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UNIVERSITY IN CAIRO



AUC Input For

Egypt's Strategy for Dealing with Slums

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Cover Photo: Slum dwellers and the hope for a better life
by Participatory Development Program in Urban Areas – GIZ

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Hay El Salam

A slum upgraded to become part of downtown Ismailia, 2012
by Khaled Abdelhalim

Introduction

This document presents the AUC's input for the strategy of dealing with slums in Egypt and the underlying principles that AUC stands for. It is developed by the Slum Development Working Group at the university, which includes a multi-disciplinary team of faculty members at the various schools. While acknowledging the Egyptian government's efforts for addressing the slum challenge at the policy and implementation levels – it is believed that there is a need to promote, review, debate and enhance the existing strategy and current efforts dealing with slums.

In brief, it is argued here that the phenomenon of slums cannot be understood and dealt with on the basis of its physical conditions alone; these physical conditions are the manifestation of malfunctioning processes of economic integration, social inclusion, good governance and preservation of citizenship rights of vulnerable and marginalized groups. The complexity of the issue of slums should not be reduced to the decision of whether to relocate them and where to, but rather of how to make slum dwellers true citizens and active and productive members of society. Planning for dealing with slums, in this case, becomes planning for inclusive development of these communities and not only improvement of the urban structures of slums. It is equally believed that a national strategy for dealing with existing slums has to be complemented by policy measures for preventing the emergence of new ones. The document addresses slums throughout its three parts: Egypt's situation analysis regarding slums; the principles governing dealing with slums in terms of global and local objectives; and the strategic approaches for dealing with slums including slum prevention proposed measures.

Reviewing the strategy of dealing with slums aims to be used to steer a dialogue among relevant stakeholders interested and involved in slum development, with a view to harness a common understanding of the phenomenon of slums and the principles that govern intervening in it. The ultimate aim of the AUC's Slum Development Working Group is to structure the efforts of reviewing the national strategy of slum development and its implementation. It also aims to catalyze efforts and initiatives for dealing with slums in Egypt to become part of international best practice.



Deteriorated urban and rural cores
by Giza Governorate

Situation Analysis

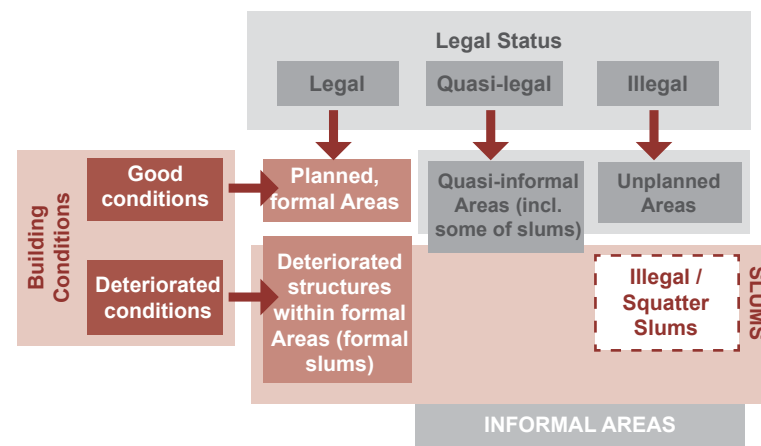
1.1 The challenge of dealing with slums in Egypt

Policy makers at central and local government, as well as their technical advisors and consultants, perceive slums as a challenge from the perspective of their responsibility for the quality of the urban environment based on planning norms and aesthetical values. Normal city dwellers may also have a feeling of being challenged to accept slum areas as part of the city; they wish not to see these areas as reminders of manifestation of the failure of society and government to uplift some segments above the poverty line. They may also be challenged to cope with perceived 'security threats' or uncivilized behavior. Slums are widely perceived as the fault of their dwellers who are seen as transgressors rather than victims of poverty and neglect or pursuers of maintaining their livelihood using the means they have. It is therefore seen by many government officials, professionals and the media as hubs of criminality and social evils. The outcome of this position is a perception of slums as 'cancer' in the body of the city, a 'time bomb', a 'burden' on the economy, and a threat to social stability. Moreover, judging slums mainly on their substandard physical conditions leads to solutions based only on physical intervention. Both perceptions are the basis of the government's strategy to physical elimination of slums and dwellers' resettlement.

On the other hand, slums pose a dual challenge to their residents; the lack of infrastructure, services and sometimes

safe and secured-tenure housing, as well as the stigma of marginalization and social isolation. This suffering is balanced with the advantages of being centrally located in cities, hence being well-connected to sources of employment and livelihood. Nevertheless, as the perception of slums as a challenge outweighs any advantages perceived by their residents, the big challenge of dealing with slums remains compounded by the limitations of the policy options and the resources needed to put them into action.

Figure 1: Types of Informal Areas Including Slums



1.2 The Phenomenon of Slums in Egypt

Slums are a phenomenon associated with rapid urbanization and other socio-economic transformations that took place in developing countries over the past four decades, whereby Egypt is no exception. Urban informality has now become the dominant feature of Egyptian cities; it can be argued that it is planned urban development not informality that is becoming the exception. Even planned areas have significant informal aspects, from rooftop dwellers in Cairo to the countless floors recently added in defiance of the building code in normal residential districts and new cities. Informality, in this context, can be seen as a cultural phenomenon embedded in the prevailing practice of urban management that lacks rule of law and suffers from serious malfunction and corruption.

Slums and other informal areas are commonly defined and classified on the basis of their legal status and physical conditions. Figure One demonstrates that while unplanned areas of good conditions comprise 85-90% of informal areas, slum areas of deteriorated building and living conditions comprise 10-15% of informal areas (ISDF, 2008). Since the 1970s, poor rural migrants resorted to substandard housing types that included run-down neighborhoods in aging parts of the city, cemeteries, rooftops as well as shacks developed by squatting on public and/or sometimes abandoned private land. Squatter slums are usually made of makeshift material such as tin or cardboard, but in some cases include brick



Continuous growth and densification of Unplanned Areas by Participatory Development Program in Urban Areas – GIZ

rooms of one or two story buildings. Some of the squatting slum dwellers were originally given the permission to stay in their location; Manshiet Nasser (4) early settlers were allowed by President Gamal Abdel-Nasser in the 1960s, Eezbet El-Haggana early residents were permitted by the army to settle down, and Hadayek Zeinhon (5) slums that were demolished in 2000s were originally wooden shacks built by government to house those who were displaced from the Suez Canal region following the 1967 war.

The two categories of deteriorated formal slums and squatter slums may require different intervention strategies. Deteriorated slums in formal areas need special attention given that most degraded popular quarters are either of historic, architectural or urban value (6) such that they require a degree of urban conservation and rehabilitation. While in unplanned areas vibrant networks of residents and/or small enterprises provides jobs, services and infrastructure to the residents and neighboring better-off districts alike, slums vary in the degree their residents are able to provide for such amenities, which are usually compensated for by relying on nearby public services.

Living conditions in slums vary depending on its location and the degree of accessibility and integration in the surrounding areas. Marginally located slums (7) tend to be poorer and attract more socially problematic and disadvantaged groups, while centrally located slums, also known as slum

Figure 2: Manshiat Nasser, Participatory Development Program in Urban Areas – GIZ



pockets within the city, tend to be more integrated into urban life economically and socially, although the stigma of coming from the slums remains evident. Locations of slum areas usually provide advantages that compensate for the substandard housing quality; proximity to places of work and livelihood, connection to public and/or affordable transport,

and accessibility to public services. Illegal, sometimes free, connections to infrastructure are also possible. A high degree of solidarity among slum dwellers commonly exists as a natural self-defense tendency against threats of eviction or harassment. In all, the delicate balance of the trade-offs of living in slums has to be understood and taken into consideration by those planning or implementing interventions in slum areas.

Past Experiences and Policy Responses

After first ignoring informal areas and then adopting (but never implementing) a policy of removing them, the Egyptian government began in the 1980s to develop strategies responding to the reality of their growth. The strategy of developing new cities and towns on desert land can be seen as an effort to develop an alternative to informal growth of existing cities on agricultural land. Within this modernist approach to urban development, the government's position of slum pockets remained demolition and resettlement, which was practiced by local government on a very limited scale. The government's acknowledgement of informal areas in the 1990s by introducing services and infrastructure was not applied to slum areas, which only had infrastructure when dwellers manage to get illegal connection to nearby networks of water and electricity.

