

THE ROLE OF THE FOREIGN PLANNING CONSULTANT:

A CASE STUDY OF  
HOUSING IN TENTH OF RAMADAN

by

MARY JANE DALY LUCHETTI

B.A., University of Massachusetts, Boston  
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To my husband  
whose contribution is unsung  
but immeasurable

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ABSTRACT:

Tenth of Ramadan is the first of several Egyptian industrial new towns in the desert. Field research was conducted in Egypt with government officials involved in the project and in Sweden with planning consultants responsible in part for its planning. Focusing on the issue of housing, this study examines the contrasts between the current situation and what was planned between 1976 and 1978 in terms of the foreign planning consultant's role. Aimed at showing the planners' perception of the nature of their involvement in the project throughout its course, this case study purposes to provide insights useful in general application to the field of international planning practice.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Preface . . . . .	7
Background. . . . .	9
Introduction. . . . .	14
Chapter:	
I. Overview of Proposed Housing Program . . .	15
II. Overview of Status of Housing: 1982 . . .	19
Public Construction of Housing (20)	
Private Construction of Housing (26)	
Population and Housing Stock (35)	
III. Conclusion. . . . .	68
Bibliography . . . . .	83

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
1. Place of Resident According to Sector of Employment . . . . .	39
2. Persons Working in Tenth of Ramadan by Yearly Income (Percent) 1982 . . . . .	39
3. Household Income Distribution in Tenth of Ramadan . . . . .	42
4. Characteristics of the housing proposed for the first phase . . . . .	54
5. Summary of housing construction in Tenth of Ramadan, Spring 1982 . . . . .	55
6. Currently Planned Housing Construction . . . . .	56

## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Figure	Page
1. Number of households moving to Tenth of Ramadan per year . . . . .	22 .
2. Assumed housing construction program for Tenth of Ramadan . . . . .	22
3. Assumed conditions for loans for different types of housing to be developed by year 0-5 (interest rate in the Private Market - 7 percent) . . . . .	44
4. Affordable housing size per household years 0-5. . . . .	49
5. Main characteristics of the existing housing financing system in Egypt . . . . .	63
6. Housing 1982 - for neighborhoods in Tenth of Ramadan . . . . .	67

## PREFACE

This thesis is the result of nine weeks of field research conducted in Egypt during the summer of 1982 with an Egyptian colleague, Hoda Sakr, Ph.D. candidate in Urban Studies and Planning, M.I.T., and in Sweden in February, 1983. Research involved an investigation of the first Egyptian Industrial New Town, Tenth of Ramadan, from two perspectives: the planning and implementation of the project; and the adjustment to life in the new town by the initial resident population. Information on the implementation process was sought in interviews conducted by my colleague with Egyptian government officials involved in implementation. The issues of planning and implementation were addressed in interviews that I made with several members of the Swedish planning team. Three weeks were spent living in the new town, during which time I conducted a visual documentation of its physical development, noting the extent and nature of commercial and industrial development and attempting, ultimately with limited success, to get accurate, current census data. In-depth interviews with a sample of fifty families of the initial resident population were conducted by Ms. Sakr and myself with the aid of a field research assistant. These interviews were designed to get information on characteristics of the migrant, residential conditions and attitudes toward life in the new town.

As Tenth of Ramadan is the first of several similar projects planned by the Egyptian government to be implemented, this study was conducted with the intention of providing

information useful to others involved in similar projects. It was hoped that the information would be useful not only in the specific terms of the Egyptian new town context, but also in terms of examining the phenomenon of international planning practice. The intention was that investigation of the planning and implementation process of this project might provide lessons from which government officials and practicing professionals might learn and apply in future similar cases.

This research was funded in part by an Aga Khan Student Travel Grant and by the Office of Special Programs of the Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture at Harvard University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. I am grateful for this support and also for the constant encouragement of Mona Serageldin, Coordinator of Special Programs of the Aga Khan Program at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. I owe thanks to various individuals involved in Tenth of Ramadan, in Egypt and in Sweden, without whose honesty, hospitality and concern, this thesis would not have been possible. For the encouragement of many friends, old and new, in Egypt and in Cambridge, I am also grateful. I wish especially to thank Lisa Redfield Peattie and John de Monchaux for their many sensitive and insightful comments and the intellectual provocation and support that made this truly a learning experience. However, for what is here said, I claim full responsibility.

## BACKGROUND

In 1974, in response to the increasing centralization of industrialization and population in a few urban centers, the Egyptian government, represented by the Ministry of Housing and Reconstruction, initiated a program of developing new communities in the desert. Its basic aims were to divert growth from the crowded cities of Cairo and Alexandria and arrest the encroachment of urban expansion on limited arable land in the Nile Valley and Delta. It was intended that growth should be diverted from the two metropolises and attracted by several new self-sufficient cities in the desert, namely, Tenth of Ramadan, Sadat City, Sixth of October, Al Amal, El Obour, and New Ameriya. In 1974, the first step in implementing the National Strategy for Urban Growth was the initiation of planning for the new industrial new city of Tenth of Ramadan, at that time merely referred to as "Cairo New Town Northeast".

In September, 1974, the Ministry of Housing and Reconstruction issued "Terms of Reference for the Industrial Area and Associated City Master Plan Study," prepared by TAMS (Tippetts-Abbett-McCarthy-Stratton), in response to the needs arising

"due to increasing demands from international firms for industrial sites near Cairo. The government feels that this influx of new business should not add to the overpopulation and congestion in Cairo but rather should form the basis of a self-

sufficient new city."<sup>1</sup>

In that same year, the Ministry selected SWECO, a Swedish firm, in association with Shawky-Zeitoun, an Egyptian firm, to undertake a Master Plan study for the proposed industrial area and its associated city to be located fifty kilometers north-east of Cairo on the desert road to Ismalia. The study was based on the Terms of Reference and called for a Master Plan

"...to provide the Ministry with a guide for the development of the industrial area and associated city. A Master Plan is required that will provide economic and physical justifications for industrial investors and that will deal with the totality of facilities and services necessary for a vital and vigorous community.

The plan should be more than a statement of desirable physical facilities. It must be concerned with the economic feasibility of components and with the procedures for their implementation.

The planning effort must reflect the basic objectives of the Government in undertaking the development of the Industrial Area. These objectives are: to increase national and regional income; to provide opportunities for relief of population pressures in Cairo; to increase the industrial base of the country; and to diversify and improve employment opportunities."<sup>2</sup>

In brief, according to the "Terms of Reference for a Development Program and Construction Scheduling for Tenth of Ramadan New Industrial City," the Master Plan should

"...serve as a guide to the Ministry of Development and New Communities to construct a framework for

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<sup>1</sup> Arab Republic of Egypt Ministry of Housing and Reconstruction, "Terms of Reference for the Industrial Area and Associated City Master Plan Study," September 1974.p.1.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 2.

initial settlement and future growth and development of the city for the next twenty-five years."<sup>3</sup>

The Master Plan of April 1976 was preceded by three earlier reports, "Initial Report, May 1975, "Interim Report, July, 1975." and the "Draft Master Plan Report. 1976." It was organized into four sections, "Background to Tenth of Ramadan," "Development Program," "Physical Planning," and "First Stage Development." The background section looks at the origin of the Master Plan and the role of Tenth of Ramadan in the national and regional context. Issues addressed in the development program include population projections, growth prospects and restrictions, employment, industrial strategy, financial evaluation, economic evaluation, social development and objectives for planning. The plan's discussion on physical planning deals with the basic planning approach, the regional framework and site characteristics, the structure of the city, industrial and residential area, the central area-transportation and utilities. In the discussion of the first stage of development, the plan addresses industrial areas for the first stage, investment costs and scheduling.

In 1977, "Tenth of Ramadan, New Industrial City Conceptual Planning Report," was prepared by SWECO and COPA, the Egyptian firm replacing Shawky-Zeitoun on the project.

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<sup>3</sup> Arab Republic of Egypt Ministry of Development and New Communities, "Terms of Reference for a Development Program and Construction Scheduling (C.P.M.) for Tenth of Ramadan New Industrial City," June 1978, p. 3.

This report included a development strategy for population and housing; a proposed industrial strategy; a set of maps for a typical neighborhood unit; a proposal for the collection, disposal, treatment, and recycling of solid wastes; and a general geotechnical report.

In 1978, the "First Stage Final Report" was prepared by SWECO and COPA, providing general plans for the implementation of the first stage of development. The report included sections on the national and regional context, land uses, housing, industrial area, commercial centers, transportation networks, telecommunications, water supply and sewerage, electricity, waste disposal, climatology, landscape, soil investigation, legal aspects and implementation. Implementation was only addressed, however, in general terms.

Today, it may be seen that the development of Tenth of Ramadan took a different route from that envisaged in the preceding planning documents. With the exception of industry, development in the city lags far behind original projections. A point of fundamental importance is that in the Master Plan, the first stage of development was to have been ten years in length. However, by the time of the "First Stage Final Report," the Ministry of Development and New Communities had decided to accelerate the development of the first stage to five years. That is, within a five year period, there was to be a population of 150,000, construction of 30,000 dwellings with complete infrastructure and the creation of 30,000 job opportunities.

In 1982. in response to the actual status of the New Town's development, the Minister of his own initiative commissioned SWECO to conduct an evaluation study. Three months in duration, it resulted in "Growth Plan 1982, Advisory Service for Implementation and Management Assistance." Its main purpose was to review and analyze the development of the new town, identify shortcomings and potential future problems and make recommendations for future action. The fate of this report remains to be seen. The report was submitted for comments and approval in May 1982. However, SWECO recieved no response until the end of October, 1982. On the whole, the report has not been well received and as such has yet to receive final approval.

## INTRODUCTION

"I can tell you the way things are, but 'why' is still an open question."<sup>4</sup>

The words of the Swedish Project Manager and Chief Advisor of the Tenth of Ramadan new town project not only point to the layers of complexity comprising the story of Tenth of Ramadan, but also suggest inquiry into the positions of the planners in this story. What follows is an attempt to put together the pieces of this story, pieces taken from interviews with government officials involved in implementation and from the Swedish planners, into some kind of comprehensible picture illustrating the nature of the role of the foreign planning consultant in this case. Focusing on the issue of housing, this study examines the contrasts between the situation at present and what was planned in terms of the planner's role, which in this case may be considered to be that of "advice-giver."

The purpose of the following story is to show the position that the planners perceived themselves to be in in this context, what they hoped to achieve as "advice-givers", what they considered to be limits to their effectiveness in this role, and how they attempted to change their role in this picture. It is suggested that such an examination might provide insights useful in general application to the field of international planning practice.

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<sup>4</sup> Alf Byden, Interview at SWECO, Stockholm, Sweden, February, 1983.

