Public Housing and Public Housing Policies in Greater Cairo

Doaa Abouelmagd

COSMOPOLIS - City, Culture & Society, Vrije Universiteit Brussel, DGGF, Pleinlaan 2, 1050 Brussels, Belgium

Institute for Social & Economic Geography, Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences (EES), Katholieke Universiteit Leuven
Celestijnenlaan 200E, bus 2407, 3001 Leuven, Belgium

E-mail: dabouelm@vub.ac.be

Abstract:

Up till the recent political revolutionary events, the Egyptian government has been the main founder for the Public Housing (PH) and Public Housing Policies in the last 60 years. In reality, the PH projects were neither sufficient nor appropriate for housing the low income classes of Greater Cairo (GC). Many PH are socially mixed (Upper middle class, middle class and poor). In addition some of them had passed through a social transformation.

This paper illustrates the development of the PH and Housing policies in GC during the last 60 year. It compares four urban districts which present the results of the housing policies in GC. The comparison aims understanding of the qualities and the disadvantages of the PH projects. It also provides a focused view of the informal districts in GC from a micro-scale point of view.

Key words: Public housing, housing policies, Greater Cairo.

Introduction:

The Greater Cairo (GC) is the home of one out of four Egyptians. Up till the recent revolution, it consisted of the governorate of Cairo, the governorate of Giza city, the governorate of Qallobeya precisely, Shubra el Kheima City and part of the governorates of Helwan and October (see figure 1). In 2006, the total land area of the metropolitan is approximately four hundreds km2 (measured from Google earth). And the total population is 16 million (CAPMAS 2006 quoted in JICA, MOHUUD, and GOPP 2008). The EHDR (2005) argues that the percentage of the inhabitants living under the national poverty line in the metropolitan area is 5.7% of the population. In 2008, this number does not reflect the number of people living in informal districts of GC which is estimated at 6,465,905 million inhabitants in 2008, presenting around 40% of the total GC population. The EHDR (2005) illustrated another poverty concept ‘Subjective poverty’, this concept is more relevant with 42.5% of the GC inhabitants considering themselves as poor (EHDR 2005:50 and CAPMAS 2008a).

The complexity of the housing crises in GC has emerged since post World War Second, and it has reached a critical point. This could be as a result of the availability, but also the sufficiency and the appropriateness of the PH projects in GC. Although the PH projects in GC are the main application to house the low income groups and the youth, the recent projects are socially mixed and have a low occupation density. The PH projects constructed during the 1960s and 1970s have passed through physical and social transformation. On the other hand, the informal areas are growing aggressively...
and host middle and upper middle classes beside the urban poor. Neither the formal housing market nor the PH projects were able to meet housing demands of these different social groups, or their social-economic needs. Thus, many governmental projects were considered not successful.

The paper is divided into three parts. The first part will illustrate historical development of the Egyptian PH and Housing policies (1945-2011) in relation with political development. In part two the four cases studied will be discussed, and finally in part three this paper attempts to compare the qualities and the disadvantages of these four urban districts.

Fig.1: the metropolitan of GC in 2011 in relation to different governorates
(Source: JICA, MOHUUD, GOPP 2008)
1. Public Housing and Housing Policies in GC (1945-2011)

The Public Housing in GC

National state economy

Capitalism

Neoliberal period

Reformist period

First PH

1952-1967

- Small housing problem.
  - Massive PH projects.
  - Creation of two industrial zones and Nasr city.
  - Series of rent control laws in 1952, 1958, and 1961 to reduce and freeze rent in favour of the low classes.

1967-1974

- Some housing problem.
  - 1967-1973 all government-sponsored housing activities were halted due to the need to maintain war.

1974-2005

- Huge housing problem.
  - The new towns agenda.
  - The PH projects moved to the new towns.
  - Since 1981 all the new PH is sold to beneficiaries under monthly instalment over 30 to 40 years.
  - Since 1977 all the old PH dwellings started to be owned to the tenants at a symbolic price ship.
  - The physical and social transformation of the 1950s, and 1960s PH stock.
  - The spread of the informal areas.
  - The private companies investing in upper and middle class housing.