A national program addressing informal areas was launched

in 1993, including redevelopment of 20 slum areas (Madbouly, 2008). A second phase of this national program began by surveying the various governorates to identify the informal areas that are worthy of upgrading or those requiring complete demolishing (ENCP 2008). From time to time, officials have announced plans to tear down slums (or informal areas

Figure 3: Hadayek Zeinhom shacks (already demolished), by Khaled Abdelhalim



Figure 4: Deteriorated slums of historic/aesthetic quality, centrally located slums, Participatory Development Program in Urban Areas – GIZ



altogether). This practically meant forcibly removing residents to distant and half-built new cities lacking essential amenities where they are expected to make a new life cut off from sources of income or livelihood. Faced with government threats to confiscate and destroy decades of hard-won investments and livelihoods, local residents have fought these plans, often but not always successfully.

On the other hand, non-governmental initiatives for dealing with slums were implemented in the 2000s through influential NGOs that can be seen as a civil society arm of government. Despite the political patronage of these projects, they introduced valuable pilots for on-site redevelopment of alternative housing for the slum dwellers as an alternative to the predominant approach of local government for resettlement of slum dwellers in new remote locations (Shehayeb and Abdelhalim, 2012). Two distinct examples are Hadayek Zeinhom and Old Agouza slum redevelopment projects (8) by the Red Crescent NGO and Future Foundation respectively.

Amidst all discussion about conventional approaches for dealing with slums, one of the pioneering international best practices implemented in Egypt is usually forgotten. The progressive upgrading of Hai El Salam slum area in Ismailia (9) started in 1978. The strategy used limited land adjustment interventions, infrastructure installation and an efficient and transparent scheme of financial support. The slum dwellers upgraded their houses on stages, which included, as the

Figure 5: Deteriorated slums in Giza, Giza Governorate



area became more established, complete replacement with reinforced concrete structures. Today, Hai El Salam is right at the heart of Ismailia city and stands as a formal residential area. This example of self-redevelopment of the slum with minimal intervention from government or other external players is worthy of exploring, more so in light of the limited resources expected to be allocated for dealing with slums within the current economic situation.

In the waning years of the Mubarak presidency, a planning exercise was bruited but did not move to implementation. The General Organization for Physical Planning (GOPP) developed Cairo 2050, a futuristic plan that, if implemented, would have replaced vast areas of informal areas with parkland or touristic developments. Such daring approach on removing unplanned areas would have certainly legitimized slum removal and resettlement. It also articulated a more realistic and less hubristic plan to address informal area upgrading. The status of this plan in the wake of the 25 January Revolution remains uncertain. However, it is recently published that the residents of Ramlet Boulaq won a court case against the Prime Minister and the Governor of Cairo against removing their houses as part of one of the Cairo 2050 projects.

The past decade has seen progress in broadening efforts aimed at informal areas nationwide and in strengthening their institutional base. In 2008 a new Building Law (Law No. 119) was developed that clearly spelled out the need to upgrade

informal areas and designated them as “unplanned zones” needing to be brought into the system. The same law also identified degraded areas needing to be “re-planned”, which include slums.

Following the rock slide in Doweika in 2008 the Egyptian government scaled up its reaction to slums from few cases of ad hoc clearance and resettlement by local government to a more institutionalized and strategic approach led by central government. The Informal Settlements Development Facility (ISDF) was established under the Prime Minister and mandated to deal with unsafe housing conditions, which classified slums from a safety perspective based on UN Habitat classification of slums, mapped slums in all Egyptian cities, proposed a national strategy for dealing with slums and ensuring safe housing, and provided funding and technical support to local government to implement slum development projects. Unsafe areas are categorized by ISDF into 4 types (grades) according to the degree of risk and thus the urgency of intervention (Box 1). In 2012, ISDF mapped out 372 unsafe areas (26 grade 1, 260 grade 2, 66 grade 3, and 20 grade 4), including 207,233 housing units. More than a quarter of these areas exist in the Greater Cairo Region (ISDF, 2012).

The Categories of Unsafe Areas according to the Informal Settlement Development Facility (ISDF)

- Grade (1), Life threatening areas: these include houses built in life threatening locations such as under sliding geological formations, in flood zones, or exposed to railways accidents.
- Grade (2), Areas of Unsuitable Shelter Conditions: these include shelters made of make-shift materials, ruined and structurally unstable buildings, and houses on sites unsuitable for habitation, e.g. dump sites.
- Grade (3), Health risks Areas: these include houses that lack access to clean drinking water or improved sanitation, those exposed to industrial pollution, and those under high voltage cables.
- Grade (4), Areas of Unstable Tenure: these include houses developed on state land or on the territory of Endowments (Awqaf).

Source: ISDF website.

The broad lines of ISDF strategy emphasize that upgrading slum areas in the same site should be the main approach of dealing with slums, with the exception of Grade 1 areas where displacement to a new location is the only option to eliminate life threat. The strategy is also based on giving the slum dwellers in each area the choice whether to be located in new housing development on the same site, to be relocated to new housing in one of the new cities, or to get financial compensation and make their own housing arrangement in an alternative site.

These remarkable efforts, nevertheless, did not yet scale up and need to be well supported by relevant stakeholders. More importantly, the ISDF strategy for dealing with slums still needs to be debated, not only from effectiveness point of view but also from a rights-based and sustainability perspective. This debate on the current strategy and practices should not be confined to professional circles or governmental bodies, but more importantly become a societal dialogue on the means and ends of dealing with slums. Such recommended interactive process of policy formulation can yield better results in terms of ownership of all societal stakeholders on one hand, and informed proposals for adopting the strategy and improving the achievement of results. The potential capacity of civil society is demonstrable in the initiative taken by the famous actor, Mohamed Sobhy, to Ma'an Against Slums NGO and collected millions of pounds for slum redevelopment. Earlier on, HSBC bank had an informal areas upgrading

program in Dar El Salam with 100 million Egyptian pounds funding, showcasing potential targeting of social corporate responsibility of private sector to dealing with slums.

The real challenge, however, remains that the Egyptian government is still dealing with housing merely on the basis of its physical condition or standard; and in the case of slums, in terms of its housing safety. The livelihood of slum dwellers and their development into full-fledged citizens fulfilling their potential require a wholistic approach that tackles poverty, labor skills, social capital, etc. Such a people-centered, multi-disciplinary approach would enable these people to eventually improve their housing conditions or sustain this improvement rather than slipping back to slums somewhere else. ISDF has been trying to overcome this limitation by targeting slum dwellers with social and economic development programs such as vocational training and women's support programs. Whether these programs are enough to tackle the real causes behind living in slums or not, this is still to be proven by evaluating their impact on the lives of beneficiary slum dwellers.

Furthermore, with the very limited resources the Egyptian government allocated to ISDF, it was deemed to become a revolving fund; offering finance to governorates for slum upgrading projects and aiming for full cost recovery. ISDF adopted a model for using the land occupied by the slums as an asset; covering the cost of slum redevelopment through

land sale or investment. This impelled ISDF to focus on areas with the potential for redevelopment and reuse of the site. ISDF could not deal with priority-one unsafe areas in dangerous locations that make these sites unusable, whereby only some of these areas were demolished and residents resettled by the governorates and with the help of the Ministry of Housing. This model also pushed ISDF to start with the slum areas that have the highest land value, with a view to use the cross-subsidy principle; capture the gain of land sales in high value areas to finance the development of slums in less attractive locations. As gain is captured by the owner of the land, in most cases the governorates, they have to agree with the cross-subsidy model. In all cases, the financial model set by the Egyptian government poses challenges for ISDF operation and needs to be revisited, especially that it affects the technical decisions of dealing with slum areas more in the direction of relocation than in situ development.



Cover Photo Credits : Deteriorating housing conditions turning to slum condition
© Baloncici | Dreamstime.com



Participatory Development Program
in Urban Areas – GIZ, 2008

Principles for Dealing with Slums

2.1 Global Objectives for Dealing with Slums

Global attention to the phenomenon of slums started as early as 1960s trying to understand it as ‘housing by people’. Later, slums were addressed as part of the human settlements issues in the first Habitat Summit in Vancouver 1976, where solutions for housing the poor such as sites-and-services projects were inspired by the incremental development process of slum formulation (State of the World’s Cities 2006/7). In 1999, the challenge of slums has become an international development priority with the launching of the Cities Alliance; a global partnership of UN-HABITAT and the World Bank and their development partners aiming to bring improvements to the living conditions of the urban poor in the developing world through the “Cities without Slums Action Plan”, which targeted upgrading slum areas as an essential part of building a city for all (<http://www.citiesalliance.org/about-cities-alliance>). Dealing with slums has been part of the following global objectives and/or initiatives:

Millennium Development Goals (MDGs):

The Millennium Development Agenda set by the United Nations for the 2000s aims at combating poverty, hunger, disease, illiteracy, environmental degradation and discrimination against women (UNDP website). It included amongst its 8 goals and 18 targets a specific goal for improving living conditions of slum dwellers and access to water (Box 2).

