

**URBAN GOVERNANCE  
AND PARTICIPATION  
IN GREATER CAIRO REGION**



# URBAN GOVERNANCE AND PARTICIPATION IN GREATER CAIRO REGION

## MASTERARBEIT

Zur Erlangung des akademischen Grades eines Diplom-Ingenieurs

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Januar 2014



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## Abstract

Greater Cairo Region is one of the largest urban areas of the world. The Master Thesis offers an analysis of the different public bodies responsible for urban governance in Cairo, and their understanding of the different attributes of good urban governance. The research questions whether the contemporary political unrest in Egypt has opened new avenues for civic engagement in urban planning and development. It discusses the challenges of participatory approaches in informal areas upgrading plans, and the feasible forms of participation which can effectively deliver tailored urban solutions to meet the real needs and expectations of the different stakeholders through inclusive decision-making process.

## Kurzfassung

Der Großraum Kairo ist eines der größten städtischen Gebiete der Welt. Die Masterarbeit bietet eine Analyse der unterschiedlichen Möglichkeiten der öffentlichen Einrichtungen in der Verwaltung der Städte und ihr Verständnis der unterschiedlichen Aspekte von verantwortungsvoller Verwaltung der Städte. Dies eröffnet die Frage, inwiefern durch die momentanen politischen Entwicklungen in Ägypten neue Wege für bürgerschaftliches Engagement im Städtebau und der Entwicklung begangen werden können. In der vorliegenden Arbeit werden die Schwierigkeiten des Upgradings Informeller Siedlungen durch den partizipatorischen Ansatz und den durchführbaren Formen der Teilnahme, welche an die städtischen Möglichkeiten vor Ort anzupassen sind, um die echten Bedürfnisse und Erwartungen der unterschiedlichen Akteure im offenen Entscheidungsprozess zu erfüllen, behandelt.





# Acknowledgments

This thesis has benefited to a great extent from the insights and direction of many people, some of whom I would sincerely like to thank here.

My first and genuine appreciation goes to my parents for always believing in me, trusting my decisions and for their unconditional support, both financially and emotionally throughout my degree. I am indebted to you, without you I could not have made it here.

Prof. Dr. Daniel Gethmann, my thesis supervisor. His wise advice, perspicacious criticisms, and patient encouragement helped me in the writing of this thesis in many ways.

Thanks to my supportive friends, Amir Kozman, Christine Samy and Mira Tadros, their words of encouragement along the way and their pain-staking efforts in proofreading the drafts, are greatly appreciated.

A very special thanks goes out to the Afro-Asian Institute in Graz (AAI) for their bursary and above all, their valuable assistance and consultancy during my busy semesters. I have benefited tremendously from the mentoring of all its cooperative members.

I would also like to extend my gratitude to the PDP team in Egypt, as the research presented in this dissertation involved essential information provided by their side.

Last but not least, I would like to thank all people who have helped me during the writing of this thesis and during my quest of knowledge here in Graz.

# Glossary

CDS	Center for Development Services
EC	Executive Councils
GCR	Greater Cairo Region
GIZ	The German Society for International Cooperation
GOPP	General Organization for Physical Planning
GTZ	The German Technical Cooperation
ISDF	Informal Settlements Development Facility
LPC	Local Popular Council
MB	Muslim Brotherhood
MoPIC	Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation
PDP	Participatory Development Program
PNA	Participatory Needs Assessment
PUMP	Participatory Urban Management Program
S.W.O.T	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UUU	Urban Upgrading Units

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# Introduction

Over the past 70 years, a great urbanization wave started hitting our planet. In different parts of the world, citizens are favoring spots within the boundaries of the cities (Peirce 2008: 23) due to a better access to wider economical opportunities and a diverse cultural display (Peirce 2008:18, 19). Nowadays, 2.8 billion inhabitants reside in urban agglomerations, representing around 50% of the world's total population (Peirce 2008: 23).

Cities are the attracting centers for public, financial and educational institutions. To a great extent, urbanization is substituting modernisation, they are becoming synonyms (Jain 1994: 149; Prasa 2003: 170). This is creating an idiosyncratic status for the inhabitants of the cities (World Urban Forum 2013: 1).

In Cairo, like most cities of the southern globe, the urbanization process is inevitable and very significant both in terms of population and construction growth (Peirce 2008:11). The total population of the Greater Cairo Region grew from 3 million in 1947 to reach 17,5 in 2009 (Sims 2012: 83). Around the 1950's, a large portion of the rural population migrated to the capital seeking a better future and lifestyle as poverty was remarkable and opportunities were missing in the rural areas of Egypt. The population of Greater Cairo kept growing through the 1980's fed mainly with natural population increase, expanding boundaries and an insignificant migration from smaller cities and towns, opposite to the rural-urban migration trend in the previous phase (Sims 2012: 32; Piffero 2009: 57).

Due to the incapability of the different planning institutions in Cairo (Singerman 2011: 179), the government failed to provide realistic analyses and estimates to the urbanization process. As a result, this rapid increase in population of Greater Cairo could not be included within the formal systems and informal areas developed over both private and state-owned properties around and within the region (Sims 2012: 52).

Meanwhile, more than a half of Greater Cairo population live within slums and unplanned areas (Piffero 2009: 57). The Egyptian administration did not take any serious steps towards the expansion of the informal settlements till the early 1990's, when a series of terror attacks took place and slums were reported to host major activities for the extremist groups, who were behind these attacks.

Consequently, international development agencies and different donors were invited to assist the Egyptian government with implementing upgrading projects in informal areas. Over the past decade, the strategies and methodologies of the different international development partners have undergone several revisions and reforms. It was recommended that institutional reforms and capacity building should be introduced to the Egyptian urban governance policies in order to achieve higher efficiency. Participatory and more inclusive techniques were implemented and practiced within the urban poor communities. The authenticity of the outcomes of the early experiments is debatable. The question remains whether these participatory exercises have succeeded in introducing significant solutions to the communities.

In the first section of this research, the contemporary policies of international development and aid community is brought to discussion. In the following section, a timeline for Cairo's urban history is provided, the city's different urban governance systems are examined and the influence of the recent Egyptian revolution on the urban practices in Cairo is highlighted. A case study is offered in the third section for Ezbet El Nasr, an informal settlement on the southern part of Cairo. The area offers an interesting example as it hosts the present phase of the Participatory Development Program (PDP) which is supported by the German Society for International Cooperation (GIZ). The fourth section discusses the way forward as well as contemporaneous yet feasible alternatives to nourish and sustain an effective community participation.





[1] // Governance  
and Participation

## 1.1 Good Governance – An old idea made new

The topic of governance became prominent in the international development discourse as of the late 1980's. As stated by UN Habitat (2002: 7), "There is an emerging consensus that good governance is the sine qua non for sustainable human and settlements development." Despite this relatively recent fondness with good governance, the idea itself has been argued for centuries in the works of many philosophers and artists (Pelligrini 2011: 52; Wagner 2004: 129). The writings of Plato<sup>1</sup> represented the liaison between prosperity of the polites and appropriate governance. Plato offered a hybrid form of governance for his ideal state, which acknowledged an important roles of both unelected experts and elected representatives of the society (Kofmel 2008: 29; Mukherjee 2006: 60). Besides, recent analyses of governance can be tracked back to the seventeenth-century Germanic tradition of Politikwissenschaft (political science) and the eighteenth-century; the European Age of Enlightenment (Brautigam 1992: 3). Specifically in the eighteenth-century, during the Enlightenment period Jean-Jacques Rousseau<sup>2</sup>, among many others, highlighted the relation between the accountability of state institutions and their acquired legitimacy in his social contract. The importance of citizens' control was pointed out by Rousseau through granting the individuals the right to terminate this 'social contract' if the state found ineffective and unaccountable (Brautigam 1991: 9; Keiner 2005: 231). As portrayed above, the groundwork for many who write today on questions of the evolution of governance was laid by old time philosophers (Brautigam 1992:3 ). The history of development offers a valuable perspective on the evolution of the notions of 'good governance' and 'good urban governance' as elaborated in the following lines.

In the years following the Second World War, the colonial presence of the western countries started to fade away and a decolonization process took place. Yet, the political and economical interests of many countries in the developed west, according to different scholars, necessitated building strong relations with their previous colonies. Maintaining these relations was seen feasible through offering development assistance and infrastructure projects in the developing countries (Stokke 2009: 5).

By the end of the 1940's and through the establishment of different international entities, the motivational drive of the earlier years was rearticulated in the form of an aid commitment of the developed world towards underdeveloped countries (Stokke 2009: 6).

Over the 1960's and the 1970's, international development was strongly conceptualized and it started to bloom speedily. Various developmental projects were implemented, to generate positive as well as negative outputs. However, the output was not fulfilling nor affirmative (Piffero 2009: 26). Hence, more effective and efficient forms of development were sought after.

The dissolution of the eastern bloc during the late 1980's created a global consensus on the validity of the western democratic model, and its applicable economic capabilities. As a result, international aid policies have undergone a dogmatic reform to emulate this transition towards democracy and the concept of good governance started to have an increasing presence in the development discourse (Piffero 2009: 9).

It is commonly agreed that underdemocratized public institutions have thwarted the first wave of development from achieving its intended objectives. It was no longer reasonable to refer to development as a strictly economic matter. Tackling political issues in developing countries; consequently, became inevitable, notwithstanding the traditional principle of states' sovereignty. This adoption of good governance on the executive agendas of development agencies, is seen as the politically correct alternative, for addressing the required institutional reforms in the donee countries. Good Governance emerged as the safeguard for maintaining a more effective implementation of the donors' strategies (Piffero 2009: 27; Weiss 2000: 799; Woods 2009: 41).

Governance is a broad term that encompasses all exercised methods and processes for administering a country, and managing its resources for development (Piffero 2009: 27; Weiss 2000: 797). Governance implies a partnership between civil society, private sector and state agencies in handing public goods, where government refers to the public institutions responsible for organizing any given state. This emphasis on the role of civil society within

the connotation of governance makes the two terms (government and governance) less of synonyms (Harpham 1997: 66). Good Governance is a concept which discusses the proper way of administering state affairs.

According to UNDP, “Good Governance is among other things, participatory, transparent and accountable. It is also effective and equitable. And it promotes the rule of law. Good Governance ensures that political, social and economic priorities are based on broad consensus in society and that the voices of the poorest and the most vulnerable are heard in decision-making over the allocation of development resources.” (UNDP Policy Document 1997: 4).

## 1.2 Good Urban Governance – an antidote for planning crisis

As a result of the vast global trend towards urbanization, cities have been overwhelmed with serious challenges. Meanwhile, more than half of the world's total population resides in urban centers. It is expected that this percentage will rise to reach 70% by the year 2050 (Peirce 2008: 18).

As a matter of fact, the greater part of this growing process is taking place in developing countries due to different socio-economical reasons (BMZ Information Brochure 2012: 1; Peirce 2008: 184). It causes the situation to be more dire as under-qualified institutions and under-funded service providers, working under pressure, try to accommodate for a rapid increase in the urban population. Ergo, many cities, particularly in the southern globe, suffer from deficient public services (GTZ Policy Document 2005: 8; BMZ Information Brochure 2012: 9; Mossberger 2012: 73).

This raised a need for reviewing the implemented urban policies and producing different guidelines for managing the relation between the governing and the governed. Therefore, Urban Governance emerged as an improved model; that is, unlike urban government, based on involving different actors (Public Sector, Private Sector, Local Institutions, Civil Society, ... etc.) in providing urban goods and services (Mossberger 2012: 74).

Urban Governance is important because cities are important. The momentousness of cities lies within their developmental potential and political nature. Urban regions offer great opportunities to their inhabitants due to their economically developing complexion (Harpham 1997: 67). But more fundamentally, cities are spaces for political practice (Rotenberg 1993: 14), represented in the basic acts of urban citizenship (Marcuse 2009: 76). Cities offer wider opportunities of participation in political activities, and this function, according to Lewis Mumford<sup>3</sup>, "is the distinguishing mark of the city: without it, there is only an urban mass" (Mumford 2000: 133). On the micro level, the political dimension of cities is shaped by the daily exercise of power over and in urban spaces, between urban dwellers on one hand, and between the dwellers and the administration on the other hand. Representation and control over the decision making processes mark a higher political

dimension (Tonkiss 2005: 59). In some incidents, conflicts emerge between local and central governments as they hold discrepant views regarding certain local problems. The predominance of these multiplex political configurations within the spatial domain of cities, contributes to the significance of Urban Governance (Mossberger 2012: 72,73).

In principle, Urban Governance is neutral. It does not advocate morality, nor does it promote democracy. While Urban Governance is more about coordinating the relationships, distributing responsibilities and blending resources for the collective good of a given community (Mossberger 2012: 75), 'Good' Urban Governance proposes stronger participation, sustainability, accountability, and further voices out the most vulnerable individuals (Pieterse 2000: 12).

Dictated unaccountable policies have not only failed to provide effective solutions to city planning dilemmas, but furthermore, contributed to their complexity (Peirce 2008: 12; Amnesty 2011: 13). Disregarding users' ability to identify their challenges and needs has resulted in unrealistic visions and deformed priorities (Abdelhalim 2009: 125). Top-down strategies have increased the sense of exclusion among the vulnerable urban communities and fed their lack of trust in governmental institutions. Planning from above has often produced malfunctioned solutions (Turner 2009: 43, 134) and uninhabited quarters exposed to inadequate security (Sims 2012: 187). The attributes of Good Urban Governance, if adopted, are believed to remedy the contemporary urban maladies, emanated by the classic authoritarian development model. Through democratic and inclusive methodologies, tackling factual quandaries becomes more feasible (Dillon 2011: 12; Piffero 2009: 27; UN-Habitat 2009: 11).

### 1.3 Citizen Participation – a right and a tool for sustainable urban development

A comprehensive development process can be secured through decentralized administration and strong civic engagement. The involvement of all stakeholders in the decision making process is a main pillar of Good Governance; it provides a medium for those who are generally marginalized to have their voices taken into consideration. Empowering citizens through inviting them to ‘the table’ is supposed to catalyze their inclusion in urban policy making bodies and sustain the development mechanism (Piffero 2009: 171; UNDP Policy Document 1997).

Citizen participation utilizes the local knowledge to deliver tailored solutions which meet the real needs of the users. The effectiveness of participatory practices can be attributed to their degree and veritability. In her Ladder of Citizen Participation, Sherry R. Arnstein<sup>4</sup> proposed a ladder of eight rungs to represent the different degrees of participation. The ladder starts with nonparticipation: manipulation and therapy, then the rungs ascends through informing, consultative and placement to reach the degrees of citizen power which Arnstein identifies as partnership, delegated power and citizen control. Arnstein brings attention to the simplicity of her proposed division “In the real world of people and programs, there might be 150 rungs with less sharp and pure distinctions among them. Furthermore, some of the characteristics used to illustrate each of the eight types might be applicable to other rungs.” (Arnstein 1969: 217).

In this sense, participation is approached as both a tool to enhance the effectiveness of urban development and human right. As citizens make cities, they should claim their right to directly participate in shaping their places and surroundings.

Henri Lefebvre<sup>5</sup> proposed a right to the city, that is extended to involve the rights to participation and appropriation. The right to participation assures that urban citizens are deeply and directly involved in making all decisions that deal with producing both social and spatial aspects of urban life. The right to appropriation challenges the capitalistic property regulations and brings control over public spaces back to the hands of the inhabitants.

According to Lefebvre, the right to appropriation does not only grant the urban citizens the

right to access urban space. It further ensures that the produced spaces correspond to the maximum possible needs of their users (Purcell 2002: 102).

Specifically, the current wave of community participation in urban planning and social housing designs was formed in the 60's and the 70's of the previous century. Opposing the CIAM<sup>6</sup> model of modernist urban planning, Paul Davidoff<sup>7</sup>, Giancarlo De Carlo<sup>8</sup> and John F. C. Turner<sup>9</sup> adopted community-based designs and advocated the expediency of local knowledge. The published works of Jane Jacobs<sup>10</sup> and Paul Davidoff have raised the public awareness of advocacy planning<sup>11</sup> and encouraged more practitioners to shift to this philanthropic approach (Mumford 2000: 268-272). This momentum has accelerated the institutionalization of citizen participation in the building and planning laws of different western countries, e.g. Town and Country Planning Act 1968 in the United Kingdom (Green 1996; Turner 2009: 18).



#### 1.4 Participation Criticized – Manipulative Policies.

In contrast to the philanthropic perception of the notion “participation”, many scholars have argued that the idea is more complex than how it is discussed. Consensual decision making is seen by many participation theorists as one of the core components of communicative planning. Critics of this form of planning, debate that in practice, theories of inclusion fail to generate significant outcomes (Miessen 2010: 13). Through the common liberal democratic understanding of participation, consensual decision-making process would hardly produce any new forms of knowledge. In this common inclusive process, visions are generated by everyone and the accountable representatives and professionals avoid assuming the responsibility of their own critical ideas or decisions (Miessen 2010: 43). Participatory planning is criticized for curtailing and neutralizing the role of planners and architects, which puts into question the value of their skills and academic backgrounds in the face of non-professional inputs (Mohammadi 2010: 28).

Realistically, when implemented in a discouraging ambiance, participation become strictly perfunctory. Requesting from the selected beneficiaries to attend regular extended meetings and performing participatory needs assessments, cost them plenty of time, which can be allocated for obtaining a better income (Piffero 2009: 116). In his analysis of ‘Participatory Voluntary Organisations’- PVOs in Uganda, Brett (1996), underlines the cost of participation and how the involvement of the beneficiaries takes time which means that this is a pricey opportunity cost for them. He continues that the ‘cost’ of community participation is challenging, since the labour time in participatory projects is more or less expensive. Thus, a financial and psychological burden is increased with no guarantee that the end result of their participation is rewarded the way they expect. In other words, the demanded engagement of community members to conduct different exercises and assignments, makes participation costly and inconvenient for many (Mansuri 2004: 6). This lengthy and unrewarding process, on the short term at least, often widens the gap between the planners and the communities, and creates doubts about the outcomes and the seriousness of the projects (Mohammadi 2010: 26).

A further complex aspect of participation in development is the fact that the recipients in many cases are requested to get engaged and execute some handy tasks in return. For example, being compelled to aid in the building and construction process for a certain number of hours per week. In poorer areas, some information might be hidden to ensure that the beneficiaries will keep on providing their help and not flee away after receiving their share. This strategy allows the donors to ensure a consistent input of funds. Subsequently, in several cases, participatory practices are reduced to the corporeal contributions of the project's beneficiaries, which promotes the pragmatic interests of the implementing agencies in reducing costs (Abdelhalim 2009: 132; Mansuri 2004: 7). The sincerity of the governmental support of participatory projects is fundamentally challenged by the exposed greater interest in the economic aspects of participation (Piffero 2009: 109,115 143). Opponents of bottom-up trends argue that the excessive use of participatory methodologies among architects and urbanists in the 1990's is rather a rebranding tactic and a window of economic opportunity than a sincere social responsibility (Miessen 2010: 47).

In addition, development organizations incline to restrict the broad concept of participation within the borders of their community projects. Even though effectual participation requires the exploitation of political opportunities (Kreisi 2007). In order to avoid any obstructions from their public partners, development agencies tend to avoid clear referral to the political aspects of participation. This adds ambiguity to the exact role in establishing an empowered democratized society (Abdelhalim 2009: 131).

Participatory strategies are also criticized for raising expectations and demands ceiling when presented to communities. This is later challenged by tight deadlines and limited budgets. Donors and local authorities commonly have their preset areas of interests which limit their ability to adopt a number of the projects proposed by communities (Cooke 2001: 6; Mansuri 2004: 7; Piffero 2009: 40-43). The willingness of the implementors to completely give up their ideas in favor of the community inputs cannot be fully guaranteed (Mohammadi 2010: 29).

Critics claim that programs where participatory approaches are applied, often tend to identify communities as homogenous bodies sharing mutual interests (Cooke 2001: 6). Participation proponents are censured for wishfully assuming the morality of all community members and their interest in the common weal (Mohammadi 2010: 28,30). This lack of recognition of the internal power relations and conflicts, grants more power to the already-empowered players and participates in muting the voices of the less-privileged members of a community (Mansuri 2004: 7).

From the perspective of social psychology, the group processes and behaviors that occur during participatory meetings and group-decision making can lead to the vulnerability of the community. Individuals within groups tend to defend more risky decisions to maintain an influential image or a certain prestige. In group-decision making, the responsibility for decisions is shared by every member and risk-taking members become less accountable for their decisions, which feeds this tendency towards risky shifts. Another trait of group behavior is what's known as Abilene Paradox<sup>12</sup>, where group members take actions that contradict their own (and the other members') personal wills, as they fail to communicate their actual interests, or fear to raise domestic disagreements. Groupthinking can underestimate real threats through creating an illusory belief in the power of the group. It can also generate collective stereotypes about competitor groups and potential opponents (Coke 2001: 121, Mohammadi 2010: 28).

As aforementioned, the idea of governance is all encompassing, as it includes different stakeholders. Furthermore, the terminology draws attention to the processes of urban management and implementation. Consequently, as UN HABITAT promotes "good urban governance" cultivates developmental processes as urban poverty reduction, stronger participatory means and the improvement of local ownership in development projects.

Additionally as this chapter illustrated, good urban governance is conspicuously based on the ideology of participation that depends heavily on civic engagement and the recognition of user needs and local knowledge. Good governance and participation, as argued in the

provided literature, are indispensable aspects of resonant urban planning. The following chapter offers an in depth analysis of urban management in the Greater Cairo Region and how the existent urban governance systems handle the inflating complexities of the ever-developing region.

[1] Plato is one of the world's best known and most widely studied philosophers. Through his writings, he offered utopian visions for the perfect city and governance system. He lived between (427-347 BC) in classical Athens.

[2] Jean-Jacques Rousseau, known as one of the most influential thinkers during the 18th-century European Enlightenment period, was born in Geneva, Switzerland (June 28, 1712).

[3] Lewis Mumford (1895-1990), an American sociologist who is famous for studying cities and urban cultures and their impacts on the lives of their inhabitants.

