

The City Of Tomorrow and Culture Heritage

Urban regeneration as an effective tool to accomplish the sustainable development in Arab cities

-A Case study of Cairo, Egypt-

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Abstract: - Cities consider as a vibrant urban entities, Influenced by what are happening from the political, economic, social, industrial and technological changes over its lifetime, and take place many of the transformations and significant changes particularly in its urban structure, and often the historic centers falters as an inevitable result of the inability to adapt quickly with these various changes and thus exposed to many negative effects which must be dealt with in order to interact again with other parts the city. For this purpose, which has emerged over the past century, many of the attempts emerged to deal with intensified urban problems in many areas of the world. Hence the importance of highlighting the method of urban regeneration that consider as a good introduction to sustainable development in historic areas to re-integrate these distinguished regions with the new urban fabric and achieve a positive interaction between them and especially that the process of urban regeneration include a dynamic state to dealing with culture heritage exceed the old methods in preserving to keep the original state of urban fabric to re-use and permanent maintenance ,and it also includes social and economic development and provide jobs for the local community. The study covers theoretical and practical aspects of conservation practice and heritage regeneration initiatives of historic cities, relevant to Egypt, taking into consideration social, cultural, political, economic aspects and stakeholders' aspirations. It seeks to explore whether the current practice facilitate in regenerating the economy of the areas to ensure the sustainable continuity of the local culture in the historic urban environment in Egypt.

Key-Words: cultural heritage- urban regeneration- sustainable development- Belonging and identity .

1 Introduction

Most of the world's major cities have been facing the pressure of new development and redevelopment due to their rapid socio-economic development during the last few decades. This rapid increase has created problems for the heritage in these cities. Every new development and redevelopment is going to tear down the old fabric and socio-economic character in them [1]. Developers and policy makers in the developing nations have started thinking to

create a balance between development and heritage conservation. But these efforts did not lead to "attract development" to these areas and re-life, because of its methods of preserving the culture heritage which isolate it from its surrounding and especially in the Arab cities that have urban heritage cores (Cairo, Damascus, Tunisia, Baghdad), It also has contributed to the damage to the vernacular built environment, cultural values and collective memory

of inhabitants, and this trend continued until the last two decades of the last century.

This paper aims to study the theoretical and practical aspects of urban regeneration as an effective method to achieve the conservation and balance between the tangible and intangible elements of heritage. So as to maintain of the intrinsic value of built cultural heritage and its importance as an asset for sustainable economic and social development in the cities in the long term.

2 Theoretical concepts

2.1 Historic Centre Of The City - The Culture Heritage

Even though the historic center - which considered a vital part in the Arab cities - is often the first areas that deteriorate by losing its urban job and the migration of its indigenous population in favor of the new urban areas, but it is distinguished in presence of a unique urban fabric including historical buildings that have big value which means potentials for its future development [2].

Nevertheless parts of the historic areas in most Arab cities had been removed in the first half of the twentieth century because of "urban renewal" projects before they can be regarded as economic resource of cultural tourism for many cities.

The way to deal with the historical urban fabric changed recently because Arab governments are starting to look to these historical areas to being a "cultural and economic potential" And a means to cultural communicate, and its exclusive ability to attract a fair share of the world tourism.

The "learning from Heritage" has become a reason to preserve the architectural heritage for future generations [3].

Even in recent years "rehabilitation" for using the heritage areas in modern activities it has become acceptable with allowing for limited changes "Adaptive Reuse", this two approaches are accepted by the local government to maintain the "essence of the architectural heritage" Even up to the future generations and recognize them on their own.

2.2 Heritage Conservation

The term heritage has different meanings to different context. World Heritage Convention classifies heritage into two categories: Cultural heritage: a monument, group of buildings or site of historical, aesthetic, archaeological, scientific, ethnological or anthropological value. Natural heritage: includes outstanding physical, biological, and geographical features, different kind of plants or animals species and areas with significant scientific

or aesthetic value those could be best for conservation [4]. This paper mainly focuses on cultural heritage which includes both tangible and intangible heritage. Heritage can bridge a link between different generations with their ancestors. Hence heritage is a source of social attachment and sense of belongings. Heritage conservation refers to the protection of heritage from damages since heritage is non-renewable in nature. Sustainable heritage conservation is "an approach to conservation that preserves the best of the heritage but does so without imposing insupportable costs and which affects a rational balance between conservation and change" [5]. The basic concept of conserving a building is to protect the built and cultural heritage [6]. This can significantly maintain social capital and generate economic resources as well as can strengthen the sense of living place and sense of belongings.