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)

Goal 7: Ensure Environment Sustainability.

Target 10: Halve, by 2015, the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation (amongst them slum dwellers).

Target 11: Achieve a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers by 2020” (UN-HABITAT 2006).

Box Two: the Millennium Development Goals

UN Habitat Global Campaigns

- 1999 Global Campaign for Good Urban Governance: aims to support the implementation of the Habitat Agenda goal of “Sustainable Human Settlements Development in an Urbanizing World.” The campaign’s goal is to contribute to the eradication of poverty through improved capacity of local governments and other stakeholders to practice good urban governance. It acknowledges slums as the physical manifestation of poverty and relates dealing with slums to the achievement of sustainable development.
- The Global Campaign for Secure Tenure in 2003 is an innovative, rights-based approach to urban development, which recognizes slum dwellers and their organizations as genuine partners, and seeks to promote their partnership with government as an essential tool for effective planning

upgrading and for city management at large. The campaign encourages negotiation as an alternative to forced eviction, and the establishment of systems of tenure that minimize bureaucratic lags and the displacement of the urban poor by market forces. It promotes the essential elements of sustainable shelter strategies, such as housing rights for all; gender equity; partnership between city government, peoples’ organizations, and land market.

- UN Habitat Campaign against Forceful Evictions Following recommendations of the first World Urban Forum to promote policy alternatives to forced evictions, UNHABITAT Governing Council during its 19th session has requested the establishment the Advisory Group on Forced Evictions (AGFE). Its mandate is to monitor, identify and promote alternatives to unlawful evictions. The group is composed of experts in the fields of urban development, community participation, human rights and forced evictions. Since its creation, AGFE has carried out mediating and conciliatory missions to facilitate dialogue between local and national governments and CSOs to achieve negotiated alternatives in situations where forced evictions were eminent or happening.

The MDGs, the UN Habitat campaigns and other global initiatives call for addressing slums in a wholistic and integrated manner. They relate poverty reduction to environmental and sustainable urban development objectives, and balance the agenda of city development with the rights of slum dwellers.

In international cooperation terms, Egypt is committed to develop its cities and human settlements in line with the principles of MDGs and the Habitat Agenda. As part of its collective regional responsibility, Egypt hosted in December 2005 the meeting entitled “Cairo Declaration on Sustainable Arab Cities: Security of Tenure and Good Governance” under the Regional Campaign for secure Tenure and Good Urban Governance, where participants were committed to ensure the effective implementation of the Habitat Agenda and the MDGs. Despite the declared alignment of the Egyptian government with global objectives on dealing with slums, development partners are reluctant to fund any urban development projects that include slum development to avoid getting engaged in any relocation exercises. This reflects the need for further analysis and discussion of ISDF’s slum development strategy as well as local government implementation of slum redevelopment projects.

2.2 Local Objectives – Changing Perspectives?

Although dealing with slum areas is very much affected by the policy framework, slum development programs and practices on the ground did not differ much in post-revolutionary Egypt. An alternative discourse that perceives slum dwellers from a citizenship perspective and call for protecting their rights as poor and marginalized communities was anticipated after a revolution that came under the slogans of freedom and social justice. Although changes in policies of dealing with slums do not seem to be up to the expectations, there is more debate and research related to housing rights; the government is taking initiative for reviewing national budget planning from a social justice perspective; and ISDF is emphasizing slum dwellers' right to stay in location, and so forth. More time and interaction between different stakeholders is needed before we judge whether this is a genuine change of perspective or an alignment with the social pressures with the intention to reproduce the conventional models of dealing with slums.

One track for demonstrating change in national objectives is legislative reforms. The 2012 Constitution stipulates human and housing rights and the State's responsibility for protecting them, including the right to a healthy environment (article 63) and appropriate house and clean water (article 68). Article 68 also states that: "the State adopts a National Housing Plan that is based on social justice and encourages

local initiatives". Equally, the Constitution indicates a shift to decentralization within ten years, with expected reforms of the local administration system that would enable local government to play a stronger and positive role in slum development programs. These legislative references for protecting slum dwellers rights should be the basis for a new building law, local administration law and relevant legislation. It should then reflect on housing policies, urban planning approaches, and local administration performance. With constitutional amendments or a new constitution being underway following 30th of June revolution, it is yet to be seen whether the legislative reforms on housing rights will progress or retreat.

However, these legislative efforts did not get full support to proceed, given the fragility of the institutional set up and indecision due to constant change of leadership positions. Equally, it does not seem that the principles of good governance, social inclusion and citizen participation— that were supposed to be brought up by the revolution – will automatically infiltrate the practice of government. Whether this will only take time to happen or will not happen at all makes a big difference in shaping the programs of slum upgrading to come. It is becoming undoubted that the Egyptian government is willing to eradicate the slum condition; the challenge remains how this will be done and whether it will tackle the root causes of living in a slum.

2.3 Framework for Acting on Slums

The proposed principles and framework for action for dealing with slums in Egypt represented in this section are based on the underpinning that AUC stands for, which is aligned with international objectives and experiences while observing Egyptian realities. Together with the proposed strategic reforms in the upcoming section, they present AUC's input towards reviewing and enhancing the national strategy for dealing with slums by capitalizing on the exerted efforts and the lessons learnt. The coming principles set the reference for the processes of dealing with slums:

Slum development should be an integrated and sustainable development process:

Slum upgrading or redevelopment is not only about improved housing conditions for slum dwellers, it is also about providing suitable public services, affordable transportation and access to other parts of the city. Programs must recognize that housing and housing-related infrastructure needs are only one element of a sustainable community; local businesses, jobs, and civic organizations are essential elements for the survival of these communities and their needs and rights must also be respected and their contribution to society must also be recognized. This requires that slum upgrading or redevelopment should be a well coordinated effort of integrating multi-sector interventions, which would eventually

Figure 6: Quick Guides for Policy Makers: Housing the Poor in Asian Cities, Evictions: Alternatives to Whole-scale Destruction of Urban Poor Communities, UN Habitat Kampung Improvement Programme, Pg. 14



lead to sustainability given the complementarities of social, economic and environmental improvements. For example, youth can be trained on-the-job during the construction process, and then they can be enabled to have an income generation mechanism based on their new skills.

Figure 7: UN Habitat
Consultation with Slum Dwellers, Cover Photo



Slum development should be a rights-based, people-centered process:

Slum upgrading or development should revolve around slum dwellers; their needs and aspirations for the future. Residents, businesses, and community-based organizations in these areas have the same rights as their counterparts in formal areas, and any development of their areas must recognize and respect these rights, which include:

- The right to be enabled to access decent housing. This right is protected by the Egyptian constitution (article 68) and corresponds to the UN Habitat's policy on access to adequate housing as well as the MDGs, Goal 7, about improving living conditions of slum dwellers.
- The right to the peaceful enjoyment of their property, including security of tenure through, where appropriate, formal land and/or housing titles. This is based on the constitutional right to freedom from fear, which can be interpreted to include fear of forced evictions. This needs to be clearly spelled out, however, in the coming building and planning law.
- The right to receive public and government services on the same basis and standards as other citizens and according to national standards.
- The right of slum dwellers to the city. Putting this right into practice does not only prevent displacement of slum residents to remote locations, almost outside the city, but should also lead to applying measures of integrating slum

Figure 8: Quick Guides for Policy Makers: Housing the Poor in Asian Cities, Evictions: Alternatives to Whole-scale Destruction of Urban Poor Communities, UN Habitat, Consultation with slum dwellers, pg. 27



dwellers into the city's society and economy. Interventions for developing or relocating slum areas should respect this social and physical inclusion, ensuring that slum dwellers are well connected to the sources of their livelihood.

- The right to maintain their livelihood by preserving productive activities, networks and value chains in all scenarios of upgrading and/or developing the slums.

Slum development should be a participatory process:

A people-centered approach would have implication on the process of implementing slum development programs. Mechanisms to engage with and consult the slum community must be built into the development process from the beginning and throughout. The participation of slum dwellers in decision-making concerning the options of dealing with their area is essential to guarantee their support to the upgrading or redevelopment plan. This means that slum dwellers are one of the main stakeholders that must be party to any major decisions that affect their destiny or well-being. Community engagement is therefore not an option; it is a necessity for program success, sustainability and scalability.

