



SWITCH Work Package 6.3 Socially Inclusive Urban Water Governance Case Study

A Development Programme of an informal area: Amrawy, Alexandria, Egypt

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Executive Summary

The Participatory Development Programme in Urban Areas (**PDP**), implemented by GTZ in five informal areas, of which two in Greater Cairo and three in Alexandria (Figure 1), was intended to institutionalise participatory policies and tools for urban development and poverty alleviation. It supports the Egyptian Government and its local agencies in developing policies and administrative mechanisms according to the capabilities and requirements of the residents of poor urban areas and their local economic sector by fostering networking among the public, civil, and private sectors. The Programme included the GTZ (German Technical Cooperation) and KfW (German Financial Cooperation) and a number of Egyptian counterparts including Ministry of Economic Development, Ministry of Planning and Local Development, Social Development Fund, Cairo and Alexandria Governorates and local districts. The Programme worked on building trust, community capacity development, sharing available information, participatory actions, and legal recognition. Ultimately, work was to be conducted to assess citizens' satisfaction.

The Programme was implemented in Amrawy informal area, located in Montazah district, Alexandria, to provide a number of basic infrastructure and services projects in addition to the tenure security and land legalisation issues that are being addressed by government agencies, and a land office in each area.

However, an assessment work found that some of the activities covered, while being of low priority to local residents, were too costly. There were limited impact on the economic side of the work in terms of local job and business creation. The main lessons from the case study indicate that there was some misconception of public participation and social inclusion, which was amplified by being working in an inefficient policy framework without allowing for that. There was also a context of mistrust between the government and the residents, the origins of which were not explored and dealt with properly. It was found also that economic development and employment and business creation was limited if non-existent. Hi-tech measures, e.g. remote sensing and GIS were employed with no clear benefits that could be derived from them for the case study or those involved. The sense of insecurity among the residents was not dealt with and residents' involvement, it seemed was limited to some aspects.

I. Introduction & Background to case

- Name of the Initiative: The Participatory Development Programme in Urban Areas (**PDP**) upgrading of informal areas.
- When and where it took place: The Programme covered one case in Cairo another in Giza and and three cases in Alexandria; namely Amrawy Area in the district of Montazah, Hadara El Gededa Area in the district of Wassat and Nag El Arab Area in the district of Gharb. The programme took place over 2002-2006.
- Type of the Initiative: The PDP was intended to institutionalise participatory policies and tools for urban development and poverty alleviation. The PDP selected the former five areas as pilot areas to work on with their counterparts. The Programme introduces participatory methods for urban upgrading and aims to improve the services provided by public agencies and civil society organisations in order to satisfy the basic needs of the poor urban

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population. It supports the Egyptian Government and its local agencies in developing policies and administrative mechanisms according to the capabilities and requirements of the residents of poor urban areas.

- The social inclusion elements: included:
 - o Methods for urban upgrading and aims to improve the services provided by public agencies and civil society organisations in order to satisfy the basic needs of the poor urban population.
 - o A Local Initiatives Fund (LIF) was created as a local development tool that provided funds to local communities for simple, small, and highly visible projects that generate tangible solutions to local priority needs.



Figure 1: The location of the three study areas

II. Main Story

Amrawy area, located in Montazah district is one of over 50 informal areas located in different districts of Alexandria. It was developed on agricultural land, owned by the Land Reformation Authorities, which was informally subdivided and sold to individuals who built their houses with proper building permits. The area covers about 650 acre and accommodate some 25,000 residents, meaning an average population density of 39 persons/acre (Figure 2). The area is bordered by Malak Hefny Street to the north, Nabawy El-Mohandes Street to the east, Mostafa Kamel Street to the south and street 45 to the west. The area is characterized by haphazard street patterns, which was meant very low accessibility in the inner parts of area. It also suffered from lack of basic infrastructure until it was provided with potable water and electricity connection as part of the government upgrading programme conducted during the past decade.

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In order to understand the main story of development actions undertaken within the PPD Programme, we will be telling the story from two perspectives; the first is the implementing agency (GTZ) perspective. The second perspective is based on the results of the field work conducted, over April-May 2006, in the area to assess on the ground the impact of this development programme.