[4] Sherry R. Arnstein, an American planner and chief advisor for the US department of Housing and Urban Planning.

[5] Henri Lefebvre (1901-1991), a French sociologist and philosopher. He is considered by many as the Godfather of the French student movement in 1968.

[6] CIAM - The International Congresses of Modern Architecture, an organization that was founded by the most prominent architects of the 1920's to spread the principles of modern architecture and planning through organizing different events and congresses. CIAM was disbanded in 1959.

[7] Paul Davidoff (1930-1984), an American planning theorist. His works are significant for introducing a more social forms of planning that support vulnerable communities.

[8] Giancarlo De Carlo (1919-2005), an Italian architect who advocated participatory and consensual practices in architecture.

[9] John F. C. Turner, a British architect, writer and proponent of citizen participation in housing.

[10] Jane Jacobs (1916-2006) an American-Canadian Journalist and urban activist. Her works like (The Death and Life of Great American Cities) have strongly influenced the contemporary practice of urbanism.

[11] Advocacy Planning, a planning direction that was conceptualized by Jane Jacobs and Paul Davidoff. Advocacy planning is a concept that seeks more representation of the disenfranchised and the poorer communities in the planning process.

[12] The Abilene Paradox is a social psychology theory about the behavior of individuals in group-decision making. It was introduced in an article by the management expert Jerry B. Harvey. The name Abilene refers to a city in Texas as represented in Harvey's article:

On a hot afternoon visiting in Coleman, Texas, the family is comfortably playing dominoes on a porch, until the father-in-law suggests that they take a trip to Abilene [53 miles north] for dinner. The wife says, "Sounds like a great idea." The husband, despite having reservations because the drive is long and hot, thinks that his preferences must be out-of-step with the group and says, "Sounds good to me. I just hope your mother wants to go." The mother-in-law then says, "Of course I want to go. I haven't been to Abilene in a long time." The drive is hot, dusty, and long. When they arrive at the cafeteria, the food is as bad as the drive. They arrive back home four hours later, exhausted.

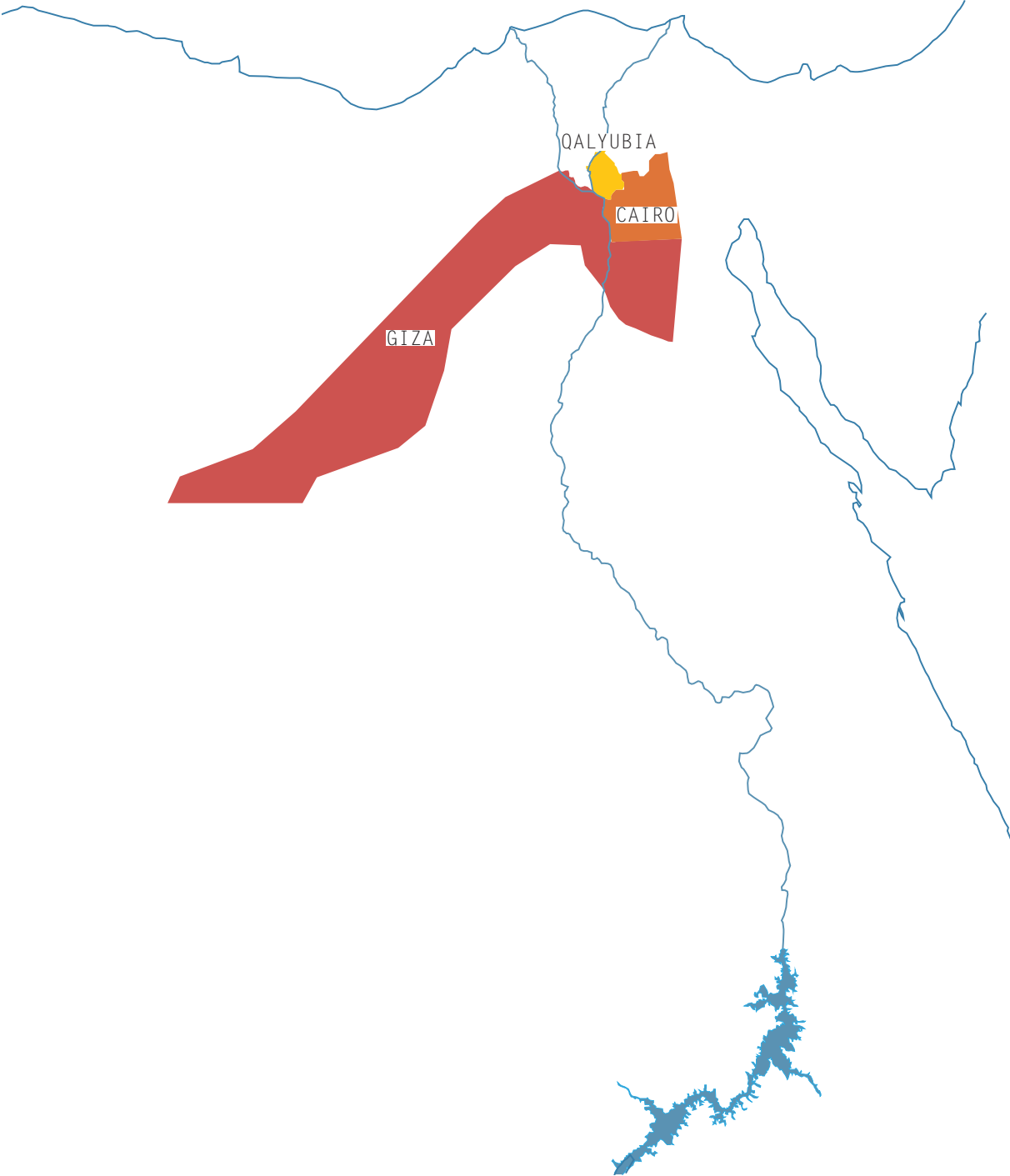
One of them dishonestly says, "It was a great trip, wasn't it?" The mother-in-law says that, actually, she would rather have stayed home, but went along since the other three were so enthusiastic. The husband says, "I wasn't delighted to be doing what we were doing. I only went to satisfy the rest of you." The wife says, "I just went along to keep you happy. I would have had to be crazy to want to go out in the heat like that." The father-in-law then says that he only suggested it because he thought the others might be bored.

The group sits back, perplexed that they together decided to take a trip which none of them wanted. They each would have preferred to sit comfortably, but did not admit to it when they still had time to enjoy the afternoon.



[2] // Urban Governance  
Systems in Greater  
Cairo Region (GCR)

2.1 Cairo: Between Formality and Informality



Map 2.1 Governorates forming Greater Cairo Region (GCR).  
Source: Author based on Google Maps.

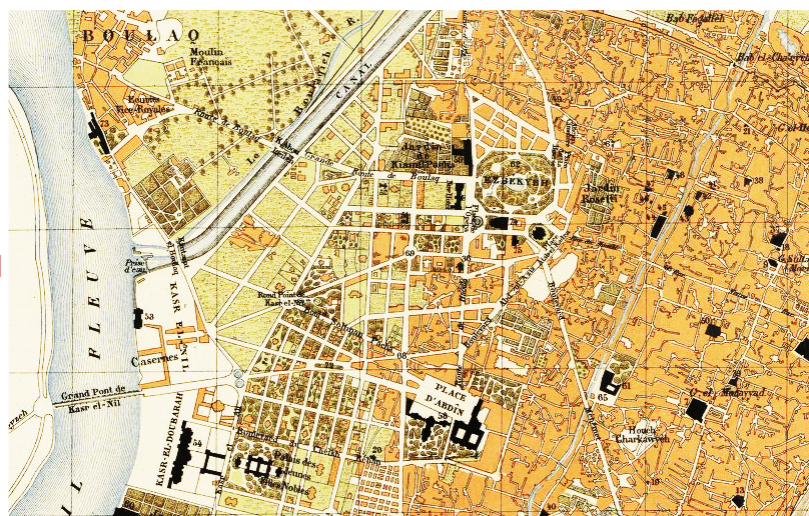


Greater Cairo Region (GCR) includes three governorates of which one of them; Cairo, is completely urban. The other two governorate; Giza and Qalyubia, include nine “rural” administrative districts in addition to their urban areas (Sims 2012: 7). Moreover, the region includes eight desert satellite towns with population of circa 800,000 inhabitants (Sims 2012: 83).

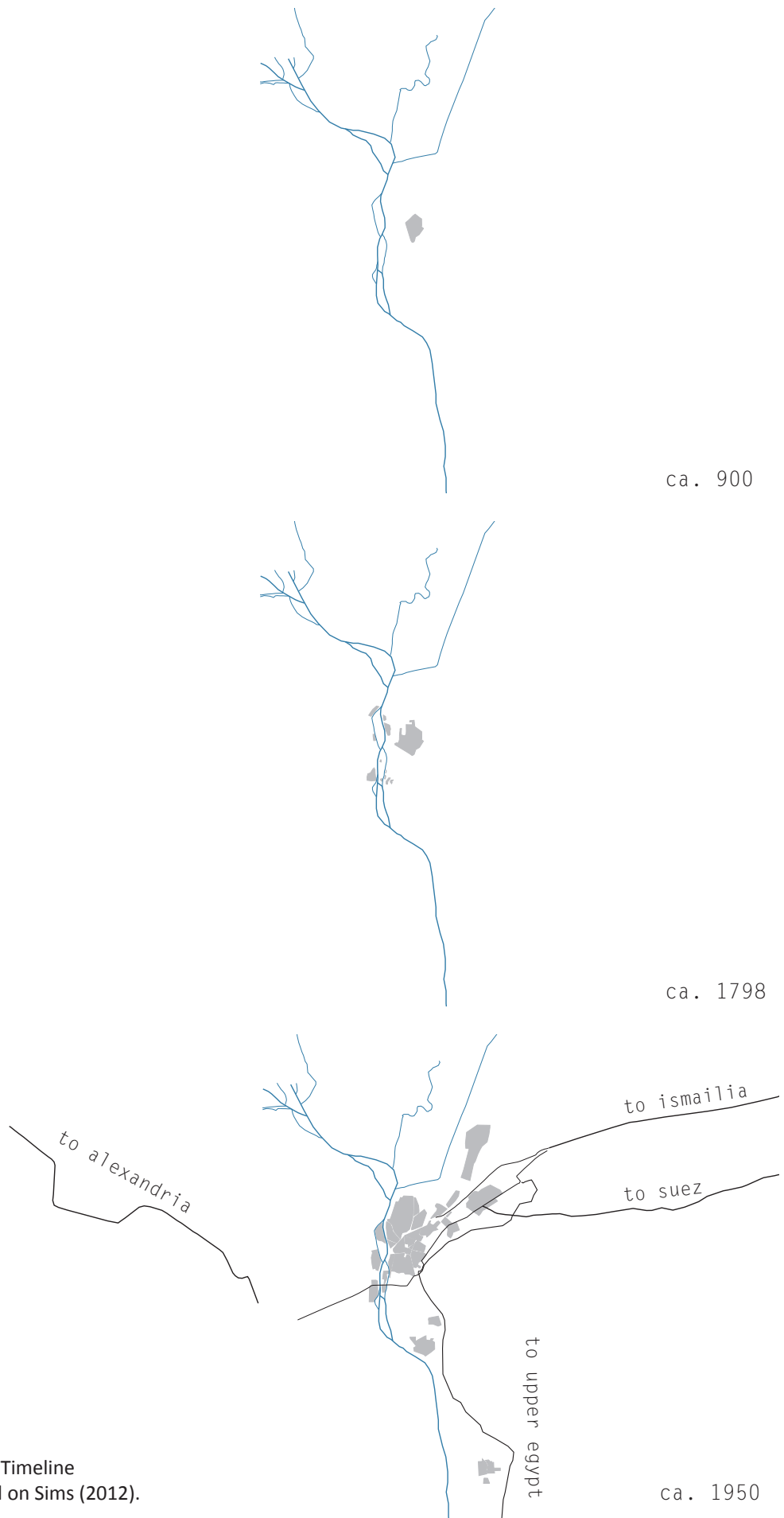
Urban development in Cairo has evolved gradually over more than 1000 years (Ketterer 2011: 20). Greater Cairo Region currently houses around 20 million inhabitant over an area of 4367 square kilometers (Sims 2012: 7). The region’s central location together with the high degree of political and service centralization in Egypt worked as population attraction factors.

The contemporary plan of Cairo can be traced back to the Fatimid dynasty<sup>1</sup>, when the current city has been declared as the official capital of Egypt. Since then it was reattributed Al-Qahira which is literally translated to The Victorious City. Fatimids provided the new capital with significant facilities namely the city walls, gates and Al Azhar Mosque and University (Ketterer 2011: 20).

In order to decipher the current urban situation of GCR, one should follow both chronological and typological analyses. Despite the ambiguity of the threshold between what is formal and informal, a significant number of observations are drawn following these analytical approaches.



Map 2.2 Downtown Cairo, 1892.  
Source: Thuillier, L., French National Library



ca. 900

ca. 1798

ca. 1950

Map 2.3 Cairo Urban Timeline  
 Source: Author based on Sims (2012).

### 2.1.1 Formal Cairo

In some measures, the total built up area of the city till the end of - what is referred to as - Cairo's belle époque<sup>2</sup>, can be regarded as formal (Sims 2012: 46). In the 40's of the previous century, Greater Cairo was formed of the historical and medieval districts, Downtown which is also known as Khedival Cairo, in addition, to few relatively modern developed districts. Both older and newer districts were considered legal as they were developed in accordance with the successive governments plans and legislations.

During this period of time, Cairo's upper middle and upper classes preferred inhabiting areas like Downtown and Zamalek as well as recently developed Heliopolis and Maadi. These quarters granted their residents an illustrious social status through reflecting a westernized ambiance and lifestyles. On the other hand, the working classes preferred residing in the older parts of the city due to both affordability and proximity to the commercial activities.

The key turning point of the city's modern urbanism took place around the fifties when the post-revolution<sup>3</sup> regime adopted a socialist model. As a result of the state urban policies and social public housing projects, GCR had undergone drastic expansions between the 1950's and the 1960's. Consequently, the population of GCR had doubled from 3 million in 1947 to 6.2 million in 1966, representing 17.4 % of the nation's total population (Sims 2003: 3).

The Nasserist<sup>4</sup> government carried out several subdivision projects, in partnership with private contractors and housing developers over agriculture and state-owned land.

The government, encouraged by a nationwide sense of pride, has also implemented industrialization policies through establishing large heavy industrial areas in Helwan and Shubra al-Khayma. This has led to further urban and population expansion due to the rural-urban migration, motivated by created economic opportunities (Ahmed 2011: 146).

In the following years, and until the mid 1970's, Egypt was in the state of war. This wartime austerity has caused a decline in the state-organized construction and development activities. During this period, Cairo's amplitude remained almost the same. Yet, GCR's population kept growing at a 2.68% annual growth rate (Sims 2003: 3).

## NASR CITY mini case study

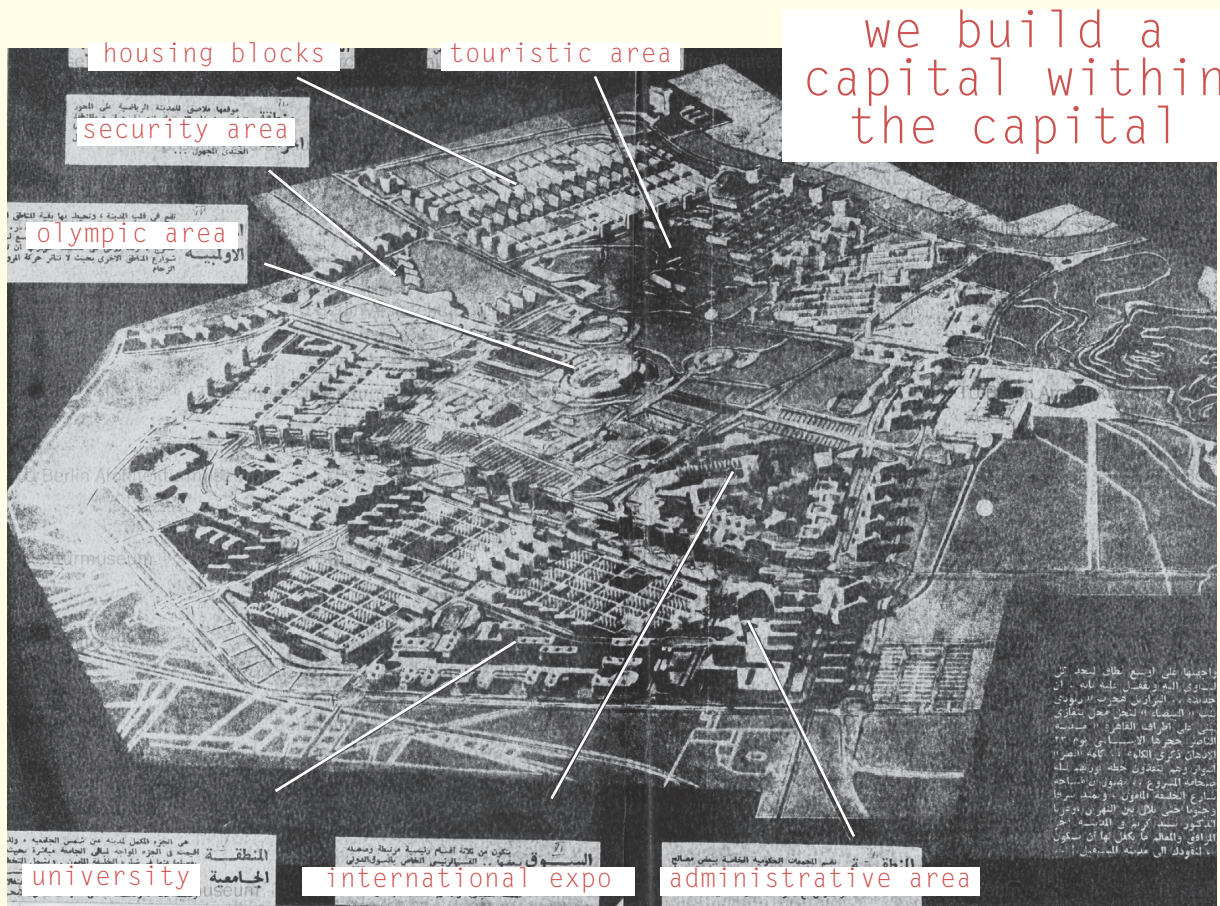


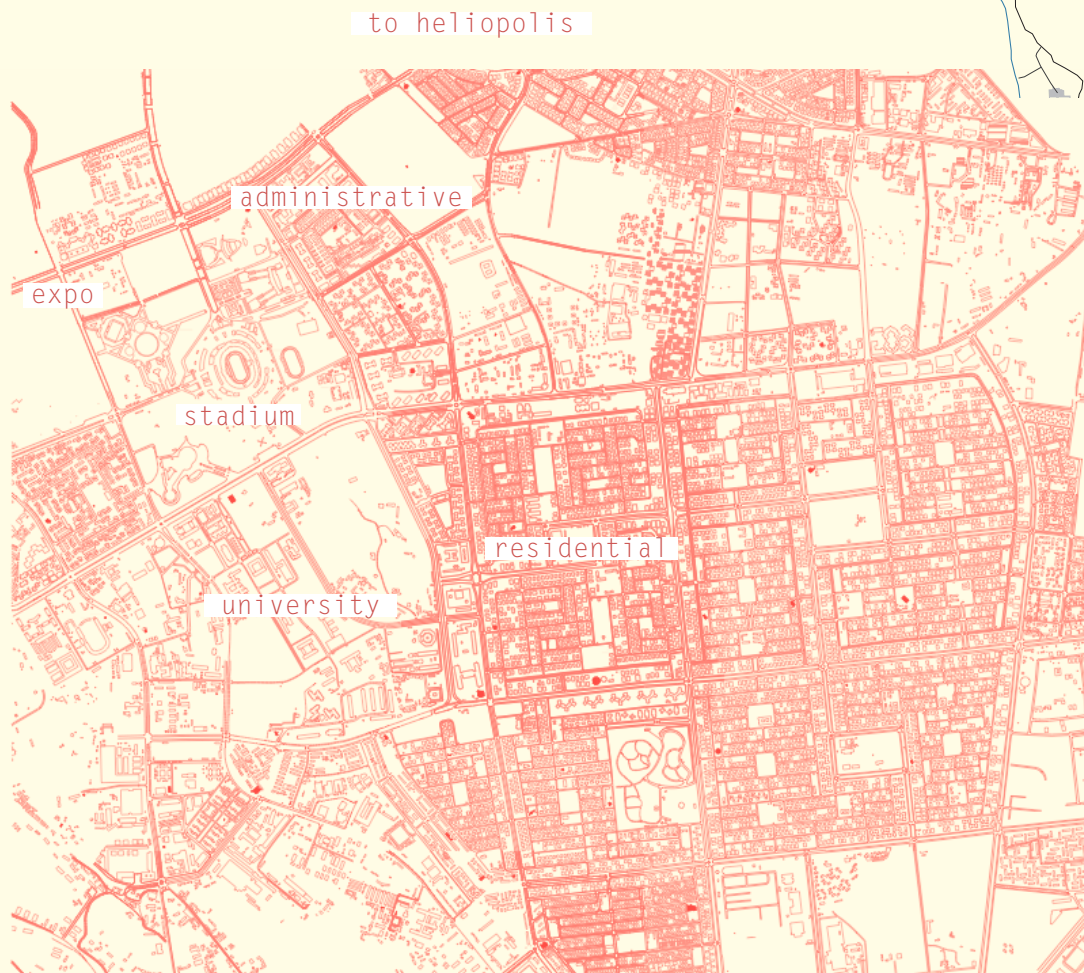
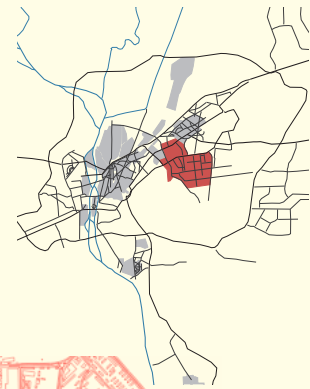
Figure I-1 Nasr City Advertisement  
Source: Frochaux (2010).