2.3 Urban Regeneration:

Urban regeneration involves comprehensive attempts to retrieve the decline in urban areas. The decline could be in the form of physical, social and/or economic functions in the urban fabric. The regeneration process is thus an integral part of urban planning which aims at reconciling the decline in the urban society and townscape [1]. The very nature of urban regeneration is interventionist activities [7]. It could be operated through various modes: by demolition and redevelopment, through refurbishment for the current use or conversion for a new use [8]. But these two modes cannot assure the sustainable and vibrant urban life and coherent city fabric. Long-term urban regeneration should thus incorporate the concept of sustainability.

Defines sustainable urban regeneration as Comprehensive and integrated vision and action which leads to the resolution of urban problems and which seeks to bring about a lasting environment in the economic, physical, social and environmental condition of an area that has been subjected to change. Comprehensive policy measures are required to deal with the crucial problem of dilapidated urban fabric and townscape to bring back the sense of living place to secure the social coherence, economic efficiency and environmental sustainability in urban areas. The comprehensive policies for sustainable urban regeneration can be attained by integrating heritage conservation in the broader framework of urban regeneration [7].

2.4 Sustainable Development:

Although many definitions abound, the most often used definition of sustainable development is that proposed by the Brundtland Commission [9]. This

broad definition, which will be used in this dissertation, does not limit the scope of sustainability. The explanation does, however, touch on the importance of intergenerational equity. This concept of conserving resources for future generations is one of the major features that distinguish sustainable development policy from traditional environmental policy, which also seeks to internalize the externalities of environmental degradation. The overall goal of sustainable development (SD) is the long-term stability of the economy and environment; this is only achievable through the integration and acknowledgement of economic, environmental, and social concerns throughout the decision making process [10].

Sustainable development expression officially went on to appear in a report on development and the environment, prepared by the United Nations in 1987 to express the pursuit of justice and equality among current and future generations when development planning in the various communities.

The key principle of sustainable development underlying all others is the integration of environmental, social, and economic concerns into all aspects of decision making. All other principles in the SD framework have integrated decision making at their core [11]. It is this deeply fixed concept of integration that distinguishes sustainability from other forms of policy.

From the above we can draw three main principles for the development are: social justice, environmental protection and economic efficiency. With this clear vision of the presence of sustainable development at the intersection of economics, environment and society, it should be detailed development goals in the three areas that is covered before propose any specific acts within the local environment in a clear and measurable way. The principles of the strategic planning of sustainable development requires putting vision and goals even can propose appropriate actions that achieve sustainable development within the community as shown in Fig.1.