## I. OVERVIEW OF PROPOSED HOUSING PROGRAM

"Both public and private community services programs require implementation concurrently with industrial housing construction."<sup>5</sup>

"I should stress the importance of having a system that could bring out the major determinants for community growth. Explicitly, they need some system that makes them aware of what are the elements and plans for growth -- the information system is so bad now -- and translate this into a coordinated development over the next couple of years. For example, information about industrial employment provides information on the size and type of population which lets you know the amount and type of housing needed, the number of schools needed, etc."<sup>6</sup> (Swedish Planner)

The objective stated in the first quote above from the 1978 "Terms of Reference For a Development Program and Construction Scheduling (C.P.M.) For Tenth of Ramadan New Industrial City," may still be seen in the words of one member of the Swedish planning team, five years later.

Consistent with the attitude expressed above is what the planners referred to as "a balanced development program" in "The Conceptual Planning Report" of 1977. Considered to be essential to ensure the successful development of the city, it called for:

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<sup>5</sup> Arab Republic of Egypt Ministry of Development and New Communities, "Terms of Reference for a Development Program and Construction Scheduling (C.P.M.) for Tenth of Ramadan New Industrial City," p. 8.

<sup>6</sup> SWECO, Stockholm, Sweden, interview with member of planning team, February, 1983.

"a balanced industrial strategy, which emphasizes a rapid industrial growth, but seeks to avoid problems with an insufficient supply of services and housing and a balanced housing programme, where the criterion for selection of housing types is the effective demand for housing of employees in Tenth of Ramadan."<sup>7</sup>

These elements of the overall "balanced development program" related to the issue of housing were outlined as follows:

- "A rapid growth in construction of housing for the population of the city"
  
- "A minimum of temporary housing or commuting to Tenth of Ramadan"
  
- "A minimum of commuting to Cairo"
  
- "To avoid uncontrolled squatter settlements"
  
- "To maximize the number of housing units constructed within a given government housing budget"
  
- "A housing construction program consistent with the demand of the population of the city."<sup>8</sup>

The discussion of the present housing situation in Tenth of Ramadan will reveal the fate of these proposed objectives.

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<sup>7</sup> COPA and SWECO, "Tenth of Ramadan, New Industrial City Conceptual Planning Report," 1977, p. I-2.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. I-1.

However, even in 1977 the planners took into account in developing their balanced housing program various constraints with the potential to limit the realization of such a development strategy. These included limits to the capacity of the construction industry, particularly in terms of adequate supplies of materials and labor, land allocation commitments made by the government; adequate provision of services and infra-structure; and the prevalence of upper income housing in the first two neighborhoods.<sup>9</sup> In consideration of these objectives and constraints, the planners proposed a housing program in which the range of housing types selected would be based on the effective demand of employees in the industrial and service sectors.<sup>10</sup>

The proposed housing program was based on the analysis of studies of employment characteristics, demographic characteristics, population projections, the sizes and spending patterns of households, economically feasible unit sizes and

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid., p. I-2.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., p. I-21.

costs, household income distribution and housing finance systems. It was designed to meet the following objectives: provision of affordable unit sizes for a range of income groups; housing standards commensurate with acceptable requirements and cost constraints; development of a housing construction program; flexibility and capacity to meet the effective demand for housing; and minimization of government subsidies.

The basic housing policy, which generated the housing program, as proposed by the planners was based on the concepts that the housing stock should accommodate a range of income groups and that it should provide a physical environment which would allow for family privacy, yet at the same time encourage neighborhood interaction. For the first stage of development, the recommended housing policy called for the rapid construction of a large number of units, a pilot project for the purposes of stimulating development activities, the use of a variety of construction methods in order to maximize production, the construction of housing appropriate to a range of income groups and the utilization of diverse forms of investment including public, private and cooperative in order to accelerate the development process. <sup>11</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> COPA and SWECO, "Tenth of Ramadan First Stage Final Report," 1978, p. 3:1.

## II. OVERVIEW OF THE STATUS OF HOUSING 1982

"The major shortcomings regarding the original plans are not on the physical level but are related to imbalances due to an unsuitable housing programme, and as a result thereof, slow migration to the city."<sup>12</sup>

The housing situation in Tenth of Ramadan in 1982 contrasted sharply with the six housing-related elements of the proposed "balanced development program." While commuting to Cairo is minimal and squatter settlements have not yet developed, commuting to Tenth of Ramadan is quite common and the rate and types of housing construction there are inconsistent with the proposed objectives. Public construction of housing has progressed at a slower rate than scheduled and private residential construction has yet to start. Moreover, the types of housing which have been built appear to be inconsistent with the needs of the intended residents, i.e., employees in the city. Consequently, the people who were expected to live there do not. At the same time, housing sits empty, as those who have bought it live elsewhere.

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<sup>12</sup> SWECO, "Tenth of Ramadan, New Industrial City Growth Plan 1982, Final Report," January, 1983, p.i.

## Public Construction of Housing

Development to Date: 1982

"Housing is far behind and is not the right kind of housing."<sup>13</sup> (Swedish Planner)

Despite the fact that in November of 1977, four contractors were contracted to build 1,344 housing units within 13 months, as of March 1982 none of these contracts had yet been completed.<sup>14</sup> Moreover, with few new contracts initiated since 1977, housing construction continues to be slow. While the Tenth of Ramadan Development Authority planned to begin construction of 5,000 units in the summer of 1982, as of Spring, 1982, the number of housing units constructed totalled 3,600.<sup>15</sup>

What Was Proposed: 1976-1978

In contrast to this situation, the planners had suggested a housing construction program of 3,000 dwellings in 1978 and 3,000 to 4,000 per year thereafter.<sup>16</sup> According to schedule there would have been at least 12,000 units built by the end of 1981. The "First Stage Final Report" stated that a

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<sup>13</sup> SWECO, Stockholm, Sweden, interview with member of Planning team, February, 1983.

<sup>14</sup> SWECO, "Tenth of Ramadan New Industrial City Growth Plan 1982 Draft Final Report", April, 1982, p. 3:2.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1:8.

<sup>16</sup> COPA and SWECO, "First Stage Final Report." p. 3:35. SWECO and Shawky-Zeitoun, "Tenth of Ramadan New Industrial City Master Plan," April, 1976, p. 51.

cooperative society and five private contractors were already involved in the construction of conventional housing and that two other contractors were involved in prefabricated construction in 1978.<sup>17</sup>

The planners projected the time phasing of the proposed housing construction program based on assumptions about the number of households moving to the city by a certain time. These assumptions are represented in Figures 1 and 2.<sup>18</sup>

Based on 1978 prices, the planners estimated the total cost for housing to be LE 70,256,030 including the costs of construction works, internal sanitary and electrical works and connection to the public network.<sup>19</sup>

In the 1978 "First Stage Final Report," the planners explicitly addressed the severe constraints on the housing construction industry in Egypt. These included shortages of manufactured building materials and problems of transporting raw materials, as well as the severe shortage of construction labor due to better employment opportunities offered in the oil-rich Arab countries. In response, they recommended that housing construction in the city be supported by "the creation of early transportation channels to the new city, adequate supplies of building materials, utilization of the surrounding

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<sup>17</sup> COPA and SWECO, "First Stage Final Report." p. 3:35.

<sup>18</sup> COPA and SWECO, "Conceptual Planning Report." p. I-3.

<sup>19</sup> COPA and SWECO, "First Stage Final Report." p. 14:13.

Figure 1. Number of households moving to Tenth of Ramadan per year  
 (Adapted from: "Conceptual Planning Report")

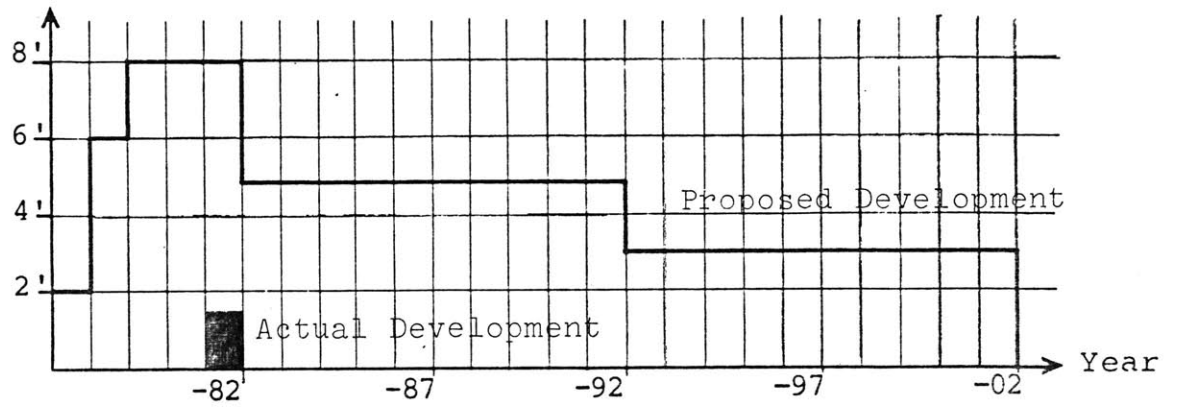
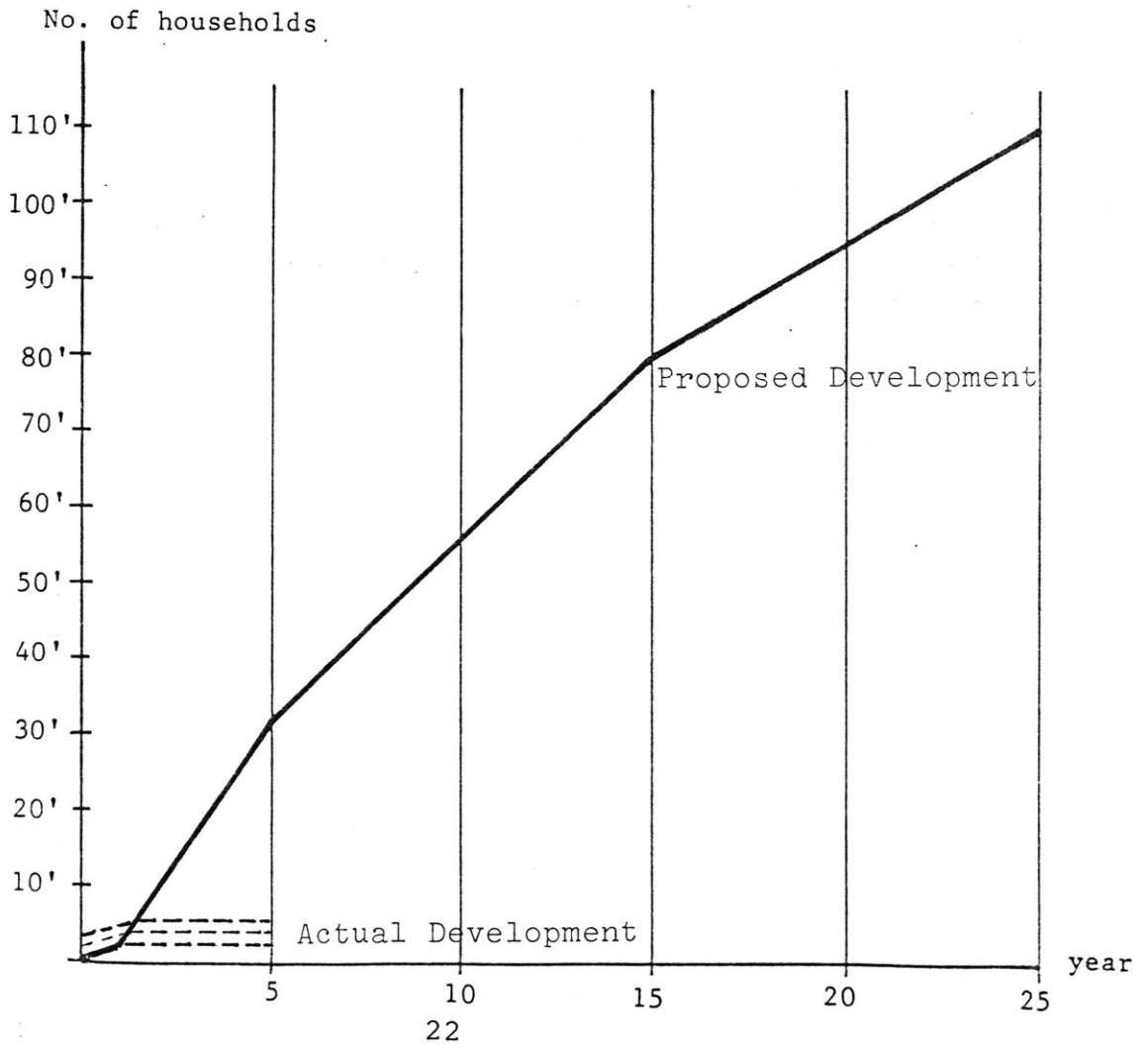


