

“HOPE IS THE LAST THING TO DIE IN LIFE” -mapping out the needs and
hopes of dump pickers in Maputo as a part of a process of empowerment

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Abstract:

The goal of the research was, through action research, to map out dump pickers' hopes and needs as a part of a process of empowerment in Hulene B. garbage dump, Maputo, Mozambique. The research identified what kinds of interventions rising from empowerment can be applied to "Bocaria" dump, starting from the hopes and dreams of the dump pickers. The research also investigated how dump pickers perceive the forthcoming closure of the dump and what kinds of plans they have for after the closure. The action research was carried out in July 2014 and the research included theme interviews, observations, picture analysis and problem analysis in the dump. The research included 23 short interviews with the dump pickers and one interview with a waste buyer. The theme interviews were analyzed using content and theme analysis. Empowerment and Freirean thinking were used as a theoretical framework and related to poverty reduction.

In the research it was observed that dump pickers have dreams and hopes for the future. Even decades in the garbage dump have not kept them from dreaming of a better future for themselves and their families. The focal observation of the research was that the dump pickers mainly dream of a life outside of the dump and they are motivated to do any kind of work or studies to make a living outside waste picking. Many dump pickers dream of specific things like starting their own business.

According to the principles of empowerment, dump pickers' hopes and dreams were used to form suggestions for future projects and design plans for a project starting in the summer of 2015. The research shows that dump pickers are a diverse group of people and they hope and need different things. Different groups of people require different interventions. Mostly they live in extreme poverty and work and live in dangerous and inhumane conditions. The dump pickers perceived that life after the closure of the dump will provide only misery and hunger and lead them into questionable measures to find an income, like prostitution and theft. The central conclusion is that dump pickers have a critical need for social and material support and targeted interventions, so that they can be supported to find alternative sources of income after the dump is closed in the near future. Without support, their opportunities to find alternative incomes are minimal.

Key words: empowerment, dump pickers, waste pickers, international social work, Mozambique, poverty reduction

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Tiivistelmä:

Tutkimuksen tavoite oli toimintatutkimuksen kautta kartoittaa kaatopaikan rosankerääjien toiveita ja tarpeita osana empowerment -prosessia Mosambikissa, Maputon Hulene B. kaatopaikalla. Tutkimus selvitti millaisia empowermentista nousevia interventioita voidaan soveltaa ”Bocaria” –kaatopaikalla, lähtien rosankerääjien omista toiveista ja unelmista. Tutkimus selvitti myös miten rosankerääjät kokevat tulevan kaatopaikan sulkemisen ja millaisia suunnitelmia heillä on sulkemisen jälkeiselle ajalle. Toimintatutkimus toteutettiin kesällä 2014 ja tutkimus sisälsi teemahaastatteluja, havainnointia, valokuva-analyysia ja ongelmien kartoitusta kaatopaikalla. Tutkimus sisälsi 23 lyhyttä rosankerääjän teemahaastattelua ja yhden roskanostajan haastattelun. Teemahaastattelut analysoitiin käyttämällä sisällönanalyysia ja teemoittelua. Teoreettisena viitekehystenä tutkimuksessa toimi empowerment ja Freireläinen ajattelu, joita pohdittiin suhteessa köyhyyden poistamiseen.

Tutkimuksessa havaittiin, että rosankerääjillä on unelmia ja toiveita tulevaisuudelle. Edes vuosikymmenet kaatopaikalla eivät ole saaneet heitä lakkaamaan unelmoimasta ja toivomasta parempaa tulevaisuutta itselleen ja perheelleen. Keskeinen havainto tutkimuksessa oli, että rosankerääjät ensisijaisesti unelmoivat elämästä kaatopaikan ulkopuolella ja ovat motivoituneet tekemään mitä tahansa työtä tai opiskelemaan, jotta voisivat löytää muuta toimeentuloa rosankeräyksen sijaan. Monet rosankerääjät unelmoivat tietyistä asioista, kuten oman yrityksen perustamisesta.

Empowermentin lähtökohtien mukaisesti rosankerääjien omista unelmista ja toiveista muodostettiin ehdotuksia tulevaisuuden projekteille ja projektisuunnitelma kesällä 2015 alkavalle projektille. Tutkimuksessa havaittiin että rosankerääjillä on erilaisia toiveita ja tarpeita ja eri ryhmät tarvitsevat erilaisia interventioita. Yleisesti he elävät äärimmäisessä köyhyydessä ja työskentelevät ja asuvat vaarallisissa ja epäinhimillisissä olosuhteissa. Roskerääjät näkivät elämän kaatopaikan sulkemisen jälkeen tarjoavan vain kurjuutta, nälkää ja ajavan heitä kyseenalaisiin tapoihin hankkia elantoa, kuten varkauksiin ja prostituutioon. Tutkimuksen keskeisenä johtopäätöksenä roskerääjät tarvitsevat kriittisesti sosiaalista tukea ja interventioita, jotta heitä voidaan tukea löytämään muunlaista elantoa, kun kaatopaikka suljetaan lähivuosina. Ilman tukea heidän mahdollisuutensa löytää muunlaista toimeentuloa ovat minimaaliset.

Avainsanat: empowerment, kaatopaikan roskerääjät, roskerääjät, kansainvälinen sosiaalityö, Mosambik, köyhyyden poistaminen

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1 INTRODUCTION

Waste pickers in cities in the developing world are a widespread, silent problem, the solution to which has received inadequate public attention and interventions globally. It is estimated that around one percent of the urban population in third world countries lives from waste picking (Medina 2007). Many studies (e.g. Zia et al. 2008; Asim et al. 2011) point out that dump pickers have the weakest position of all the waste picker groups; the work is the most dangerous, least paid and the most stigmatizing. It could be argued that dump pickers are one of the most disadvantaged groups of people, because they are not only poor but they are also exposed to many dangers and hazards due to their living and working place.

Multiple studies have been done globally about waste pickers, but they mainly focus on the economical-ecological aspect of waste picking while the social aspect is largely missing (e.g. Wilson et al. 2006; Medina 2007; Asim et al. 2011). Furthermore, the majority of the studies discuss all the waste pickers groups generally and only a few studies focus on dump pickers separately. It is important to conduct research targeted specifically to dump pickers, because they face the most extreme, harsh and dangerous conditions, and many vulnerable groups as women, children, the disabled, the elderly and immigrants, pick waste and live in the dumps. Research made from social science viewpoint and specifically through social work lens brings important contribution to this research field, because it forces us to consider the individuals, treat them equally, respect their hopes and dreams and strive for empowerment in their lives. In none of the previous research I've found, have waste pickers explicitly been asked what they need and hope in life. However, that is an indispensable part of the process of designing interventions for helping dump pickers and supporting their empowerment. In a postmodern social work approach it is essential not only to consult the clients, but to enable them to provide the framework within which the interventions are designed (Parker et al. 1999, 153).

Although empowerment is a widely used, fashionable concept in the world today, it was chosen to use in this research because dump pickers mainly lack power, strength and opportunities to make choices concerning their own life. In social work empowerment is not only part of the current trends, but also a central principle and essential part of social work values (Thompson 2000, 135). Social work has traditionally focused on work with the most disadvantaged and vulnerable in the society (Barry & Sidaway 1999, 29). Although along the years

social work tasks and position have changed slightly, this original mission remains valid. My research strives to refine the concept of empowerment to its original meaning and put emphasis on the external elements of empowerment, which take into account societal elements like injustice, oppression, discrimination and inequality. This approach takes notice of the fact that empowerment as an internal increase of strength is insufficient in itself to make people powerful if external elements prohibit them from using their gained strengths. Empowerment is linked here with Freirean thinking where the core is that in co-operation with people they can become aware of the oppressive structures and fight for their own freedom (Freire 1970). In this way empowerment is not something that can be done for people, but is only found in co-operation, building on people's own wishes and strengths.

In this research empowerment is discussed specifically in the context of the empowerment of extremely poor people. Here its important is to define what is meant by poverty and extreme poverty. In this research poverty is defined as a combination of low income and low standard of living which keeps poor people from having a socially acceptable living standard (e.g. Siki 2008; Dierckx 2010). In extreme poverty the key elements are that poverty is prolonged with multiple disadvantages and that it is very hard to rise out of poverty without outside help (Dierckx 2010, 55). Important building blocks of empowerment of the poor are the opportunity structure, which can be divided into the institutional climate and social and political structures and agency of the poor, which can be either individual or collective assets and capacities (Narayan 2000, 5–12). I combine these building blocks in this research with the goals of improving equity and quality of life (Dierckx 2010, 58). These goals take into account that providing the same opportunities for everyone is not enough, because people don't have the same possibilities to utilize the opportunities. Furthermore, rising out of poverty is not only a material issue but foremost a question of the improvement of the quality of life.

This research focuses on dump pickers of the waste dump of the capital city of Mozambique, Maputo. Hulene dump, also referred as "*Bocaria*", is the only waste dump of this city of almost 1.1 million people. Into the dump almost 700 tons of unsorted waste is dumped every day (Mertanen et al. 2013, 11). In Maputo dump pickers are called "*catadores*" and in this research this term is used when dump pickers of Maputo are discussed. Catadores sort through the waste, looking for items to sell. Mostly catadores search for plastics and metals and sell them straight to the companies which utilize waste for re-use. There are no exact numbers of the number of catadores in Bocaria dump, but estimations revolve around 500-

800 people. The majority of the catadores lives in the near-by communities in and around the dump area but some also sleep in the dump, in huts made out of waste materials. The goal of this action research was to map out the needs and hopes of the catadores in order to design interventions for an empowering project. This research was conducted during July 2014 and it includes interviews with the dump pickers and waste buyer, observations and discussions in the dump, and photos and videos.

My interest in the dump pickers of Bocaria rose in 2012, when I visited the dump several times during my social work internship in Mozambique. The extreme misery and hopelessness there were unlike those in any other place where I had been before. Since then I have visited Mozambique four times and continued visiting in the dump regularly. Knowing the context and people who know the dump and the people there well was beneficial in this research, because it allowed access to the dump, real contact with people, and a more favorable attitude towards a stranger like me. It was also essential for survival in the dump, since dump pickers do not tolerate outsiders in their area well. The local contacts provided important information and viewpoints for this research, which enabled me to understand the context and voice of the catadores better, also during the writing of this research report. Although I have striven to write as truthful an account as possible of their situation, the ethical notion that it is always an interpretation of their ideas, views, hopes and dreams must be taken into account.

Action research was seen as a suitable research method for this research, because the goal of the research is not only to produce information, but also to alter the current practices in co-operation with the participants of the research (Kuula 2006). This differs from 'traditional' qualitative research so that the researcher becomes involved in the process, instead of being an objective bystander and gives away his/her expert position (e.g. Kuula 2006). Data collection differs in a way that the participants are involved from the beginning in the construction of ideas and solutions (Stringer 2007; Fleming & Ward 1999). Furthermore, action research goes well with the principles of empowerment, where co-operation with the people and starting from their own wishes should be enhanced in all stages. Fleming and Ward (1999, 374) see this as a two-way process: empowerment can be actualized in social action research, and on the other hand research is vital for the practice of empowerment.

The goal of the action research was to find in co-operation with the dump pickers feasible solutions for their situation, which would later on be implemented in a project. Also, during

and after the fieldwork some of the sick and disabled people were helped in their immediate needs (e.g. food, hospital costs) and currently a child sponsorship program is been established for the children of the dump who are in the worst position. This research was the first step in the action research process, which is going to be continued next summer. In the continuing research the first stages of the projects will be implemented based on the needs and hopes mapped out in this research. One of the goals of the research was to produce project plans for empowering research, which are presented in the last chapter.

In Mozambique the situation of the dump pickers is crucial at the moment; the dump is going to be closed in the near future in order to establish a new high-tech landfill in Matola. It was estimated that the dump would already be closed in 2015, but it is still unsure what the schedule of the closure is in reality. The closure means that the dump pickers will lose their only source of income and survival, and some also their living place. Due to this, this research is very timely and important. At the moment, there is no organization working on a large-scale to help the catadores and provide alternative opportunities for them after the dump is closed. The government is in the process of thinking what to do for dump pickers, but it is uncertain if there will be actions targeted for them and to what extent. Furthermore, the current situation makes continuing this research essential.

The research task is to map out the needs and hopes of dump pickers and, based on them, identify what kinds of interventions rising from empowerment can be applied in the Bocaria dump. This includes determining which interventions dump pickers themselves prefer. Furthermore, another key task is to investigate how dump pickers perceive the closure of Bocaria: are they aware of it and what do they think they will do after the closure?

The structure of this research report is the following: the second chapter presents the overview of the waste pickers' situation globally. In chapter three a theoretical framework is formed and discussed. The fourth chapter introduces the research task, the methodological overview, fieldwork, ethical questions and analysis methods. Chapters five and six present the results of the research, and in chapter seven they are reflected and discussed. In the chapter five context of the Bocaria dump and situation of dump pickers of Bocaria are discussed in more detail. In chapter six dreams of dump pickers are categorized and reflected on. In chapter seven the closure of Bocaria, scavenger co-operatives and empowerment are dis-

cussed in the context of the research results, and future suggestions are presented. Chapter eight provides the concluding remarks of the research.

2 SCAVENGING AS A THIRD WORLD CHALLENGE

2.1 WASTE PICKERS AND SWM IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

Consumption of goods has increased all over the world and within it the amount of the household waste (UNEP 2002). The increased packing and short lividness of products, changing consumption patterns by trends and more careless consumption culture create huge waste problem which affects indirectly and directly to human health. Many governments lack the understanding of the ecological benefit of waste recycling and often because of scarce resources target insufficient actions and policies to recycling. (Gutberlet 2008, 662.) Growing population, migration from rural to urban areas, poor SWM (solid waste management) systems and lack of resources to improvement leads into poor waste collection and growing amount of waste in the roads, streams and dumps (Sembiring & Nitivattananon 2010, 803). This results in rise of informal sector which fills in for public waste management and searches vendible items for living from growing, unsorted waste mass. In developing countries both formal and informal actors operate in the field of solid waste management, informal sector referring to waste picking and recycling activities performed by individuals or groups who have not been registered in SWM (Sembiring & Nitivattananon 2010, 802).

In literature variety of concepts are used to describe the people who collect waste and utilize it for sale, and each country uses its own terms. In English most frequently used terms are scavengers and waste pickers. In Mozambique waste pickers are called *catadores*. In this research the concept waste picker or dump picker seemed the most neutral and considerate choice. Although scavenger is widely used concept in research, it carries some negative connotations due to its second meaning of animals who feed on dead organic matter. The concept dump picker is used when I discuss about people who collect waste in garbage dumps. The term *catadore* is used of waste pickers in the context of Bocaria dump in Mozambique. Waste pickers collect waste to sell it for recycling and use it for multiple own purposes (Medina 2000, 52). The work tasks include collecting waste, utilizing it for use, cleaning, analyzing, storing, transporting and selling waste (Tubtim et al. 2007, 887).

According to many studies, waste pickers in developing countries are the most disadvantaged segment of the society and face many dangers and challenges (Medina 2000, 52). It is esti-

mated that around one percent of the urban population in third world countries lives out of waste picking (Medina 2007). People in developing countries are driven into waste picking due to prevailing poverty and unemployment, incapability or reluctance for other kind of employment and demand for cheap raw materials. (Medina 2000, 52–58.) Also, socio-economic factors drive people into waste collection, as growing population, insufficient SWM systems, unskilled work force, and poor and unaffordable services (Wilson et al. 2006, 798; Tubtim et al. 2007, 886). According to Martin Medina (2000, 53), waste picker's work make them the lowest cast of society although they would not necessarily be the poorest. Waste pickers are often perceived as a public health risk, shame for the authorities and wider society, associated with filth, or even considered as criminals (Medina 2000, 52; Semibiring & Nitivattananon 2010, 807). Authorities have regarded waste picking in the one hand as criminal, punishable activity and in the other hand been indifferent of their existence (Medina 2000, 57). Formal SWM systems generally have negative attitude towards the informal sector and see it underdeveloped and unsanitary and not being able to compete with the requirements of SWM today (Wilson et al. 2006, 798).

Most of the waste pickers live in very bad conditions, for example in slums, shags and huts in or around the dump with minimum or non-existent basic infrastructure (Zia et al. 2008, 598). For example, in Thailand over 70 percent of waste pickers didn't have right to their place of residence and many broke the law in living in a certain area (Tubtim et al. 2007, 887). In history waste picking has been marginalized activity of low status groups and outcasts (Medina 2000, 53). Waste pickers are often poor migrants from rural areas who have not been able to find another way of living in the cities (e.g. Zia et al. 2008, 604, Rankokwane and Gwebu 2006, 157). Also, many immigrants, religious and ethnic minorities and people in specifically low position, as Dalits in India and Gypsies in Europe, end up picking waste without another kind of livelihood (ILO 2004, 18). Waste picking is often the only means of subsistence for the waste pickers (Zia et al. 2008, 603).

The waste pickers outside of the dumps are mostly men. In a research conducted in Mozambique among the street waste pickers, it was found that 97.7 percent of the waste pickers were male (Mertanen et al. 2013, 30). In the garbage dumps also many women and children and whole families pick waste. For example, in India and Pakistan the dump pickers were mainly women and girls. (Zia et al. 2008, 603; Asim et al. 2012, 156.) However, in Botswana it was estimated that most of the waste pickers in the landfill are men (Rankokwane & Gwebu 2006,

157). According to ILO report (2004, 19), children pick waste mainly in the dumps. The age range of children is from 4 to 5 years up to 18 years (ILO 2004, 19). The age of adult waste pickers varies from research to research. In a research conducted in Thailand (Tubtim et al. 2007, 886) biggest age group were middle-aged, in Botswana (Rankokwane & Gwebu 2006, 157) they were mostly young and young adults and in Pakistan they were mainly adult men (Asim et al. 2012, 156).

