HOUSING FOR THE LOW INCOME GROUPS IN GREATER CAIRO: AN INTERPRETATION OF POLANYI’S MODES OF ECONOMIC INTEGRATION

Doaa Abouelmagd

COSMOPOLIS - City, Culture & Society, Vrije Universiteit Brussel.
Institute for Social & Economic Geography, Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences (EES).
Katholieke Universiteit Leuven
dabouelm@vub.ac.be

ABSTRACT:
This paper compares the different relations and survival strategies the inhabitants use in two urban districts in Greater Cairo (GC), Mubarak youth housing project (MYHP) - the main national housing program between 1995 and 2005- in Zaied city, and the informal area of Manshiet Nasser. The comparison aims to analyze the different relations the individuals use to reach the different means of existence. The paper applies the three modes of economic integration driven from Karl Polanyi work (1944): reciprocity, redistribution and market exchange, with a special concentration on the different assets the individuals use to survive.

KEY WORDS:
Public Housing, Informal Areas, Poor Neighbourhoods, Means of Existence, Greater Cairo.

1 Draft version, not to be quoted.
INTRODUCTION

Egypt consists of 26 Governorates; Cairo is one of those Governorates and Greater Cairo (GC) - up till the recent revolution- consisted of the governorate of Cairo, the governorate of Giza, Shubra el Kheima City in the governorate of Qallobeya and part of the governorates of Helwan and October. In 2006, the total land area of GC is approximately four hundred km2 with a total population of 16 million (CAPMAS 2006 quoted in JICA, MOHUUD, and GOPP 2008). The Egyptian Human Development Report EHDR (2005) argues that the percentage of the inhabitants living under the national poverty line in the metropolitan area is 5.7% of the population. In 2008, this number does not reflect the number of people living in informal districts of GC which is estimated at 6,465,905 inhabitants, as 40% of the total GC population. The EHDR (2005) illustrated another poverty concept ‘Subjective poverty’. This concept is more relevant with 42.5% of the GC inhabitants considering themselves as poor (EHDR 2005:50 and CAPMAS 2008a).

Up till the recent political revolutionary events, the Egyptian government has been the main founder for the Public Housing (PH) and Public Housing Policies in the last 60 years. In reality, the PH projects were neither sufficient nor appropriate for housing the low income classes of Greater Cairo (GC). Many PH are socially mixed (Upper middle class, middle class and poor). Furthermore, most of the new Public Housing projects suffer from low occupation rates.

This paper uses the three spheres of economic integration driven from Karl Polanyi work and the concept of ‘survival strategies’ to analyze two different neighbourhoods in GC; the informal settlement of Manshiet Nasser and the Public Housing project in Zaied city. It shows the ability of each district to provide the economic integration of its inhabitants, and their ability to access to the socio-economic resource necessarily for their survival.
PART 1: THEORITICAL PART

MODES OF ECONOMIC INTEGRATION (MEI) FOR POLANYI

Through his review of the history of the mankind, Polanyi (1944) distinguished three different relations people engaged with in order to access the different means of existence. These relations were latterly called the modes of economic integration consisting of reciprocity, redistribution and market exchange. In present days the three spheres of economic integration are related to the ranking position of individuals in the social network, and the relation with the welfare state and participation in the labour market. The spheres show how individuals and sometimes the societies are integrated economically, culturally, socially and politically (Musterd and Murie 2006: 7).

Individuals use these three spheres to access different socio-economic resources necessarily to have a decent living. In many cases, the modes of economic integration are used by disadvantages to reach the minimum level of survival. Most of these resources are not produced directly by the households, but by producers engaged in the economic system (Kesteloot 2002). The three spheres are connected together not separated, the dominance of one of the sphere does not mean the disappearance of the others. Musterd, Murie and Kesteloot (2006) argue that in western societies access to resources is dominated by market exchange via the formal market. Households try to get positions in the labour market to earn income. But, that the access is unequal and verifies on the strength individuals have. Examples are the level of education and social skills. In most developing countries, opportunities in the formal market are very limited and the informal labour market dominates the market sphere. But Inequalities also exist and in general it dominates the market sphere in both developing and developed countries. This inequality is compensated by state intervention especially in what Polanyi (1944) called the fictitious goods of labour, money and land. Finally, reciprocity implies the exchange of resource between the members of a certain network. This last mode of economic integration enlarges in the developing countries and in the deprived neighbourhoods. When the other spheres shrink, the low income groups compensate them with social relations and mutual help. (Musterd and Murie 2006: 7).