2005-2011

- Continuity of housing problem.
  - Continuity of the spread of the informal areas.
  - All the housing under the National Housing Program in the new towns.
  - The increase numbers of the gated.

MYHP in Zaied

- All the New PH outside the agglomeration with the exception of the slum clearance projects.

New Zeinham

- The presidential election and the housing promise.

Ain El-Sira PH

- Transferring the PH dwellings ownership to tenants at a symbolic price ship.

Manshiet Nasser

- Two master plans for Cairo 1956 and 1961.
**Fig. 2: The time line of the PH history in GC, indicating the four case studies**

From Figure 2 there is five political regimes; each representing a partial societal development mode. Within this division one can document the evolution of the housing and PH related to these periods. The post WW2 – 1952, this period is remarked by the first PH project in Egypt. The national state economy (1952- 1974) is remarked by a huge PH schema. The capitalism turn (1974-1981) is remarked by new PH policies and the new towns related to the new economical policy, and finally the neoliberal and the reformist periods which are remarked by the continuity of new towns and the spread of the informal districts. Whereas, the main governmental policy in the last 60 years was a direct housing provision, the shift from Capitalism to National State Economy and then to Capitalism followed by Neoliberal Capital has affected the PH in terms of policies, locations, production, producers and designs.

### 1.1 Post Second World War (WW2)- 1952:

The Second World War had left the Egyptian economy in crisis; the economy was halted during the war period and was directed to serve the British military. As a result, the country faced for the first time big internal migration towards cities from rural areas. The peasants who did not find job in the countryside migrated to the big cities hoping to find jobs.

In 1939 the real estate market faced shortage of steel and cement which caused the halt of building construction. The owners raised the rent of existing dwellings and led the government to announce new laws to reduce the rents. In 1950, after the end of the WW2, the economy was dipped in economical crisis resulted waves of migration to cities. Cairo had huge demand in the real estate market. As a result, the squatting phenomena started. This period is referred as notion of the informal housing in Egypt (Hanafy, 2003).

#### 1.1.1 Public Housing and Housing Policies:

The first publicly subsidized low rent housing was constructed barley before the 1952 revolution (kingdom to republic). Some 1100 dwelling units had been constructed in Imbaba in Governorate of Giza. The project was named ‘the worker city’ (Abu-lughod .J, 1971:166). Prior to the revolution, there was no PH schema. The main factor in housing activities was the private sector. Consequently, housing the low income families and the poor was carried out by the private sector.

### 1.2 National state economy (1952-1974):

The 1952 revolution had introduced a radical and economic challenge. It changed the Egyptian society to achieve social justice. It paid more attention to low income groups (El-Batran.M, 2004). President Gamal Abd El-Nasser brought the economy under the state control and the government guaranteed employment. This led to the growth of public government sector employment (Stewart, 1999:138). Between 1952- 1961 the Egyptian government played an increasing role in the economic development through its management of the agricultural sector soon after the land reforms, the nationalization of the Suez Canal Company and, the nationalization of most industrial, financial, and commercial sectors of the economy. Moreover, two industrial zones in the north and the south were created. A substantial number of large factories were constructed on the periphery, specifically in
WS09 – Housing and urban issues in developing countries

Shubra al Khaymah located in the north and on the south in Helwan. This industrialization process has attracted more migrants to the city (Abu-lughod, J, 1971:163).

1.2.1 Cairo masters plans 1956, 1960 and the creation of two industrial zones:

The socialist government developed two master plans in 1956 and 1960. The 1956 master plan assumed that the max population of GC will be 3.5 million. The population of the city already reached that number at the time the plan was rolled out (Soliman 2004:4 and Abu-lughod 1971). One of the main results of the master plan of 1956 was the attempt to construct a large town-extension scheme northeast of Cairo’s center located in the desert fringe. It was called Medinet Nasr (Nasr city). The construction began in 1965 with thousands of government-built apartment units mostly for various government employees. These apartments were adjacent to government office buildings and monumental recreation complexes. As to the master plan of 1960, the plan was to construct El-Mohamdesin city in the west of Giza (Sims, 2007:7 and Soliman 2004). The two industrial zones in the north and the south; and the two residential zones in the west and east are considered the main pulling points of the extension of the city. This led to the recent form of the GC.