Waste pickers' level of education varies from country to country. In Botswana none of the waste pickers who participated in the research were without education. They had done most often basic level of studies (in Botswana Standard and Junior Certificates). The ones who had graduated from diploma level were immigrants. (Rankokwane & Gwebu 2006, 157–158.) In Thailand education levels ranged from no education to primary school and up to Bachelor's degree (Tubtim et al. 2007, 886). As Batsumi Rankokwane and Thando Gwebu (2006, 158) point out, it shows that although waste pickers would have the basic reading and writing skills, they lack an economic opportunity to continue an education or find another kind of living.

In Pakistan and India most of the waste pickers were illiterate and their children didn't go to school either (Zia et al. 2008, 603; Asim et al. 2012, 157). Typically globally waste picker children don't go to school. Their contribution is essential to a family income and often parents can't afford or don't have the means to send their children to school (Gonzenbach & Coad 2007, 10). In Pakistan waste pickers said that they would want to send their children to school but they are not accepted there (Asim et al. 2012, 157). Waste picker children are discriminated based on their low status due to their work and dirtiness. Moreover, waste pickers don't always see the importance of education. (Gonzehbach & Coad 2007, 10–11.)

2.2 WORK AND EARNINGS OF WASTE PICKERS

The work and earning of waste pickers are characterized by low income and low position in the trade hierarchy. Waste pickers are often exploited and they receive low prices in markets often dominated by one buyer. This is especially typical in the dumps, because the dumps are usually far from the markets and waste pickers have no economic means to transportation.

(Wilson et al. 2006, 801.) In research made in Pakistan (Asim et al. 2012, 157–158) it was found that the higher of the rank of a waste picker or a waste buyer, the higher the earnings or profits. For example, households or servants had highest earnings, because they were able to collect items that were cleanest and had the most value while the dump pickers had the lowest earnings, because they collected the lowest quality waste. (Asim et al. 2012, 157–158.)

Waste dealers and owners of recycling shops often take advantage of waste pickers. There is a huge price difference between the prices of factories and recycling shop and the prices waste pickers receive. Waste pickers are not able to provide sufficient amounts and quality for the industry demands and this causes dependency on the dealers. Waste pickers can also be in debt to recycling shop owners. (Tubtim et al. 2007, 888-889; Gutberlet 2007, 663.) The price waste pickers get from the waste differs considerably from the price the dealers receive; it is 18-times higher in India, five times higher in Columbia, four times higher in Mexico and three or four times higher in Brazil (Medina 2000, 54; Gutberlet 2007, 663).

David Wilson, Costas Velis and Chris Cheeseman (2006, 802) have categorized ways to add value to waste recyclables, firstly by waste collection and identification. Secondly, sorting waste is the main way to add value to the waste. The more categories is uses the more value it gives to recyclables, for example, sorting plastic into hard and soft and further by type, color, shape, and possible future use. Furthermore, increasing quantities of waste and pre-processing by, for example, washing and compacting gives waste picker better position in the markets. In small micro-enterprises waste can be already turned into trading article and market intelligence is needed to have understanding of suitable trading partners and prices. Trading takes place in formal or informal markets and links to different networks are needed. (Wilson et al. 2006, 802.) The challenge for the dump pickers is that they often lack the space to add value to the waste materials and are forced to sell them with low price (Asim et al. 2012, 158).

Waste pickers can be divided into different groups based on what kind of work they do, where it is done, and with what kind of equipment. In research conducted in Thailand it was observed that what kind of equipment the waste pickers use divides them into different income categories and determines how accepted they are within their group (Tubtim et al. 2007, 888). The names and tasks differ to some extent and all of the countries don't have all the groups. For example in Asia waste picking is more organized than in Africa and in Asia

there are different levels of pickers, dealers, recycling shops and waste industry (Rankokwane & Gwebu 2006, 153). The actual waste pickers can be roughly generalized five categories of (e.g. Asim et al. 2012; Rankokwane & Gwebu 2006; Wilson et al. 2006; Zia et al. 2008)

1. Dump pickers: People who collect waste from the open dumps or landfills and often live in the dumps or near-by communities.
2. Street waste pickers: People who collect any waste with recyclable value from streets, sewages, garbage bins and open dumps.
3. Itinerant waste buyers: People who go around from door to door to buy waste; they usually have some kind of vehicle for carrying the waste.
4. Municipal waste collection crews: Waste collectors who segregate raw materials from vehicles which transport waste to the dumps.
5. Waste pickers, who work for the waste dealers and are obliged to sell their daily collection for them.

Many studies (e.g. Asim et al. 2011; Zia et al. 2008) point out that dump pickers have the weakest position of all the waste pickers groups; work is the most dangerous, less paid and the most stigmatizing. Due to this it is important to focus on improving specifically their life conditions. Also, women and children who are the most vulnerable groups of waste pickers usually pick waste in the dumps. In Philippines it was noticed that waste picking in the garbage dumps had affected to the dump picker children so that they felt crippling insufficiency, inability and incapability. This resulted in that they could not be convinced of anything else than lifelong waste picking. (Gunn & Ostos 1992, 636.) The central problems for the children in the dumps are child labor and children growing in the environment which is detrimental to their health and psychological well-being. Women waste pickers face more harassment (Zia et al. 2008, 603).

The waste picking in the dumps includes sorting out the materials which can be recycled from the waste that is poured out to the dumps by the waste trucks. Furthermore, the items are cleansed and sorted. These tasks are similar to transfer point pickers (Pakistan), but in dumps sorting happens in more unhygienic conditions. Also, the quality of the collected waste is lower. When all the waste picker groups are compared dump pickers have to work longer days than other groups and they are harassed and insulted more. (Asim et al. 2012, 156–160.) In the dumps people also search for food scraps for survival (Rankokwane &

Gwebu 2006, 157). Dump pickers collect waste from the dumps either legally or illegally. For example, in Gaborone dump in Botswana there are also legal dump pickers who have been given a permission to collect waste from the dump. Still, even in Gaborone the amount of illegal waste pickers surpasses the amount of legal dump pickers. (Rankokwane & Gwebu 2006, 157.)

2.3 HEALTH RISKS AND PROBLEMS

Waste pickers are exposed to many health risks due to their working and living place. Wilson, Velis and Cheeseman (2007, 803) divide health risks which are connected to informal waste recycling activities into: *community health risks* and *occupational health risks*. Community health risks include risks that informal recycling poses to surrounding communities and wider public. Recycling and storing waste near living places creates unhygienic conditions which can allure animals which carry diseases. Furthermore, burning dumps create fumes which pose health hazard for the exposed population. (Wilson et al. 2007, 803–804.) Polluted waters coming from the dump can cause groundwater pollution, expose the people who consume the waters into risk, and be breeding place for disease carrying insects (Spies 2010, 15).

Children are in the biggest danger to be exposed to these types of risks because of their character and their vulnerability to diseases. Children don't have the understanding to avoid touching the dangerous items in same way than adults, and their exposure to toxic waste and air can have more harmful, permanent effects because they are still in the state of development. (Spies 2010, 15.) The extent of the risk for the public is unclear (Wilson et al. 2007, 804). However, the tests have proved a clear connection between the water, land and air pollution and the vicinity of the dumpsites, which affect the health of the people living around the dump areas. In Nigeria people living around the dumpsites suffered from for example malaria and respiratory, skin and body problems. (Ogunrinola & Adepegba 2012, 239–244.)

Occupational health risks refer to risks that are posed to waste pickers in waste collection and handling. Health risks arise from manual handling of waste without sufficient protective equipment e.g. from contact with sharp objects, faeces, toxics, chemicals, needles, and

breathing fumes from burning waste. (Wilson et al. 2007, 803–804.) Health risks increase in waste dumps because in the open dumps waste pickers work in the most unhygienic conditions and many dump pickers live in the dump or near-by areas and pick waste manually. According to Rankokwanen and Gwebu (2006, 161; see also Binion & Gutberlet 2012) dump pickers suffer from injuries, wounds, burns, eye irritations, respiratory illnesses, dental problems, parasitic and gastrointestinal problems, backaches, and other pains and skin diseases. In addition to above mentioned, in India virus infections were common among the dump pickers (Zia et al. 2008, 605). In Nigeria (Afon 2012, 669–670) the biggest health complaint of the waste pickers (83.9% of the respondents) were insect stings (e.g. by mosquitoes, scorpions, termites and flies) which caused skin rashes and Malaria (see also Oluranti & Omosalewa 2012). Insects breed rapidly in decomposing waste of the dump sites, which makes insect bites high risk for the dump pickers (Afon 2012, 669). Lastly, health risks result in low life expectancy rate of the waste pickers (Wilson et al. 2006, 803).

Serious injuries happen sometimes when waste pickers struggle to get first to the vehicles which deliver the waste to the dump (Rankokwane & Gwebu 2006, 161). Slipping down from the dump also causes injuries (Sasaki et al. 2014, 17). Furthermore, many waste pickers have psychological and psycho-somatic problems, like anxiety, insomnia, high blood pressure and depression. These problems expose waste pickers to suicide and homicide risks. In community “survival of the fittest” is common, which produces aggressive behavior. (Rankokwane & Gwebu 2006, 161.) In Indonesia, one of the key problems in the dump was using polluted water for drinking and cooking (Sasaki et al. 2014, 17). The child waste pickers are exposed to biggest risks because they are the more vulnerable, and there can be observed more sicknesses among the waste picker children than others. Other risk factors for children are carrying huge loads, eating food scraps, malnutrition, and lack of sanitation. (Spies 2010, 16.)

Waste pickers have many special challenges and problems which are connected to their low position. Because many waste pickers are immigrants, rural migrants or people in other ways lowly position, they often lack identity papers and birth certificates (ILO 2004, 18). Local authorities often perceive them as temporary residents and due to that much attention is not paid to them and they are not entitled to public services, as health services or education (ILO 2004, 18; Asim et al. 2012, 160). Without papers it is difficult for them to find work, participate in public life or put their children to school (ILO 2004, 18). Waste pickers also can face harassment by the police officials, who require bribes from them. Most of the waste pickers

live in unhygienic conditions, without sanitation or clean water. They are also looked down upon by other people in the society. (Asim et al. 2012, 160.) Lastly, waste pickers face stigmatization and shame connected to waste picking (e.g. Medina 2000) and it can cause for example low self-esteem for the waste pickers.

3 EMPOWERMENT

3.1 DEFINING EMPOWERMENT

There is no clear, all-encompassing definition of empowerment as the concept includes multiple different meanings and interpretations. Nevertheless all definitions include the idea that a person, a group or a community gains power to influence and make choices concerning his own life (e.g. Miley & DuBois 1999; Alsop et al. 2005; Thompson 2006; Adams 2008). Making choices includes achievement of wanted action and results (Alsop et al. 2005, Adams 2008). According to Liisa Hokkanen (2009, 317), in social work generally accepted definition of empowerment is Robert Adams' (1996, 5): Through empowerment individuals, groups and/or communities gain power in their living circumstances, reach their goals and work towards helping themselves and others in order to achieve better life quality.

Neil Thompson (2006, 24) warns simplifying the concept to only giving power to people, because the process of empowerment is much more complex and it distorts the idea of power as something which is gained in expense of another. Ruth Alsop, Mette Bertelsen and Jeremy Holland (2005, 2) argue that understanding the concept of power wrong results in perceiving empowerment as something when a person or a group gains power, the other loses it. It can result in that the efforts of empowering particular individuals or groups can face resistance and undermining at all levels of the society (Alsop et al. 2005, 2–3). Oversimplification is partly due to that empowerment is widely spoken and written concept but there has not been formed a clear theory-base (Alsop et al. 2005, 21–24). According to Adams (2008, 3) empowerment should be understood comprehensively and it should cover all the sectors from personal to interpersonal, groups, organizations, communities and political viewpoints. It can mean different things to different people and include academic, rhetoric and radical connections. Empowerment is connected with many concepts, most essentially to concept of power (e.g. Miley & DuBois 1999; Thompson 2006; Adams 2008). Empowerment is also closely connected with self-help, advocacy, democratization, reflexivity, radical social work, consciousness-raising and anti-oppressive practices (Adams 2008, 9–22).

Empowerment can be seen both as a process and as an outcome (Miley & DuBois 1999, 2; Hokkanen 2009, 319). Empowerment as a process refers to individual using psychological

control over his life affairs and influencing the course of life in social and political arenas. As an outcome it is the result of gaining personal or political power. Then it is more a mindset when a person can for example feel worthy, capable and powerful. (Miley & DuBois 1999, 2.) In social work empowerment is often seen as a process which sets off from unsatisfactory situation and aims at bettering the circumstances. Due to this process and outcome are interconnected and cannot be distinctly separated. (Hokkanen 2009, 319.)

In social work empowerment is one of the key principles and the practice of empowerment is led by the same set of values and ethics with social work (Thompson 2000, 135; Lee 2001, 8). In social work it is important that in empowerment people are equipped to fight the disadvantages and injustice. Empowerment should not be reduced to enabling, but the oppression what a client faces should be taken into account. Hence, empowerment in social work expands from being only an inner process to social and political sphere. It is important that people are helped to connect their personal problems to the political and become aware of the larger societal connections of problems. (Thompson 2000, 120–121.) Empowerment concepts participation and co-operation are not new in social work, but medical way of working is still partly prevailing and partnership with the client discontinuous (Thompson 2000, 135–136).

According to Hokkanen (2009, 318), empowerment can have either an internal dimension, which is primarily connected to life control and individual strengths, or an external dimension which is more essentially connected with living conditions and position in the society (see also Dierckx 2010, terms internal/external translated according to Dierckx division). I use in my research both of the dimensions of empowerment although I emphasize external dimension, taking into account the dangers of individualistic tendencies. Dump pickers need both the inner understanding of themselves which Adams (2008, 17) mentions and motivation to work towards the change, but it is also essential to take into account the subordinate position of the whole group and strive for a change in the society (Hokkanen 2009, 318). In Finnish empowerment can be translated in two ways, '*valtaistuminen*' and '*voimaantuminen*'. '*Valtaistuminen*', which is connected to the word power, focuses more into external dimension and '*voimaantuminen*', which is connected to the word strength, includes mainly internal dimension (Hokkanen 2009, 329). The Finnish concept '*valtaistuminen*' is more essential for my research. The internal dimension of empowerment has been criticized in that it has lost its emphasis in political radicalism and social change. The danger is then that it becomes part of social policy which emphasizes individual responsibility. (Barry & Sidaway 1999, 14–15.)

A key concept connected to empowerment is power. If the goal of empowerment is that people gain more power it is important to ponder what is really meant with the concept of power. Power is a widely used concept but defining it unambiguously is difficult, because it is defined differently within different theoretical frameworks (Thompson 2006, 4). Power can be among the other things psychological or personal, political, structural, discursive or cultural power (Miley & DuBois 1999, 3; Thompson 2006, 5–7). Carla Miley and Brenda DuBois (1999, 3) define personal power as a capability of person to be in charge of his future and affect his surroundings. Thompson (2006, 5) adds individual capabilities, qualities, role and attitudes as important factors in determining personal power. Discursive or cultural power includes the idea of the power structures which are created through discourses. Discourses can for example determine what is considered as normal. (Thompson 2006, 5.) Structural power is connected with the position in the social hierarchy and it includes different elements as class, nationality and gender. These are manifested in different ways, for example through financial possibilities to use services, hegemonic ideological presumptions or structural barriers. (Thompson 2006, 5–7.) On the contrary, political power enables transformation of systems, re-distribution of resources and social change (Miley & DuBois 1999, 3).

Rosalind Eyben (2005, 17–24) brings a slightly different approach the understanding of power. She divides the aspects of power to: ‘power to’, ‘power over’, ‘power with’, ‘power/knowledge’, ‘power everywhere’ and ‘power structures’. ‘Power to’ is linked with agency and the capability of making choices. ‘Power over’ refers to relational, social power and hegemony. ‘Power with’ is about mobilizing our collective capabilities into action. ‘Power structures’ describe how the power to, power with and power over are formed and institutionalized. ‘Power everywhere’ sees that everyone is part of forming power relations which are created not only in the institutional sphere but also in our everyday lives. ‘Power/knowledge’ refers to Foucault’s idea where power and knowledge cannot be separated and knowledge determines what we think that we can do or cannot do. Furthermore, revealing the discourses is the only way to change the power structures. (Eyben 2005, 16–24.) The key point Eyben (2005, 15–16) brings up is that we ourselves and the people we work with perceive power in number of different ways. These ways are influenced by multiple factors as our life experiences, identities and current status (Eyben 2005, 15–16). Lorraine Gutierrez (1991, 201–202) sums up well the definition of power that is also used in this research “*the ability to get what one needs; the ability to influence how others think, feel act or believe; and the ability to in-*

fluence the distribution of resources in a social system such as a family, organization, community or society”.

3.3 EMPOWERMENT OF POOR PEOPLE

When empowerment of the poor is discussed, it is essential to define what is meant by the concept of poverty. Poverty is not an unambiguous concept, because defining who is poor and who is not is a socio-political question, as it defines who is for example entitled to services and who is left out. On the other hand it can place a stigma on the ones who are defined as poor. Poverty lines are problematic as they do not mean that when a certain level is exceeded a person necessarily has high-enough income to satisfy his basic needs (Siiki 2008, 130). Annamari Siiki (2008, 136) defines poverty as a combination of low income and low standard of living. It is important to include low standard of living as a part of the definition of poverty, as poverty lines can be problematic. Low income is not necessarily a problem if it is not prolonged. On the other hand other factors are connected to the living standard such as sickness, debt, mental problems and a family size. (Siiki, 2008, 134–136.)

It is essential to understand poverty not only as a low income, but also as a shameful social relationship (Siiki, 2008, 130). Danielle Dierckx (2010, 55) defines poverty as “...*income and resources so inadequate as to preclude them [poor people] from having a standard of living considered acceptable in the society in which they live*”. Hence poverty cannot only mean measuring income, living standards or resources; have to find out what poverty means to people and how they experience it. Reflections on hunger are also relative; the right to nutrition doesn’t mean only the right to certain number of calories but a right to eat in a socially acceptable manner and the same type of food as others in the society. (Siiki 2008, 130; Silvasti 2008, 248–249; Silvasti 2014.) In ‘Voices of the poor research’ (Narayan et al. 2000, 2) it was found that poverty has much deeper dimensions than only material ones; it causes various deprivations resulting in fierce psychological ill-being. It is extremely hard to find a way out of poverty, and this was described by the poor in the research as bondage, slavery and “being tied like bundles of straws” (Narayan et al. 2000, 2).