MARKET EXCHANGE

Harvey (1973) indicated that it is important to distinguish Market Exchange as a mode of economic integration from Trade and Exchange, which can occur under reciprocity and redistribution (Harvey. D 1973). The market exchange sphere refers to economic structure of world economy, but it divers in the metropolitan level according to different economic histories of each place and the capability of each city to attract new businesses. (Musterd and Murie 2006: 7). Although, Market- Exchange sphere operates on an urban regional level, in the developing countries, it operates also in the neighbourhood level. In most of developing countries, the informal labour market is connected to the informal settlements. Those informal settlements attract the low- income groups to live and work there where they can develop a product these individuals can sell. In general individuals develop a social utility or labour product, which they can sell in the market according to special division of labour. Market exchange generates winners and losers, according to the production choices and productivity levels. Market exchange is accompanied with stratification and unequal access to resources. Winners end-up commanding the means of productions while others can only sell their time and labour force. Wages
are the rewards they got when they succeed in selling their labour skills and working time. (Kesteloot 2002)

REDISTRIBUTION
Each state appropriates part of the resources under the forms of taxes and social security contributions. In order to provide collective resources and an access to individual resources for people who lost their ability to sell their labour skills in the market. Redistribution refers to the welfare mode. In Europe, the welfare state was developed since the end of the 19th century. Different typology of welfare states has been developed. The redistribution is dominating in the social- democratic welfare state model. The liberal welfare state emphasises market exchange and the family oriented types which has been based on reciprocity. (Musterd and Murie 2006: 9). In the developing countries the welfare state is weak. Although the redistribution of the welfare dominate most of the social-economic plans but the application of the system does not satisfy the needs of the individuals, Consequently, it is compensated with the reciprocity sphere.

RECIPROCITY
Harvey tells ‘Reciprocity involves the transfer of goods, favors and services among individuals in a given group according to certain well defined social customs’ (Harvey.D 1973) but an economy dominated by reciprocity cannot sustain urbanism. (Harvey.D 1973)

Reciprocity mainly works in the neighbourhood level. This sphere of integration is strongly affected by the type of the social groups who occupy each neighbourhood. It helps people to obtain resources through mutual exchange, and implies the capacity to produce some resources or provide a service, and depend on the social network. A balance between the input and the output should be respected and the failure of achieving that balance would lead to the expulsion from the network. Most clear examples of social networks are the household, the extended family and the ethnic networks (Musterd and Murie 2006: 8).

[fig. 1] Spheres of economic integration and access condition, source: Kesteloot (2010) course of Urban Spatial Structures and Social change, KULeuven.
SURVIVAL STRATEGIES
The concept of survival strategies (SS) has been discussed largely in literature from the micro-economic level approach (Meert.H, Mistian.P, Kesteloot.C 1997), from a social capital approach (Richards.P, Roberts.B 1998), from feminism and liberalization approach (Lingam 2005), and from anthropological approach (Rosas 2002).

In general the SS could be defined as: the different strategies and techniques household or individual uses to reduce vulnerability and to face economic transitions. Those strategies and techniques are dynamics and differ from a household/individual to other and can be changed and developed by time. Survival strategies can be economic and/or social individual or collaborative acts.

Gonzalez de La Rocha (2007) criticized the use of SS as an alternative to the macro-economic policy for the poor. She studied the hypothesis that the poor can survive under the different economical stress by their ability to develop their ‘survival strategies’ in order to reduce poverty. She concluded that it is a myth. She also criticized the fairytale of the resourcefulness of the poor: their endless ability to work, their ability to consume less and being part of mutual networks. She added that the resources in the hand of the poor are plentiful: both tangible and intangible including material, human and social resource. She called for a shift from ‘resources of poverty’ to ‘poverty of resources’. ‘Poverty of resources’ as she says is the outcome of labor exclusion and poverty intensification and it signals the erosion of the social and economic conditions for survival (Gonzalez de La Rocha, 2007) this critique was also supported by Lingam (2005) who said that survival strategies cannot be a substitute for equitable macro-economic policies. Survival strategies can only be used when the household/individual has a minimum level of income. When the vulnerability increases the use of the strategies become more difficult (Lingam 2005).

SS IN TERMS OF SPHERES OF ECONOMIC INTEGRATION
The survival strategies can be categorized within the three modes of economic integration. In the redistribution sphere the low income groups apply for social aids or exceptional pension and receive help from the redistributive associations. In the Market Exchange sphere the low income groups practice activities related to money and employment seeking to increase their income. For example, these individuals are working in the informal market, having more than one job, having more than member working, sometimes the female members and the children and sub-renting their houses. Finally, in the reciprocity sphere these individuals find mutual help dominates this sphere, specially between ethnic communities and communities and specially when having a kin relation or come from the same origin (Meert.H, Mistian.P, Kesteloot.K 1997).

