



UNITED NATIONS CENTRE FOR HUMAN SETTLEMENTS - UNCHS (Habitat)

PROJECT IDENTIFICATION MISSION

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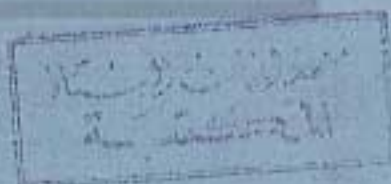
ARAB REPUBLIC OF EGYPT

جمهورية مصر العربية

MISSION REPORT

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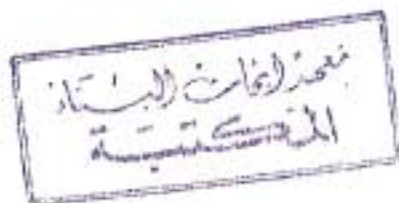
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A - BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Government of the Arab Republic of Egypt and the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (UNCHS-Habitat) expressed their mutual interest to establish future technical cooperation in the field of Human Settlements.

Consequently, correspondence was exchanged between His Excellency Mr. Hassaballah Mohamed El Kafrawi, Minister of Development, New Communities, Housing and Public Utilities, and Dr. Arcot Ramachandran, Under Secretary General, Executive Director of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements.

As a result, UNCHS fielded a Project Identification Mission consisting of:

1. Mr. Bogdan Wyporek, UNCHS Human Settlements Adviser of the Unit of Africa, West Asia and Europe (AWAE), and,
2. Mr. Ismail Hammad, Architect/Physical Planner, UNCHS Consultant, and writer of this report.

The Mission visited Cairo from 19 to 24 March 1988, in order to discuss, explore and identify subjects and potential areas where UNCHS can extend its technical assistance to the Ministry in the field of Human Settlements. In achieving its goal, the Mission met with His Excellency the Minister and other key officials.

On the Mission's final day, a preliminary draft report generally outlining the major issues, conclusions and recommendations, and the follow-up action was discussed with Mr. Moustafa Rizk, the First Under Secretary of the Ministry. After introducing some minor alterations, that preliminary draft report was mutually approved and endorsed.

Within the framework of the Terms of Reference and based on the outlines of the approved preliminary draft report, this Final Mission Report elaborating on the issues mentioned therein, was prepared at the end of the abovementioned Project Identification Mission to Egypt, on behalf of UNCHS (Habitat).

B - SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Egypt and UNCHS (Habitat) decided to establish technical cooperation in the field of human settlements, which did not exist to date. Action started by fielding an UNCHS Project Identification Mission in Cairo. The Mission held discussions with His Excellency the Minister of Development, New Communities, Housing and Public Utilities together with key officials at the Ministry. Due to time constraint, the Mission conducted only one field visit to the new community the "Tenth of Ramadan City".

Discussions yielded many findings, the most significant was the willingness expressed by both parties to cooperate. In view of its second 5-year-national-development-plan, the present Government decided to embark on an ambitious housing programme. Efforts are mostly geared towards the construction of medium and low cost housing units in urban centres. Due to scarcity of lands in urban centres, "core-house" units were, are and will be constructed based on a vertical approach rather than horizontal. The major philosophy behind adopting that concept, is that it reduces significantly the general construction cost, particularly its related infrastructure.

In urban centres, physical planning activities are meant to arrest the "informal" development, and control the encroachment of urbanization on the limited agricultural land. Nationwide, several Master Plans and planning schemes are completed and approved, others are still being studied. Exhaustive efforts are under way to train fresh planners and improve seniors' capacity. Bilateral cooperation exists between Egypt and each of France and the Federal Republic of Germany in some physical planning activities. Technical cooperation also exists between Egypt and several European countries, the U.S.A., and Japan in many domains related to human settlements and building materials industries.

It is obvious that the Government has been responding, within available resources, to the enormous demand for housing and whenever the pressure was felt. It is also clear that national, regional and international professional expertise exist. However, scarcity of capital, as one of the major constraints, hampers the pace of implementation of different projects in the field of human settlements.

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Over population and limited urban lands, lead the Government to expand its housing projects through creating new communities in the desert. Some are totally independent and self reliant like Sadat City and the Tenth of Ramadan City. Others are satellite settlements close to existing urban centres, such as New Amreya (near Alexandria) and Sixth of October (near Cairo).

It was made clear to the Mission that the Ministry is ready to contribute funds to a future project providing UNCHS technical assistance. It was also clear that UNDP would revise and reconsider its Country Programme, in the event that the Government decides that an UNCHS technical assistance is a priority requirement.

To this end, it is therefore recommended that a project be formulated immediately in one, or more, of the following areas of cooperation:

1. Evaluating the "core-house" vertical concept, in terms of its technical viability, and socio-economic and environmental impacts.
2. Establishing a comprehensive computer system for physical planning of human settlements, both at their planning and management stages.
3. Strengthening the existing physical planning capacity, by organizing short-term training visits for national professionals to planning institutions abroad.
4. Assisting in updating and preparing appropriate physical planning standards, taking different local environmental variants into consideration.

The Ministry is, therefore, invited to follow the usual procedure by submitting its request for UNCHS technical assistance through, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, to the UNDP office in Cairo. Upon receipt of such a request, UNCHS will field a Project Formulation Mission in Cairo, after which a Project Document would be drafted. That Project Document will be submitted to the Ministry through UNDP, for consideration and approval. Once funds are allocated as stipulated in the provisions of the Project Document, UNCHS and UNDP will take the appropriate action in collaboration with the Ministry to realize the agreed project(s).