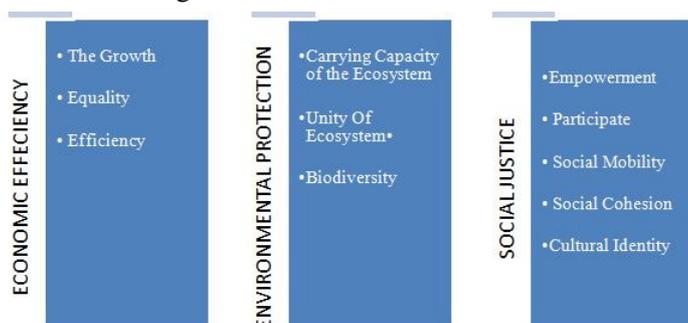


Fig.1: sub-goals for the three main principles of sustainable development

2.4 Heritage Conservation, Urban Regeneration in the context of Sustainable Development

World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) defines sustainable development as “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” [12]. This emphasis for a balance and integrated urban growth by utilizing minimum resources for dynamic results of sustainable development. During the preparatory meetings for the URBAN21 Conference (Berlin, July 2000) the following definition was developed to define sustainable urban development: *“Improving the quality of life in a city, including ecological, cultural, political, institutional, social and economic components without leaving a burden on the future generations. A burden which is the result of a reduced natural capital and an excessive local debt. Our aim is that the flow principle that is based on equilibrium of material and energy and also financial input/output plays a crucial role in all future decisions upon the development of urban areas.”* Heritage conservation can help to visualize the diversity of urban form and to explore the cultural, political and historical character of the urban areas. Heritage conservation can also support to dig out some crucial incidents and events that might have brought major changes in the development trends, urban fabric of the city and the townscape. In a way the conservation of heritage is a crucial factor in the long-term prosperity of a city. Furthermore the involvement of community in the process of heritage conservation can bring sustainable results. Sustainable urban regeneration is a comprehensive process which deals with the social, economic and environmental vitalization at the same time for a long term urban vibrancy. Sustainable urban regeneration refers to a process that will help reconstruct or rehabilitate the urban fabric, revitalize community-based economy and built social capital [13]. It not only deals with social equity and justice issues, but also promotes and enhances diversity in culture, economy and built form [13]. Heritage conservation is a broader and holistic term which needs broader policy for better results by involving the community for getting the sustainability principles. Actually community participation increases the effectiveness and can initiate transparent measures to control the regeneration process. Effectiveness in this context is measured in terms of how well the process serves to solve urban problems. Heritage is a catalyst for sustainable urban regeneration. A comprehensive

policy for heritage conservation by involving the community as a partner and integrating the heritage conservation in the process of urban regeneration which can lead a way to sustainable development. The results of sustainable development can be attained by achieving social coherence, economic viability and environmental up gradation by the comprehensive policy for sustainable urban regeneration [1].

3 practical concepts

3.1 Historic Cairo World Heritage Property

Cairo is home to a number of historical districts and significant monuments that demonstrate the architectural wealth of the city, not only as a capital of the Islamic World but as a wonder of the human urban experience. As such, it was inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1979 under the title of “Islamic Cairo”, recognizing “*its absolutely unquestionable historical, archaeological and urbanistic importance*” [14].

Cairo’s historic city was cited as covering an area of around 32 square kilometres on the eastern bank of the River Nile and surrounded by the modern quarters of Greater Cairo. The site was described as an historic fabric where vast areas are still intact.

Following the inscription of Islamic Cairo, UNESCO and the World Heritage Centre (WHC), in cooperation with the Egyptian government, international institutions and experts, carried out regular missions to evaluate the state of conservation in the site. On several occasions, the World Heritage Committee encouraged the government to formalize the limits of the historic city and pointed out the need to strengthen coordination among the institutions involved in its protection, while taking into account the special character and complexity of the site [15].

According to the *Convention concerning the Protection of World Cultural and Natural Heritage*, a State Party is required to put in place legislative and regulatory measures to safeguard its World Heritage properties. The Egyptian government has issued several decrees and laws concerned with the protection of the historic city. To safeguard Islamic Cairo, and in response to an ICOMOS monitoring mission concerned about the urban and architectural heritage of the city after the 1992 earthquake, an *International Symposium on the Conservation and Restoration of Islamic Cairo* was organized in Cairo by the Ministry of Culture (MoC), in collaboration with the WHC, in February 2002. Attended by conservation experts, the conference provided a forum for public debate on the problems involved in the preservation of cultural heritage in Islamic Cairo

as a living city. It included site visits, thematic sessions on the conservation of the World Heritage property and technical workshops on projects partially implemented by the Supreme Council of Antiquities (SCA) , Fig.2, Fig.3.



Fig.2: Preliminary plan showing the borders of the World Heritage property submitted by the Egyptian Government to the World Heritage Committee in 2006