Slum development is a multi-level action process:

Slum development projects cannot be successful without an endorsing policy and legislative framework as well as an enabling institutional set up. Interventions are needed not only at the local or project level, but also at the level of local government where slum upgrading programs and projects are managed or coordinated, and at the central government level where policies are made and budgets are allocated to slum upgrading or redevelopment. The actions on these levels need to be complementary and consistent with each other in order to serve as one strategic framework of action that yields the best results on the challenge of slums.

Slum development is a multi-stakeholder process that requires good governance:

Multiple governmental stakeholders should be involved in slum upgrading; urban development agencies, those responsible for provision of public services, promotion of employment, social security, etc. However, slum upgrading requires an active role not only from government but also from civil society and private sector. These stakeholders should interact together within the frame of the slum upgrading strategy according to good governance principles; transparency, accountability, participation, responsiveness, equity, rule of law and combating corruption. Local administration units that adopt such good governance principles are necessary for sustainability and scalability of slum upgrading programs. Yet, as stated in the above principles, slum dwellers themselves should be the most important stakeholder in decision-making and in acting on the issue. Hence, external expertise and resources, where needed, must not displace or supersede involvement of local communities.

2.4 Essentials for Success

The above principles need to be put into action within a framework that coordinates the responses to the challenge of slums by coming to grip with the following sets of issues. Answering the following issues can be seen as a critical factor for success in dealing with slums.

Whose interests are to be served?

In any slum development program, it is important to transparently tackle the question of whose interests are to be served by the different scenarios of intervention. Running through the debate on slums is the question of whether the interests of slum dwellers are set aside in favor of the broader real estate development interests of the country or the city, which may be conceived as synonymous with those of major investors in some cases. If these slum areas are occupying valuable real estate, should they be accommodated in a new mixed-use development even if the total value of the development is thereby reduced, or should they be displaced so that the “best use” of the land can be realized? The critical factor of success is the reconciliation of conflicting agendas of slum dwellers, real estate developers and city planners (as guardians of the public good), not only on the short term of reaching some sort of a ‘deal’, but on coming to a sustainable solution that ensures that the slum condition is not shifted somewhere else.

Whose land is it?

Slum areas usually have a complicated land tenure condition, with a variety of situations of public land, private land, Awqaf (endowment) land, etc. This is directly reflected on the legitimacy of dwellers to stay in their location, and hence on the options or scenarios of dealing with each slum. On the question of tenure, should formal tenure rights be granted

Figure 9: competing informal and slum areas with luxurious real estate developments

Strategic Urban Plan for Greater Cairo: Cairo 2050, General Organization of Physical Planning, 2009



to informal area landholders, regardless of what has gone before? If people are moved, should they be recompensed for the value of their land and buildings? If tenure is granted, how will renters be affected? The critical factor of success is to acknowledge land tenure and use it, where applicable, as an incentive for getting into a serious process of negotiating what the future of each interest group in the slum community will be.

Where will the money come from?

When thinking of reaching scale in slum development, the

question of financial resources becomes critical. It is evident that a lot of money will be needed to bring the standard of living in slums up to an acceptable level or at least to the best level that is affordable. To date, a very large share of government urban investment funds have gone to new cities which mainly benefited upper-middle class families, leaving not enough funds in the public coffers to deal with the services and infrastructure deficit of existing urban areas. There is no government budget line for slum development, and the current allocations to ISDF are neither sufficient nor consistent. How, then, can public funds be used to mobilize private funds, including the residents’ own funds and self-help efforts, to make faster progress against slum upgrading needs? How can this system be regularized? The critical factor of success here is the ability to mobilize public, private and community financial and non-financial resources within a complementary and integrated process of developing each slum.

What will the future look like?

How should Cairo, where the majority of slums exist, look like in 2050 (figure 9), assuming that the answer is not a cross between Dubai and Haussmann’s Paris as the Strategic vision of Cairo 2050 presents it? If the imagined image of Cairo and other big cities is to be without slums, does this mean that the slum dwellers have to leave those cities? Can slum dwellers stay close enough to their sources of livelihood in an acceptable urban form? Can policy-makers ever realize

Figure 10: UN Habitat, 2009

A woman vendor passes down the sidewalk of the upgraded waterfront at Bang Bua, Thailand

Photo © Ruth McLeod



that the presence of popular districts for the poor and very poor within the city is useful for the local economy and the diversity of its activities? The critical factor of success here is to keep slum dwellers within the city through slum upgrading or in situ development and integrate them more into urban life and city fabric.

How will decisions be made?

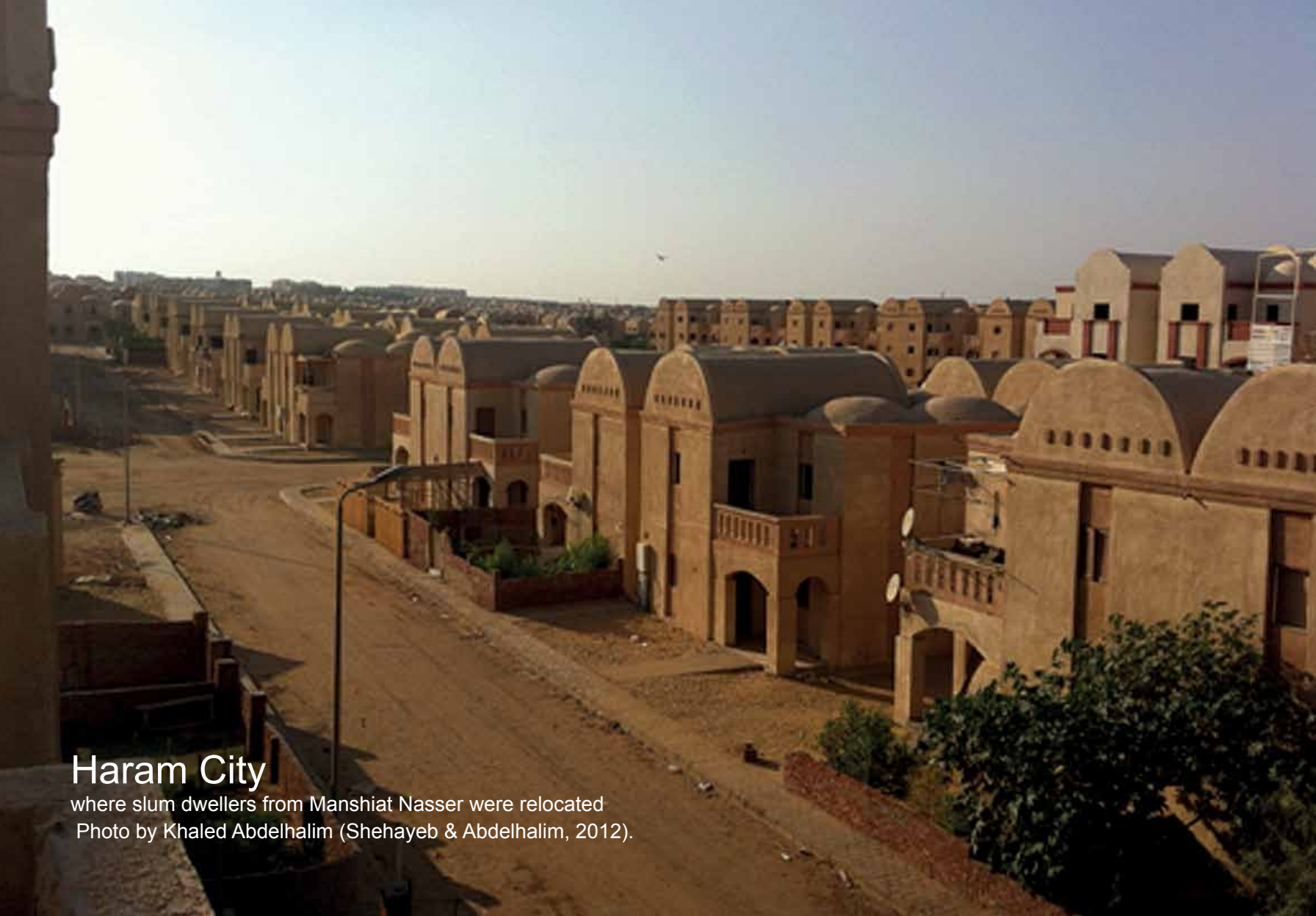
Even if we had answers to the questions above, which we do

not, our answers would by definition be incomplete; because how decisions are made is as important in this context as what decisions are made. A decision that is 75% correct reached through broad consultation with slum dwellers and consensus building among relevant stakeholders is better than a solution that is 95% correct reached by two technocrats and a consultant sitting in a room by themselves. How can the government learn to consult concerned people and decide that it wants to systematically apply it? The critical factor of success here is transparent and inclusive decision-making that comes after a process of negotiation and trust building with the slum dwellers.