HOW DO THE POOR RESPOND TO VULNERABILITY AND POVERTY
In her work on four urban communities; Moser (1996) looked on how the poor face harsh conditions and what strategies they adopt under the economic stress to limit the impact of transitions and generate additional resources (Moser 1996:1). Moser (1996) developed a simple classification of assets both tangible and intangible: labor, human capital, housing (a productive asset), household relations and social capital. She argues that the ability of households to avoid or reduce vulnerability and to increase economic productivity depends not only on their initial assets but also on their ability to transform those assets into income, food, or other basic necessities (Moser 1996:2). Moser classification of assets can explain why the poor prefer to live in a certain district rather than other; the poor prefer to live in a place where they are able to transfer their assets into income and where they are able to survive.
ASSETS

LABOUR
Changing in the labor market has been a major source of vulnerability; the restructuring in the formal sector, privatization and the competition in the informal market led to decrease in the household income. That led to different strategies to face and reduce vulnerability. Women are joining the labor force and often working in petty trade and services in the informal sectors. Mobilizing labors by travelling to work abroad. Children have also joined the labor force. They often work in hidden and informal sectors. While, the male members tend to earn money more females assist indirectly by taking care of household responsibilities including childcare (Moser 1996:4, 5). Work is the fundamental strategy to overcome poverty. The poorest householders had to send more of their members out to work to sustain the same level of living. Entering more household members into the workforce is the main survival strategy of the urban poor. (Roses 2002: 98, Lingam 2005: 8, Hossain 2005:4)

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC INFRASTRUCTURE
Economic and social infrastructure includes the social services, services that able people to gain skills and knowledge like education and healthcare, infrastructure like water, transport and electricity (Moser 1996: 38). Moser argues that social and economic infrastructure makes a crucial difference in the ability of the urban poor to overcome poverty and vulnerability. While social services such education ensure that people gain skills and knowledge, economic infrastructure such as water, transport, electricity and healthcare insure that the poor can use their skills and knowledge effectively. Access to service has deteriorated because the poor often spend more time to meet the daily needs and allow them to pay extra cost of living to get these services (Moser 1996: 6, 7, 40).

HOUSING
According to Moser (1996) when the poor are having a secure ownership of their housing (the importance of the legal tenure), they often use this asset as a resource when other sources of income are diminished or reduced (Moser 1996:7, 44). Examples are renting, sub-renting and home-based-enterprises.

HOUSEHOLD RELATIONS
One of the strategies the poor use to face poverty is changing the household structure. This includes families headed by women, integrate ‘hidden’ female heads where women are pooling different incomes and sharing responsibility to care for children and elderly. Another strategy is splitting households allowing individuals to migrate and take advantage of any economic opportunities elsewhere. Furthermore, the strategy of densification become apparent by allowing other family members to construct homes on their plots, and increase the number of members joining the labor market. The main factors that change the new restructuring increase or decrease vulnerability are the financial and labor contribution of the new members (Moser 1996:7, 8, 48, 51, 52). In some cases, the number of extended families increase and number of original families decreased after marriage (Moser 1996: 50 and Gonzalez de La Rocha, 2007).

SOCIAL CAPITAL
The concept of social capital has been discussed largely by Bourdieu, Putnam, Lingam among others. Social capital is defined as ‘rules, norms, obligations and reciprocity embedded in social relations, social structures, and society’s institutional arrangements which enable its members to achieve their
individual and community objectives’ (Hossain 2005:3). Richards.P, Roberts.B (19998) argues that this concept is used to explain how relationships between individuals can provide access to resources that benefit both individuals and groups, social capital can be destroyed if social relation are not maintained (Richards.P, Roberts.B 1998: 6)

when communities become poorer, their stock of social capital can erode, making it more difficult for them to cope with problems of the declining of public services, this can be explained each household focuses on the survival of his/her own family rather support community (Moser 1996: 11, 61). The reciprocal relationship and social networks are stronger between rural-urban and ethnic communities. This can explain the strong social networks in some of the informal areas in Greater Cairo where the kin relation is very strong and the reciprocity networks are very important in compensating the absences of the state.

POLITICAL CAPITAL
Hossain (2005) added another asset which is closely linked to social capital; the Political capital. She argues, it is based on access to the political process and decision-making and seen as the gatekeeper asset, permitting or preventing the accumulation of other assets (Hossain 2005:3). In most developing countries, the political capital is important in the housing provision system and the social and economic development of the squatter settlements. Many developing projects consider political decisions or are used as apolitical toll during elections. The political capital is located in the generic framework of the assets.

HUMAN CAPITAL
This asset includes health status which determines people’s capacity to work, acquire skills and education. This health status determines their return to the labor force (Moser 1996: 24). The DFID (1999) define this concept as following ‘Human capital represents the skills, knowledge, ability to labour and good health that together enable people to pursue different livelihood strategies and achieve their livelihood objectives. At a household level human capital is a factor of the amount and quality of labour available; this varies according to household size, skill levels, leadership potential, health status, etc.’ (DFID 1999). The human capital considers the outcome of other assets and is located also in a generic framework.

