



MINISTRY OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT

REPORT ON STUDY TOUR TO EGYPT AND LESSONS LEARNED ON APPROACHES TO INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS



A report by the Ministry of Urban Development, October, 2006. On the cover, an informal settlement in Kabul.

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PREFACE

The Ministry of Urban Development recently participated in a study tour for key counterpart officials from the Government of Afghanistan to Egypt, to meet with officials of the municipal corporations of Cairo and Giza, and counterpart representatives from the ministries of urban development. The study tour was sponsored by the USAID/LTERA project in Afghanistan.

This report outlines the key features of the study tour, as well as lessons learned from the exchange of information. The Ministry of Urban Development would like to thank staff of the USAID/LTERA project for their comments on earlier versions of this report.

Readers of this report also may be interested in the following documents that are available on www.ltera.org:

- The White Paper on Informal Settlements, Afghan Ministry of Urban Development, 2006; and
- Proceedings of the Conference on Informal Settlements in January 2006, Afghan Ministry of Urban Development, 2006.

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An electronic version of this report is available on: www.ltera.org

ABOUT THE KABUL URBAN RECONSTRUCTION PROJECT

In addition to the efforts made by UN-Habitat upgrading projects implemented in the districts 6-7 and 8 of Kabul Urban areas in the informal settlements, the government of Afghanistan with the support of IDA through World Bank and assistance from ARTF funds decided to assist in a larger scale the upgrading of formal and informal settlements in Kabul city through Kabul Urban Reconstruction Project under the umbrella of the Ministry of Urban development.

This \$28.2 million project will help the up-grading of formal and informal areas of Kabul through provision and improvement of infrastructure and delivery of services. This project has five components.

- Upgrading of formal and informal settlements through provision and improvement of, Drinking Water, - Sanitation, - Surface water drainage, - Solid waste management systems, - Surfacing of the access roads and street lighting. This process is planned and implemented through a participatory process with the relevant communities who will be benefited from KURP.
- The second component of KURP is the Land Tenure Regularization process in the informal settlements that are covered under the upgrading process. This component is considered with direct coordination and cooperation with the LTERA/USAID
- The third component of this project is the Engineering Management and Support, will help the Project Management Unit PMU to manage and monitor the planning, design and implementation of this project. A TSU technical support unit have been hired from an Australian company called SMEC who are affiliated with the Lois Burger company to handle the TSU for KURP.
- The fourth component of this project is the Capacity building of Kabul Municipality in financial management which is dealt with by the World Bank directly.
- The fifth component of this project is the Structure Plans for Kabul and four other major towns of Afghanistan namely Herat, Kandahar, Jalalabad and Mazar-i-Sharif. Through this component we are trying to bring the existing cities of the above mentioned under control in terms of the land use, provision of city infra-structure and city services. This component will insure the systematic approach to the urbanization process and will take into account the informal settlements and its rationalization in terms of upgrading and land tenure regularization.

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Government of Afghanistan has been active in building consensus and capacity around resolving property rights, augmenting urban development, regularizing informal settlements and developing a comprehensive land information system since September 2004. As part of its efforts, a study tour to Egypt was organized for key representatives from counterpart agencies, to facilitate an understanding of how other countries with similar urban development constraints have approached informal settlements and their upgrading.

Despite its reputation for being a popular cultural destination which includes a vast amount of art galleries, music halls, cultural centers, and luxurious accommodations, Cairo has been facing particular challenges related to informal settlements and land tenure issues. Recent governmental and non-governmental responses to these problems have included development of housing projects and new cities, as well as upgrading existing informal settlements when deemed appropriate through legalization of unlawful occupation of public land. Egypt is trying to cope with the expansion of cities such as Cairo and Giza in an unplanned fashion. According to a GTZ estimate, about 50% of the Greater Cairo area lives in informal settlements. Basic services such as potable water, sewerage and waste disposal are inadequately provided in these settlements. Moreover, residents of informal settlements in Cairo and Giza lack tenure security because their dwellings are:

- built on public land; or
- constructed on private property either belonging to the owner; or purchased from a private owner;
- built on shared title land;

- constructed without occupancy or construction permits; and/or
- rented in informal settlements without formal rental contracts.

