

# **Urban Informality in Egyptian Cities: Coping with Diversity**

Ahmed M. Soliman

Professor, Architecture Department, Faculty of Engineering, Alexandria University, Egypt  
ahmsoliman@yahoo.com, ahsoliman812@gmail.com

## **Summary:**

The question of urban informality today concerns the majority of the inhabitants and policy makers of regional metropolises, as well as those of secondary cities. This study aims to show that there are diverse mechanisms behind the complexity of urban housing informality in Egyptian cities. It develops a typology of informal housing and estimates quantities and values of different types of informal properties. Its research includes case studies of Alexandria, Egypt's second largest city and main port. The value of informal properties should be harnessed to promote development and alleviate poverty. Understanding the built environment of informal housing developments would enable the state and housing professionals to accumulate, eliminate, and integrate of informal housing areas within formal areas in Alexandria. It concludes that the role of the government should be changed from *provider* or *facilitator* into *enabler*. This would also conform to the government's requirements and policies.

## **Key Words:**

Urban informality; Housing typology; Informal areas; Semi-informal areas; Squatter areas; Hybrid areas; Exformal areas; Accumulation, Elimination; Integration; Cairo, Alexandria, Egypt.

## **Urban Informality in Egyptian Cities: Coping with Diversity**

### **I. INTRODUCTION**

In the majority of developing countries the low incomes of many urban households, combined with the high costs of urban land, conspire to make access to affordable, appropriate, and legal housing extremely difficult<sup>1</sup>. In Egypt, the result is that about twenty million people live today in houses that are detrimental to their health and safety. Yet as Egyptian urban centers continue to expand, these problems become daily more urgent. In Egypt housing is essentially an urban problem, one closely linked with development processes, socioeconomic change, and political milieu. Its main features are overcrowding, a shortage of affordable housing for those most in need, the continued emergence of informal housing areas, and a general deterioration of the built environment.

Informal housing development is not a new phenomenon in Egypt. In fact, it is as old as modern urbanization and development, which have existed in the country for more than five decades. Indeed, Egyptian cities, particularly Cairo and Alexandria, have played a decisive role in the country's socioeconomic development. The key to this role has been the complementary development of industrial technology and sprawl growth. In Egypt, the twin phenomena of industrialization and urbanization, formally or informally, have been virtually inseparable, and have directly affected housing delivery systems.

Acting as a partner in housing production, the Egyptian government has sought to protect public health and provide safety in overcrowded cities, and recently it began to seriously tackle the problem of informal housing areas. As a result, policies and programs are now being devised to address such important concerns as the continuing deterioration of housing conditions, the low level of formal housing production, the spread of informal housing areas, and the restricted nature of building regulation.

This study aims to show that there are diverse mechanisms behind the complexity of informal housing in Egyptian cities. It develops a typology of informal housing and estimates quantities and values of different types of informal property. Its research includes case studies of Alexandria, Egypt's second largest city and main port. In addition, the study seeks to question the recent policy of accumulation, elimination, and integration of informal housing areas within formal areas in Alexandria city. Finally, it examines the prospects for further informal residential development in the present socioeconomic and political milieu. In this study all housing that is not in compliance with building and zoning laws will be termed "informal," rather than "illegal." All illegal housing in Egypt is deemed informal, and as will be shown, formalization occurs only through the process of legalization.

The diversity, complexity, and widespread nature of informal housing development in Egypt have resulted in a situation where various types of housing have been created to suit various strata of society. The quality of information on such informal housing and its typologies is one of the most important factors influencing the success of international development assistance. Yet in Egypt, little is known about this subject from the perspective of local intermediaries and residents. A central purpose of this study, therefore, is to introduce a typology of informal housing which reflects accurate information, and which may facilitate the process of developing a proper policy of government intervention. In particular, the quality of information presented here may assist decision-makers in arriving at a conceptual framework for legalizing much of this sector. This would allow housing to play a proper role in the socioeconomic development of the country.

Research for this study was achieved from two projects. The first project, commissioned by the Institute of Liberty and Democracy in Peru (ILD), was carried out to examine informal housing and land-use patterns within Greater Cairo Region, and Alexandria, to investigate how informal housing developed according to certain characteristic typologies. It involved

---

the observation of random samples of informal areas.<sup>2</sup> The out put of the project involved mapping informal areas in the two cities by typology and sub typology. The analysis proposes three main informal housing types: semi-informal, squatting, and hybrid or exformal. Within these types, ten subtypes were identified, and within several of the subtypes an additional fifteen minor variants were distinguished. In order to estimate the quantity of property associated with each informal housing type in Greater Cairo and Alexandria, analysis was carried out at the lowest census enumeration level — that of the *shiakha* (part of a district) and village (*qaria*)<sup>3</sup> to estimating asset value. Throughout this process, conservative estimates were used — in other words, average physical attributes and values were held at the lower end of possible ranges. The author carried out various phases of the project from August 1999 to July 2000.

The second project is announced by the General Organization for Physical Planning in Cairo (GOPP) to eliminate and accumulate certain informal housing areas in Greater Cairo Region and Alexandria city. The author carried out various phases of Alexandria project from November 2006 to the present time, and the project is still in progress. Using the most detailed local maps and satellite images, the analysis then moved on to examine the possibility of extending the existing informal areas into the available surrounding areas. This first involved calculating the extent of built-up area for each informal subtype in each *shiakha* or *qaria*. This gave the percentage of each enumeration district that could be attributed to each. To estimate the total asset value of these dwellings, it was then necessary to ascribe average physical characteristics and assign monetary values by dwelling type.<sup>4</sup> This was done for each of the informal types to reflect generalized differences between informal residences on agricultural and desert land.

The study is organized into nine parts: first, an overview of research methodology; second, a discussion of the problems posed by the emergence of urban informality; third, a

---

description of Alexandria context and informal housing development; fourth, an investigation of informal/exformal housing types; fifth, an examination of policy of elimination, accumulation and integration; sixth, presentation of spatial extent of informal housing typology; seventh, quantification and valuation of informal/exformal housing properties; and last, a concluding section offering recommendations for future government action.

## **II. METHODOLOGY**

The paper is based on two projects conducted between the years 1999-2000 and rationalized at November 2006. The first project was involved the ILD, while the second project was implicated the GOPP. During the first project the study conducted in three phases; preliminary, intermediate and feasibility. First, a preliminary study was carried out to examine informal housing and the land use pattern within three cities; Greater Cairo Region, Alexandria, and Tanta. Second, the intermediate study was formulated to examine the general causes of informality and housing mechanisms. Third, fieldwork was conducted within the study areas themselves. The preliminary study was carried out by the ILD team and two local consultants in 1996 through the observation of random samples of informal areas.<sup>5</sup> It produced a typology of nine residential areas to be analyzed for the formalization of Egypt's urban informal sector. This observation was under the umbrella of three main types of informal residential area in Greater Cairo and Alexandria which were used as the base for this analysis.

The intermediate study was carried out in 1999 to gather information from various sources; reviewing available data within Egyptian universities, official governmental departments, and the Ministry of Housing and Utilities in Cairo. The main task of this stage was to investigate the history and the main causes of settlement formulation and the associated mechanisms. This stage was carried out through cooperation between the two local consultants and the ILD team. After gathering sufficient information regarding informal

---

housing areas in the three cities, it was decided to form three teams for investigating the local laws, carrying out field survey, and elaborating typologies to classifying the informal areas and providing maps as well as basic statistical and background information.

The feasibility phase was shared between the ILD team, and local consultants by whom many open forums were set up. The main three types and possible sub-types were discussed with the ILD team and with the local consultants to elaborate these three types and to set a first detailed list of possible typologies. This phase took a period of about four months. This typology structure was then tested and elaborated through a dual process; first, the existence of differing tenure histories behind the development of informal areas in the three cities was elaborated with knowledgeable officials and professionals, including those working on other ILD property teams. Finally, numerous field checks were carried out in different parts of the three cities. Informal housing areas (Ashwaiyyat) constitute a considerable proportion of many Egyptian cities.<sup>6</sup> The fieldwork has shown that 52.7 percent, 50 percent, and 25 percent of all Greater Cairo, Alexandria, and Tanta's residential areas respectively are informal. These areas occupied net surface areas of 129.2, 34.2, and 10.5 square kilometers in the Greater Cairo, Alexandria, and Tanta respectively (Soliman, 2002).

Three main informal housing types were found. Twelve informal sub-types and minor sub-types were identified. In order to estimate the quantity of properties associated with each type of informal/ex-formal areas in the Greater Cairo, Alexandria and Tanta study areas, analysis was carried out at the lowest census enumeration level, that of the *Shiakha* (a part of district) and *Qaria* (village).<sup>7</sup> This stage took six months, where during this period, information was analyzed and evaluated by the ILD team, and the final report was submitted in July 2000.

During the second project, an appraisal was conducted to review, revisit and refine the previous gathered information from the first project. This project was only concentrated on

---

informal areas in the City of Alexandria which were accounted within 50 areas varied in size and covered the reached typologies. The study design was decided upon in the light of what was practical as well as what was theoretically desirable. The study was divided into three stages; a pilot study, feasibility study, and finally the in-depth case study, with various techniques and instruments used in each stage. The author collected information about informal housing developments from the first and second phases carried out of the pilot stage. Later, in order to have a good background on the informal residential areas, satellite images were used with pixels of one meter. The aim of selecting target areas was to gain the analysis of the “Informal Physical Contract and Extra Legal Regulations” a representative selection of the main informal typologies and sub-typologies found in the three cities, and thus give a fair idea of the variation of physical and tenure characteristics of residential informality. Methodologically, this meant selecting stratified sample areas that represented the whole range of informality within the city of Alexandria. A greater detailing of the informal typologies was necessary to ensure that the main location, temporal and land tenure characteristics of each informal typology could be targeted to gain a fair representation of the aggregate of informal areas in Egypt. What role did the residents and the government plays in the formulation of the informal areas? What principles did the residents adopt in their implementation process? What were their responses towards government bodies’ changing attitudes relating to housing regulation, land legislation and planning control? Had these changes affected the mechanisms within the areas? At this stage GIS tools have been used to analyses the data and to test the reached typologies. Accrued data have been obtained. Detailed analysis have investigated building heights, total number of population of each informal area, the number of land plots and its size, the number of dwelling units, and land ownership types.

---

### III. OVERVIEW OF URBAN INFORMALITY

In the recent decades, a controversy on urban informality and its linkage with the urban poor and correlation with the transformation of the socioeconomic situation and the diversity of cultural/religion context within Third World cities became a critical debate in the literature (see for example, Rakowski, 1994; Roy and AlSayyad, 2004; Bromley, 1994 and Soliman, 2004a). The critical issues are that what transactions and struggles that is behind the creation of urban informality? Does the concept of urban informality differ in cities and within the city itself? Does the sociopolitical transformation affect the progress of urban informality? Does historiography has to do with the formulation of urban informality? Rakowski examined urban informality from two different perspectives; essentially the structuralists and the legalists. The former comprised the ILO and advocates of the underground economy; the latter included Hernando De Soto and the advocates of microenterprise perspectives.<sup>8</sup>

The invention of the term informal sector is generally attributed to Keith Hart in his seminal article “Informal Income Opportunities and Urban Employment in Ghana” published in 1973. Hart spoke of income opportunities rather than sectors, and he defined informality simply as “self-employment.” For Hart, informal income opportunities were ways for the poor to get by when neither corporations nor the government could provide sufficient employment for the expanding population. Hart’s “informal income opportunities” varied in terms of legality, official registration, skills required, and so on, but because he used only the criterion of self-employment for definitional purposes, it was relatively easy to define a sector using his definition.