PART 2

METHODOLOGY OF THE RESEARCH
This paper is based on the fieldwork conducted by the author with four case studies between 15 August and 19 October 2010. In this paper the results of two cases are presented. A sample of 30 interviewees in each district was conducted. The interview was performed in three segments: questioner concerning living in the area, questioner concerning the different assets used by the individuals/ the households, and questioner concerning the evolution of each area. The main objective of choosing the following case studies is to compare between the assets and survival strategies the individual use in terms of the three spheres of economic integration to reach the needed social-economic integration. Table 1 illustrates the different themes asked by the author in terms of spheres of economic integration.
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PART 3

The two chosen case studies represent together extend examples of the Egyptian housing policies in the last 60 years. MYHP in Zaied is one of the new PH forms, experiencing the policy of beneficiaries’ ownership which was applied since the 1980s. This project as all the new PH is located in new towns. And it is a representation of the future of the coming PH projects. Manshiet Nasser is an informal area. The area had been growing in a fast manner presenting an alternative housing to the low income families and the poor. It is important to understand the effect of such projects on the households. This research is comparing the two districts to understand the different relations the individuals use to survive.

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<th>Market exchange</th>
<th>Redistribution</th>
<th>Reciprocity</th>
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<td>- Medical services</td>
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<td>- Informal labor market</td>
<td>- Schools</td>
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<td>- Quality of infrastructure</td>
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[Table 1] The assets in terms of spheres of economic integration

[fig. 2] the different assets in terms of economic integration
CASE STUDY 1 – MYHP

INTRODUCTION TO MYHP

Mubarak Youth Housing Project (MYHP) - known also as the youth housing - was the main government subsidized housing program in Egypt till 2005. Since its beginning in 1995, over 80,000 units have been built by the Agency for Youth Housing under the New Urban Community Authority (NUCA), almost all in new towns. The program is distinguishable by the ‘attractive façade’ (see figure 4) and the low monthly instalments. It targeted the low income family and the youth (Sims, 2007: 10-15). Despite the fact that all the MYHP in Zaied are sold to the beneficiaries under a monthly instalment over 30 years, the 11 years old project suffers from a low occupation rate. Some buildings does not exceed 50% occupancy rate. Reasons include troubles lack of public transportation, lack of services, high cost of living comparing with other parts of GC, and in some cases, the beneficiaries buy the dwellings as a future investment.

[fig. 3] The location of the case studies, MYHP in Zaied and Manshiet Nasser source modified from JICA, MOHUUD, GOPP 2008.
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[fig. 4] MYHP in Zaied, source: photo by the researcher

ASSETS FOR MYHP

LABOUR-MYHP
Zaied city was designed as a residential city; whereas, other new cities like October and 10th of Ramadan have industrial zones not available on Zaied. Accordingly, the only employment opportunities in the city are: starting a commercial activity, working in the service sector, or working in the construction services.

During the field work the interviewees were categorized under three categories: the first type was in the service and commercial sectors in city operating commercial units and others were working with the authority. The second type involved workers who commute either to Cairo or October city to perform work. Finally, the last type is housewives who in few cases are working from home, or in one case a high school student, and in another case a handicap who does not work.

A comparison between living in Cairo and Zaied showed that Zaied does not give the opportunity to have a second job which is necessary in present time to accommodate today’s economic conditions. Furthermore, the authority is strict on second job opportunities there are very few jobs in the informal market. Within the 30 interviews conducted by the author there were only two interviewees who work in the informal market.

WORK OPPORTUNITIES IN MYHP- COMMERCIAL
The city’s authority has used two systems to run the commercial shops (see figure 5) which are located in the MYHP, the current system is the renting system for 10 years of rent and the previous system was the ownership system.
Most of the renters face difficulties to operate their shops due to the low occupancy rate in the district and/or the competition. Many shops are not capable of paying the monthly instalments. Moreover, the renter faces many administrative obstacles to get the needed license for operating the shops.

2 The authority used a public sale for renting and selling the commercial units.
An interviewee who owns a dry clean in the MYHP since 2004 explained why he chose to open a dry clean: he said ‘the occupation rate in MYHP is not high, I wanted to open a shop which does not have goods that can spoiled, I also did not want to go to Cairo to buy goods or to be in such a situation that someone ask me for something that I do not have’. He added that what encourage him to continue doing business and not close his shop is that he has another source of income. Therefore, it is helping him to survive and keep his shop opened.