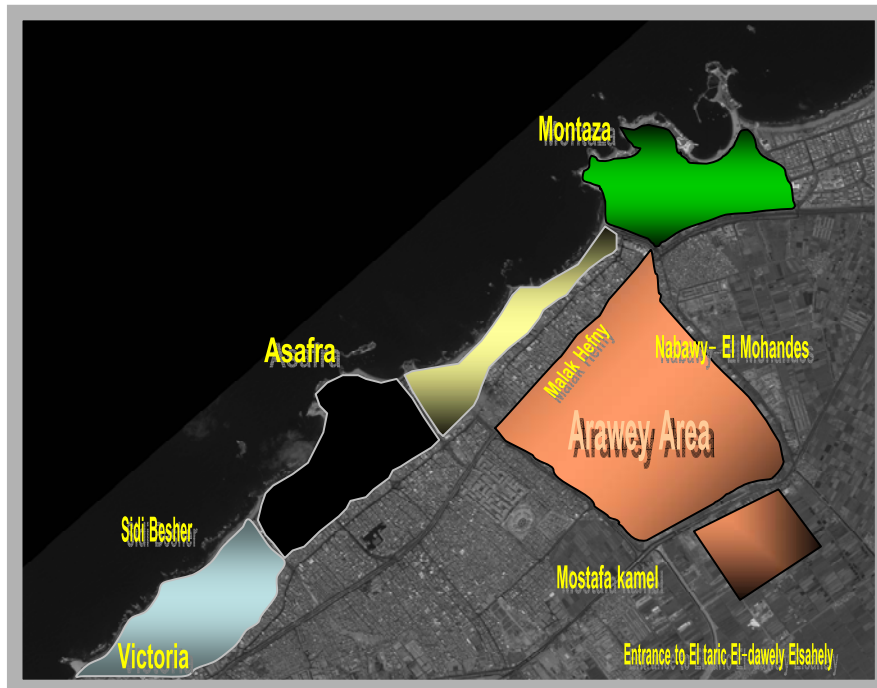


Figure 2: Location of the study area

a. GTZ perspective

Almost all informal areas in Egypt are densely populated with too little infrastructure and social services. Residents suffer from lack of access to health services, education, employment, and cultural and sports activities. Therefore, upgrading informal areas and improving living conditions for social and security reasons are imperative. Such areas are mainly built on privately owned agricultural land and thus their residents live on land with legal land titles, but their houses are not legally recognised. The lack of legal security threatens their populations' recognition as citizens with full rights with access to governmental services. For the state, on the other hand, the increase in informal housing and corruption in the formal sector decreases the state's tax income and its ability to generate development revenues.

Since the 1990s, centrally-steered attempts to upgrade informal areas have not yielded sustainable results, as central budgets designed to upgrade informal urban areas are not suitably used: physical infrastructure is financed while little or no investment is made in economic and social services. There is no monitoring of implementation and impact. Until recently local communities were not involved in the planning and development process and have not felt improvements in their living conditions.

The PDP introduced participatory methods for urban upgrading and aims to improve the services provided by public agencies and civil society organisations in order to satisfy the basic needs of the poor urban population. It supports the Egyptian Government and its local agencies in developing policies and administrative mechanisms according to the capabilities and requirements of the residents of poor urban areas and their local economic sector by fostering networking among the public, civil, and private sectors. The programme is funded by the German

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Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and the Egyptian Ministry of Economic Development (MoED) and co-financed by German, Egyptian, and international private companies, the Cities Alliance, and the World Bank.

Creating sustainable improvements in living conditions means building on existing potential in informal areas: those of their inhabitants and existing socioeconomic structures. Planning and urban upgrading need to be linked to capacities and the priority needs of the people. Only participatory planning and implementation will lead to sustainable results.