The answers to these questions combine issues of competing interests and complex factors. Yet, the critical factors of success are not mainly technical; they are political. As such, these are decisions that, in a new democratic Egypt, must be made through open consultation, broad engagement, and legitimate representation. Civil society should play a mediating role between slum communities and the government and help manage equal eye-level negotiation processes towards win-win solutions.



Doorway to old apartment building, slums
© Yury Asotov | Dreamstime.com



Haram City

where slum dwellers from Manshiat Nasser were relocated
Photo by Khaled Abdelhalim (Shehayeb & Abdelhalim, 2012).

Strategic Approaches for Dealing with Slums

3.1 Strategic Actions for Dealing with Slums

Putting a national strategy for dealing with slums into implementation entails that the government takes overall strategic actions at the national, governorate and local levels and decides among strategic options for dealing with each case of slum areas.

Actions at the central government level (enabling role):

Based on the principles and strategic approach of dealing with slums introduced in Part Two of this document, the central government should take actions towards ensuring supportive legislative and institutional reforms, coordination mechanisms between responsible agencies, and establishment of a monitoring system based on reliable databases.

- **Legislative Reforms:**
 - Explicit recognition of the slum dwellers' rights in the coming versions of relevant laws;
 - Endorsement of the National Slum Development Strategy by ministers, governors and the Parliament after being subject of public debate. The strategy to be presented and endorsed here is not limited to the upgrading or redevelopment programs and interventions, but also the principles underlying them, the mechanisms for their implementation and the indicators measuring the expected impact on the lives of slum dwellers.

- Legislation of a prototype Slum Development Contract that formalizes the agreement based on negotiation between government and dwellers, including a manual for developing a contract. The contract should include a feasibility study that indicates funding, percentage of cost recovery, social and environmental costs and forward and backward linkages. ISDF has developed a slum development contract that may be reviewed in light of this document.

- **Institutional Reforms:**

- Anchor ISDF at the Ministry of Local Development. It can then become the financing mechanism of an urban development sector that is to be created to be equivalent to the village development agency that has the local development fund for rural development. This clarifies accountability lines for ISDF and ensures being in service of governorates.
- Make a budget line for slum development in MLD's annual budget plan to ensure regular replenishment of the fund, given that it is not always possible to recover cost of projects.
- Legislate and support governorates to establish and manage their own slum upgrading funds that receives funding from ISDF upon agreed upon slum development projects, but can also mobilize other governmental or non-governmental resources for the purpose of dealing

with slums. This decentralized funding mechanism will relieve ISDF from a huge fund management load and give it time to concentrate on program design and monitoring.

- Provide capacity building to local government to coordinate and manage slum development projects using Slum Development Contracts and manuals.

- **Coordination Mechanisms:** Intergovernmental coordination for slum development has to be obligatory. ISDF coordinates with GOPP and the governorates the planning of slum interventions within city plans; with the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation public and donor funding; with line ministries to align their sector plans with slum development interventions. Also, the governorates have to coordinate their slum integrated development plans prepared with ISDF support with relevant ministries and public agencies.

- **Slum Interactive Database:** Regular updating of the national map of unsafe areas is needed, including (re) identification of slum areas. The database should be made through the participation of governorates' administrations and should be made available for the general public.

- **Slum Development Observatory:** Setting up an independent monitoring and evaluation system of slum

conditions and development efforts. A Slum Development Observatory can be placed at IDSC, Ministry of Planning or the Parliament, or added as a function to the Urban Observatory at the Ministry of Housing or to the Local Development Observatory at the MLD. The observatory can also be more independent and performs a watchdog function if created at independent or civil society organizations, including the option to be created within AUC. It can measure the effectiveness and impact of slum development interventions; observe slum dwellers' rights; document and promote best practices using sustainability indicators of success; and so forth.

Actions at the local government level (coordinating & managing role):

Local Slum Development Strategic Plans: Each governorate should prepare a Governorate Slum Development Strategic Plan which identifies slum types, priority intervention and central and local resources. The plan ensures the coordination of all slum development projects within the wider planning and social inclusion frameworks of the city. The plans can be used to promote packages of slum development projects with national and international development agencies, using technical support agencies that bring in international experience and best practices.

- **Building Capacity for Dealing with Slums:** Governorates

should be directed and supported by central government to build institutional and technical capacity for dealing with slums, including identifying slum characteristics, establishing contact with slum dwellers and winning their trust, managing participatory and negotiation-based planning of slum areas, and managing and coordinating slum development projects. ISDF has supported governorates to establish Informal Areas Development Units, which can be the target of such capacity building measures.

Actions at the slum area / project level (implementing roles):

- Capacity Building and Technical Support to Local Actors: CSOs such as rights-based NGOs, universities and research centers can:
 - Train local CDAs on mobilizing collective action of slum dwellers and local resources.
 - Build the organizational capacity of slum dwellers to form representative bodies.
 - Mobilize rights-based NGOs and the media to play a watchdog function for slum interventions.
 - Provide technical and legal support to slum dwellers in negotiating Development Contracts.
 - Train local government personnel involved in slum development projects.
 - Train development professionals on working in slum development projects.

- International best practices demonstrated that it is more important to build the Capacities before the Houses! Raising the awareness of the residents and building their capacities on different skills is necessary before even moving to the new apartments or upgrading their houses is the best way for preventing going back to the slum status. The residents should be trained in a simple way on critical livelihood issues such as removal/use of garbage, participatory food security, etc.

- **Slum Development Projects' Implementation:** Adopting a people-centered approach means to start with people not the physical improvement. International best practices demonstrate that no upgrading or resettlement without engaging the targeted community and enhancing their awareness and capacities. Project management needs to give slum dwellers the feeling of ownership of the whole project and allow them to contribute to the decision making process. Adopting a participatory process by establishing dialogue through participatory profiling and planning can be an entry point to negotiating different options. Here, international best practices also tell us that priorities should be identified before starting. A committee of all stakeholders involved in the project is one way of including dwellers in decision making. Immediate gains and long-term impacts need to be balanced, with space left for incremental improvement.

Figure 11: Community consultation over plans and projects in informal areas upgrading – Egyptian best practice in Boulaq el Dakrour, Participatory Development Program in Urban Areas – GIZ



3.2 Options for Slum Development

These actions at the national, governorate and local level will result in processes and projects of dealing with existing slum areas. On a practical note these actions will have to follow a deliberate selection among the following options of intervention in slum areas.

Tailor-made, negotiation-based options of intervention in slums:

Each case of slums has its unique location and physical, demographic and socio-economic characteristics, which necessitate a tailor-made intervention strategy for dealing with it. While applying a people-centered and participatory approach, the full-fledged demands, and sometimes wishes, of slum dwellers may clash with a city-wide planning agenda that observes the right of all city residents to access quality public spaces or amenities. Slum dwellers should be empowered and supported to enter an equal eye-level negotiation process with city planners and/or administrators. Innovative solutions should be proposed to try to reconcile the city and slum dwellers' agendas. In broad lines, these options can include (Figures 12 - 16):

- **On-site upgrading:** this is the most conservative option with least physical intervention. It works by providing the financial and technical resources, enabling environment, and incentives for the slum dwellers to upgrade their

Figure 12: Unsafe housing conditions in Manshiat Nasser, Participatory Development Program in Urban Areas – GIZ



dwelling into proper housing. The process is usually a house-by-house incremental upgrading and requires land readjustment according to a plan/design agreed upon by all stakeholders. This option can work for slums on less demanded sites.

- **On-site redevelopment:** keeping slum dwellers on the same site in a new development that accommodates their residence and other activities they used to have as essential for their livelihood. This new mixed-use

Figure 13: Physical improvement of slum areas – Manshiat Nasser, Participatory Development Program in Urban Areas – GIZ



development either occupies the whole site or can be intensified in part of the site while leaving another part for other uses. The latter case is encouraging both public and private sector to develop slums in attractive locations to make use of the released land. The rights of slum dwellers have to be well guarded against pressures of developers to leave the site or accept inappropriate deal within the new development. Involving the slum dwellers in the new uses, be it commercial development, social services or

Figure 14: Community participation in assessing needs in informal areas upgrading – Boulaq el Dakrou, Participatory Development Program in Urban Areas – GIZ



public spaces, is productive for both the maintenance of these facilities (surveillance by adjacent residents) as well as for their socio-economic inclusion.