WORK OPPORTUNITIES IN MYHP- SELF EMPLOYMENT
Two interviewees who are housewives are working in order to support their families thus helping in easing the financial difficulties they encounter. One of the interviewees works as an unofficial broker in the real-estate market in low income housing. She linked her needs to job opportunities in order to support her family and to face the financial conditions since they moved to the MYHP. The cost of the public transportsations for her three daughters and the high prices of the food forced her to find work. She said: ‘I did not need to work when I was living in El-Azbaa, but I had to work since I moved to live here. My husband earns 600 EP/month from his job. I can say that his job pays for the cost of my daughters’ pocket money. I become happy when my daughters take days-off to decrease our daily expenses. Here in Zaied there are not enough vocational high schools. The nearest schools are located in October city or in Haraam Street in GC. Two of my daughters need 20 EP/each day to go to their schools and the youngest needs 2 pounds and I need another 20 pounds for cooking. So how am I suppose to get 42 pounds a day without working?’ . She added that when she first moved to the MYHP, she used to do her shopping in Cairo. She used to buy more vegetables and fruits and sells them on the street in order to cover the cost of her trip to Cairo’s markets. Now, she works in the real estate market by renting flats in MYHP and the economical housing, her costumers are mostly workers and labours.

Another interviewee works from home. She cooks hot meals, prepares sweets and bakery and sells her products to people in the area. The main reason of why she works is to support her family. She has five children and her husband is a vocational labour who works in a different city, October City.

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3 El-Azbaa is azbeet welad alaam one of the informal settlements which is located in the governorate of Giza in GC.
SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC INFRASTRUCTURE- MYHP

Services are mainly offered by the city. The original design of MYHP contains services that are neither constructed nor completed yet. Many interviewees complained about the administration location of these services. The complaints included the availability of the markets and the existence of the transportation system. In many cases, the interviewees explained that their daily expenditure increased soon after moving to the new location of the project. It shows poor planning and weak project management.

The number of complaints regarding services and transportations increased particularly when the interviewee’s or partner (i.e. wife or husband) does not have a private car. Fifty percent from the sample do not have a car and usually depend on public transportation. Although, the services and the infrastructure are available in the city, it cannot be considered as an asset in helping low income families to survive.

[fig. 6] Layout of district number one, neighbourhood number 13. A mosque and a commercial centre are the only services constructed from. Source of the map: Zaied authority.

[fig. 7 - 8] Satellite image showing empty spot where services should be located, source: Google earth and actual photo, photo by the researcher.
HOUSING – MYHP
Out of 30 interviewees, 28 own a residential or a commercial unit in MYHP; all the residential units have a living area of 70 m\(^2\). Among the 30 interviewees only one interviewee has a home-based-enterprise, as explained before.

Also, many original owners, who do not live in their dwelling units, are renting out their units using a new renting law system. One of the interviewees answered the question of how the residences can make use of their residential units. He said: ‘the only way to make use of the units is by renting them out, many of those who used to close their units started to rent them to new tenants, using the new rent law’. Therefore, this is the only methods of using the housing as an asset, even though the house in this case is an asset to the one who is lives in the original city of residence.

In addition, residents try to maximize the use of their units. All the interviewees who live in the ground floor added a balcony to the living area or are planning to do so. Other interviewees said that they may also divide the living room into two living areas. An interviewee and said: ‘Some people divide the living room in two areas with a divider and others enclose a balcony. These actions are done in order to increase the area of the unit.’

All the interviewees agreed that the cost of electricity, gas and water is reasonable and it depend on the consumption of each user, and there is no extra cost in receiving these services.

One of the main reasons why residents do not use their housing as an asset is the authority. Local government authority strongly prohibits the use of residential units in seating businesses. Switching residential units to commercial or vocational use will be subject to paying a fine and may end up in the court.

HOUSEHOLDS’ RELATIONS-MYHP
The sample of the 29 interviewees shows that almost all households have one head of the family. As in all the cases it is the man in the family. Only in one case the household head is a widow. In 6 cases there are two working members in the family. And in one case the interviewee is a student who helps his father who operates a shop. For the rest there is only one working member in the family. Household as an asset is not strong in MYHP. Reasons differ between the difficulties to find jobs and the absence of the informal market.

SOCIAL CAPITAL –MYHP
The MYHP is a ten years old project. Normally, the neighbourhood social relations should have been established and became strong and stable. The facts that the occupancy rate remains low with many renters stay only few months and then move somewhere else. And finally, the diverse social backgrounds of these residences, lead to weakness and instability of the social ties.

