

Public participation in planning in the Egyptian context

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Public participation is a critical aspect in the planning, also spatial planning. Its role is changing dramatically as it is present not only in social development but also tackles issues connected with cultural, educational. The most important element in participation is the will to do it – to engage in the process of planning the of life, of new urban communities, and how it is taking place in the planning process at different levels/ scales.

There is a need to strengthen the public participation in the Egyptian context. Consequently, there are many cases in public participation related to the different levels (metropolitan, city, action area), connected to urban issues, besides, the sectoral issues related to economic development and societal needs. Thus, there is still a gap between existing national policies and their implementation at local level. The important question is how to achieve the local needs with strategies prepared on upper-level agencies. The main problem, in addition to the environmental issues is the regional disparities, poverty illustrated by low human development index.

The research aim is to determine general framework and rules of citizen participation in Egypt by illustrating many cases from Egyptian context, and to examine the process and assess their effectiveness and the paper will end with the policy changes.

Keywords: Public participation, spatial planning, regional disparities, implementation, Egypt

Introduction

Spatial planning is a central tool for establishing long-term, sustainable frameworks for social, territorial and economic development both inside and between countries. Its main purpose is to enhance the integration between sectors such as housing, transport, energy and industry, and to improve national and local systems of urban and rural development, also considering environmental (United Nations, 2008). It is causing that it has a development and a regulatory impact. As a regulatory mechanism, the government (at local, regional and/or national levels) should give approval for giving activity; as a development mechanism, the government has to elaborate upon development tools for supplying services and infrastructure, for establishing urban development, for preserving national resources, and for investment, etc. The spatial plan aims to (United Nations, 2008):

- (a) Promote territorial cohesion with more balanced social and economic development of regions, and enhanced competitiveness;
- (b) Promote more accessibility;
- (c) Provide access to information and knowledge;
- (d) Reduce environmental damage;
- (e) Protect natural heritage and natural resources;
- (f) Develop energy resources while preserving safety;
- (g) Encourage high-quality, sustainable tourism;
- (h) Limit the impact of natural disasters.

As (Cullingworth & Nadin, 2006) define spatial planning is concerned with “the problem of coordination or

integration of the spatial dimension of sectoral policies through a territorial-based strategy”.

More complex than simple land-use regulation, it addresses the tensions and contradictions among sectoral policies, for example for conflicts between economic development, environmental and social cohesion policies. The key role of spatial planning is to promote a more rational arrangement of activities and to reconcile competing policy goals. The scope of spatial planning differs greatly from one country to another, but most share a number of similarities. In almost all countries, spatial planning is concerned with identifying long- or medium-term objectives and strategies for territories, dealing with land use and physical development as a distinct sector of government activity, and coordinating sectoral policies such as transport, agriculture and environment (Koresawa & Konvitz, 2001).

Methods

Here’ the state of the research methodology, which is aiming to determine general framework and rules of citizen participation in Egypt. Firstly, have a quick view for the spatial and strategic planning. Secondly, define the major urban issues in the Egyptian context. Then, more focus on the procedure of strategic planning from public participation perspective. Finally, illustrate many cases to find how much citizen opinion makes change, and to measure their effectiveness.

Results and discussion

Egyptian urban issues

- National issues: (Issues; unbalance urban distribution „shortage of area”, priorities of new development land, globalization impacts, regional disparities in HDI, poverty, climate change impacts, no vertical connection between the planning levels).
- Regional issues and disparities: (urban and rural disparities, human development index disparities, the income gap „GDP”, conflict land ownership, Rapid urbanization, duplication decision making, no integration between sectoral plans, Loss of natural habitats and cultural heritage, duplication of services or lack of other area, destructive competition for investment, Metropolitan areas share a regional economy and co-exist in a common environment).
- Agencies and Organizations: (conflict land ownership, tiny land tenure, conflict between sectoral agencies, conflict of planning process within the organizations. There is a relation between an agent and site power also requires us to challenge some conventional understanding, stakeholder (power balance) (Aboelnaga, 2016).