Figure 2. Assumed housing construction programme for Tenth of Ramadan  
 (Adapted from: "Conceptual Planning Report")



quarries and encouragement of various building material workshops in the city."<sup>20</sup>

The planners' discussion of implementation of the housing program was based on the following list of points which they suggested be "considered" to ensure achievement of the basic objective of provision of housing of a range of standards.

"-The ministry should not increase the proportion of luxury and above medium residential units but can vary that under construction in the First Stage.

-Start the construction of industrial and public housing from the beginning.

-Redistribute land reserved for inhabitants and societies to those who are serious applicants prepared to construct quickly.

-Reservation of residential land for industrial organizations.

-Study means of attracting people prepared to construct, e.g.,

Preparation of model residential units with different standards, prices and construction times.

Study building costs together with contractors in order to reduce cost per residential unit.

Attempt to make building materials easily available with fast delivery at reasonable prices.

Securing of long-term loans for building houses with a low interest rate.

Setting up a residential bank.

Preparation of detailed plans for the second,

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<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 3-35.

third, and fourth stages."<sup>21</sup>

Using the recommendations outlined in the "Growth Plan 1982" as a likely indication of the limited realization of the above listed points for "consideration", it may be seen that the planners were still urging that the following suggestions be taken:

"As there at present is very little affordable housing available to industrial workers, a new housing programme should be developed providing the right housing types to the right costs and with appropriate financing of different kinds."

"In order to find the necessary land for this large number of workers, a Land Management Plan that can 'unlock' the city by rebuying or redistributing the land is a necessity."

"Observe the possible constraint represented by the construction sector and try all ways of developments...(including) establish a building materials depot;"

"Create a special savings bank and other financial instruments for low income groups."

"Start planning parts of Stage Two of the city to meet the increasing demand for land from industry."<sup>22</sup>

What Happened: 1978-1982

Despite the planners' concern that shortages of construction materials would impose constraints on building, according to one Egyptian official, this situation was short-lived.

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<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 14-3.

<sup>22</sup> SWECO, "Growth Plan 1982 Draft Final Report." pp. x,xi.

"There was a shortage of cement for sometime, but after the open-door policy we could import the quantities needed and we were given priority. Now we have no shortage of any of the construction materials."<sup>23</sup> (Egyptian Official)

It appears that the constraints that did have a serious impact on building were administrative in nature, and thus more difficult to control.

"Each new town is supposed to get tenders from contractors and submit them to the Ministry in a bundle and then it's cut up. What contractors must do because they're bidding for something in the future is to project costs - which are of course higher and then wait around to see whether or not they get the job."<sup>24</sup> (Swedish Planner)

This system of administering contracts, which requires the contractor to submit prepared bids and then wait for acceptance or rejection, is obviously more feasible for large contractors with regular activities that allow them to sustain themselves during the waiting period. Furthermore, given the rapid rate of increases in construction costs in Egypt, this system forces the bids submitted for future work to be inflated.

Another administrative constraint acting on the level of

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<sup>23</sup> Tenth of Ramadan Development Authority, Tenth of Ramadan, Egypt, interview with government official, June, 1982.

<sup>24</sup> SWECO, Stockholm, Sweden, interview with member of planning team, February, 1983.

construction activity is the way that contracts are awarded to large public sector contractors given the overall limited supply of building materials and labor available to the construction industry in Egypt. In this case, when contracts are awarded, the government makes a large advance downpayment which must later be repaid. Consequently, the incentive is for the contractor to roll twenty percent over into his own firm and to delay the start of construction.<sup>25</sup>

According to the Swedes, the use of large contractors was a reflection of the Egyptians' view of Tenth of Ramadan as one large construction project. The planners contended that small-scale contractors could have produced better housing cheaper. Stressing the potential for savings in this case, they suggested that the realm of large-scale public contractors should have been limited to public buildings.<sup>26</sup>

#### Private Construction of Housing

Development to Date: 1982

"Housing is slow on private land. We take it as an unhealthy sign. They are waiting for the situation to clarify before risking the capital to build. Nothing is being done to force them to build, so obviously it's not for themselves to live that they bought the land. Until last spring, they'd just written letters to the land owners stating that

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<sup>25</sup> Ministry of Development, Cairo, Egypt, interview, June, 1982.

<sup>26</sup> SWECO, Stockholm, Sweden, interview with member of planning team, February, 1983.

they must come up with drawings within 3 months and they must build within 3 years. I asked to see the letters and was shown around 11."<sup>27</sup> (Swedish Planner)

As of spring of 1982. no residential construction had been started in Tenth of Ramadan either by private individuals or cooperatives, despite the low acquisition costs of land.

What Was Proposed, What Happened: 1976-1982

In the financial analysis summarized in the Master Plan of 1976, the planners recognized the possibility that the financial resource constraint could become serious. Consequently, they stressed that the land policy chosen could, and indeed should, play a vitally important role in revenue generation. They proposed that rather than selling title to the land, the government should lease it at annual rates reflecting its increasing value.<sup>28</sup> However, the residential land allocation policy actually put into effect in 1977 was the result of a political decision reputedly made in response to resource constraints.

"...for political reasons, at Sadat's request, land was sold at a price that was never deduced from any figure. It was decided to announce the selling of land in the city, at fifty piasters per meter and adding LE 1.50 to 3.00 per meter for infrastructure according to the size of the land, for residential,

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<sup>27</sup> SWECO, Stockholm, Sweden, interview with member of planning team, February, 1983.

<sup>28</sup> SWECO and Shawky-Zeitoun. "Master Plan," p. 19.

the lots were announced to be 600 meters squared irrespective of the proposed structural plan."<sup>29</sup> (Egyptian Official)

"In 1977, they sold out the whole city at a price not even close to the cost of provision of infrastructure...but the poor in general didn't even have that much. Therefore, middle and upper class speculators now are sitting on the land waiting for development to come."<sup>30</sup> (Swedish Planner)

The sale of land was announced by the Ministry of Development in the official paper, Al Ahram, before the first phase infrastructure drawings had even been completed. This was a political decision based on the intent to raise the resources to finance the initial stages of the city's development. However, the price announced did not even reflect the actual cost of servicing the land, which at that time was approximately LE 30 per meter. Consequently, this represented a substantial subsidy from the government. It was hoped that this move would encourage migration to the city. A downpayment of 25 percent of the price was required and a formal commitment of land ownership was made to the buyer. However, no specification as to the location of the land was made.

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<sup>29</sup> Tenth of Ramadan Development Authority, Tenth of Ramadan, Egypt, interview with government official, June, 1982.

<sup>30</sup> SWECO, Stockholm, Sweden, interview with member of planning team, February, 1983.

"We heard that within only a few days 17,000 lots were sold. That was the figure that we heard at the time. Originally, the lots were to be 600 square meters, which are large. There was no guarantee that these people would be connected with the city. The effect is a housing stock that is unusable. The purchasers do not have the personal or economic pressure to develop it."<sup>31</sup> (Swedish Planner)

The response to the sale of the land was overwhelming and resulted in the reservation of 4.5 million square meters, an area 1.5 times greater than that designated for residential use in the first stage of development. The planners' concern over the conflicts that the situation might precipitate led them to include in the appendix of the "First Stage Final Report" of 1978 recommendations for a land parcelling policy for the new city. They stressed the importance of the design of the policy, particularly because of its influence on that of the other new towns. The aim of the proposed policy was to allow most applicants to maintain their claims on reserved land and thus avoid a situation in which government policy on ownership would be violated by the denial to a substantial number of applicants of their reserved plots.<sup>32</sup> The planners suggested that the government might be able to maintain its obligation to applicants by offering them as an alternative

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<sup>31</sup> SWECO, Stockholm, Sweden, interview with member of planning team, February, 1983.

<sup>32</sup> COPA and SWECO, "First Stage Final Report." Appendix 1, p. 1.

the option on a dwelling or an apartment.<sup>33</sup> Citing the possibility that the demand for such options might prove to be overwhelming, the planners recommended that the government should be prepared with a policy for dealing with the demand, such as providing refunds to applicants not willing to change their requirements.<sup>34</sup> It was hoped that expanding the options available to applicants would allow the majority of them to be accommodated during the first stage of development. The planners noted that this would be economically advantageous in that it would enable the government to revise prices for later stages more in line with the costs of infrastructure.<sup>35</sup>

The Ministry attempted to cope with this situation by contacting applicants by mail, requesting information on their financial ability to build, and seeking their approval to reduce the size of the lot or exchange it for an apartment. On the whole, the idea of smaller lot sizes was met with opposition. Despite this fact, lots were initially reduced to 70-450 square meters.<sup>36</sup> Additional protest by the buyers brought the lot size up to 120-450 square meters.<sup>37</sup> However,

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<sup>33</sup> Ibid., p. 2.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Cairo, Egypt, private interview with government official, July, 1982.