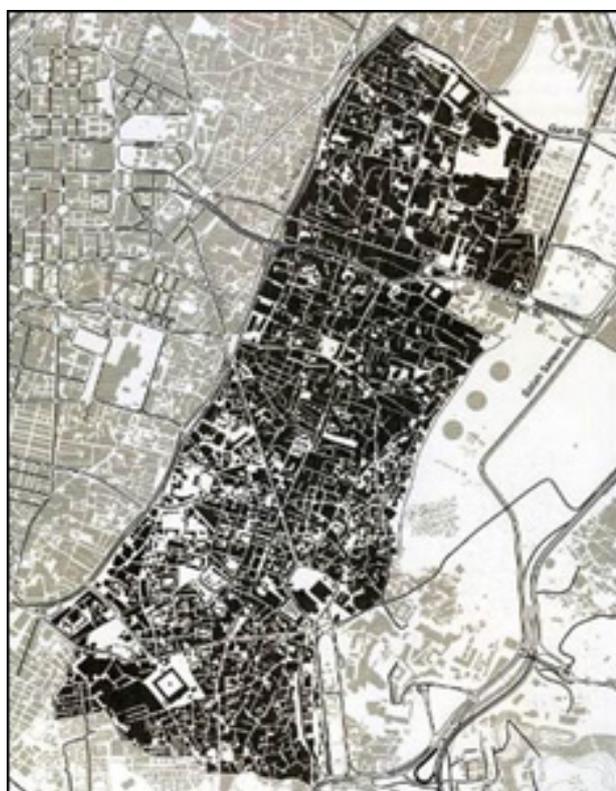


Fig.3: The study area of the Historic Cairo Project launched by the Ministry of Culture in 2002

The conclusions of the symposium were discussed by the World Heritage Committee at its 28th session (Suzhou, 2004), and the Government was asked to implement its recommendations [15].

In 2007, in response to a World Heritage Committee request to identify the boundaries of the property [16], four maps were submitted by the Egyptian government, together with a request to modify the name of the property to “Historic Cairo”. The maps incorporated five zones including the Fatimid city, parts of the northern and southern necropolis, and the al-Fustat area. These maps are the only official documents providing the delimitation of the site. However, they proposed an unclear definition of the “property area” and the “buffer zone” and did not correspond to the elements included in the nomination file, while the perimeters identified were also not related to either protection measures or an official decree.

In 2008, a UNESCO mission recommended the preparation of a management and conservation plan for the World Heritage property as a compulsory measure to stop the decay of Cairo’s historic fabric. The mission suggested the formation of a dedicated technical unit, including the expertise of concerned Egyptian institutions, to carry out this task. A comprehensive perimeters definition was suggested as a preliminary action, while control of building activities was urgently recommended, to be established on the basis of the existing Building Law, 119/2008. In 2009, Egyptian authorities and the WHC agreed to develop joint activities aimed at protecting and revitalising the urban heritage of Historic Cairo, in the framework of a larger UNESCO program of technical assistance to the Egyptian Government entitled “Safeguarding of Cultural Heritage in Egypt”, Fig.4. [15]