Strategic plan in Egypt at all levels, focusing on public participation:

In Egypt, strategic planning is the planning system, which is defined as the general procedure in the following steps;

- Firstly, **Scoping** (Stakeholder Issues); Scope out fundamental issues, stakeholders, opportunities for participation, needs for conflict resolution, and needs for data and analysis; Draft preliminary work plan for the process; Draft preliminary design for stakeholder involvement and participation.
- Secondly, **Identification of Issues, opportunities, Concerns, objectives, Criteria, Uncertainties** (Stakeholder Criteria); Identify IOC (issues, opportunities, concerns), evaluative factors, including institutional, legal, technical criteria; Participation tools (advisory committees, meetings, workshops, surveys) determined by scoping; Conflict resolution and negotiation tools (advocacy) depending on degree of controversy.
- Thirdly, **Analysis of Planning Situation** (Stakeholder Local Knowledge); scope of data gathering and analysis determined by evaluative factors; Identify data limitations and uncertainties; Participation tools (workshops, surveys); Conflict resolution and negotiation tools (advocacy) depending on degree of controversy.
- Fourthly, **Formulation of Alternatives** (Stakeholder Alternatives); Scope of alternatives (comprehensive vs. incremental) determined by LOC, planning situation, degree of uncertainty (adaptive), Participation tools (workshops, workbooks, surveys).
- Fifthly, **Assessment of Impacts** (Stakeholder Assessment); Economic, environmental, and social effects;

Scope of assessment (comprehensive vs. incremental) depends on evaluative factors planning situation, and alternatives; Impact assessment tools (cost-benefit, environmental impact assessment (EIA), social impact assessment (SIA); Organization and evaluation tools (matrices, indices, etc.); Participation tools (workshops, surveys).

- Sixthly, **Evaluation and selection of Plan** (Stakeholder Evaluation); Organization and evaluation tools (matrices, etc.); Participation tools (workshops, surveys, review and comment); Conflict resolution and negotiation tools (advocacy) depending on degree of controversy.
- Finally, **Implementation, Monitoring, Post Implementation Evaluation, Modification** (Adaptive) (Stakeholder Implementation); Timing and extent of monitoring and modification (adaptive) determined by level of uncertainty and degree of controversy; Participation tools (citizen monitoring, workshops, annual conferences) determined by level of uncertainty and degree of controversy. (Randolph, 2011)

Certainly, spatial planning at the district or provincial is in its beginning and no real spatial plan had ever been planned or released at those levels. Thus far, planning environment at a district or provincial level was characterized by a lack of participation and consultation with the population. The horizontal integration of government agencies was rather weak as the budget mainly flows in direct vertical lines from the ministry to these agencies. Development efforts were fragmented by sector and surprisingly, there was little attention by the donor community for improved coordination. But the institutional re-engineering of the D&D reform brings new promises. The vision to devolve both responsibilities and authorities to sub-national councils are likely to generate stronger integration between agencies and an opportunity to go “beyond the sector”. Comprehensive and cross-sector spatial planning may benefit from this change in the governance structures. (Nguon & Diepart, 2010).

Cases (how much citizen opinion makes change)

The citizen opinion really has a great effect on implementation the projects leading to the development of the country. The most important problem is in which stage the decision maker takes into confederation their opinion. Here in next cases and examples we will be able to be determined what it is the effect and influence of the public participation in different projects in different levels.

Metropolis level, Khufu Plaza gardens- Khufu Axis (Cairo vision 2050)

Khufu Plaza – Khufu Axis, this project has been designed as the world largest and longest historical cultural axis by main aim to rarefaction of informal areas and open axes to ensure the unique characteristic heritage and monuments elements.



Fig. 1. Khufu Axis (GOPP, Cairo Vision 2050, 2010)



Fig. 2. Boulak el Dakroor (GOPP, Cairo Vision 2050, 2010)

This project concentrates on opening an Avenue along the extension of Gamaet El-doal street, 600 m width and 8 km length, open view of the pyramids, centered with green area 250 m in width along the Avenue, rarefaction of Boulak el Dakroor area the highest density among informal areas, and to provide services for residential and touristic buildings which are allocated along both sides of the Avenue. (GOPP, Cairo Vision 2050, 2010).

This project takes place in the mega projects to upgrade living conditions to international standard and to increase the competitiveness of Egyptian capital, and its related to community's opinion on the future of Cairo. But the problem to implement this project and rejection the community related to the rarefaction of informal areas without recommending the new place for the inhabitant after they have been moved and the lack of financial support.