- **Relocation in the vicinity of the slum:** in case the slum upgrading or redevelopment requirements cannot be fulfilled on the same site or a win-win deal can be agreed between developers and the slum dwellers, relocation in the vicinity of the slum location can be an option if accepted by the slum dwellers. The closest the relocation sites to the

Figure 15: Example of urban studies and plans for development of slum areas, Giza Governorate, Participatory Development Program in Urban Areas – GIZ



original slum location and/or being well connected with it through cheap public transport, the more successful and sustainable this option, because it preserves the social and economic networks and ties the slum dwellers have and depend upon in their livelihood. The success of this option depends on many factors such as availability of land close enough to the slum location, the willingness of slum dwellers to stay intact into one quarter or their acceptance to divide into smaller communities, and so forth.

Figure 16: Hai El Salam Slum Upgrading Project in development stage, Shehayeb Consult



- **Relocation in a new site:** relocation outside the site of the slum into a new, remote location must be the last option considered. This case is inevitable when the slum location is unsafe and will not be used at all and there are no nearby locations for resettlement. It has to be undertaken only when there is no suitable/agreeable alternative, when full consultation with the residents has been carried out, and when relocation will not leave the residents or businesses in a worsened condition. If there are more than one option for the relocation sites, slum

dwellers must be given the chance to make an informed selection of the most appropriate option. The resources of the redevelopment project must be fully utilized to reproduce the factors of livelihood in the new location from the perspective of the slum dwellers and not the developers; it is an ideal case for participatory planning and design since the target group is known beforehand.

International best practices bring out an important lesson learnt; that is nothing should be by force! The residents should be given different options to decide about their stay or leave options (e.g. get apartments somewhere else or upgrade their existing house). In case there is only one option, their awareness should be raised first before imposing any solution. They should also participate in designing their houses or the way they will be upgraded. Therefore, forums and workshops should be organized with experts who are able to talk their language and explain the alternatives and give them the opportunity to express their opinions.

3.3 Stakeholders' Cooperation in Dealing with Slums

Since governments cannot deal with the phenomenon of slums alone given its multi-dimension nature, stakeholders' cooperation in the integrated development of slums is an essential factor of success. Such cooperation is needed at all levels – central, governorates and area levels – as well as across sectors – governmental, private sector and civil society. To manage stakeholders' cooperation, stakeholder mapping is an essential exercise, with a view to be used for analyzing the agenda of each stakeholder group and interrelations between them. Relation-management should aim to capitalize on cooperative relations and strategize for resolving conflicting ones. Based on stakeholder mapping and analysis, stakeholders' cooperation can be mobilized by meetings, public debates, awareness campaigns as well as institutional arrangements for continuous exchange and cooperation.

A National Council for Informal Areas' Development:

Stakeholders' coordination at the national level requires a sustainable mechanism that enables ministries relevant to informal areas upgrading to convene together, exchange information, coordinate plans and actions, and network with non-governmental partners. This mechanism can also be the platform on which central-local government coordination takes

place by inviting governors and their Informal Areas Upgrading Units to discuss slum development strategies and programs in their governorates. The described mechanism can take the form of a National Council for Informal Areas' Development, whereby ISDF can act as the executive secretariat. Widening the scope of the council from slums to informal areas ensures more legitimacy on one hand, and more integration of slums into other types of informal areas and eventually into the rest of the city on the other hand. The council should also include representatives of non-governmental actors such as civil society (Umbrella NGOs, universities and research centers, syndicates, etc.) and private sector (business associations, CSR committees, etc.). The council can form working groups on specific issues, including a development partners working group.

Civil society role in dealing with slums: CSOs, with all their diversity, can play multiple, significant roles in dealing with slums:

- At the slum area level, CDAs and CBOs can act as representatives to slum dwellers that organize their solidarity, participation, negotiation and interface with authorities. Also, Umbrella NGOs operating in slum areas may play an enabling and empowering role to slum dwellers as well as technical and legal support.
- Rights-based NGOs can play an advocacy role that should lead to policy reform and corrective measures

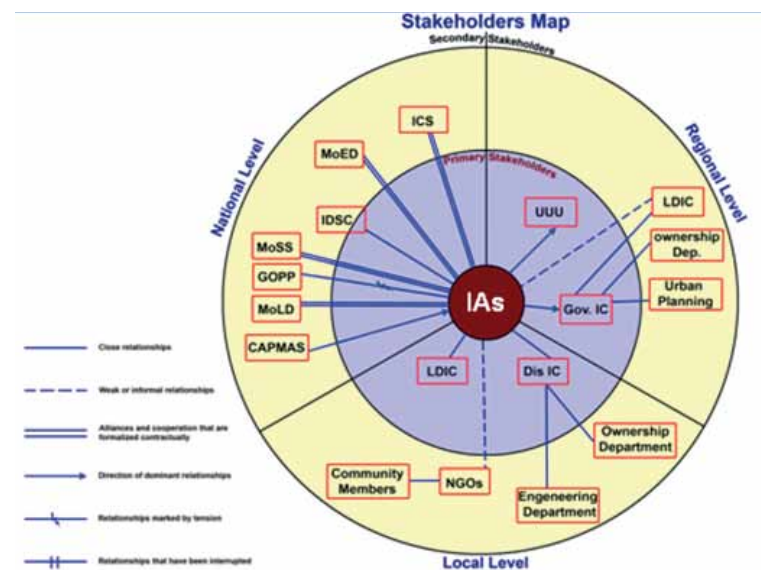
by implementing agencies of slum development projects. They can also play a role in fund raising and project implementation, such as Ma3an NGO for slum development.

- Academic and research institutes can play multiple roles as well in slum development, ranging from conceptual development of approaches and methods to capacity development and technical support to stakeholders including slum dwellers and local administration, conducting research and profiling of slum areas and examining innovative solutions to low-cost upgrading.
- The media should play a proactive role in changing stigmatizing perceptions of slums and slum dwellers and to promote their rights beyond the emotional targeting of sympathy.

CSOs working in slum upgrading both at the conceptual and implementation levels need to network with each other to have an experience exchange on one hand and to gain weight in cooperating with government at the central and local levels.

Private sector engagement in slum development: Private sector affiliation to slums has been negatively perceived due to the focus on its commercial interest in the land value occupied by slums in attractive locations. This undermines the potential of releasing the resources of private sector through both CSR (base of the pyramid investment - UNDP) as well as corporate development of slums (India model) in a way

that preserves slum dwellers' rights. The engagement of the private sector in slum development needs clear regulation and legislation. Promoting the role of private sector and potential gains out of their involvement in slum upgrading through tax exemption, product advertizing, etc. needs to be legislated and announced to the private sector.



Stakeholders Map for informal areas upgrading,
Participatory Development Program in Urban Areas – GIZ

3.4 Financing Models for Dealing with Slums

The scale of the problems associated with slums cannot be addressed without mobilizing community resources, including slum dwellers themselves; their resources willingly provided as well as their knowledge. The mobilization of local resources encourages external actors to get engaged and capitalize on community efforts. International development agencies and the social corporate departments of the private sector are looking for community initiatives to support. A strategic approach for dealing with slums should aim to integrate external and internal resources and propose interventions in which both resource-inputs complement each other. This requires mediation to bridge the gap of mistrust between slum dwellers and outsiders, and for governmental and nongovernmental organizations to find ways to pool resources and partner together in implementing slum development programs. Unconventional models of funding need to be explored by both external and internal actors.

The lesson learnt out of international best practice is that slum dwellers are willing to pay! Slum dwellers are willing to contribute to the services and to pay taxes, contradictory to the belief that they are a pampered vote-bank and want everything free. Several cases showed that payment gives them the feeling of ownership and responsibility to protect and take care of their infrastructure. However, another lesson is that resource mobilization is not only about “money”.

Mobilization of resources doesn't mean only raising funding; engaging multidisciplinary teams (engineers, architects, planners, social workers, etc.) is a must. This also includes the involvement of local NGOs and residents with different skills and backgrounds. Involving a research team during the whole project is also essential to investigate the issues that will arise during the planning, implementation and monitoring processes.

The current financial model for slum development is that the central government, through ISDF, finances the governorates with loans that should be repaid out of the slum development 'revenue', which is expected to come out of land sales. It is assumed that there will be cross-subsidy; the revenue of projects for strategically-located slums can be used to fund projects where revenue is not expected. While this model may suit certain cases, other financial models are needed, especially if involving slum dwellers becomes an essential element of the development process.