The study tour took place from September 9-15, 2006 and was aimed at providing participants with a comparative understanding of issues related to informal settlements and land tenure, including the upgrading of basic services, formalization of property rights, and the project management process. The tour included meetings with a range of senior Egyptian government officials and their development partner NGOs as well as site visits and case studies of various new initiatives taken by the government of Egypt to assist with the informal settlements challenge.

The members of the high level Afghan delegation met with Egyptian government officials including the Minister of Housing, Utilities and Urban Communities, the First Under Secretary for Housing, the Governor of Cairo, the Deputy Minister of Justice, the District Chief of Boulaq-el-Dakrou in Giza Governorate, the District Chief of Manshiet Nasser in Cairo Governorate, the Chairman of the Housing and Building National Research Center, the Head of Planning Department at the Ministry of Housing, the Chairman of the General Organization for Physical Planning (GOPP), the Chairman for the Development of Cairo, and the Head of the New Cairo Project. From among non-governmental agencies, the delegation met with the Area Manager and Deputy Manager of the Boulaq-El-Dakrou GTZ office, the representative of KFW, the Area Manager of the Manshiet Nasser GTZ project, and the elected representative of the Boulaq-El-Dakrou community.

The delegation visited Manshiet Nasser district in the Cairo Governorate and the Boulaq-el-Dakrou program in Giza, funded by the KFW and GTZ, and were given detailed presentations on the Participatory Development Program in Urban Areas. In addition to providing an understanding of the evolution of informal settlements growth in the Greater Cairo area, the study tour created the environment for the Afghan delegation to discuss questions relevant to building a socially inclusive city through the upgrading of informal settlements and improving tenure security of their residents.

At a practical project implementation level, the delegation was able to draw valuable lessons from the Egyptian experience with regard to building the partnership between relevant ministries, local governments, implementing partners (international organizations), and communities in implementing community-based upgrading projects.

The USAID/LTERA team took the opportunity of having the heads of key Afghan government agencies in the tour group to facilitate discussions on better working relationships between the Ministry of Urban Development, the Municipality of Kabul and the Ministry of Justice. USAID/LTERA will assist the MOUD and MoJ in clearly outlining and defining the powers and responsibilities of both agencies, as well as areas of mutual collaboration.

2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 Background

Total area of 1001450 sq km. Cairo, the largest city in the Middle East and Africa, was founded on July 16, 969 AD by the Fatimid leader Jawhar Al-Sequilli. Well known for its historic monuments and artifacts of ancient Egypt, Cairo is Africa's most populous city and the Arab world's cultural center.

Despite its earned fame for being a popular cultural destination which includes a vast amount of art galleries, music halls, cultural centers, and luxurious accommodations, Cairo has been facing challenges related to rapid urban growth, informal settlements and land tenure issues. Recent governmental and non-governmental responses have included development of housing projects and new cities as well as upgrading existing informal settlements when deemed appropriate. The upgrading of informal settlements is complemented by legalization of unlawful occupation of public land. Pls. see the map of Egypt on the right



2.2 Objectives of the study tour

Map of Egypt

The study tour that took place from the 9th of September to the 15th of September of 2006 aimed at providing participants a comparative understanding of issues related to informal settlements and land tenure, including the upgrading of basic services, regularization of property rights, and the project management process. Networking with Egyptian counterpart government officials, as well as building team spirit between the representatives of key Afghan government bodies, were also important objectives of the study tour. The Team facilitated discussions between Afghan officials and Egyptian counterparts. The Team also succeeded in facilitating productive and constructive discussions between representatives of different Afghan institutions. The discussion focused on improving existing working relationship between the MOUD, Kabul Municipality and the Ministry of Justice.

2.3 Participants, meetings and site visits

A delegation of Afghan Government officials and LTERA personnel, participated in the study tour. The ten Afghan officials were the Minister of Urban Development, the Mayor of Kabul, the Deputy Minister of Justice, the Mayor of Herat, the Head of Municipality Affairs at the Ministry of Interior, the Head of District 7 of Kabul, two senior advisors to the Minister of Urban Development, the Head of Policy and Coordination at the Municipality of Kabul, the Head of Expropriation Department, Kabul Municipality. The Afghan officials were accompanied by three members of the Land Titling Team.