In 1956, the Egyptian post-revolution administration commissioned a committee to set the layout plan for a new urban development on the south eastern fringes of Cairo. The new development was part of a new wave of urbanization that marked a new political era and represented the government's adopted socialist ideology (Rashed 2007: 83, 84). The planning task was carried out by the prominent Egyptian architect Sayid Karim who had participated in setting the layouts of different cities in the Arab world (Frochaux 2010: 50).

Marketed as “A capital within the capital”, the modernist layout of Nasr City is formed of administrative, recreational and residential zones allocated onto two lobes and divided by El Nasr Autostrade (Singerman 2006: 85). The administrative zone hosts the headquarters of different ministries, governmental and military institutions. Cairo's International Stadium and the International Expo Grounds on the recreational zone represent the government's interest in establishing new monumental public facilities to communicate the new role of Egypt as the leading nation of both Arabic and African regions.

## ANNEX I

Map I-1 Nasr City Location  
Source: Author based on Google Earth.



Map I-2 Nasr City Master Plan.  
Source: Frochaux (2010).

According to the original estimates, the residential zone of Nasr City was planned in the 1960's to host around 200,000 inhabitants, predictably from the middle class, in cooperative housing projects and private lots (Frochaux 2010:101, Sims 2012: 53). The residential zone is composed of neighborhood units planned on a grid pattern road network; recreational area and community facilities are planned at the center of each neighborhood. Building heights were restricted in the earlier phases to 2-5 floors except for the plots overlooking the main roads. As a result of the regional instability, the population of the city increased vastly during the 1980's and the 1990's. The building regulations became less strict and violations were seen in the high rise structures and the super-legal change of use. Between 1986 and 2006 the population of Nasr City expanded fourfold (Sims 2012: 57). Today around 550,000 inhabitants reside in Nasr City, causing a noticeable deterioration in the public services and chronic traffic congestions (Frochaux 2010: 101).



Figure I-2 First Public Housing Units in Nasr City  
Source: Abu-Lughod (1971).

In the 1990's, Nasr City became famous for its mixed used buildings and shopping malls which can be reasoned by understanding its inhabitation background. A remarkable segment of Nasr City's current population is composed of Egyptian technocrats who travelled to the Gulf countries during Sadat's open market period and carried back to Egypt their acquired westernized suburban shopping trends, famous among the Gulf residents. Besides, those migrant workers have established -during their expat years- an economic status that allow the majority of their families to own private vehicles, which contributed to the revitalization of the mall business (Singerman 2006: 204, 205). A further reason is the predisposition of Nasr City's master plan to host malls; the former markets at the neighborhoods centers were usually replaced by the new shopping structures (Frochoux 2010: 162).

Today, Nasr City is perceived negatively amidst the majority of Cairenes (Frochoux 2010: 216). Residents of Nasr City commonly list traffic congestions, lack of parking spots, unregulated commercial zoning, ugly architecture and mismanaged recreational spaces among the negative aspects of their district (Cairoobserver.com 2012, 2012a, 2013; Frochoux 2010: 216).



ANNEX I



Figure I-3 Nasr City  
Source: Frochaux (2010).

21.03.2010 20:55

@waelabbas: I pray that God might doom, destroy and burn Nasr City!

08.08.2010 19:43

@Sarahcarr: 2nd that. Sort out yr bastard driving mofoss RT @BooDy: I hate nasr city, please god let me watch it burn to ashes before i die.

04.11.2011 14:20

@5orm: God's curse be upon Nasr City on earth and in heaven.

07.04.2012 19:00

@AliAbuTaleb: I hate and I still hate Cairo. Nasr City embodies all my hatred reasons for it. And I am not going to adapt. If I was not living in a new suburb, I would have committed suicide.

12.04.2012 18:40

@raghoudas: Damn all Nasr City streets every Thursday

29.08.2012 23:02

@gehan\_shaaban: Then what can we say about Nasr City and all its negative aspects?

01.09.2012 11:56

@OlaOsman: +1000000 RT @ahmada2 +1 RT @N\_Pinko: I hate Nasr City with passion.

08.10.2012 16:07

@AhmedZaky: It would be perfect if an atomic bomb would hit Nasr City, and (without killing its



Wael Abbas

@waelabbas



Following

يخرب يحرق يلعن يولع ديك ام مدينة نصر

ANNEX I

View translation

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1 FAVORITE



8:55 PM - 21 Mar 10



أبو كار

@Sarahcarr



Following

2nd that. Sort out yr bastard driving mofos RT @BooDy: I hate nasr city, please god let me watch it burn to ashes before i die

Reply Retweet Favorite More

7:43 PM - 8 Aug 10



@5orm صاحب نظرية الحرام

4 Nov 11

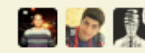
لعنة الله على مدينة نصر في الأرض والسماء

twitpic.com/7aqlzm

Details

Reply Retweet Favorite More

3 RETWEETS



2:20 PM - 4 Nov 11 · Details



علي | علي

@AliAbuTaleb



Follow

@attahawy انا كنت ولا زلت باكره القاهرة. مدينة نصر تجسيد لكل اسباب كرهى لها. ومش هاتاقلم. لولا ان الواحد ساكن في مدينة جديدة كان انتحر (:

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7:00 PM - 7 Apr 12



Raghda Safwat

@raghoudas



Follow

#اللجنة على كل شوارع مدينة نصر كل خميس  
#cairotraffic

View translation

Reply Retweet Favored More

6:40 PM - 12 Apr 12



Gehan Shaaban

@gehan\_shaaban



Follow

@Maryazeez @Sandmonkey آمال مدينة نصر نقول فيها إيه وهي فيها كل العبر (:

View translation

Reply Retweet Favorite More

11:02 PM - 29 Aug 12



أنا زهقت يا مصر

@OlaOsman



Follow



## ANNEX I

inhabitants), and then they rebuild it in a better style.

10.10.2012 15.05

@dan\_doona: I hope that a nuclear bomb would be thrown over Nasr City so we would be saved from this daily traffic jam.

02.12.2012 16:04

@HeidiElkady: Nasr City is as bad as terrorism. It has no religion!

31.01.2013 12:33

@monzy\_83: I really hate madinet nasr! #cairotraffic

13.06.2013 23:18

@alhussainym: Damn you Nasr City! Damn you Nasr City!

05.09.2013 19:50

@BooDy: I'm sad that today's explosion was not large enough to eliminate Nasr City completely, hopefully next time!

09.11.2013 17.43

@waelabbas: God damn Nasr City and the district chiefs of Nasr City. Those who are living and those who died. Damn the army generals and the Tawfiqia construction company and Hosni Mubarak and Gamal Abd EL Nasser for building Nasr City.

Figure I-4 Agglomeration of Random Tweets by Famous Egyptian Tweep and Activists about Nasr City (2010-213). Source: Author based on Twitter.com.

Reply Retweet Favorite More

2 RETWEETS



11:56 AM - 1 Sep 12



Zakovich | زاكوفيتش  
@AhmedZaky



Following

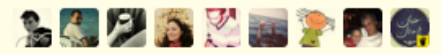
لو فيه قنبلة ذرية تضرب مدينة نصر (بدون ما حد يموت) ويرجعوا يبنوها بالستايل دة، يبقى مشروع النهضة نجح!  
[instagr.am/p/Qhio2dih7x/](https://www.instagram.com/p/Qhio2dih7x/)

View translation

Reply Retweet Favorite More

13 RETWEETS

5 FAVORITES



4:07 PM - 8 Oct 12



Dina Ehab  
@dan\_doona



Follow

مفيش قنبلة نووية تنزل على مدينة نصر كده وتخلصنا من أم الزحمة بتاعة كل يوم دى!  
#CairoTraffic

View translation

Reply Retweet Favorite More

1 RETWEET



3:05 PM - 10 Oct 12



Heidi El Kady  
@HeidiElkady



Follow

مدينة نصر لا دين لها. #CairoTraffic #NasrCity

View translation

Reply Retweet Favorite More

1 RETWEET



4:04 PM - 2 Dec 12



Mona Khattab  
@monzy\_83



Follow

I really hate madinet nasr! #cairotraffic

Reply Retweet Favorite More

12:33 PM - 31 Jan 13



Hussainy. @alhussainym

13 Jun

كسم مدينة نصر. كسم مدينة نصر.

Details

Reply Retweet Favorite More

13 Jun 13 · Details



ahman Ghareeb



Following

حزين ان انفجار النهاردة مكاتش كبير بما فيه الكفاية علشان يقضي على مدينة نصر، معلى خيرها في غيرها

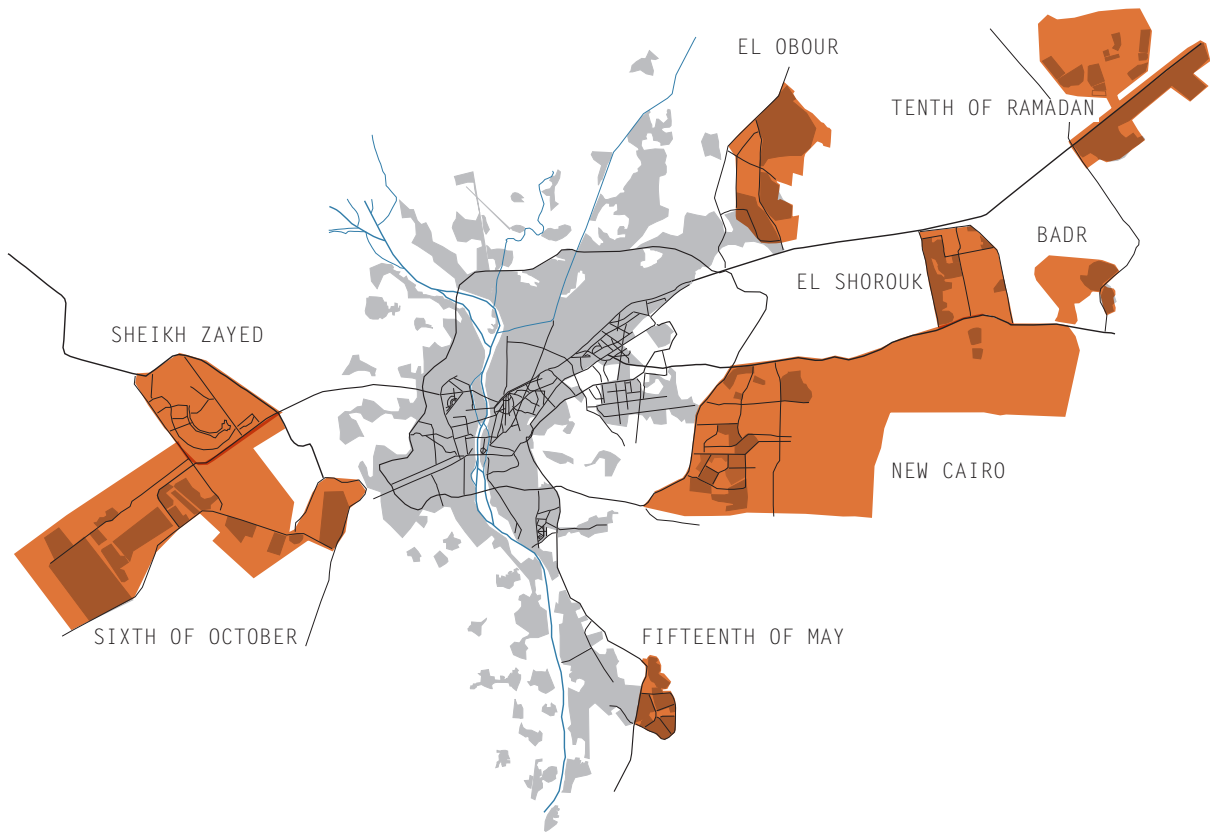
View translation

The next wave of GCR's urbanization took place amidst the late seventies prosperity years. The economy was boosting as private and foreign investments were vastly growing, encouraged by the government-fostered open door policies. This was reflected, in turn, in a rapid urbanization activity sustained by lax planning regulations. The cityscape got taken over by a vista of high rise structures, the increased demand for housing prompted real-estate developers to add more storeys to their buildings. New highways and underground metro lines were introduced to serve the booming city. Numerous developments were carried out across the eastern borders of GCR to accommodate the increasing population. The most significant is Madinet Nasr, East of Cairo, on 70 square kilometers of state-owned desert land. This included public and private housing projects, commercial buildings, public facilities, industrial district, exhibition grounds and the Cairo International Stadium. Nasr City was planned earlier in the 1960's but its vigorous expansion took place during the late 1970's (Sims 2012: 52).

The pace of the urbanization process during the 70's and 80's, in addition to the government's focus on the anemic economic recovery, left out the resilient planning institutions overlooked. This has caused the authorities to condone several building violations with regard to the licenses, height restrictions and construction materials. Subsequently, contributing to the vulnerability of the nation's real estate wealth (Ahmed 2011; Sims 2012: 52).

Although proposed earlier, satellite towns were first established during the 1970's. They were planned to limit the population growth rate of the formal city, through offering a suburban alternative. By 2006, ca. 600,000 inhabitants resided in eight satellite towns surrounding Cairo, over a combined area of 1174 square kilometers. This number reflected less than half of the GOPP estimated new towns' population for the same year (Sims 2012: 172).

The planning authorities adopted several public housing projects in the new towns and on Cairo's periphery to contain the population escaping the increased rents, and decay of the older urban districts (Sims 2012: 55).



Map 2.4 Cairo 2013 Built Up Area and New Satellite Cities  
 Source: Author based on Sims (2012).

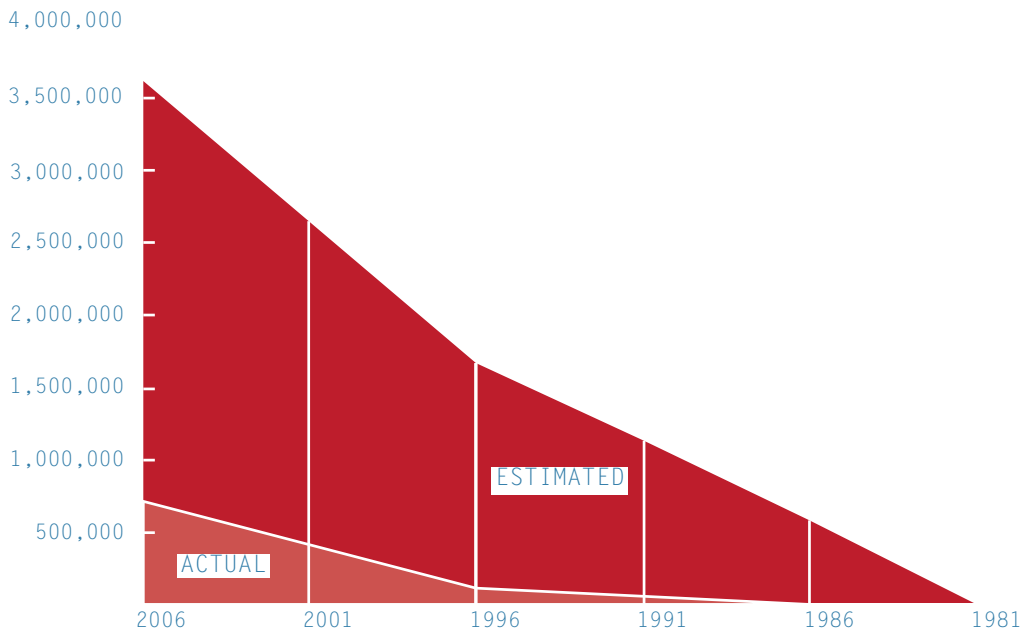


Figure 2.1 Estimated and Actual Population of New Satellite Cities  
 Source: Shawkat (2013).



Figure 2.2 Social Housing in Desert Satellite Cities.  
Source: Youtube (December 2013).



Map 2.5 Location of Social Housing in Figure 2.2 in Sixth of October Satellite City.  
Source: Google Maps (2014).

Barring the new satellite towns and the few districts introduced to the desert periphery, GCR did not encounter any significant formal urbanization over the last 20 years. Infrastructure upgrading projects were implemented to the existing formal region with the aid of foreign funders. Cairo's ring road has been completed and several flyovers built. In addition to the respective launch of two extra underground metro lines to serve the demanding traffic and transportation problems (Ahmed 2011: 149).

Since 2011, the impacts of the Egyptian revolution on the formal city could be observed in less investment in infrastructure and intermittent progress of the third underground line project. As a result of the political and economical instability, real-estate developments in new satellite towns, slowed down significantly. Cairo's traffic problems have even worsened due to the daily protests and clashes. Concrete blocks are placed to block major roads leading to vital buildings and ministries. Public art and politically-oriented campaigns could be seen everywhere on walls and outdoor billboards (Stryker 2013: 6, 33).



ACAB

الذرة سترة  
للذرة  
مبارك

UAC

R-DIP  
ANAS

الذرة



Figure 2.3 Roadblocks in Downtown.  
Source: Flickr / Eleanor Mcdowall (2012).

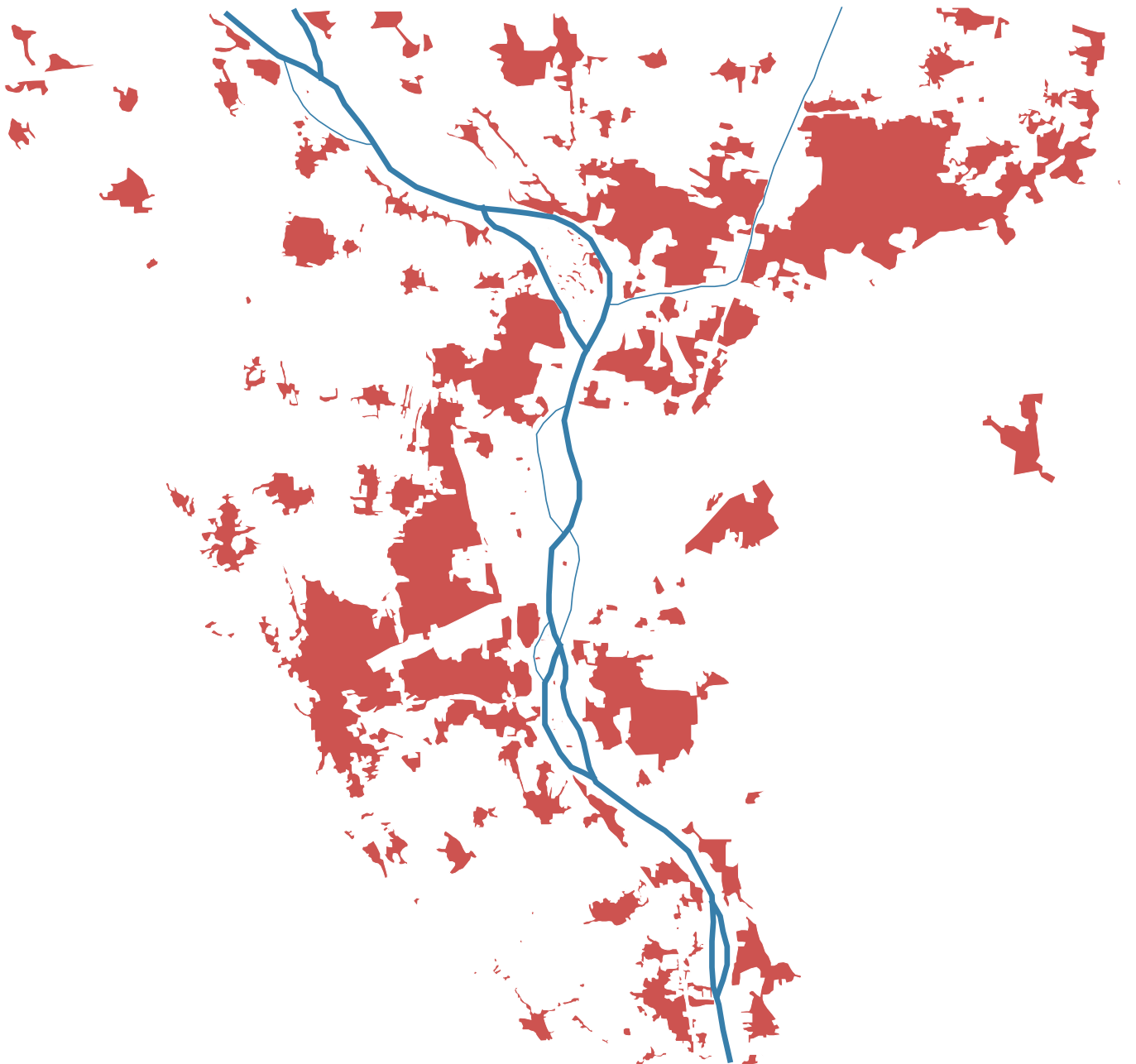
### 2.1.2 Informal Cairo

The first informal hamlets around GCR appeared in the 1960's (Sims 2003: 2). In fact, a handful of the areas built before this date, might not meet the western standards of formal urban regulations. But, as mentioned earlier in this chapter, they are considered formal because they accorded with the "regulations' tolerance" of the periods they developed (Sims 2003: 11). The transform to industrialization in the 1960's encouraged an ample movement of rural – urban migration. Smaller informal subdivisions of the agricultural land around Cairo took place, as it was more profitable to use the allocated agriculture parcels for housing purposes (Amnesty 2011: 13; Piffero 2009: 63). Alternatively, other informal settlements were growing on uninhabited state-owned pockets to resettle residents of some demolished inner slums (Sims 2003: 6).

The authorities reacted to the slowly growing phenomenon with a great amount of inadvertence (Amnesty 2011: 12; TU Berlin 2010: 21). This can be returned for the following reasons: first, the government was very engaged with implementing its industrial policies and creating new opportunities, hence, it did not see harm in turning a blind eye to a limited extralegal urban growth (Sims 2003: 11). Second, in some cases, the government itself supported these informal activities through protection and infrastructure provisions because it had not the sufficient capacity to deal formally with some emergent housing needs (Piffero 2009: 64-65). Third, as some of these developments took place over the agricultural fringes of GCR, they were considered rural settlements, which - according to the law – were not under the same strict adjustments applied to urban districts (Sims 2003: 12).