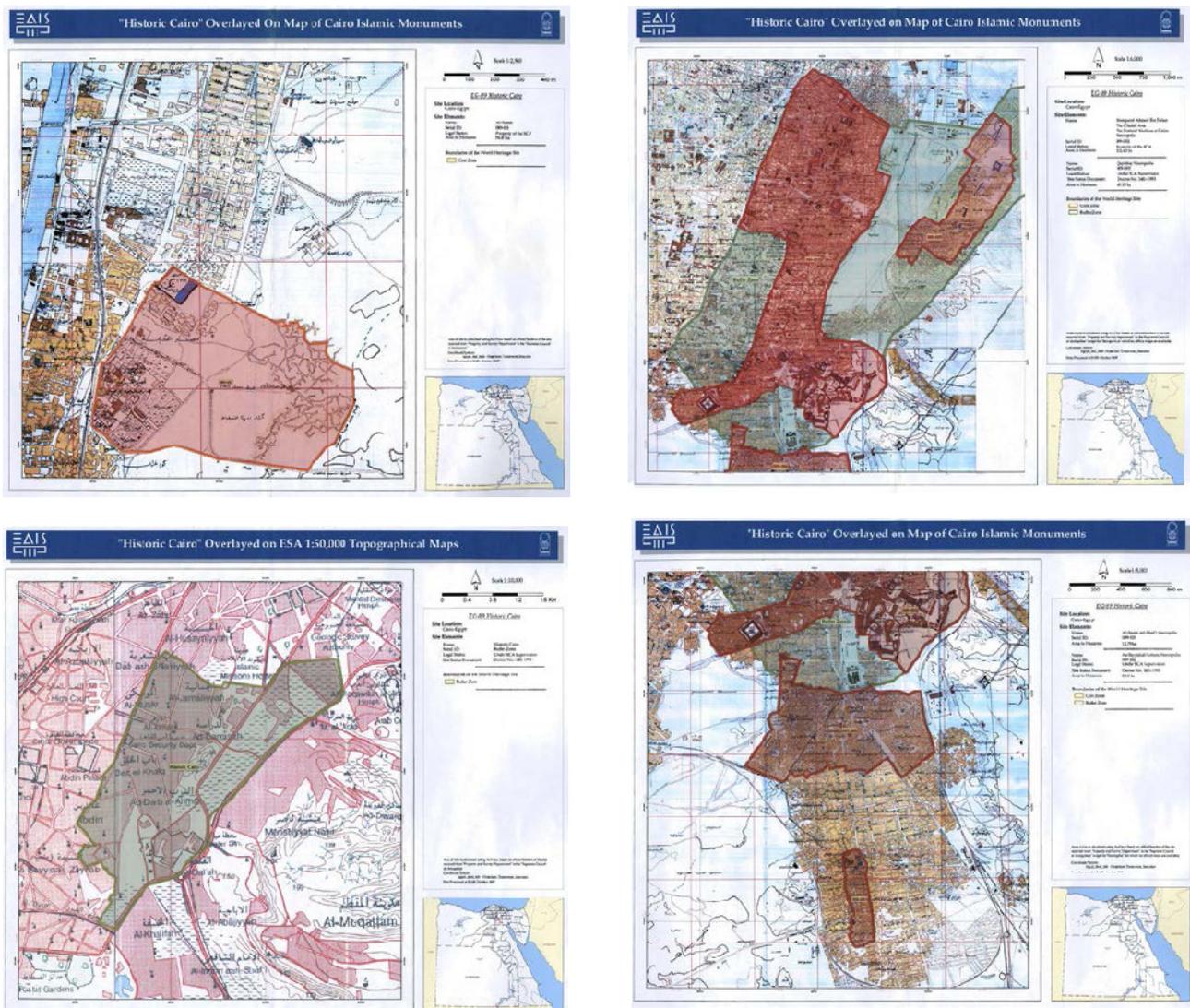


Fig.4: The perimeters of “Historic Cairo” as defined in 2007 (in brown, the “core zone,” in green the “buffer zone”). The original thickness of the lines has been enhanced and the concerned areas have been coloured to make the

3.2 Interdisciplinary Approaches To Conservation In Historic Cairo

3.2.1 URHC Map Of Architectural And Urban Conservation Projects

As recognized by the UNESCO mission of 2008, numerous conservation studies and actions have been undertaken in recent years, including the restoration of monuments and clusters of urban significance. Among a conspicuous list of interventions and studies, the following should be taken into account due to their importance and impact on the historic city.

3.2.2 Urban Conservation Projects In Historic Cairo

A. UNESCO Study, 1980: "The Conservation of the Old City of Cairo"

An early study of Islamic Cairo was carried out by UNESCO consultants between February and August 1980. It identified the complexity of the problems facing the historic city, including poor infrastructure, high land prices, low residential rents, new market dynamics and transportation issues. Taking into consideration the scale and density of the listed area, the study suggested focusing conservation efforts on six key clusters comprising significant monuments or architectural ensembles. The study also considered social, economic and environmental aspects important to improving the quality of life in the property.

B. Al-Darb Al-Asfar Alley Rehabilitation Project, 1994-2001

Al-Darb al-Asfar Alley is located off al-Mu'izz Street in al-Gamaleya district in the northern part of the Fatimid city. In 1994, the MoC and SCA began the documentation and establishment of a conservation strategy for the area, which had become a neglected backwater of decaying buildings and services. In 1996, the restoration process of historical buildings (such as bayt al-Suhaymi, bayt Mustafa Ja'far, bayt al-Khorazati and sabil-kuttab Qitas) located in the alley began. This was financed by the Kuwait-based Arab Fund for Social and Economic Development (AFSED). Through the project, an interdisciplinary approach to urban conservation was introduced, since it combined restoration with urban rehabilitation, community participation and the upgrading of the quality of life in the area.