1.2.2 Public Housing and Housing Policies:

In order to achieve a social equality, the state had legalized a series of rent control laws in 1952, 1958, 1961 and 1962 to reduce and/or freeze rent. In long term, these laws had an impact on the housing market. First, the withdrawal of the private sector from the rental housing market due to its limited profitability, secondly, the deterioration of housing stocks and the decline of the maintenance of the buildings due to the declining income from rent. (Stewart, 1999:140 and EHDR 2004:103).

During this period the state had been involved in subsidizing the PH program. Consequently, many PH projects had been constructed. Unfortunately, the exact numbers of the projects and the dwellings units are not documented. Most of the projects were constructed in the 1950s and the first half of the 1960s.

The location of the PH projects had a correlation to the industrial zones, the available free land in the city and its periphery and the new residential zone of Nasr city. At that time the PH projects were considered on the periphery of the city, which considered as the city center. El-Batran (2004) illustrates that the main player in 1950s and early 1960s was the Public Housing and Construction Company (PHCC). During 1960s a new system applied which shifted the responsibility of constructing the public housing to the local governorates (El-Batran, M. 2004). During the period of 1967 through 1973, all government-sponsored housing construction activities were halted due to the war and decline of the economy. (Sims, 2007:7)

1.3 Capitalism turn (1974-1981):

In 1974, law number 43 was introduced by President Mohamed Anwar El-Sadat, putting a fundamental shift to a new Egyptian economic policy. The new law allowed Sadat initiatives to open the Egyptian economy to the foreign capital investments, which had been closed to outside foreign investment for almost 20 years. A stream of legislations were followed, facilitating an open door policy identified as ‘Infitah’ (El-Naggar, A.E 2009: 34). The national economy remained dominated by the public sector, and a small circle of new bourgeoises that benefited from the new policy. During President Mubarak ruling period Egypt became a true capitalist system. (Stewart, 1992:142)
Sadat also relaxed the restrictions and constraints put by Nasser regime on migration from Egypt to other countries. Over the years, many skilled workers and willing to leave Egyptians travelled abroad in Arab countries, seeking jobs (Ghannam.F, 2006). This labor migration became one of the main financing sources of the Egyptian economy and the focus of the acceleration of the development of informal areas in Cairo. Part of the families of these abroad workers are blue collar families, and with their investment were attracted to live in informal areas.

1.3.1 Public Housing and Housing Policies:

As El-Batran (2004) argues that in creation of the new open door policy, many private companies started to operate again. They invested in construction upper income housing to achieve large amount of profit. But, only few of these companies invested in the construction of the middle-income housing. There were no incentives of any of these companies to construct low-income housing (El-Batran.M, 2004).

As the reaction of the new economic policy, the cities had suffered from waves of inner migration. In 1977, The state strategy to face the increasing housing demands was through launching a policy called 'the new towns policy’ and since then was formalized as Law of New Communities in 1979. The new shape of town movement quickly appeared to dominate Egypt's urban development as well as budgetary allocations. It is still dominants current market. Currently, there are 39 new towns in Egypt (NUCA 2011).

Coping with the ‘Infitah’, a new PH law was launched in 1977 (law number 49 of 1977 and decision number 110 for the cabinet of ministers in 1978). The new law aimed to reduce the responsibilities of the state toward the PH initiatives. It has stated to transfer the tenure from monthly rent and public ownership to private ownership in a symbolic price. This had led later to physical and social transformation in the PH projects.

1.4 Neoliberal period (1981-2005):

Since the 1980th the Egyptian government applied a series of political and economical reforms which led to a massive privatization of the public sector. President Muhamed Hosni Mubarak encouraged liberal capitals. Over the years, these economic reforms had affected the Egyptian society, which suffered from price increases and the spread of poverty.