In order to attain the overall objective, the PDP work at three corresponding levels of intervention in parallel namely; national, district, and local levels, which allows continuous, vertical networking and creative communication. On the macro level, it advises the Ministry of Economic Development, other ministries, and governorate administrations on policies oriented to participatory social, physical, and economic development. On the district and local levels, as no local administration is responsible for management of existing unplanned areas, the programme brings its partners together and supports them in developing participatory policies and methods for urban upgrading. This involved the employment of a number of tools intended to deal with the lack of trust between the residents and government agencies and lack of legal recognition of land and house titles

In Alexandria, a management unit was established within the governorate and three local offices were set up in each of the three areas, guaranteeing constant communication between the governorate and the local community. Stakeholder Councils were started in each of the areas consisting of prominent community leaders (including representatives of the elderly, young people, and women), executives from the local administration offices, and representatives from the Local Popular Council, NGOs, and the private sector. Knowledge about the local community was gathered through a variety of methods, including for instance training young people from local NGOs to carry out a Participatory Rapid Appraisal (PRA), which provides information about interests, priorities, and resources available in the area. The PRA quickly makes available required knowledge about the area and its residents and collects information about the NGOs operating within the neighbourhood. Identified priority needs are then translated into action plans and detailed legal plans during participatory planning and budget meetings. These are agreed upon by all stakeholders and approved by the Local Popular Council.

In 2006, the PDP was initiated in Alexandria with the participation of the government of Egypt (represented by the Ministry of International Cooperation), the World Bank, and the Cities Alliance, in three informal settlements, including:

- Amrawy Area in the district of Montazah
- Hadara El Gededa Area in the district of Wassat
- Nag El Arab Area in the district of Gharb

The problems in these areas are manifold. Rubbish is not collected, and supports colonies of rodents. Lack of a sewerage system means mosquitoes and other insects proliferate. The water supply is inadequate. Air and noise pollution come from surrounding industries. There are security problems. The roads are in poor condition, as are some mosques. There are problems with bread distribution. Illiteracy and unemployment rates are high and anti-social behaviour widespread. School attendance is low. Residents suffer from a lack of services such as telephone and postal services, streetlights, and markets. Public health and youth services are nonexistent.

On the other hand, a number of local leaders were ready to cooperate with the Programme and a "Stakeholders' Council" was formed in each area with existing NGOs in these areas used as focal point for developmental activities.

Projects identified for implementation in Amrawy, Hadara El-Gededa, and Nag El-Arab included:

- Paving roads, installing sewerage systems, covering sewerage canals, and planting trees.
- Establishing a public hospital and introducing medical caravans to the area.
- Building a women's skills enhancement centre and new public schools.

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- Building pedestrian bridges, rehabilitating a playing field, and constructing a new youth centre.
- Establishing a police station, post office, and computer centre.
- Establishing a credit unit system.
- Improving access to the area and within neighbourhoods; providing bus routes.

In addition, tenure security and land legalisation issues were being addressed by government agencies, and a land office in each area was being built.

b. Another Perspective

A study was conducted between April and May 2006 by results of the field work conducted, over April-May 2006, in the area to assess on the ground the impacts of the PDP on living conditions in Amrawy area. In order to attain this objective, the work began with a review of the development programme activities in the area, which was followed by conducting a field survey to study the socioeconomic conditions of the residents and to assess their feedback on the outcome of the PDP. Finally, issues of concern to the residents were identified and prioritized and potentials for local contributions to development were assessed.

When asked about knowledge about the PDP work, some 60% of the respondents suggested they knew about it. However, when the issue of benefits derived from the project, over 80% of the respondents argued that they did not benefit from the work, which suggests that residents involvement was limited to the identification of the problems confronting them. The selection of the actions to be carried out and the actual implemented meanwhile were not done in close cooperation the residents. This conclusion is emphasized by the list of issues the respondents raised when asked about the problems they suffer from, which more or less similar to the list provided by the implementing agency when conducting the Participatory Rapid Appraisal (PRA). This means that the same issues of concern were still prevailing even after the completion of the work. The issues of concern for instance included, in priority order, unpaved roads, low quality of potable water and sanitary services, schools, and street lighting (Figure 3).