C. UNDP Report, 1997: "Rehabilitation of Historic Cairo"

A substantial effort was undertaken by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the SCA in 1997 to define a consistent strategy of urban conservation for Historic Cairo. The analysis of the

site was based on various sources of information structured into four sections:

- Statistical data concerning socio-economic, demographic and physical conditions. A multi-criteria analysis was carried out to identify "*shyakhas*" with unfavourable socio-economic and physical conditions that needed urgent interventions.
- An appraisal of the spatial components of the living environment, including cultural heritage, urban fabric, distribution of activities, traffic and infrastructure issues.
- Urban markets: tourism, housing, and labour.
- The impact on the built environment, showing that poverty, unemployment and illiteracy were reasons for the critical situation of the site.

For an integrated approach to urban rehabilitation, the following components were highlighted:

- The community, targeting poverty alleviation.
- The physical environment, targeting cultural heritage, urban fabric, infrastructure, and transportation.
- The urban management system, focusing on multi-sector policies and guidelines to reinforce the implementation of the previous two components.

The UNDP report proposed a Framework Plan (FWP) that highlighted the interrelation between activities, transport and infrastructure as important factors influencing the image of the World Heritage property. The proposed FWP was based on a rehabilitation strategy articulated in five urban areas: heritage corridor, institutional corridor, 19th century corridor, transformation zone, and community zone. Urban policies would guarantee a feasible implementation of rehabilitation strategies, while community participation was identified as another tool for protecting Historic Cairo's outstanding value. The report provided an important reference for large-scale urban rehabilitation actions in Cairo [17].

D. Historic Cairo Restoration Project (HCRP)

The Egyptian government showed great interest in the outcomes of the UNDP Study on Historic Cairo and subsequently agreed with UNESCO to regularly update it, in light of the rapid environmental, demographic, urban and cultural changes affecting the World Heritage property.

To establish the "Historic Cairo Restoration Project", the MoC submitted a special paper to the Government. This highlighted the importance of

conducting comprehensive surveys on the site in collaboration with relevant authorities. As a result, in 1998, a decree¹² was issued by the Prime Minister to form a working group at the ministerial level, with representatives from the following ministries: Endowments, Housing, Planning, Local Government, Interior Affairs and Transportation, as well as the Cairo Governorate. A plan of action was defined according to the recommendations of the MoC, as the authority entrusted with the major part of the work in the area. The plan included the restoration of 147 listed and 48 unlisted historic monuments in eight years, from 1998 to 2006.

Additionally, the “Centre for Studies and Development of Historic Cairo (CSDHC)”, affiliated to the MoC, was established. This was charged with studying and coordinating development works carried out at the site, the creation of a Geographical Information System (GIS) on historical buildings, the formulation of policies necessary to implement decisions, and the establishment of coordination mechanisms between authorities for the development of Historic Cairo, limited within the following borders:

- Northern border: The northern Ayyubid wall and its two gates.
- Southern border: Bab Zuwaila and Ahmad Mahir Street.
- Eastern border: Salah Salim Street.
- Western border: Port Said Street.

The CSDHC also laid down an implementation plan to safeguard monuments in the area, as part of the national project for Historic Cairo. The basic objectives of the plan were to:

1. Save listed monuments from deterioration.
2. Apply a holistic concept of conservation rather than the restoration of single buildings.
3. Divide the work into phases according to status and needs.

E. The Old Cairo Rehabilitation Project: Mugamma' al Adyan, 1999-2002

Mugamma' al Adyan was a conservation project in the al-Fustat area of Old Cairo, financed by the Ministry of Tourism (MoT) and carried out in cooperation with the Cairo Governorate. It included the renovation of around 350 buildings (houses and shops), the improvement of public services, and the upgrading of open spaces in the surrounding streets and on the boundaries of the Coptic quarter. Community participation was emphasized through different approaches, with residents participating in the renovation process of their houses and expressing their needs in the rehabilitation process.

The revitalization of Old Cairo's traditional arts and crafts was one of the main objectives of the project; therefore, a new centre for traditional crafts (suq al-Fustat), using traditional materials, was constructed between the mosque of Amr ibn al-As and the Coptic Cairo complex.

Al-Fustat was once renowned for its excellent pottery workshops, but many had been forced to move out of the area due to the city's expansion. The MoT proposed to preserve this traditional Egyptian craft through the creation of a new pottery village in the area. The project was continued in 2003 with a fund from the Italian-Egyptian Debt for Development Swap Program and completed in 2006.