On the urban development level, the state encouraged the private sector to take an active roll. Although the goal was to solve the housing problems, public lands were sold cheaply surrounding Cairo to private development, with infrastructure and transport links including express ways and bridges. As an outcome, the gated communities started to be constructed outside Cairo. Within these gated communities there are multiplex cinemas, hypermarkets, shopping malls and private universities. The gated communities raised the differences between the poor in city and the rich in the peripheries (Marfleet.P 2009: 31).

1.4.1 Public Housing and Housing Policies:

During the 1990s, the government continued a direct housing provision policy. This policy started in 1950s, ensuring its responsibilities to house the low income classes. During 1982-2005 the overall production of housing was 1.26 million units, with an annual average production of 54,700 units. The government programs were under different authorities, but the housing models and payment...
conditions have remained similar over decades (Sims, 2007: VII). During these periods the GC has benefited from over 50 percent of all government housing production (Sims, 2007: 8, 9). Most governmental projects were located either in new towns in remote desert locations or on local government desert lands which are also far from existing urban agglomerations (Sims, 2007: VII).

As a result of decision number 110 in 1978, the tenure of all the all new PH units was converted to monthly installment payments leading to eventual ownership over 30 to 40 years. An exception was the administrative housing for officials in remote areas, as well as emergency housing units. Given the 30–40 year lead time there are few original owners (second party of the preliminary contract) of government housing units who have obtained the right to be given a final contract (Sims, 2007: 7, 41).

1.5 Reformist period (2005-2011):

In 2005, within many political and economical reforms, and for the first time, a presidential election took place. In his program President Mubarak promised to build 500,000 units over six years, a number which there is no evidence that it was achieved. The result of such promise was the creation of a National Housing Program (NHP).

The vast spread of the informal areas has been continuing, characterized with absence of adequate infrastructure, inappropriate design, and the misuse of building materials. During the last decades, the corrupted relation among property developers and officials led to buildings damage and collapse. In 2007 and 2008 a large number of people were killed in Alexandria when apartment blocks collapsed abruptly. In 2008, a large boulder fell on the district of Deweka (a huge slum area) in Cairo. The result was the killing of hundreds of people. It still remains that hundreds of people are threatened with the same conditions (El-Mahdi & Marfleet 2009: 6, 7).

1.5.1 Public Housing and Housing Policies:

In 2005, the state had launched a new housing program. It was aimed to construct 500,000 subsidized housing units over six years spread throughout the country for low income groups, and is located in new towns; the program was administrated by different governorates. The government, and in particular the Ministry of Housing, Utilities, and Urban Development (MHUUD) and the Ministry of Investment (MOI), have made impressive efforts to design the terms of the new program. The NHP intended to include all subsidized government housing production efforts under a single national program (Sims, 2007: 51). According to Sims (2007) the state subsidized housing production in a massive way. For a typical MYHP unit, at least 68% of every Egyptian pound invested by the State was never recovered. There is also a loss of potential land revenues, which raised the total subsidy to at least 75 percent of the full cost per unit. (Sims, 2007: VII)