Fig. 3. Proposed of Khufu Axis (GOPP, Cairo Vision 2050, 2010)

City level (local level), Zagazig City

On behalf rehabilitation for Egyptian cities, while the strategic planning process going to Zagazig city, the stakeholders and owners had refused to have a logistics center in their city as answering to regional plans and policies for the Suez Canal region. And the processes looked as follows (GOPP, Zagazig Strategic plan, 2010):

- (a) Remove the logistic center from city boundary and recalculate the employee;
 - (b) Change Proposed year to 2032 and recalculate the land use budget;
 - (c) Relocate the sports stadium and smart village abroad the city;
 - (d) Relocate AlAzhar and AlZagazig universities extensions out of the city.
3. Edit the report related to new TOR edit's (Form 37) in third stage and edit the land use budget related to new data and new plan. Those changes in housing and urban sector was in:
 - (a) Aims and objectives and follow up indicators;
 - (b) Development strategic lines;
 - (c) Investment plans for the development projects;
 - (d) Prepare new city boundary and land use plan with structural requirements;
 - (e) City development perspective.
 4. Define the needs and requirements to complete the strategic plan:
 - (a) Be sure about located land uses in the database and define the existing and proposed ones;
 - (b) Determined the extension and redevelopment areas beside the activity changing areas related to (form 35);
 - (c) Resurvey the extension areas to complete land use budget;
 - (d) Confirm land use of extension areas if it changed;
 - (e) Confirm removing army land from the plan.

Site level, Maspero Triangle Development

One of the most expensive value of land in Greater Cairo, connected very well with all transportation systems and also located along the Nile near to branding hotels in the city center. But behind that beauty of the Nile and waterfront, there is an informal area the planners, investors and government need to develop and improve quality of life in this area.

Thus, the government announced on competition to redevelop Maspero Triangle Development as one of urban regeneration projects in Cairo. In implementation stage the government and investors have faced the community who resists to leave their place at first. The Slum Development Fund is the agency which is responsible to deal with the community, and they start at first to determine the key actors from the community, who will be an active partner in all possible initiatives, pushing for the community-oriented solutions at every stage and scale. To achieve the goals and strategies from the participation; to have a representative and leader being partners in communication with all process participants, to make community visible and important, to raise the self-consciousness, to participate as a partner in key city development projects.

As the report of Slum Development Fund (2017) illustrate the social survey to show the desire of leaving or staying in the area after development, (85% of the families voted and participate in the survey) it comes as following; People, who want to leave 77%, and People, who want to stay 22%, and 1% of the families refused the project. For the people who decide to leave divided into two groups 4%