During the war years (1967-1973), formal urban plans were halted but informal ones kept growing. More informal districts started to develop around Cairo and on its edges to house significant amounts of people fleeing from the turmoil areas. An example of wartime development is Dar El Salam, near Maadi, on the southern fringes of GCR (Abdelhalim 2010: 3; Sims 2012: 62).





Map 2.6 GCR Informal Areas, 2005.  
Source: Author based on Sims (2012).

The further expansions of informal settlements over the post-war years can be attributed to the government's urban and economic policies. As the country's economy was improving, real estate rates increased dramatically due to the recent adoption of the free market model. The government introduced a new law to control the rents. Discouraged by the government's rental control policies, many real estate developers concentrated their activities in providing units for ownership only, which was not convenient to many of those who wanted to stay in the capital (TU Berlin 2010: 24). Besides, the open door policy allowed many Egyptian workers from the lower social strata to travel to Gulf countries seeking better job opportunities. The remittances sent by those workers to their families back in Egypt created a long-missing opportunity for ownership and resettling closer to Cairo, causing a boom in the informal real estate market (Ahmed 2011; Piffero 2009: 58; Sims 2003: 5).

The government responded to the increasing informal urbanism by imposing even more stricter to criminalize the construction over agricultural land. The new legislation put violators liable for legal accountability before military courts (Sims 2003: 5). In addition, the government continued with planning for new desert towns around Cairo to absorb the increasing population and hopes (Ahmed 2011: 158). Despite the early indicators of their failure to attract the estimated populations, the planning authorities conceptualized these satellite towns as the major resolution for Cairo's overgrowth (Sims 2012: 74; TU Berlin 2010: 23).

Although the residents of the informal settlements represented a great share of GCR's total population in the late 1990's, the issue was not publicly acknowledged until the violence wave of the 1990's followed by the declaration of one of the informal settlements as an independent Islamic principality by group of fundamental Islamists in 1992. With the increase of terror attacks and extremism, and the fact that many of these radical groups held their meetings and trainings in informal settlements, the problem of slums opened widely for discussion (Abdelhalim 2010: 3; Amnesty 2011: 13). Many thinkers addressed the issue in a stereotypical way. They portrayed slums as hotbeds of crime, illiteracy and extremism; which in reality did not correspond to the heterogeneous fabric of these areas (TU Berlin 2010: 45).

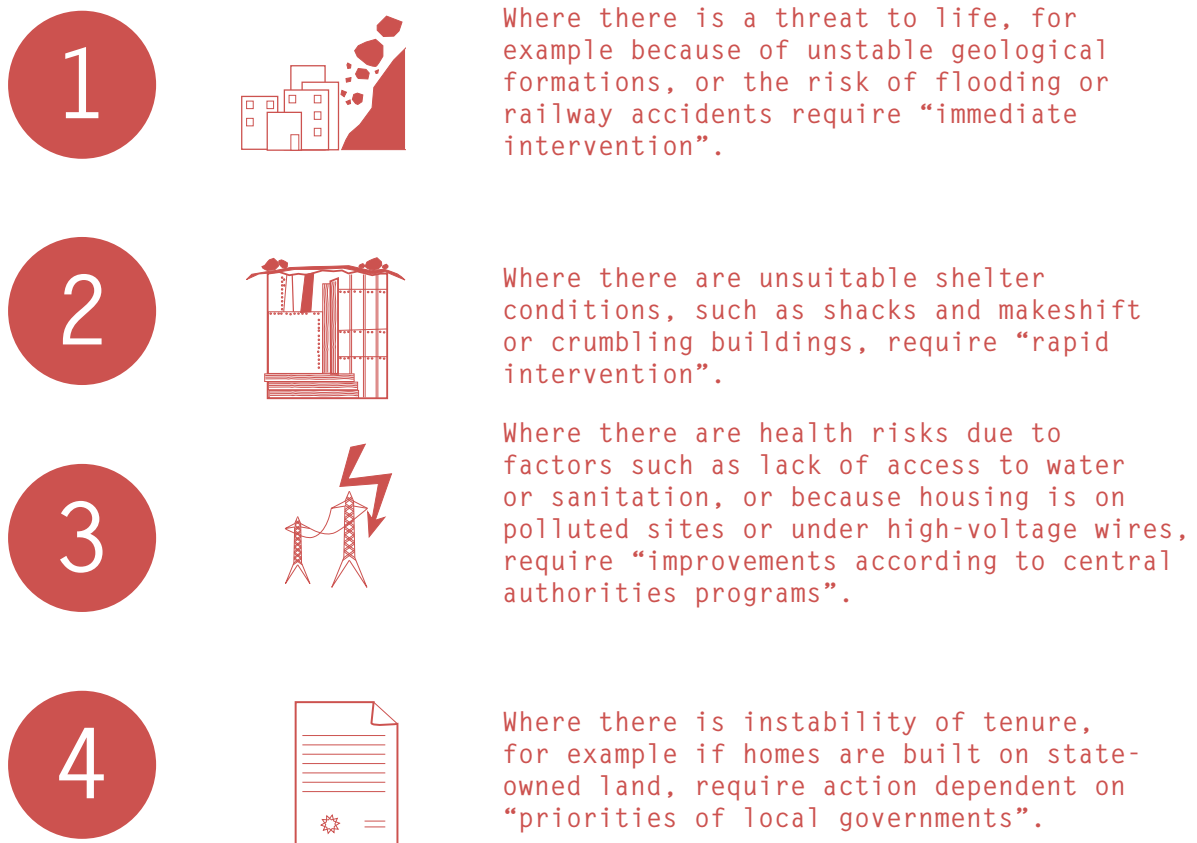


Figure 2.4 Classification of Unsafe Areas Based on ISDF  
Source: Author based on Amnesty (2011).

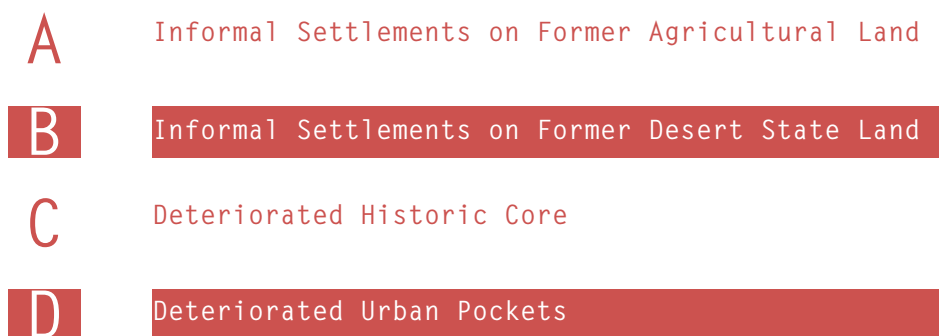


Figure 2.5 Typology of Slums in GCR  
Source: David Sims (2003).



Figure 2.6 An example of housing under high-voltage wires according to the classification in Figure 2.5.  
Source: Youtube (May 2012).



Figure 2.7 An example of shacks according to the classification in Figure 2.5.  
Source: Youtube (May 2012).

This embedded a false generalized idea about informal settlements among large segments of Cairenes to the present day. Another reason for the public acknowledgement was the completion and gradual use of Cairo's ring road. The road cuts through many unplanned districts and the motorway commuters could not neglect the red-bricked informal structures on both sides (Sims 2012: 69).

Throughout the late 1990's and early 2000's, the informal settlements in GCR have continued to evolve through densification rather than larger horizontal expansions (Sims 2012: 70). In 2009, 156 unplanned areas hosted 63% of GCR's total population crowding over only 17% of the region's total area (Amnesty 2011: 11; Sims 2012: 96 ). Several upgrade measures have been taken by the central government and local authorities to improve the livability of informal areas. Many development partners have, since then, responded to the government's plans and supported it with the required consultancy, technical and financial resources (Abdelhalim 2010: 3).

As a consequence of the Egyptian revolution on January 25<sup>th</sup>, 2011 and the successive political unrest, state control collapsed and law enforcement became missing. This produced an inflated informal construction wave over agricultural and state-owned land. As mentioned by David Sims (2013), "...according to the Ministry of Agriculture, 29,468 feddans of agricultural lands in approximately 700,000 separate cases, had been built on since the January 25 Revolution." Sims added, "For Example, in Geziret El-Warraq in Giza the post-revolution rate of population growth has increased four and a half times compared to its pre-revolution rate." (El-Kouny 2013).





Figure 2.8 An example of informal housing development stretching on agricultural land as viewed in El Marg district in northeast Cairo.  
Source: Christine Samy (2014).



Image © 2013 DigitalGlobe

2011

26 January 2011

1/26/2011







7/12/2013

12 July 2013

Image © 2013 DigitalGlobe

Map 2.7 Informal Development in Nahia, near Giza, after the 25th of January Revolution. Source: Author based on Google Earth.

## 2.2 Governing Urban Cairo – Overlapping Mandates

In this section, Governance of Greater Cairo Region is discussed with respect to January 25th Revolution. A comparative analysis is applied to governance systems pre- and post-revolution, in order to realize if the uprising has forced more democracy and decentralization into the governance system. The examined post-revolution period is limited to the period from the 25th of January 2011 to the 3rd of July 2013, when the elected Egyptian president was deposed by the army and the constitution was suspended, following four days of mass protests. The consequences and incidents following these events will not be considered in this research.

During the 30 years preceding the revolution, several scholars argued that the Egyptian state is stable and well-rooted albeit inefficient (Sims 2012: 254). This means, well-established bureaucratic institutions which are – theoretically - responsible for governance and services delivery. These institutions and public agencies function through circa 5.2 million civil servants (Ahrām Online 11.11.2012) and a budget which accounts for 30% to 40% of Egypt's GDP (Sims 2012: 252). The ineffectiveness and inefficiency of this governance system are clearly reflected in a behemoth parallel informal sector.

Egypt is administratively subdivided into 27 governorates. It is widely accepted to say that Greater Cairo Region lies within the borders of 3 Governorates, despite the fact that one of Cairo's eight satellite cities, Tenth of Ramadan, belongs administratively to a fourth governorate. In 2008, certain parts of Cairo and Guiza governorates were cut out to form two new governorates; Sixth of October and Helwan (Sims 2012: 252). An action that was later cancelled by the interim prime minister in April 2011 (Ahrām Online 14.04.2011).

Greater Cairo Region is governed through different bodies with tangled mandates in an overlapping hierarchy (Hamilton 2012: 14; Tag-Eldeen 2003: 32; Singerman 2011: 183; Piffero 2009: 105). In the following paragraphs, an institutional analysis is attempted to discern the responsibilities' domain of the different bodies.

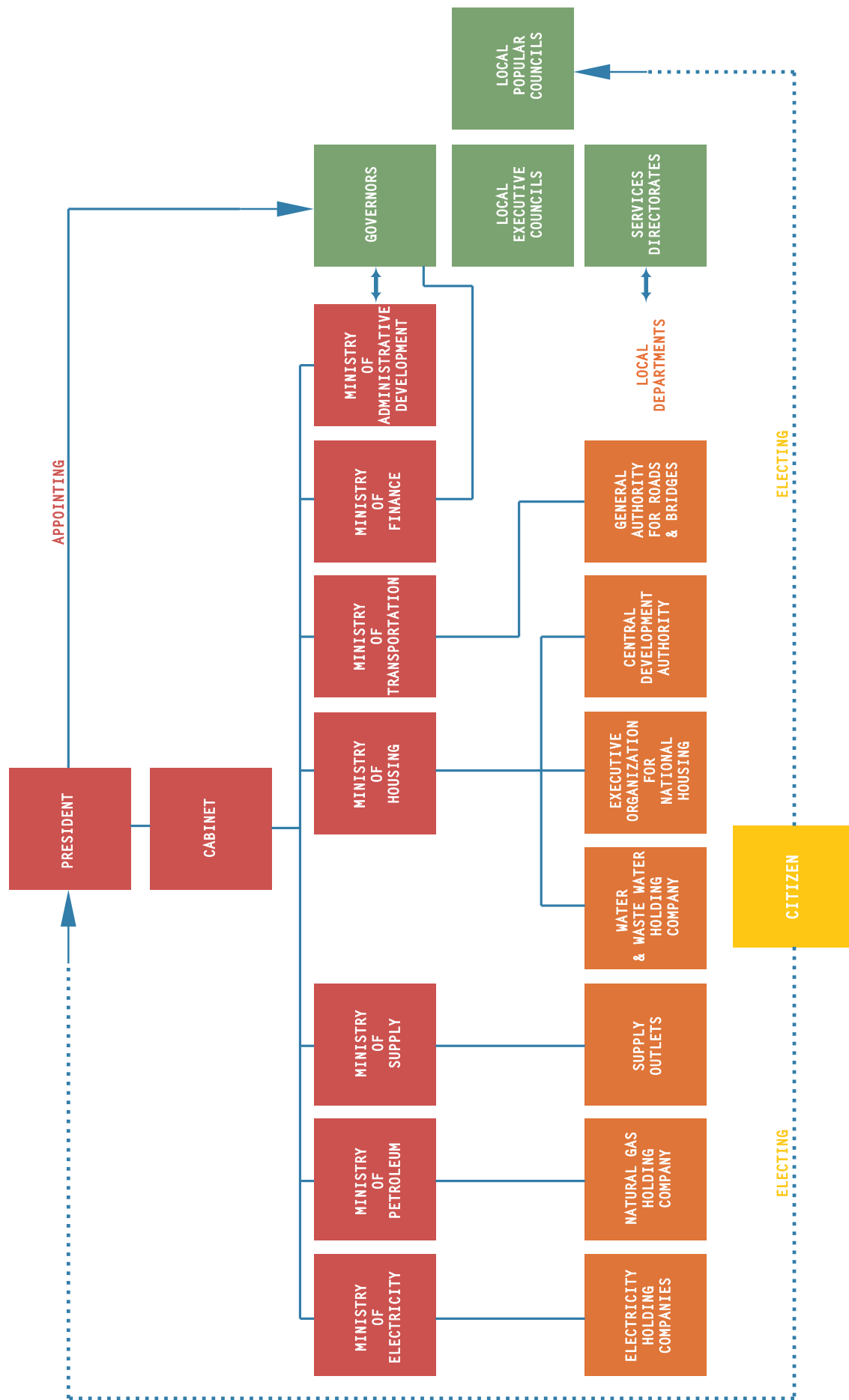


Figure 2.9 Existing Urban Management System in Egypt.  
Source: Shawkat (2013).

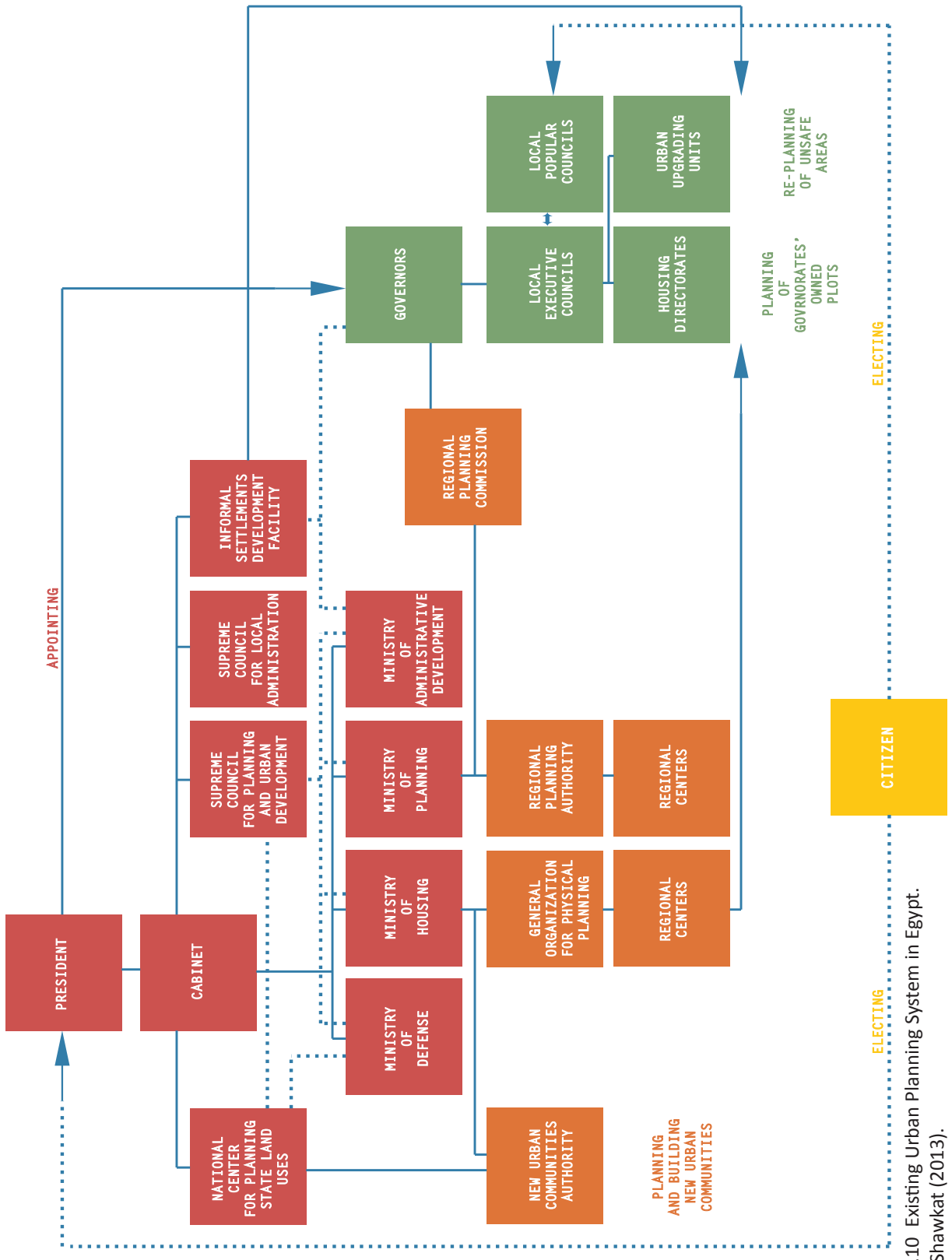


Figure 2.10 Existing Urban Planning System in Egypt.  
Source: Shawkat (2013).

### 2.2.1 Governorates

Greater Cairo Region expands over the administrative governance of Cairo, Guiza and Qalyubia governorates (Singerman 2011: 181). Each governorate is headed by a Governor who is – according to the constitution of 1971<sup>5</sup> – appointed by the president and carries presidential executive powers within his provincial level (Sims 2012: 253; Singerman 2011: 181). Governors carry a rank of a minister and they are responsible to the prime minister, who in turn beheads their periodical council meetings (Singerman 2011: 181; Hamilton 2012: 18).

Since the formation of the Republic of Egypt in the 1950's, governors have been customarily selected from a pool of retired army and police generals. This reveals the security-prioritized mindset, which governed Egypt for around 60 years (Singerman 2011: 182). Following the revolution in 2011, four governors movements took place; twice during the interim period and twice under the rule of the Muslim Brotherhood<sup>6</sup>. The selection process has not undergone any serious changes during the interim period. An increased number of civilian governors (brotherhood cadres) beside ex-military general got appointed in the following period by the elected MB president. The appointment of brotherhood cadres was strongly condemned by the opposition, for it was interpreted as a process of 'brotherhoodizing' the state apparatus (Ahram Online 14.04.2011; El-Din 2011; Ahram Online 04.09.2012; Ahram Online 17.06.2013).

Governors manage their divisions through a significant number of civil servants working under 10 to 15 different departments. The exclusive urban responsibilities of governors are limited to “ ..solid waste management, street cleaning, public housing, local street paving and improvements, building control and permits, administration of cemeteries and mines and upkeep and improvement of public gardens and public spaces” (Sims 2012: 253). Additionally, there are functions that are conjointly managed by the governorates and national-level ministries like education, traffic control and licensing (Sims 2012: 253). Units for physical planning and urban upgrading are established in few governorates (Hamilton 2012: 18), yet their effectiveness is limited by the central authoritarian planning and

development organizations (Sims 2012: 254). “Electrical distribution, water and sewerage, telecommunications, public buses and the metro” are provided through holding companies and metropolitan authorities which run under national-level ministries (Sims 2012: 253). In this context, the interference between agencies functioning onto manifold scales and levels, forms an overlapped hierarchical structure as the heads of services departments are held accountable to different entities (Hamilton 2012: 18; Piffero 2009: 105).

The autonomy of the governorates is hindered by their dependence on the central government for around 80% of their budgets (Sims 2010: 254). Thus, in practice, governorates befall tools in the hands of the central authorities, supervising the execution of its visions and policies, which often contradict with the divisions’ needs and priorities (Singerman 2011: 181).

Still not typically autonomous, the interests and modus operandi of the 3 governorates forming GCR, might differ with regard to urban governance and planning. The absence of a metropolitan authority for managing the regional affairs and coordinating between the different public bodies, holds back most planning efforts and makes the metropolis vulnerable to informality and crisis (Hamilton 2012: 17).