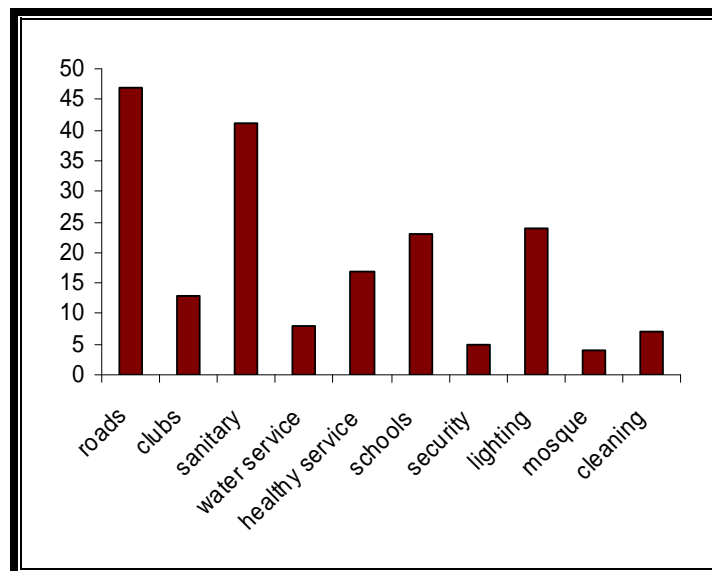


Figure 3: Priority listing of the residents' needs

The socioeconomic conditions of the respondents were typical of informal areas residents, with low educational level, with about two-thirds were either illiterate or having a high

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school degree. Furthermore, about half of those declaring their monthly income were in the range of L.E. 300-450¹, which is considered to be low to low-middle income groups. Still, more than 70% of respondents owned their houses. This reflected the utmost need of the residents for social and economic development actions to be undertaken.

Nevertheless, when reviewing the list of actions undertaken by the implementing agency (as shown in Table 1), shows that economic development and employment and business creation was only limited to the establishment of a new set local market shops. These shops were supposed to be allocated to local residents, but the respondents suggested that this was not done and the shops were given to outsiders with good contacts with officials (favourism). Furthermore, most of the list of actions, stated by the implementing agency and relate to [provision of education, employment opportunities and capacity building for women were not implemented.](#)

Table 1: A number of local development actions and cost involved²

Action	Cost involved (L.E. 000')
Renovate and furnish Siklam youth Club	1,500
Construct pedestrian bridge over MK str.	1,000
Construct a new local market	500
Construct a public transport bus stop	300
Covering municipal and water canals	1,200

III. Key Lessons

The key lessons presented in this section take the form of an approach and/or action description made by the implementing agency followed by some statement of the lesson that could be driven from the description.

- **Misconception of public participation and social inclusion**

QUOTE "Participation means bringing national and local agencies, local community organisations, the private sector, and academic institutions together in a search for innovative development ideas that lead to reform."

This statement shows that local residents were missing; they assumed that NGOs really represent and reflect the needs of local residents. Furthermore, participation does not mean that the residents be present, rather they have to be involved and to have a say in what's been planned and how to implement and by whom.

- **Working in an inefficient policy framework**

"Until now, **former centrally-steered attempts** to solve Egypt's urban problems have not proven successful; however, throughout recent years the **political climate** has changed and become more receptive to a participatory approach."

Actually this is a general statement, with no concrete actions to show for that change, the government of Egypt typically is pursuing a centrally-oriented approach at all levels; i.e. national, governorate and local levels.

- **Working within a context of mistrust**

"There is little trust between the local community and local representatives".

Meetings been attended by different stakeholders and with local residents presence cannot in itself diffuse the feel of mistrust, nor for that matter transparency and information availability, as stressed by the PDP. Rather, there was a need to explore the origins of this mistrust and then attempt to overcome the real causes of this mistrust, especially when

¹ The exchange rate is US\$ 1 = L.E. 5.5

² The overall cost of the development project was about L.E. 5.85 million, of which L.E. 4.5 millions were allocated to the listed five local actions.

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considering that government officials at all levels of government are elected and thus do not have to answer to the people.