The very early experience of Hai El Salam slum upgrading in Ismailia provides an interesting case of establishing a fund for the project that was managed by the governorate, to which slum dwellers contributed through land sales when they trusted the financial modality for being close enough to them. In addition, the development of the extension of the slum area and the sales of bigger parcels of land also contributed to the project fund in a way that allowed the governorate to

provide infrastructure and services. When the project gained exposure and took over by the Ministry of Housing, the fund became inaccessible not only to slum dwellers but also to local government. The result was bringing the project to a halt. The lesson learnt here is that if we are keen on involving slum dwellers and local actors, then the financial management of slum development projects has to be localized and be accessible to them, with fund managers being accountable to local actors.

Community Organizations Development Institute (CODI) Experience in Thailand: The Baan Mankong Collective Housing Program was launched by the Thai government in January 2003, as part of its efforts to address the housing problems of the country's poorest urban citizens. The program channels government funds, in the form of infrastructure subsidies and soft housing and land loans, directly to poor communities, which plan and carry out improvements to their housing, environment, basic services and tenure security and manage the budget themselves. Instead of delivering housing units to individual poor families, the Baan Mankong Program ("Secure housing" in Thai) puts Thailand's slum communities (and their community networks) at the center of a process of developing long-term, comprehensive solutions to problems of land and housing in Thai cities.

As part of this unconventional program, which is being implemented by the Community Organizations Development

Institute (CODI - a public organization under the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security), poor communities work in close collaboration with their local governments, professionals, universities and NGOs to survey all the communities in their cities and then plan an upgrading process which attempts to improve all the communities in that city - all of them - within a few years. Once these city-wide plans are finalized and upgrading projects are selected, CODI channels the infrastructure subsidies and housing loans directly to the communities.

Figure 17: Participatory design in the Baan Mankong Collective Housing Program, CODI website



This housing experiment in Thailand is the result of a process which has been developing over the past thirteen years, starting with building community savings activities around the country, then forming and strengthening large-scale networks of poor communities, and finally using these people's managerial skills to deal with housing problems at city scale. But Baan Mankong has only been possible with the commitment by the central government to allow people to be the core actors and to decentralize the solution-finding process to cities and communities.

By creating space for poor communities, municipalities, professionals and NGOs to work together on the housing problems in their cities, Baan Mankong is bringing about an important change in how the issue of low-income housing is dealt with: no longer as an ad-hoc welfare process or a civic embarrassment to be swept under the carpet, but as an important structural issue which relates to the whole city and which can be resolved. The upgrading program is helping to create local partnerships which can integrate poor community housing needs into the larger city's development and resolve future housing problems as a matter of course. CODI website <http://www.codi.or.th/housing/aboutBaanmankong.html>

Figure 18: Baan Mankong slum before and after development, CODI website

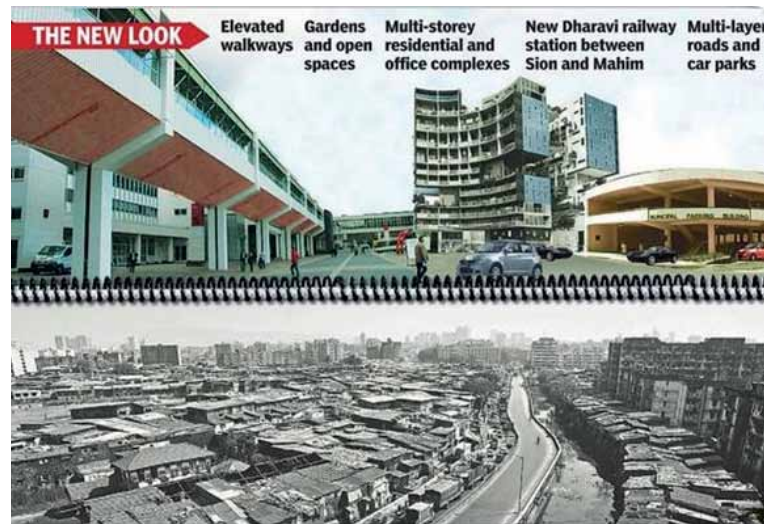


Transferable Development Rights Financing in India:

Over 60% of the population of Mumbai lives in slums, and the city contains the world's biggest slum – Dharavi. The extreme crowding of the Mumbai peninsula has led to exceptionally high land prices that make slum upgrading particularly difficult. To address this issue, Mumbai has evolved a Transferable Development Rights (TDR) and Additional Development Rights (ADR) program that gives extra buildable floor area to developers who include replacement slum housing in their projects. A portion of the extra density can be built on site, and the remainder must be used further “up” the peninsula and away from the worst crowding.

TDR programs allow property owners to be compensated for some of the value of their land without actually having to sell their land. In areas with high demand for development, TDR programs can eliminate sprawl by encouraging higher density in areas where growth is desirable. The community still receives the tax benefits of having the land privately held while the property owner may realize a tax savings as a result of the diminution of the land's value.

http://www.sustainablecitiesinstitute.org/view/page.basic/class/feature.class/Lesson_Transfer_Devt_Rights_Overview

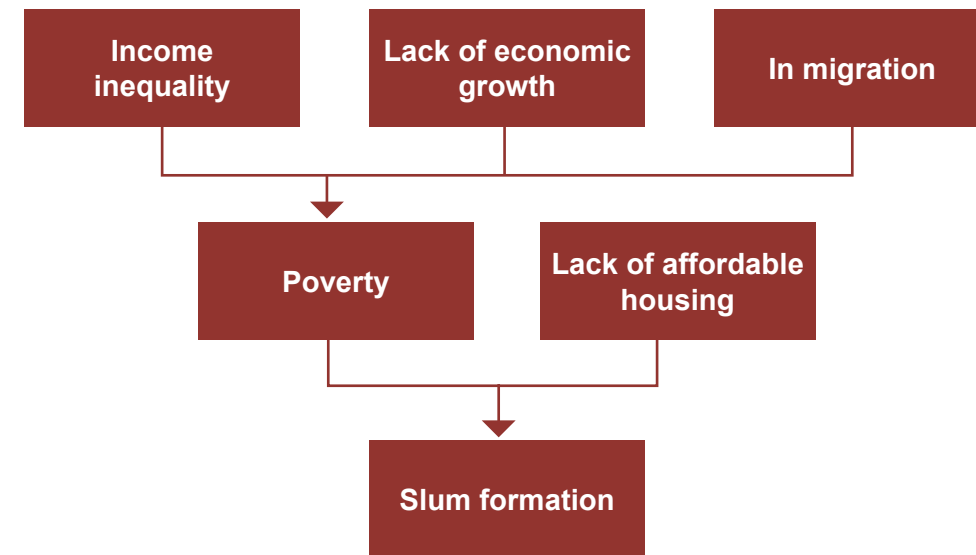


Scheme for redevelopment of Dharavi, the world's biggest slum in Mumbai, google images

3.5 Preventing New Slums in Egypt

Aiming towards a country free of slums requires upgrading or developing existing slums as well as preventing the establishment of new ones. While the former factor, dealt with throughout the document so far, engages with the slums as a de facto, the latter factor deals with the root causes of living in a slum condition. The prevention of new slums builds on an understanding of how to reverse the factors contributing

to inability of slum dwellers to live in standard, decent or even safe housing. There are two main sets of such factors; one related to the socio-economic conditions of slum dwellers and their ability to afford formal housing, and another related to the conditions defining formal housing including building laws, planning regulations and urban governance practices. The following are entry points for dealing with these factors:



The Challenge of Slums: Global Report on Human Settlements 2003, Pg 17, United Nations Human Settlements Programme.

Targeting urban poverty: housing the ultra poor and marginalized groups:

Acknowledging that the basis of the slum phenomenon is not physical but economic, a prevention strategy has to tackle urban poverty by addressing the lack of economic growth opportunities and income inequality. It also has to address the poverty geographic distribution and how it relates to the different types of substandard housing. The formation of slums can be prevented or reduced by identifying ultra poor families in cities and addressing their poverty, and associated social problems, before it leads them to becoming homeless or living in a slum. This requires a variety of sensitive programs addressing the unskilled labor, poor elderly people, widows and women-headed households, homeless young children, drug users and distributors, etc. Also, the provision of decent emergency housing for those whose houses collapse is essential for not leaving them to squat in the nearest vacant plot of land and developing a slum. The housing program for the most-needy families is in principle providing the right response to poverty by offering temporary shelter until vulnerable and marginalized groups are supported by other socio-economic programs and pulled out of poverty, and potentially slums.