The reflections on poverty in the context presented above are important in relation to dump pickers. Dump pickers have both a low income and a low living standard, but a low living standard is the key defining factor in their extreme poverty. Dump pickers who are experienced in waste picking might earn income that provides them with enough calories to satisfy their everyday needs, but living standards are very low because of their working and living place. Also, the quality of the food that they eat is low and many of them supplement their insufficient diet by eating from the dump. Dump pickers might not be starving, but eating food scraps in the dump is far from a socially acceptable practice and it is shameful, stigmatizing and excluding. Furthermore, it is extremely hard for them to move out of poverty and their life conditions without outside help, to such an extent that strong words like “bondage” and “slavery” could be applicable.

Dierckx (2010, 55) argues that the term “extreme poverty” can be used when poverty is prolonged with deep-rooted problems and disadvantages and there can be seen no way out of poverty without outside help. She lists the dimensions of extreme poverty as relative, multidimensional, structural, dynamic poverty and violation of human rights (Dierckx 2010, 5–57). Relative poverty refers to the problems with a definition of poverty based on only monetary terms, as reflections on absolute versus relative poverty. These definitions are insufficient to capture the realities of people living in extreme poverty. Poverty as multidimensional, structural and dynamic is connected with everyday multidimensional disadvantages that poor people face. (Dierckx 2010, 55–57.) Poverty as a violation of human rights refers to the aspect of poverty that prevents poor using their basic rights, for example “*civil and political rights and other rights such as the right to housing, health, education, culture and justice*”. Poverty also keeps poor people from getting their rights back through their own efforts. (Dierckx 2010, 57.) Dump pickers fill all the criteria for extreme poverty in this categorization.

According to the study ‘Voices of the Poor’, which includes voices of more than 20, 000 poor people from 60 different countries, one of the mutual factors for poor despite their very diverse backgrounds and contexts, was shared experience of *powerlessness* and “*lack of freedom of choice and action*” (Narayan et al. 2000, 1–2). Due to this, empowerment’s external power dimension plays a key role in striving for change in poor people’s lives. Deepa Narayan (2002, 14) defines empowerment in the context of poverty reduction as: “...*the expansion of assets and capabilities of poor people to participate in, negotiate with, influence, control*

and hold accountable institutions that affect their lives.” However, Ruth Alsop, Nina Heinsohn and Abigail Somma (2004, 122–124) criticize this notion of empowerment in the sense that it focuses on what poor people do, instead of focusing on the state’s actions. They complete this definition by including the structures (formal and informal) in the factors which limit the use of *agency*. Agency should include acting also at the intermediary and national level in addition to the grass roots level. (Alsop et al. 2004, 122–124.) Furthermore, later Narayan (2005, 5) expands her definition by taking note of the inequality in societal and institutional relations and the hindrances that inequality brings to poor people’s agency. It is essential that the definition of empowerment also takes also into account outside factors and the oppressive structures as framed by Paulo Freire (1970).

Dierckx’s (2010, 58) definition of empowerment in the context of poverty reduction and communities puts more emphasis on the role of external actors in enabling the agency: “empowerment as *social action process* by which individuals, communities and organizations *gain mastery over their lives* in the context of *changing their social and political environment to improve the equity and quality of life*”. Another good element of this definition, which is not found in the other definitions, is the concept of empowerment defined as the improvement of equity and quality of life. Equity brings up the aspect that providing the same opportunities for everyone is not enough, as the most disadvantaged and oppressed groups are not able to utilize the given opportunities. Although Deepa Narayan-Parker and Patti Petesch (2007, 9–10) don’t use the word “equity”, they argue similarly that economic opportunities are constrained by, for example, class, gender and racial divisions, and access to economic resources and rights. Hence, positive discrimination is needed to compensate for the disadvantages so that in reality everybody can have the same opportunities (Hokkanen 2014, 53). Also, quality of life is connected with the definition of poverty discussed earlier. It is important to note that improving economic situations is not enough, but a key point is the subjective notion of quality of life and well-being. In the case of dump pickers, raising their income doesn’t necessarily better their quality of life, if they still work and live in unhealthy conditions.

Narayan (2002, 2–8; 2005) reflects on empowerment in relation to development outcomes. According to Narayan, there is clear evidence that empowerment affects development outcomes positively and also economic growth and good governance. This is in addition to the more traditional goals of empowerment of reducing human suffering and expanding people’s

choices. (Narayan 2002, 2–8.) In the empowerment approach good governance is enhanced and this affects economic growth (Narayan 2005, 3). Through empowerment poor people can become active, contributing to society and economic growth benefiting the poor, so that it doesn't widen the income gap but reduces poverty. Participation, transparency and citizens actively demanding accountability put pressure on removing corruption. It has been observed that the more women are involved in public life, the less corruption there is. However, it needs to be noted that empowerment should not only be considered as an instrument to achieve the objectives mentioned above but as a goal in itself. (Narayan 2002, 2–8; Narayan 2005, 3–4.)

According to Narayan (2002, 17) the key point in the empowerment of the poor is that poor people are served with respect, their identity is valued and they are seen as the key resource of development instead of as the problem. The starting point of empowerment should be poor people's assets, what they know and value and their will to tackle the problems and move out of poverty. Also Adams (2008, 154) argues that in empowerment it is essential to co-operate with people, considering their wishes, tackle the inequality and disadvantages, and help people to form and reach their own goals. Narayan (2005, 5–12) divides empowerment of poor people into two elements which are opportunity structure and the agency of the poor, and further into four building blocks of empowerment, which are institutional climate and social and political structures within the former element and in individual asset and capacities and collective assets and capacities within the latter element. Together these can be used to achieve developmental outcomes (Narayan 2005, 5–12). These two elements can be located in the two dimensions of empowerment: opportunity structure located within the external dimension and the agency of the poor located within the internal dimension.

Dierckx (2010, 58–59) divides the goals of empowerment into material, immaterial and political goals. These goals can be reached with tools which are divided into basic needs, social networks and political participation. Fulfilling basic needs like nutrition or clothing is an essential starting point for empowerment and raises people up from bare survival. Without basic support it is impossible to advance into other levels of empowerment. The key in empowering basic support is that it needs to be holistic, person-centered, preventive and making people independent, not dependent. (Dierckx 2010, 59–68.) Dierckx (2010, 59) sums up well the importance of fulfilling the basic needs for the empowerment process:

“...these basic needs serve individual capacity building, by allowing access to the labor market and different kind of social services and collective goods, as education, energy and health care.”

Social networks are important in providing a positive basis for empowerment and enhancing emotional support in hard times. Furthermore, they can be a source of information and act against stigmatization. Empowerment can be enhanced through solidarity between people in similar situations (in-group solidarity), understanding the root causes of their poverty and positive connections with society (out-group solidarity) and building up the local communities (community development). Lastly, political participation can be part of the external empowerment, where people can get hold of their situation and make their voices be heard. This can be enhanced either top-down or bottom-up. (Dierckx 2010, 59, 76–86.) These goals will be reflected on more with respect to the empowerment of dump pickers in the last chapter.

3.3 FREIREAN THINKING AND CRITICAL NOTIONS OF EMPOWERMENT

Freire’s pedagogy of the oppressed shares some basis with empowerment, especially empowerment of the poor. However, it needs to be clarified that Freire himself doesn’t use the concept of empowerment. Combining empowerment and Freirean thinking deepens the understanding of the structural constraints, oppression and inequality that poor face and allows us to examine empowerment in critical light. Furthermore, including Freirean principles in empowerment can enhance achieving the “real” empowerment, in its original meaning. It also enables us to distinguish the core of empowerment from the superficial, modernist notions and clarify vagueness and obscurity of the concept.

First and foremost Freire’s pedagogy of the oppressed has to be created in co-operation with the oppressed, not for them. To be freed from the oppression people have to be critically aware why they are oppressed and through the awareness they can fight for their own freedom. (Freire 2005, 48–49.) Critical and freeing dialogue is important part of the battle for freedom, in all the stages of the battle. The dialogue should include serious reflection which should lead into action (Freire 2005, 69–100). In the context of empowerment Hokkanen (2014, 45) argues that critical thinking and dialogical practices are essential for cutting the

circle of disadvantages. Freire (2005, 69–100) sees that the success of the dialogue requires humility, hope and trusting the oppressed. This includes same elements with the empowerment of the poor which requires respecting and valuing the poor and starting from their own know-how (Narayan 2002, 17).

Freire (2005, 45–46) tackles well the core problem of charity. He uses concepts of false and real nobility. False nobility keeps poor in their position where they need to keep begging for help instead of that they could by their own work change the world. In contrary, real nobility fights against charity. (Freire 2005, 45–46.) Charity prevents poor of becoming powerful and empowered. Instead of making real difference, it reinforces the structural inequality. Charity faces less resistance, since it doesn't threaten the position and advantages of the ruling classes, 'oppressors' in Freire's terms. This is also connected with the idea that empowerment produced resistance because power is understood as something that is possessed; when a person gains power other loses it (e.g. Alsop et al. 2005; Thompson 2006).

Stephen Parker, Jan Fook and Bob Pease (1999, 151) criticize the modernist notions of empowerment where empowerment becomes something which is done for people without people getting real power to influence their own lives. According to Adams (2008, 4), in empowerment those who use the services should hold the authority instead of those who provide the services or write or teach about the subject. Kenneth Macdonald and Geraldine Macdonald (1999, 51) warn that freeing another person is impudent and risky. Instead should focus on providing people know-how which may in the end free them. Also, Freire (2005, 70) argues that no-one can free another person and no-one can free himself either without any help from outside. He sees that oppressed have to reflectively participate in their liberation; otherwise they become objects in the process. Parker, Pease and Fook (1999, 153) call this that "*clients are not merely consulted... but supply the interpretive framework that is necessary for determining proper intervention*".

The key critical notions of empowerment are connected with the internal and external dimensions of empowerment. If internal dimension is over-emphasized it can result in focusing on individual responsibility (e.g. Barry & Sidaway 1999). Hokkanen (2014, 49) sees that social work orientation which focuses on individual responsibility has been strengthened recent years due to the public policy which emphasized civil responsibility and right to choose, among the other things. Hokkanen (2014, 45) discusses about social position which can de-

fine group or a person. It is essential to preserve the social understanding of the social position, so that it is not only interpreted as an individual choice or incapability. Critical analysis can be used to avoid this type of interpretations; the goal is that person can find behind his inferiority also the societal reasons and disadvantages. This connects a person to a larger context. (Hokkanen 2014, 45–48.) Furthermore, the challenge is so-called ‘dilemma of difference’, in other words how to target services to certain group of people without lading stigma on them. Tackling the dilemma of difference requires postmodern approach where differences are not avoided but they are placed within the worker-client relationship, instead within the person himself. (Parker et al. 1999, 151–152.)

Based on the critical understanding of empowerment and Freirean thinking, a theory-base for this research is formed, where empowerment is understood as an outer and inner gain of power and strength, which takes into account the structural injustices, oppression, inequality, and the social position of people. Structural constraints for the ability of making effective choices and turning the choices into desired outcomes needs to be tackled before the empowerment can actualize. Internal gain of strength is needed so that people can utilize the give opportunities. Empowerment of the poor means that the poor can become masters of their own life and change their circumstances, which will lead to improved quality of life. This can include Freire’s ‘concientizao’, where poor become aware of the oppressive structures and in co-operation with them they are equipped to fight for their own freedom. In all the stages, empowerment starts from people’s own wishes and builds on their strengths.

4 RESEARCH METODOLOGICAL OVERVIEW

4.1 RESEARCH TASK

My interest towards dump pickers aroused in 2012 when I did social work practical training in Mozambique in an organization which in addition to running center for orphans held a church service, visited people, and delivered bread in Bocaria dump weekly. My attention caught the extreme misery and hopelessness of the people in the dump. The place was unlike any other place I had visited before and with its burning fires, extreme human misery, and filth it gave me an image of hell on earth. Later on I married a Mozambican man who spent part of his childhood in the Bocaria dump in search of food scraps to eat and materials for the trash cars to sell. In his adulthood he continued to help the people of Bocaria and dreamed to do someday something bigger to improve their lives. During the several visits back to Mozambique couple months at the time, I have continued to visit Bocaria and think of the ways to improve the life situations of the dump pickers.

For my Bachelors thesis I made a study on research projects made among the waste pickers around the world. I found that prevailing approach is an environmental-economical from the viewpoint what benefits the waste management systems, environment and general public. Social approach is missing and the viewpoint of waste pickers. In none of the conducted researches I found, waste pickers were asked what they want, of their hopes and dreams for the future or what they wish to be done for them. For my research I wanted to find out the missing viewpoint of the waste pickers. Empowerment-term was used in some of the studies (e.g. Gutberlet 2008, Tubtim et al. 2007) but it mainly got to mean enabling since waste pickers had not gotten real power concerning their own lives. The projects made among the waste pickers focus on scavenger co-operatives (e.g. Medina 2000, Asim et. al 2012, Binion & Gutberlet 2012): on how to help the waste pickers to collect the waste more safely, effectively and rise out of the poverty. In my Bachelors thesis I came into conclusion that in most of the parts empowerment doesn't seem to actualize in the co-operatives. For this research, I wanted to investigate if co-operatives can be considered as an option, find dump pickers' viewpoint on the matter and seek for an alternative solution.

The research is a qualitative research and the goal of the research is to find out in co-operation with the dump pickers how to improve their life situations. The solutions are used in designing a project to help the dump pickers. For the success of the future project it is essential that empowerment can truly be achieved in dump pickers' lives. The additional goal for the research is that action research could be in itself empowering and dump pickers could feel that they are heard and valued. The fieldwork was conducted during one month stay in Mocimboa do Congo in July 2014. The action research included mixed methods of theme interviews, observations and discussions with the dump pickers and key persons during several visits to Mocimboa dump. The key persons provided important insider viewpoints for designing the research and getting overall understanding of the life in the dump. Also, their insights gave building blocks for the future solutions. Without the right persons it would have been impossible to access to the dump, so their role was vital.

Most of the studies made among waste pickers address all the waste picker groups generally and only few focus on dump pickers (e.g. Rankokwane & Gwebu 2006). It is important to focus specifically on dump pickers because as the research points out (e.g. Asim et al. 2011, 156; Zia et al. 2008, 602) they are in the weakest position; they have the worst living conditions, the work is most dangerous, poorly paid and stigmatizing. I limit my research to waste pickers of Mocimboa which include both the waste pickers living in the dump and in the near-by communities who pick the waste in the dump. Targets of my research are all the waste pickers of Mocimboa regardless of age and gender. I didn't want to limit my research to certain group of people because often times whole families pick waste in the dump; for example in ILO report (2004) it was found out that to address children's problems more effectively you have to tackle the parents problems first. Furthermore, the goal was to make overall problem analysis in the dump.

The research questions are:

- What kind of interventions rising from empowerment of dump pickers can be applied in the Mocimboa waste dump and how the interventions can be implemented?
- What kind of hopes and dreams dump pickers have for the future and which interventions they prefer?
- How waste pickers perceive the closure of Mocimboa and what are their plans for after the closure?

The research sets out to answer these questions through theoretical framework, which critically engages empowerment, Freirean thinking and poverty reduction, focusing on the societal dimension of empowerment. Formed empowerment framework is used as starting point in designing interventions for improving lives of the dump pickers. This includes the basic principle that empowerment should start from people's own needs and hopes, which is taken as a starting point of this research.

4.2 ACTION RESEARCH

The purpose of the research is in co-operation with dump pickers seek solutions for their situation which will be implemented later in a project. Due to the nature of the research which aims for not only getting information of the current state of affairs, but also finding in the future feasible solutions for the situation of the dump pickers, action research works as a suitable research method. The basic principle of action research is that in addition to the research the goal is to alter the current practice and this is done in co-operation with the participants of the research (Kuula 2006). This goes well together with the principles of empowerment, where essential is to do something in co-operation with people, instead that something would be done for them. Jennie Fleming and Dave Ward (1999, 374) see this as a two-way process; empowerment can be actualized in social action research and on the other hand the research is vital for practice of empowerment.

In action research important is that a researcher gives away his expert position by giving everyone equal chance to participate in the research project: to learn, plan and develop ideas (Kuula 1999, 170–221). Hence, it is essential to ask the dump pickers what they hope for the future, what they wish that would be done in order to help them, and how it should be implemented. According to ILO report (2004, 27), the participation of waste pickers and taking account their wishes was rare in the projects designed to help the waste pickers and their children. This was seen to strengthen the patronizing attitude, the passivity of receivers of help and in the end destroy the goals of the project (ILO 2004, 27). To avoid this, participation should be enhanced in all the stages of the project. Stringer (2007, 34) describes this as *“feelings of ownership that motivate people to invest their time and energy to help shape the nature and quality of the acts, activities, and behaviors in which they engage”*.

Ernest Stringer (2007) divides action research into three stages: *look*, *think* and *act*. For this research I have implemented the first two stages: look and think, and the third stage is going to be implemented and discussed in my second master thesis. Look includes a collection of information which is used to determine the problems. Furthermore, the goal is to seek comprehension of the viewpoint of the individuals, in order to find solutions. Information gathering in action research differs from traditional qualitative research data collection in a way that the participants are involved from the beginning in construction of ideas and solution. (Stringer 2007, 65; see also Fleming and Ward 1999.) Furthermore, a hypothesis is not presented beforehand but instead the researcher strives to understand *how* and *why* something happens and what the *nature* of the issue is (Stringer 2007, 65). Fleming and Ward (1999, 375) see this as a process where researcher facilitates participants in identification of needs and acting for the mutual goals, which can lead into change. Involving the participants at all the stages benefits the research in producing an acute information and deeper insight of the issues and possibilities.