The ILO team that wrote the Kenya Report divided the economy into two sectors, formal and informal effectively recreating and renaming W. Arthur Lewis’s (1954) dualistic model of the interaction between the modern and traditional sectors in underdeveloped countries. Key assumptions underlying this development strategy were that poor countries must diversify from dependence on primary production through manufacturing, rather than through

the expansion of services and that small enterprises generate more jobs and require less capital investment per job than larger firms (Bromley, 1990). This is true, while most of small enterprises are illegally operated by which encourage the creation of urban informality.

Even the neo-Marxist petty commodity production literature of the late 1970s often seemed to adopt a dualism analysis, and many observers concluded that the debates about the utility of the informal sector concept were largely semantic. Recently, however, a few authors began to question economy, especially the collection of “The Informal Economy” edited by Portes, Castells, and Benton (1989). The three writers argue that the informal economy involve “the unregulated production of otherwise licit goods and services,” and termed it a “novel economic trend.” The resilience of the growth of informal arrangements was in context in which it was believed to be extinct or in which it was expected to disappear with the advance of industrialization. Also, the initial assumptions gradually lose credibility, leaving the reader confused as to what “the informal sector” is and how it relates to “the informal economy” and to “informality” (Bromley, 1990).

The concept of the informal sector is fatally flawed as a tool of analysis or policymaking (Peattie, 1996). The informal sector is therefore said to contain the mass of the working poor whose productivity is much lower than in the modern urban sector from which most of them are excluded. The informal economy is no longer novel in Africa (Stren, 2004), yet formulated a “dominant sector” in the national economy in many Third World countries. For example, in Egypt, the informal economy sector may account to formulate 40 percent of the national economy distributed between small, bigger to intermediate enterprises (Soliman, A., 1996).

For De Soto (1989) “informality” is the key to survival and success, ignoring or deliberately breaking unreasonable official rules and regulations in order to make a living and to satisfy basic needs. In his view, “informality” occupies an intermediate position between

---

“formality/legality,” when all laws and regulations are complied with, and “criminality,” when acts are performed clearly against official laws, basic morality, and the public interest. Arif Hasan (2000 and 2002) defines as “informal” all activity which is related to land development, affects land use and land values, and which, in whole, or in part, does not have de jure recognition. Corrupt stake groups view informality as a mass response to mindless, pompous bureaucracy and to the manipulations of the economic system. In short, informality exists when the means are illicit but the ends are licit.

De Soto, in his book *The Other Path* and numerous short articles, has defined and elaborated a concept of informality as activities with illegal means but legal ends and social utility. Thus, he often adds a second criterion, social utility, whereby the people involved and the society as a whole are better off if the law on these activities is broken than if it is obeyed. He stresses on four fundamental characteristics. First, it is sociological in character, deriving from the interdisciplinary field of law and economics rather than from mainstream economics or sociology. Second, it focuses on economic activities and enterprises, rather than on individuals, households, or neighborhoods; it represents a way of doing things, rather than a fixed population or territory. Third, it bridges the gap between production and reproduction, dealing with the totality of income-generating and expenditure-saving activities. Fourth, it is not dualistic, because it does not presuppose that the whole economy is, or should be, divided into two sectors.

De Soto’s (2000) superselling book entitled “*The Mystery of Capital: Why Capitalism Triumphs in the West and Fails Everywhere Else*” argues that the poor inhabitants of Third World nations, five sixths of humanity, do have things, but they lack the process to represent their property and create capital. Why then are these countries so underdeveloped? Why cannot they turn these assets into liquid capital, the kind of capital that generates new wealth? For De Soto, this is the mystery of capital. De Soto explains how this unwitting process,

---

hidden deep in thousands of pieces of property law throughout the West, came to be, how it works, and how today it can be deliberately set up in the developing and the former communist nations. On the other hand, Gilbert (2002) argues that property titles have not resulted in a wealthy housing market or a regular supply of formal credit. He adds on the uncomfortable truth is that, in practice; the granting of legal titles has made very little difference. Some writers argued that property title alone does not help in economic development, but a high level of home ownership may even have a detrimental impact on economic development (Payne, 2002). In most cities title deeds cannot do a great deal of harm beyond accelerating the introduction of taxes on land and housing in poor settlements (Gilbert, 2002), but it seems that securing land title in some cities differs from others, by which it depends on different circumstances that control the system of a given environment, and the cost involved in legalizing land tenure (Soliman, 2002).

De Soto never mentions the effect of ethnicity structure on urban informality and its effect on urban fabric within a given environment, on the other hand, urban informality has a great effect on drawing up the social stability within a given area, for example Lebanese case. AlSayyad (2004) argued that urban informality does not simply consist of the activities of the poor, or a particular status of labor, or marginality. Rather, it is an organic logic which emerges under a paradigm of Liberalization. In Israel, in furtherance of the politics of an ethno-nation, planning has been used as an instrument of ethnic control. Thus, urban informality is created for the purpose of marginalizing, excluding, and impeding the development of an entire subpopulation (Yiftachel and Yakobi, 2004).

In a simple term, informal is defined as not according to due form (The New Collins Compact English Dictionary, 1984). On other words, informal is doing things that differ than common. When we taking about informality, we mean all sorts of activities (whether socioeconomic or space development) operate outside the prevailing law of a given society.

---

Along with Nezar AlSayyad, Roy has used the term urban informality to indicate an organizing logic, a system of norms that governs the process of urban transformation itself (AlSayyad and Roy, 2004). In attempt to locate the production of theory and policy in the cities of developing world, Roy (2005) has ended up with three pressing issues towards informality; moving from land use to distributive justice, rethinking the object of development, and replacing best practice models with realist critique. In her conclusion, Informality is not a distinct and discrete mode but is rather the very circuits of articulation that link different types of housing production to one another. As the above discussion would seem to indicate, urban informality also represents a failure of official socioeconomic and political programs to meet the basic needs and requirements of the majority of people. When such programs fail to meet the requirements of society, informality takes place. Similarly, people may choose ad-hoc ways of obtaining goods and services to avoid complicated, time-consuming official procedures. Urban informality in this sense simply involves a form of highly rational economic behavior, allowing people to obtain what they need at lower cost. Most scholars dismissed the strong link between informal economy and informality, as the previous is occurring first, and followed by the latter. Informal economy, whatever its form, size, and place is occurring in both urban and rural areas. Informality is rather the circuits of articulation that integrate different sorts of activities that operate unofficially. As soon as informal economy established, informality appears in various forms of illegality either tangible or intangible.

Changes in official policies, rapid urban development, land tenure laws, and spreading of poverty are all factors have historically been associated urban informality by which informal residential development flourished in Egyptian cities. For all these reasons, it is important to understand why the urban poor are not interested in obeying the law. Enhanced information on informal residential activities may also lead to policies that will enhance national

---

economic development by changing the status of informal housing from covert to overt wealth.

However, informality in its simple term is doing things that do not obey the prevailing laws or systems. It involves using numerous mechanisms to avoid complying with prevailing legal procedures. It is doing things at the lowest cost, or doing things to avoid or not avoid complicated circumstances, either ethnic conflicts or social segregation, to implement things in the shortest time and to raise the maximum profit and solidarities. In other word, informality exists when the prevailing law does not recognize who owns what in which, and what is going on the market. Therefore, examining the informality as a way of informal housing development is a crucial aspect to understand the mechanisms of informality, and to understand why the urban poor are not interested in obeying the law. Does urban informality exist in a certain area by a certain strata of a society? Has social exclusion have main impact on urban informality? If so how does social exclusion create, or at least encourage, the spreading of urban informality?

#### **IV. ALEXANDRIA BACKGROUND AND INFORMAL HOUSING DEVELOPMENT**

Alexander the Great founded Alexandria in 332-331 BC. In the early development of the city, Dinocrates, Alexander's architect, built a break-water or mole, the Heptastadium, linking Pharaohs Island, where build the lighthouse that was one of the Seven Wonders of the World, with the mainland, thereby forming the bases of the present eastern and western harbors.

In 1819 Mohamed Ali had dredged *El Mohmudiya* canal, and linked the Nile and western harbor. In 1854, the city witnessed the building of Egypt's first rail way which marked the start of Egypt's industrial revolution and the consolidation of the western harbor and the navel base the city developed rapidly. In 1863 the tram way was constructed as a connection between the newly established eastern section of Alexandria, the city centre and the western

---

part of the city. Miser Railway station was built in 1876 adjacent to part of *El Nabi Daniel* street.

In 1918 the Municipality of Alexandria commissioned the British planner Mclean to carry out an extensive town planning schemes for the city. In 1934, El Cornish route was constructed to link the western harbor with the new established suburb of *El Ramel* which stimulated suburban growth, principally eastwards, much of it with villas used only in the summer by affluent Caireness. Alexandria's expansion during the two decades 1947-67 was towards the eastern section of the city, with very few exceptions at the agricultural land in the southern part of *El Ramel* area. During 1947-67, the arbitrary extension of the city to the west, mixed land uses in different areas, and increasing pressure on the city infrastructure were remarkable.

The decolonization measures of the 1950s and the nationalization of foreign-owned properties had led to changing the ownerships of most *Ezabss* located at the southern edge of the city into public control. The 1958 plan, had introduced new axis of growth for east-west into the desert flanks. The first priority of the plan was the construction of Suez canal Road (replaced *El Farkha* canal) to link *Moharrm Bey* District with *El Horia* route, and *Smoha* district with *El Ramel* area. This has led to easy conversion of adjacent agricultural land to urban use where development was pulled both by the newly established industrial areas of *Seouph* and also by numerous public housing projects and factories located in the wide wedge of agricultural land and along *El Mahmoudyia* canal lying at the southern part of *Abu kir* railway. Due to the construction of Suez canal road, many informal residential areas had demolished and resettled nearby the road (*Ezbet Nadi El Said* and *El Siadeen* area).

The Principal growth of informal residential areas in the southern part of the city was at the beginning of 1960s, when *Hamdi Ashor*, the governor of Alexandria, started to implement the master plan of 1958. These areas were constructed as *EWAQ* or emergency housing for

---

short period of time, till to be located in other areas within the city (*Ewaq El Siadeen Area*, and *El Karntena*). Thus, it could be said that the appearance of informal residential areas within the city return back to the late 1950s and the early 1960s.

The 1967 war with Israel, the subsequent War of Attrition, and the run up to the 1973 war completely froze formal development in Egypt, including Cairo and Alexandria cities. However, the demographic growth of Alexandria and Cairo did not. Migration continued, if somewhat abated. In addition, Cairo and Alexandria had to accommodate a significant number of the over one million and a half a million people subsequently evacuated from the Suez Canal zone. Alexandria's formal growth may have halted, but its informal growth was just beginning to build up momentum.