The NHP intended to attract private sector developers to finance and build subsidized units. In return, the state provides the developers with a minimum cost of land. Hence, they are to construct units according to the standards of the NHP. According to Sims (2007) the private developers had two options. These are either 50 percent of the built area of the project to be devoted to subsidized units or all to be so dedicated. Moreover, upon completion of the NHP units within a maximum period of three years, the developer should either: Market these units to families that met the criteria of the NHP; or Sell the unit to NUCA for distribution to beneficiaries at a preset price (Sims, 2007: 53)
The five political periods shown above have shaped the housing and PH policies in Egypt (see figure 2). For the last five decades the Egyptian government has been involving in a direct housing provision policy, and taking the responsibility to house the low income classes. During 1952-1967 the state was involved in many urban and housing projects. Some squat ter areas appeared during that period due to internal migration, it could be said that the housing supply met the housing demand. As a reaction to the new rent laws, the private sector withdrew from the housing market. This affected the housing supply during the following decades. During the period of 1967-1974 the housing market was halted due to the war. Accordingly, the government did not have enough stock of buildings to house the victims of collapsed houses nor it had enough housing for the war immigrants from the Suez Canal. The result was the issuance of emergency housing which took place in many locations in Cairo and had transferred by time to squat ter areas. This period could be featured with some housing problems. Starting from the late 1970s, most of the PH was constructed in new towns and/or in desert remote lands. The locations of those projects were far and not well connected to Cairo. On the other hand, the informal areas in GC were attracting the low income classes and the poor. They found in informal areas the solution for their housing crises. The private companies came back to the housing market and constructed luxuries housing to gain maximum benefits. In the 1990s, the housing problems reached a critical point, the state was continuing in developing new towns policy. Moreover, the private sector for the first time has been involved in the urban development projects, creating gated communities surrounding Cairo agglomeration. This contrast was more obvious during the 2000s with PH projects having low occupation rate in new towns and therefore the crowding the informal areas in Cairo.

2- The case studies:

Four districts were chosen in GC as case studies to investigate the qualities and disadvantages of living in such districts. The selection of the four case studies was based on choosing different PH projects with different location, reason of construction, period of construction and one informal district. These districts present the results of the housing policies in GC in the last 60 years. These namely are:

1- Ain El-Sira PH

Ain El Sira PH is one of the first PH projects in GC. The project was built by Nasser’s regime on the late 1950s and it is located in the neighborhood of Masr El-Kadima. This project passed through physical and social transformation due to the change of the economic policies and the housing policies in 1970s.

2- Mubarak youth housing project (MYHP) in Zaied city

The Mubarak Youth Housing Project (MYHP) is known also as the youth housing. This project created the main government subsidized housing program in Egypt till 2005. It was constructed in new towns. Since its beginning in 1995, over 80,000 units have been built by the Agency for Youth Housing under the New Urban Community Authority (NUCA). The
program is distinguishable by the ‘attractive façade’ and the low monthly installments. It targeted the low income families and the youth (Sims, 2007: 10-15).

3- **New Zeinhom a squatter clearance project.**
Zeinhum was one of the largest squatter areas in Cairo, with an area up to 50 acres. When the implementation of this development started in 1999, it was inhabited by 4000 families about 20,000 inhabitants. The Egyptian Red Crescent (ERC) selected Zeinhum district to start an urban – social development project. The project was implemented with the cooperation of the ERC and Cairo governorate (ERC 2005: 10). All dwelling units are under the right of ‘Usufruct’.

4- **The informal area of Manshiet Nasser**
Manshiet Nasser is the largest squatter or informal area in GC. It is lying in an area of about 850 acres with a gross residential density of 400 persons/acre (MOH 2001:2). The history of the squatter area goes back to the 1960s when the first settlement was founded. Before that time the area was considered an abandoned area with reputation to house refugee of criminals. The squatter area has been growing very fast since its foundation. Although the official statistic indicate the population was 262,050 thousand inhabitants in 2006 (CAPMAS 2008b), other scholars estimate that it is the home of more than half million inhabitants (Gerlach. J 2009:49 , Sims 2009 in Howeidy.A 2009:181)

2.1 Reasons of choosing these four districts:
The four chosen case studies represent together extend examples of the Egyptian housing policies in the last 60 years. Ain El-Sira PH is one of the first PH in GC. The project was affected by changes in the PH policies during the 1970s, and has gone through social and physical transformation. MYHP in Zaied is one of the new PH forms, experiencing the policy of beneficiaries’ ownership which was applied since the 1980s. This project as all the new PH and NHP is located in new towns. And it is a representation of the future of the coming PH projects. New Zeinhum squatter clearance project is a result of a public private partnership and as an example of urban social development. The dwellers have also experienced living in a temporary housing located in the periphery of the city for duration of 2-4 years. Finally, Manshiet Nasser is an informal area. The area had been growing in a fast manner presenting an alternative housing to the limited income and the poor.