Stringer's (2007, 95) *think* refers to analyzing the gained data and finding the ideas and principles which can be used to understand the problem-producing issues and interpreting and reflecting on them. This helps participants understand better their experiences. This stage is used to understand *what* and *how something happens*; Fielding and Ward (1999) add *why* as an important question in social action (research). Categorizing and coding is then used for further utilizing the data (Stringer 2007, 95–103). Central principle for producing ethical research is to communicate trustfully and openly and not break the confidence of participants. Professional should be aware to not work from elitist basis and consider participants as equal partners in the process. (Fleming & Ward 1999, 375–377.) The conditions for the cooperation can be enhanced by researcher aiming for genuineness and equality and being morally empathic and consistent (Kuula 1999, 170). In the following quote the key principle of social action research for this research is well presented: "...focus is on analyzing *what is happening* on the basis of *people's felt experience* and, from this, to contribute to *developing measures* that can *explicitly empower* those involved to *shape their environment* and bring about *improvements in their material conditions*" (Fleming & Ward 1999, 376, highlighting added)."

4.3 FIELDWORK AND THE DATA

I conducted the research in Maputo Hulene dump, called 'Bocaria' by the locals, during one month stay in Mozambique in July 2014. The fieldwork included several visits to the dump, observations, theme interviews with the dump pickers and waste buyer, discussions with different key persons, photographs and videos. The research work and observations were documented into a research diary which works one of the sources of the research. The fieldwork in the dump was carried out in co-operation with my husband Gabriel Paco and one of the key waste pickers of the dump, Jito, who has good overall knowledge of the dump, is well-known among the waste pickers and has been involved in a Bocaria research project before. Jito is a waste picker in his thirties and he has been in the Bocaria garbage dump already 20 years. He is one of the catadores who has been able to develop good skills in waste picking and he earns relatively better than many other catadores. Jito lives in the catadore community within the dump area and is well-known and respected in the community.

Gabriel Paco's role was to be a 'cultural interpreter' in addition to being a regular interpreter, as he knows well the culture of the country and the dump as well. It gave me valuable information in designing the research and during the implementation phase. He also had a way to address the dump pickers in culturally suitable manner, which was beneficial for me being a foreigner myself. Jito has better overall knowledge of the dump than many other catadores, so he provided important information of the overall situation. He also knew how to address the people, where to go, and find different people who could be interviewed. He took us, for example, to see the places where the catadores live in the dump and introduced us to different kinds of people, which was essential in the research. Paco can be said to be the second key person who gave important advices in all the stages of the research, how to design the research in suitable, ethical way, how to approach the people, giving background information, and correcting false information during writing the research report. Furthermore, he has been asked to comment the ideas of the suitable interventions for the dump pickers.

For the success of the research work it was essential that I could do it in co-operation with one of the well-known dump pickers. Although Paco is known by some of the dump pickers from his childhood or from his almost weekly visits to the dump still many perceive him as an outsider. Since he has not been living in the dump since childhood and lives different kind of life than people in the dump, he is not part of the group, although people in the dump who

know him value and respect him. I was also aware that it is not safe to go the dump without the right people, especially as a foreigner. Jito shared with us that in the previous week before we arrived there was an unfortunate incident with a Brazilian couple; they had come to the dump in intention of filming and ended up attacked and robbed by some of the dump pickers.

The interviews were conducted in a way that Jito went first alone or with Paco to explain the purpose of the research for the dump pickers and to get their consent and I stayed behind within seeing distance. This was done in order to get better response from the dump pickers and Jito had excellent skills to explain the purpose of the research in a language the dump pickers were able to understand. The actual interview was carried out Paco being my interpreter from English to Shanghana, the local language. Having the interview through interpretation is not an optimal choice in research, but it was the only possible option because many of the dump pickers don't speak Portuguese and my knowledge of Shanghana is limited to few words. The dump pickers' responses were translated into English during the interview and again later in Finland, to ensure that the message got across as correctly as possible. Hence, the focus is in content analysis since discourse analysis would not provide reliable results.

The interviews were carried out in the "trash mountain", as dump pickers are busy during the day in waste picking activities, and to get their consent was easier when they didn't need to leave their work for a long time. The place caused some distractions and also interviews were kept quite short due to the impatience of the dump pickers to continue their jobs. Few of the dump pickers even continued sorting the waste while we were discussing. With the help of Jito majority of the dump pickers gave their consent for the interview. Due to the limited time we conducted some of the interviews alone with Paco, but this resulted in more rejection and suspicious attitude towards us. Based on what people told us in the interviews, it seems that negative attitude towards outsiders has been formed through past negative encounters with people who have come to the dump and given false promises of doing something for them. They have also felt used by people who have come to interview them but gave them nothing in return. After the interviews we offered the dump pickers clothes and bread. Most of the dump pickers were not aware of this beforehand since the purpose was it not to be the motive for the interview. Still it worked in bringing positive atmosphere. In addition I wanted dump pickers not to feel used but to have at least some immediate gain of the research. Few of the

least fortunate dump pickers (disabled and sick) we helped in their immediate needs of food and hospital costs.

The data

The theme interviews conducted included 23 interviews of dump pickers and one interview of waste buyer. Out of the 23 dump pickers interviewed, six were men, fourteen women and three children. Men were between ages 27 to 48 years and women ages 18 years to elderly. Children were ages 12 to 13 years. The oldest catadores and few of the middle aged couldn't tell their exact age. It seems that this is connected with a lack of schooling and cultural habit among the oldest to not to count their age in years. Four of the interviewed catadores live in the dump and all of them are men. Rest of the catadores live in the near-by communities and come pick the waste in the dump almost daily or during the weekdays, as some of them kept weekends or Sundays off from work.

Sampling was done through random selection, with an exception that I aimed for that the sample would represent all of the dump pickers as well as possible, so we tried to make sure that all the age and gender groups were presented. However female pickers were more receptive and a group of young male pickers around their twenties didn't consent to be interviewed. Jito told us that many of them have a home and family but they choose to stay in the dump shorter or longer times and most of them use drugs. The young men would have accepted to be interviewed only if they have been paid. Instead they invited Paco to join them to smoke marihuana. In addition, some of the other men told in the beginning that they would not accept to be interviewed if they were not paid. However they gave their consent after a longer discussion with Paco. The fieldwork in the dump included also short interview with the Chinese waste buyers and observation of the sale situation.

The research place concerned posed different challenges and limitations for the research. In the garbage dump a researcher has to work in extreme conditions. The Bocaria dump is covered with thick smog which quickly starts to cause eye irritation and shortness of breath. To reach the dump pickers one is required to climb up the trash mountain on top all kind of waste, also on possibly sharp or dangerous items. Going up or down the trash mountain is challenging due to sliding trash and ash. Therefore it is not possible to be long time in the

dump and this limits the extent of the research. The place challenges not only physically but also mentally as we faced extreme misery and hopelessness.

To conduct the interviews in another place could have had two effects. On the one hand it could have provided a place with fewer distractions so that interviews could have kept longer. On the other hand most likely there would have been less people who would have accepted to be interviewed and less variety of people. Already at the dump some people were busy and could not stop working but sorted out the waste while discussing. Furthermore, some of the children and youth who were going to school didn't have time to leave the place because they were on their way to school. Although most of the people were interviewed alone there were few people interviewed who had other people near them. The people around them either participated to the interview or just listened. Having other people around didn't seem to limit the issues that people brought up but it might have had some effect. On the other hand when people heard each other speaking it gave them new perspectives and brought up new viewpoints. In this case it might have been interesting to have both individual interviews and group interviews. However, for this research it was considered to be the most important to reach as large variety of people as possible, so that different voices could be heard.

4.4 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS AND ANALYZE METHODS

Research ethical norms can be divided into three groups: the norms connected to the credibility of the research and truthfulness, norms related to the dignity of the research targets, and norms connected to relations between researchers. The first set of norms guides researcher to strive credibility in research and collect, analyze and store the data in ethical, credible manner for producing as truthful account as possible. The second set of norms deals with respecting the autonomy of the targets of the research and avoiding causing harm for them. The last set of norms is connected with respecting the work of other researchers. (Kuula 2011, 24–25.) These norms have been taken into consideration in this research by striving for good scientific practice. This includes obtaining honesty, accuracy, ethicalness during the research work and in reporting the results and evaluating them. Furthermore, value and meaning of the work of other researchers has been acknowledged and research has been planned, implemented and reported according to good scientific conduct. (Kuula 2011, 34–35.)

In social work research first important ethical aspect is to extend the ethical considerations to all the phases of the research, not limiting ethics only to questions concerning confidentiality. Secondly, social work research ethics broadens the view of respecting human dignity by ensuring that the goal is not only to limit the harm caused to the targets of research but enhance that they could benefit of the research. (Rauhala & Virokangas 2011, 238.) This includes respecting their privacy, autonomy and confidentiality (Kuula 2011, 60). These aspects have formed the essential basis of this research. Action research goes well together with social work value base because the research aims for an impact and a change. From the beginning it has been important to consider the ethical aspects in all the stages of the research.

According to Arja Kuula (2011, 61–62), a key part in respecting the autonomy of the people is that they are given the freedom to choose if they want to participate in the research. This includes giving enough information of the research and telling broadly enough of the meaning of the research and its use concretely (Kuula 2011, 61–62). Ethical concern in the beginning was that the dump pickers can attain clear enough understanding of the meaning of the research, so that they can make a rational choice if they want to participate in the research. This seemed to be underestimation of the people who were well aware of demanding clear explanation of the meaning of the research by asking additional questions and only then consented to be interviewed. The key concern for them was that the videos would be shown somewhere in Mozambique, but after they were told that the videos are used only for research purposes in Finland, most of them consented to be filmed. However, a choice was given to them to have the interviews only recorded and few people chose this option. Furthermore, some of the people didn't consent to be interviewed. It didn't seem ethical to require signatures of consent as some of the dump pickers don't know how to read and write and it would have been more unethical to sign a paper that you can't read. Despite of that, dump pickers are not in any means ignorant and even more careful of giving their consent, so there was no concern that they would have been interviewed without their full consent or understanding of the meaning of the interviews.

Respecting the privacy of people and confidentiality was taken into consideration by ensuring that people are not recognized from the research and confidentiality is kept by keeping the promises concerning the research material (Kuula 2011, 64). Furthermore, it is important that people's views are reported and analyzed as truthfully as possible and there happens no mis-

use of their sayings. Especially when the goal of the research is to make people's voices heard, it is essential to get their views presented as authentically as possible. However, in the end research results are always an interpretation of people's views and opinions, which in the optimal situation present the views of the people as truthfully as possible.

The importance of the ethical aspect highlights when a research is made with people who have had earlier bad experiences of outsiders who have come to the dump for interviewing them. People of the dump have felt used and gotten tired of false promises. As an ethical consideration, it was important to ensure that the dump pickers could not feel used for obtaining the research goals. Instead, the goal was that they could feel that they can benefit of the research and experience that they are heard and valued according to the principles of empowerment. Although the research is action research and the goal is to seek for a change, had to be very careful not to give them any promises which would fail and make them even more disappointed and increase the distrust. For this reason, dump pickers were not told yet of the future project and not given promises of work or other opportunities. Instead, as much it was possible the research was combined with giving little immediate help in form of food, clothes and hospital costs. Also, the work is continuing, recently some of the least fortunate ones, who are not able to do waste collection, were supported with food for months so that they will not need to stay in the dump and eat food scraps there. Furthermore, school fees were paid for some of the children and around 150 children received new pairs of shoes, which can prevent some of the injuries walking barefoot in the dump. Although, the effects of these actions are mainly temporary, they might enhance the trust to work with the people in the future.

Analyze methods

The data was analyzed using realistic approach, where the contents of the research material are structured and analyzed (Saaranen-Kauppinen & Puusniekka 2006). This was done by using content analysis and thematic analysis. Content analysis starts from the research questions which target the focus of the research, and the answers are derived from the text analysis (Krippendorff 2014, 37). The larger text is comprised into smaller categories which consist of text with shared meaning (Weber 1990, 12). It is important to decide what is interesting in the data, mark it, and omit the other parts of the text (Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2013, 92–93). In content analysis focal is that the technique should be *reliable*, *replicable* and *valid*. This

means that different researchers in different times should come into same conclusions using the same method. Furthermore, the results should be able to be proved by clear evidence. (Krippendorff 2013, 24.) Theme interviews were analyzed by using thematic analysis, where the aim was searching common themes from the interviews and collecting under one theme all things spoken about it and describing the theme (Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2013, 93). The analysis could be described to be partly data driven and partly theory driven. In data driven analysis parts for the analysis are chosen based on the research task and the goal of the research. In data driven analysis the previous theory should not affect the analysis process: in practice this is almost impossible. Hence, the analysis is partly theory driven because the previous theory also plays part in the analysis. (Tuomi & Sarajärvi 95–99.) Furthermore, empowerment theory has an important part in the research, nevertheless the analysis has been mainly data based.

In picture analysis it important to note that the meanings given to the picture are always subjective and differ depending on the researcher's background and the context where the analysis is made. Hence, making picture analysis requires reflexive approach and examining in a critical light the subjectivity of the meanings given to the picture. (Pink 2007, 117–118.) There is a difference between analyzing your own pictures and pictures taken by someone else. Already in the phase when the pictures are taken a researcher makes choices which items he/she photographs and what is in the photo and what is left out. In this research the analyzed photos were not primarily taken in analysis purpose, but more in a way of making observations and taking note of certain details. Taking pictures is a good way to expand the observations; from the photos you can notice certain details that were missed in the field. In this research researcher had already plenty information of the content of the pictures. This enabled giving different kinds of meanings for the picture than someone who would have interpreted the pictures without previous knowledge of the situation. Probably in this way the analysis is more accurate, but on the other hand a person who sees the situation for the first time might notice some new details. In the analysis phase multimedia description is written of the photo and the content is divided into different categories (Karvinen 2012).

In practice the data analysis was implemented by first reading through the transcribed data multiple times in search of themes. Several themes stood out from the text and were divided into categories. Under an each category were collected all the issues spoken about it in the interviews. The formed categories were: dreams of life outside, dreams of work, dreams of business, dreams of education, dreams for the family, health and well-being, waste picking,

closure of the dump, life history, education levels of the dump pickers, family relations and wishes for the government and NGOs. Afterwards these themes were analyzed and structured into the chapters of the research report. Photo analysis was carried out by first choosing the photos to be analyzed. Then description of the photo was composed and all the elements in the picture were analyzed, which formed the multimedia description. The chosen photos were also divided into the theme categories, formed earlier. The analyzed photos are from the years 2012 and 2014. Recorded videos and taken photos were watched multiple times which allowed continuing to make observations of the dump and the people.

5 IN THE BOCARIA DUMP

5.1 LIFE IN BOCARIA

“Every time when I arrive to Bocaria same things catch my attention: filth, smoke, smells and flies, barefoot children in their ragged clothes, extreme misery and hopelessness of the people. But eyes, the empty, defeated, bitter, hopeless eyes of the dump pickers, are the one which touches me the most.” - Research diary 27.7.2014

Mozambique is a country in south-east Africa at the coast of the Indian Ocean. Although development of Mozambique has been rapid in recent years it is estimated that still over 50 per cent of the population lives under the poverty line. Life expectancy of a Mozambican in 2013 was only 50 years. (World Bank, 2009.) Bocaria is a waste dump in Hulene B., Maputo city, the capital of Mozambique. Hulene garbage dump is widely referred as ‘Bocaria’ by the local residents and the catadores of dump, so this name was chosen to use in this research, although it is not the official name of the dump. Bocaria is the only garbage dump in the city of Maputo’s almost 1.1 million people. Area of Bocaria consists of 17 hectares where 700 tons of unsorted waste is dumped every day. It is estimated that 400 tons of waste never reach its final location. (Mertanen et al. 2013, 11.)

According to different estimations, there are around 500 to 800 waste pickers in the Bocaria dump. Bocaria is open for 24 hours a day and it is not guarded so people have easy access to the dump. Catadores are not officially allowed to be in the dump but regulations are not carried out and presence of the people is largely ignored, with an exception that they are not allowed to the weight bridge area. (Allen & Jossias 2011, 7.) However, municipality perceives that catadores hamper the operation of the dump, because they light fires and go too close or on top of the moving trucks (CMM 2008, 33). Bocaria has been opened for 50 years, but due to odor and other nuisances in the area, the residents have been campaigning for its closure already for years (Allen & Jossias 2011, 7).

According to some sources, officials have tried to evict the people from the dump in some instances (e.g. Koikkalainen 2013, Lapin Kansa) but none of the catadores interviewed in this research talked about this kind of incidents. Fleas and other insects breed in the unsorted,

open waste mass and air is usually covered with flies, smoke and ashes from the burning waste. Catadores light fires in order to find valuables, as metals among the waste (CMM 2008, 33). The dumping of waste is nearly uncontrolled and waste is not treated in any other way than compacting it with bulldozer (Allen & Jossias 2013, 7). This results in multiple accidents with the waste trucks.

Most of the catadores live in the near-by communities which are mostly inside of the dump area and some of them also sleep in the dump, in the huts made out of waste material. Jito (a key person) estimated that around 120 people sleep inside of the dump.

“Jito took us to a place where the catadores sleep. The place is in the thin strand between the dump and its outside wall. In this place there are dump pickers huts which have been made out of different waste materials. We went to see one small hut which was so low that a person could not even fit to sit well inside. From outside it looked like a pile of trash. Jito told that here sleeps four people. For me it seemed that you can barely fit one inside.” -Research diary 21.7.2014

“On the one hand the village looked like normal, poor Mozambican village community, but deeper look into the village revealed the misery which I have not seen elsewhere. Some villagers were dressed in normal simple Mozambican way, but others’ clothes revealed them immediately to be waste pickers with their ragged, grey, dirty clothes... Villagers looked more suspicious and hopeless than usually cheerful Mozambicans... The other side of the village looked much more miserable. The floods last year had brought the water into the village and it had not dried yet in this side of the village.”- Research diary 21.7.2014

The near-by communities have basic concrete houses as in the other poor neighborhoods of Maputo, only the environment is dirtier with more waste in the streets and the smells and fumes from the dump reach the communities. Also, in the rainy season the waste streams flood to the community. According to Leonor Domingos (2001), dump area was illegally inhabited during the war and since then there have been built these permanent concrete settlements.



