



AIN SHAMS UNIVERSITY

FACULTY OF ENGINEERING

Urban Planning

PRO-POOR ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION AS A TOOL FOR INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENT Case Study of Lake Qaroun, Fayoum, Egypt

A Thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of

Master of Science in Architectural Engineering

(Urban Planning)

by

Nada Samir Ramzy Tewfik

Bachelor of Science in Architectural Engineering

(Urban Planning)

Faculty of Engineering, Ain Shams University, 2013

Supervised By

**Prof. Dr. Mohamed Abdel Karim
Salheen**

Professor of Integrated Planning and
Design

Dr. Marwa Mohamed Abdellatif

Associate Professor of Urban Planning
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Examiners' Committee

Name and Affiliation

Signature

Prof. Jan Dieterle

Landscape Architecture, University of Stuttgart

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Prof. Dr. Ghada Farouk

Urban Planning, Ain Shams University

.....

Prof. Dr. Mohamed Salheen

Integrated Planning and Design, Ain Shams University

.....

Date: 02 October 2019

Statement

This thesis is submitted as a partial fulfilment of Master of Science in Architectural Engineering, Faculty of Engineering, Ain shams University.

The author carried out the work included in this thesis, and no part of it has been submitted for a degree or a qualification at any other scientific entity.

Nada Samir Ramzy Tewfik

Signature

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Date: 02 October 2019

Researcher Data

Name	: Nada Samir Ramzy Tewfik
Date of Birth	: 27 th of April 1991
Place of Birth	: Cairo
Last Academic Degree	: Bachelor of Architecture 2013
Field of Specialization	: Urban Design and Planning
University issued the degree	: Ain Shams University
Date of issued degree	: 2013
Current Job	: Teaching Assistant, Faculty of Engineering, Urban Design and Planning Department, Ain Shams University

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I am grateful for the staff of Integrated Urbanism and Sustainable Design (IUSD) program who did not save any resource to help delivering this thesis. Additional thanks go to the IUSD

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At the end, I am acknowledging myself for all the personal challenges I went through, and for reaching this point of time where this work is done the way I am proud of.

PERSONAL MOTIVATION FOR THE RESEARCH TOPIC

Several reasons motivated me to conduct this research and choose both: the topic and the case study. These are described as following:

The first reason of choosing this topic was being a part in the Urban Design and Planning department; and being interested in the fields of urban planning where a broad understanding of several issues is crucial. Urban planning field generally is not a narrow-minded discipline from the researcher's point of view. It requires tackling several disciplines of social, environmental, economic, managerial, and other domains. In this regard, during the undergraduate studies, different courses shaped the mind of the researcher and were of quite relevance to her fields of interest; such as the Environmental planning, and city planning courses.

Continuing her pre-master studies, the researcher was able to have insights about the conservation concept during the Urban Conservation module. At this time, the researcher found interesting the complexity and the continuous debates of conservation vs development; and conservation vs people. Following this track of research, the researcher was gifted an opportunity to co-teach in the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) module at the Integrated Urbanism and Sustainable Design (IUSD) master program. This opportunity sustained the researcher's persistence in investigating the challenges facing the environmental conservation approach generally.

The second reason behind choosing this topic is more of a personal or spiritual one. The researcher feels responsibility towards the people generally, and the Egyptian specifically. She believes that each one should have a role in his/her community in whatever way they can. Reflecting on herself being a researcher in the urban planning field, she found it is necessary to explore the means to enhance people's quality of life. She has chosen the poor of them, for -sometimes- being vulnerable and lacking the capacity to improve their own lives. After finishing this work, the researcher is planning to translate it to the Arabic language; so it can be available in both languages to find its way to decision makers. The researcher is seeking that this piece of work could be a benefit to the chosen case study. She is willing that this dissertation be transformed from the research phase to the on-the-ground practice with high respect to all the up-lifting criticism she might receive to enhance the outcomes.

The last reason is mainly related to the location of the case study. In this regard, the researcher has chosen Fayoum for not being usually studied while having complex challenges. Another intention for choosing Fayoum is mainly the uniqueness of its context where desert, water, and agricultural lands meet. This variety of landscape triggered the researcher to explore the dynamics of people living in such context. Moreover, the proximity of Fayoum to Cairo- where the researcher lives- had a strong impact in travelling more than one time to meet different stakeholders and make interviews.

ABSTRACT

Rural Communities living within Protected Areas (PAs) depend mainly on the natural environment for their livelihoods and tend to be among the poorest in the country; since the degradation of the environment jeopardizes their economic-resource base. Moreover, economic development pressures cause changes in PAs' contexts leading to negative and positive impacts on the environment and people, which then affect the long-term benefits of development. In this regard, an integration between the different themes of community poverty, natural environment and economic development is crucial – especially when challenges and practices intertwine on ground.

With notions of integration starting in the Egyptian context; the case study of lake Qaroun – and specifically Shakshouk village- within Qaroun Protected Area in Fayoum is investigated- where the majority of the community is rural poor who live in degraded environments and face continuous development pressures. This research explores the relationship between community poverty, natural environment, and economic development co-existing in Shakshouk; and describes it as a circular relationship, where an action in one theme leads to impacts on others. This is deduced during on-site semi structured interviews, focus groups, observation and building on previous secondary data.

With a continuous chain of negative mutual influences, the pro-poor environmental conservation concept is introduced seeking a synergy between the three themes (community poverty -natural environment -economic development). This is discussed in the light of (what if) scenarios building on previous best practices and lessons learned. This research ends by highlighting how pro-poor environmental conservation could be used as tool in the integrated development of Shakshouk village following two tracks. These tracks should be considered by decision makers in future interventions.

KEYWORDS

Community Poverty, Natural Environment, Economic Development, Pro-poor environmental conservation, Circular relationship, Wetland, Shakshouk, Qaroun Protected Area, Fayoum