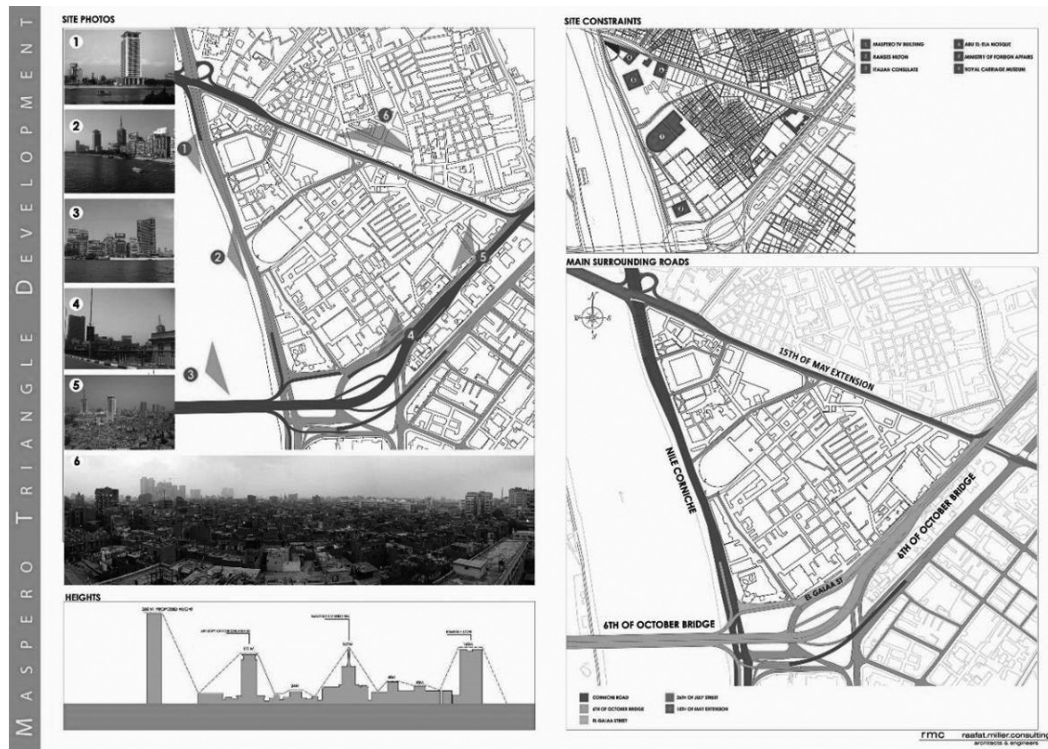


Fig. 6. Maspero Triangle, location and connectivity (Slum Development Fund, 2017)

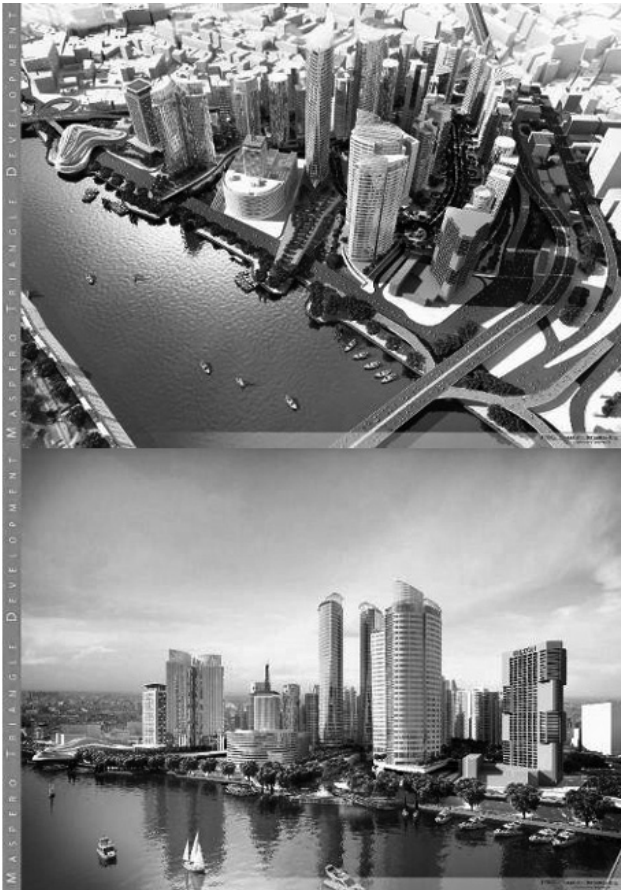


Fig. 7. Maspero Triangle, proposed perspectives (Slum Development Fund, 2017)

moves to AlAsmarat, new area established to have the people from the informal areas well designed and well planned; and the rest of people who will leave 73% they decide to get financial compensation. (Slum Development Fund, 2017)

Regarding to the people, who want to stay most of them have commercial units along 15th of May extension corridor, one of high frequently visiting the area for shopping.

Conclusion

1. As shown in cases the public participation is more effective in site level than the larger scales.
2. Planning consultants should have a good understanding of how to comprise local communities in the planning process and how to benefit from their knowledge and proficiency.
3. Add more workshops in planning processing before and after the planning process until the implementation to make sure that planner plan to have their plans on real.
4. The ability to restructure the planning process is also

key because it highlights that transparent and multi-level spatial planning is an effective tool for development.

5. Qualified planners should be aware of the importance of integrated spatial planning techniques in implementing a policy that represents the interests and the realities of all stakeholders with a high degree of objectivity and transparency.
6. The difficulty to implement the projects are hierarchy by the development level, causing lack of participation and consultation with the population, especially in higher levels than in the site and action plans.
7. Projects have to be able to adapt to local community needs to have the chance to be in the real site. Especially those project that providing and improving housing, infrastructure and services for growing populations.

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