One of the interviewees explained his view about the development of the social relation in the MYHP and compared them with the informal areas. He said: ‘In the beginning we did not know each other and by time our social relations become stronger. But overall, the social relations here are less than the popular and the informal areas in Cairo’

Another interviewee explained her view about the social relations. According to her there is a barrier in establishing strong social relations. She said: ‘The MYHP has a critical weakness, it is a subsidized project and you can find different social classes here. You can find yourself living in the same
Building with people from different backgrounds who act in different behaviours and have different attitudes. The housing authority did not care to rent to the same class of people with the same background.

The interviewees were asked if they relied on the informal credits arrangements such as borrowing from friends or from informal lenders. These informal credit arrangements include informal arrangements with doctors, getting goods from vendors and paying with an instalment system or paying after a certain time period. All interviewees agreed that these kinds of informal credits do not exist in MYHP.

In one case, an interviewee mentioned an informal arrangement with the residents to overcome the lack of the established shops and the markets in the neighbourhood and the city. In the beginning of the project and before the construction of the mosque of the district number four, the residences of MYHP used to pray on an entrance of one of the building as a temporary place of pray, two of the workers who pray used to write down the needs of the residents. They used to go to the market in a different city, October City on a weekly basis to buy vegetables and fruits for the residents. Although, this method worked only for few months, during this period the residents used to get cheap and fresh goods compared with goods the buy by themselves.
PART 4

CASE STUDY 2 – MANSHIET NASSER

INTRODUCTION TO MANSHIET NASSER

Manshiet Nasser is the largest squatter/informal settlement in GC. It is lying in an area of about 850 acres with a gross residential density more than 400 persons/acre (MOH 2001:2). The history of the squatter area goes back to the 1960s when the first settlement was founded. Before that time, the area was considered an abandoned area with the reputation of attracting refugee of criminals. The squatter area has been growing very fast since its foundation. Although the official statistic indicate the population was two hundreds sixty two thousand fifty (262050) inhabitants in 2006 (CAPMAS 2008b). Other scholars estimate that it is the home of more than half million inhabitants (Gerlach. J 2009:49, Sims 2009 in Howeidy.A 2009:181). During the 1990s and the 2000s the area was the location of several development pilot projects. Examples of these developments are the GTZ and PDP in Ezbet Bekhit and Suzan Mubarak pilot project in Deweka. The area cannot be considered one homogeneous entity. In general, the urban and social conditions are decreasing when you roll into the area or go up the hill.

[fig. 9] Inner Street in Manshiet Nasser, source: photo by the researcher

ASSETS FOR MANSHIET NASSER

LABOUR- MANSHIET NASSER

The location of Manshiet Nasser, the numbers of workshops located in the districts and the absence of the state control, are the main factors which create job opportunities. The interviewees claimed that in many cases the residents have more than one job which one of them at least is located in or near the area. The location considers the main advantage to live in the area. The interviewees explained that it is easy to walk to the bazaar of Khan El Khalili, Bab El- Shee’reyah, Darasaa. The residents can

4 GTZ: Deutsche Gesellschaft Fur Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ)
PDP: Participatory Development program in urban areas a cooperative project between German Financial Technical Cooperation KFW development bank and GTZ.
easily reach the Downtown, Attaba and Moskie. These districts contain important commercial and vocational nodes to GC.

THE FEEDER INDUSTRIES AND THE WORKSHOPS

The location of Manshiet Nasser is in a walking distance to the main commercial, vocational nodes of Cairo. Besides, the feeder industries located in the area are considered the gateway to the labour market. The feeder industries are defined as partial or complete products which are produced by workshops for the bazaar of Khan El Khakili. Examples of these products are Jellalib\(^5\), buttons, accessories of the furniture, copper and aluminium products. An interviewee explained the importance of the location, he said: ‘The location of Manshiet Nasser has an advantage for the labours as it is near from the jobs locations avoiding us taking any transportation. I can walk to my work, and if I need to go to Bab El-Sheeria or Hussein\(^6\) I can get there walking. Moving out of this convenient location will be difficult’.

The area provides opportunities of working either from home, in a workshop or in a production unit of civil organizations or charitable associations\(^7\). A vocation is taught to the disadvantage, orphan, and the needed persons in those production units. Furthermore, the help in marketing these products is provided. Examples of vocational training are making soap, postal cards, sewing. An interviewee said: ‘My son works in the production unit in Bedaya\(^8\). He makes cards and earns 120-200 pounds each month. We use the money to pay for both him and his brother school groups expenses\(^9\)’. Residents who work from home perform simple manual works such as packing, sewing and embroidery. An interviewee explained and said: ‘Many people work from home. This phenomenon has been growing recently. We\(^10\) do that ourselves. We have a neighbour who has a factory for abayat\(^11\) and my sisters and I do the embroidery, even my little sister is helping. Many people do that but not everyone can do embroidery. Other work is in packaging of chewing gum or packing nails as there are two nails factories in the area’.