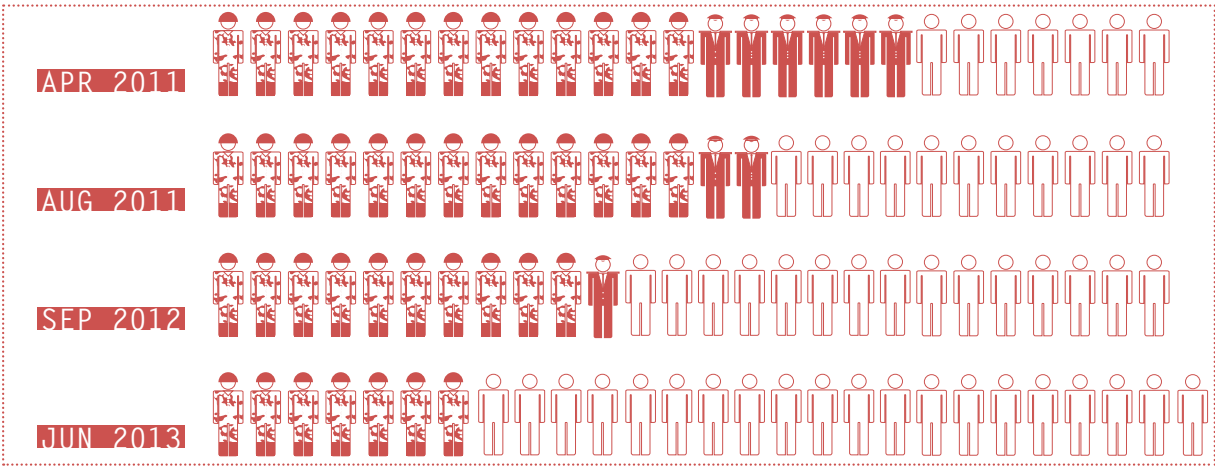


Figure 2.11 The different affiliations and backgrounds of the appointed governors, post the revolution period. Source: Author based on (Ahram Online 14.04.2011; El-Din 2011; Ahram Online 04.09.2012; Ahram Online 17.06.2013).

### 2.2.2 Ministries

Urban governance and planning of GCR lie within the jurisdiction of at least 5 national-level ministries. The Ministry of Housing, Utilities and New Communities plays a central role through drawing the national policies for housing and urban/rural development. The ministry is also responsible for designing and supervising the execution of public housing and public facilities projects. The mandates of the ministry of housing extend to include setting the Egyptian code for design and construction and the regulations for foreign investments in Egyptian real estate market (Hamilton 2012: 15; Environmental Agency Austria 2011).

The Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation (MoPIC) is responsible for supervising and allocating the required funds for urban upgrading plans. Besides, it is responsible for jointly implementing projects funded and managed by international donors and agencies. The ministry is a merge of two former portfolios: Ministry of Economic Development (formerly Ministry of Planning) and Ministry of International Cooperation (Piffero 2009: 108, EC Document 2011: 6; Hamilton 2012: 15).

In addition to having control over vast areas of land, The Ministry of Defense reviews and approves all national, regional and local plans (Hamilton 2012: 15). Further, it usually participates in the construction of social housing and infrastructure projects (Bakry 2011; Abdelhadi 2012). Projects within the borders of historical and touristic areas are reviewed by ministries of Tourism and Culture (Hamilton 2012: 15). The Ministry of Religious Endowments (Awqaf) manages a significant number of properties within GCR (Gad, H. Personal communication, 7th of May 2013) and the Ministry of Local Development is responsible for coordinating between central authorities and governorates.

### 2.2.3 Informal Settlements Development Fund (ISDF)

The ISDF was established by a presidential decree in 2008 after a rockslide tragedy in Al-Duwayqa informal settlement<sup>7</sup>. The main objective of the fund is to survey and classify the informal settlements nationwide according to their degree of danger. In addition, it is responsible for proposing general policies and plans for informal settlements.

The fund is a directorate of the Egyptian cabinet and is directly accountable to the prime minister. Decisions and plans developed by the fund's board are enforceable, if approved by the prime minister. A collaboration agreement is then signed between the fund, the jurisdictional governorate and the ministry of finance for implementation of the upgrading strategy (Amnesty 2011: 2; Hamilton 2012: 15; Zayed 2012: 25; ISDF 2011: 6).

#### 2.2.4 General Organization for Physical Planning (GOPP)

GOPP was first introduced in 1973 as a subordinate body of the Ministry of Housing to comply with the mandate to develop general public policy for physical development plans (Tag-Eldeen 2003: 24) and preparing urban planning programs as well as drawing strategic plans for the governorates (Hamilton 2012: 16). Being central, the organization overshadows the local planning units within the different governorates, leaving them technically weak with very little to do (Sims 2012: 254). Supposedly, GOPP coordinates with ISDF to include the latter's vision towards informal areas in the national strategic plans. This coordination is challenged by their interfering mandates and missing hierarchy.

#### 2.2.5 Local Government

The smallest administrative units of GCR's urban governance hierarchy are districts and satellite villages equally. In completely urban governorates (like Cairo), districts compose the level directly below governorates while in complex governorates like Guizah and Qalyoubia, cities and villages make an intermediate level above districts and satellite villages. (Piffero 2009: 103). These administrative units function through Executive Councils (EC) formed of appointed services directors and headed by districts chiefs who are usually, like governors, of a military or security background (Singerman 2011: 183). For every district or satellite village, there is a correspondent Local Popular Council (LPC) formed of 10 to 20 elected members representing the interests of the unit's locals. Each council is represented on the higher level's council by 2 members (Sims 2012: 255).



The effectiveness of LPCs is criticized for several reasons. First, with the exception of the last LPC elections in 2008, the turnout is usually between 3% to 5 % of the eligible voters (Sims 2012: 256). Second, the candidates lists are dominated by influential families and NDP<sup>8</sup> members, which calls into question their ability to favoring the interests of their communities over those of their party (Piffero 2009: 106). Third and most important is, LPCs lack any real influential power over the decision making process. Their mandates have shrunk since 1979<sup>9</sup> to reviewing and approving spending proposals formulated by the executive units. There are rare incidents where LPCs did not approve the policies of their correspondent executive bodies (Singerman 2011: 184).

More than ten lawsuits were filed after the revolution in 2011 to dissolve the local councils due to their members' affiliation with the ousted president's National Democratic Party. Later in June of the same year, the Egyptian administrative court decreed to dissolve all 1750 local councils of Egypt (El Gundy 2011). Ever since, development plans and local projects are reviewed and approved by the appointed executives only and elections were planned to take place after approving a new law for local administration (Ashoub, S. Personal communication, 30th of April 2013).

In the first post-revolution constitution, drafted in November 2012 predominantly by Muslim Brotherhood figures and supporters, further authority was given to the LPC's. Nevertheless, the articles concerned with local administration were vague in their outlining of democratic governance. As Article (190) states: "Decisions taken by the local councils on matters within its purview are final. The executive authorities may only interfere to prevent the council from overstepping limits, or causing damage to public interests or the interests of other local councils". The power of the elected council were subjected to a higher-level intervention from the appointed executives. Clear definitions for the 'limits' or 'interests of other Local Council' were not offered. Another example is Article (187) which reads, "The law regulates the manner of selecting governors and heads of other local administrative units, and defines their jurisdiction". While the president appoints governors under the current law of local administration, the new constitution left the door slightly open for future changes (tadamun. info 2013b).

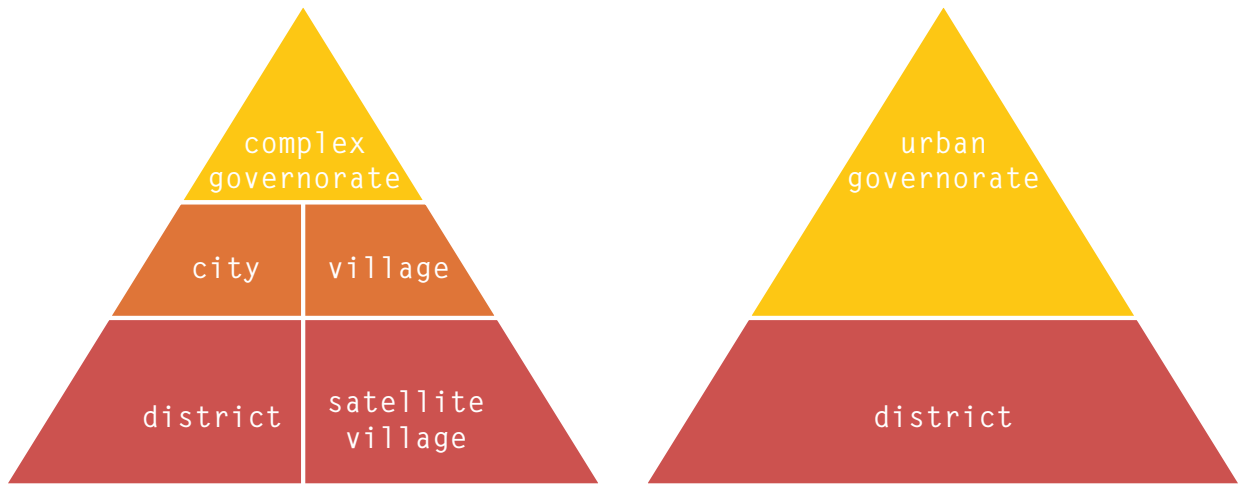


Figure 2.12 Hierarchy of Local Administration Units.  
Source: Piffero (2009).

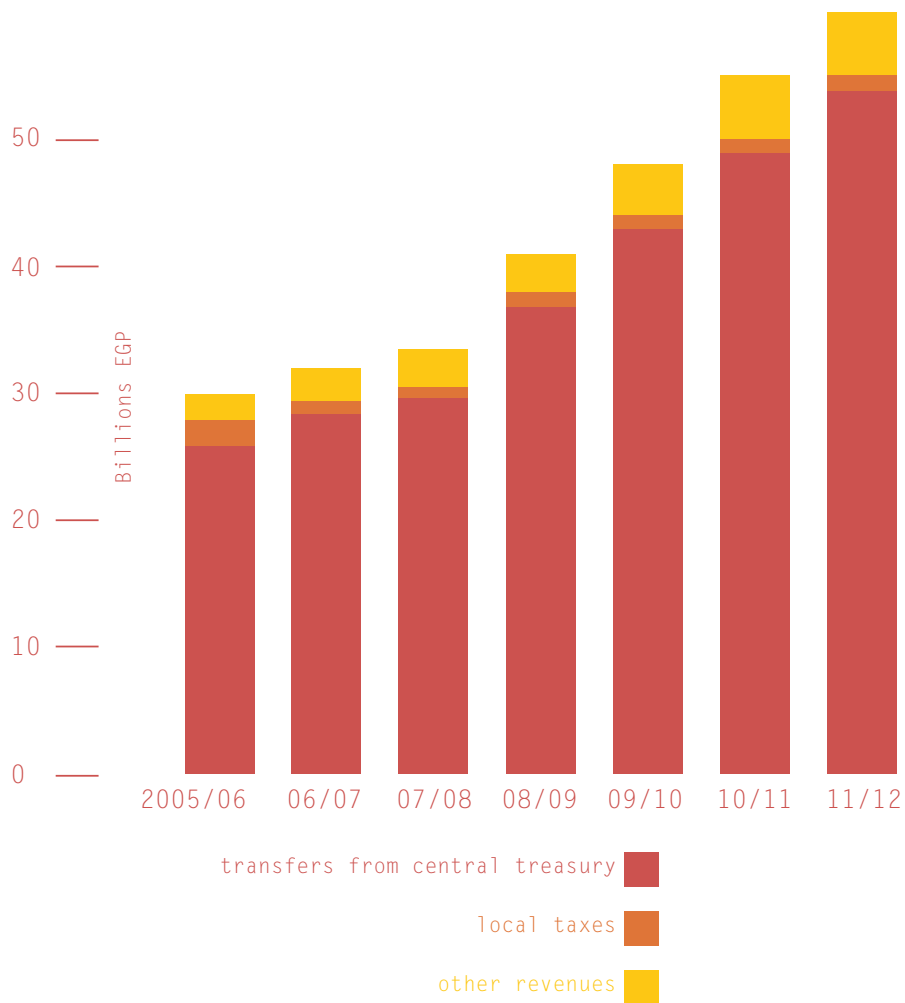


Figure 2.13 Public resources dedicated to local administration by type.  
Source: tadamun.info (2013c) [regenerated]

### 2.3 Participation - Different Degrees and Definitions

Softly, the Egyptian state started encouraging more citizen participation since the 1970's. This slow transformation to a more democratic process was a part of the state's efforts to reform its economy through forming new bonds and relations with the western forces in the post war years. The required image demanded a minimum limit of political reforms to create an incubation environment for investments.

Motivated by donors and development agencies policies, the terms "participation in development" and "community participation" started to gain immense presence during the 2000's in public strategy documents and guidebooks. In the building law number 119/2008, much space was devoted for consolidating the framework of participatory planning. The law provides for the inclusion of the local leaders and community representatives in identifying challenges and solutions proposals, in addition to consultations of different actors for setting the future planning scenarios (Hassan 2011: 207). Nevertheless, in application, participatory practices in planning have been narrowly limited to certain development projects within informal and unplanned areas (Afify 2011: 32) which could fairly be construed to be a result of the indirect pressure and recommended reforms by partner donor agencies and international donors (Abdelhalim 2009: 141).

Meanwhile, the strategy of Cairo governorate towards informal areas indicates that services upgrade in unplanned areas should be done by involving citizens and through participative development methodologies. It also points out that expanding these participative methodologies in determining problems, priorities and upgrading intervention would secure a sustainable process (Cairo Governorate 2006).

The General Organization for Physical Planning claims that the second phase of the governmental efforts for upgrading informal settlements (2005-2010) was based on participation of citizens, civil and community-based organizations (GOPP 2011), whereas for the ISDF, a more general gesture of participation is adopted (ISDF 2011).

However, less evidence is available to prove that these strategic and legislative statements are effective to maintain a satisfactory degree of democratic planning and governance. To begin with, “Community Representatives” is a notion that usually refers to the Local Popular Councils within the context of state sponsored projects and interventions. As argued earlier in this chapter, the representativeness of LPCs is controversial due to a lack of trust and conflict of interests between LPCs’ members and the represented communities. Furthermore, it’s hard to secure an abundant participatory process where both monitoring and political will lack. Thus, citizens consultation become a “checklist” item rather than an empowerment tool or a right to development (Abdelhalim 2009: 141).

It has been reported that in most unsafe areas which were planned for evictions, community members were not consulted about the decided intervention and if there were any other alternatives. Moreover, they were informed about evictions very shortly before the execution dates (Amnesty 2011: 37). In a personal communication with one of ISDF directors, he explained that these measures are taken to prevent any roguery from the beneficiaries side.

Mistrust, bureaucratic and untrained civil servants and the superficial adoption of participatory concepts, hinder a genuine involvement of citizens in planning, despite the Egyptian government’s declared tendencies towards approaching a decentralized model of urban governance.

For many urban specialists, the revolution was regarded as “an urban revolution rooted in unjust urban conditions and played out in the public spaces of large cities” (Nagati 2013: 6). This has raised expectations among Egyptian urbanists to experience the revolution’s payoff in more inclusive and fair urban strategies. The different post-revolution administrations failed to show enough efforts in responding to the country’s urban challenges. Traditional public housing and satellite development plans have continued to exist. In the “learning from Cairo” conference held in Cairo in April 2013, Karim Ibrahim, an architect and urban activist, summarized the situation, “Following the Revolution, people hoped to see a shift in state policies towards urban areas to address their urgent needs and redistribute the city’s resources in a more equitable manner. However, when we learned about the Morsi

government's urban development plans, questions started to arise about the state's ability to integrate and adopt the popular demands of the Revolution. Former plans of the Mubarak Regime such as Cairo 2050 resurfaced in the official discourse and were dressed up by different names and supposedly different approaches. The Ministry of Housing announced it will "immediately" start building 44 new cities across Egypt, yet this direction simply mimics the former regime's policies. Has the government changed its approach? Not yet, unfortunately" (Stryker 2013: 105).



## ANNEX II

The accumulation of the urban complexities of Cairo over many years, is of a paramount significance, and has created an increasing sense of anger and dissatisfaction towards the surrounding chaotic environment among many Cairenes. The discontentment of Cairo's residents has made its way to the Egyptian media scene. The daily tribulations faced by Cairenes were bluntly portrayed in "Le Caire" documentary by the renowned director Youssef Chahine. The movie "Yacoubian Building" adapted from a novel by the same name, written by Alaa Al Aswani, depict a popular scene expressing the deeper social reasons for the disintegration of downtown's architecture and the irreplaceable style it once buoyed up. Traffic congestions, pollution and loose building regulations were represented in songs by alternative bands and signers like Yousra El Hawari, Cairo Complaints Choir and Masar Igbari.

ANNEX II



Figure II-1 Screen Caption from Yusra El Hawary's song (The Wall), where she mocks the installed concrete blocks in downtown streets. Source: Youtube (April 2012).

# صباح النخري يا قاهره

لأجلك يا مدينه الغبار والدخان أصلي

Figure II-2 "Shitty Morning Cairo! - I pray for you, the city of dust and smoke."  
Source: Tumblr (unknown).

In the social media, Cairo is often represented as a frustrating, depressive and an ugly city. Bloggers and subscribers across the different social media platforms, tend to share posts that express their detest and abomination of the city's daily problems. Their everyday struggles communicated through their shared posts, often reflect the suffocating traffic jams, the unclear polluted air, or losing the city's distinguished architectural character, to construct dreadful and unfitting huge concrete blocks.

# العاهرة الكبرى

التحرش العمراني

Figure II-3 "THE GREAT PROSTITUTE - Urban Harassment"  
Source: Facebook (unknown).



# cairo kills.



Figure II-4 "cairo kills."  
Source: Tumblr (unknown).

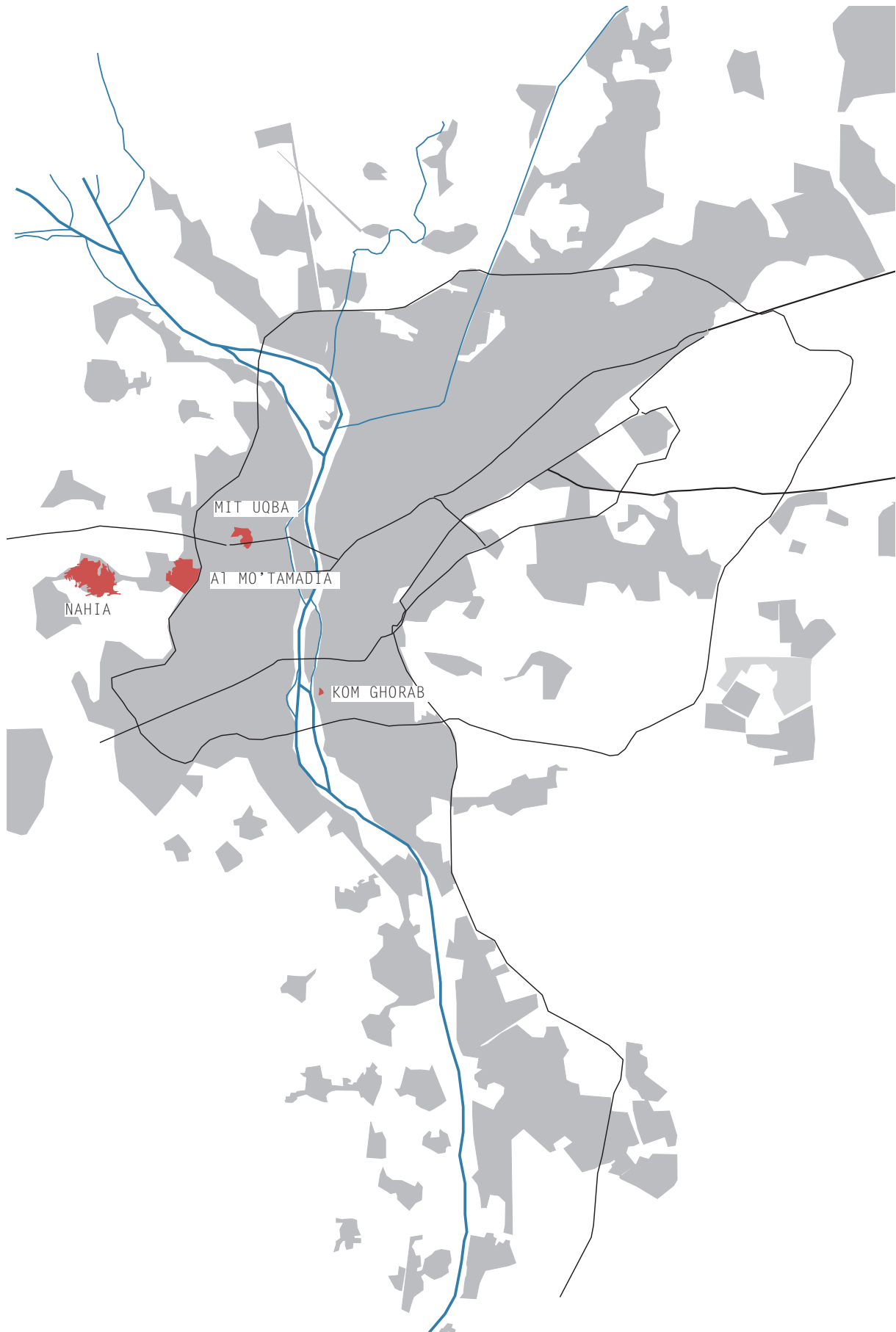
## 2.4 Cairo's Bottom Up

The inability of the Egyptian government to deliver the required public services to the urban poor population has opened the doors for community-driven informal activities to fill the missing role of the state. It is argued that throughout the past four decades, informal activities had shared with a significant portion in Cairo's growth. Informal settlements had offered a feasible alternative for housing and income generating projects (Sims 2012: 268). It is reported in different incidents that communities were able to substitute the state and autonomously offer tangible solutions to their chronic problems as further explained below.

After the revolution on January 2011, the inhabitants of Al Mo'tamadia village in Giza constructed a long needed highway exit from Cairo's Ring Road to their village to facilitate their daily travel and offer a better connectivity to the rest of the city. Through personal efforts and contributions by the residents, the self-built exit was later paved, lighting facilities were installed and traffic signs were provided (Youtube January 2012; Hamdi 2013).



Figure 2.14 Al Mo'tamadia Exit.  
Source: Stryker (2013).



Map 2.8 Location of Al Mo'tamadia, Kom Ghorab, Mit Uqba and Nahia informal developments in GCR.  
Source: Author based on Google Earth.

The construction process lasted around 3 months and cost around 1 Million Egyptian Pounds. It is noteworthy to mention that the residents of informal settlements around the Ring Road have usually constructed small access points or staircases to increase their accessibility to the important route, but this case was the first in this scale and significance. The community was able to document the whole process on video and they have even invited the Governor of Giza to inaugurate it (Stryker 2013: 82). In the following months, the General Authority for Roads and Bridges refused to ratify this exit and supervise it, as it does not meet its technical construction code.