After the war of October 1973, the political and economic milieu within Egypt, in the regime, and internationally had changed dramatically, and to take advantage of the new environment, a fresh economic strategy needed to be articulated. This is what President Sadat did in his October Working Paper which was introduced in May 1974, the aim of which was to provide the guidelines and a future vision for Egypt's development. This paper characterized, first, "the construction battle" to modernize Egyptian society by the year 2000. Second, liberalize the economy, to "Open" it to outside investment and to encourage the private sector (*Infitha*, or Open Door Policy)<sup>9</sup>. Third, the priorities set for the plan emphasized a modernized industry, an intensive high-value agriculture, oil and energy development and tourism. In fact during the Sadat period, the country experienced a new period of transition in all life's aspects. After the assassination of *Sadat* in 1981, president *Mubark* took over, and a new era for socioeconomic and political readjustment programs had introduced, and informal development had slowed in the mid 1990s and had flourished again at the beginning of the new millennium.

---

The economic situation flourished, and resulted on economic boom which provided the main financing for, and accelerated the development of, informal areas in Alexandria and other Egyptian cities. It was particularly important because it put serious investment money in the hands of the kinds of *baladi* and blue collar families who are attracted to live in informal areas. Not unreasonably, for many the choice of investment was land, bricks, and mortar. The level of construction in the large fringe areas already established before 1981 rose to fever pitch, with new buildings going up and, equally common, vertical extensions being added. Also, new informal areas began to be created during this period, and urbanizing villages continued to grow. In the mid of 1980's a much-quoted study concluded that an overwhelming 70% of the additions to Alexandria's housing stock over the previous ten years were informal.<sup>10</sup>

Although the 1974-1985 periods could be called the heyday of urban residential informality in Egypt, it was also the period when the State finally took notice of the phenomenon and began to proscribe it. Starting in 1978 a series of decrees and orders made it increasingly illegal to build on agricultural land, and in parallel efforts were stepped up to preserve State lands from encroachment. Throughout the period in question, these proscriptions had little real impact, only making it more difficult for authorities to turn a blind eye and opening up a considerable business in petty bribes. There was little official commitment to tackle the issue, since it began to dawn on decision-makers just how vast informal areas had become. For urban planners and the State alike, it was an unwelcome reality which hopefully could be wished away.

On the level of both public awareness and government action, informal areas of Alexandria, and elsewhere in other Egyptian cities gained prominence in the 1992-93 periods. The radical Islamic fundamentalist movements of the late 1980s and early 1990s became active in certain informal areas and suddenly these areas, termed '*ashwaa'i*' (meaning random

or un-planned) gained notoriety as breeding grounds for fundamentalism and came to represent a threat to the security of the State. In response, the government began to deliver much needed infrastructure and social services to these areas (with police stations figuring prominently), and a national program to upgrade these areas continued through to the mid 1990s. However, virtually no attempt was made to tackle the underlying tenure aspects of informality. An important impact on informality was a much stiffer prohibition of the phenomenon embodied in two decrees issued in 1996. In effect, they stipulated that any new building on agricultural land and any urban construction without a permit would be severely punished through military courts, thereby avoiding the many well-established manoeuvres familiar to lawyers in the civil courts. This has considerably dampened informal construction both on agricultural land and in desert settlements; informal building is still going on in certain areas, presumably where local officials are partners in the game.

*Table no. (1): illustrates the growth of population in Alexandria*

Annual Average Growth Rate (%)	Population	Year
2.1	0.919024	1947 (census)
2.5	1,516,000	1960 (census)
1.9	1,801,000	1966 (census)
1.8	2,318,000	1976 (census)
2.8	2,917,000	1986 (census)
2.7	3,286,816	1995 (census)
2.4	3,339,076	1996 (census)
1.67	3,888,000	2006 (estimate)

Source: Data for census years from CAPMAS (1986, 1996), Statistical Indicators, and Cairo. The estimation figure is obtained from Information and Supporting Decision Makers Centre (ISDMC), 2006, Alexandria Governorate, Egypt.

*Table no. (2): illustrates the informal housing areas and its population within the city of Alexandria*

Average p./Km2	Density	Size in Km2	Total population	Number of informal areas	Name of the District
43617	15.98	697000	697000	8	El Montazha
13425	12.32	165399	165399	5	Sharek (East)
807218	0.11	88794	88794	2	Wasat (Middle)
42664	5.26	224416	224416	2	El Gomerk
137743	0.444	61158	61158	5	Gharb (West)
27435	10.64	291910	291910	8	El Amiriya
10634	5.20	55301	55301	1	Madent Bourg El Arab
31711p./Km2	49.95	1583978	1583978	31	Total

Source: Alexandria Governorate (2006) Informal Residential Areas in Alexandria City, Information and Supporting Decision Makers Centre (ISDMC), Alexandria, Egypt.

By the end of the nineteenth century, the city of Alexandria had reached a population of about 316,000 inhabitants, which later increased from little more than a million in 1952 to 1.8

---

million in 1966. The Mediterranean in the north and Lake *Maryout* in the south confine the physical limits to the growth of the city. The city extends eastwards, but is constrained by agricultural lands. The harbor and the industrial development at *El Dekhila* and *El Amriyha* occupy the western edge.

Today, the city stretches along the coast for 85 kilometers ( till the new border of the governorate at *Marqua* sea resort area in the west) and accounts for 40 percent of Egypt's industry, as well as being a main summer resort with more than 3.0 million visitors each year. Alexandria's total population is currently approaching 3.888 million (see Table1) with a growth rate estimated at 1.67 percent a year and an urbanized area of 262.48 square kilometers giving an average density of around 14812 persons per square kilometer. As illustrated in Table 2 the population of informal housing areas accounts of 1583978 persons which constitutes 40.7 percent of the total population of the City, and makes up 17.2% of the urbanized area. The total number of informal areas assumed to be with the figure of 50 informal housing areas, but they grouped recently into 31 areas. They named according to the largest informal area within each district. This accumulation was due to facilitate or assemble the basic services to cover the main area and its surrounding areas.

The central part (*Wasat* and *Sharek* Districts) of Alexandria (the old town and inner-city areas) accommodates 29 percent of the total population, while the eastern sector (*El Mountaza* District) constitutes more than 30 percent of the city's area and accommodates around 1.7 million persons, close to half the total population. The western sector (*Gharab*, *El Amriyha*, and *Bourg El Arab* Districts) contains 785,000 inhabitants, some 22 per cent of the city population, in 60 percent of the city's built-up area. The existing residential areas in the city are varied in their characteristics, the type of housing being built, the status of land tenure, and the social status of their residents. The most expensive residential areas are in the

---

eastern sector, close to and parallel to the coast. South of this area are the middle class houses, and behind the railway track are the informal and popular housing areas.

Social segregation is evident within the city's residential areas with distinct areas being occupied by high-income, middle-income and low income groups. The northern areas enjoy better road access to the coast, good services and less pollution, all characteristics which are desired by the more affluent groups. The least affluent groups occupy the southern part, which has poor access, inadequate or poor quality services, cramped conditions and high levels of pollution. The middle strip of the city suffers less than the southern part and is occupied by middle and higher middle-income groups. Thus, the further a residential area is from the coast, in general, the poorer the quality of services, the higher the density and the higher the level of air pollution (with some exceptions such as *Kafer Abdow* and *El Faranhia* areas).

Most of the informal housing areas are located in the southern part of the city of Alexandria, adjoining the industrial zones of the city and close to the city's ring road, a drinking water canal and the agricultural areas (see Figure 1). Others are located adjacent to Lake *Maryout* and some scattered on desert areas in the southern west sector of the city. Most or informal residential developments are connected with the city centre by poor public transport services. The scarcity of land, and the high cost of plots inside the city forced low income groups to occupy locations that have less services or job opportunities.

## **V. INFORMAL HOUSING TYPOLOGY**

The typology of informal housing classified into three main types (see table 3). The types have differentiated informal settlements, which were built either on agricultural (private) or desert (state) land or on land whose ownership is in doubt, thus depending on a physical definition, and land tenure. The main types and their sub-types classifications have been reached and tested in three Egyptian cities<sup>11</sup> (Soliman, 2002, 2004b). The typology divided informal settlements into informal residential development on agricultural privately owned

---

land, informal residential development on state desert land, and informal residential development on land whose ownership is in doubt or where the construction process is illegal. The first type is sometimes known in the literature as semi-informal settlement or illegal agricultural subdivisions, while the second type is often known as squatter settlement (Soliman, 1996). The third type involves housing built on public or private land, which originated as formal housing, but which is now informal. This type may be known as ex-formal housing, and some properties have passed backward and forward between the formal and informal categories. Twelve sub-types emerged out of the three main types. All types are examined below.

#### **5-1 SEMI-INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS**

Semi-informal housing is not developed through established and state regulated procedures and it does not utilize the recognized institutions of housing and housing finance. Nevertheless, the semi-informal housing is developed on agricultural land for which the owner has legal tenure with a formal occupation permit. The semi-informal settlements are in areas of essentially rural character located on the urban fringe, interspersed with, surrounded by, or adjacent to, undeveloped sites or ones with agricultural uses. These settlements often develop in advance of the principal lines of urban growth and are most noticeable during periods of rapid urban expansion and around the most rapidly growing axial lines of urban roads. These settlements can be classified into three sub-types (A1, A2, and A3).

*Privately owned land (A1).* These areas have been constructed on illegal subdivisions of agricultural land. The level of informal housing development increases considerably as soon as they are incorporated into the city's boundary or as soon as municipal authorities install basic services.

*Core village land (A2).* These areas are constructed on traditional, un-surveyed village land that already had building by 1950. The peasants replaced their old housing with new on larger areas than the original site without obtaining building permission.

*Government agricultural land (A3)*. These areas are subdivided legally by the public sector into large parcels, which are sold to private developers for agricultural purposes. The developers then illegally subdivide it further into small plots for housing. This sub-type can be further subdivided into four sub-types as follows.

Table no. (3): Matrix of informal areas by types and sub-types

C Public & private land (hybrid / ex-formal)		B Desert land (squatting)		A Agricultural land (Semi-informal)		Main Typologies
C1a Municipal land	C1 Pre-public housing	B1 Municipal land		A1 Privately owned land		Sub-Types
C1b Cooperatives		B2 Reclaimed land		A2 Core village land		
C1c Public-sector companies		B3a Development company concession	B3 Decree land	A3a Agrarian land reform	A3 Government agricultural land	
C1d Development companies		B3b Public-sector company- assignment		A3b Awqaf land		
C1e Armed forces/police		B3c Cooperative assignment		A3c Decree land		
C2 Land/dwelling units under rent control	B3d Antiquities land	A3d Nile/lakeside land				
C3 Land/dwelling units in ex-permit buildings	B4 Armed forces land					
C4 Land /dwelling units in historic city areas	B5 Public domain land					

Source: Soliman, A. (2002) "Typology of Informal Housing in Egyptian Cities: Taking account of Diversity." International Development Planning Review, 24 (2), 177-201.

*Agrarian reform land on agricultural land (A3a)*, which was confiscated and redistributed to peasants after 1953 and was informally subdivided and sold to individuals.

*Awqaf agricultural land (A3b)* administered by the Awqaf authority and rented to farmers who subdivide it and sell to individuals.<sup>12</sup> These areas are usually sold by religious institutions at auction and converted into housing development sites by private developers.