F. Al-Darb Al-Ahmar Revitalisation Project

Since 2000, and with reference to the UNDP Report on Historic Cairo in 1997, the Aga Khan Trust for Culture (AKTC) and its partner funding agencies, with support from the Cairo Governorate, the SCA and the community, has developed a series of projects combining social and economic initiatives with the physical improvement of the al-Darb al-Ahmar area, on the eastern edge of the World Heritage property.

In spite of the architectural significance of the area and its active community of traditional craftsmen, living conditions have worsened here due to the accumulated problems affecting the historic city over the years.

To improve quality of life and enhance the image and perception of the area, the Al-Darb Al-Ahmar Revitalisation Project, represented by Al-Darb Al-Ahmar Community Development Company, focused on the following aspects:

- Micro-credit for business development
- Housing rehabilitation
- Employment-generation
- Monument restoration
- Adaptive reuse of historical buildings
- Infrastructure and open spaces improvement projects

The project has concentrated its efforts on three action areas, each with its own special character, needs and opportunities [18].

Currently, the financial support for development projects in the al-Darb al-Ahmar area has decreased. Therefore, the Al-Darb Al-Ahmar Community Development Company is focusing on handing over several components of its activities to civil society organizations in the area that have been trained and have cooperated with the project since its inception.

G. Al-Sayeda Zeinab Revitalization Project

As part of a project to improve urban areas around monuments along the religious path of the Prophet

Mohammed's descendants, *Aal al-Bayt*, the Egyptian MoT, in cooperation with the Cairo Governorate, carried out studies and documentation for an urban conservation project in al-Sayeda Zeinab area, located to the south of the World Heritage property, in 1998.

The project consisted of five phases, of which the following two were implemented between 2002 and 2004:

- Phase (1): from the Citadel square to the sabil of Umm Abbas.
- Phase (2): from the Sayeda Nafisa square to the Sayeda Ruquia Mosque.

The project was concerned with the upgrading of the infrastructure, as well as the renovation of residential houses, shops and open spaces in the area. Community participation was considered a vital part of the rehabilitation process.

Around the same time, in 2002, the Governor of Cairo became interested in a participatory rehabilitation approach being carried out by the City of Paris (Mairie de Paris) to protect its historic city from socio-economic pressures. As a result, the two capitals launched a joint technical collaboration on the rehabilitation of al-Sayeda Zeinab district. The pilot project aimed to develop tools with residents for the protection of the area, which comprises several architectural masterpieces and interesting remnants from the French presence in Cairo.

The City of Paris worked with Atelier Parisien d'Urbanisme (APUR), with the support of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in a decentralized program to carry out urban studies and detailed conservation projects for selected streets such as Abdel Meguid al-Labban and al-Khoderi. A bilingual publication presents the proposals developed within the framework of this cooperation, demonstrating how the redevelopment of roads and the renovation of buildings can revitalize an historic neighbourhood.

3.2.3 Urban Regeneration Project for Historic Cairo (URHC)

July 2010, the WHC launched the project "Urban Regeneration project for Historic Cairo (URHC)" after obtaining approval for a detailed proposal on technical assistance from the Egyptian Government, funded through a UNESCO Special Account dedicated to safeguarding Egypt's cultural heritage. The URHC's aim is to prepare the management tools necessary for the conservation of the heritage values, socio-economic revitalization and environmental upgrading of the inscribed World Heritage property. The project also intends to foster a subsequent urban conservation policy whose prerequisites are: (a) the definition of clear concepts

on conservation to be implemented through new urban planning tools, special projects and building regulations; (b) the creation of adequate institutional capacities and technical skills; and (c) an increasing and wide awareness of heritage issues amongst the relevant authorities and the larger public.

With this in mind, the URHC project is focusing on the following interrelated objectives:

- The preparation of a conservation plan for the property and its buffer zone, including the management plan required by the Operational Guidelines for the implementation of the World Heritage Convention.
- The formation of an institutional framework to undertake a sustainable urban conservation policy, promoting collaboration amongst the various institutions managing the site.
- The creation of an appropriate and shared information platform for urban conservation.

The aim is for the World Heritage property of Historic Cairo to be recognized and protected through an efficient management system and adequate protection measures, with strong coordination among the relevant local authorities. For that reason, "conservation" has to be associated with "rehabilitation", favouring interventions that aim to improve the quality of life and sustain, or initiate, compatible activities in the historic city.