Another example from Giza, is on the self-organized 'Popular Committee' in Mit Uqba which was persistently able to find resolutions to their urban problems and implement those resolutions on their own. In the course of the installing the natural gas network in their neighbourhood, repaving the streets was a necessity. But the residents of the area with a futuristic look, were aware that any future repair work of the gas network would entail tearing up of the asphalt streets, once all over again.



Figure 2.15 Communities paving the streets of Mit Uqba  
Source: [tadamun.info](http://tadamun.info) (2013)

They themselves came up with a pilot scheme to the head of the district, suggesting repaving their streets using cement interlocking paving blocks instead of asphalt. Using their own savings, residents were able to pave their streets; even more with the money left behind they planted trees.

This Popular Committee declined aid from NGOs as well as offers from some political parties and former members of the dissolved National Democratic Party. The Mit Uqba paving initiative is an outstanding example of local self-management and citizen-government collaboration (tadamun.info 2013).

In May 2012, The Shadow Ministry of Housing, an initiative for raising awareness about housing and shelter rights, produced a documentary about informal communities around Cairo. An interviewed resident from Kom Ghorab, a slum near the religious center in older Cairo, pointed to the fresh constructed green entrance to his community and stated, “We plant trees around the entrance by our own monetary contributions, waste removal is performed by our own efforts, even gas cylinders we distribute them through self-efforts. State? There is no state. Government? There is no government.” (Youtube May 2012).



Figure 2.16 Entrance of Kom Ghorab community.  
Source: Youtube (May 2012).

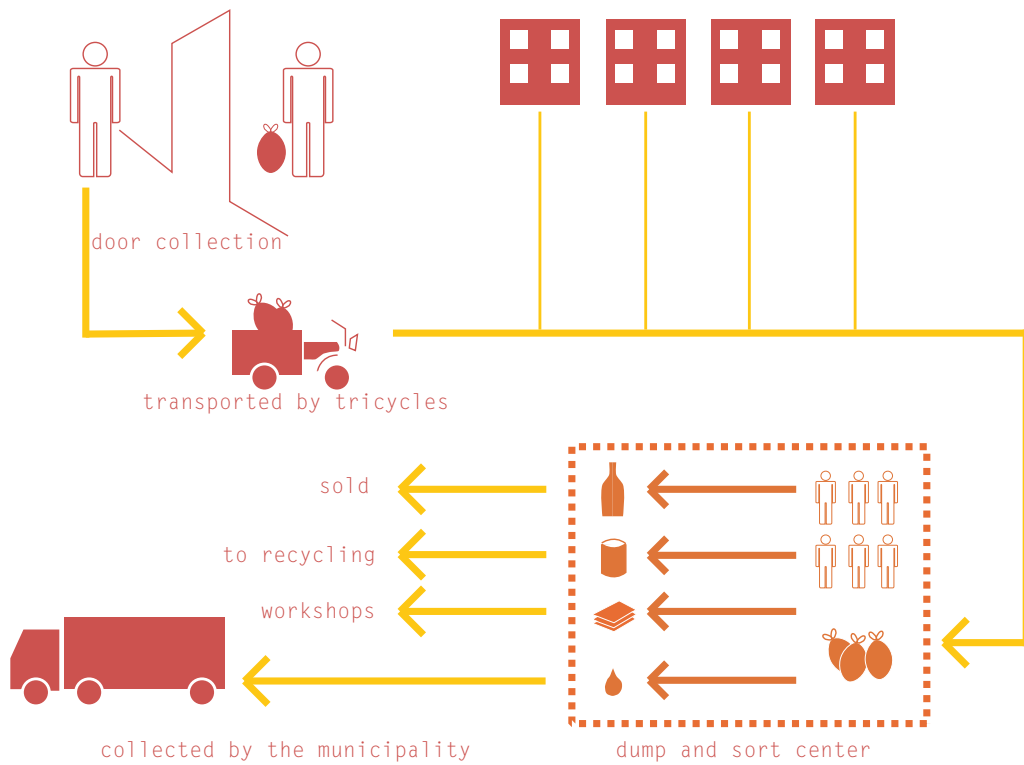


Figure 2.17 Solid waste collection in Nahia.  
Source: tadamun.info (2013a) [regenerated].



Figure 2.18 Solid waste collection in Nahia.  
Source: tadamun.info (2013a).

A very recent stupendous exemplar is that of Nahia village, located at the Kerdassa district, Giza governorate. Its 100,000-tenants suffered from polluted drinking water causing high rates of kidney failure (tadamun.info 2013a). Through organisation, effort and collaboration with the involved institutions, realistic and attainable outcome was achieved. The initiative entirely started by Nahia villagers who allocated the limited resources of their community—public and private—to the implementation of a sustainable project for dealing with their solid waste quandary. The plan surfaced by the residents themselves after the first wave of the revolution, amidst the formation of Popular Committees (tadamun.info 2013a). The “Nahda Foundation” is the name of the community association in Nahia village that was established in 2011 to collect and recycle solid waste of the village. The community foundation claims that their self-initiated developmental project is vastly successful, covering 70 percent of the village.

Those community driven projects mentioned above, support policies of Al-Majhud Al-Dhati (self-reliance), which recently the government has been trying to promote. Although this term denotes that freedom is granted to the communities to improve their surroundings and neighborhoods as portrayed. Nevertheless, it is on the other hand questioned if that Al-Majhud al-Dhati or self-help policies are in reality a form of self-obligation enforced by the state. As stated by Ali Abdel Wahab, the president of Ard Al Liwa’s LPC (another informal settlement in GC), it is not Al Majhud Al Dhati but rather Al Ijbar Al Dhati (i.e. forced self reliance). More or less an “informal taxation policy imposed on the working class districts”, as stated by Sarah Ben Nefissa (Singerman 2011: 190). As the experienced architect on Cairo’s informal areas, Dr. Khaled Abdelhalim debates:

“By leaving the people to build or organize their markets informally, the government is able to accuse them of violating laws at any time. It is an indirect way to control as well as a way to reduce people’s demands and expectations of quality services, since they are informal.” (Hamilton 2012: 36). In other terms, top-down distribution have worn out the government capacities and led to what Dorman has referred to as the “logic of neglectful rule” (Dorman 2009).

This chapter outlined an underlying understanding of the political context of Cairo, in an attempt to understand the convoluted relationships involved in urban planning and urban governance in this city. As emphasized by (Dorman 2009: 419), informal settlements in Egypt are “an outcome of an authoritarian political order as well as embedded in the informal control stratagems used by Egyptian governments to bolster their rule”. In the 1990’s, during Mubarak’s tenure, the government concentrated on counterterrorism and was concerned if no actions were taken with the informal areas, they would become a breeding ground for drastic movements; the government back then bluntly condemned informal settlements for terrorists’ attacks. Although on one hand that bonded crime and terrorism to these areas as mentioned in a report of the Upper house of the Egyptian Parliament -the Shura Council- in 1996 (Hassan 2012: 7), yet on the other hand, in a constructive sense, it brought into attention the once disregarded areas.

Accordingly, the government founded different entities and public institutions to manage the urban governance and the growing challenges of Greater Cairo Region. Through an institutional analysis of these bodies, it is impartial to mention that clear modus operandi and domain are missing, hence, the coordination between them is usually weak and their mandates often overlap. Although the majority of the interventions and proposals offered by public urban governance institutions are based on top-down methodologies, the notion ‘participation’ started to gain a stronger presence within their strategy documents over the past few years. Nevertheless, a substantial evidence of the satisfactory application of participatory approaches is lacking.

Meanwhile, from another perspective, the vulnerable urban communities were successful in various reported cases to offer valuable community-driven solutions to complement the role of the overburdened state as this chapter depicts.

Even though after the Arab spring in 2011, the governmental urban policies did not change much due to the instability. However, the revolution had a positive impact, as vociferously the communities were able to express their opinions/demands, this was confirmed through different scholarly papers and interviews (Tobbala 2012: 4; Ashoub, S. Personal communication, 30th of April 2013; Dijk, Lisa v. Personal communication, 6th of June 2013).



In the post-revolutionary environment, drastic alterations occurred in the city and its public spaces. A new form of "urban citizenship" elevated, outlining a new complex relation between urban citizens and the authorities. The "collective psyche" towards the Egyptian state became more intrepid. While the public institutions started losing their grounds in the midst of the unrest, the communities did not hesitate to seize this acquired power. In the above discussed cases, the previously marginalized communities, did not only voice out their needs, but further took the lead and offered feasible solutions to their daily challenges through different community-driven processes. This shift of power gave the upper hand to the -now- empowered communities in opposition to the susceptible state. As Omar Nagati, a practicing architect and PhD. candidate describes these raising practices, "by marking their presence through infrastructure interventions, they are transcending questions of basic needs, and raising fundamental questions about what it means to be a citizen after the Revolution, having equal rights and access to services" (Stryker 2013).

In the following chapter, a case study is discussed with reference to Ezbet El Nasr, an informal settlement within the Greater Cairo Region. This settlement represents a model in which a foreign developmental agency (GIZ), assisted the government to apply community participatory means. GIZ -PDP is explicitly keen on providing urbanely deprived communities with tools to make their own decisions with regard to urban planning. Also, the chapter will further investigate if Ezbet El Nasr's model -which is still in progress to the day- witnessed tangible participation methods; so far, or the minimal models listed in the preceding section reflects a more appealing environment to participation.

[1] The Fatimid Dynasty (909-1171 A.D), is a Muslim Shia Caliphate which originated in Tunisia and expanded from Morocco to Syria. In 969, the Fatimids army conquered Egypt and Cairo was established to be the new capital for the Fatimid Egypt.

[2] Egypt's belle époque lasted for around 90 years from the second half of the 19th century till the overthrow of Farouk of Egypt, the last ruler from the Mohamed Ali's Dynasty, in 1952. During this period of time, Cairo has undergone several developments in culture and architecture following the Parisian trends. This westernization process was first adopted by Khedive Ismail and continued through the reign of his successors.

[3] The 23 July Revolution took place in Egypt in 1952. A group of army officers, led by Gamal Abd El Nasser and Mohamed Naguib, overthrew King Farouk of Egypt through a military coup and established a republican system.

[4] Nasserism is a social pan-arabism ideology based on the political beliefs of Gamal Abd El Nasser, the second president of the Republic of Egypt. Nasser served as president from 1956 until his death in 1970.

[5] President Anwar El Sadat adopted a new constitution drafting when he took office in 1971. Unlike its previous 1956 constitution, the new constitution encouraged more democratic political practice and the return of political parties and parliamentary processes.

[6] The Muslim Brotherhood is a political religion-oriented organization. Founded in 1928 by Hassan El-Banna, the Muslim brotherhood has been banned between 1956 and 2011. After the revolution in 2011, the Muslim brotherhood won the majority of seats in the parliamentary elections and in 2012 their candidate for Presidency took office with 51 % of the total votes.

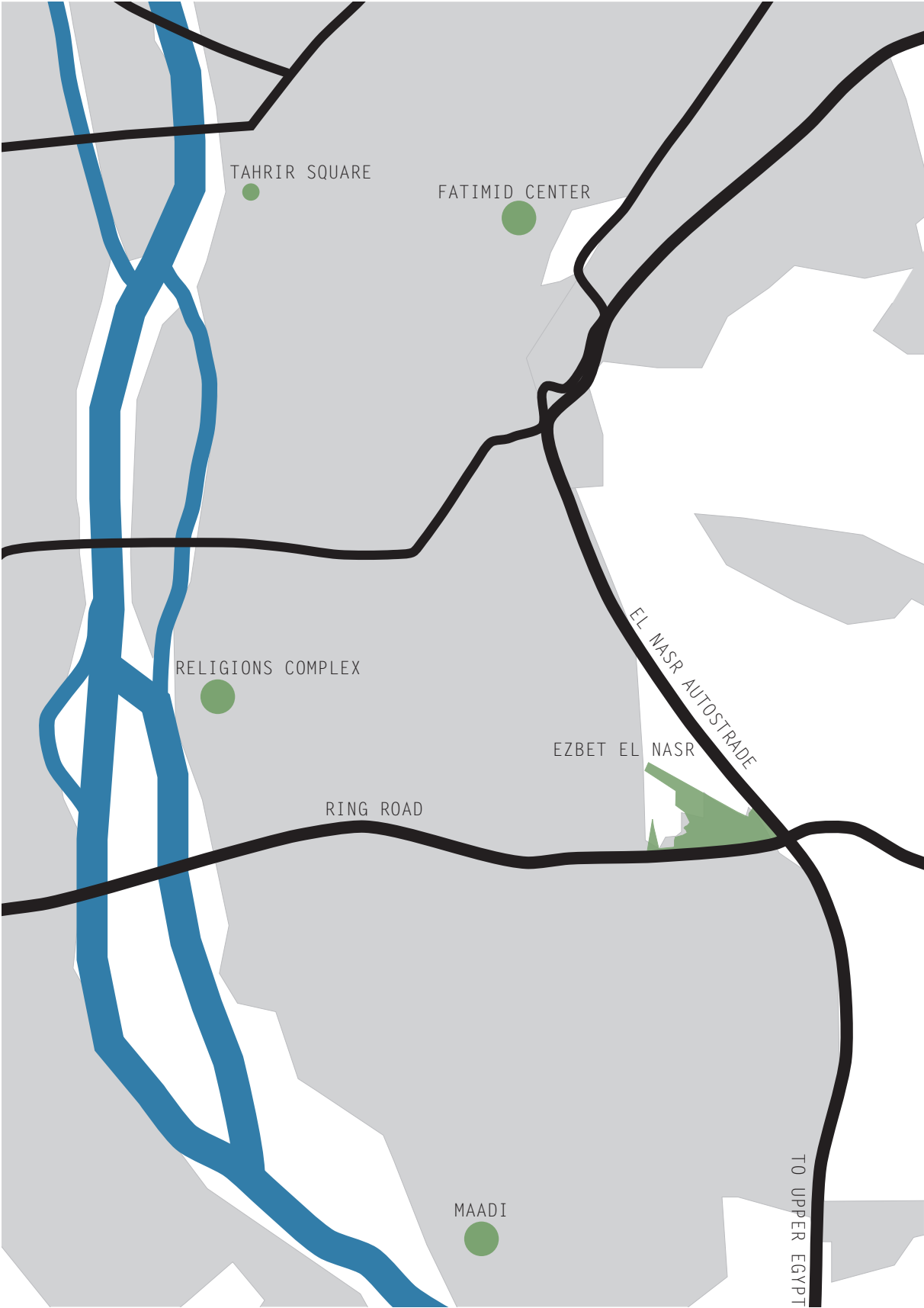
[7] In September 2008, a huge rockslide took place in Al-Duwayqa informal settlement in Cairo. It resulted in destroying many houses causing 75 deaths and more injuries. The incident fueled a public resentment and the government's policy for with informal areas came under strong criticism.

[8] The National Democratic party was founded by President Anwar El Sadat in 1978 and was the major political player in Egypt for 33 years till it was dissolved by court in April 2011 after the revolution. NDP was usually criticized for corrupting the political life in Egypt through monopolizing and forged elections.

[9] A new law for local administration was issued in 1979 to replace the older law of 1971. It was later amended in 1981, 1982 and 1988. The local administration law no 43/1979, with its amendments, was in effect till the revolution in 2011.

[3] // The Case  
of Ezbet El Nasr

3.1 Ezbet El Nasr - Settlement at a quadrivium.



Map 3.1 Location of Ezbet El Nasr.  
Source: Author based on Google Maps.

### 3.1.1 Background

Ezbet El Nasr (or Torab Al Yahud) is an informal self-built settlement within the boundaries of El Basateen district on the south of Cairo. It is located 4 km. east of the Nile River and 8 km. south of the historic center (TU Berlin 2010: 35), at the intersection of Cairo's ring road and El Nasr highway. The area which covers 0.55 square kilometers was originally planned for industrial activities. Motivated by the proximity of the location to commercial areas, migrants mainly from Souhag and Qena provinces in upper Egypt, slowly started squatting over the state owned land on the outskirts of Cairo (Ketterer 2011: 61). As the city expanded over the years, the settlement became integrated into Cairo's urban structure. Ezbet El Nasr houses 60,000 inhabitants over 0.3 square kilometers while the residue area is occupied by a Jewish cemetery, sewage treatment plant and an abandoned bus depot. The settlement is bounded by a slaughterhouse to the north, commercial developments to the east and dense residential areas to the south and west (TU Berlin 2010: 35).

Over the past two years, the settlement was the focus of concern by students' research groups from the Technical University of Berlin, University of Stuttgart and Ain Shams University. In the following lines a situation analysis is offered based both on field visits and the findings of those different research groups. Furthermore, their proposed urban and architectural interventions for improving the livability of the settlement, are outlined.

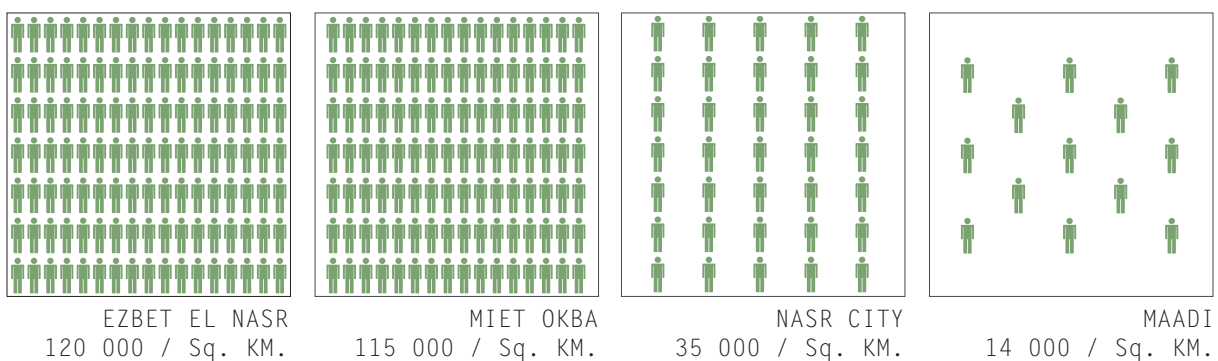


Figure 3.1 Different Densities in GCR.

Source: Author based on (TU Berlin 2010; Ketterer 2011; Frochoux 2010; Maadi Community Foundation).