*Decree land (A3c)* on state-owned agricultural areas, assigned to various state authorities and farmed by tenants who subdivide it and sell it on to individuals.

*Nile/Lakeside land (A3d)* that has emerged because of changes in the Nile's riverbed or in Lake Maryout. This land is farmed or used for storage by private sectors who subdivide it and sell it on to individuals.

## 5-2 SQUATTER SETTLEMENTS

Squatters are persons who settle on public land without title, or take unauthorized possession of unoccupied premises (The Concise Oxford Dictionary, 1984). Squatting has

---

meant and continues to mean different things in different cultures and, moreover, at different times in each culture's existence. In other words, it is a concept that is neither absolute nor static but evolves over time (Sen, 2001). Squatting is a cultural construct; and more specifically, it is a political fabrication (ALSayyad, 1993).

In Egypt, squatter settlements, known as *Wada'yad*, have generally developed on state desert lands and have often been established outside the formal legal and economic structure of the city.<sup>13</sup> It can be subdivided into five sub-types (B1, B2, B3, B4 and B5).

*On municipal land (B1).* Housing here occupies state desert land controlled (owned) by governorates and their local units. This land is usually located where the governorate has no interest in it, or where it is too expensive to be publicly developed. Such areas are usually located within municipal boundaries, and land ownership may be in doubt.

*On reclaimed land (B2).* Housing here occupies state desert land that was either sold to investors for reclamation, or was reclaimed by farmers under *Wada'yad*, and was subsequently informally subdivided and built upon.

*On decree land (B3).* Housing may appear in such areas when ownership of land is in doubt, or when land changes ownership. This type of housing on public-owned land has four minor variants.

*On development-company concessions (B3a).* These areas may once have been public-sector concessions, or may have been assigned (*Mukhasas*) to different government bodies. These areas usually have some sort of land-holding rights in the form of the *El Heker* system (de jure recognition). Nevertheless, all housing on them has been illegally constructed.

*On public sector Company land (B3b).* Such settlements are often constructed illegally on desert or vacant public land on the fringe of urban centers. The initial invasion of these areas may have been permitted by a municipality, which later encouraged settlement indirectly.

*On cooperative land (B3c).* Housing here occupies state desert land, which was originally assigned to housing cooperatives, but which was then either squatted on directly by individuals, or was later deemed by the cooperative to have no value.

*Antiquities and cemetery land (B3d).* Such land was originally public but was distributed to individuals for burial purposes. In such cases, people may also have built houses on vacant courts or adjacent parcels.

*On armed forces land (B4).* Housing here may occupy state desert land or land controlled by the armed forces. Most of this land is on the periphery of big urban centers and had been neglected for a long time.

*On public domain land (B5).* These lands were once considered to be in the public domain for security purposes and were occupied by the military, or else they were considered important as rights-of-way for railways, canals, and roads. These settlements are usually located on Egypt's north coast, where municipalities had no interest in development. The Bedouin who squatted here are now confident that the government will pay them compensation before any formal urban development takes place. Their confidence derives from their attitude toward the state and from their role as guardians of Egypt's borders. Generally, they are the ones who most resist eviction, and who help the authorities confront the leaders of protest groups.

### **5-3 EX-FORMAL (HYBRID) SETTLEMENTS**

These settlements are residential units in formal areas, which have temporarily or permanently acquired degrees of informality. Unlike residential units in informal areas, this type of informality relates to individual dwelling units on a case-by-case basis, where some units in a formal neighborhood or even an individual building are "formal" and have remained largely so.

---

On the other hand, others either have been built illegally or have been transformed over time into illegal tenure arrangements. Such transformations are most common in the major metropolitan areas, and are of four types.

This third type of settlement includes residential units in formal areas, which have temporarily or permanently acquired degrees of informality. Unlike residential units in informal areas, this type of informality relates to individual dwelling units on a case-by-case basis. In many cases some units in a formal neighborhood, or even an individual building, may be “formal” but others have either been added illegally or been modified over time into illegal configurations. Such transformations are most common in the major metropolitan areas, and are of four subtypes (see TABLE 3).

*Pre-public housing (C1).* Public housing in Egypt was initiated around 1950 with the *Madinat El Umaal* (Workers’ City) project in the *Imbabah* District of Greater Cairo. Since the early 1960s, the Egyptian government, through a variety of programs, has produced a further supply of between 40,000 and 80,000 housing units per year. There are a number of different types of public housing. While most date from Egypt’s socialist days (1961-1970), others (which sometimes carry equally confusing tenancy) are of more recent origin.

It is possible to identify five minor variants of public housing controlled by a variety of local public agencies. These include *local administrations (C1a)*, *cooperative/professional syndicates (C1b)*, *public-sector companies (C1c)*, *public/private development companies (C1d)*, and *the armed forces and police (C1e)*. Yet whether such housing is built directly by the government or by cooperatives, public-sector companies, or state housing and land companies, it is financed and subsidized in one way or another by the government. The relative weights of these different forms of public housing are hard to estimate, as there are no known overall statistics on the public housing stock in Egypt.

---

Various systems have been set in place to allocate public housing to beneficiaries. However these have inevitably all been open to abuse, and political patronage has often figured prominently. As a subsidized commodity, there is a nearly inexhaustible demand for public housing, as much from those who have no housing problems as from those who do. Moreover, despite regulations intended to prevent transfer of tenancy, many transfers are made. Public housing units are readily exchanged through a number of informal shadow markets (which discount the risk of discovery and forfeiture). One fact remains consistent for all public housing, however. This is that with few exceptions, title to the land upon which it sits remains in the hands of the original finder/builder, or with the local administration, even when units have been sold outright in private condominium arrangements.

*Dwelling units under rent control (C2).* Vast numbers of residential units in Cairo and Alexandria (as well as in other urban areas in Egypt) are rented, and remain under rental contracts that give the tenant near perpetual rights of occupation at fixed or nominal rents.<sup>14</sup>

However, even with this attempt to rationalize the rent system, a very large number of units in formal areas of Egypt are still rented at extremely low rates, with no relation to the market. In effect, tenants are sitting on significant assets, and besides waiting for the death of the lessee and his children, the only way a building owner can reclaim the unit is to offer a sizable cash incentive (sometimes approaching the real market value of the unit) for the tenant to renounce his contract and leave. (A semi-legal system does operate by which a third party may purchase the rental contract from the tenant, endorsed by the owner, but this only perpetuates the condition of informality.)

*Dwelling units in ex-permit buildings (C3).* Starting in the 1970s, due to the open door policy, the practice of adding floors to existing buildings in formal areas became widespread. At the time, real estate investment, building licensing, and control of construction became quite lax. As a result, there are today a number of dwelling units which, although located in

formal areas, are irregular in terms of building licenses and may be subject to outstanding fines and/or demolition orders. Most of the dwelling units in these buildings are owned under simple condominium arrangements (*Tamlík*) and in most cases the owners of these units hold assets that are difficult, if not impossible, to transfer/convert except to a gullible buyer, who then is in a similar irregular situation. In the 1990s, control of construction became much stricter in Greater Cairo and Alexandria, partly as a consequence of the widespread damage caused by the 1992 earthquake. In particular, an effort was made to restrict building heights, and some scattered demolition of offending (ex-permit) structures and floors even took place. Thus, it can be said that the phenomenon was mainly a product of the years 1974-1992.

Units in the historic city with confused tenure status (C4). The historic cores of both Cairo and Alexandria were surveyed and cadastred in the 1900-1920 period, and were thus included as part of the two cities' "formal" areas. However, many of the dwelling units in these areas are subject to rent control, and a few are "ex-permit." Also, many huts have been illegally erected on top of these buildings. Such "roof-toppers" are estimated to number 500,000 and 200,000, respectively, in Greater Cairo and Alexandria. In addition, many residential buildings in Cairo and Alexandria have disputed ownership due to inheritance problems and/or religious trust (*Awqaf*) involvement that sometimes extends back for centuries. Many of these buildings have partially or fully fallen into ruin, and although they represent prime real estate, they cannot be transferred or otherwise exploited. Occupation of these areas mostly takes the form of renting or occupying public land for a certain period of time (*El Heker*) and paying a token rent to government agencies.

## **VI. ELIMINATION, ACCUMULATION AND INTEGRATION POLICY**

A possible way out to tackle informal housing areas is to urbanize them and regularize ownership of the land they occupy, thus formally integrating them into cities. Such actions should take place according to a specific national plan for each type of informal housing area.

---

This plan should have three main goals: physical and environmental recovery, land regularization, and community participation. Such a program should further be implemented by stages, in an organized and progressive way, as resources become available. Such an approach would be national because it would include the whole establishment; and it would be integrated because it would involve physical, judicial, and social aspects. Such an approach to the problem of informal housing areas would optimize the use of public resources and avoid waste. To facilitate community participation, reference group should be formed at the beginning of the program. Participation would then occur at all stages of the process, mainly through periodic meetings with the group and irregular meetings with the whole community (Soliman, 2004).

As a response to the above outline program, in the late 2006 the GOPP has introduced a project for tackling the problem of informal housing areas in Cairo and Alexandria within the main outlines stated above. The main objective is an attempt to eliminate and integrate the arbitrary residential growth, and prevent further sprawl on agricultural areas. Also, *to guide the urban poor to squat in areas that the decision makers would like to see developed by the urban poor* (Soliman, 1987). Therefore, the innovation of the project is neither site and services nor upgrading project; rather it is elimination, accumulation and integration of informal residential areas within the urban tissues of Alexandria city.

A recent field survey (November 2006-March 2007) has been carried out to identify the extent of each informal area, the surrounding areas, and the main physical boundaries, either main roads or water channels, to assess how could one eliminate, accumulate and integrate the informal areas within its surrounding areas. The informal residential areas are assessed for two main reasons: Firstly, to identify the process of development and its direction over time. Secondly, the target areas presented various lands tenure by which would reflect a wide range of tenure status and to cover the various typologies being set at the beginning of this research.

---

Fourteen target areas have been selected to cover the variation of informal residential areas in Alexandria. These target areas represented a wide range of various typologies and sub-typologies discussed earlier, and also, covered the city of Alexandria from the western section to the eastern one.

The aim of selecting target areas was to give the GOPP in charge of the analysis of the "Informal Physical Contract and Extra Legal Regulations" a representative selection of the main informal typologies and sub-typologies found in Alexandria, and thus give a fair idea of the variation of physical and tenure characteristics of residential informality. Methodologically, this meant selecting stratified sample areas which represent the universe of informality.

The criteria for selection were:

- The number of target areas chosen should roughly reflect the predominance of the typology/sub typology in Alexandria.
- At the same time, it is important to select at least one example of minor sub-typologies to be sure of capturing all variations of the informality phenomenon.
- A selected target area should be well defined in terms of physical boundaries. If possible areas should conform to Census enumeration districts.
- A selected area should exhibit homogeneity in terms of built environment.
- Any non-residential land uses should be clearly excludable.
- Subject to the above criteria, if possible a selected area should contain between 5000 and 30000 inhabitants.