- **Dealing with symptoms not reasons underlying the phenomena**

"(The new towns) lack the intrinsic social patterns of solidarity that arose in informal areas". It is worth mentioning that what seems like solidarity between informal area residents is more of a feel of collective danger. This means if this danger, or the feel of it, could be overcome, one way or another, conflict of interests would heighten. This is especially true, when noting that informal areas are typically established through a process of migration and urbanisation that provide diverse interests, values and attitude, which are not better than the original ones people come with. For instance it is reported in another part that "Illiteracy and unemployment rates are high and antisocial behaviour widespread. School attendance is low".

- **Limited or no social and economic development initiatives**

The socioeconomic conditions of the respondents were typical of informal areas residents, with low educational level, and low income levels. Accordingly, the implementing agency blamed government upgrading efforts of being "not suitably used: physical infrastructure is financed while little or no investment is made in economic and social services." **However, it was found that** economic development and employment and business creation was only limited to the establishment of a new set local market shops, which was allocated to outsider and not local residents. Furthermore, most of the list of actions, stated by the implementing agency and relate to **provision of education, employment opportunities and capacity building for women** were not implemented.

- **Use of Hi-tech means**

It is stated that Effective participatory local development assumes that the population, business people, and government offices have equal access to the same accurate information. Sharing information is a precondition for cooperation and common responsibility in local development. This statement in itself true, but taking about the government providing local partners with a simple interactive information base that combines satellite images, socio-economic data, locations of services, and physical plans with applied Geographic Information System (GIS) technology, is way out of target.

We are talking about people with high levels of illiteracy, low income and minimum basic services. Nevertheless, it could be argued that the resources allocated to getting the satellite images, GIS technology and development of the system could have been more beneficial if spent on improving conditions in the area. This is specially true when considering that hi-tech options could be costly and do not provide much benefits. The issue is about potential utilization and attaining objectives at the most efficient use of resources, especially as these areas are more or less already filled up and thus no changes are expected at least in the near future.

Can you imagine a resident from an informal area, being illiterate, lack basic infrastructure and services and can hard earn a living, having to deal with this technology?

- **Sense of security of the residents**

The problems of informal areas are not always related to a feel of insecurity as in most cases they get official recognition, though, indirect. Those people get, by having access to infrastructure and services provided by governmental bodies, indirect recognition of their status. This, accompanied by the relatively large number of residents reduces the risk of forced eviction. However, the sense of insecurity they experience is more related to their feel of being excluded or marginalised, in terms of either lack or low quality of the services provided and their low socioeconomic status.

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- **Residents' involvement**

It seems that residents were to some degree given a chance to identify the issues or the problems prevailing in the area during early stages of the PDP work. However, the involvement of the residents in the later stages, prioritisation, implementation and follow-up was almost absent. This is clear from the list of actions selected for implementation within the framework of the DPD work, which did not conform to the list of priorities obtained during the assessment study field work.

IV. Conclusion

Most of the informal areas typically accommodate large proportion of the urban poor in developing countries. The feel of being excluded and marginalized is amplified by the lack of infrastructure and services provision in these areas. The Participatory Development Programme in Urban Areas (**PDP**), implemented by GTZ in a number of informal areas in Egypt attempted to institutionalise participatory policies and tools for urban development and poverty alleviation. It supports the Egyptian Government and its local agencies in developing policies and administrative mechanisms according to the capabilities and requirements of the residents of poor urban areas and their local economic sector by fostering networking among the public, civil, and private sectors.

Despite the ambitious objectives of the programme, some drawbacks were found when an assessment was conducted in one of the informal areas covered by the programme namely, Amrawy area in Alexandria. The main lessons from the case study indicate that there was some misconception of public participation and social inclusion, which was amplified by being working in an inefficient policy framework without allowing for that. There was also a context of mistrust between the government and the residents, the origins of which were not explored and dealt with properly.

Hi-tech measures, e.g. remote sensing and GIS were employed with no clear benefits that could be derived from them for the case study or those involved. The sense of insecurity among the residents was not dealt with and residents' involvement, it seemed was limited to some aspects.

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