BUS DEPOT

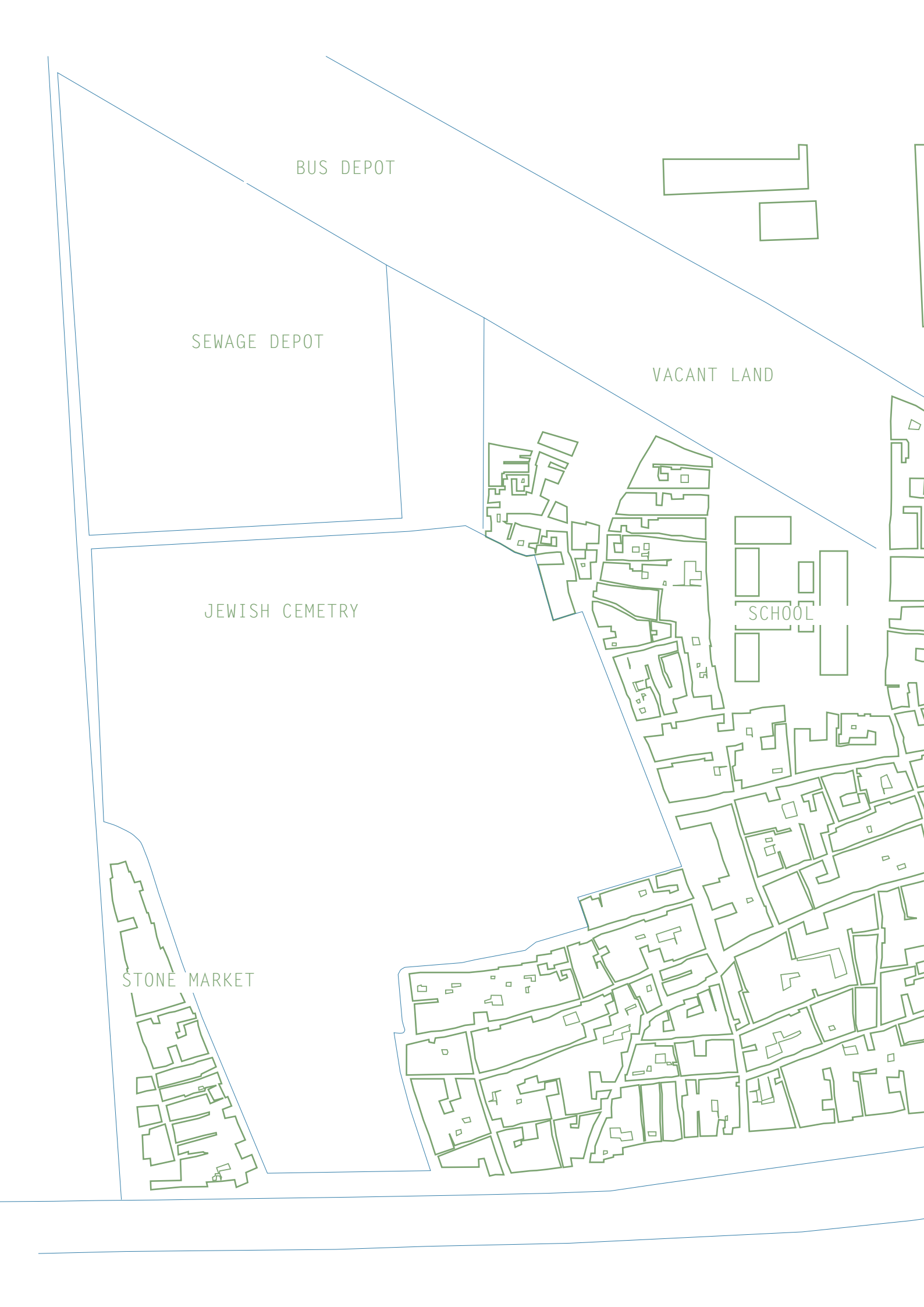
SEWAGE DEPOT

VACANT LAND

JEWISH CEMETRY

SCHOOL

STONE MARKET

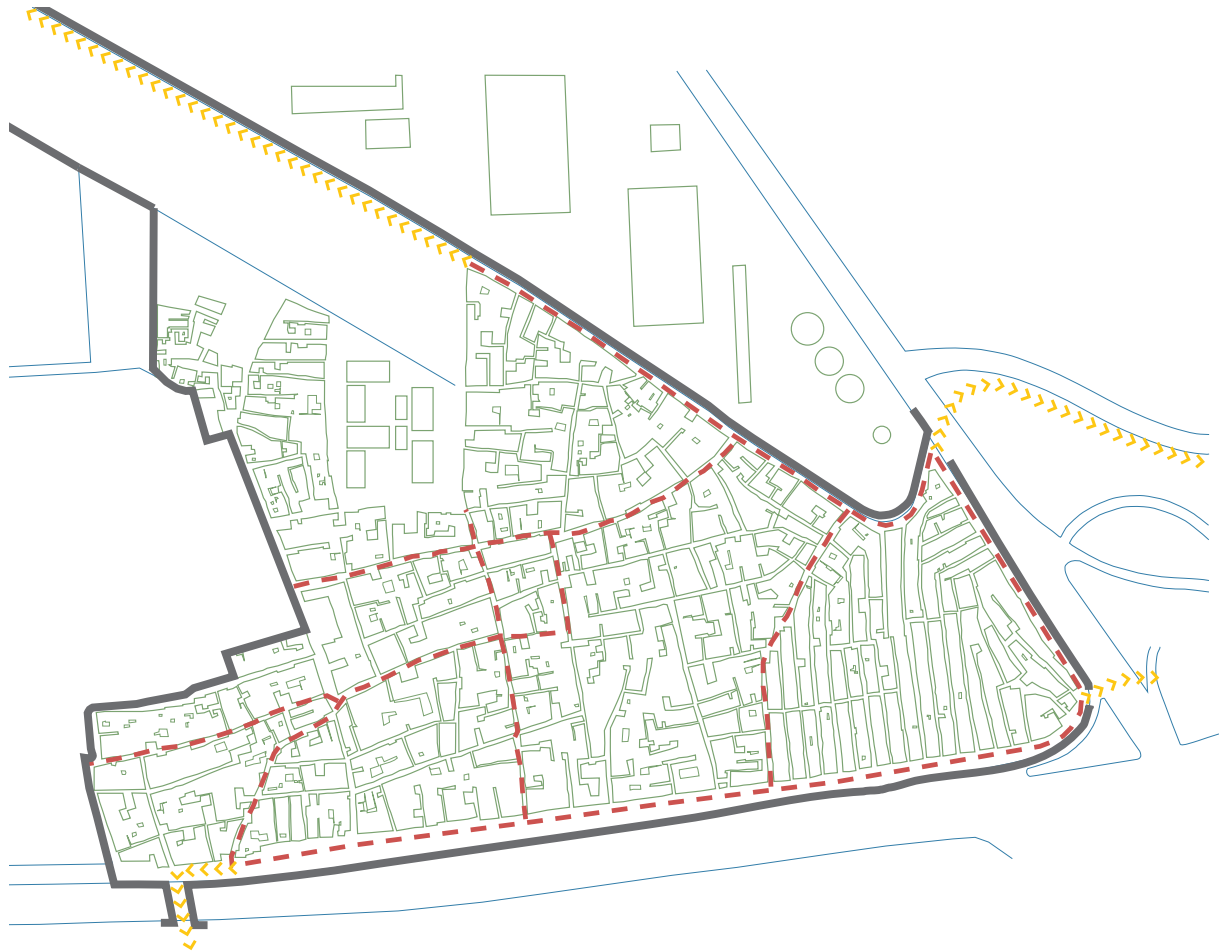


Map 3.2 Ezbet El Nasr.  
Source: Author based on (Ketterer 2011).



### 3.1.2 Situation Analysis

#### Accessibility:



Map 3.3 Accessibility in Ezbet El Nasr.

Source: Author based on (TU Berlin 2010; Ketterer 2011).

Ezbet El Nasr is bounded by an intersection of two highways, a Jewish cemetery and a slaughterhouse, which limits the external pedestrian accessibility to the dense settlement. There is a tunnel under the Ring Road to the south of the settlement connecting it to El Basateen and Maadi areas, but due to the lack of adequate lighting and safety measures, the route is considered highly unsecure after daylight hours. Residents of Ezbet El Nasr, have to cross multi-lane highways to access public and informal transport lines, which expose them routinely to traffic dangers (Ketterer 2011: 64). The problem was partially solved in 2010 when a pedestrian overpass was constructed over El Nasr highway in partnership with Sawiris Foundation and the Egyptian Society for Road Safety (Sawiris Foundation).



Internally, the settlement is highly accessible for both pedestrians and vehicles. The internal accessibility structures are obstructed by their shoddy physical conditions. Most of Ezbet El Nasr streets and alleys lack proper surfacing and treatment, which make the situation more critical in the persistent incidents of the sewage system breakdowns (TU Berlin 2010: 40).

#### Electricity, Sewage and Waste Collection Systems:

Due to the fact that many units miss a legal status, their residents tend to use illegal connections to the electricity networks (Ketterer 2011: 66). As a result, inhabitants are vulnerable to electricity risks, disconnections and extortion by public executives.

A sewage infrastructure is installed in Ezbet El Nasr but is outdated and ineffective. Common blockages and uncontrolled leaks fill the settlement's streets with sanitary waste water and negatively affect built structures and hygienic conditions.

Like most of GCR districts, garbage is collected informally by garbage collectors. The informal and unreliable service results in piles of waste accumulated around corners and street intersections (TU Berlin 2010: 42).

#### Commercial Activities and Economy:

The main commercial activities in the area are; marble processing, car repair garages, as well as carpentry and metalwork. Marble processing particularly is the most prevalent, as the neighborhood is located near "Shaq El Teebaan", the largest market for marble in Cairo. Non-residents own most of these shops. Besides, most of them employ skilled workers living outside the suburb.

Whereas, the inhabitants of the settlement work in construction, mainly in the neighboring areas, which is witnessing a growing construction activity (TU Berlin 2010: 42).

A central market does not exist, only few grocery stores and vegetables stands. Thus, these stores enjoy a comparative advantage of being located within the hub and commodities prices are uncompetitive (Ketterer 2011: 67).

- weaknesses
- threats
- strengths
- opportunities

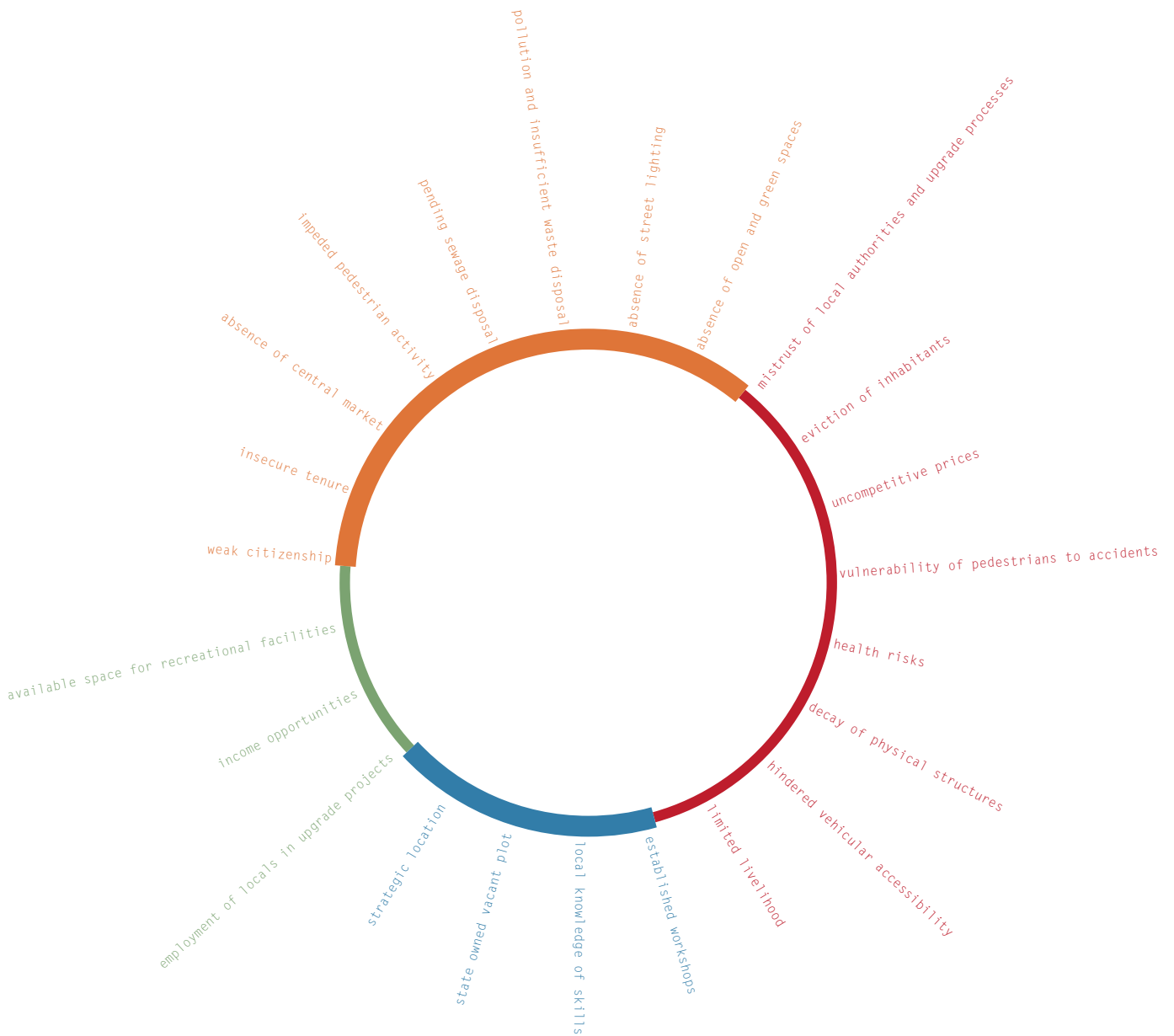


Figure 3.2 S.W.O.T analysis of Ezbet El Nasr  
 Source: Author based on (TU Berlin 2010; Ketterer 2011).

In fact, the buildings in Ezbet El Nasr enjoy satisfactory structural conditions, in comparison to other settlements in GCR; except for the surfacing and sewage system deficiencies, the streets of the settlement are of an acceptable accessibility; residents of Ezbet El Nasr have the ability to organize themselves which is emphasized through their regular protests and stand-ups to voice out their dissatisfaction with the provided services niveau (Albesfy 2010; El Essawy 2012 , Ragab 2012). These existent strengths, in addition to the fact that they form tight family and neighboring bonds and firm networks, as well as having the local construction know-how and familiarity with income generation through recycling (Ketterer 2011: 70). If the mentioned assets are prudently utilized, this could grant the settlement a potential opportunity to smoothly advance through development plans.

Each of the reseach groups of TU Berlin and University of Stuttgart has came up with a set of proposals based on their situation analyses. As illustrated below, the proposals are tackling common problems and offering almost similar interventions.

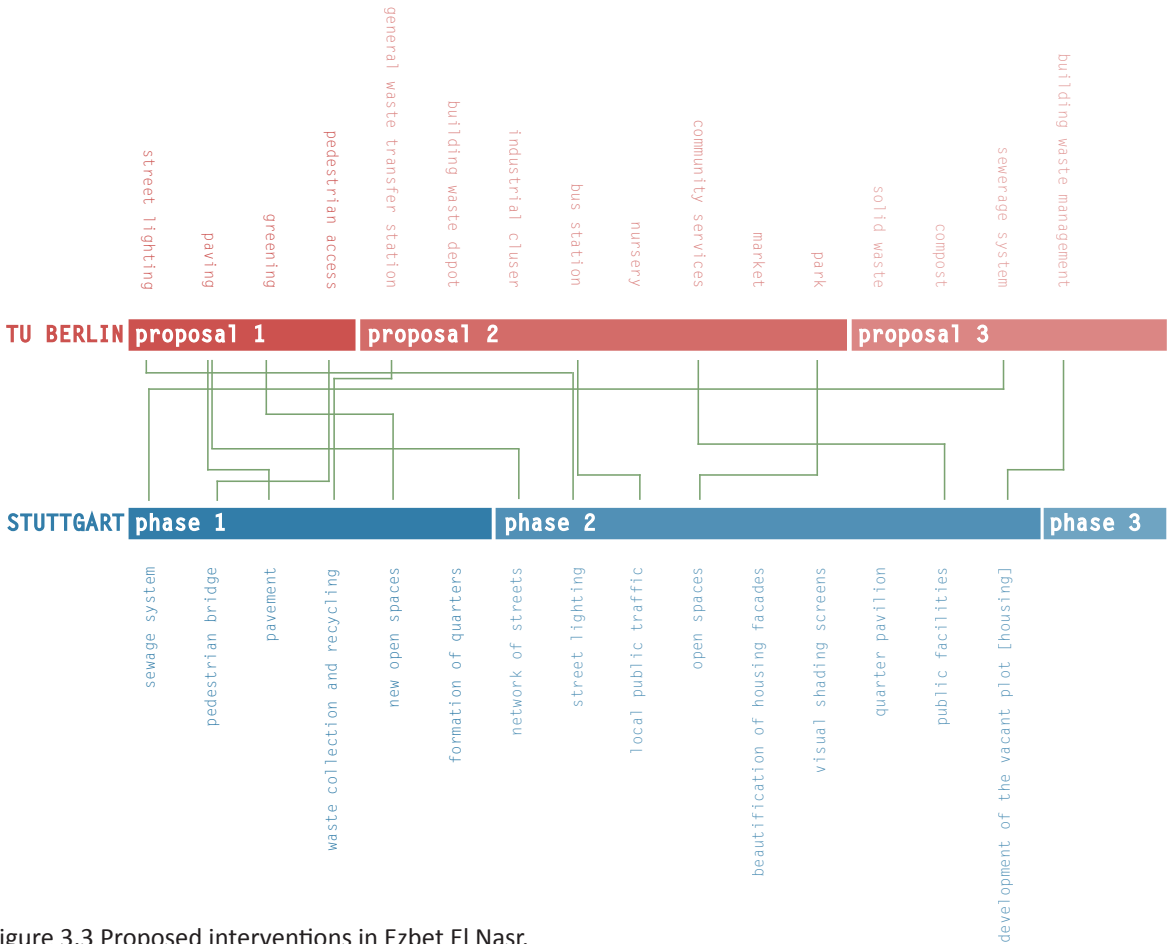
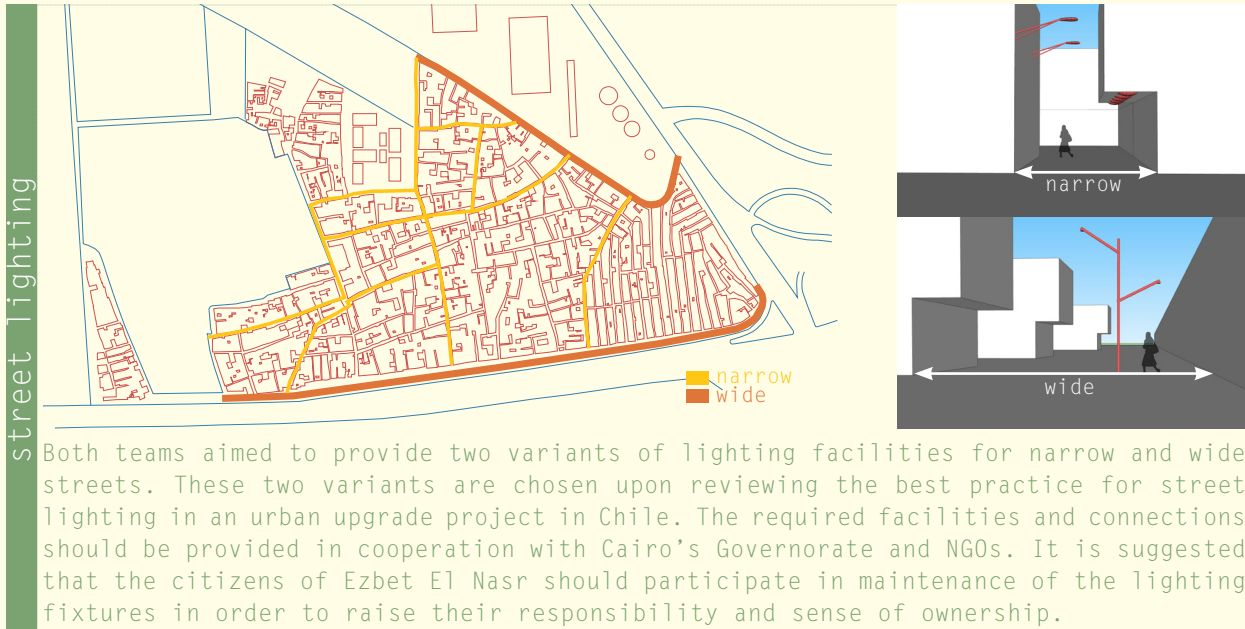


Figure 3.3 Proposed interventions in Ezbet El Nasr. Source: Author based on (TU Berlin 2010; Ketterer 2011).

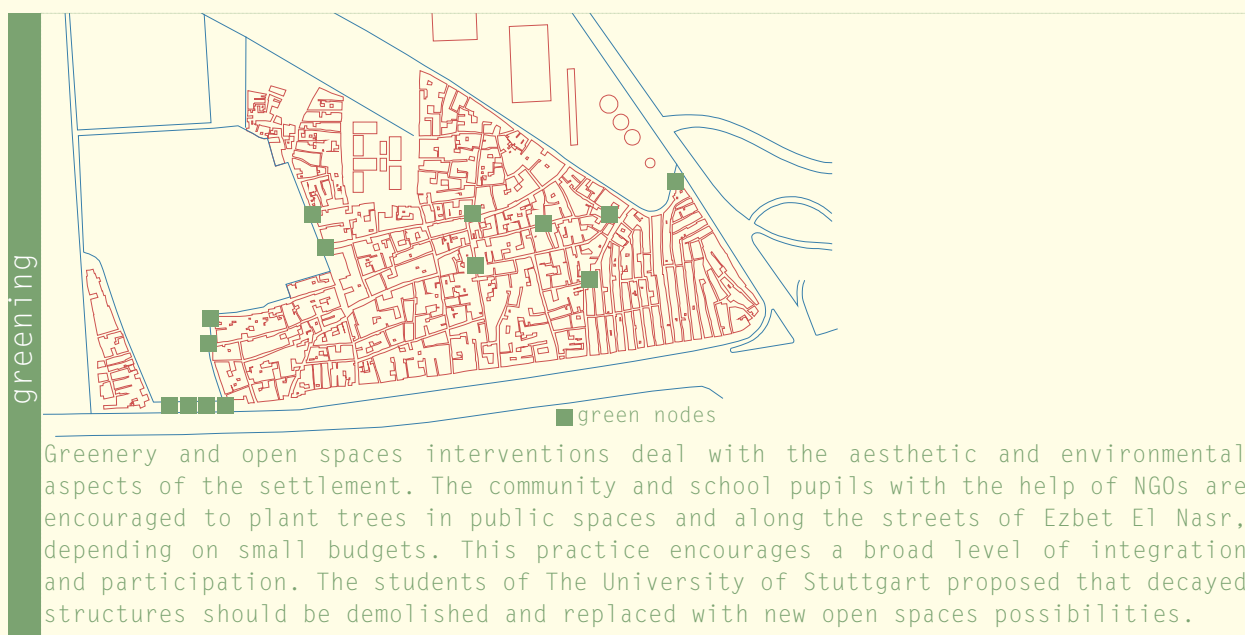
# Ezbet El Nasr

Overview of the proposed interventions by TU Berlin and University of Stuttgart researchers.



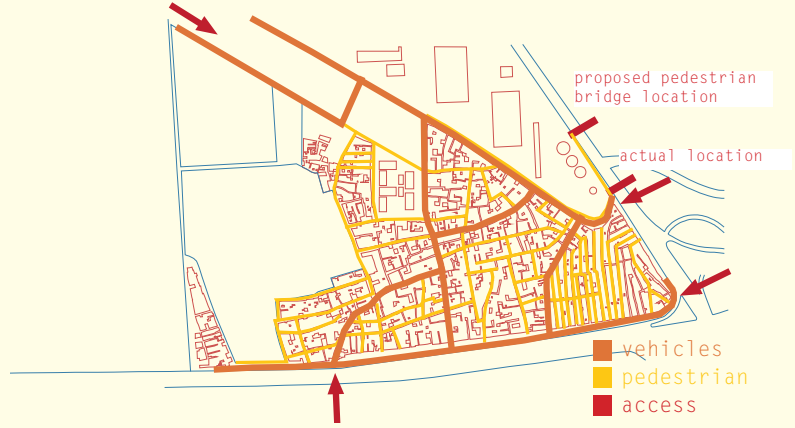
paving

The paving intervention is about involving the community and utilizing the existing stone and marble workshops in paving and tiling specific routes for pedestrians use. It is seen as an inclusive sustainable process with chances for generating income to the community. TU Berlin team has proposed that the local authorities, on their turn, are required to finance and pave the heavily utilised streets with asphalt and proper surfacing.