As far as possible, different areas should be chosen to reflect locational variations within Alexandria (e.g. inner areas, fringe areas, and satellite locations), directional differences (i.e. north, south, east and west quadrants), administrative differences (i.e. samples from both urban and rural local administrations), and differing ages of settlements.

Using the most detailed satellite images and GIS tools, the first step was to calculate the extent of the built-up area of each informal housing type in each Shiakha or Qaria within Alexandria City. This gave the percentage of each enumeration district that could be attributed to each of the twelve main informal sub-types (A1, A2, A3, B1, B2, B3, B4, B5, C1, C2, C3, and C4). In addition to population and building statistics, the CAPMAS census

---

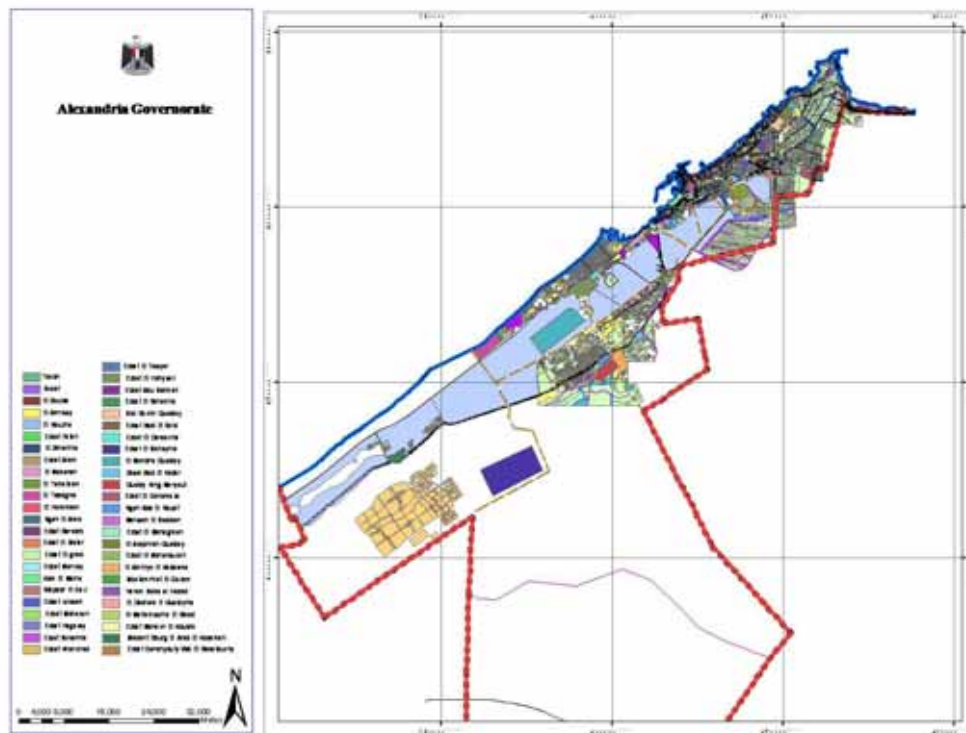
of 1996, and the statistics of the ISDMC at the Alexandria governorate enumerated dwelling units in each census *Shiakha*, where the dwelling unit is defined as a space with a separate entrance where one or more households can live.

Dwelling units were broken down by the census into a number of types, and five main types were used in the analysis: Entire Building, Entire Floor(s), Apartment, Room(s), and Precarious (a shop, garage, or other non-conventional space used to house a family). The quantities of each of these dwelling unit types were calculated for the 50 informal areas in Alexandria. It was possible to aggregate the total number of dwelling unit types by the twelve main informal sub-types.

To estimate the asset value of informal dwellings it was necessary to ascribe average physical characteristics and assign monetary values to each of the five dwelling unit types. This was done for each of the informal types A, B and C in order to reflect generalized differences between informal residences on agricultural and desert land. Throughout this process, conservative estimates were used, meaning that average physical attributes and values were kept on the lower side of the possible ranges.

Figure (1) presents a map of Alexandria governorate showing the various informal settlements. These settlements are varied in their built up area and its population. A satellite map for the city of Alexandria is used, and obtained a recent map from the Survey Department in Alexandria to indicate the informal areas, as well as, to measure approximately the size of these areas to compare with the official data obtained from the governorate. The net surface area of informal areas in Alexandria is obtained from the ISDMC in Alexandria<sup>15</sup> By comparing the data given, it was found that the areas are higher than the actual size of the informal areas in the field; therefore the actual size has been taken for calculation.

Figure no. (2) Illustrates 50 informal areas in Alexandria City



Source: Field survey carried out by the author between November 2006-March 2007.

The work on target areas' selection ran from November 2006 through March 2007, and the project is still in progress. The first requirement was to assemble appropriate maps and satellite images of informal areas under consideration, and these were obtained from a number of sources. Also, GIS tools have facilitated the analysis and obtained the total number of dwelling units, size of each land plot, the number of population, land tenure, and the size of each informal area. Numerous maps have produced, and then possible target areas were identified on these maps, following which field visits to each area were carried out. During these field trips the following information was obtained through observation and queries with inhabitants: updates of the extent of built up areas, confirmation of land uses and place names, a general sense of the types of residential buildings, and summaries of the area's history and land tenure peculiarities. This information was written up in profiles of each target area, where ever possible enriched by other sources of information and by feedback from the GOPP teams.

The overall choice of target areas followed the criteria given above. However, the choice of urban quadrants (north south, east and west) and the inclusion of fringe areas was somewhat influenced by map availability. Selected informal housing areas were examined in order to cover the variation of informal housing typologies in the city (see table 4 and figure 2). Also, selected case studies were analyzed to give more insights for the mechanisms of informality within the city.

Table no. (4): Informal and Target Areas and their Classification in Alexandria city

Area size	Sub-typology	Name	Area size Km2	Sub-Typology	Name	
0.039	C1	El Slaha	Action area 1	0.115	B3a/B3c/C1	El Mahamourha El Balad
0.258	C2	Ezbet El graia		0.141	A3/A3b/A3c	Sidi Bashir Quabley
0.451	A1	El Nouzha	Action area 2	0.151	A3/A3b/C2	El Asaphrah Quabley
0.027	A3a/A3b/A3c	Ezbet Barabra		0.653	A3/A3b/C2	El Mandria Quabley
0.949	A3a/A3b	Ezbet El Gahamaza		0.243	A3c/C2	El Harameen
0.102	A1	Ezbet Lakeam		0.569	A2/A3b/A3c	El Amrawy
0.201	A1/A3b	Ezbet El Tawyer	Action area 3	0.925	A1/A3a/A3b	Ezbet Genchyouy Wei El Bakatoushy Wei Mosehamet El Behari
0.630	A1/A3a/A3b	Ezbet El Dereasiha		0.782	A1/A3a/A3b/C3	Ezbet Sekenhia, Wei El Sanahya
0.111	B2	El Tamateem		0.586	A1/A3a/A3b	Ezbet Mohesen Wei El Bahar
0.150	A3d/B1/C1	Mahwah El Siadden		0.114	A1/A3c	Ezbet Khorshed
0.341	B3b	El Makenah	0.257	A1/A3a/A3b	Ezbet Hegazey	
0.452	A3c	El Tobeghia	0.175	A1/A3a	Ezbet El Maharousah	
0.187	B5	Haram Sekia el Haded	0.104	A3c	Ezbet Fatah	
0.845	B1/B2	Kom El Malha	0.167	A1/A3a/A3b	Ezbet El Rahamha	
0.209	B3	Wapoor El Gaz	0.156	A1/A3a/A3b/C3	Ezbet El Sallahyha	
Action area 4	0.836	B3a/B3b/B5	Zawai Abd El Kader	0.102	A1/A3a/A3b	Ezbet Mansey
	2.905	B1/B2a/B3c	El Amiriya El Kadeema	0.587	A1/A3c	Ezbet El Matar
	0.437	B3c/B5	Mostamrhet El Gozam wai Mergheem	1.080	A3a	Ezbet Mohesn El Koubra
	3.184	B1/B2	Quebly King Maryout & Bahig	0.820	A3a	Ezbet El Abu Soliman
0.393	B1/B2/B3	Ezbet Allam	0.496	A3c	Ezbet El Mohagreen	
0.473	B1/B3a/B3b	Ezbet El Honyvell	0.084	A3a/A3c	El Zouida	
1.205	B1/B3c	El Dekhela El Quablyhia	0.360	A3/A3c	El Zaharihia	
0.844	B1/B2	Ngah Abd El Rouof	0.177	A3/A3c	Scoat	
0.596	B1/B2	Ngah El Arab	0.231	B1/B2	Ezbet Nadi El Said	
1.813	B1/B2/B3/B4	Madent Bourg El Arab El Kademah	0.524	B1/B2	Toson	

Source: Field survey carried out by the author between November 2006-March 2007.

Detailed maps of each target area were prepared, for the most part based on the recent satellite images and the CAPMAS 1996 1:5000 series, and major streets, canals, government establishments, and other features were labeled. In most cases smaller scale location maps were also prepared to facilitate access to the particular target areas. For each target area a short written profile was prepared, in order to give basic background information to the study teams. These profiles covered the following subjects; typology classification, location and settlement age, maps made available, boundaries, urban pattern, building types, and particular

---

physical characteristics, administrative status, demographics and socio-economic information, and development history and housing dynamics. As soon as the maps and draft profiles of a particular target area were prepared they were handed over to the GOPP teams, so that their assessment could proceed without hindrance. Refinement of the profiles continued after this point.

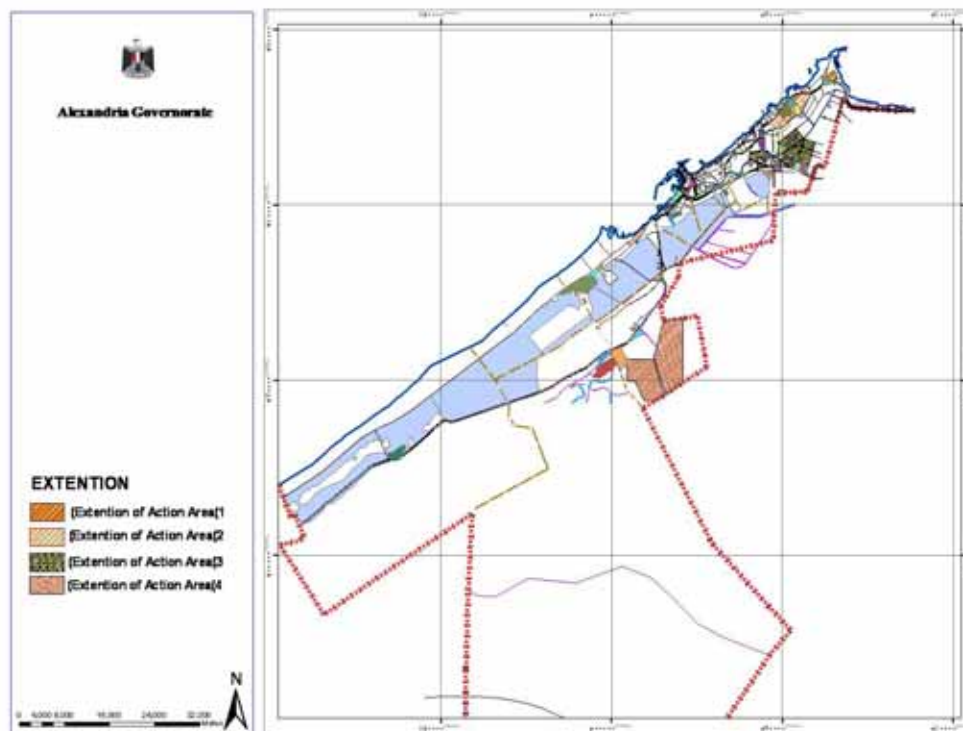
## **VII. PRESENTATION OF SPATIAL EXTENT OF INFORMAL TYPOLOGIES**

This proposal is going in parallel with the Strategic Plan of Alexandria which is currently under taking. The idea is to link and integrate various informal areas (*Ezbes*) with the existing residential formal areas. Also, to allocate vacant areas for future development according to the future population growth for the existing informal areas and to meet the future need for housing low income groups. The idea is to ensure that the establishment of commercially viable Central Areas capable of adequately meeting the needs of the population of the community. In addition, the aim is to provide sufficient flexibility in the Plan to enable future residents of the existing informal areas to participate in the detailed planning of its future development and growth. In this plan, there are many issues to be solved. These include the promotion and upgrading of already existing economic growth in scattered locations, which would improve informal-formal linkages. How does the urban locality development achieve sustainable development? How is this to address the socioeconomic and physical development that would create a sustainable development in a proper way? This urban locality development would offer vacant land to meet the requirements of the expecting population to the year 2022, as well as will be linked with the surrounding areas according to the availability of infrastructure.