All participants departed together for Dubai on September 8, 2006, and arrived in Cairo on September 9. The study tour last for a week, and the participants returned to Kabul on September 16, 2006..

The members of the high level Afghan delegation met with a range of senior Egyptian government officials and their development partner NGOs. The Egyptian government officials included the Minister of Housing, Utilities and Urban Communities, the First Under Secretary for Housing, the Governor of Cairo, the Deputy Minister of Justice, the District Chief of Boulaq-el-Dakrou in Giza Governorate, the District Chief of Manshiet Nasser in Cairo Governorate, the Chairman of the Housing and Building National Research Center, the Head of Planning Department at the Ministry of Housing, the Chairman of the General Organization for Physical Planning (GOPP), the Chairman for the Development of Cairo, and the Head of the New Cairo Project. From non-governmental bodies, the delegation met with the Area Manager and Deputy Manager of the Boulaq-El-Dakrou GTZ office, the representative of KfW, the Area Manager of the Manshiet Nasser GTZ project, and the elected representative of the Boulaq-El-Dakrou community. (See Appendix A).

3 INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS AND LAND TENURE ISSUES IN EGYPT

3.1 Overview of the Challenge

Egypt is trying to cope with the fast and unplanned expansion of cities such as Cairo and Giza. According to a GTZ estimate, about 50% of the Greater Cairo area lives in informal settlements. Basic services such as potable water, sewerage and waste disposal are inadequately provided in these settlements. Moreover, most of the urban poor in the Cairo and Giza Governorates lack tenure security for different reasons. For example, in the Manshiet Nasser district of Cairo, residents of informal settlement have been living in dwellings built on public land, while in the Boulaq-El-Dakrou residents live in dwellings built on private land, albeit without construction permit. Pls see the representative photo of the area on the right.



Thus, residents of informal settlements in Cairo and Giza lack tenure security because their dwellings are

- **built on public land; or**

- **constructed on private property either belonging to the owner; or purchased from a private owner;**
- **built on shared title land; and/or**
- **constructed without occupancy or construction permits; or**
- **rented in informal settlements without formal rental contracts.:**

It appears that the Government of Egypt has been very cautious in addressing issues related to informal settlements. There has not been any attempt for drastic legislative or administrative measures. However, the government has shown a de facto recognition of settlements through provision of basic services in informal settlements and supporting upgrading of physical infrastructure. The prudence and gradual approach adopted by the Government seems to be a reflection of the complex nature of unplanned developments in urban areas in the country.

3.2 Program Implementation and Financing

Based on an agreement between the Cairo Governorate, and KFW and GTZ regarding the development of poor urban areas, the district of Manshiet Nasser was selected as one of the main projects for development. A similar project has also been implemented in the Governorate of Giza. The Boulaq-el-Dakroun program in Giza and the Manshiet Nasser program in Cairo are implemented with the full participation of the local government administrations and the concerned communities. The project which will be implemented through 2011 is aimed at supporting the government, particularly the Ministry of Planning and Local Development, the Ministry of Housing, the Governorates of Cairo and Giza, and the relevant districts, to institutionalize participatory policies and tools for urban development. In Cairo, the Participatory Development Program aims at improving the provision of basic services to urban poor population, as well as improving tenure security through the legalization of unlawful occupation. Further, Egypt has launched a low-income housing development project that primarily aims to accommodate the shelter needs of the urban poor, particularly the residents of informal settlements where their areas were determined not to be amenable to upgrading because of environmental and physical reasons. The project is financed by the Abu Dhabi Development Fund.