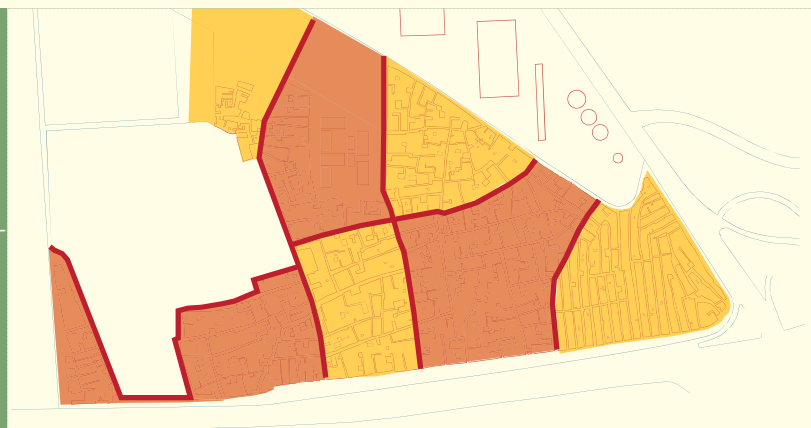
## ANNEX III

pedestrian access



The following intervention approaches the pedestrian accessibility to the settlement; it suggests constructing a pedestrian bridge over El Nasr autostrade on the east of Ezbet El Nasr to reduce the high risk of accidents and to facilitate more circulation and better integration of the area into it's surroundings. As mentioned earlier in chapter 3, this intervention has been implemented later through a partnership between private and public sectors.

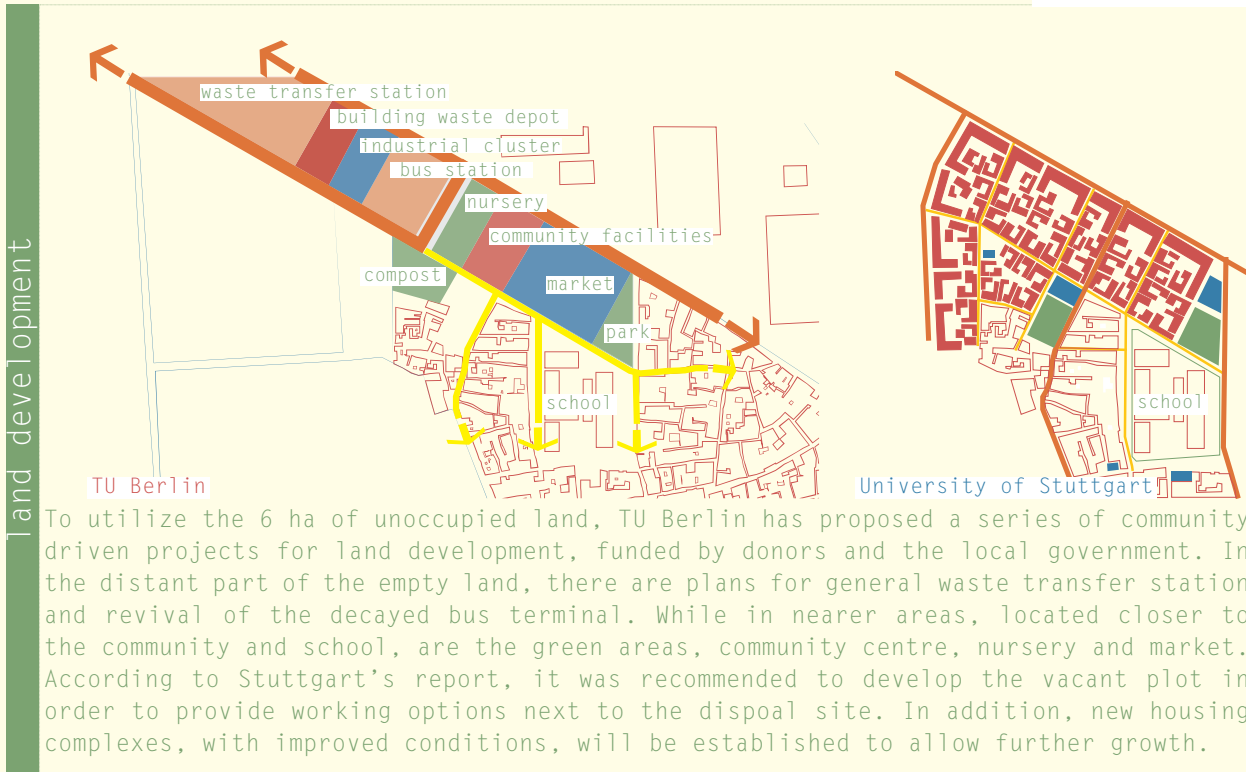
formation of quarters



In order to encourage more citizen participation, the research team of The University of Stuttgart has proposed dividing the area into six smaller quarters, each has its own elected local leader. The quarter leader is responsible for sharing the development information among the quarter's inhabitants and contacting them for consultation.

waste collection

Both teams tackled the point of using the waste produced in any construction activity to the existing needs of the community to avoid accumulation of waste. TU Berlin divided the waste management interventions into four categories: solid waste management, composite plant, sewage system and building waste system. Also, adding garbage containers at strategic spots was suggested by Stuttgart team as well as the creation of a hygiene co-ordinator position, whereas the responsible person assures that waste is collected and thrown into the containers. Besides, providing remuneration to inhabitants in order to motivate them to collect waste and recycle.



All maps, figures and images in this annex are produced by the author and based on:

[1] "Improving informal areas in Greater Cairo: The cases of Ezzbet Al Nasr & Dayer El Nahia." Results of a case study project 2010, Urban Management Program, TU Berlin. Berlin: TU Berlin; December 2010.

[2] Ketterer, Ina and Christina Schade. "Diploma Thesis: Ezbet al-Nasr, Cairo." Diss. University of Stuttgart, 2011



Figure 3.4 Ezbet El Nasr - South Eastern Access.  
Source: Author (2013).

In 2011, when the Egyptian government expressed its interest in extending the activities of the Participatory Development Program in Egypt for a fourth phase, Ezbet El Nasr was one of the four selected areas for the proposed development phase. In the following lines, an overview of the previous phases of PDP in Egypt is elaborated upon. Evaluating the outcomes of the program in its previous phases is fundamental in order to comprehend how PDP managed to develop their objectives and tools over more than 12 years to enhance the effectiveness of participatory approaches in the Egyptian model. Besides, an overview of the PNA conducted and its output is highlighted.



## 3.2 PDP in Ezbet El Nasr – Building Connections

### 3.2.1 Participatory Development Program in Egypt

In 1998, and upon an expressed interest from the Egyptian Government, the German Technical Cooperation (GTZ, later in 2011, GIZ) started expanding their activities in informal settlements, upgrading through founding the Participatory Urban Management Program (PUMP) as a Quasi Autonomous Governmental Organization. PUMP (Later Participatory Development Program, PDP) is implemented by the Egyptian Ministry of Economic Development (MoED, now Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation MoPIC) and commissioned by the German Federal Ministry of Economic Development (BMZ) (Piffero 2009: 109). The first phases were supported financially by the German Reconstruction Credit Institute (KfW), while the current phase is financed by the European Union (EU), correspondingly the GIZ, Bill and Melinda Foundation and MoPIC (EC Document 2011: 1). According to some scholars and the program's internal documents, the Egyptian government's interest in cooperating with GTZ was rather based on the economical privileges of participation than a genuine intention towards empowering the communities. A project progress review written in 2000 stated that "the major concern of the government is not how to integrate the population into the planning process but how to solve the problems of urban expansion and land management without losing the control and the central level" (Piffero 2009: 109).

PDP has developed their activities in Egypt over four different phases since 1998. In the first phase (1998-2003), PUMP implemented two pilot projects in Manshyit Nasser and Boulaq El Dakrou to experiment different participatory models. The main objective of the first phase was to "increase the ability of social and institutional agencies to promote participation-oriented urban development." (Piffero 2009: 109).

However, the local authorities were tentative and skeptical regarding the project's activities. Yet, during elections time, the members of the LPC were interested in promoting such issues so as to get the support of the community. Besides, in the first six years of the assignment

at Boulaq El Dakrou, the District Chief was changed five times, making it complicated for GTZ team to establish a concrete relationship to deal with the corresponding persons (Piffero 2009: 139). As mentioned by Elena Piffero (2009), to a great extent, development measures relied on the favor of specific political figures. Furthermore, local lobbies play a great role in intimidating the elected and appointed workers who fear taking actions against their wish, and putting their political career in danger or merely harming their public image. Both projects were affected by the insufficient financial funds accessible. Predominantly in Boulaq El-Dakrou, with no monetary element, the approval of the project by the counterpart was almost impossible to attain. Moreover, resentment towards the German teams, due to the perceived inefficiency of the old GTZ team prior to 2004, played a role in creating a doubtful atmosphere (Piffero 2009: 141). Additionally, a significant shortcoming was the nonexistence of local civil society counterparts (CBOs and NGOs) that are validly dedicated to the promotion of change.

The second phase (2004-2007) witnessed the expansion of PDP activity to include 4 intervention areas in total. The objective of this phase was to enhance the capabilities of the local administration to deliver urban services efficiently to the less privileged population. The strategy for achieving the goals of the second phase was based on the introduction and implementation of participatory tools and methodologies into the local administration executive policies. The local government level was approached because, according to the program managers, it represents the gate that controls the engagement level of the different stakeholders (Abdelhalim 2009: 126). Local personnel and consultants were recruited by GTZ, under the notion of enhancing chances of sustainability of the project after the German expats returned home. Nonetheless, as mentioned by the program manager at that time, the factual reason behind hiring local Egyptian consultants was due to the fact that recruiting foreign experts is merely too costly as experienced in the first phase (Piffero 2009:143).

Delegating the responsibility to the local administration to apply participatory tools, was criticized for being unrealistic and partially naïve as previous evaluations had already pointed out “lack of capabilities, funds and motivation of the administration”. The second phase

(2004-2007), deliberately overlooked earlier commendations that collaborating with the public institutions in Egypt is inflexible and that the local NGO's are not sufficiently qualified (Piffero 2009: 144). Above and beyond, except for attracting donor funds and improving its public image, the governmental mindset is not genuinely in favor of conceding some of its powers and authorities to the communities.

The third phase (2008-2011) acknowledged the significance of the governorate level in the urban development process. According to Khaled Abdelhalim, Head of the Urban Development Unit at PDP, "Governorates approve all plans, request and allocate budgets, give legitimacy to priority community needs and communicate them to ministries' service directorates. Governors can order district administration to mobilize participatory processes and can issue decrees supporting localized participatory mechanisms" (Abdelhalim 2009: 128). The third phase aimed to institutionalize the participatory approach onto the governorates level through offering technical support and consultancy.

Upon an official request from the MoPIC, the participatory development program was extended and a fourth phase (2011-2016) was introduced. The objective of the fourth phase "is to improve the living conditions of the poor population residing in underserved informal areas. All through offering better quality services via public administration and civil society organizations so as to satisfy the needs of the residents and to improve the environmental conditions in these informal areas" (EC Document 2011: 3). Allegedly, this general goal is to be achieved through granting communities the adequate opportunities to practice direct participatory techniques in identifying their needs and recognizing their priorities. Similar to the previous phase, improvement of informal settlements management at the governorates level is one of the main approaches of PDP in its fourth phase. "The main lesson learnt for future support is that the governorate level is the right and effective intervention level for managing the development of informal areas and for linking interventions to national policies" (EC Document 2011: 2). Four informal areas were selected for the implementation of the projects: (Ain Shams and Ezbet El Nasr) in Cairo and (Ezbet Harb and Dayer El Nahya) in Giza.

The selection process was influenced by the donor's disinterest in intervening in unsafe areas where demolitions and residents reallocation are contingent. The four project areas mentioned above were selected in agreement with the urban upgrading units (UUUs) in Cairo and Giza governorates (Ashoub, S. Personal communication, 30th of April 2013).

In Ezbet El Nasr, PDP subcontracted a consultancy firm (CDS) to conduct the Participatory Needs Assessments in accordance with GIZ strategies and guidelines. PNA is a qualitative research that is not statistically based and is executed through different data collection and consensus building tools. Yet, PDP has always worked on obtaining a balance between different genders and age groups, in order to reach a fair representation of the community to fulfill the donor's (EU) requirements and conditions. The outcomes of PNAs are then analyzed and discussed; afterwards, a decision is made to correspond to the interests and goals of the different stakeholders (Ashoub, S. Personal communication, 30th of April 2013).

The exercised level of participation in this case was limited to providing information and consultation, which Sherry R. Arnstein identifies as the degrees of tokenism (Arnstein 1969: 217). The priorities and needs of the community are not directly transferred into tangible projects. Instead, the outcomes of the PNAs are introduced as one of the inputs of a higher decision making round.

In the beginning of the project, PDP overtly explained to the community their project areas and what is feasible. This was done to obtain more realistic solutions and to avoid later frustrations if the community expectations were not met (Ashoub, S. Personal communication, 30th of April 2013). The number of options presented to the community; were the viable options the GIZ can afford. Still, it is questionable if the community would opt for the same options if they had the opportunity to choose from a greater number of choices.

Another challenge with Ezbet El Nasr, is that the PNAs were launched in an early stage prior to building a strong relations with the communities have been built. The consultant was not able to reach out easily to the different sects and groups of the community. As a result, the assessment was implemented over a longer period of time (Dijk, Lisa v. Personal

communication, 6th of June 2013). PNA is an exercise that requires filling different surveys and attending focus groups and community meetings. It requires a strong commitment and consumes lots of time and energy. The longer a PNA takes to be conducted, the less interested the community participants become in attending its different activities and having confidence in the overall project outcomes.

A plain verification of this hypothesis was the unpleasant incident, which took place precisely on the 12th of May 2013 - during the 8th month of the PNA implementation, and only two days after a big festive community event sponsored by GIZ. Where tens of Ezbet El Nasr residents had cut off a major highway, the Ring Road and set fire to tires for over two hours to protest the lack of services, and the lack of a sewage system in their informal settlement (Barakat 2013). Straightforwardly, the people of Ezbet El Nasr lost faith in the long unending developmental project procedures taking place at their neighbourhood. They expressed their dejection from the Egyptian government and trespassed their developmental partner to communicate their message, as there were no strong ties between them and the community eventually started to lose confidence in their ability to help them out.

The strong presence and engagement of Cairo's governorate urban upgrading unit in the different project phases has manipulated the implementation of the PNAs to a certain extent. As Lisa van Dijk, a CDS director mentioned that in many incidents, community meetings took place in venues that are affiliated with a certain political party according to the preferences of their public partner (Dijk, Lisa v. Personal communication, 6th of June 2013).



[4] // Beyond  
Participation  
[Conclusion]

#### 4.1 The Way Forward - Tailoring and Rescaling.

This research aimed to investigate and analyze the diverse public bodies accountable for urban governance in Cairo, as well as their understanding of the different aspects of good urban governance. In the first chapter, urban governance was covered and international development and aid community were brought to discussion.

A timeline for Cairo's urban history, the city's urban governance systems and a brief regarding the political context of Cairo; particularly after the revolution, was given in chapter 2, in an effort to familiarize with the complex relationships involved in urban planning and urban governance in the capital of Egypt. Additionally, the same chapter revealed some of the post revolution trends and successful stories of the underprivileged urban communities who through self-reliance offered community-driven solutions.

In chapter 3, a case study about Ezbet El Nasr, the slum vicinity in Cairo, and the outcome of the visiting research groups who undergone investigations there was explored. Lastly, an examination of the in progress project by PDP-GIZ at Ezbet El Nasr was presented.

Governance is an old notion that has been discussed over many centuries in the literature of political theory. The idea discusses the sound form of handling the state affairs and regulating the responsibilities between the different groups in a given community. A general premise that guided the research hypotheses in this study was the contemporary revitalization of Governance through the promotion of "Good Governance" in the policies of aid partners and international credit institutions. In Cairo, akin to most developing cities, urban policies are directly influenced by the general orientations of bilateral development agencies and Bretton Woods institutions. Cairo's urbanism reflects an interesting model due to a long history of urban development, deeply rooted bureaucracy, ever growing population and varying political trends over the successive administrations. Since mid 1970's, the Egyptian state has been concerned with building robust partnerships with western powers. This was driven by the state's interest in reforming its economy, creating better opportunities and marketing a new liberal image after the long years of war. These partnerships required an institutional reform, which supports more liberalization and calls for less centralization.



In the late 1980's and throughout the 1990's, The World Bank and the different development agencies started adopting the concept of "Good Governance" on their agendas. According to these institutions, "Good Governance" is seen as an accountable, democratic, transparent and participative form of Governance. Accordingly, the Egyptian government started promoting the attributes of "Good Governance" in order to comply with the requirements of its development partners. In Cairo, the domain of this research, embracing the qualities of good governance in the urban management system was challenged by different factors. The existing urban system is an outcome of more than a thousand years of urban policies and planning which reflected scattered orientations that depended on the head of state and not part of a unified plan. Furthermore, the state had to deal with limited economic resources, a product of failed political practices, war budgets and a vastly growing population. On the short-term, the implementation of participatory processes and decentralization in urban management, is very costly, making it harder for the authorities to embed. Besides, scholars have debated the authenticity of the Egyptian government's interest into giving away some of its centralized decision making power. The shift towards more participation in urban planning, seemed to different researchers, an outcome of a stronger interest in the economic privileges of participation, i.e. exploiting foreign aid institutions, acquiring funds from international donors and sharing costs with community members (Piffero 2009: 109, 115).

Following the revolution of the 25th of January 2011, the question arose, among many urbanists, whether this political mobilization will succeed in creating new avenues for civic engagement in Cairo's urban management. What can be inferred from the announced plans of the different post revolution governments (till the 30th of June 2013), that only very little has changed in the government's progress towards good urban governance. In many cases, the authorities were bound to preserve the embedded authoritarian hierarchies and structures; top-down regional plans and mass housing schemes were re-offered under different names and sponsors (Stryker 2013: 105). In the Egyptian Constitution of 2012, few articles have been introduced to delegate more power to the elected local councils, and to provide an opportunity for potential future shifts towards more democracy in electing governors and executive officials. Yet, these articles were drafted in vague and unclear

language, which doesn't offer an explicit time plan for applying further democratization (tadamun.info 2013b). Moreover, the -ongoing- political and economic instability that succeeded the revolution, is weakening the chances for any experimentation of new urban regulations. Between January 2011 and June 2013, 4 governors movements have taken place, 4 prime ministers have sworn in, and the constitution was changed twice.

The case of Ezbet El Nasr demonstrates an ongoing participatory-oriented development project that took place after the revolution in one of Cairo's informal settlements. The project is sponsored by GIZ and implemented through their Participatory Development Program, which has a relatively long history of introducing participatory practices to the Egyptian government's informal settlements development programs. The project objectives are to improve the living conditions of Ezbet El Nasr inhabitants through providing better services in partnership with the public administration and civil society organizations (EC Document 2011: 3), the needs and the priorities of the community are to be recognized through participatory techniques and activities. The project implementation was challenged by the common limits of community participation, which are discussed in the first chapter of this research. The level of participation was limited to consultation and development practitioners and authorities took final decisions. The community's needs and priorities were bounded by a limited set of intervention areas that adhere to the objectives of PDP and their public partners. Additionally, the participatory assessments were lengthy which caused many community members to lose interest into engaging with the project's activities. The project in Ezbet El Nasr is still in progress and the final outcomes remain unknown. Nevertheless, through evaluating the first phases, it can be realized that the project did not build strong relations with the community nor did it meet their actual needs or expectations. This has been ascertained by the dwellers who blocked the Ring Road to convey their discontent, as mentioned in the earlier chapter. Manifestly GIZ-PDP did not fully thrive in crafting enhanced tools and methods for initiating participation that accommodates to the atypical Egyptian mentality. Analogously participation confines occurred in their first phase (1998-2003) in Zumor Canal Street project in Giza. It has been documented that the participants did not show high interest in attending the consultations and different participants showed up every

time, reflecting their lack of interest. A number of the project beneficiaries uttered that the meetings were exceedingly burdening and of a waste of time. Moreover, the community lacked a sense of ownership of the project outcome and shortly they returned back to exhibiting their older practices (Piffero 2009:116). Thus, unless the solutions are genuinely sought after by the community and not a consequence of stipulated resolutions, it is thorny that the community will abide by and maintain it.

On the other hand, the revolution has triggered a new form of urban citizenship among the poorer population of Cairo, where the marginalized inhabitants became strongly empowered. Community-driven initiatives have paved their way to Cairo's urban discourse. In the afore-discussed initiatives of Al Mo'tamadia, Mit Uqba, Nahia and Kom Ghorab in GCR, the residents favored independent self-initiatives, and were able to produce smart solutions solely based on their self-efforts. These community-driven projects, despite widely accredited by their implementers; often lack legal ratification and technical qualities.

In the current political unsteadiness and the unverified governmental views on genuine community participation, it might be more convenient if donor institutions like GIZ and benefactors are willing and accepting to step into a different position and allow the communities to escort them and take lead while they follow. This would conserve energy and resources, as the projects would be initially driven or already in progress by the communities themselves. To enhance the legitimacy of participatory methods, a recommendation would be: exercising it through concentrating on projects articulated by a particular community most instantaneously and take actual steps to aid their already established/arranged plans, as they will be appreciative to have an entity responding to them. This could be done through providing them with what they ask for in terms of technical assistance, facilitation, materials, resources... etc., instead of inviting them to a certain fixed model of participation. This inward orientation, and 'playing the game' their way seems to be a reasonable solution to deal with the situation in Egypt and accommodate with the Egyptian mindset and culture.

Institutionalizing participation in the public policies is a very important but complicated process that requires different resources, long-term plans and strong political will.

The Egyptian government should realize that participatory processes have explicit resources requirements as funds, time, and skills; the needed aptitude must be established and sufficient opportunities for participation created in order to deliver affirmative results. This will not be achieved as long as the notion of participation to the Egyptian administration –in many cases- is merely tempting for its economic returns. Above and beyond, the Egyptian governmental and bureaucratic procedures often constrain the scope of participatory development.

Participation has the capability to reconstruct the Egyptian system of governance in a more egalitarian picture. Foreign aid organizations must not consume the opportunity they have to seize that potential by not promising too much too soon, or by basing plans on idealistic assumptions about Egyptians tendency to consent and join committees in large numbers. Although the Egyptian government and policy makers should be praised for opening up their system of local governance to community participation, yet their knowledge about its dimensions, in addition to their capability to reform should be vigilantly taken into consideration.



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