Figure 1 Village houses in the flood. Hulene dump. Maputo. 21.7.2014

Figure 1 shows catadores' houses in the village next to the dump. The houses are swimming in water which floods brought to the village last year. Water is now covered with green vegetation and lots of waste. At the time of the fieldwork people were still living in these houses, but later government gave them tents to live, until the water goes down.



Figure 2 Arrival of a waste truck. Hulene dump, Maputo. 21.7.2014

In Figure 2 catadores are battling to get to the waste truck first in order to get hold of the most valuable waste items. The catadores on top of the truck are mainly young men. Young men are the strongest and have usually the best access to the waste; some of them jump onto the truck already at the gate. Middle aged and older women collect the waste in the side of the truck and others collect waste around the truck or wait for a chance to get access to the new load of waste. In the front of the picture little boy helps his father to pick waste. Children often help their families in waste picking activities.

5.2 PATHS TO BOCARIA

“I came here when I was around 20 years old. Came because of suffering and poverty” (Man, 48)

“What made me to come to this place is poverty, because not having anything to eat at home” (Woman, middle aged)

One theme in the interviews was to find out what made people to come to the dump in the first place. The goal was to have a better understanding of the underlying factors which lead people to find means of survival from a place which is despised and stigmatized by many. Catadores' stories of their past were diverse, with one theme linked to all; a story of poverty and suffering. Poverty and suffering forced the people into coming to find a living or survival from the dump. Some of the people simply talked about poverty and suffering, without specifying their life situations. Others told more specifically about the certain life events which had led them into coming to the dump. What stood out from the interviews was the intergenerational transmission of poverty which had lead into emergence of third or fourth generation of waste pickers in the dump.

“I used to come here when I was a child but when I was 14-15 years old I stopped for a while, because I was pregnant and continued after the child was born. I used to come here with my mom when I was a child and my mom is still coming.” (Woman, 19)

All of the catadores interviewed, except children, had been in the dump already several years, ranging from 5 years to a lifetime, majority from 10 to 25 years. Many catadores could not tell how long they have exactly been in the dump; they only knew they have been there al-

ready for a long time. It is questionable how accurate even the presented estimations of the numbers of the years are. Good example of this is a middle aged woman who said that she has been in the dump two years. Another catadore near-by loudly protested this statement and said that he has known her already for a very long time. In the end it was discovered that she must have been in the dump already from the beginning of 1990s. The oldest catadore said that she doesn't know how long she has been in the dump, because she doesn't know how to count. All of the young women and men interviewed had been coming to the dump since they were children.

“I came here as a child (10 years old), in the war time I escaped and ended up here” (Man, 32)

The women around their twenties had started to come to dump because their parents or mothers used to pick waste in the dump. Some of their parents still continued waste picking. There were few young women whose parent was sick and they were taking care of the family by collecting the waste in the dump. The catadore men around their thirties had ended up to the dump alone after their parents had died or other tragic life situations had forced them to come. There were few men who said that they came to the dump because of the war, either escaped war or their parents died in the war. This goes together with the case study made by Domingos (2001, 15) which points out that the dump was illegally inhabited during the war. Since employment opportunities were limited, most of these people became waste pickers in the dump. Later concrete houses were established, which now constitute the settlements near the dump where most of the catadores reside. (Domingos 2001, 15.)

“I have been long time in the dump, started when I was 11 years old. My mom used to come here to collect these things and I used to come with her” (Woman, 21)

Middle aged and elderly *catadores* had usually started coming to the dump in their adult life and none of them had been in the dump since they were children. Few of the mothers ended up to coming to the dump after their husband died and they didn't have other means to provide for their family due to scarce employment opportunities. One middle aged woman had come to pick logs, because they didn't have enough money to buy coal to heat the food. She had stayed to pick waste to be able to get money for buying food for the family.

“I came here, because when my husband died, I had no job and I tried everything and couldn’t find anything. I ended up coming here because I heard some people coming here to collect these things.” (Woman, forties)

There is a clear difference seen between catadores in the streets and catadores in the dumps in Maputo. In the research made by LVIA (Mertanen et al. 2013, 32) among the street pickers of Maputo it was discovered that most often catadores had been picking waste 3-5 years (32%) and relatively small percent of street pickers had been picking waste more than 10 years. This is considerably lower amount of years than for most of the people in the dump. None of the adults in the dump had been there less than five years and most of them had been in the dump from 10 to 25 years. In designing interventions key point to consider is that many dump pickers have spent most of their life in the dump and the transfer to the life outside can have its challenges. There can be seen intergenerational transmission of poverty since many of the young adults in the dump are children of the waste pickers, and some of them have now children of their own growing in the dump. This brings out the importance of breaking the cycle of poverty in the families and especially focusing on education of the second and third generation catadores in order to provide for them better opportunities in life.

5.3 FAMILY RELATIONS AND EDUCATION

“I live with my mom and my mom comes here to collect these things with me” (Woman, 21 with a baby)

“I have no wife or kids. I live somewhere there with one family.” (Man, 27)

In the Bocaria dump diverse group of people collect waste. It includes both men and women, single and married and children with or without their parents. This section examines who are the people who pick the waste in the dump and describes the different groups of people in the dump. Since the people in Bocaria dump are so diverse, there cannot be formed a clear profile how is a catadore like (unlike catadores in the street, who were mainly adult male, as it was found in LVIA’s [Mertanen et al. 2013] research). However, by understanding what kind of people pick waste and live in the dump, we can find better ways to support them. Moreover, it needs to be understood that the all the people in the dump are not in equal position, but hierarchical relations prevail in the dump, which allow some of the people better position to get

hold of the resources. In the end part of this chapter, education levels of catadores are discussed.

According to WIEGO's research (Allen & Jossias 2011, 9) biggest group of catadores in the Bocaria dump are middle aged woman. The second biggest group is young men and third biggest group older men (Allen & Jossias 2011, 9). Observations and Jito's estimates support the idea that more women than men pick waste in the dump. However, young women are left out of this categorization and according to my observations and sources, there are also many young women picking waste in the dump. It is estimated in WIEGO's (Allen & Jossias 2011, 9) research that inside of the dump mainly women and children collect the waste, but this didn't seem accurate based on this research. Although group of young male catadores stay around the entrance and outside of the dump, inside of the dump are also many middle aged and older men who pick waste and some younger men, around their thirties. The hierarchy of the fittest prevails in the dump and more able and young men have the first hold of the waste when it arrives and have access to more valuable items. In the lowest rung of the hierarchy are the people who are incapable of collecting waste for sale, due to sicknesses or disabilities.

Group of men inside of the dump, who are elderly, sick or disabled either only eat food scraps in the dump because they are not able to do waste collection or collect waste and supplement their insufficient earnings by eating food scraps. Most of them are single and also sleep inside of the dump. Based on WIEGO's interviews (Allen & Jossias 2011, 9) the older men are perceived as "addicts" and "delinquents" by the NGOs, but similar findings were not indicated in this research. Young men were rather seen in this way and this kind of behavior could also be observed among the young men. The young men are mainly situated outside of the dump and when the waste truck comes, they jump on it at the entrance (Allen & Jossias 2011, 9).

Single mothers are one of the groups which stood out in the dump. Some of them have been forced to find earnings from Bocaria after their husband has died and they didn't have another means to support their family. There were also single mothers who told that the fathers of their children were not involved in their life. Women waste pickers are usually in the weaker position, especially if they have the divided role of a mother and a breadwinner of the family. Some of the women in Bocaria had to bring their babies or toddlers to the dump because they had no-one to look after them while they were working. One interviewed woman catadore

had a three month old baby with her. She told that she has to come to the dump with the baby every day to collect waste because she needs the money and she doesn't have anyone to be with the baby. The father of the baby was not involved in their life. Also her parents were picking the waste in the dump.

The group of single people who are in the dump without any family members seemed mainly to consist of single young men and older women and men. Young single women often had children and they picked waste to support their family. Jito told that some young men have parents but they choose to come to the dump and many of them are addicts and use drugs like ganja. Elderly single women and men had different kind of stories. Some of them didn't have any family members or their family had abandoned them. Some of the older women lived with their grandchildren and supported them while their children had traveled somewhere further away to find work, like to South Africa or other provinces of Mozambique. Also couples and whole families pick waste and women who supplement their husbands' low earnings by picking waste or due to their husband's unemployment are at the moment the only breadwinner in the family. Some of the older couples picked waste together to support themselves or their children's families.

The children of the dump either have families or they are separated from their family, by force or by choice. Most of the children in the dump are children of the catadores. Some of the children interviewed or children of the interviewed catadores go to school, especially going to primary school was more prevalent. However, many said that they are not able to go to school or send their children to school because they don't have enough money. Some women said that it they are not able to send their older children school, because the secondary school is expensive. Catholic primary school near-by is free but some of the waste pickers could not afford to pay the registration fee of 50 meticaís (around 1,3euros) or a school uniform. For few children someone, like a missionary, had paid school. Furthermore, there can be difficulties finding a place in the school. Many waste pickers said that they support their children's schooling by collecting waste. Moreover, there are children and youth who collect waste to support their own schooling, either in primary or secondary school. In other studies (e.g. ILO 2004) it was found that waste picker children often face stigma in schools and therefore are not accepted to schools or are forced to drop-out. These kinds of incidents were not noticeable in Mozambique and it seemed that the children of the dump would be accepted to the school, but the biggest constrain was the affordability of schooling for the families. As a part

of this project, some of the children of the most disadvantaged families were paid school recently.

“Four boys come with us. I chat with them. A boy, around thirteen with ragged orange t-shirt says that he would like to go to school. He shows a notebook, points out to another boy and tells that he doesn’t want to go to school. I ask from them if they go to school and only one of the boys says he goes.” Research diary 21.7.2014

“Some of my kids go to school but some of them don’t go because secondary school is expensive and money I earn here is very little” (Woman, 40)

The education levels of catadores varied a lot, but there can be made some kind of generalizations within age and gender groups. The young women had most likely some kind of education and they had commonly finished their education around 8th grade or were still continuing to study. Those who were in still in school were supporting their schooling by collecting the waste in the dump. It seemed that young women were more educated than young men and they also had more motivation to study. Few men around their thirties had not gone to school or had studied only few years. Education levels of the middle aged catadores varied, some of them had never gone to school, but some others had studied up to 7th grade. None of them had finished secondary school. The oldest catadores had not gone to school and were illiterate. Out of the interviewed catadores highest education level was studying in the 10th grade in secondary school, yet no-one had finished secondary school (in Mozambique Escola Secundaria goes up to grade 12, equivalent of finishing Upper Secondary School).

“I started to come here when I was 10 and I started to find material for the toy cars, like cans and wires. That time I got used to being here and I even gave up school (Man, 27)

“I’m in grade 10. The money I get from collecting these things I pay school” (Woman, 18)

These results differ from other countries discussed earlier; in other countries some of the catadores had also higher education, like in Botswana Standard or Junior Certificates and in Thailand up to Bachelor’s degree (Rankokwane & Gwebu 2006, 157–158; Tubtim et al. 2007, 886.). On the other hand, majority of catadores in Mozambique are not illiterate, as it was common in India and Pakistan (Asim et al. 2012; Zia et al. 2008). It seems that most

prevalently catadores in Bocarria are low educated, but still have some reading and writing skills obtained from studying few years in primary school. However, there are also completely illiterate catadores, most prevailing among the older generation and more men than women.

5.4 HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

“In this place you can see people crushed by cars when they run after the cars. People can get disease and die in this place.” (Woman, thirties)

“You can find disease of course because it is place of lots of trash” (Woman, 19)

Health and well-being hazards and risks observed in the dump can be divided into two groups: occupational health risks and community health risks, based on the categorization of Wilson, Velis and Cheeseman (2007). Occupational health risks relate straight to waste picking activities and community health risks extend to the wider public. Occupational risks seemed much more prevalent in the dump than the community risks. The responses concerning health risks and health problems in the dump were polarized; some of the interviewed catadores understood the severe health risks related to waste picking, and others didn't seem to be fully aware of the connections between their health problems and waste picking.

Many catadores told that you can find a disease from this place and even die of it. However, other catadores responded that they have not gotten any health problems in the dump, although additional questions revealed multiple health problems. This might be linked with that many waste pickers are not aware of their health problems or lack the understanding of connection between waste picking and their health problems, because their low education levels (e.g. Ezeah et al. 2008, 4, 9; Binion & Gutberlet 2012, 50). In this research the connection between low education level and ignorance of the health problems cannot be clearly verified due to low number of interviewees, although catadores with low awareness of their health problems were mainly low educated, with few exceptions. One explanatory factor could be that dump pickers adapt to their surroundings, so the common health problems as coughing, soreness in eyes, and cuts and scratches become part of normal life.

The health problems that the catadores mentioned include cough, eye problems, Tuberculosis (TB), cuts and scratches, injuries caused by accidents with cars, malaria, malnutrition, back pain and hip problem. The most common health complaint among the catadores was coughing. Many people told that they are having persistent cough in the dump. Second most common complaint was eye problems; redness and soreness of eyes, infections and blurred vision. Tuberculosis was also common, several people had TB themselves or in their family or thought it to be one of the biggest health problems in the dump. In the interviews TB was often connected with coughing, but still catadores seemed to have knowledge of what TB is. One man with TB in his testicles told that some of his friends have the same sickness and one friend had died recently of that disease. These men didn't have means to get medication for their sickness.

Another common complaint was cuts and scratches from broken glass and other sharp items. For some cuts had led into infections. Many catadores told about people who had been crushed by car in the dump. Furthermore, several interviewees had been crushed themselves and even had become crippled due to the accident. One of the boys and three interviewed men had been crushed by a waste truck. Jito told that previous week two catadores were driven over by a waste truck while reversing and both of them died. He said that these accidents happen often in the dump; he estimated that around 30 people die every year due to accidents with cars. Men and boys usually more courageously jump onto the trucks and follow them while they are bringing the waste to the dump. This can result in that men face more accidents with cars. Accidents are one big risk for dump pickers found also in previous researches (e.g. Rankokwane & Gwebu, 2006)

“I was crushed once by car. When the car (waste truck) comes we follow the car and there are too many people and other cars coming behind us. Somehow I stumbled to something with my feet and the car behind didn't see that I had fallen because there was too many people, that's how I got crushed. It happens to many people here” (Man, 27)

Elderly woman mentioned that people in the dump suffer from malnutrition, because they eat unhealthy waste scraps from the dump. Jito said that malaria is also prevalent in the dump because plethora of mosquitos breeds in the dump. Other interviewed catadores didn't men-

tion malaria among the health complaints, but it might be connected with the idea that catadores don't necessarily perceive the connection between malaria and the waste dump, since malaria is prevalent outside of the dump as well. In contrast, in Nigeria insect sting which caused skin rashes and malaria, was the most common complaint among waste pickers (Afon 2012, 669–670). Other health complaints of individual catadores were back pains, getting sick due to witchcraft and a hip problem.

All the findings of the health problems among the waste pickers discussed above are in parallel with the earlier researches, discussed in earlier chapters. Only high prevalence of TB in Bocaria dump seemed to differ from other researches, at least it has not been mentioned explicitly in them. In addition to health problems, catadores were asked if they have faced in the dump any problems, dangers or annoyances other than health problems. The interviewed catadores could not specify any other problems or challenges in the dump. However in the interview Jito (the key person) told more about the dangers of the dump: *“People who are doped are dangerous. It is always dangerous here; someone can steal your stuff and so on. There are some people who wake up dead, they have been poisoned etc.”* This can be linked with the common idea among the waste pickers of the “survival of the fittest”, which produces aggressive behavior (Rankokwane & Gwebu 2006, 161). Dump is perceived to be especially dangerous for the unwelcomed outsiders and unwelcomed foreigners have been attacked and robbed in the dump.

Catadores didn't mention community health risks in the interviews, but their presence could be clearly observed in the dump and the surrounding area. Since the dump is open and always burning, the smoke, odors and flying insects are big disturbance for the local residents. Also, the location of the dump is right in the middle of the residential area, so the nuisances can easily reach the near-by communities. The dump can be seen and smelled from far and in a typical day sky near the dump is grey with smoke. Also during the time of rains which often cause floods, especially the near-by communities suffer from the waste water coming from the dump. It has not been studied what kind of health risks this poses to the community, but generally it could be estimated that all sorts of diseases can breed in the filthy water. Contact with the polluted water can cause for example diarrhea.

5.5 WASTE AS A MEANS TO SURVIVE

“I don’t have enough strength to collect these things since I’m sick... When the truck comes here to bring the mixed food, I take the food and eat, as the people do here.”(Crippled man, 48)

The waste and dump environment produces four kinds of meanings to the catadores. It can either be a source of income and work or provide food, a living place or a community. In many ways waste provides people a means to survive, as the majority of the people in the dump don’t have possibilities for alternative work or income. In its most extreme manner, it provides survival for the weakest ones in the community: the sick, elderly and disabled, who survive by eating the food scraps in the dump and living on the dump premises. The sense of community in the dump is distorted and contested, but to some extent within the smaller group of people, the dump can also provide a sense of community.

The first and most central aspect of waste is that it provides income for the people who are not able to find other kinds of work and living. This happens in practice through collecting and selling waste. Catadores’ earnings vary vastly based on what they collect, how skilled and experienced they are in waste picking and their age, gender and state of health. The place where the waste is sold affects the earnings as well. The ones who earn the most have their own network of buyers. Young men, who are the fittest and most experienced in waste picking, have the highest earning. Among the catadores interviewed, a man who had considerably higher earnings than others collected mainly aluminum and tires among. He earned 200-500 meticaïs¹ a day, but this level of earnings seemed very exceptional, as it was the same amount than many people earned in one month. This level of earnings requires long experience and exceptional skills in waste picking and understanding of the markets. Other interviewed men earned much less, around 1500 meticaïs a month (37,5eur).