On the other hand, basic services are closely linked, and decisions are taken with respect, to appropriate standards of provision, for one might well impact adversely on others. Water supply and sanitation are perhaps the most obvious examples. Services are usually non-

existent, as these can only be provided by the local authority. Commercial facilities, religious buildings and some small-scale private health facilities are provided by means of community efforts. Utilities are provided by private efforts. This is usually done by collecting money among the settlers in a particular area and ordering a local contractor to carry out the work with or without labor input from the beneficiaries. Until recently, the Water and Electricity Company used to send somebody after the settlers had organized house connections. The company employees collect a fine and install meters against payment of the respective fees. The whole procedure is called *Musalha* (literally reconciliation).

Figure no. (2): Illustrates four action areas and available land for expansion



Source: Field survey carried out by the author between November 2006-March 2007.

In the initial stages of areas built on agricultural land, a manual pump is installed on the site to provide water for construction and eventually for domestic use. Sewage is disposed of in a septic tank, or in a tank dug in front of the building, and removed mechanically by trucks when full. Electricity is either produced by a diesel generator in a workshop or then sold to neighbors or an illegal hook-up is made to the electrical lines. Later on, the local authority provides the basic services within these areas. The preliminary installation of basic services is

---

carried out by the local settlers who save the state's fund so that it can be allocated in other aspects of development.

As Shown in figure (2) four action areas are designed to accumulate 14 informal areas which cover various typologies and accommodate the expected population growth till the target year of 2022. Each of which is described below.

### **1. An action area in far East Sector of the City**

The first action area (*El Mahamourhya El Balad*) is located at *Abu Kir* with a total population of 24355 person and covered an area of 0.115 km<sup>2</sup> with an average density of 202958 persons per square kilometer. It characterizes types B&C, and contains one informal area and other adjacent scattered residential areas located on the other side of the main road that linking *Abu Kir* with town down of Alexandria. This action area was characterized as an informal or "pre-informal" and organized residential area. Pre-informal area is considered an area in which the government has intervened, installed infrastructure and recognized as an urbanized area. It could offer an area of 1.0 km<sup>2</sup> for future expansion with an average of 7000 land plots with a total of 14000 housing units by which would accommodate around 66000 people.

*El Mahamourhya El Balad* is a derelict desert land left for so many years. During the construction of *El Mahamourhya* area as a sea resort for Alexandria at the early 1960s, people who are working in construction process were settled on this site as a temporary shelter. Since then, the site became an informal area for people who have no shelter in the city, and attracted newcomers for its close proximity to *Abu Kir* area. Later subdivided the site illegally and sold it in small parcels. Some settlers claimed adjacent parcels (*wad'a'yad*) and sold plots to individuals. Alexandria Governorate issued decree (No.324 of 1982) concerning adjustment of the regulations for public land holders, and offered Tamilk in part of the settlement.

---

## **2. An action area in Eastern Sector of the City**

An action area is adjacent *Abu Kir* Railway track and located in the southern part of El *Montaza* and *El Asafrah* areas. It accumulates five informal areas and has adjacent agricultural area of around 5.0 Km<sup>2</sup> by which would welcome the expected future population growth of these areas. It characterizes types A&C. These five areas are *El Haraman*, *El mandrah Quabley*, *El Asafrya Quabley*, *Sidi Beshher Quabley*, and *El Amaraway*. They accommodate 329000 persons within an area of 1.657 km<sup>2</sup> with an average density of 198551 person per square kilometer, and are formulated around 17% of the total area of EL *Montazha* District. It could welcome around 200000 people till the target year of 2022. It would provide around 22000 land plots with different sizes ranging from 150-300 square meters per plot to suite the various requirements of low/middle income groups, as well as it would help in alleviating the problem of housing the urban poor. Most of the five areas are formally big agricultural land owners, expropriation in the 1950s and administered by agricultural reform authority as farm land, re-privatized in early 1970s followed by urbanization. *Awqaf* and agricultural reform land: *heker* peasants started to sell informally (3LE/m<sup>2</sup>), *Awqaf* realized informal sales and urbanization and offered *Tamilk* (*Awqaf*: 8LE/m<sup>2</sup>), some bought and obtained contracts that can be registered. Water and sewerage through self-help, later upgraded and complemented by the government.

## **3. An action area in Middle Sector of the City**

This action area is created in order to eliminate, accumulate and integrate the informal residential areas within surrounding areas. It is located at the middle sector of the city, and has been discussed with the local settlers and modified according to responses gained. It determines and makes the best of trends and allocates resources in accordance with desires to promote or alter them. It accumulates four informal areas and has adjacent agricultural area of around 1.0 Km<sup>2</sup> by which would provide 7000 land plots to welcome the expected future population growth of these areas. It characterizes types A, B, &C. These four areas are

---

*Hagar El Nawatyeha, Sekena, Ezbet Mohesen, and Khorshed Quabley.* They accommodate 540000 persons within an area of 2.407 km<sup>2</sup> with an average density of 224345 people per square kilometer.

*Hagar El Nawatyeha* consists from three main areas; *El Bakatoushy, Genyouaty* and *El Salahia*. Formally big land owners, expropriation in the 1950s and administered by agricultural reform authority as farm land, re-privatized in early 1970s. *Awqaf* land: *heker* peasants started to sell informally, *Awqaf* realized and offered *Tamilk*, some bought and obtained contracts that can be registered. Water and sewerage through self-help, later upgraded and complemented by the government.

*Sekena* is mainly agricultural land, and some scattered areas are under *Awqaf* authority. It is located adjacent *El Mahmoudya* canal and textile industries that offered good job opportunities for people who are looking for work. Because of increasing demand for both job opportunities as well as a cheap shelter, the site attracted newcomers and became an important settlement for low income groups.

*Ezbet Mohsen* is formally big land owners, expropriation in the 50ies and administered by agricultural reform authority as farm land, re-privatized in early 1970s followed by urbanization in the 80ies. The early establishment of the site is started with squatters along the canal. Still agricultural pockets left within the site.

*Khorshed Quabley* is a typical agricultural core village. It is a peasant land; around 10 extended peasant families were settled since early 1960s. Because its close proximity for factories' brick, the site attracted many people who used to work in mud brick.

Most of adjacent area is agricultural land which its subdivision is a product of inheritance. According to Islamic law, all heirs obtain a share of the heritage, but a son inherits a share double that of a daughter. Such a process of subdivision is dynamic and occurs piecemeal over a locality, increasing disparities in parcel size. However, since each

new plot must have access to an irrigation canal and a public road, the result is generally one of linear plots (*Ahwad*) up to 400 meters long and 120 meters wide. Generation after generation, such plots have been further subdivided into narrower strips separated by small irrigation channels (*Missqa*). Some today are as narrow as 15 meters. As localities become increasingly urbanized, some canals dry up and are added to the width of contiguous roads. (For further details see Soliman, 2004). The pattern of the old irrigation system thus usually defines the main and secondary streets in proposed plans on former agricultural land. Also, major access and main physical boundaries have been taken into consideration.

#### **4. An action area in far West Sector of the City**

This action area constitutes four informal areas located at the far southern west of the city. It occupied an area of 7.362 square kilometers with total population of 97211 people giving an average density of 13204 people per square kilometer. These four areas are *Zawai Abd El Kader*, *El Amiriya El Kadeema*, *Mostamrhiat El Gozam wai Mergheem*, and *Quebly King Maryout*. It characterizes types B&C. This action area is considered a vast desert fringe area for future extension by which would offer around 36.7 km<sup>2</sup> (larger than the current total size of informal areas within the city) for future extension.

*Zawai Abd El Kader* is desert land which is, by default, state land. It is redeveloped after the flooding of 1992. The government built emergence housing for people who were victims of the flooding. There is, however, a long and complicated history of legal and extra-legal mechanisms to exploit this land for the benefit of private and institutional interests.

*El Amiriya El Kadeema* is Bedouin land, around 6 extended Bedouin families settled down when desert development authority (*Al-Tamir Al-Sahari*) started to develop adjacent parcels (*King Maryout*) *Wada'yad* and sold plots to individuals. Government offered *tamilk* in part of the settlement. Urbanization took place when *El Amiriya* textile factory opened in the early 80s. Water and sewerage through the installation for *El Amiriya* factory, some parts through self-help. It is a typical desert core village.

---

*Mostamrhiet El Gozam wai Mergheem* is public desert land. Many intruders claimed their rights for landholding, later subdivided illegally and sold in small parcels for newcomers from Alexandria city and from Lower Egypt. Some settlers claimed adjacent parcels (*wad'a'yad*) and sold plots to individuals. The site established to serve *El Agmey* resort area in front of the settlement.

*Quebly King Maryout* is Bedouin land, around 12 extended Bedouin families settled down *Wada'yad* and sold plots to individuals. Government offered *Ttamilk* in part of the settlement. Alexandria Governorate issued a decree (No.324 of 1982) concerning adjustment of the regulations for public land holders, and offered *Tamilk* in part of the settlement. Urbanization took place when North Coast developed in the late 80ies. Water and sewerage through the installation for the resort areas close by the site.

The process of residential occupation of such land in Egypt has also had many typical features. The collective invasion of fringe desert areas around big urban centers began in Egypt in the 1920s when settlers moved onto land along Alexandria's North Coast, in the area between *El Dekhala* and *Agamy*, and around *Lake Maryout*. The parcels settled here were mainly controlled by Bedouin. Following these invasions, the claims of settlers living on their plots were rarely disputed. Only in rare situations when a claimant did not show up for a long time might somebody else claim his plot. However, even in such cases, should the first claimant reappear, he was usually offered compensation. Most settlers claimed more land than they needed for themselves, selling adjacent areas to kin or friends in order to create a pattern of familiar neighbors. At a certain stage, criteria among the oldest settlers were developed which regulated access to land for newcomers. The process of settlement and construction was widely done in a spontaneous way. Neighbors used to help each other in construction and site development but did not interfere in subdivision activity and sales decisions<sup>16</sup>. Some arrangements were made collectively for public space.