4 CASE STUDIES AND SITE VISITS

4.1 Manshiet Nasser

Manshiet Nasser is a district consisting of the most challenging and largest informal settlements in Greater Cairo. An estimated half a million people in the district live in houses built on public land located on hilly sites. According to the Manshiet Nasser district Head and the Area Manager of GTZ in the district, the surface area of the district is 7.27 km². The steady and dense pattern of informal settlement expansion often resulting from rural-urban migration has led to problems associated with basic services and tenure insecurity. See the photo on the right



On September 13, 2006, the delegation met with the Manshiet Nasser District Chief and his GTZ partners including the Area Manager and KFW representative. Following a brief welcome and introductory speech by the District Chief, the GTZ Area Manager delivered a detailed presentation on the ‘Participatory Development Program in Urban Areas’ that is being implemented by GTZ and its government partners in the Manshiet Nasser district. Among other things, the Area Manager explained the sequencing of the project implementation and land tenure issues associated with informal settlements in the district in general and in Ezbet Bekhit neighborhood in particular. See the photo on the right



He further explained the need for the development of trust between communities through constructive dialogue and demonstrated credibility of government agencies and their partners. He also shared his view on the value of empowering informal settlement residents to participate in decision making processes and the importance of effective coordination between government agencies and their partners

According to the presentation delivered by the GTZ area manager to the Afghan delegation, Manshiet Nasser officially became a municipal district within the Cairo Governorate in 1991. Since the formation of the informal settlements in the hilly sites of this district, residents have been trying to alleviate their problems related to basic services, the environment and security. However, little success was achieved until the government and its international development partners recently initiated a community based upgrading program. The non-responsive policy that the Government adopted until the mid 1990s led to the expansion of the informal settlement and the worsening and inadequacy of infrastructure and social services. The presentation was followed by an exchange of views between the two sides. At the end, the Egyptian side gave a tour of the Ezbet Bekhit informal settlement to the Afghan delegation.

Earlier on September 12, 2006, the delegation met with the Chairman of the Organization for the Development of Cairo and his colleagues. The Chairman gave a presentation on the housing project that this organization is implementing based on the plan prepared by the Ministry of Housing. The apartment buildings that are being constructed will accommodate households relocated from the Manshiet Nasser area informal settlement due to environmental considerations. The discussions between the two sides focused on challenges faced during the implementation process, the cost of relocation, and the legal involved such as security of tenure of the occupants of the new building units. See the photo on the right



Following the presentation and exchange of views between the two sides, the Chairman accompanied by his colleagues and the Director of Planning of the Ministry of Housing gave the Afghan delegation a tour of the housing project. During the tour, the Chairman and his colleagues for the Development of Cairo has thus far constructed about 1000 units for the residents of the area, who have to be relocated from informal settlements due to environmental considerations. Pls. see the photos below.



The government, GTZ and community partnership paved the way for a sustainable upgrading of basic services and helped to improve the sense of tenure security. The Egyptian hosts explained to the delegation that the participatory intervention of the Government and GTZ in 1998 was a decisive measure in terms of transforming the coping strategies of the residents of this squatter settlement. The two important initiatives that took place in 1998 were:

- The General Organization for Physical Planning (GOPP) of the Ministry of Housing, Utilities and Urban Communities (MHUUC) prepared a master plan for the area in 1998; and

- The Cairo Governorate in partnership with GTZ launched the Urban Upgrading Project of Ezbet Bekhit, as a pilot neighborhood of Manshiet Nasser in 1998. Both initiatives adopted a community based approach in dealing with the problems associated with infrastructure, social services and tenure insecurity in the squatter settlement.

Among the many lessons learnt from the discussions with the Egyptian hosts was the value of adopting a two-pronged approach in dealing with the problems associated with informal settlements. While upgrading the basic services of informal settlements and improving the tenure security of their residents is one of strategies adopted by the Egyptian government and its development partners, the construction of low-income housing and the development of new cities are also key government strategies.

Both strategies adopted a community participatory approach. The similar implementing mechanisms that the two projects adopted helped in creating an atmosphere for collaboration and coordination between the two initiatives. The similar mechanisms that the two initiatives adopted were: 1) forging strong partnerships with community representatives, natural leaders in the area and governmental and non-governmental stakeholders; 2) forming an in-situ coordination office to organize public consultations with residents, share relevant information, and organize meetings of all stakeholders; and 3) empowering a non-governmental organization representing local inhabitants to take an active role in facilitating communication, implementation and management of the project.