The young men are in the best position when the waste truck arrives and they usually jump onto the truck already at the gate. Catadores chase the truck and battle to be the one to pick the best things from the truck. This results in accidents. Elderly and women pick through the leftovers. Due to this the earnings of young men are usually higher than those of women and older people. In addition, they are physically stronger, so they can carry heavy loads and pick

¹ One euro is around 40 meticaïs.

more in the same amount of time. In my research none of the young male catadores who stay outside of the gate were interviewed. However, in WIEGO's study one of these men said that he earns around 50 meticaïs per week, which would add up to 1500 meticaïs in a month.

"I pick bottles. Because I am strong I can earn 700mts in two weeks" (Man, 30)

The women commonly earned around 400-1000 meticaïs (10-25eur) per month. Among the women catadores interviewed highest earnings were 2000 meticaïs per month. The middle-aged woman who had the highest earnings collected plastic bags for sale. To earn this much a woman needs to work very hard and be skilled in waste picking. This woman said that she can earn even more than her husband, who has a low-income job. The oldest woman had the lowest earnings, and she earned a maximum of only around 200 meticaïs (5eur) per month. Elderly are in the worst position of the waste pickers because they don't have strength to move much or carry heavy loads. They pick leftovers after more able men and women have taken their share. They mainly stay on the sides of the dump and collect bottles. Some catadores collect food scraps to sell for pig food. Others raise pigs themselves and collect food for their pigs from the dump.

"I earn around 200mts/month, it depends how much I collect, but it is not possible to walk far so I am not always able to collect it" (Old woman)

If one compares the earnings of catadores to the national minimum wage of Mozambique, which is from around 3000 meticaïs/month to around 7500 meticaïs/month, depending on the sector (Wage Indicator 2014), the wage of catadores is substantially below the average. It is practically impossible to survive in Mozambique on 200 or 400 meticaïs per month, as the food prices are relatively high compared to other Southern African countries. Comparison can be made to the basic staple food of Mozambique rice and beans; a 20 kilo sack of rice costs around 600 meticaïs and a sack of beans around 200 meticaïs. This results in many catadores supplementing their insufficient earnings by eating the food waste in the dump.

"Grandma finds food here in the waste dump and we eat" (Boy, 13)

Many women catadores pick plastics, mainly bottles and some of the women also pick metal cans. According to Allen and Jossias (2011, 9) the young men who stay around the entrance

and outside of the dump pick mainly metals, plastics and cardboard. A few of the men interviewed also pick wire. Some catadores could not tell how much they earned because their earnings varied greatly or they had not paid attention to their monthly earnings. A few catadores said that they accept whatever is paid them. Low literacy and numeracy skills expose catadores to exploitation, when they lack the skills to bargain for better prices. When a truck comes to the dump to buy plastics, many catadores go to sell whatever they've got at that moment and don't question the price that is set by the buyer.

"I cannot wait for a month, I'd starve. 10 mts, one mt, I don't care, I take anything I get." (Woman, 57)

"I collect bottles and plastic, it depends how much I earn... It took me one month to collect these things. I don't know how much I will earn; these days not much is paid for these things, now they pay very little. There are Chinese people who come here by cars" (Woman, 40)

Furthermore, for the older people carrying big sacks is hard so they are forced to sell smaller quantities of things at a time. Another challenge for the extremely poor is that they cannot afford to collect items for a longer period of time, because meanwhile there is nothing to eat at home.

I observed one sale situation and briefly interviewed the Chinese waste buyers who came with a truck to the dump to buy plastics. Many catadores said that they sell their plastics to the Chinese buyers. The Chinese waste buyers have their own factory, which make plastic chairs out of the recycled bottles. The waste buyers said that they pay different prices depending on what size the bottles and other plastic items are. Chinese buyers pay 5 meticaís per kilo for the small bottles and 8 meticaís per kilo for the big bottles. Jito (a key person) said that they are suspected of taking advantage of the waste pickers by using false scales.

"Catadores rush to bring their sacs of bottles and different kinds of plastics to the truck. An old scale is placed on the sand carelessly and huge sacks of plastic don't even fit on the scale completely. Huge sacs only weigh a few kilos; no-one is questioning the kilos and the amount that they are paid for the waste. The truck is relatively small and it gets full fast; some need to wait till the next time to sell their plastics. Chinese people seem annoyed by our presence, and a Mozambican woman who is with them answers my questions briefly; she says they are in hurry." -Research diary 21.7.2014

It is common that children help their mothers or grandmothers in waste picking activities, especially if they don't have financial opportunities to go to school. However, some of the mothers and fathers don't allow their children to come to the dump. Others don't like their children to come to the dump, but they are not able to prevent them or their contribution is invaluable for the family income. Some mothers take their toddlers or babies to the dump, because they don't have anyone to take care of them while they are working. Still, if it is possible, catadores wish to keep their children at home and they hope for a better life for them.

"I come to help my grandma to collect the bottles." (Boy, 12)

"Some of my kids come to help here sometimes, but it is very hard for them"
(Woman, 47)

"I don't want my wife and kids to come to the dump." (Man, 32)

The other meaning that the dump produces for people is providing them with food and survival. On the lowest rung of the hierarchy of the dump are the sick, elderly and disabled who are not able to do any waste collection for sale. For them the dump provides a means of survival and sustenance. Furthermore, some of the children are forced to eat in the dump, because the people who take care of them don't have possibilities to provide food for them or they are alone in the dump. Some of the catadores who collect and sell waste also supplement their earnings by eating in the dump, because they are not able to earn enough to sustain themselves. This can be the result of, for example, old age or disabilities. Moreover, for many of these people the dump also provides a living place. If they don't have possibilities for large scale waste picking, they will not have possibilities for renting a place for themselves either. Some of the people have a house somewhere further away, but due to a lack of income and food, they are not able to stay in their home, but sleep in the dump instead. Some of the people have made small huts out of waste materials, but some sleep wherever they can find a place at night.



Figure 3 Eating food scraps in the dump. Hulene dump, Maputo. 2012

In the picture above a man is putting food scraps into his mouth in the Bocaria dump. Usually food scraps are eaten “fresh”, after the waste truck has unloaded the mixed food waste in the dump. However, the food is of very low quality and can cause various health problems for the dump pickers.

Providing a sense of community has two different aspects: on the other hand, as one sick catadore said: “*we take care of each other here (Man, forties)*”. That shows that there is a certain sense of community, probably more within different small groups of people. On the other hand the community as a whole is threatened due to crimes, lack of trust and “the survival of the fittest ethos”, which makes the community fragmented and erodes the unity as whole. For the young men, many of whom choose to come to the dump, the dump provides a group where they can belong. This situation can be seen as a parallel to a sub-culture group in the streets, where young people can feel a sense of freedom and being their own bosses. In the same way as in some groups in the streets, this lifestyle is combined with alcohol and drug abuse.

6 DREAMS OF ANOTHER LIFE

6.1 DREAMS OF LIFE OUTSIDE AND DREAMS FOR THE FAMILY

“All of them who live here have lots of dreams, there is a lot that government and NGOs could do for us, because we are not here because we like it, but because we want to live and not to steal anyone’s stuff” (Woman, 18)

One of the key themes in the interviews was to find out if catadores have hopes and dreams for the future and what kind of dreams and hopes they have. Almost all of the interviewed catadores had some kind of dreams; only two women told that they don’t know what their dreams are because they have not gone to school. Nevertheless, even they spoke about themes which could be paralleled to hopes and dreams as hope to get a better life for the children or life outside of the dump. For some of the people dreams were clear and for others it required a bit more reflection and additional questions. It is important to note that catadores do have hopes and dreams and even a lifetime in a dump has not been able to keep them from dreaming, despite their seemingly hopeless situation. One young catadore woman sums this up well:

“Of course I have hopes. Hope is the last thing to die in life.”

The dream that the catadores most prevalently talked about in the interviews was a dream of getting a life outside of the dump. This theme was found in all of the interviews in one way or another. This was regardless of earnings, living place or perceived health and well-being. Even catadores who could earn relatively well in picking e.g. aluminium, tires and wires, were eager to find another kind of life and work, outside of the dump. However, the ones in the most hopeless situation, due to illness, disability, old age or lack of family, were the ones who also most desperately hoped to find another kind of life.

This was in contrast to some of the earlier research, where it was found out that some of the waste pickers were not ready to stop waste picking, even if they got another kind of occupation (e.g. Nzeandibe et al. 2012, 360–361). None of the catadores suggested anything similar in the interviews. Instead, jobs which seemingly would not improve their income level con-

siderably (like selling fruits or bread) were seen attractive, because they could provide a living other than waste picking. Life outside of the dump was seen as a *“life of normal people”*. This can relate to the stigmatizing nature of waste picking, which was discussed earlier (e.g. Medina 2000, Wilson et al. 2006).

“In my future I’m hoping to have a job or business, I really want to leave this place. I would like to change to become like normal people in this world (Man, 27)”

It is important to consider catadores’ hopes and dreams especially in the context of empowerment. Sheppard (2006, 131–132) challenges the idea of working on the current wishes of the people, because it poses a danger that some actions, which can be based on false consciousness, can be actually disempowering. However, it seemed that catadores’ wishes and hopes were reasonable and realistic and easily parallel with the wishes of any other person, for example hopes of getting a good life for them and their family, work which brings enough money, their own house and a safe and healthy environment. In empowerment the future has to be built up in partnership, which requires considering people’s hopes and wishes. In this context it means considering the catadores’ hope of getting life outside of the dump and work besides waste picking. This will be discussed more in the context of previous studies and projects, which focus on scavenger co-operatives.

*“I wish to do something which is not hard labor because I’m already old”
(Elderly woman)*

The old and sick dreamed of someone helping them to get a living without having to do hard labor. The sick and handicapped that I interviewed lived in the dump and were not able to do waste collection, so the only choice for them was to crawl to the dump in search of food scraps. This was reality for the men who were paralyzed from the waist down and for a handicapped man who could barely drag himself forward with his feet. They hoped for someone to help in their sickness, by providing medical help, food and housing. The disabled man had a house which had been built in one project but there was no food or work that he could do, so he was not able to stay in his house. He hoped that he could get food coupons for his weekly food so that he could stay in his house, or do some light work within his capabilities. The elderly people hoped to have a life out of waste collection, which started to be very hard for them already.

“I have a lot that I hope for, but I don’t have them, I wait for you to help me... I can become a gardener, sweeper, because I am very slow, because of these problems. (Man, 48)

“If there would be even something small to do, I could do anything to help my kids” (Woman, 40)

Another common theme of dreams was dreams for the family. Many catadores seek a living for their families in the dump. Especially many women pick waste in order to provide for their children. Many of them are the only bread-winner of the family, or their husbands have very low-income jobs. There were also several grandmothers who are taking care of the grandchildren and providing for them, while their own children have moved elsewhere in Mozambique or South Africa in search of work.

“If I would have a job which would give me enough money to help my kids, I could leave this place” (Woman, 47)

Parents of the dump dream of a better future for their children. Interviewed mothers and grandmothers commonly dreamed of education for their children, so that they could have possibilities to find a better future outside of the dump. It was common that some of the children went to school, while families didn’t have economic means to put all of their children to school. One younger man dreamed of a better future for his wife and children. He was living in the dump and collecting waste to provide for his family. He rented a small place for his family outside of the dump, because he didn’t want them to come to the dump. This man hoped that his family could have a better life in the future than the one he had gotten. One woman hoped to have a house which she could leave to her children when she dies. For many catadores waste picking is a means to provide for their children and if they had another way to provide for them, they would be eager to leave the dump. These parents lack the opportunities and means to fulfill the dreams for their families, but they strive and work long hard days to do their best in providing a better life for their children.

6.2. DREAMS OF WORK AND EDUCATION

“Any job I can go to study I can do. The only thing I want is that whatever job it is I can do or study to give me money” (Young woman)

Dreams of work and business were catadores’ second most common dreams. Many catadores said that they could do any work that is possible to get and gives them money. A young woman dreamed of having work so she could pay for university. Most catadores didn’t have clear preferences for the type of work; work which gives money to provide for them and their families outside of the dump was the main criterion for a job. For some the type of work they dreamed of was linked with wanted education; if they were able to study, then they could become, for example, a teacher or a doctor. One woman said that she would want to become a house help, because that is what she used to do and she knows how to do. She said if someone would give her a job as a street sweeper she could not do it because she does not know how, but someone else could do it. This needs to be taken into consideration in designing interventions; it has to be taken into account that some people have previous work experience and want to continue this kind of work; therefore one solution doesn’t fit all.

Dreams of having their own small businesses were more common than dreams of other kinds of work. Also, catadores had clearer ideas what kind of business they would like to do if they had a chance. This can be linked with the idea that waste pickers are already doing small business by picking and selling the waste, as none of them was working for another person. It is possible that among the catadores there are more business-oriented people and catadores are used ‘being their own bosses’. This was said to be one of the factors in research done in Thailand (Tubtim et al. 2007, 888) why waste pickers were not willing to stop waste picking and also were proud of their independence. Although the catadores interviewed in Bocaria dump were willing to stop waste picking, this might be connected to the fact that many of them are interested in having their own micro-enterprise.

“When I was a child I dreamed to be a businesswoman... If there would come another business I would be very happy, I have the gift of business, when I sell the bread they finish but I don’t have money to sell a lot” (Woman, forties)

Some of the catadores dreamed of having a business in general, without specifying what kind of business, but most of the people had clearly in mind what kind of business they would want to have. Catadores dreamed of for example having their own bread shop, barber shop to cut hair and sell hair for the braids, or selling fruits. An older woman dreamed of having a

small business to sell little things near her home. A young man dreamed that his wife could have a chance to start a small business, so she could provide for the children. Support for the businesses was seen one of the most important things in helping them.

“I hope to get a Nholo (trailer) to put some product there like bananas and apples, just push it around and sell. If someone would help me with this business thing, that would be the most important thing for me.” (Man, 27)

Catadores had dreams of education for both themselves and for their children. Especially younger catadores dreamed of getting education, but also older ones were ready to study anything to get work. The younger ones, especially younger women, dreamed of basic education, like finishing secondary school and going to university and older ones dreamed more about vocational training. The interviewed children had similar dreams to any other children in this world, going to school and studying a profession. The interviewed boys wanted to become teachers and firemen and the interviewed girl wanted to become a doctor. The children whom I talked with in the dump were eager to go to school, especially the ones who had been going to school but had to stop because of the poor financial situation of their families.

“There are lots of things that I dream, as dreaming never ends. I’d like to study and after I finish studying I’d like to go to Matalane, where they train the police, I want to become a police officer.” (Woman, 18)

“Now I don’t go to school, I ended school because my grandma didn’t have money to pay for the school, the uniform and the school material. I’d like to go back to school, to become a teacher. (Boy, 13)”

Most of the catadores, apart from the youngest and oldest ones, were eager to go to study professional skills, in order to find a job outside of the dump. Most often they could not easily define what kind of professional skills they would like to study, as long as they could study something to give them work. It was suggested that in a project designed to help them women could study for example sewing, business or raising chicken. Some of the younger women were already in the grades 8-10 in the secondary school, some were still continuing studying and some had had to stop but almost all hoped to finish secondary school and continue studying even in university.

Although all the interviewees had some hope and dreams in their life, some were more hopeful than others. To some extent having less hope could be connected with the years in the dump, but it doesn't give a full explanation. Even some of the children seemed very hopeless; although all of their dreams were not dead, their appearance, their way of talking and endless sadness revealed the depth of hopelessness inside them. In fact, their situation came across as hopeless, for example, if their family could not provide food for them and they had to eat food scraps from the dump and there were no possibilities for the future, like education.

Hence, being hopeful or hopeless appeared to be more connected with the life situation and prospects of a better future. The ones who had been studying recently or were still in school seemed more hopeful, probably because they are able to envision alternative opportunities for the future more easily. In contrast, the sadness and hopelessness of the ones who had the most miserable life situation seemed bottomless, like the sick and disabled. However, it needs to be noted that a certain similar hopelessness pertains to all the people in the dump and their eyes are filled with similar emptiness and sadness. Lastly, it is important to understand that being hopeful or hopeless doesn't necessary make people lose their dreams in this life. Many know what they hope for in this life, if they would just have a chance. It seems that certain dreaming and hoping never end, and hope indeed appears to be the last thing to die in life.



Figure 4 A child of the dump. Hulene dump, Maputo. 2012

Figure 4 shows one of the catadore children standing on top of the trash mountain. He is wearing ragged clothes, filthy from ashes and dirt. Also his skin is grey from the ash, which is typical for the people in the dump. He is holding a sack, which he uses to collect bottles. His facial expression reflects well the hopeless life the catadores are living with no way out, which makes even the children lose their natural joyfulness and trustful perception of the future. In the background can be seen the vast area of the dump, smokes from burning ashes, a dumpster and a sole catadore looking for something to pick.

7 FUTURE DIRECTIONS

7.1 CLOSURE OF BOCARIA

“We know this place will be closed and if they close here there is nothing we’d ever do in this world so I’m asking to at least help me with these things so that even if they close here I can still feel as a human.” (Crippled man, 48)

Mozambican government has plans of closing Bocaria in 2015 for establishing new more high-tech landfill in Matola. It is still unclear with what schedule the closure will be carried out and at the time of the fieldwork there were no signs of closure in the near future. In the past government has lacked resources for building the new landfill but in recent years funding from South Korea has been confirmed. (See also Allen & Jossias 2011.) Catadores have been informed of the closure already during few years, but it has been uncertain when it is going to happen. Jito (a key person) was aware that the closure is going to happen next year. In this research key question was to find out how catadores perceive the closure, are they aware of it, and what are they going to do when the dump is closed. Based on the discussion with the government officials and Mozambique TV news, government is still in process of studying and thinking what they can do for the dump pickers after the dump is closed. Until now government has not targeted any measures to find alternative work or living opportunities for the remaining catadores.

For the catadores closure appeared as something indefinite and distant and no-one had concrete plans after the closure. Since they see future after closure hopeless and providing no opportunities, this can be a way to avoid facing the reality. Also, it seemed that the information about closure has been unclear; this can be connected to overall obscurity of the closure schedule. All of the catadores told that they don’t know what to do if the dump is closed. It was common to perceive life after closure providing only starving and suffering. It is clear that catadores depend on the dump for income, food and even for shelter. As first place they have ended up in the dump because they lacked any opportunities to make living, so it’s natural not to see any opportunities after the closure either.