The real estate value was thus very low. Therefore governmental bodies did not show any interest in desert land before the early 1970s when large parts of the adjacent new formal settlement of Alexandria city had already been erected. In 1984-85, land parcels could be found for no more than 10-30 LE per square meter. Consequently more land was claimed, subdivided and sold informally. The improved accessibility of desert land and the increased demand for land plots due to the general boom in informal housing development attracted not only more settlers but made the land interesting to the governmental bodies, too.

After decree No. 506/1984 was issued, the municipalities tried to clear some areas and started with vacant land claimed by the oldest settlers. The latter organized themselves in community associations, for example “*El Dekhila* and *Lake Maryout’s* banks” and filed several lawsuits against municipalities that have been dismissed by the courts. For most of the desert areas, land tenure remains somehow confusing, although some municipalities have recently attempted to regularize the situation by sanctioning trilateral negotiations between resident land claimants, municipalities and the military. Nevertheless, there have been numerous conflicts and disputes concerning formal as well as informal property rights and ownership, particularly in *El Dekhila* area in Alexandria. In some cases, settlers have built on land that has been claimed before by others. One of these disputes was reported to have resulted even in the death of two persons in a fight when they tried to get hold of a parcel that was already claimed by others. In other cases, land or even buildings have been sold several times by the same owner.

#### **VIII. QUANTIFICATION AND DIVERSITY OF RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES IN INFORMAL/EX-FORMAL AREAS**

This section presents an estimate of the number and value of informal housing units in Alexandria in the year 2007. The accompanying table presents a quantification of informal and ex-formal dwelling units in Alexandria by subtype of dwelling unit (see table 5).

A total of 0.709 million dwelling units was estimated in the informal areas of Alexandria. The estimated number of informal units in all Egypt, therefore, is around 7.116 million (48.6 percent), compared to an estimated total of 7.524 million formal units (51.4 percent). As expected, the greatest number of units in informal areas of Alexandria was associated with Type A1, “on private agricultural land” representing 25.87 percent of the total of informal units in the city, followed with type A3 on “on government agricultural land” representing 20.97 percent.

*Table no. (5): Extent and Values of Informal Housing Areas Types in Alexandria*

%	Current value in LE million	No. of dwelling units	%	Net surface area in km <sup>2</sup>	Type/subtype
25.87	10,640	212,800	16.66	5.70	<b>A1 On Private Agr. Land</b>
8.44	3,472	69,440	5.44	1.86	<b>A2 On Core village land</b>
20.97	8,624	172,480	13.51	4.62	<b>A3 On gov. agricultural land</b>
<b>55.28</b>	<b>22,736</b>	<b>454,720</b>	<b>35.61</b>	<b>12.18</b>	<b>Total type A</b>
8.64	3,552	88,800	21.64	7.4	<b>B1 On local administration land</b>
2.68	1,104	27,600	6.72	2.3	<b>B2 On reclaimed (desert) land</b>
3.62	1,488	37,200	9.06	3.1	<b>B3 On decree (desert) land</b>
0.58	0,240	6,000	1.47	0.5	<b>B4 On armed forces land</b>
2.57	1,056	26,400	6.43	2.2	<b>B5 On public domain. wadayad</b>
<b>18.09</b>	<b>7,440</b>	<b>186,000</b>	<b>45.32</b>	<b>15.5</b>	<b>Total type B</b>
10.01	4,116	68,600	7.16	2.45	<b>C1 Public land</b>
6.95	2,856	47,600	4.97	1.7	<b>C2 Under rent control</b>
6.4	2,634	43,960	4.60	1.57	<b>C3 Dwelling units ex-permit</b>
3.27	1,344	22,400	2.34	0.8	<b>C4 Core historic/ confused</b>
<b>26.63</b>	<b>10,950</b>	<b>182,560</b>	<b>19.07</b>	<b>6.52</b>	<b>Total C &amp; No classified</b>
<b>100.0</b>	<b>41,126</b>	<b>709,600</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>34.20</b>	<b>Total all types</b>

Source: Field survey carried out by the author between November 2006-March 2007.

Type C “ex-formal/hybrid” represents 26.63 percent of total number of informal housing unit. Second most significant in Alexandria was type B1, “on local administration land” representing 8.64 percent of the total. However, the number of units recorded here was much higher than the type’s share of informal surface area, reflecting the two very mature and dense areas made up mostly of this category. There are many reasons why semi-informal housing on agricultural areas is the most popular and common type of housing in the city.

First, the inhabitants of semi-informal housing have the advantage of legal land tenure. Second, such housing is not only relatively cheap, but it generally retains its value. Third, the inhabitants within such areas may acquire their land by means of incremental payments.

---

Fourth, such housing has been provided by private developers who have flourished using informal processes of subdivision and land commercialization. Fifth, such settlements offer greater security of tenure than other types. Finally, land subdivision in such areas follows the geometry of former agricultural use, resulting in a pattern of mostly straight roads although they may be narrow (4-6 meters) and longer than standard requirements. This pattern has allowed the state to install basic services. Private developers acted as decision-makers for setting up the street network of the areas and relieved the municipality from paying additional costs for such arrangements.

By contrast to the semi-informal type, the second type of housing studied, squatter settlement, is usually established on desert sites relatively far from the city center. The major disadvantage here is that the cost of access to job opportunities is greater. The major advantage, however, is that land may be obtained cheaply, or at no cost at all. Such settlements are usually located beside a main road that acts as a strong edge limiting future expansion, and their streets are wide and mainly used by pedestrians. Such settlements generally offer only limited basic services and they may lack all social and public services. They were generally established by collective invasions of people from Upper Egypt or from Bedouin regions.

The total number of dwelling units of the third, hybrid or ex-formal, type was estimated to be around 0.182 in Alexandria. In the city, public housing type C1 represents the highest percentage with the range of 10 percent followed by the suburban/under rent-control type that is slightly below 14 percent.

Ex-formal housing areas in the historic core of Alexandria also have serious problems of registration, as a high percentage of this type has changed ownership several times or occupy land whose tenure is in doubt. Recent field investigations and work by ILD teams have shown that in a small number of cases properties in ex-formal areas have become more-or-

---

less formal, in the sense that buildings and land have been registered and titled. This formalization has mainly been due to the Herculean efforts of individual owners and their lawyers.

However, the field survey estimated that the total population in semi-informal and squatter areas of the city in 2007 was 2.881 million. The field survey estimated an additional population in hybrid/ex-formal housing typologies of 0.73 million in Alexandria. Therefore, the total population in all informal housing types was found to be 3.611 million people in the city. This represented 92.8 percent of the total population of the city. It should be noted that these figures are higher than official estimates.

However the informal share of total built-up residential areas was 17.2 percent, indicating that informal areas are considerably denser than formal areas – even though informal areas are newer and mostly located at the urban fringe. The official estimate of population in informal areas in Alexandria represents 41 percent of the total 2006 population (3.888 million inhabitants). Finally, the study estimated a total of 5.2 persons per dwelling unit in informal areas. The figure reflected both slightly greater household size and a greater degree of utilization (fewer vacancies) in informal areas than the average.

Table 5 presents the results of the estimation of aggregate current values of properties, which can be said to represent the total stock of residential assets in informal areas. A total of, 41.126 LE billion<sup>17</sup> (7. 21 US Billion Dollar) were the estimated value of this stock, of which building assets account for 69.1 percent and land assets 30.1 percent in Alexandria. A full 25.87 percent of this total value, 10.64 LE billion, was accounted for by one informal type, A1 “on private agricultural land.” A total of 10.95 LE billion was the estimated value of the ex-formal type in Alexandria, and represented 26.63 percent of the total informal/ex-formal housing, while squatter housing is a value of 7.44 LE billion representing 18.09 percent.

---

**IX.CONCLUSION**

As discussed previously, the interaction between informal housing and informal economy became visible, and dominated most of the cities in the South. The Egyptian government institutions have for the most part failed to address the needs of the poor for housing, just as they have failed to meet their other basic needs. Furthermore, whereas original settlers in informal housing areas used their limited financial resources and collective efforts to address their needs, today the situation is different. Despite the current diversity and complexity of informal housing types and subtypes, today's newcomers encounter great difficulties in obtaining housing units or land plots at reasonable cost.

Therefore, the concept of informal housing should not simply be looked on as shelter, but also as a capital asset that shapes people's life chances, and differentiates these chances accordingly. To understand this complexity and diversity, a broad view of how cities, institutions, and social systems work should be investigated. A close look at how people actually are housed should take place, rather than defining the problem around official housing programs and the housing that governments recognize. Housing programs as part of larger complex systems should be closely investigated at top and bottom levels including urban planning, fiscal policy, and socioeconomic structures. A close look is needed at the diversity and complexity of informality either in land tenure and acquisition or in building construction in which the informality concept has flourished. A close look should be taken at how such systems evolve over time, and the ways in which the evolution of housing markets shapes the evolving social opportunities for people.

The question of illegality of land and real estate today concerns the majority of the inhabitants of regional metropolises, as well as those of secondary cities. It can therefore no longer be contained in an unacknowledged fringe. Furthermore, from the perspective of an over all control desired by the local powers, the passage from a policy of containment to a policy of integration has become vital and it represents an inescapable reversal. The

---

unauthorized quarters are finally being considered as integral parts of the urban matrix. As well as, the absence of both planning control and urban management over the built environment within Third World cities has led into urban informality.

On the other hand, if the Egyptian government were today to begin to accumulate, eliminate, and integrate informal/formal housing areas, the urban poor might be able to participate in the development process. This would help reduce poverty for three main reasons. First, in the case of integration of informal housing areas into formal areas, it would allow the private developers to construct or speculate on vacant available land which would be included within action areas. This would increase the availability of land plots at reasonable cost, as well as increasing the housing stock within these areas. Second, in the case of accumulation of informal areas, it would give the settlers the opportunity for increasing their investments in housing production, as well as, changing their status from illegal into legal by which would change their capital from hidden capital into live capital. By accumulating, eliminating and integration of informal/formal areas, new procedures and regulation would be issued and formalized the informal areas to be squeezed into formal areas, that ownership can be traced and validated and exchanges can be governed by a legally acceptable and recognizable set of rules. This would give the opportunity for the poor to integrate legally into, and be an essential part of, the urban matrix of the city. Third, if settlers could feel secure in land tenure, additional housing units might be constructed/added, which would offer additional rental housing units for the newcomers. Fourth, increased investments in housing would enhance the economic situation, which would offer job opportunities for people who are most in need. Government involvement would also provide reliable information about the needs and capacities of such communities, and it might lead to development of a social delivery vehicle that would value the health of the communities themselves. Sound information and efficient delivery might also save money, both by

---

preventing waste and by ensuring that the outcome would be appropriate to people's needs. On the other word, the role of the government would be changed from provider or facilitator into enabler. This would also conform to the government's requirements and policies.