<sup>37</sup> Cairo, Egypt, private interview with government official, July, 1982.

some applicants did accept apartments as alternatives. One government official made the point that, while the Master Plan Study cost \$2 million, the city was sold for less.<sup>38</sup> Moreover, in such an open sale of land, the only requirement for ownership was the ability to pay. No priority was given to workers in the city. Obviously, it was not the poor but the middle and upper classes who were able to take advantage of this offer, many, it is felt, for speculative purposes. The inevitable result was that a large portion (8,000 lots) of the First Stage were committed to people without any guarantee that they would have any involvement in the city.

Among the conditions included in the lot contracts were the following of particular importance given the situation at present:

"Second party should get the license for building the piece of land and start the building work within one year from signing the contract (this generally means maximum one year from informing the land owner that the utilities have been connected). He should finish the building works within three years including the previous year or the Authority will have the right to cancel the contract and get back the land by paying back the money originally paid by the second party (deducting 10% for administrative costs)" (unofficial translation)<sup>39</sup>

However, as of the spring of 1982, no lot contracts for individual housing had yet been signed. Prospective owners had been registered by the Tenth of Ramadan Development

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<sup>38</sup> Ministry of Development. Cairo. Egypt, interview with government official, June, 1982.

<sup>39</sup> SWECO, "Growth Plan 1982 Draft Final Report. p. 5-2.

Authority and assigned a lot number. Those prospective owners whose lots had recently been provided with utility connections were notified and requested to respond within two months with their intentions about building. However, the condition that construction commence within one year was not included in letters shown to the planners conducting the "Growth Plan" study.<sup>40</sup>

"After fighting we were able to get names and [one of our team] tried to find people. She had letters of introduction from the city with the authority to interview them. 25% didn't exist, others were people interested in living in LOR and others were clearly not."<sup>41</sup> (Swedish Planner)

The study team attempted to interview applicants during the spring of 1982. Their efforts to locate people met with mixed results. While some people were anxious to start construction, others were not. Moreover, one quarter of the addresses proved to be those of ministries, empty lots, etc., rather than addresses of applicants. At the same time, the study team prepared a questionnaire to be sent with a cover letter from the Authority requesting information about the future land owner, desired date of construction, phasing of construction, type of building planned, etc.

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> SWECO, Stockholm, Sweden, interview with member of planning team, February, 1983.

The major problems in the future development of the city, resulting from the way in which land has been allocated, were addressed in "Growth Plan 1982." In brief, these problems are: the inevitable shortage of land available to present and future workers in industry, which the planners stressed represents an irresolvable problem given the existing land management systems and government housing policy; the economically inefficient use of investment in infrastructure and services and dispersed settlement inherent in the probability of limited private construction over the next five years; and finally the threat posed to the original objective of creating an "independent" city by the sale of land to those with no guaranteed involvement in the city.<sup>42</sup>

"We are secluded from the political decision-making that influences our work with little chance to react. For example, when Sadat sold the city, it came to us as a total surprise. He blew the chance for something to be good. My point is that there's no chance to react to political decision-making before it is too late."<sup>43</sup> (Swedish Planner)

The impact of one political decision on the present and future development of the city suggests strongly the marginal position of the planner in this story. It is obvious that despite the financial and economic analyses conducted by the

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<sup>42</sup> SWECO, "Growth Plan 1982 Draft Final Report." pp. 5-4, 5-5.

<sup>43</sup> SWECO, Stockholm, Sweden, interview with member of planning team, February, 1983.

planners, and their recommendations about project cost recovery and land allocation policy as a primary source of revenue generation, their impact on "result" was virtually negated by the political power of one man. This example illustrates the potential impotence inherent in the role of the international consultant and its relation to the context of implementation. Segregated from the arena of political decision-making which profoundly impacts the results of their plans, the consultant's role is virtually limited to that of a powerless advisor.

"I have a feeling that during Sadat it was going from mild socialism to capitalism. It's quite clear that political behavior is influencing the planning. A change in political system must influence the result."<sup>44</sup> (Swedish Planner)

One can only surmise as to the motivations behind President Sadat's decision. While it was reputedly intended to provide financial resources for the city's early stages of development, the absence of any prior analysis in this regard and the inefficiency, indeed failure, of this decision in achieving the objectives is obvious. It is clear that the beneficiaries of the decision were members of the middle and upper classes. If the weight of their political leverage is recognized, then one might speculate that this political decision as made with the intention of maintaining the support

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<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

of this group. In fact, could one assume that given the recent political history and present political context, the President of Egypt would be able to remain in office without the support of the middle and upper classes? This situation suggests the impact of the larger political context on the realization of a program or plan, and the limits to the effectiveness of the planner as advice-giver. Given the perspective espoused in the planners' recommended land allocation policy, it is unlikely that any number of such recommendations would have sufficient leverage to counter the force of the overall political context.

#### Population and Housing Stock

Development to Date: 1982

While a basic objective in the development of the city was the provision of housing and services to those employed there, the current situation is a different story. If this objective is accepted as valid, then it must be concluded that the housing constructed thus far is in one way or another inappropriate to the needs of a large portion of the target population. Not only does population growth fall short of original projections, but seventy percent of those employed in the city, who are supposed to be the 'core' of the community, live outside the city.<sup>45</sup> Yet at the same time, even with

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<sup>45</sup> SWECO, "Growth Plan 1982 Draft Final Report." p. 1-3.

housing construction far behind schedule, unit upon unit of built housing sits empty. One encounters entire blocks of vacant flats in the city as well as whole clusters of villas similarly locked and empty. In contrast to a first stage population of 150,000 as initially projected, the population according to the SWECO report for March 1982 was only 3200.<sup>46</sup> This figure includes 750 single males, with the balance comprising 650 families. The majority of the 750 men are married but living alone in the city, having come for purposes of employment.<sup>47</sup>

Approximately 90 apartments have been provided, on the whole rent-free, by the Tenth of Ramadan Development Authority to house the single men.<sup>48</sup> Furthermore, there were estimated to be about 40 tents around the city housing workers.<sup>49</sup> The SWECO report estimates that only 20 percent of the population of single men pays rent.<sup>50</sup> Most of the 650 families live in apartment blocks. Of these families, 40 percent own their apartment, having purchased them under ordinary financing conditions, i.e., a downpayment of 10 percent of the cost of construction with the balance to be paid over 30 years with 3

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<sup>46</sup> Ibid., p. 1-5.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., p. 1-6.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

percent interest.<sup>51</sup> Approximately 50 percent of the families rent their housing. The majority of these are employed by the Tenth of Ramadan Development Authority.<sup>52</sup> The proportion of housing which sits empty in Tenth of Ramadan is one extremely obvious characteristic of the city. As of spring 1982, only 30 percent of the 3600 units constructed had been allocated, 50 percent sold, and 20 percent were still free.<sup>53</sup> Moreover, only 20 percent of the built units were occupied and only 40 percent of those sold were inhabited.<sup>54</sup>

"Misallocation has led to disastrous consequences. They must recognize what kind of town it should be - it's not Islamabad or Brasilia - but an Industrial City - Therefore it will have industrial labor and therefore you would end up with the kind of housing that you don't see in Tenth of Ramadan. LE 6 - 12 is far beyond the paying capacity of an industrial laborer. The kind of housing they can afford you don't see now and won't see for years to come."<sup>55</sup> (Swedish Planner)

"A New Industrial Independent City. Nobody cared about the word "Industrial", some people read NEW city, some people read INDEPENDENT city. OK, you can put industry, but we don't want any industrial workers."<sup>56</sup> (Swedish Planner)

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51 Ibid., p. 1-7.

52 Ibid.

53 Ibid. p. 1-8.

54 Ibid.

55 SWECO, Stockholm, Sweden, interview with member of planning team, February, 1982.

56 Ibid.

As of March 1982, there were 4200 people employed in Tenth of Ramadan.<sup>57</sup> Of these, less than 30 percent actually were living in the city, i.e., 1500 residents and 2700 living elsewhere.<sup>58</sup> While in the construction sector the number of workers varies, the total was 1000 at that time.<sup>59</sup> Formal housing had not been made available to them. Consequently, the majority commuted, while others lived in tents in the city. Approximately 30 percent of those employed in industry and approximately 70 percent of those employed in public and commercial services were living in the city as shown in the Table 1 from "Growth Plan, 1982."<sup>60</sup>

The average income level of employees in Tenth of Ramadan was 2 percent higher in 1982 than the national average, with 65 percent of the working population earning between LE 800 and LE 1200 annually.<sup>61</sup> Sixty percent of those employed in industries were earning between LE 1200 and LE 2000 per year.<sup>62</sup> Considering the anticipated growth in this sector, the planners stressed the urgent need for affordable housing to accommodate these workers. Table 2

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<sup>57</sup> SWECO, "Growth Plan 1982 Draft Final Report." p. 1-2.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid., p. 1-3.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., p. 1-4.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

TABLE 1: Place of Residence According to Sector of Employment

	Living in the City		Living Elsewhere		TOTAL	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Construction	100	7	900	33	1000	24
Industry	400	27	1400	52	1800	43
Administration	650	43	250	9	900	19
Services & Commerce	350	23	150	6	500	14
TOTAL	1500	100	2700	100	4200	100

(source: "GROWTH PLAN 1982")

TABLE 2: Persons Working in Tenth of Ramadan by Yearly Income  
(Percent) 1982

Sector	LE/YEAR				TOTAL
	< 800	800-1200	1200-2000	.2000	
Construction*	1	90	7	2	100
Industry*	5	32	60	3	100
Administration	1	93	4	2	100
Services and Commerce	13	83	4	0	100

\*SWEKO estimates  
(source: adapted from "GROWTH PLAN 1982")

represents the distribution of income according to sector.<sup>63</sup>

Income regularity as well as income level is a factor influencing the housing program. Over 50 percent of the labor force receives a daily income.<sup>64</sup> The insecurity inherent in this system is obvious. In recognition of this fact, the planners stressed the need for a housing system which could accommodate people even when they are temporarily not working, for example, when ill.

#### What Was Proposed: 1976 - 1978

In accordance with their general objectives of providing housing that would be affordable and appropriate to a range of income groups and at the same time minimize the level of government subsidization, the planners proposed a housing construction program in their planning documents based on a series of studies. Given the discrepancy between overall population projections made during the planning process and the actual population in 1982, the limits to the validity of the following projections are obvious. In order to determine the effective demand for housing and this its physical characteristics, the planners projected the distribution of household incomes in Tenth of Ramadan. First, they made a

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<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid., p. 1-5.

forecast of the city's employment structure according to sector and year. Then using available statistical data, they determined the assumed average annual wages according to sector. They then considered the number of employees per household over time and the employment structure of the second employee of the household in order to determine the average household income for inhabitants of the city, which facilitated the estimation of the distribution of households according to income. This distribution was categorized as follows:

Very low income	less than 200 LE/year
Low income	200 - 500 LE/year
Medium income	500 - 900 LE/year
Upper medium income	900 - 1500 LE/year
High income	more than 1500 LE/year <sup>65</sup>

In this regard the planners projected the following distribution of household incomes as shown in Table 3.<sup>66</sup> It is interesting to note that while LE 617 was the projected average household income for 1982. The actual 1982 figure is much higher, between LE 800 and LE 1200.