“If they close this place without doing anything (for them), I will suffer with my children.” (Woman, 40)

“...I will stay home and starve to death.” (Woman, 47)

In addition, closure might lead catadores using questionable measures for survival like prostitution or theft. Two young women said that they might need to start selling themselves for money. Also few catadores said that might need to become thieves because there is nothing else what they can do. Only one young man said that he would try to find part-time jobs, others didn't see any possibilities for alternative employment.

“If they close here we can steal. (Mother & Daughter) I can go to find many men to go to sleep with them to find money (Daughter)”

“If they close here I can even go to Luso to become a prostitute (Woman, 18)”

These results clearly show that there is an urgent need to find alternative employment for the catadores before the dump is closed. In other countries when a dump has been closed dump pickers have moved to pick the waste in the new landfill or to pick waste in the streets (e.g. Nadeau 1999, 155; Rankokwane & Gwebu 2006, 161). None of catadores of Bocaria said that they would move to pick the waste in the new landfill, but two men said that they would need to go back to streets. However, in Van Baalen's (2013) article, some of the young male catadores he interviewed in Bocaria said that if the dump is closed, they will find the new landfill and continue picking waste there. Most likely this might be the case what could happen in reality if Bocaria is closed, but it is unclear how the dump pickers could fit in the operation of more high-tech landfill which is more controlled and regulated.

“If they close here, we don't know what we will do, if we will go to the streets or what. This place is what makes us to survive, because it is what we do, we can sell the things and find money to eat.” (Man, 30)

“If they close here I don't know what I would do, as I don't have a father. I am only living with my mom and my sisters. And my mother is sick so I am a mother and a father at the same time” (Woman, 18)

WIEGO (Allen & Jossias 2011, 13) proposes as a solution organizing catadores to co-operatives. This is said to enhance their negotiating power with the municipality for finding alternative opportunities, mainly in waste recycling. According to WIEGO (Allen & Jossias 2011, 13–16) catadores have *“some interested in organizing”*, although are *“far from expressing interest in organizing”*. This vague statement is based on short research in the dump

and mainly one hour discussion with the catadores. However, what needs to be taken into account is that the starting point of the discussion was to show the benefits of organization for the catadores, so it doesn't bring objective ground for the study. Also, the group of interviewed catadores only consisted of young men, which brings a one-sided picture of the issue. Nevertheless, WIEGO's study mentions that other organizations who work with the catadores (as LVIA) perceived catadores not interested in organizing, lacking unity and since probably not organizable (Allen & Jossias 2011, 12). In this research it became clear that catadores dream of a life outside of the dump, which makes it ethical question to pursue something against catadores own wishes. I discuss more the theme of scavenger co-operatives as a solution in next chapter.

7.2 SCAVENGER CO-OPERATIVES AS A SOLUTION?

In the conducted researches the word empowerment is mainly linked with organizing waste pickers to so-called scavenger co-operatives and micro-enterprises (e.g. Gutberlet 2008, Tubtim et al. 2007). Almost in all the researches proposed solutions and project proposals are connected with organizing of waste pickers as part of SWM systems and projects made among adult waste pickers have mainly focused on organizing to co-operatives and supporting them. According to Medina (2000, 59–60), benefits of the co-operatives are that waste pickers can get better price from the waste they collect and by-pass dealers which often take advantage of the waste pickers. This would enhance higher earnings and better their living and working conditions. Same time the goal is to legitimate waste picking as a public service and get social services for waste pickers, as health services and child care (Binion & Gutberlet 2012, 50).

Waste picking can also be seen to benefit larger society and be ecologically sustainable as it can solve problems which are connected to recycling and waste disposal because it reduces waste transportation and disposal costs (Medina 2005, 53). Recycling industry gets needed raw materials for the products which then can be sold with cheap price (Asim et al. 2012, 59; Wilson et al. 2006, 802). Binion and Gutberlet (2012, 49–50) see that for example work spaces where the waste is sorted can reduce health risks, although the risks cannot be fully eliminated. Co-operatives appear to offer employment and survival for those who might not

be able to find employment in the formal sector due to lack of education, disabilities and prevailing unemployment (Wilson et al. 2006, 802–803). Gutberlet (2008, 664) adds that co-operatives can strengthen members identity, self-esteem and participation and raise from economic and social exclusion.

In the research made in Brazil it was observed that waste picking and sorting in co-operatives includes many risks to health and workers wellbeing, for example, because waste pickers are in contact with contaminated materials or sharp objects like glass and metals. Despite of co-operatives waste pickers struggled to sustain them because salaries were still under minimum wages and financial insecurity of the future of the co-operative caused constant stress. Moreover, waste pickers are suspicious and suffer from lack of trust so it can be difficult for them to do co-operation and form relationships. (Gutberlet 2008, 666–667.)

In Pakistan it was noted that the most positive effects of waste picking concerned those waste pickers who went from door to door to collect certain waste as glass or metal or who offered another kind of services like cleaning or gardening. These *korreywalas* were in all ways in the best position of the waste pickers and it was seen important to improve their life conditions and train other waste pickers to work as *korreywalas* (Asim et al. 2012, 155–161). It needs to be noted that even in the co-operatives waste pickers also work in the dumps and other risky places. Improvement to the former is better income levels, possible protective gear as gloves or working spaces (e.g. Medina 2000, 2005; Gutberlet 2008).

When co-operatives are analyzed in the empowerment framework it is important to reflect if organizing of waste pickers has produced empowerment, either in the dimension of strength or power. In the empowerment chapter I discussed the critical viewpoints of empowerment where empowerment becomes something, which is made for people instead of working in co-operation with them respecting their own wishes. It is noticeable that the studies and projects of scavenger co-operatives start from the viewpoint what benefits society ecologically and socially (Medina 2000, 59) and waste picking is essential for the present-day consumption patterns (Binion & Gutberlet 2012, 50). In none of the researches it is articulated that the waste pickers own wishes would have been considered in the formation of the project, although researchers bring up the perceived benefits of the co-operatives for the waste pickers.

The strength dimension of empowerment seems to be achieved better in co-operatives. Co-operatives can be seen to increase participation, awareness, and integration to the society. Co-operatives also strengthen identity and self-esteem. (Gutberlet 2008, 664.) Co-operation and organizing is connected to empowerment of communities. Increase of power can be seen as economic power and hence increase of choices (e.g. Medina 1998, 2000). However, this has not actualized in all of the cases because part of the waste pickers working in co-operatives still live below the poverty level (e.g. Gutberlet 2008).

All in all it seems that the core of empowerment is missing and mostly empowerment has been watered down to helping from above. Then although life circumstances have materially changed, the person's own choices remain limited and so the person has not gotten real power concerning his own life. Thompson (2006, 22) names this a difference between enabling and empowerment. In enabling the worker defines the goals and helps the person to obtain them. Empowerment includes the idea of working in collaboration and determining the goals together (Thompson 2006, 22). Hence, scavenger co-operatives can be seen more as instruments of enabling than empowerment.

It is important to ponder if scavenger co-operatives work more as freeing from oppression or as an instrument of oppression. Equality and respect for people, which are important starting points of empowerment, appear to be missing from the project values and it seems that inequality between different classes is seen natural. Waste pickers are the lowest class of the society and their life circumstances should be improved, but possibilities to rise to become equal members of the society are not given. In social work stereotypes can lead into discrimination and oppressive practices (Thompson 2000, 137). In scavenger co-operatives you can notice stereotypical thinking. Stereotypically waste pickers are seen to be incapable to find another kind of work (e.g. Medina 2000, Wilson et. al. 2006). Removing this type of thinking can be seen to be one of the goals of empowerment.

According to Medina (2000, 58), waste pickers like their work because it is a way for them to earn money, to be their own bosses, and to have flexible work hours. He argues that waste pickers are reluctant to accept changes which would influence their income and working and life conditions (Medina 2000, 58). In Nigeria (Nzeandibe et al. 2012, 360–361) it was found out that some of the waste pickers were not ready to stop waste picking, even if they would get another kind of occupation. Likewise Tubtim et al. (2007, 888) see important that waste

pickers can hold on to their occupation, because some of the waste pickers were proud of the independence, despite of their low education levels, poverty, sicknesses, and dangers of the work. Medina (2000, 58) argues that most of the waste pickers would be incapable of finding work from formal sector, because their education levels are low and most of them are youth or elderly. Although some of them could be employed, still other poor people would replace them because poverty and unemployment is prevalent in developing countries (Medina, 2000, 58) This kind of thinking justifies the idea that existence of informal waste pickers is inevitable and their life conditions can be bettered, but it is not seen important to offer them other kinds of chances in their lives.

Findings of this research seem to contradict the earlier researches and project which have focused on scavenger co-operatives. However, in most of the other researches it doesn't become clear that waste pickers would have been asked what they hope and want to do in the future. Making a research based on certain assumptions or wanted outcomes poses a problem for the credibility of the study. Also, making statement of what waste pickers want and need without letting them to speak with their own voice, seems ethically questionable. Scavenger co-operatives seem like a perfect solution, which solve both the problem of ecologically unsustainable waste disposal of developing countries and improving the income of the waste workers. Nevertheless, they mainly lack crucial element of empowerment and emancipation, which are key to development work based on social work ethics and values.

In Mozambique, WIEGO (Allen & Jossias 2011, 13) proposed three justifications for promoting organizing of catadores in Hulene dump. Firstly, it can work in enhancing their negotiating power with the municipality for finding alternative opportunities after the dump is closed, mainly in waste recycling. Secondly, they suggest that municipality would have interest in working with catadores but it is not possible because of the lack of unity of catadore groups (although many factors of the municipality interests are still with big question mark). Thirdly, if a local market is created for recyclables, catadores will need to be organized in order to be able to benefit from it and influence for example on prices. Also, catadores would need to be organized to negotiate partnerships with NGOs or municipality, so that they are not excluded from the business by more powerful actors. (Allen & Jossias 2011, 13.)

These are viable arguments first of all if catadores have interest in continuing waste picking. Regardless there is still a big question mark what will happen after the dump is closed and

will there be demand for informal waste picking activities or whether they would be “*excluded from the market or exploited by larger and more powerful firms*” as it was presented in WIEGOs report (Allen & Jossias 2011, 13). However, as it was shown earlier, even in the WIEGOs research the dump pickers’ interest in organizing was still very doubtful. In this research it became clear that catadores dream most prevalingly getting out of the dump and doing any other work so that they could have financial possibilities to stop waste picking.

Schemes like korreywalas could be explored and taken into account when designing interventions to help dump pickers. However, co-operatives which require dump pickers still continue waste picking in the dump seem out of the question, based on the dump pickers’ own interests and due to the hazards and dangers of the waste picking activities in the dump which cannot be totally eliminated. There is one co-operative scheme in the Hulene dump, called RECICLA, which consist of around 20 former catadores of the dump. They purchase plastics from the catadores of the dump, sort them out, process manually, and then sell them as pellets to firms which make utensils. (Allen & Jossias 2011, 10–11.) There was not an opportunity to interview the workers of RECICLA, but it would be interesting to study if they are satisfied with their working conditions and have their living standards improved. In other ways these kinds of schemes seem promising, only the challenge is that the co-operatives require that some people do the actual manual scavenging in the dump to get the raw materials for further processing. How these schemes could be combined with eliminating manual scavenging in the dump is a question which should be further solved.

7.3 EMPOWERMENT OF THE DUMP PICKERS

“I don’t like to come here, but I have no choice because I have no help” (Girl, 12)

Because the key questions of empowerment differ in diverse social, institutional and political contexts, it is important to identify the main elements of empowerment in the local context (Narayan 2002, 18), in this case in the dump picker community. The critical notions of empowerment are crucial to take into account so that the real empowerment can happen in dump pickers lives. Critical notions of empowerment include, for example, ensuring that the interventions are done bottom-up, in co-operation with the dump pickers all stages of the process,

taken into account the wider societal context and oppressive structures within it, and providing them the tools and knowledge which can equip them to fight for their own freedom (e.g. Parker et al. 1999; Macdonald & Macdonald 1999). It is also important to consider that the interpretations that we as outsiders give to their situations and their stories are always filtered through our different perceptions of the world and it can never present the reality as it is fully. For this reason, I have striven to consult the people who know the culture and reality better in all the stages of the research, so that the reality could be captured as truthfully as possible and the real voice of the dump pickers could be heard, with its limitations.

Empowerment and Poverty Reduction –sourcebook defines four elements which have been connected to successful empowerment of the poor. These are access to information, inclusion and participation, accountability and local organizational capacity (Narayan 2002, 18). In inclusion and participation it is essential that collaboration is made with poor people and they are seen to hold power in making choices and over the resources. According to ILO report (2004, 24–27), waste pickers' participation and consideration of their wishes was low in the analyzed projects designed for helping waste pickers and their children. This was seen to reinforce the patronizing attitude, making receivers passive and in the end destroying the goals of the projects. Example of this is project implemented in Romania; in this project the NGO implemented the project without consulting the waste pickers. As a result the made structures were not used and in the end destroyed because waste pickers didn't see their necessity. (ILO 2004, 24–27.)

To avoid this mistake, inclusion and participation were taken as two key starting points in designing this action research and an “empowering project”. Essential basis was to start from the hopes and wishes of the people. Important to be noted is that if empowerment in its original meaning is to be achieved one solution cannot fit all and everyone has to be considered individually. Nevertheless similar themes can be found from several interviews and these can be further divided different groups based on what people want and need. Different groups require different solutions. However, even within the group individual differences need to be taken into account as a basic principle of empowerment. In the next chapter these groups are discussed in more detail.

Dump pickers need both internal and external dimension of empowerment (e.g. Hokkanen 2009, Dierckx 2010). Although this research focuses on the external dimension of empower-

ment, dump pickers also need internal dimension of empowerment because they can suffer from low self-esteem and feelings of incapability and powerlessness. Internal dimension can be linked with Narayan's (2005) concept of agency. Narayan (2005, 7) places both individual and collective assets and capacities within the agency of the poor. This is important contribution to the discussion of agency, since often agency concentrates to individual features. This definition expands the notion to the collective capacities which can be crucial in assisting individuals to gain power and voice (Narayan 2005, 6).

Individual assets can be both material (e.g. house or land) and monetary assets which provide protection during the time of shocks, enlarge options, and reduce vulnerability. Individual capabilities can be human capabilities, psychological or political capabilities. As poor people mainly lack power the individual capabilities are not enough, but the power of the group is needed in form of collective assets and capabilities. Collective capabilities can provide solidarity, recognition, and social capital. It is important that social capital is not only arising within the group, but also that groups of poor people can unite to make their voices to be heard and increase their strength. (Narayan 2005, 10–11.) Organized communities have a better chance to get their voices heard and mobilize and target their resources to solve their problems (Narayan 2002, 21–22). Dierckx's (2010, 76–82) social networks include similar ideas of emotional support during the hard times and working against the stigmatization. This is important for the dump pickers, because they suffer from stigmatization and shame connected to waste picking and by uniting they can gain power to influence issues concerning their life and connect with other groups in similar situation. Networking and organizing can also increase their self-confidence and self-worth.

As Dierckx (2010, 59) argues, fulfilling basic needs is an essential starting point of empowerment. If people are hungry or don't have clothes or housing, getting their needs fulfilled becomes their primary concern in life. Until these primary needs are fulfilled, it is difficult to advance to anything else in life. The important idea what Dierckx (2010, 57, 67–68) points out is that fulfilling these needs can be done in empowering manner; people should not be made dependent, but instead fulfilling basic needs can open door for other things as labor markets. This expands the notion of basic needs from needs as food and housing to needs as education. Some people in Bocaria dump argued that education is good, but if they are not able to have food or provide for themselves or their families while they are studying, providing education is useless. Key is to consider carefully how basic services are provided in right

manner so that they support the other kind of empowerment, independence of people, and encourages the motivation and person's own goals to move forward. Furthermore, fulfilling basic needs should support moving out of poverty and finding alternative opportunities.

Access to information is essential for the poor so that they can use and negotiate their rights, make different actors responsible, and receive services. Without understandable knowledge poor are not able to act for their rights. (Narayan 2002, 18–19.) For example, in the research made in Thailand it was noticed that waste pickers were not aware of their rights (Tubtim et al. 2007, 889). Dierckx (2010, 57) argues that poverty hinders poor of getting their rights back through their own effort. Awareness-raising is one of the ways empowerment can be enhanced among the dump pickers. Awareness-raising is needed so that the poor can understand their own rights better, and fight for their own rights. This can be connected with Freire's (1970) idea of 'conscientizao', where through becoming aware of the oppressive structures, oppressed can start fighting for their own liberation. Support for this process is needed and it should not be done in top-down manner but instead in co-operation with the dump pickers. Information should work two-ways, from poor to the government and from government to the poor. (Narayan 2002, 19.) Similarly Dierckx (2010, 82–86) includes political participation as part of the external empowerment, where poor can get hold of their situation and get their voices to be heard.

Furthermore, raising awareness of the health consequences of waste picking is needed, because many waste pickers are not aware of the health problems or uneducated lack the understanding of the connection between their health problems and waste picking (Ezeah et al. 2008, 4, 9; Binion & Gutberlet 2012, 50). This was also seen in the Bocaria dump, as some of the dump pickers could not see at first the connection between their health problems and waste picking. Sometimes dump pickers are so used to the certain prevailing health complaints in the dump, so that they start to keep them as normal part of life (e.g. eye irritation, shortness of breath, coughing). Some dump pickers had visible health problems as blurriness and redness of eyes, but they perceived not to have any health problems in the dump until they were pointed out their obvious health constraints.