The project tasks were identified as follows:

1. Definition of the World Heritage property and its buffer zone.
2. Creation of a shared information system.
3. A strategic planning and management system.
4. Conservation and development planning.
5. Consultations with the relevant administrations.
6. Raising awareness amongst the public.

To implement the project tasks and perform its activities systematically, overlapping phases were set up over a period of 24 months. However, due to the political unrest in Egypt after the revolution of January 2011, the initial work-plan has been delayed and the project duration expanded to 42 months (until December 2013, including the months of delayed activities).

The implementation of some activities has also had to be delayed because of the difficulties in setting up a permanent office for the project. It was first hosted by the Nubian Trust Fund office in Downtown Cairo and currently has a temporary location in the historic district of al-Sayeda Zeinab. At the moment, the project team is preparing to move to a permanent location at UNESCO's Cairo headquarters in the area of Garden City.

Nevertheless, in the first 24 months of the project the following progress has been achieved:

- Nucleus of the URHC team created.
- Documentation on the historic city of Cairo collected and organised.
- Transformation of Cairo's historical urban fabric (1807-2006) synthesized.
- Field survey to evaluate the urban fabric of the historic city completed (2011).
- Photographic documentation of the streets of Historic Cairo completed (2011).
- Sector studies on socio-economic conditions, housing issues, community-oriented activities, and environmental risks facing the World Heritage property undertaken.
- Delimitation proposal and first zoning of the World Heritage property completed.
- Proposal for an awareness campaign to recognize and protect Historic Cairo prepared.
- Consultation with concerned local administrations and institutions launched.
- Protocol of agreement with Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics (CAPMAS) and the National Organization for Urban Harmony (NOUH), affiliated to the MoC, established.
- Protocols of agreement with the Governorate of Cairo and the General Organization for Physical Planning (GOPP) affiliated to the Ministry of Housing (MoH) under discussion.

4 Conclusion

There is an urgent requirement for heritage conservation strategies which aims at sustaining the essential qualities of the historic sites in old cities along with the life of their resident communities.

These strategies should adapt these physical structures while maintaining the everyday life of the people. This approach not only introduces new uses for historic heritage buildings which supports today's life style requirements but should also be able to provide for future generations to come.

The intent of this paper is to highlight lessons that can be learned from looking at urban regeneration projects of historic and heritage sites in Developing countries. The appropriate technical and social solutions provided by sustainable urban conservation of these projects are analysed in detail in the cross case analysis in the above section.

Developing countries have high expectations out of the conservation projects and this can be seen in transformation carried out in the rehabilitation and conservation of some of their old towns and cities.

Sustainable conservation by urban regeneration projects of historic towns and cities is viewed as a comprehensive approach that integrates several processes that pertain to historic buildings and their physical urban context as presented in the examples analysed. These along with the socio/economic environment within which the city exists and operates. The paper envisaged that the problems of historical centres would not be solved by individual projects that focus on the conservation and rehabilitation of their architectural and urban spaces. Rather, they can be solved by those policies and concrete programs that address the needs of the inhabitants such as reducing poverty, increasing employment, upgrading local communal services, and most importantly, empowering and enabling the local inhabitants to positively participate in the planning and management of their environment. This is also to ascertain user satisfaction and sustainable continuing conservation of those sites. To be able to achieve this, it will be necessary to enable change in the political agenda and environment in which historical sites are rehabilitated and regenerated in the true essence. Concomitantly, policies and governmental practices should be modified accordingly.

Sustainable urban conservation has been addressed in a wide variety of projects in different contexts.

In general, to achieve sustainable development through urban regeneration projects we need to broader and comprehensive policies for protection of collective memories, legal and institutional framework and involving the community to give more diverse policies, and open and transparent procedures which leads to a strong sense of belonging and ownership to their ancestor's social cultural and historical values.

Developing countries must doing a lot for conserving their physical, cultural and historical relics at National, by involve the community and motivate other stakeholders, community professionals and volunteers to work for sustaining their heritage that could be a symbol of pride and give a sense of ownership to the coming generations.

The comprehensive policy for heritage conservation by involving every member of community and integrating the heritage conservation in the process of urban regeneration is making its way to success. and can result in achieving sustainable development in the cities of tomorrow.

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