

Tenth Pillar: Urban Development

Overview of Current Situation

In light of the current increase in urban expansion and the increase in the rate of rural to urban migration, the current inhabited areas have reached its vital capacity and population saturation. This is clear through the increase of population and urban densities. The lack of provision of new areas to accommodate the population's growth has resulted in the deterioration of the urban environment quality due to environmental pollution, traffic congestion, decrease of green spaces, as well as the spread of random construction on the most fertile agricultural lands. The housing system in Egypt has suffered from poor distribution that resulted in an overflow in middle- and high-income housing and deficiency in low-income housing with an amount estimated at **2.5 million** residential units¹. The State's efforts during the past years resulted in significant progress in covering drinking water services, in both urban and rural areas, in which the percentage of coverage has reached **90%** of citizens.² There is, however, a geographical misdistribution of such services, as coverage in rural areas is less than urban areas with approximately **10%**. Safe sanitation services still need development, as the percentage of sanitation service coverage did not exceed **50%** of total population and there is a great gap between the coverage in urban areas, which reached approximately **79%**, compared with the coverage in rural areas, which reached only **12%**.³ Following traditional solutions in sanitation service coverage constitutes a massive financial burden on the State's general budget.

The percentage of users of public transportation modes in Egypt decreased compared with those in more developed countries, which resulted in harmful environmental effects represented in air pollution, increased carbon dioxide emissions, and traffic congestion in urban centers. The lack of a comprehensive developmental plan that guides the usages of land resulted in conflict among different authorities governing State land as well as the lack of optimal utilization of land resources.

The central system followed currently to manage housing system is unsuitable for the aimed urban expansion. Despite articles of the 2014 Constitution encouraging decentralization, Egypt must exert more efforts to activate the roles of local bodies in a way that achieves the desired decentralization.

The State has started taking the necessary procedures for the expansion of new communities since the State is planning on building new cities as the New Alamein City, New Al Galala City, New Ismailia City, and more other cities that are being built. This is aligned with new development pillars that the government is currently working on. The next phase will be to address the needed renovations to encourage the construction of new housing communities in those new cities.

¹ Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics (CAPMAS), 2014

² Ministry of Housing, Utilities and Urban Communities, The Current Situation of Water and Wastewater Sector, 2014

³ Ministry of Housing, Utilities and Urban Communities, The Current Situation of Water and Wastewater Sector, 2014