Workshops provide work opportunities to both adults and children. The interviewees claimed that there is a high percentage of dropping out of schools. Many children are working in the workshops either as a permanent job or during the summer. Only one interviewee claimed that the work opportunities in the workshops are limited and with the current economical condition limit the numbers of the job opportunities in workshops. He said: ‘The work opportunities here are limited. If someone has a workshop, he works with his children or with a maximum of 4 workers’.

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\(^5\) Men traditional wear  
\(^6\) Bab El-Sheeria and Hussein are two popular districts in Cairo.  
\(^7\) In October 2010 the researcher has interviewed Madam Lobna Abd-Elaziz Chargé d’affaires of the head of department of the NGOs in Manshiet Nasser – Ministry of social solidarity. According to her in total there are 68 NGOs, most of them are charitable associations. Most of those organizations were founded in 2002 and 2001 and after the fall of the Deweka rock in 2008  
\(^8\) Civil organization  
\(^9\) The school groups are an official system where the student can take extra classes in one or more subject.  
\(^10\) The interviewee and her family  
\(^11\) women dresses
SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC INFRASTRUCTURE-MANSHIET NASSER

In addition to the development and growing of the area, services and infrastructure have been progressing. As a fact, till the 1980s the basic social and economical services and infrastructure were limited and the residences of Manshiet Nasser were mostly dependant on the markets, medical services, educational services from the neighbouring districts. A police station was only founded in 1992 and before that time the local inhabitants were responsible about the security of the area.

Although during the last 50 years services and infrastructure have been developing. But most of the interviewees argue that the improvement is very slow. This could be explained by the age of the interviewees who most of them are in their twentieth and thirtieth and were born in the area. They did not live the conditions of the 1960th and 1970th. Another reason could be comparison between the situations on Manshiet Nasser with other formal districts in Cairo.

From the survey observation of Manshiet Nasser in 2010, there is still lack of medical and educational services. The situation in Deweka is much worse in numbers of services, quality, and availability of services and infrastructure as compared with other parts of Manshiet Nasser.

HOUSING-MANSHIET NASSER

The ability of using housing as an asset is very important to the residents in order to be able to survive. The house is also used as a production unit. Furthermore, it is used as a place to raise the chickens, goats some animals to produce a source of income (see figures 10 and 11). Sub-renting and living with the extended family is another form of using the house as an asset.

According to Sanaa Tuba an activist who works in the area since 2000 said ‘Many women use their houses as production unit, for example they do sewing, embroidery or even open a window and sell sandwich among other things. In other cases, they sell vegetables on the streets. The labour market in Manshiet Nasser is almost 100% informal and most of the workshops perform in the informal market. She added that after the fall of the rock in 2008 many inhabitants were evacuated and resettled in the district of Nahda. People in Nahda tried to create informal economy like the one they had in Manshiet Nasser with hoping not to be caught by the local government or the state. They do that to be able to find a source of income and be able to survive’.

The interviewees gave many examples about simple manual jobs they perform such as packing, sewing and embroidery. An interviewee said: ‘I used to make blankets and get 70 piaster for each. I was also packing nails in small bags, putting every 60 nails in a small plastic bag to be sold’. Another interviewee said: ‘Most of the residents of Mansheya are daily labours, small merchants and do not have a stable income. Many persons work from home making handmade carpets, handicrafts, rosary, sewing reel and frames for Quran verses’.

12 Mansheya is the name given by the local residence to the lower part of Manshiet Nasser.
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HOUSEHOLD RELATIONS- MANSHIEt NASSER

The sample of the 30 interviewees showed that in 11 cases the bread earner is not the man. In seven cases, the household is headed by women. In two cases there are hidden female heads and in two cases the main bread earner are children who work in the informal market. Households’ relations among its members are considered an important asset for the survival of Manshiet Nasser inhabitants. In 18 cases there are more than one member of the family working and sometimes more than one job.

SOCIAL CAPITAL - MANSHIEt NASSER

Almost all the interviewees have a relative who live in the area. That relative is a first or second degree relative. The social relation is considered an important asset. It exceeds the relatives to the co-villagers and the neighbours. The social fabric in the informal settlement of Manshiet Nasser is an important asset and a critical factor for which the inhabitants to survive. Sanaa Tuba explained this and said: ‘In the formal areas the social fabric is a social and a sociological need, but in the informal areas is it a necessity of life. People relay on each other either in their sorrow or happiness. If you remove them in a formal housing without taking into consideration the importance of the social fabric, they will not be able to live’.

The importance of the social fabric clearly appears in the daily life of people and in their sorrow and happiness occasions. Examples from the social fabrics among are: childcare, cooking, borrowing money, food, tools and clothes.

