Abstract

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Residents’ Willingness to Participate in Neighborhood Development and Upkeep Initiatives – the Case of Neighborhood Park Upgrade in New Cairo, Egypt

Abstract—Over the past decade, the World Bank has assigned nearly $85 billion to participatory development initiatives. Underlying this enormous funding is the idea that involving beneficiaries in any development initiative phases would be a progress towards sustainable urban development. Several benefits derive from integrating residents in development and upkeep initiatives, benefits derive not only from cost reduction and resource mobilization, but also enhancing the residents’ "ownership" of the facilities ensuring more extensive and efficient use of facilities, better maintenance, and more reliable operation. In most developing countries, such as Egypt, the dramatic pace of demographic, economic, and social changes severely overburden the capacity of local authorities to provide adequate urban services. The required funding for the provision of appropriate services is mostly unavailable. In recent years, a shift has taken place to incorporate local communities as active partners into urban upgrading and development interventions. Therefore, the more knowledge drawn on the current participation potential, the more public could be effectively engaged in future neighborhood development initiatives. This research aims to explore the residents’ willingness to participate in neighborhood development and upkeep initiatives. To explore the different aspects, a case study approach was undertaken. The study showed residents’ potential willingness to participate, it also derived a clear picture on the preferred participation methods and perceived barriers. This in return, can hopefully help practitioners and policy makers decide on the type of interventions needed to engage residents in future development attempts in response to the current economic situation. Index Terms—Public Participation, Neighborhood Development, Neighborhood Parks, Cairo, & Egypt.