Another lesson that the delegation drew from the Manshiet Nasser experience was the value of adopting an integrated approach to issues associated with informal settlements and land tenure. The Manshiet Nasser upgrading project involved: 1) constructing a potable water and sewer network and paving the streets; 2) preparing a detailed plan of the neighborhood; 3) formalizing land tenure; 4) relocating (re-housing) residents whose homes were located in areas that were susceptible to natural or environmental calamity and those whose property was required either partially or fully for spatial rearrangement; 5) upgrading service facilities and collecting solid wastes; and 6) capacity building of the local authorities.

4.2 Boulaq-el-Dakrou

Boulaq-El Dakrou is another informal settlement area that offers a contrasting experience in terms of its land tenure situation. The houses in this settlement, which has an estimated 650,000 inhabitants, are built on privately owned, formerly agricultural, land. Although the houses are built on land owned by the inhabitants, these residents lack tenure security because they built their houses without permit and on formerly agricultural land that was later subdivided unlawfully.

On September 11 2006, the delegation met with the Boulaq-El-Dakrou District Chief and his GTZ partners, including the Area Manager and his deputy. Also present in the meeting was Mr. Abdul Alim, the Popular Chief who is the elected community representative of the district. After the District Chief and the Popular Chief gave their welcome speeches and general introductions about the district, the GTZ Deputy Area Manager and Area Manager delivered a detailed presentation on the ‘Participatory Development Program in Urban Areas’ that is being implemented by GTZ and its government partners. The presentation was followed by exchange of views between the two sides. At the end, the Egyptian representatives gave a tour of the project sites to the Afghan delegation.



5 HIGH LEVEL MEETINGS AND OUTCOMES

The Afghan delegation met with key government officials including the Minister of Housing, Utilities and Urban Communities, Engineer Al-Maghraby, the Chairman of the Housing and Building National Research Center (HBRC), Prof. Dr. Amr Ezzat Salama, the Deputy Minister of Justice, Mr. El-Shorbagy, and the Governor of Cairo, Dr Abdel Azim Wazir. All the meetings were conducted in a good spirit of cooperation and mutual respect. Besides exchanging views on issues relating to informal settlements, land tenure, housing and urban planning, the meetings also focused on areas of cooperation for the future.

5.1 Meeting with the Minister of Housing and Urban Development

Minister Pashtoon and his Egyptian counterparts agreed to cooperate on issues related to capacity building, technical assistance and exchange of information. As a follow up to the understanding reached between the two Ministers, during a visit to the Housing and Building National Center, Minister Pashtoon and Prof. Dr. Amr Ezzat Salama signed a memorandum of understanding as an expression of the interest on both sides in developing economic, scientific and technical relations in the area of construction, production of building materials and urban development.



5.2 Meeting with the Governor of Cairo

The Mayor of Kabul led the Afghan delegation during the meeting with the Governor of Cairo. Both sides exchanged information and views on the challenges faced by the capital cities of their respective countries. At the end of their discussion both sides agreed to explore ways to work together towards establishing twinning programs between the capital cities.

5.3 Meeting with the Deputy Minister of Justice

The meeting between the Afghan delegation and the Deputy Minister of Justice of Egypt was led by the Deputy Minister of Justice, Dr Hashimzai. The discussions focused on the Egyptian experience in dealing with property related legal issues. Both sides agreed on future cooperation with respect to providing technical assistance, as well as the exchange of information and legislative materials.

6 MAIN LESSONS LEARNED

6.1 Informal Settlements and Tenure Security

6.1.1 PARTICIPATORY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM TOOLS

The study tour provided the Afghan delegation with the opportunity to learn valuable lessons from its various meetings with high level government officials and technical personnel, as well as from presentations made by GTZ project managers and site visits. In addition to providing an understanding of the evolution and growth of informal settlements in the Greater Cairo area, the study tour created the environment for the Afghan delegation to discuss questions relevant to building a socially inclusive city through the upgrading of informal settlements and improving tenure security of their residents.

A number of specific questions relating to implementing informal settlement upgrading projects were thoroughly discussed during the tour. These included: 1) how to deal with the interests and capacities of local communities; 2) how to build trust with communities through quick and tangible successes; 3) how to gather and share correct information; 4) how to plan and agree upon public, private and community investments towards community development; and 5) how to monitor the impact among public, private and community partners. The answers to these questions were articulated as five tools that are the synthesis of experience in various areas of Egypt.