There is an urgent need to address the concerns and crises created from the Egyptian PH and its housing policies. An exhaustive literature survey summery shows that the housing crises in Greater Cairo have focused either on the informal housing phenomena or the Egyptian housing policies in a macro-scale, without analyzing the relation between housing policies, PH projects and the spread of informal housing in a micro-scale. It is important to understand the effect of such projects and policies on the households. This research is comparing four districts (three public Housing projects and one informal area) to understand the qualities and the disadvantages of the PH in the present day context.
3. The comparison:

Based on the fieldwork conducted with four case studies between 15 August and 19 October 2010, this paper compares the qualities and the disadvantages of each district. A sample of 127 interviewees around 30 per each district was interviewed. The interviewees had sometimes mentioned more than the survey asked for quality or disadvantage. In few cases the interviewees said that they have no problems.

The research grouped qualities and disadvantages mentioned by the interviewees and were classified under the following categories:

**Qualities:**

- **Location:** Location of the project/district in relation with GC, labor market and economical and social services.
- **Social relations:** Social relations with the neighbors, relatives and chain immigrants (inhabitants from the same city of origin).
- **Transportation:** Different means of transportations, including private and public transportation.
- **Services:** Social and economic services including schools, medical services and markets.
- **Security of Tenure:** Ownership of the dwelling unit.
- **Environmental qualities:** Clean environment and high percentage of green areas.

**Disadvantages:**

- **Public space problems:** The maintenance of street lighting, garbage collection, lack of care of green areas and lack of cleanliness of public spaces.
- **Social problems:** Feeling of insecurity, fights, inhabitants’ behaviors, conflicts due to social transformation (new social class/groups have different lifestyle), conflicts due to break of strong social ties.
- **Transportation problems:** Numbers, cost and frequency of the exits private and public transportation.
- **Housing problems:** Maintenance of the PH, size of the dwelling unit, rent amount, dwellers do not have official lease contracts (in the case of Zeinhum), and plumbing problems.
- **Infrastructure problem:** Sewer networks and connectivity with water and electricity networks.
- **Economic problem:** Poverty, living cost and unemployment.

**Location:**

'We consider ourselves in the downtown; we are in center location of GC. This factor is the greatest advantage of living in the area, and is one of the reasons we live in this district’ interviewee – Ain El-Sira

The location in relation to downtown is considered a quality by the interviewees of Manshiet Nasser, Zeinhum and Ain El-Sira, almost in an equal ratio (see tables 1 and 2). The two PH projects and the informal area are located in a central location in the GC, near CBD, and the administrative and the governmental quarters of the city. The districts are well connected with primary and secondary roads to the other districts of the city. And they are also very near to the old Islamic Cairo and its historical monuments. Moreover, the locations of these three districts provide a direct access to the main medical and the educational services of the city. On the other hand, the location is considered a quality by only 10% of Zaied interviewees presenting only 3% (see tables 1 and 2). The location of the MYHP in one of the new city and the problems the residences face with the different means of transportation (explained in more details below) are the main reasons of this contradiction with the other three districts.

**Social relations:**

'In the formal housing the social fabric is a social and a sociological need, but in the informal areas is a necessity of life. People relay on each other either in their sorrow or happiness. If you remove them in a formal housing without taking in consideration the importance of the social fabric, they will be not able to live’ interviewee, Manshiet Nasser
Table 1: the percentage of the qualities per each district

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Location_Adv</th>
<th>Social_Adv</th>
<th>Trans_Adv</th>
<th>Services_Adv</th>
<th>Tenure_Adv</th>
<th>Environ_Adv</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ain El-Sira</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manshiet Nasser</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zaied</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zeinhum</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: fieldwork

Table 2: the percentage of the interviewees who mentioned the quality in each district

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Location_Adv</th>
<th>Social_Adv</th>
<th>Trans_Adv</th>
<th>Services_Adv</th>
<th>Tenure_Adv</th>
<th>Environ_Adv</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ain El-Sira</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manshiet Nasser</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zaied</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zeinhum</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of total interviewees</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: fieldwork

