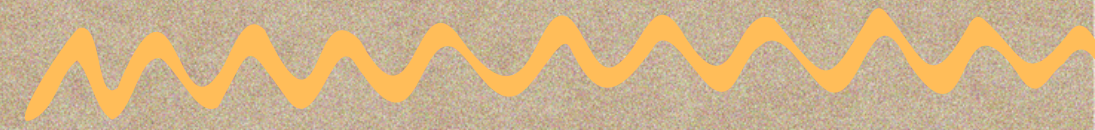
"As nothing has been arranged yet, do you think it is rude if we just show up tomorrow? Let's send an email first"

(From research team conversations - adapted)





EXtraction



The methodological obsession with data collection and extraction is indeed an expression of coloniality (Fuñez-Florez, DATE:195)

- We have a longstanding commitment to use participatory methods and approaches to challenge the 'coloniality of knowledge' (Mignolo, 2011)
- We tried to remain aware of our positionality at all times and to step back to allow mutual exchange of knowledge and expertise
- We are aware that colonial extraction is built into what counts as knowledge and whose knowledges count
- We believe that it is possible to work in ways that are equitable and inclusive, ethically creating shared knowledge, even though this is still an aim rather than a reality
- Having time to build partnerships and to design project together is essential to avoid extraction

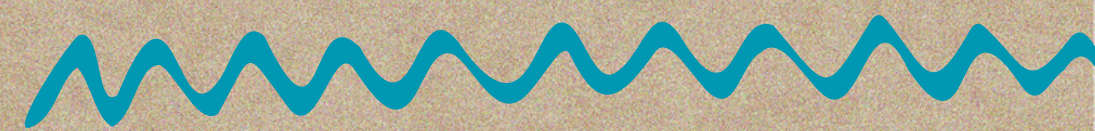
"[In Jordan it] was nice, but it felt very much us going in and getting what we needed. I am not sure what we can offer them in return"

"Well, they still said this was useful to them, so maybe that's ok for now and we can then build on this"

"I didn't have this feeling with the work in Lebanon, maybe because we knew them already and decided what to do together..."

(From a research team conversation - adapted)





Partnerships

"All new partnerships begin on the basis of histories, understandings, and layers of context that are not always immediately evident, not always directly connected to you, but always influencing the starting positions and the potentials of the collaboration ahead" (Ferdous et al, 2021: 1)

- The work we did built on existing relationships and connections
- We strived to build spaces where everyone could speak to each other truthfully and respectfully
- Strong relationships of trust were needed to solve disagreements within the research team
- Knowing when to intervene without interfering was not always straightforward since, because of our positionality, we carry power with us even though we may not wish to
- The research funding infrastructure necessarily creates hierarchies that influence partnership
- We did all we could to establish collaborative partnerships and to be transparent, without pretending to ignore our privileged position

[This initial grant will allow us [...]: to establish relationships and develop trust in Lebanon and Jordan that will help to ensure collaboration and co-creation of knowledge with Global South partners working in challenging contexts (From the project proposal).