The profile of household incomes shown in Table 3 indicated to the planners the need for a housing program within the financial reach of the large percentage of households in lower income categories in the early period of

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<sup>65</sup> COPA and SWECO, "Conceptual Planning Report." p. I-25.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid.

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TABLE 3: Household Income Distribution in Tenth of Ramadan

Year	Average House- hold Income, LE	Distribution by income brackets: Percent				
		<200	200-500	500-900	900-1500	.1500
1980	578	20	42	18	13	7
1982	617	19	39	20	13	9
1987	695	16	34	23	14	13
1992	757	13	32	25	15	15
1997	835	10	30	27	16	17
2002	938	7	28	29	17	19

(source: "CONCEPTUAL PLANNING REPORT." 1977)

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development.<sup>67</sup> The planners explicitly warned against the consequences of failing to provide housing for these groups. These consequences included the proliferation of uncontrolled squatter settlements and the possible jeopardization of industrial development, which in turn could prevent the development of the city as a self-sufficient settlement and prohibit the achievement of the population target of 500,000 for year 25.<sup>68</sup>

The planners estimated affordable annual costs for housing based on projections of household income and assumptions about household expenditure patterns for housing. In order to define affordable sizes and standards of housing,

the planners estimated the construction costs for various types of housing over time. They used the description of the current housing finance system in Egypt as presented in the report, "Housing Finance in Egypt," by the Ministry of Housing and Reconstruction and the U.S. Agency for International Development, to reach assumptions concerning housing finance. They then determined housing sizes demanded by different income brackets based on household spending patterns and housing construction costs. Figure 3 illustrates what the planners had assumed would be the possible financing options available to different types of households.<sup>69</sup>

The planners then developed guidelines for housing sizes which would be affordable for families of various income levels. They stressed the importance of using these calculations in determining housing types and floor area per

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<sup>67</sup> Ibid., p. I-27.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid., p. I-35.

FIGURE 3: Assumed conditions of loans for different types of housing to be developed by year 0-5. (Interest rates in the Private Market - 7 %)

Household Income. LE/year				
<200	200-500	500-900	900-1500	.1500
No down payment 3% 30 yrs	No down payment 3% 30 yrs	10% down payment 4% 30 yrs	15% down payment 5% 30 yrs	15% down payment 5% 25 yrs
Projects financed through the national housing fund or direct from the Government budget				
Projects financed through NHF or the general authority of building cooperatives or direct from the Government budget				
Project financed through GAOBC or the credit foncier				
Projects financed through the credit foncier, commercial banks or insurance companies				

It is presupposed that the down payment will be used to pay the costs for land and technical infrastructure.

The conditions presented above also presuppose the development of an efficiently working private sector for housing finance with larger funds and longer terms for loans than available today.

(source: "CONCEPTUAL PLANNING REPORT." 1977)

flat, etc., in planning neighborhood units. For the first stage, they stressed that the figures pointed to the need for the construction of a large percentage of small flats, i.e., 80 percent of the housing units should be less than 56 square meters in area.<sup>70</sup>

One purpose of the economic evaluation of the project was the definition of feasible levels of standards for various components of the city, including housing, given the constraints imposed by household incomes. The planners considered different levels of standards, including an alternative with a comparatively high standard for housing. They concluded, however, that to build this level of housing would necessitate unrealistically high levels of investment and government subsidy, particularly considering the fact that only 2 percent of the projected national increase in urban

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<sup>70</sup> Ibid., p. I-37. COPA and SWECO. "First Stage Final Report," p. 3:6.

population would be accommodated in the city.<sup>71</sup> Furthermore, they stressed that "levels of standards implying high subsidies will have the effect that the poorer strata of the population cannot be provided any conventional housing at all, which is both an inefficient and inequitable solution."<sup>72</sup> They advised research into the range of housing standards that could be provided with various levels of subsidies. Furthermore, they suggested alternatives such as self-help programs, reductions in floor area per capita or lower standards of finishing, etc., as means of reducing construction costs to provide housing affordable to the lowest income groups.<sup>73</sup> They recommended that housing be an area for economizing because of its potential for future upgrading as compared with social or technical infrastructure, which must be of higher standards from the start in order to be adequate in a longer time perspective.<sup>74</sup>

In sum, as a result of their economic analysis, the planners outlined factors which would improve the economic justification of the project. Those of relevance to this discussion of housing include the minimization of government housing subsidies and thus a reduction of standards which

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<sup>71</sup> SWECO and Shawky-Zeitoun. "Master Plan," p. 20.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 21

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*

would in turn reduce costs and facilitate the construction of more dwellings for the same amount of investment and the reduction of housing costs through self-help construction and the creation of a central pool of building materials and the provision of technical and financial assistance.<sup>75</sup>

The housing proposed in the "First Stage Final Report" in 1978 was designed in consideration of the following socio-economic parameters: the social characteristics of the migrants, whether employment in the city is permanent or temporary, social mobility, religion, differing lifestyles of the members of each sex, age structure and household compositions and sizes, household income distribution, geographical distribution of income groups, activity rates and employment structure and affordable annual rents for housing.<sup>76</sup>

The planners proposed five levels of housing construction costs: high cost at LE 70 per meter squared, upper medium cost at LE 60 per meter squared, medium cost at LE 52 per meter squared, lower medium at LE 45 per meter squared, and low- and very low-cost at less than LE 35 per meter squared.<sup>77</sup> Based on these assumptions, guidelines were established for housing sizes that would be affordable to a range of income groups. It was concluded that during the

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<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 23.

<sup>76</sup> SWECO and Shawky-Zeitoun. "First Stage Final Report." p. 3:9-3:14.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3:15.

first stage a large number of small apartments should be built. Figure 4 illustrates affordable housing sizes projected per household for the first five years of this project.<sup>78</sup>

The planners proposed a range of housing types intended to reflect the previously mentioned socio-economic parameters. They suggested as suitable housing types small apartments rather than the conventional large flats, particularly from an economic perspective. They suggested that prefabricated construction, with proper planning and design, and with the benefits of quick construction and standardization, could reduce the costs of housing through maximization of production.<sup>79</sup>

Extendable as opposed to confined housing units, such as corehouses and "Sites and Services" were recommended, based on consideration of the amounts available to spend on housing, the intention to minimize government subsidization and changes in family sizes.<sup>80</sup> The housing types proposed in the "First Stage Final Report" included "Sites and Services," core housing, a variety of apartment blocks and court houses.

In their discussions of "Sites and Services", the planners pointed out its advantages, potential disadvantages, the role of the government, and an implementation procedure.

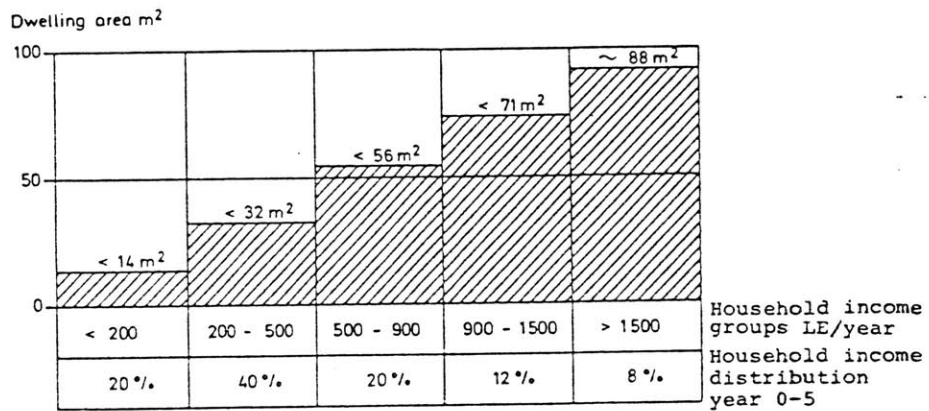
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<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid., p. 3:16.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

Figure 4 Affordable Housing Size per Household  
Years 0-5



(source: "First Stage Final Report")

To ensure that the efforts of families in such a self-help program are productively channelled, the government should offer technical advice and social assistance as well as supplying sites, services, and minimum specifications for land development.<sup>81</sup> The planners recommended a wide range of serviced sites, from bare sites with no facilities to larger lots with individual utility connections in order to accommodate a spectrum of income levels. This was suggested in order to avoid a situation in which unnecessarily high standards and large lot sizes prohibit availability to the poor. "Sites and Services" was considered to be economically advantageous in that it is less costly than public housing projects, and it places more responsibility on the private sector than the public sector. An important advantage seen by the planners was that it facilitates simultaneous saving and investment because "much of the saving needed can be mobilized directly, in kind, rather than indirectly, through financial intermediaries."<sup>82</sup> Furthermore, the future owner's control over the construction process in terms of technique and phasing promotes self-reliance.<sup>83</sup>

The planners urged that the role of the government be secondary to that of the future occupants in ensuring the

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<sup>81</sup> Ibid., p. 3:18.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid., p. 3:20.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

successful implementation of such a project. However, they stressed that creating a viable community implies more than the construction of physical facilities. Consequently, they suggested that the future inhabitants, with the encouragement of local leadership, must be active in the organized development of their new community by instituting occupant-controlled, local decision making and management processes; through involvement in housing construction; by creating cooperative and social and economic programs; and by instituting local credit and savings mechanisms.<sup>84</sup> The planners saw the government as responsible for the provision of the technical and organizational skills required by the inhabitants in these efforts.

The planners recommended the provision for low income groups of core housing which would be low cost and facilitate future extension by the occupants. They suggested the provision of core houses in different stages of development, including some that are completely developed which could provide examples for the occupants, to accommodate a range of household requirements. The stages of development ranged from one room and small bath to four rooms, a bath and kitchen on two stories.<sup>85</sup>

Four types of apartment blocks were proposed. The first,

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<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3:21.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3:22.