Today, free market economies are a reality for most people. Like globalization, they create a frightening gap that is dividing the globally enabled from the increasingly marginalized people of the same city. Reform of the real property regime (land included) is a window through which we could look at urban management, at least for some time to come. From the perspective of real property, new insights are gained into the city's functions, relating to the wealth creation dynamics of cities. This window would help us see the role that our cities (in which most housing and economic activity is informal) can play in closing the gap and making the race easier. A functioning real property regime represents a possible way out for the urban poor. To close the gap between various strata of a society, and improve the economic performance, a new enablement among all sectors in the society is needed. The view of enablement as a cooperation or an arrangement or relationship (whatever the level and the type of enablement), was the result of developments and the functions of capital - whatever the amount and sort- state involvement and the nature of community concerned. Therefore, public/private enablement in urban management is considered as the outcome of capital which is generated by a number of different interest groups and different sources (public and private, whatever their legal form and economic status) utilizing the main collectives commodities within the market (land, labor, material etc., as well as, the legislative process which controls the operation of these commodities) in facilitating and controlling land provision for housing, interacting within the development strategy of the government.

**X. BIBLIOGRAPHY**

- AlSayyad, N. (1993). "Squatting and Culture," *Habitat International*, 17(1), 33-44.
- AlSayyad, N. (2004) "Urban informality as a New Way of Life," in Roy, A. and AlSayyad, N., editors. *Urban Informality: Transnational Perspectives from the Middle East, Latin America, and South Asia*. Lexington Books, Lanham, Maryland, p 7-30.
- AlSayyad, N. and Roy, A. (2004) "Prologue/Dialogue," in Roy, A. and AlSayyad, N., editors. *Urban Informality: Transnational Perspectives from the Middle East, Latin America, and South Asia*. Lexington Books, Lanham, Maryland, p 1-6.
- Bromley, R. (1990). "A New Path to Development? The Significance and Impact of Hernando De Soto's Ideas on Underdevelopment, Production, and Reproduction," *Economic Geography*, 66 (4), 328-48.
- Bromley, R. (1994) "Informality, De Soto Style: From Concept to policy," in Rakowski, Cathy, editor. *Contrapunto: the informal Sector Debate in Latin America*. Sunny press, Albany, NY, p131-151.
- De Soto, H. (1989) *The Other Path: The Invisible Revolution in the Third World*, Harper & Row, New York.
- De Soto, H. (2000) *The Mystery of Capital: Why Capitalism Triumphs in the West and Fails Everywhere Else*, Basic Books, New York.
- Gilbert, A. (2002). "On the Mystery of Capital and the Myths of Hernando de Soto," *International Development Planning Review*, 24 (1), 1-19.
- Hart, K. (1973). "Informal Income Opportunities and Urban Employment in Ghana," *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 11 (1), 61-89. Hart's paper was originally presented to a conference in 1971, before the ILO mission to Kenya completed its work.
- Hassan, A. (2000) *Housing for the Poor: Failure of Formal Sector Strategies*, City Press, Karachi.
- Hassan, A. (2002). "The Changing Nature of the Informal Sector in Karachi as a Result of Global Restructuring and Liberalization," *Environment and Urbanization*, 14 (2), 69-78
- Lewis, W. Arthur (1954). "Economic Development with Unlimited Supplies of Labour," *Manchester School of Economics and Social Studies* 22, 139-91.
- The New Collins Compact English Dictionary(1984) Wm. Collins Sons & Co. Ltd., London.
- The Concise Oxford Dictionary(1984) Oxford University Press 1984 ED, Oxford.
- Payne, G. (2002) "Introduction," in Payne, G., editor. *Land, Rights and Innovation*. Intermediate Technology Development Group, London, p 3-22.
- Peattie, L. (1996), "Urban Research in the 1990s," in M. Cohen et al., editors. *Preparing for the Future: Global Pressures and Local Forces*, Woodrow Wilson Center Press, Washington, DC, p 371-91.
- Portes, A., Castells, M., and L. Benton (1989) *The Informal Economy: Studies in Advanced and Less Developed Countries*, John Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, Md.
- Rakowski, A. (1994) "The Informal Sector Debate , Part 2: 1984-1993," in Rakowski, Cathy, editor. *Contrapunto: the informal Sector Debate in Latin America*. Sunny press, Albany, NY, p31-50.
- Roy, Ananya (2005). "Urban Informality: Toward an Epistemology of Planning," *Journal of the American Planning Association*, 71(2), 147-158
- Sen, J. (2001) "The Unintended City Revisited: A Transnational's Perspective." *Proc, Urban Informality in an Era of Liberalization: A Transnational Perspective*, University of California at Berkeley.
- Soliman, A. (1987) "Informal land Acquisition and the Urban Poor in Alexandria." *Third World Planning Review*, 9 (1), 23-39
- Soliman, A. (1996). "Legitimizing Informal Housing: Accommodating Low-income Groups in Alexandria." *Environment and Urbanization*, 8 (1), 183-94.

Soliman, A. (2002) "Typology of Informal Housing in Egyptian Cities: Taking account of Diversity." *International Development Planning Review*, 24 (2), 177-201.

Soliman, A. (2004a) *A Possible Way Out: Formalizing Housing Informality in Egyptian Cities*, University Press of America, Lanham, Maryland.

Soliman, A. (2004b) "Tilting at Sphinxes: Locating Urban Informality in Egyptian Cities," in Roy, A. and AlSayyad, N., editors. *Urban Informality: Transnational Perspectives from the Middle East, Latin America, and South Asia*. Lexington Books, Lanham, Maryland, p 171-207.

Stern, R. (2004) "Introduction: Toward the Comparative Study of Urban Governance," in McCarney, P. and Stern, R. editors. *Governance on the Ground: Innovation and Discontinuities in Cities of the Developing Countries*, Woodrow Wilson Center Press, Washington, DC, p 1-30.

Yiftachel, O., Yakobi, H. (2004) "Control, Resistance, and Informality: Urban Ethnocracy in Beer-Sheva, Israel," in Roy, A. and AlSayyad, N., editors. *Urban Informality: Transnational Perspectives from the Middle East, Latin America, and South Asia*. Lexington Books, Lanham, Maryland, p 209-239.

## XI.ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> See Ananya Roy, *Urban Informality: Toward an Epistemology of Planning*, *Journal of the American Planning Association*, 2005, Vol.71, No.2, Pp. 147-158

<sup>2</sup> In 1996 the author and David Sims produced a quick classification of informal housing areas in Alexandria and Cairo, respectively.

<sup>3</sup> A district consists of 6-8 shishka, each containing between 1,500-2,500 people, while a qaria (village) contains between 5,000-10,000 people.

<sup>4</sup> The following are details of the assumptions used.

First, dwelling unit size is the estimated average size of dwelling unit types in gross square meters (75 square meters per dwelling unit), defined to include stairways and other shared built space associated with the typical unit.

Second, building value per square meter, that is the asset value of dwelling units, was defined as the current replacement value of a particular dwelling unit, calculated as estimates of total construction cost per square meter. Architects, contractors, and informal builders were consulted to make these estimates.

Third, associated land per unit. This is the average net land area associated with each unit. This was calculated by taking the average unit size and dividing by the average plot coverage ratio, and by the number of floors in an average building. The number of floors was obtained from field survey and inserted into GIS to reflect the actual number of floors in each area. The unfinished floors were dropped down from the analysis.

Finally, land value per square meter at the current market prices of vacant land in informal areas was solicited from land brokers and residents. These values in all cases referred to interior locations, i.e., those on secondary roads and side streets where there was little or no commercial potential contributing to the land value. These values are based on current year 2007 land prices.

<sup>5</sup> In 1996, the author and David Sims observed a quick classification of informal housing areas in Alexandria and Cairo respectively.

<sup>6</sup> Informal areas called El Manatique El Ashwaiyya in the Arabic language, some times called Ashwaiyyat (The plural for Ashwaiyya), literally meaning haphazard, is the term used in public to refer to the informal housing areas in Egypt.

<sup>7</sup> District consists of 6-8 Shishka, which is between 1500-2500 people, while Qaria (village) is between 5000-15000 people.

<sup>8</sup> Cited from Roy and AlSayyad (2004) as a discussion for Rakowski's debate (1994).

<sup>9</sup> For further details of the Open Door Policy, see A. Soliman, "A Prognosis for Housing Development in New Towns in Egypt," *Netherlands Journal of Housing and Environmental Research* 7, no.3 (1992), 283-305.

<sup>10</sup> ABT Associates, "The Informal Sector", Main Report, USAID/Egypt, 1981.

<sup>11</sup> This housing typology has been carried out by a team of consultants; the author was responsible for Alexandria and Tanta cities, while David Sims was responsible for Greater Cairo. The final reports from both consultants were submitted to the ILD in July 2000. The study of typology of informal housing has been set up by the author, and does not reflect either the ILD opinion or the other consultant.

<sup>12</sup> Awqaf is the traditional form of tenure in Islamic countries. Waqf land has two classifications; Waqf Khayri (charity) and Waqf Ahli (private). Religious land tenure system especially on Waqf system is divided into two main types of land: Waqf Khayri (Charity) and Waqf Ahli (private), the former is found through three ways: 1-the beneficiaries died, at which point the property was absorbed into the Waqf Khayri. 2- the property deteriorated to the point where the original value was totally dissipated, at which time it was returned to the open market as freehold, or 3- long term leases on the property could be granted to investors with capital. Waqf Ahli (private family) is transferred from the owner of a property to a religious foundation but the owner continues to receive its revenues personally during his lifetime. After his death, the revenues from the property are transferred to his descendants, merely arranging for their eventual disbursement to a charitable purpose, if the owner dies. Often the owner himself was appointed to administer his property, although after several generations this administration generally passed into the hands of the professional. After so many generations (under the condition of the Waqf), the Waqf Ahli could be transferred into freehold land, and this may often require a court order.

<sup>13</sup> Wada'yad is an Arabic word for illegal occupation of land plot (hand claimants); it is always used for any illegal occupation for land plot.

<sup>14</sup> Rent control was first applied during World War II as a measure to combat wartime inflation, and it froze rents at 1941 rates. Such a situation was codified in Law 121 of 1947 (applying to properties built before 1943). Then, after the Revolution in 1952, a series of laws reduced rentals on new construction and also rents on existing units. Finally, Laws 49 and 106 of 1976 and 1977 incorporated previous legislation, codified existing rent levels, and established a system for calculating rent levels in new buildings in ways that greatly favored tenants. In addition, rental contracts were deemed inheritable as long as an original tenant's children lived on the premises. Subsequently

several small amendments were made to restore landlord interests. For example, Law 136 of 1981 allowed one-third, instead of 10 percent, of units in a building to be sold (Tamlik) rather than rented. However, it was not until Law 4 of 1996 that provision for an unrestricted, market-oriented kind of contract for rentals was promulgated.

<sup>15</sup> Alexandria Governorate, 1998

<sup>16</sup> Popular organizations are very important within them and, indeed, often played a major role in the original land-invasion process. As mentioned previously, land tenure in most such desert areas remains confusing, although the municipalities have recently attempted to regularize the situation by sanctioning trilateral negotiations between residents/land claimants, the municipalities, and the military.

<sup>17</sup> LE Livre Egyptian The US dollar was equal to 5.7 LE at the time this survey was carried out (November 2006 – March 2007).