Table 3: the percentage of the problems per each district

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Public_Space_Pro</th>
<th>Social_Pro</th>
<th>Tran_Pro</th>
<th>House_Pro</th>
<th>Infra_Pro</th>
<th>Economic_Pro</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ain El-Sira</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manshiet Nasser</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zaied</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zeinhum</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: fieldwork

Table 4: the percentage of the interviewees who mentioned the problem in each district

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Public_Space_Pro</th>
<th>Social_Pro</th>
<th>Tran_Pro</th>
<th>Hous_Pro</th>
<th>Infra_Pro</th>
<th>Economic_Pro</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ain El-Sira</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manshiet Nasser</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zaied</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zeinhum</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of total interviewees</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: fieldwork
As a unique case, the social relation is mentioned as a quality by 36% from the interviewees of Manshiet Nasser (table 2). The informal area has been growing on the base of the chain migrations and kinship. The social relations, social capital and household’s relation are important assets the inhabitants depend on to survive.

**Transportation:**

Although, this quality is strongly connected to the location, 22% from the interviewees of Zeinhum in particular have mentioned (see table 2). The main reason is the comparison they make between their current location in Zeinhum and the provisional residence places they used to live in during the construction of the project in Motheleth Helwan and Nahda city. Most of the inhabitants who work as daily labors work in or around the city center. They had suffered a lot from the cost and the duration of the transportation during living in the provisional housing.

**Services:**

‘El-Helal’ has an important role with the residences of the project, it provides many services like: illiteracy and sewing classes, medical centre, kindergarten and so on’ an interviewee - Zeinhum

Yet again, this quality is practically mentioned as a quality by 72% of the interviewees of Zeinhum (see table 2). What distinguish this project from the others is the development and promotion provided by the ERC and the Cultural and Social Centre for women (CSCW) for the local community in the different fields: social, health, education and culture, in order to adapt to the new environment. Most of the women and children are participating in those activities.

**Security of Tenure:**

This quality was mentioned in particular by 30% of the interviewees of Zaied (see tables 2). The project is feathered by the low monthly installments witch lead to complete ownership in 30 years period. The type and the security of tenure are from the main attraction of the project. In comparison with the other districts the PH of Ain El-Sira with the informal extensions, the informal housing of Manshiet Nasser and, the right of ‘Usufruct’ in Zeinhum, MYHP in Zaied is considered the more secured one in term of Tenure.

**Environmental qualities:**

This factor is considered the main quality of living in MYHP in Zaied by 60% from the interviewees (see table 2). The location of the city 222 m above sea level, distinguish the city with a clean dry weather. The city is also quiet and has a high percentage of green areas and public spaces.

**Public space problems:**

‘What has been changed during the last 10 years is the cleanness of the area; in the beginning you could never find a paper in the street, now you can see bags of garbage’ interviewee - Zeinhum

The public space problems were mentioned by the interviewees of the four districts. In Ain El-Sira and Manshiet Nasser large part of the problem is dominated by the garbage collection system. The municipality responsibilities and the inhabitants’ behaviors are the main reasons of this problem. Although, the cost of collecting the garbage is added to the electricity bill and it is an obligation to pay it, the garbage is rarely formally collected. The residences used to throw their garbage in the

---

2 El-Helal refers to the Egyptian Red Crescent.
streets and the public spaces and burn them. In Zeinhum and Zaied the lack of cleanliness of public spaces, the lacks of care of the green areas are dominating the public space problems of those two districts.

**Social problems:**

*The neighbor who raised up my children and I raised up her children is living very far. And the neighbor who is living next to me is a complete stranger* interviewee - Zeinhum

The social problems are dominated by the interviewees of Ain El-Sira and Zaeinhun (see tables 3 and 4). In Ain El-Sira the social transformation which happened during the 1970s and later led to the replacement of the original inhabitants with another social class who has different lifestyle. The clash between the original inhabitants, the new comers and between the new comers themselves had led to the increase of the social problems. In Zeinhum the redistribution of the new dwellings was done randomly; therefore, the dwellers were settled in the new project with new neighbors, not the old neighbors who they used to live with. That fact led to the broke of the social relations and brought up many social problems.