"C-1," has four stories, with two flats of 100 meters squared per floor, on a lot of 600 meters squared. These are intended for upper-medium and medium income families of four to six individuals.<sup>86</sup> The "C-2" type also has four stories with two flats of 90 meters squared per floor on a 500 square meter lot. It is intended for families of three to four persons of the medium and upper-medium income levels.<sup>87</sup> The "C-3" type is for high and upper-medium income households. It has four stories with three dwellings per floor.<sup>88</sup> Type "C-4," again four stories, was designed for medium and lower-medium income families of three to four or four to six persons.<sup>89</sup>

Two types of court houses were proposed. The first, "C-5," has two stories each of 60 meters squared on a 150 square meter lot and was designed for a three to five person family of the medium and upper-medium income levels.<sup>90</sup> Type "B-1" was designed for high income families of three to four persons and upper-medium income families of four to six. These two-unit dwellings sit on a 225 square meter lot, with each unit occupying 125/135 square meters.<sup>91</sup> The types of

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<sup>86</sup> Ibid., p. 3:25.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid., p. 3:28.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid., p. 3:29.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid., p. 3:31.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid., p. 3:33.

housing recommended for the first phase are summarized in  
Table 4.92

#### What Happened: 1978-1982

In contrast to the planners' recommendations, Table 5 shows the types of housing already built or under construction as of the spring of 1982.<sup>93</sup> Notable are the marked discrepancies between the costs of units proposed and those actually built. For example, while only 40% of the proposed housing was to have cost more than 2800 LE per unit, 100% of that actually constructed cost more than this amount. Moreover, the highest cost proposed per unit was 4400 LE. In contrast 68 percent of the units constructed cost more than 6500 LE. Thus, it may be seen that in terms of size and cost of construction the housing stock actually built tends toward higher standards than that originally proposed.

Table 6 represents the housing planned for construction by the Tenth of Ramadan Development Authority. Construction of these 5000 units was to have commenced in July of 1982.<sup>94</sup>

SWECO's reactions to the Development Authority's plans focused on two issues. First, they thought that the plan to build the core flats in Neighborhood 14 and the economy and

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<sup>92</sup> COPA and SWECO, "Conceptual Planning Report." p. I-45.

<sup>93</sup> SWECO, "Growth Plan 1982 Draft Final Report." p. 3-2.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3-4.

TABLE 4: Characteristics of housing proposed for the first phase

Household income (LE/yr)	Recom'd type of bldg	Afforded size of bldg (m <sup>2</sup> )	No. of fam/unit	Affordable cost/unit	Approx. lot size (m <sup>2</sup> )	Share of total
<200	Low rise building flexible	<14	1)	600 LE	100	20%
200-500	Low rise building flexible	14-32 ave:25	1) 1,0	1400 LE	100	40%
500-900	3-4 storey bldgs, 1-2 bdrms/flat or low rise	25-56 ave:40	1,0	2900 LE	75% 100 25% 300	20%
900-1500	2-4 storey bldgs, 1-3 bdrms/flat low rise	40-71 ave:65	1,0	4400 LE	50% 300 50% 600	12%
>1500	2-4 storey bldgs, 1-3 bdrms/flat or low rise	40-	1,0	2800 LE	25% 300 75% 600	8%

1) 14m<sup>2</sup> per household is evidently not an acceptable standard of living. Therefore, solutions with several households sharing facilities like for example bathrooms may be feasible. Other solutions are self help activities based on organized site and service schemes.

(source: "CONCEPTUAL PLANNING REPORT," 1977)

TABLE 5: Summary of Housing Construction in Tenth of Ramadan, Spring 1982

Type of housing	Area, m <sup>2</sup> lot/floor	No. of units	Approximate Cost LE	Constr. Year
Core house type 2	90/18 90/29 90/40 90/55	121	2890 3246 3601 3957	1979 " " "
Core house type 3	96/22 96/38 96/62	105	3083 3498 4328	" " "
Core house type 4	120/23 120/38 120/79	172	3853 4268 5514	" " "
Core house type 6	90/24 90/37 90/49 90/62	102	2940 3332 3725 4117	" " " "
Four story standard apartment buildings				
Type 1	110	1064	6500	1978
" 2	86	568	5600	"
" 3	130	96	9000	1982
" 4a	68	40	4300	1978
" 4b	95	40	5500	"
Prefabricated units				
Arab Contractors	77 and 88	268	6725-7520	"
Bilbeis Contractors	91	586	6200	
Villas				
Attached	100	178	11000	"
Semi detached	100	198	11500	"
Detached	100	49	12500	"
Total number of units		3567		

(source: "GROWTH PLAN 1982")

TABLE 6: Currently Planned Housing Construction

Type of housing	No. of units	No. of rooms	Approximate expected cost/unit 1982 prices (SWECO Estimates) (LE)
Core flats (4 story)	1,000		4,000 - 5,000
Economy housing	2,400		
	400	1 room + rec.	5,000 - 7,000
	1200	2 " "	7,000 - 8,000
	800	3 " "	8,000 -10,000
Medium housing	1,600		
	400	2 room + rec.	8,000 - 9,000
	800	3 " "	10,000 -12,000
	400	4 " "	12,000 -14,000

(source: "GROWTH PLAN 1982")

medium housing in Neighborhood 9 would result in undesirably dispersed settlement.<sup>95</sup> Second, they objected to building such a large number of core flats, considering that coreflats are a comparatively recent and untested concept.<sup>96</sup> Finally, given current projections for industrial growth, they felt that this supply of housing will be still inadequate to meet the anticipated demand.<sup>97</sup>

In brief, it may be seen that the housing situation is problematic in that the city's labor force is not living there for a variety of reasons and a large portion of the housing stock sits empty, owned by individuals not in residence.

"We need more housing - the factory will work two shifts in the future and all will have to live in Tenth of Ramadan. We are trying to get land from the Authority to build housing for employees who have asked to join in cooperatives and own their apartments....We still need more housing."<sup>98</sup>  
(Factory owner - Tenth of Ramadan)

One reason that workers are not living in the city is the mere fact that there is a shortage of housing. The urgency of this need, and the validity of the demand, is clear in the words of the factory owner quoted above. The current

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<sup>95</sup> Ibid.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid., p. 1-10.

<sup>98</sup> Tenth of Ramadan, Egypt, interview with factory owner. June, 1982.

shortage of housing has been previously addressed in the discussion of public housing construction.

"I have been working in the city for four years. I have been reluctant to move because the city is lacking many services..."<sup>99</sup> (Development Authority Employee)

While this impediment to migration is not directly part of the issue of housing, it does reflect the fact that the "balanced development program" sought by the planners has not been effectively implemented. Sentiment affirming the inadequacy of services in the city proved to be widespread in this research, and the research team conducting the Growth Plan study pointed to it as one of the major factors deterring migration.<sup>100</sup> I believe that this situation is attributable to the lack of coordinated development in the city resulting to the very form and organization of the implementation process.

"Another issue is that I don't own the apartment in Tenth of Ramadan. It is owned by the Authority and I've had experience with similar cases when I worked Aswan for eleven years and I would be moved every now and then."<sup>101</sup> (Development Authority employee)

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<sup>99</sup> Tenth of Ramadan Development Authority, Tenth of Ramadan, Egypt, interview with employee, June, 1982.

<sup>100</sup> SWECO, "Growth Plan 1982 Draft Final Report." p. 1-14.

<sup>101</sup> Tenth of Ramadan Development Authority, Tenth of Ramadan, Egypt, in with employee, June, 1982.

The method of allocating housing chosen, which reflects the financial limits of household income in the city, constitutes another reason that workers are not living there. This reality stands in marked contrast to all of the planners' studies, analyses and recommendations made in an effort to ensure affordable housing. Realizing that the income of employees was insufficient to purchase flats, the Development Authority abandoned their original plan to sell them, and instead have rented them out at a rate of approximately 15 percent of the tenants' income.<sup>102</sup> As the tenant must move if employment ceases, the lack of security of tenure has discouraged residence. This situation suggests reference to the issue of standards which will be addressed in the following discussion.

"Housing is too expensive."<sup>103</sup> (Industrial employee)

Given the nature of the effective demand for housing in Tenth of Ramadan, the SWECO team concluded that the housing types already built, those being planned by the Development Authority and those types probably to be built by cooperatives and individuals will be beyond the financial capacity of most

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<sup>102</sup> SWECO, "Growth Plan 1982 Draft Final Report", p. 1-7.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid., p. 1-13.

of the potential future residents.<sup>104</sup>

The issue of housing types chosen for construction in Tenth of Ramadan is significant not only in terms of its impact on the nature of the city's development, but also in terms of what it suggests about the planners' place in this story. On one level it appears that there were cultural differences operative in terms of not only how to deal with the problem of providing affordable shelter for the poor but in perception of the problem in the first place. The following quotations illustrate the planners' perspective of the situation:

"As foreigners, we had a better sense of the problems of the poor than our Egyptian upper-class partners had."<sup>105</sup> (Swedish Planners)

"With our colleagues there were rows. They didn't believe our figures. They wanted changes."<sup>106</sup> (Swedish Planners)

"Affordable housing was a highly controversial issue, there was even controversy over the likely composition of the population."<sup>107</sup> (Swedish Planners)

"In the original schemes there were lots of simple housing. Our Egyptian colleagues didn't believe that they could only afford 14m<sup>2</sup> per family. 'It is not decent for an Egyptian to live in less than 30m<sup>2</sup>, it's even better if the poor

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104 Ibid., p. 3-1.

105 SWECO, Stockholm, Sweden, interview with member of planning team, February, 1983.

106 Ibid.

107 Ibid.

can live in 42m<sup>2</sup>. How can a man live in less? No, we have to start with giving them a decent standard.' They look at their own living situation and don't believe that people could or should live in less."<sup>108</sup> (Swedish Planners)

The controversy over the composition of the population indicates a denial of the fact that it would be members of lower income groups who would be likely to migrate to Tenth of Ramadan in response to the industrial employment opportunities there. At the same time, despite the very obvious inadequacy of the living conditions of the poor in Egypt, such as in the City of the Dead in Cairo, for example, the story here seems to point to a sort of myopic idealism on the part of some Egyptians who are in the position to help. Unfortunately, in this case the idealism proved sufficiently unrealistic to be dysfunctional in result, if it was in fact their objective to provide adequate shelter to the poor at prices that they can afford.

"The kind [of housing] that they have now requires subsidies which are impossible in Egypt. If they adopt policies demanding huge amounts of subsidies, the majority of the population will have less chance to get housing."<sup>109</sup>

The final result of this disagreement over affordable standards of housing between the Egyptian and Swedish members

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<sup>108</sup> Ibid.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid.

of the planning team in terms of what kinds of housing actually were constructed suggests the political dimensions of this issue. Its political sensitivity is expressed in the story of a high governmental official who was soon out of office after attempting to initiate an affordable housing study with an international agency.<sup>110</sup>

"Regarding the question of housing and planning for the poor. is difficult in Egypt. It's a highly political question - if possible, subsidies stay with the middle and upper classes."<sup>111</sup> (Swedish Planners)

"Not just political overtones, but political overtones in Egypt, because subsidies are granted for expensive villas and flats."<sup>112</sup> (Swedish Planners)

The issue of housing standards and the concomitant level of government subsidies demanded is indeed a political one when seen in terms of an allocation of limited resources. The political overtones of this issue are implicit in the current housing finance system in Egypt, outlined in Figure 5, which clearly indicates the favoring of medium and above-medium income groups.<sup>113</sup>

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110 Ibid.