Provision of land for low-income housing within the urban planning of cities:

A slum prevention strategy needs to take off from a realization of why national policies and efforts for the provision of formal housing options as an alternative to informal housing did not

work. These particularly include segregatory urban planning norms in new urban developments, sectoral non-synchronized development of their physical structures, high-standard building regulations in new cities, and other mechanisms through which land for housing is made available. The question remains, with the insistence on this modernist planning approach, if desert communities can be made to work for low-income residents at a justifiable cost.

On the other hand, land in existing cities is scarce and expensive such that low-income housing would compete with many other public functions and private interests. This is one reason why informal housing should be upgraded; to maintain a place for the low-income groups in cities. In addition, the rate of growth of existing cities should be projected on a long-term perspective (e.g. 20 years), and based on the estimated figures take action to obtain land and promote the construction of social housing for the urban poor. For example, by making legislative changes to reserve a certain percentage of land allocated to any new public or private housing project for the urban poor. In addition, the same rule can apply to allocation of public land for creating any other non-residential use, such as work space, industries, or investment projects.

A sustainable housing policy:

A viable social housing policy needs to be in place to offer a wider variety of housing options and arrangements to match the diverse demand groups, including the poor and the ultra poor.

Social housing programs should focus on the development of sustainable communities rather than on the production of houses, meaning that the success benchmark should be to enable individuals, households and different social groups to work and generate income, access different housing solutions resulting in dwellings that suit their needs, demands and their ability to pay (adopted after UN-Habitat). Learning from what suits informal housing dwellers, incremental house building should be one type offered within the social housing programs, which is appropriate for low income people.

Adjusting housing market distortions would generally improve access of all income categories to housing. In this sense, rental housing should be also part of the overall housing policy. Through legislation, the government should encourage the owners of closed apartments nationwide to be opened and rented, and should also offer new low-income housing on rental basis to reduce speculation and ensure it ends up in the hand of the targeted low-income groups.

Urban governance: improved monitoring, control of urban development and good governance:

In a very pragmatic sense, a slum prevention strategy has to deal with how local government can improve monitoring of urban change, control over vacant and public land, and enforcement capacity of preventing squatting. However, a good governance approach would encourage local government not just to apply rule of law and prevent potential establishment

of a slum, but also to be responsive to needy citizens by listening to them and opening a dialogue on their needs. This change of governance and urban management can lead to substantial improvement in preventing slum development by tailoring solutions that respond to the needs of potential slum dwellers. It has to be understood that slum development is also related to a wider societal trend of informality and break of laws and regulations. Therefore, a slum prevention strategy has to spread the culture of respect of law, which also has to go hand in hand with social justice, citizenship rights and social inclusion.

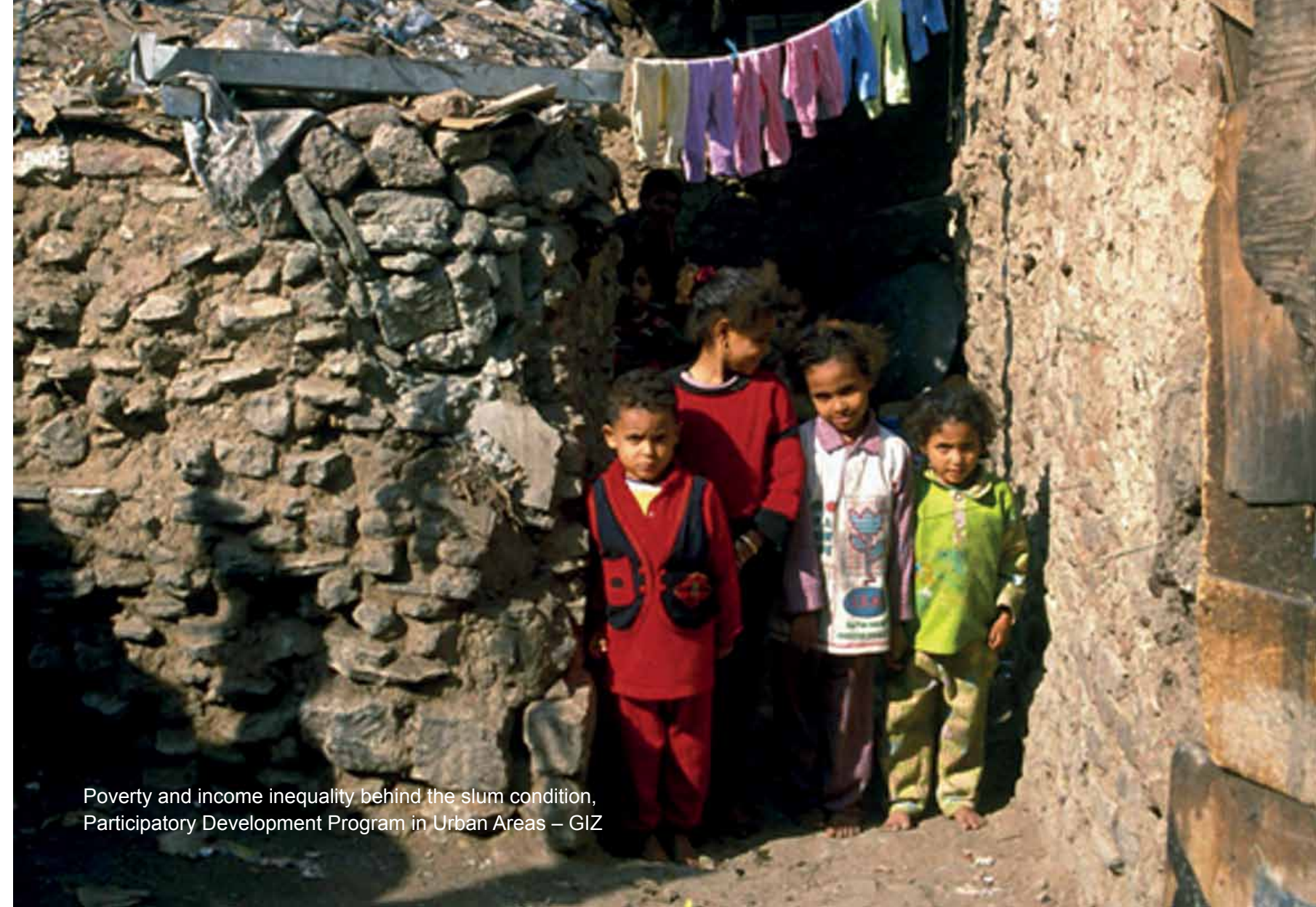
Reducing rural-urban migration:

Although rural-urban migration does not contribute to more than a quarter of urban growth, it is a critical factor in developing slums given the low socio-economic profile of the migrants. There is not enough income or employment opportunities in agriculture, a condition that is not encouraging agricultural workers to stay in the countryside. Instead they migrate to nearby towns or cities searching for more remunerative non-agricultural jobs. They would stay with a relative, work in any casual or non-skilled work, move to a rented room in an informal area and bring their family over, and they may move to a poorer area or a slum to establish their own house. A strategy for preventing future formation of slums will have to tackle rural development. Pursuing Egypt's 2030 Sustainable Agricultural Development Strategy and similar plans targeting rural development will have a great impact on reducing the

rural-urban migration. The government should identify the rural areas that send the highest numbers of migrants to the cities and then work on:

- eradicating rural poverty in these areas through a combination of sustainable economic growth, income distribution and social development policies. This can be achieved in the farming sector through, supporting the farmers to increase the productivity of both land and water units, increasing the competitiveness of agriculture products, improving the economic climate for agriculture investments, enhancing creation of job opportunities, particularly for rural youth, strengthen producers' associations for better marketing of smallholder farmers' production; making market information more freely available; and enacting and enforcing laws and regulations on product standards ¹.
- investing in reclaiming the nearest areas of desert to the targeted rural areas—for distribution to poor, disadvantaged rural people, and landless workers. These projects should provide post-settlement and agricultural support services that are crucial to the establishment of viable farming. This will encourage adapting new technologies, improving the efficiency of water use and the sustainability of irrigation systems, increasing attention given to off-farm enterprises, facilitating the provision of financial services to small-scale farmers in the new lands, and supporting marketing and agro-processing.
- improve living conditions in deprived rural areas through extension or improvement of infrastructure and public services. This has been targeted by the geographic targeting of poverty by the governmental initiative of improving the 1000 villages program.

¹ Egypt's Sustainable Agricultural Development Strategy towards 2030 in IFAD 2012



Poverty and income inequality behind the slum condition, Participatory Development Program in Urban Areas – GIZ

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