**Transportation problems:**

*The problem that I have since I moved to the MYHP is the transportation, especially the transportation to Giza, add to that if I want to go to Giza with my two children I pay 8 EP for one direction that without the inner transportation cost* interviewee - Zaied

67% from Zaied interviewees complained about the means and the cost of the public and private transportation (see table 4). This includes the inner transportation which link the MYHP with Zaied city and the transportation linking the city with GC.

**Housing problems:**

28% from Ain El-Sira interviewees and 25% from Zeinhum interviewees have mentioned housing problems (see table 4). In Ain El-Sira the PH maintenance, the slums pockets located inside the PH and the tanneries areas are considered the main housing problems. In Zeinhum, the official contracts, the size of the dwelling units and the plumbing problems are the main housing problems. On the other hand, only 6% of the interviewees of Manshiet Nasser informal area mentioned housing problems (see table 4). This is due to the dominance of the economic, public space and the infrastructural problems in Manshiet Nasser. The Housing problems the interviewees mentioned in Manshiet Nasser are the size of the dwellings and the increase of the rent. In Zaied the plumbing problem is the main problem.

**Infrastructure problems:**

*From the 1980s the government had get rid from its responsibilities toward the area, since then there was not any improving for the infrastructure... the sewer system is always broken and the garbage is everywhere* interviewee Ain El-Sira

This problem was dominated by the interviewees of Ain El Sira and Manshiet Nasser (see tables 3 and 4). The sewer network is huge problem in Ain El-Sira. The network is deteriorated due the overloaded system and the tanneries which use the same sewer networks. The results of such problem appear in streets with sewage-contaminated. In Manshiet Nasser some areas suffers from the cut of electricity and water, moreover, some areas inside Manshiet Nasser are still not connected with the infrastructure mainly up the hill in Shahba and A’alaa El Razaz.
**Economic problems:**

‘The main problem in MYHP is the low occupation rate. When I opened this shop I chose an activity which does not have goods that can be spoiled, or which I may be requested to go to Cairo to buy goods, or to be in such a situation that someone ask me for something that I do not have’ a dry clean owner Zaied

In Manshiet Nasser Living costs, goods prices, poverty and unemployment are the main economic problems mentioned by 21% of the interviewees. On the other side, in Zaied the low density rate and the low work opportunities are the mentioned economic problems. The low density rate was a problem mentioned mainly by the interviewees who run shops who face many difficulties due to the competition between the shops and the low occupation rates.

**Conclusion:**

This paper aimed to show the qualities and disadvantaged of living in different four urban districts represent the Egyptian housing and PH policies in the last 60 years. This level of comparison shows that the location was identified as the highest quality as mentioned by 77% of the interviewees, mainly in the districts of Ain El-Sira, Zeinhum and Manshiet Nasser. The services were the second high score with 18%. The environmental quality was 14%, the social relation was 9%, and the transportation was 6% (see table 2). In terms of disadvantages, the Public space problems scored the highest disadvantage by 49.61% in the four districts, followed by the social problems 26% , the infrastructure problems 19% , housing problems 17% and finally transportation problems 16% (see table 2).

It is clear that most the interviewees voiced their most critical factor in locating a residence. It is the location and the supply of local services. The lack of public services and market provision is compensated by social networks. And when the social networks are broken, the social problems appear. In future research the modes of economic integration of Polanyi (1944) will be used to explain the different modes of economic integration the inhabitants used to reach the means of existing.

In conclusion, the housing quality is not the only sufficient quality of the housing. The housing policies should pay more attention to the transportation nodes (transportation infrastructure and accessibility) to compensate for the location. Secondly, the quality of the public spaces that put housing in habitation. And finally, the local services and the local economy that provides for the needed income for the inhabitants.
Bibliography:


Egyptian Red Crescent (ERC) (2005), ‘Development of Zeinhum Squatter Area’, special publication


WS09 – Housing and urban issues in developing countries