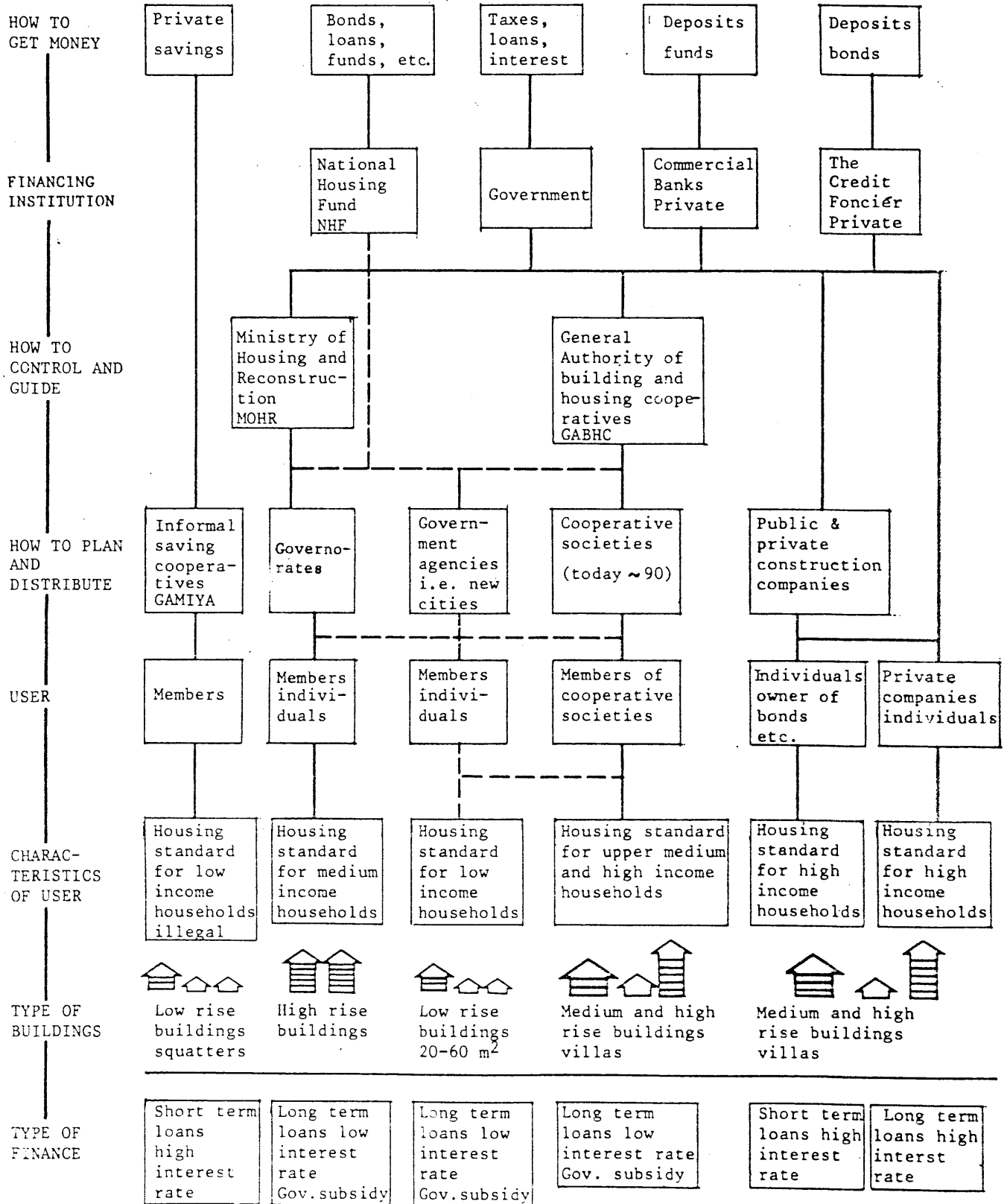
111 Ibid.

112 Ibid.

113 COPA and SWECO, "Conceptual Planning Report," p. I-34.

Figure 5

MAIN CHARACTERISTICS OF THE EXISTING HOUSING FINANCE SYSTEM IN EGYPT



(source: "Conceptual Planning Report")

"They have an aversion to building a slum. Key decisions were taken with no prior analysis of consequences." (Were the decisions about housing types made high up?) "High up? Centralized. yes, at least as high as the closets advisors to the Minister."<sup>114</sup> (Swedish Planner)

Another issue that this situation points to is the impact of the bureaucratic structure, particularly the problems inherent in a system in which decision making is highly centralized. Disregarding the political overtones of the housing issue in the national context, with such a high degree of centralization, the ability of the official to make a well informed decision becomes increasingly limited.

Finally decisions made about the city's housing type makes a strong case for the "power of image."

"They have an idealized vision of it - a 'garden city' but in fact if it is an Industrial city, it's not a garden city, it's not pretty, it's denser more informal..."<sup>115</sup> (Foreign Consultant in Egypt)

"They still had the characteristic dreams of creating a show case and thus didn't want to build a slum."<sup>116</sup> (Swedish Planner)

"The architect's attitude was very much a 'showcase' one. The final form of the city was an important topic. I disagree. Development process arguments about form were done at the expense of

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<sup>114</sup> SWECO. Stockholm. Sweden. interview with member of planning team, February, 1983.

<sup>115</sup> Ministry of Development COPA, Egypt. interview. June 1982.

<sup>116</sup> SWECO. Stockholm. Sweden. interview with member of planning team, February, 1983.

content and the implementation process "117 (Swedish Planner)

This appears to have been an important issue not only for the government officials. It is evident from the visual imagery of planning documents and the words of a non-architect member of the planning team that this was an important consideration for the architect/planners as well. I believe that this issue of the image of the new town is fundamentally related to the fact that the new town approach was the one chosen as a solution to the problem; a potentially imageable solution to a very visible problem of overurbanization. Indeed, residents always mentioned in the interviews conducted their enjoyment of the greenery, low density, clean air and quiet. Faced with the reality of urban life in Egypt, such an attitude is the reaction that one would expect.

"The main mistake - they have allocated apartments to whomever can pay for it, this turned out to be people working in Arab countries who took the apartments, paid the downpayments and closed them and went back to these countries."118  
(Egyptian Official)

As previously stated, an overwhelmingly high percentage of the built housing is empty. Ironically, the overall housing shortage in the country is one explanation. That is, with such

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117 Ibid.

118 Tenth of Ramadan D A. Tenth of Ramadan. Egypt, interview with official, June, 1982.

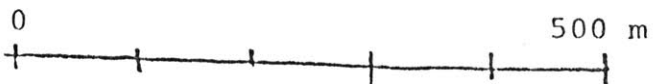
a shortage an individual is unlikely to refuse the opportunity for home ownership when it is presented. At the same time temporary employment in one of the oil-rich Arab countries offering higher salaries facilitates meeting the financial requirements of ownership. Consequently the housing remains empty until the individual repatriates, as existing law prohibits sub-letting. Figure 5 indicates occupied and unoccupied housing in the city.<sup>119</sup>

NORTH



Occupied Housing

Housing not used



500 m

Figure 5

Housing 1982 - Four neighbour -  
hoods in Tenth of Ramadan .

Source: "Growth Plan 1982"

## CONCLUSION

The story of Tenth of Ramadan, specifically in terms of its housing program, is of necessity unfinished and only the passage of time will reveal its fate. Moreover, no pretext can be made that the story presented here of the situation thus far, is complete. Research done by a foreigner on a very sensitive subject was in this case, subject to its own constraints. Access to information involved time consuming and often fruitless quests. Information gathered was sometimes inadequate or marked with inconsistencies, for example in regard to census data. It was the objective, however to present here as complete and as accurate a picture as possible, given the fact that in research of this nature, there is no access to perfect information.

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<sup>119</sup> SWECO. "Growth Plan 1982 Draft Final Report", p. I-22.

While many of the events in the history of this new town are unique to Tenth of Ramadan, it is suggested here that there are certain characteristics related to the role of the planner in this context which are generally applicable to international practice. It is suggested that these may be considered in terms of the lessons that they contain which could prove useful in future, similar projects. These include the way in which the planners' role was defined; the planners' perception of themselves in this role of advice-giver in relation to the context; the limits perceived by the planners associated with this role; issues related to the nature of the advice in terms of form and content; and the planners' response in this case to their perceived ineffectiveness.

#### Definition of the Planners' Role

"They never wanted discussion on whether to go one way or another. The Minister said that it was SWECO's job to advise. It was impossible to get feedback."<sup>120</sup> (Swedish Planner)

"We were not consulted at all when crucial policy decisions were made, which would have made sense. Key decisions were always taken without prior expert analysis. It was probably viewed as politically necessary to do that. Consultants were told 'This is what will happen.'<sup>121</sup> (Swedish Planner)

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<sup>120</sup> SWECO. Stockholm, Sweden. interview with member of planning team, February, 1983.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid.

It appears that the parameters of the planners' role in this story were defined by the political and bureaucratic context as that of "advice-giver." Advice-giver in this case implied two, one-way channels of communication without benefit of response in either direction. Advice was "sent" from the planners in the direction of the Government. The Government "sent" word of the results of decisions it had made in the direction of the planners. Given the frequent lack of correspondence between the advice and the results of political decisions, for example in regard to the issue of affordable housing, one could question whether or not the advice "sent" ever "arrived."

#### The Planners' Self-Perception as Advice-Giver

Given the contextual definition of the planners' role as that of advice-giver, raises the question of what the planners considered their role as advice-giver to be. One Swedish planner expressed in an interview the sentiment that SWECO sometimes acted as a conscience in this scenario by maintaining what they felt to be politically correct position.<sup>122</sup> He went on to stress that regardless of the reception of his suggestions, "...the only way to make it correct is to tell what I feel."<sup>123</sup>

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122 Ibid.

123 Ibid.

At the same time, one of the planners considered the possibility that three consecutive commissions as 'advice-giver' on the project could be an indication of Egyptian confidence in his performance. However he continued with an analogy to a film in which the Marx Brothers sold their knowledge, then were approached for an explanation, which they then sold, and then they were approached for an explanation for the previous explanation, which they in turn sold, etc. The planner concluded with the possibility that rather than a sign of confidence, his continued involvement in this position might represent a sign of despair 124

Another dimension to the planners' self-perception in this role of advice-giver involves their perception of their relation to the context. While it is clear that they consider their position to be marginal, they've considered both negative and the potentially positive aspects of not being part of the context. On one hand, while one planner suggested that in making politically unfavorable recommendations that, "...maybe as foreigners we have a better change."<sup>125</sup> The story thus far appears to provide no support for this hope. On the other hand, the awareness of not being part of the context is made clear in one planners' discussion of his uncertainty

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124 Ibid.

125 Ibid.

about the intentions of some officials despite the opinions that they express at meetings, particularly when the results of their decisions contradict signals received by the planner.

The planners' intense realization of being outside of the context is expressed to a certain extent in their having ignored it in their advice-giving.