Weddings and funerals are perfect examples where everyone is complementing and helping (see figure 12). It is done physically, financially or morally. In emergency cases like fire or even a sad event like the fall of the rock of Deweka, all neighbours offered their help even before the arrival of the officials. It is important to note that many residents came from the same village/ town and provided moral support to their co-villagers.

An interviewee made a comparison between his friends in Mansheya and in Abaseya13. He said: ‘When I compare between friends, I can tell you that in Abaseya they are physicians, engineers and employees. Here where I live they are vocational workers. The social relation here is very strong and

13 A middle class neighbourhood in Cairo, located near from Manshiet Nasser
if they do not see me for one day they always call and ask how am I doing. In addition if someone living in the front of my street is in need of something the one at the end of the street will ask him if he is ok.’

[fig. 12] Preparation for a wedding in Manshiet Nasser, Photo by the researcher.

The interviewees were asked if they relied on the informal credits arrangements like borrowing from friends, borrowing from informal lenders, having any informal arrangements with doctors, getting goods from vendors and paying with an instalment system or paying after a certain period time. They claimed that the two main common issues which are common on the districts are buying under the instalment system and engaged with a financing method called elgame’eyat.14

PART 5

CONCLUSION

SURVIVAL STRATEGIES AND ASSETS IN TERMS OF SPHERES OF ECONOMIC INTEGRATION

Under the two cases studies in this research, two types of redistribution can be defined, the state redistribution (i.e. the Public Housing as a housing provision system, the social- economic infrastructure and services), and the redistributive services from the charity organizations and associations. Although Manshet Nasser is where many projects are developed, the area suffers from lack of the social- economic infrastructure and services. The residents use means of the public transportation located outside the district. Furthermore, there are a high numbers of charity organizations known to work with the disadvantage in the informal settlements. Although the social-economic infrastructure and services are available in MYHP, the interviewees complained about the

El-gme’eyaa (the single of game’eyat) is an informal saving arrangement between a defined group of people. Each person pays an earlier defined amount of money every certain period for a previously defined period. One member of this group receives the total collected money after every cycle of collection. The total numbers of the cycles is equal to the group’s members. In Manshiet Nasser the Gamaia is normally done in a daily base. Each member pays 2 Pounds and receives 100 pounds during 50 days.
lack of charity organizations participation in the neighbourhood. Furthermore, the quality of the medical services and the accessibility to public transportation remains a huge challenge (see figures 15, 16 and 17).

In the Market exchange sphere, a comparison between Manshiet Nasser and MYHP provides chances for its inhabitants to join the informal labour market in or near the informal settlement. Most of interviewees have a second job (see figure 18, 19 and 20). Many members of the household join the labour market. Moreover, the house is used as an asset (i.e. sub-renting, home enterprises). This is not the case of the MYHP were most of the interviewees has one or two members of the household working in the formal market. This research documented the use of the house as an asset only once, this where the interviewee is preparing food at home for sale.

Finally, in the reciprocity sphere, the mutual help and social relations are an important asset to survive in Manshiet Nasser. The residents rely and on support each other. The nature of kin-relations strength on the social relations, contrary to this style of living, the social fabric is very weak in MYHP and most of the interviewees said that they hardly know their neighbours (see figures 21, 22).

[fig. 1] Spheres of economic integration in Zaied
Note: the size of the spheres indicates relative importance. Market and redistribution spheres are smaller than the size of the redistribution sphere.
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[fig. 14] Spheres of economic integration in Manshiet Nasser. The redistribution sphere is smaller than the other two spheres.

[fig. 15] The availability and quality of the medical services

[fig. 16] The availability and quality of the schools
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[fig. 17] The mean of transportation

[fig. 18] Location of the first job

[fig. 19] Location of the second job

N/A not applicable
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[fig. 20] Figure 20: the result of the question Is the head of the family working in the informal market?

[fig. 21] Figure 21: the relations with the neighbours

[fig. 22] Reliance on relatives
FINDINGS

The spatial dimension of the survival strategies differ between the inner city squatter settlement and the PH project in the periphery. Access to redistribution in the periphery is connected to the nature of the PH as a redistribution project. The social and economic infrastructure exists in the level of the city. This is met with the absence of the charity redistributive organizations and the services in the neighbourhood level. In the informal settlements the redistribution sphere is related to the high presence of the civil organizations and charitable associations and the nature of the area as location to many developing projects. The contrary tendency is found in the other two spheres. For the main and basic needs like food, durable goods, services and job opportunities; the centred located informal area provides higher access to the market exchange sphere. The reciprocity sphere is also higher in the squatter settlements due to the strong relations. In Manshiet Nasser, The households and individual compensate the absence of the state redistribution services with the other two spheres to reach the assets they needs to survive. It can be said that the disadvantage prefer to live in a location where he/she can access the different means of existence.
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