Awareness-raising of the importance of education has brought good results and affected to the increase of education levels of waste picker children (ILO 2004, 40–42). Supporting education is important part of empowerment of waste pickers. This includes supporting basic

education, vocational education, and education designed specifically their needs. Through education a person becomes more powerful by having more opportunities to make choices concerning his/her own life. Also, empowerment's participatory and awareness raising elements are actualized in education: when person's knowledge and understanding are expanded and he/she can be more included and conscious of having possibilities of influencing in the society (Narayan 2002). However, in Philippines it was observed that although lack of education contributed essentially to low family income, participating to education and being able to utilize the learnt skills was hampered by many social and personal problems (Gunn & Ostos 1992, 632). Hence, it can be seen that education is not in itself sufficient but it needs to be linked with internal empowerment. Also, it is important to provide education specifically designed for waste pickers, which takes into account their situation and life experiences.

Also in Freirean thinking education is seen as a tool to liberation and conscientization as it was reflected earlier. However, need to make sure that education doesn't work as an oppressor, as in 'banking education', where students are seen as empty vessels which teacher should fill. On contrary, in liberating education there is space for communication and both teacher and student can switch roles as students and teachers. Hence, responsibility of the process is common and everyone can grow through it. (Freire 2005, 77–89.) ILO (2004, 44–54) suggest as one of the possibilities of the future projects co-operation with universities who could produce research and material, for example guidelines for the health work among the waste pickers.

The effectiveness of interventions with waste picker children and their families are analyzed in ILO's report (2004). According to ILO (2004, 32–38) right- and system-based interventions produced more successful and long-lasting results than development or well-being based interventions. Right- and system-based interventions can mean for example organizing of waste pickers, children associations, study clubs or increase of their social and political skills. In projects implemented with waste picker children, right and system-based interventions were rare. This can result from that they are more difficult to carry out than development and well-being based interventions and require system-based changes. However, it is argued in the ILO's report that there is not a one way to success, but projects should include all intervention-types and include both short-term and long-term goals (ILO 2004, 32–38.) Empowerment is the essential base of right and system-based interventions which include both the internal and external dimensions of empowerment. As it was observed before, these

results reflect that although answering to basic needs is important; to achieve real, long-lasting change people need to be aware of their rights and the structural constraints and fight for their own rights and liberation. Furthermore, to become aware is not enough, but the importance of system-based inventions show that structural changes and impacting in broader level are needed so that the poor people can gain the opportunity structure to get power and a real change can happen in their lives.

7.4 FUTURE SUGGESTIONS

“I don’t feel good of coming here but life obliges me to come here” (Woman, 18)

The key starting point for designing interventions for helping dump pickers is to have an understanding of the true nature of their poverty. In *Moving out of Poverty* (Narayan & Petesch 2007, 25–26), research made in 500 different communities and 17 countries, one of the key findings was that instead of the misconception that poor people are drunkards, lazy and passive, they work hard and strive to get out of poverty. Lack of opportunities, capital and social networks prevents them moving up “the ladders of life”², which they try to compensate usually with wearing hard work (Narayan & Petesch 2007, 25–26). The key finding of this research is that majority of the catadores of Bocaria are hard-working and extremely motivated to do any work or participate in any kind of training which would provide them living outside of the dump. Instead of being drunkards and outcasts, they are people who strive to survive by hard labor in extreme conditions. They are people whose extreme life situations and poverty forced them to come to find living from the dump. However, it is essential to understand that is extremely hard for them to move out of poverty and improve their life situations without outside help.

This research strived to map out the different hopes and needs of the catadores in the dump. It was discovered that people of the dump are a very diverse group and different people have different needs and hopes from life. All of the interviewed catadores had a strong motivation to get out from the dump and find another kind of living outside of waste picking, but it needs

² A key tool in the *Moving out of Poverty* research, which villagers used describing poverty in the local context.

to be taken into account that not all of the catadores necessarily share the same will. There needs to be consideration of people's own wishes and support for those who have the will to move forward. However, since the dump will be closed soon, that means that all the catadores will lose that source of income, so interventions are more critical in this juncture. This research will continue next summer in form of starting a project which strives to answer some of the needs of the people in the dump in practice. The future project and suggestions for other projects and interventions will be reflected in the following paragraphs.

Although catadores are a diverse group of people, it is possible to form groups of similar interests and needs. The first group of people in the dump have *low education level and/or no occupational skills*, most of them with low literacy skills, having studied only few years in primary school or completely without schooling. In this group people were prevalingly above 30 year old with few younger people who had not gone school, had studied only few years, or had no motivation to continue formal schooling. Catadores in this group presented interest in studying *vocational skills* which could provide them more possibilities for alternative work opportunities. This was one of the most prevalent groups of people in the dump.

“If there would be a project to teach professional skills I would like to participate and leave from this place” (Woman, 47)

ILO (2004, 46) suggest as successful approaches to vocational training of waste pickers:

- “◆ A combination of theory and practice, on-the-job and classroom training
- ◆ Linking with a limited number of relevant subjects (hygiene/health, family planning, business development, etc.)
- ◆ Incorporating arts and recreational activities to develop work and social skills (e.g. being punctual, team work)”

Education opens possibilities for empowerment's participatory and inclusive elements and access to information. In our future project the plan is to include for all the vocational and business courses life and work skill studies which focus on easing the transition to life outside of the dump and supporting inner empowerment. This includes the themes discussed by ILO above, which consist of multiple subjects and include awareness raising, health education and traditional arts. Arts can be further sold to raise funding for the project and make it more self-sustainable. Furthermore, since in this group catadores have low education skills

vocational training needs to combine basic literacy and numeracy skills with practical vocational skills.

In ILO report (2004, 46–47) vocational training arranged by the NGOs was often gender biased and focused on the certain typical vocational areas, as sewing for the women. Market research was found essential in order that there is demand for the business products or work services (ILO 2004, 46–47). The subject of the courses should be decided based on the interest of the people, market needs and also availability of suitable teachers. After the course it is important to find suitable training places for the students combined with income support so that the firms can take interns for free or with low pay. Internship could provide essential work experience and open ways to paid work. If construction of the vocational training center will be in question, construction skilled catadores could be hired to help in construction and same time this could work as a way to teach them vocational skills.

Second group form people who have *unfinished schooling and desire to continue their education*, mainly in primary and secondary school level up to university. In this group are mainly younger people, under thirty years of age and children. For this group of people essential intervention would be supporting their education. For the dump pickers of Hulene dump it would mainly mean support in primary school in registration fees, school supplies, uniforms and in secondary school also in tuition fees. It is essential that the support could continue up to higher level of studies. Since most of the people in this group are young adults or children, education works as investment for the future generations. Child sponsorship program is one of the intervention possibilities for supporting education for children and youth. These types of programs work in many countries through several NGOs (e.g. World Vision, Plan, Save the Children) and are practical way to ensure that the support reaches straight its target. For the future project designing working web-pages, social media and other channels e.g. churches can be used as channels to reach interested supporters.

However, it needs to take into account that for some of the families in the dump child's work contribution in waste picking is essential for the family income. That is why it is important to target the interventions for the whole family. For the children and youth who stay in the dump without a family and a place to call home, support for education is in itself insufficient to answer to their needs. They also need a place to call home. The challenge is that children of the dump don't always want to leave that lifestyle and are suspicious towards attempts to

provide alternative life for them. Several problems as drug abuse and difficult life history make accepting changes harder. Some of the children have a family but for different reasons and problems, as poverty or abuse, they are not able or willing to stay with their family.

Miguel Marrengula (2010, 32) argues that many of the projects with the street children in Mozambique have failed because there has not been enough consideration for the reasons why children are in the street and taking account their backgrounds. Also, he sees children's participation in deciding for their own life essential for the success of the projects (Marrengula 2010, 32). This can be parallelized with goals of empowerment which should also extend to working with children and youth. Making real connections with the children and youth and gaining their trust can work as a way to provide help for them. This has happened in several instances with the children of Bocaria, many of which have found home from the Iris global children's center. Still, need to take into account even in the end, not all the children and youth are willing to change their lifestyle and some of the children have returned to the streets and dump.

In the third group are *business oriented people*, who have a desire to start a micro-enterprise or who used to have a small business of their own. Both older and younger people dreamed of their own business and many of them already had or had had some business initiatives. What was mostly lacking was the capital to get the business going and expanded enough to provide living for them. Many dump pickers are business oriented probably because they are used to work for themselves and already do small business by picking and selling the waste.

“When I was a kid I dreamed to be a businesswoman, when Mama Aida gave me money to sell the bread. I come here because the money of selling breads is not enough to find some extra. If there would come another business I would be very happy, I have the gift of business, when I sell the bread they finish but I don't have money to sell a lot” (Woman, forties)

For starting a successful micro-enterprise both resources and training is needed. Training is needed to be able to utilize the given resources effectively and without resources it is impossible to have the capital to start the business. Often the capital to start the micro-enterprises has come through micro-credit programs in developing countries. However, there are many debates about the effectiveness of microfinance, does it really alleviate poverty, and problems connected to it, as a microdebt trap (e.g. Dichter & Harper 2007). To avoid that catadores

would not lead into the debt trap because of the micro-loans, starter money for starting the business could be safer option. It is essential that catadores are not given big sums of money which they are not able to handle. Hence, starter money should be given based on the business plans made in the business course and it would be used to make the necessary purchases for the business together with the people, e.g. a trailer for selling bananas. This would allow that the people could be given only a smaller sum of money which they can better handle, so that they have something to live on before the business starts to make profit. Furthermore, it is important to select to the business course people with strong motivation for starting their own business and sufficient literacy and numeracy skills. Teachers who know the local business context are needed so that they can give relevant and effective teaching for the students.

Fourth group of people are *with previous occupation* and desire to continue working in this occupation. There were not many people who indicated this kind of interest but it is good to take into account in designing interventions, that there can be people like this in the dump. Supporting their own wishes and saving resources, they could be given *support to find work in their previous occupation*. They could be given short life and work skills course and provide internship places combined with income support, which could provide them chances to get back into that area of employment. For now, it is not easy to make the transition from the dump back to the working life without outside help and it is hard to find people who can hire dump pickers due to the stigma attached to their work. The internship could lessen the stigma and provide references for finding another work place.

“If the government would give me a job to be a housemaid I could do it because that is what I grew up doing, but if they would tell me to sweep the road I could not do it because I don’t know how, but others could do it.”(Woman, middle aged)

In the fifth group are people *who are incapable of work*, mainly disabled, elderly or permanently sick. These are people who are in the dump because they have no other means for survival and they mainly live by eating food scraps in the dump. Often interventions in developing countries are targeted for the ones who can be incorporated back into society and work life. However, these people should not be forgotten based on the social work mission to take care of the weakest and people who are in the worst position. These people are in most desperate need of help and were crying for someone to do something for them. They are ready to do some light work, as much as they are able, as long as they could get food and a home. One

of the suggestions is to have *a resting home* for them and for example combine home for elderly, physically disabled and for the orphan children. In this way everyone could benefit, elderly would like to have children around and children would benefit of having more people to give attention to them. Home could become at least partly self-sustainable, if it would include small vegetable and poultry farm where the elderly and handicapped could do light work and participate in the other chores of the house. Furthermore, in the dump are many people with current health problems, as for example TB. It is important that their health problems would be treated in the first place.

Lastly, it is essential that co-operation is made with the officials and strived for influencing the wider society and the policy makers. However, it needs to be taken account that co-operation with officials is sometimes challenging in countries with wide-spread corruption. In this research project co-operation has been enhanced by being meeting people from the social ministry and director of social and health of Maputo city. They shared an interested of the research and the results and suggestions of the research will be shared with them. Government is in process of thinking what to do with these people, so at this point of the time there are important opportunities to make an impact. Discussions of the possibilities and extent of the future co-operation will continue after returning to Mozambique.

8 DISCUSSIONS

This research set out to look for possible solutions to dump pickers' situation by mapping out the needs and hopes of the catadores of Maputo Hulene dump. This was done by designing action research which strived to find possible feasible solutions for the future and tackling some of the immediate needs of the people in the dump. The theoretical background of this research combined empowerment and Freirean thinking and explored what possibilities empowerment could bring in providing change in dump picker's lives and what empowerment would mean in this specific context. The goal was ambitious and the researcher got to understand her own limits as an agent of change, but the research provided important insider viewpoints for the empowerment of the people and for planning interventions for the future.

One of the key findings was that it is essential to put people in the center of their own development and start from their own wishes in all the stages of planning and implementing a project. Also, in research it is important that people's voices will be heard as it produces very different kinds of outcomes. Researches and projects which started from the "expert" point of view came into very different conclusions than what the people of the dump wanted in reality for themselves. The ideas of how dump pickers could be supported changed drastically through the research process, which shows that if interventions would have been designed based on the previous research, they would not necessarily have reflected the wishes and needs of the people.

Empowerment as a vague, contested concept provides some important elements and possibilities in striving for a change. It includes both the internal and external elements which cannot be separated if the goal is the development of people. There will be no development if people are not developing. Therefore, inner and outer cannot be separated; inner empowerment and development is not enough if the outside structures, injustices and oppression are preventing people to empower. Also, inner constraints can hinder people using the provided opportunities. Freirean thinking highlights the external factors which have not been given enough emphasis in empowerment theory and practice. It is alarming how empowerment –term is used to justify many kinds of intervention which in fact have nothing to do with people gaining more power and strength in their lives. For this reason this research has striven to re-define and clarify the concept of empowerment.

One of the key results of this research is that against the expectations, catadores' hopes and dreams are not dead and even the hopeless dump environment has not kept them from dreaming of a better life. People of the dump have specific dreams and different people dream of different things. This cannot be ignored when designing interventions for them. Basis of empowerment starts from person's own wishes and it is the key for the ownership of empowerment and increase of power. Catadores' biggest hope was to find living outside of the dump and they have a strong motivation to do anything which could provide them a way out from the dump and means of supporting themselves and their families. People of the dump wish someone would come and help them to achieve their dreams. This was in contrast to some of the other researches which suggested that waste pickers don't have a wish to stop waste picking. For this reason scavenger co-operatives were not supported in this research. Furthermore, many catadores dream of their own business and support for the micro-enterprises became one of the key future intervention possibilities.

The research found out that catadores in Bocaria dump are a diverse group of people and they hope and need different things. Mostly they live in extreme poverty and work and live in dangerous and inhumane conditions. Most of the catadores earn way below the national minimum wage and many support their insufficient income by eating food scraps in the dump. The hierarchy remains in the dump where on top of the hierarchy are young able-bodied men and at the bottom the disabled, sick and the elderly. The people in the top of the hierarchy have generally the highest earnings and the ones in the bottom don't have any income. Children of the dump are in the most vulnerable situation, because they are in the highest risks of health and other hazards and their opportunities for the future are very limited. Some of the children are alone in the dump and their situation is the most risky and fragile. Education can provide them a way out, but many cannot afford the education or are in danger to drop-out.

Furthermore, it was discovered that there are multiple health hazards and risks in the dump, but all of the catadores are not well aware of the connections between their health problems and waste picking. For this reason, awareness raising of the health issues is needed. As other researches indicated, health risks are always present in manual scavenging and they cannot be fully eliminated, even with protective wear or equipment. Accidents with waste trucks had high prevalence in the dump and generally the dump environment is dangerous and harmful for both the people who live and work there and for the outsiders and surrounding communi-

ty. For this reason dump pickers are one of the most disadvantaged groups of people and targeting measures for them is especially important.

Hulene dump is going to be closed in the near future and life after the closure seems to provide no alternative opportunities for the catadores of the dump. After the dump is closed they will lose their only source of income and some also their living place. Moreover, it is very hard for the people of the dump to find alternative income generating opportunities, because at the first place they ended up to the dump due to lack of employment opportunities. The situation is urgent for the catadores to find another kind of living so that they will not need to resort in suggested questionable measures of finding income: as prostitution or theft or move to the streets. The possibilities to employ catadores who have an interest in operating the new landfill can be explored, but it should be ensured that the health hazards will be eliminated.

The core of empowerment in this situation would be supporting the hopes and needs of people and building on them. Building on people's own strengths and wishes will produce higher motivation and better results. Since catadores of Bocaria mainly lack power and opportunities to make choices concerning their own life, this should be key starting point of the interventions and a way to empowerment. Basic education, vocational education, and business education are important ways to achieve these goals; but they should be combined with inner empowerment so that gained skills are able to be utilized. Furthermore, income support in different forms is needed, so that people are able to participate in education, find work, and get their businesses going. Income support can mean meals during the courses, support for the firms to take interns, and help in making purchases for the new businesses. Moreover, it needs to be taken into account that some of the people in the dump will never be able to contribute fully to the society and earn their income. Social work mission is that these people need to be taken care of and considered first because they are in the worst position. Even these people have a desire to be useful and as a part of a family-type of environment they could be able to do everyday tasks and light work.

This research provided a little glimpse into what dump pickers need and want in life but there is needed more research on the social aspects of informal waste picking globally. Furthermore, this research will be continued in form of implementing some of the project plans in practice and evaluating the outcomes. Evaluation of how dump pickers perceive the interventions is needed and furthermore an evaluation of what type of outcomes the other projects

have produces, as scavenger co-operatives. It is especially important to not only evaluate the measurable targets, as improved income, but also study how people perceive the done actions and how they have affected their quality of life. In the first place this action research sought to provide more immediate relief for the situation of the dump pickers, but it was discovered that there needs to be more long term goals and plans so that the interventions can be sustainable. Now answering to the immediate needs was minor and short-term and more connected to the desperate situations of some people. Also, the goal was to enhance the good relationships for the future. However, it is important the “receiver-attitude” is not formed, so only the ones who were in desperate need of help were supported in their immediate needs of food and other costs. Lastly, a child sponsorship program is currently being started and some of the children have been paid of their school fees for this year.

As a conclusion, this research clearly shows that it is very difficult for the dump pickers to improve their life situations without outside help and measures are urgently needed to target for their support. The different needs and hopes of people should be taken into account and plan interventions based on them. As a starting point of empowerment, it is essential to see the dump pickers in the first place as human beings who have the same kinds of needs and hopes in this life than any other people and respect and value their dignity and rights. Although Hulene dump will be closed, it doesn't mean that the challenges concerning informal waste picking will end locally or globally. Informal waste picking in dumps is dangerous and hazardous activity which should receive more attention globally. Furthermore, more research and measures to alleviate the detrimental effects of waste picking to people's health and well-being is needed and support for rising out of poverty.

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