



Imbaba bridge © Flickr/Hossam el-Hamalawy

EGYPT, GREATER CAIRO REGION An Airport The Renovation of a Brownfield that Achieves Inclusion and Connectivity

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Imbaba is a neighbourhood in northern Giza, Egypt, located west of the Nile and northwest of downtown Cairo, within the Giza Governorate. It is one of Cairo's most populated and unplanned areas. The northern sector, which comprises 1,270 hectares, is home to almost one million inhabitants. The sector lacks access to primary services, such as schools, health service and public transportation. It also suffers from insufficient water supply, poor solid waste management and absence of sewage in most of the residential areas.

The main objective of the Imbaba Urban Upgrading Project was to strengthen the integration of Imbaba in the city of Cairo and to provide basic facilities, infrastructures, and service to its inhabitants. The main concept of the project relied on proposing the best use of the land of the former Imbaba Airport, an old out-of-service infrastructure that lied inside the urban mass of Giza. The Imbaba project was launched in 2006 and its implementation started in 2009, aiming to upgrade for the whole area through five sub-urban regeneration projects coordinated through a master plan. The project was developed by the General Organization for Physical Planning affiliated to the Ministry of Housing, Utilities and New Urban Communities, in conjunction with the Giza Governorate in 2006 as a preliminary concept, that developed in 2008 as a final master plan.

These five projects include; a mix use housing neighborhood, the Imbaba park, the corridor of Ahmed Orabi which links the neighborhood to the ring road, transformation of the existing aviation academy into a hospital, school and a district building and finally the waterfront pedestrian walkway, which will offer Imbaba residents the opportunity to enjoy the Nile, improving accessibility and provision of open space for the whole neighborhood.

The main achievement of this urban regeneration project is to have addressed the main concerns of sustainable urban development and territorial cohesion, within the framework of an integrated planning approach favouring the spatial planning of living areas. The project has improved the connectivity of the Greater Cairo region through road network and the metro line (under construction). It has also upgraded unplanned sites, created green spaces and provided facilities for the neighbourhood. The project has successfully transformed vacant plots, wasteland and dump sites into educational and health facilities, public spaces, public buildings and cultural centres. From the total cost of USD 110 million, 20% has come from the engagement of the private sector. Imbaba has also become a well-known experience that attracts many researchers and practitioners to witness an innovative way of dealing with informal areas, becoming a best practice example with replicability potential.