"We should perhaps have been listening to what was realistic and adjust "126 (Swedish Planner)

"We come in and size up the problem from scratch and try to understand the Egyptian reality, not taking into account political constraints."127 (Swedish Planner)

To a certain extent, it appears that the planners studied, analyzed and dissected the problem, and then offered a solution which assumed a rational, predictable and well-controlled context in which their suggestions would be respected, accepted and realized. This dismissal of the impact of the context, particularly the political context, on the results of the planning process suggests the image of a technician operating in a vacuum, which is clearly never the case in the planning. The planners' recommendations in some ways appear to be characterized by an idealism which ignored the reality of the context and expected somehow that

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126 Ibid.

127 Ibid.

the context would be responsive to the demands of the plan. For example, in regard to housing finance, despite the nature of the existing housing financing system, their plans were based on assumptions that other alternatives would be made available.

"I feel that in general everything I'm doing is not coming out to the result that I hope for."<sup>128</sup>  
(Swedish Planner)

"The Minister isn't knowing (sic) the correct way. He calls for our opinion. What will he do with our report. burn it, or use it? He's clever enough to know what's possible and what's not."<sup>129</sup>  
(Swedish Planner)

The planners' awareness of the limited effectiveness inherent in their marginal position is clearly reflected in the words above. As illustrated previously, this story contains numerous examples in which recommendations made by the planners were never realized, such as the land allocation policy or the time frame for the first stage of development.

"It is even purely a language problem, few people at Tenth of Ramadan even speak English."<sup>130</sup>  
(Swedish Planner)

"You speak one language telling them to do 'this', and the receiver doesn't understand

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128 Ibid.

129 Ibid.

130 Ibid.

'this'."131 (Swedish Planner)

"You have to learn how to deal with all of these other factors. While I've worked in Egypt since 1962, I still don't understand so much, each new town or situation is different. You don't even know if you are understanding the same things, even if you are using the same words, you don't know if you are meaning the same things."132 (Swedish Planner)

"I really thought that I knew Egypt more than most. It's always difficult to really know."133

Intangible in many respects, the difficulties inherent in functioning in a different cultural context were considered in the planners' realization of the limits to their effectiveness in the position of advice-givers. Most obvious were the problems resulting from the language barrier. More subtle and, perhaps because of this, more difficult to deal with were the communication problems resulting from different perceptions or understandings of a situation due to different cultural backgrounds. The different attitudes toward the provision of housing for the poor are an example.

#### Nature of the Advice: Content

"Perhaps it's our fault. we may have been too optimistic. Maybe the rules we gave them were too

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131 Ibid.

132 Ibid.

133 Ibid.

difficult to follow."<sup>134</sup>

One possible explanation for the current situation considered by the planners was the nature of their advice. Were the prescriptions recommended too difficult to be followed? Was their advice simply too optimistic, idealistic?

To some extent there were inherent in the very nature of the project certain characteristics contributing to its current status. First of all was its grand scale in terms of size and the nobility of its objectives, such as provision of affordable housing to a range of income groups. This is particularly important given the Egyptian political and bureaucratic context and the fact that it was the first such project attempted by the Egyptian government. As such, simultaneous to the development of Tenth of Ramadan the government was still in the process of creating legislation and organizations for implementing its new urbanization policy.

Another aspect of the nature of the project, or "context" of the advice, which influenced its outcome, relates to the notion of 'image'. Could it not to a certain extent be expected that a "model city" or "garden city" attitude might accompany the new town approach given the fact that this was the approach chosen, as opposed to other less imageable solutions to Egypt's very visible problems of over-urbanization?

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<sup>134</sup> Ibid.

Nature of the Advice: Form

The planners also considered the form that their advice took as a possible explanation for their limited effectiveness. In interviews, for example, they suggested the possibility that reports such as the "First Stage Final Report" might not have been read due to its length.<sup>135</sup> They pointed to the degree of centralization of decision making in the Egyptian bureaucracy, in which "everything must go through the chairman, and therefore he must digest everything," as an argument against their long reports.<sup>136</sup> They also suggested that in response to the Egyptians' lack of experience with such projects, perhaps they should still have done the comprehensive background work but presented the client with simpler, more easily understood reports.<sup>137</sup> Furthermore, they suggested that perhaps the Egyptians had expected a manual to be able to follow step by step as opposed to the kinds of planning documents that they were given.<sup>138</sup>

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135 Ibid.

136 Ibid.

137 Ibid.

138 Ibid.

## The Planners' Response To The Limits Of Their Role as Advice-Givers

"If you have no experience, how can you do it? Therefore. you need a group. not one time advice. because tomorrow there will be something that is not in the manual."<sup>139</sup>

"The whole project is complicated, new and pioneering. It would be wishful thinking to believe that a few one-time pieces of advice would be enough."

"The implementation of Tenth of Ramadan for the coming decade needs a strong and flexible management, using the utmost of available knowledge and experience. The present organization should for a limited period be given extra assistance and extra resources."<sup>140</sup>

In both interviews and "Growth Plan 1982," the planners suggested that the Egyptians have viewed the first stage of development of the new town as one large construction project. In contrast they stress the vital need for an effective management system, referring to the lack of managerial skills evidenced in the form that development has thus far taken.<sup>141</sup> In "Growth Plan 1982," they outline four "overruling recommendations."<sup>142</sup> In addition to the repeatedly stressed recommendations, "Balanced Growth," "Independent Growth," and

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<sup>139</sup> Ibid.

<sup>140</sup> SWECO. "Growth Plan 1982 Draft Final Report", p. iii

<sup>141</sup> SWECO. Stockholm, Sweden. interview with member of planning team, February, 1983.

<sup>142</sup> SWECO. "Growth Plan 1982 Draft Final Report", p. iii

"Rapid Growth," the list now includes "High Class Management Assistance."<sup>143</sup> This recommendation indicated the planners' response to their experiences in the role of advice-giver. Ironic, however, is the fact that this is advice. With the planners' role unchanged, any recommendation will continue to carry the weight of a mere recommendation. The level of realization of previous recommendations is illustrated in the number of such recommendations finding repetition yet again in the latest report, "Growth Plan 1982." Given the reputedly poor reception of the report in Cairo and suspicion concerning the management recommendations, could one not consider this report just like all of the previous recommendations in terms of the lack of concern with political feasibility or palatability that it indicates? This is especially true given the implications of suggestions about management assistance. Moreover, "Growth Plan 1982" abounds with the same recommendations found in previous documents generated by the planners, such as the need to rectify the land allocation situation, the creation of alternative means of housing finance, or the creation of a building materials pool and provision of "technical assistance for housing construction activities."<sup>144</sup> However, at this point it must be remembered

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<sup>143</sup> Ibid., p. viii

<sup>144</sup> Ibid., p. xi.

that the results of the recommendations presented in the "Growth Plan 1982" remain to be seen.

### Recommendations

This research on Tenth of Ramadan initially involved looking at the contrast between the current situation and the proposed plans as a result of the constraints on implementation, those being physical, financial, bureaucratic, institutional, cultural, etc. Consequently, the interviews conducted in Egypt were with officials involved in the implementation process and those presently dealing with the results of previous implementation decisions. These interviews mainly focused exclusively on the implementation process -- events that occurred and decisions that were made that impacted the status of the development of the new town to date. The implementation theme again ran through the interviews with the Swedish planners. However, they also included an attempt to get a sense of the planners' "story of what happened."

However, through time, as my understanding and thinking evolved, it became apparent that the story was speaking more to the issue of the role of the foreign planning consultant. It appeared that the "implementation constraints" perspective was a limited one. Rather, Tenth of Ramadan, in this case concentrating on housing, was a story about a particular type of planning.

Consequently, in retrospect if this had been the

perspective of the research at its initiation, other actors and other issues would have been included. To begin with both Shawky-Zeitoun and COPA, the Egyptian planning firms would have been interviewed. Issues addressed would have included the following: the actual nature of their relationship to the project, with their Swedish counterparts and with the government organizations involved; what they perceived their role to be; what they considered to be their capacities and limits in this role; what their expectations from SWECO were; in what ways they perceived themselves to be similar and different from SWECO in their involvement in the project; what were the advantages and disadvantages they perceived themselves as having because they were Egyptians; and how these differences and similarities, advantages and disadvantages were expressed in the context of the project.

Secondly, in interviewing the Egyptian government officials the following areas would have been addressed: their understanding and expectations of the planners role, i.e. the Egyptian and Swedish planners, including their limits and capacities; any differences in expectations that they had between the Egyptians and Swedish planners; what they saw their own role to be in this story, including its limits and capacities; what they perceived their relationship with the planners to be; what if any were the differences between this and other planning projects that they'd been involved.

Thirdly, while many of these issues came out in interviews with members of the Swedish team, I would have explicitly asked: where they saw themselves fit into this

picture; what they considered their role to be; how this differed from the roles that they have played in other planning stories in Sweden and in the developing world; whether they saw their role as being that of "advice-giver", and if so what does this really mean to them; what advice would they give to other planners in similar situations, such as those foreign consultants working on other Egyptian new towns as a result of their experiences; what would they have done differently; and how they perceived their relationship with the Egyptian officials involved in implementation.

Finally, I would have interviewed the planners, both Egyptian and foreign involved in the other new town projects presently underway, such as Sadat City and El Obour. Addressing issues previously outlined, I would have looked for consistencies, discrepancies and evidence of learning from the Tenth of Ramadan experience.

The comprehensive picture that such a study could potentially provide, would be likely to generate a set of recommendations to foreign consultants involved in similar situations. However, recognizing the limits of the present study, it might still be possible to propose certain recommendations.

First of all given the overall nature of Tenth of Ramadan as an EVENT in context of the process of urbanization in Egypt, as exemplified in the new and special legislation and organizations created on its behalf, efforts might have been made to make components of the EVENT less alien and obtrusive

and more part of the on-going existing processes. For example, the housing program proposed was foreign to the reality of the existing housing process and demanded for its success certain institutional changes, such as changes in the housing finance system and government housing policy. In this regard, it appears that plans were reduced to the level of expectations, without benefit of actions to be taken to increase the likelihood of their outcome. Thus, one recommendation might be that the foreign planning consultant maintain an acute awareness of the limits of the context to change to accommodate their plans and also assess the on-going processes in terms of their political and institutional impacts in order to determine their flexible points and thus design interventions more conducive to the on-going processes and potentially more politically feasible.

The planners in this case explicitly admitted that they had not taken into consideration in their planning the political constraints influencing its outcome. Consequently, such recognition must be stressed as a fundamental recommendation. Furthermore, in their retrospection, they realized that their plans should have shown a greater reflection and indeed responsiveness to the Egyptian reality. However abstract in concept the recommendation that this admission suggests is vital to any planning process, especially in the international context.

Although general in nature, I believe that these few recommendations would be potentially applicable to specific issues and could indeed contribute to a more effective planning process.

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