The five tools that were explained in detail during the delegations' meetings with the Manshiet Nasser and Boulaq-EL-Dakroul district officials and GTZ personnel were:

1. mobilizing the community through the allocation of immediate budget resources for small and quick projects based on community-set priorities;

2. understanding and building local community structures;
3. making available information visible and accessible to all;
4. encouraging participatory local action and budget planning; and
5. encouraging participatory implementation and impact monitoring.

6.2 Partnership between Stakeholders

At a practical project implementation level, the delegation was able to draw valuable lessons from the Egyptian experience with regard to building the partnership between relevant ministries, local governments, implementing partners (international organizations), and communities in implementing community-based upgrading projects.

6.3 Two-Pronged Strategy to Deal with Property Related Issues

While upgrading the basic services of informal settlements and improving the tenure security of their residents is one of strategies adopted by the Egyptian government and its development partners, the construction of low-income housing and the development of new cities are also key government strategies. The delegation met with the Chairman of the Organization for the Development of Cairo and his colleagues. Also representatives of the Ministry of Housing, including the Head of International Cooperation and Planning, were present during the meeting. The Organization for the Development of Cairo has thus far constructed about 10,000 apartments for low-income household residents of the area, who have to be relocated from informal settlements that are not suitable for upgrading due to environmental considerations. In addition to the low-income housing development project, the government of Egypt has a plan to develop 45 new cities by 2017.

APPENDIX A: List of Participants on Study Tour to Egypt

1. H.E. Mohammad Yusuf Pashtoon, Minister of Urban Development (MoUD).
2. H.E. Dr. Ghulam Sakhi Noorzad, Mayor of Kabul.
3. H.E. Dr. Mohammad Qasem Hashemzai, Deputy Minister of Justice.
4. Abdul Ahad Wahid, Advisor to MoUD and Head of World Bank–funded Kabul Urban Reconstruction Program (KURP).
5. Dr. Farouq Bashar, Legal Advisor, MoUD.
6. Mohammad Ali Niazi, Head of Department of Policy and Coordination, Kabul Municipality.
7. Ameer Mohammad Wardak, Head of Department of Land acquisition, Kabul Municipality.
8. Mehrabuddin Yousoufzai, Head of District #7, Kabul Municipality.
9. Eng. Shah Wali Zamee, Head of Municipalities, Ministry of Interior.
10. Mohammad Rafiq Mojadadi, Mayor of Herat.
11. Sayed Mohsen Banouri, Legal Advisor, USAID/LTERA.
12. Dr. Yohannes Gebremedhin, Land Titling Team Leader/Legal Advisor, USAID/LTERA.
13. Tressan Sullivan, Advisor to the Kabul municipality, USAID/LTERA.

APPENDIX B: Agenda and List of Meetings

September 10, 2006 (holiday):	Tour of the city
September 11, 2006:	Ministry of Housing: the Minister of Housing, Utilities and Urban Communities: First Under Secretary for Housing,
September 11, 2006:	Governorate of Cairo: Governor of Cairo.
September 12, 2006:	Ministry of Justice: Deputy Minister of Justice.
September 12, 2006:	Planning Department of Ministry of Housing: the Chairman of the Housing and Building National Research Center, the Head of Planning Department at the Ministry of Housing, the Chairman of the General Organization for Physical Planning (GOPP).
September 13, 2006:	Boulaq District office: District Chief of Boulaq-el-Dakrou in Giza Governorate.
September 13, 2006:	GTZ office: Area Manager and Deputy Manager of the Boulaq-El-Dakrou GTZ office, the representative of KFW.
September 13, 2006:	Boulaq District community: Elected representative of the Boulaq-El-Dakrou community.
September 13, 2006:	Manshiet District office: District Chief of Manshiet Nasser in Cairo Governorate.
September 13, 2006:	Cairo Municipality: Chairman for the Development of Cairo, and Head of the New Cairo Project.
September 14, 2006:	GTZ office: Area Manager of the Manshiet Nasser GTZ project.