



Ministry of Planning and
International Cooperation

Cairo, 20 March 2013

Press Release:

Development Plan for informal urban areas agreed

A major development plan for informal urban areas in Greater Cairo Region was agreed this week, bringing together Egypt's main actors in the urban development field.

The meeting at the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation (MoPIC) on Wednesday 20 March marked the beginning of the next stage of a large-scale EU-funded development programme to improve living and environmental conditions in informal areas in Giza and Cairo Governorates.

Representatives from the MoPIC, Giza and Cairo Governorates, the European Union, German Development Cooperation (GIZ), as well as the Ministry of Housing, Ministry of Insurance & Social Affairs, Ministry of Youth, Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Education, the General Organization for Physical Planning and the Informal Settlements Development Facility were invited to discuss the way forward for developing four informal areas in Giza and Cairo.

The purpose of the meeting was to gather all development partners crucial to the success of the Participatory Development Programme in Urban Areas (PDP) and to create a steering committee. The committee will meet regularly to supervise the progress of the programme.

Dr Ashraf El-Araby, Minister of Planning and International Cooperation, said: "This is an excellent example of ministries working together on the development of informal areas. I am very optimistic that the participatory aspect of this programme will help to address the most urgent community needs, and provide a model to be replicated in informal areas all over Egypt."

Currently the PDP is carrying out a participatory needs assessment in four target areas in Giza and Cairo, involving street interviews and public meetings with local residents to hear their views and determine the most urgent needs of each area. Possible upgrading projects could include improving youth centres and health facilities, upgrading roads or street lighting, developing skills for unemployed residents and improving waste management.

The PDP is an Egyptian-German cooperation programme aiming to enhance the living conditions for the poor urban population – and in particular youth and women – of Greater Cairo. It is co-funded by the European Union with € 20 million. The goal is to improve environmental conditions as well as services provided by public administration and civil society organisations for 1.9 million residents in the target areas.

PDP Coordinator Dr Günther Wehenpohl said: "Improving living conditions in these informal areas presents a great challenge but also a great opportunity for all partners involved. Our goal is to achieve tangible and concrete improvements to the livelihoods of the residents of those areas."

Key partners are the MoPIC, the Governorates of Cairo and Giza, as well as GIZ which supports implementation. Local stakeholders, public administration, civil society, and the private sector, will be included in the process. The four target areas – Ezbet el-Nasr and Ain Shams in Cairo Governorate, and Masaken Geziret El-Dahab/ Saqqiet Mekky and Markaz El-Abhath/Warraq in Giza Governorate – were selected by each governorate.

Approximately 60% of the people in the Greater Cairo Region live in unplanned, densely populated areas that lack basic services and social infrastructure, and are suffering from environmental pollution.

More information about the Participatory Development Programme can be found on: www.egypt-urban.net

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