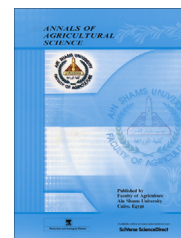




Faculty of Agriculture, Ain Shams University

Annals of Agricultural Science

www.elsevier.com/locate/aoas



Governance of rural development in Egypt



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Received 5 August 2014; revised 19 August 2014; accepted 20 August 2014

KEYWORDS

Rural development;
Governance;
Coordination;
Egypt

Abstract Egypt is facing great challenges regarding its economy in general, and rural development (RD) – including agriculture – in particular, such as: the extreme poverty among small-scale farmers; lack of coordination and integration between various stakeholders; complicated local administration system and centralization; and reduced governmental investments. Therefore the current study aimed at identifying rural development policies in Egypt, recognizing the stakeholders both in public and civil society involved in designing, implementing and evaluating RD, and analyzing the relationships and linkages between these actors.

Various analytical tools were used to provide a comprehensive overview of RD in Egypt, including quantitative and qualitative methods. A questionnaire survey dealing with coordination of RD policy in Egypt was performed in May–September 2013 with 50 representatives of key public, civil and international organizations. SWOT analysis was used to verify the gaps in the current RD strategy approach.

The review of literature and survey revealed no explicit RD strategy, only agricultural and socio-economic strategies. Additionally, a significant gap was found between plans and their implementation, besides problems in planning, monitoring and evaluation (M&E), and implementation in “what is considered RD”. Most of the studied organizations lack coordination, financial resources, and community participation. Moreover there is a big confusion when defining RD. About 48% of stakeholder organizations mentioned that most of the RD programs and projects only partially reflect people’s needs indicating that these programs are centrally planned and implemented without any participation.

In light of these results, the study recommends that RD strategy in Egypt needs to be structured and based upon coordination and integration between various sectors and stakeholders either national or international to avoid duplication and to better fulfill RD goals and objectives that will eventually lead to “true” socio-economic development, food security and poverty alleviation.

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Peer review under responsibility of Faculty of Agriculture, Ain-Shams University.

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.aoas.2014.11.018>

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Table 1 Main characteristics of Egypt's geographical territories. *Source:* Sustainable agricultural development strategy "SADS", toward 2030, pp: 166, 168, 170, 172,175, Cairo, 2009.

Territories	Population size (million)	% of population	Population density (inhabitant/km)	Illiteracy rates	Female illiteracy rates	% of women in labor force	% of poor families	Area (thousand) km ²	Agricultural area (million feddans) ^a
Upper Egypt	12	16.5	24.2	47	55	18.4	45.8	495	1.13
Middle Egypt	15.3	21	286	48	50	13	38	54	1.5
East Delta	8	10.9	100	33	43	29	23.5	79	1.2
West Delta	12.6	17.5	51.2	30	40	27.5	15.6	179	1.7
Middle Delta	20.2	27.8	1450	32	42	24.5	8.7	139	2.3
Total	68.1	93.7	1911.4	190	230	112.4	131.6	946	7.83

^a 1 ha = 2.34 feddans.

Introduction

Rural development in Egypt has a long history traced back to the nineteenth century. Generally, the national political system was always very influential in setting up the outline of state orientation toward the rural sector and formatting the type of interrelationship between rural areas and the other state sectors. This fact is valid across the last two centuries regardless of some minor differences and details from time to time (Nawar, 2006).

Agriculture, also witnessed significant developments over the last two decades with direct effects on the role of the agricultural sector in national income formation and promoting exports. Such developments have affected farmers' delivery system as related to the cropping structure, applied technology, levels of income, and farmers' response to market changes (MALR, 2009). The share of agriculture sector in GDP is about 14.5% (CAPMAS, 2006).

Agriculture sector growth rates have widely differed from one period to another due to the effect of general economic conditions, and development and investment efforts. The 1981/1982–1986/1987 period witnessed higher growth, estimated at an annual rate of 3% during this period, while the 1987/1988–1991/1992 period was at an average annual rate of 2% (MALR, 2009).

Agricultural areas have increased from around 5.87 m feddans¹ in 1980 to around 8.44 m feddans in 2007, an increase of 44% during this period. The cropping area has also increased from 11.1 m feddans in 1980 to 15.4 m feddans in 2007 (MALR, 2009).

However, in same time population size increased and reached 72,798,031 inhabitants of which 31,370,925 inhabit urban areas representing about 43.09% and about 41,427,106 inhabit rural areas representing about 56.90% (CAPMAS, 2006).

In addition to many threats and challenges that faces the agricultural sector and rural areas of Egypt (i.e. small and fragmented land holdings, water shortage and droughts, natural resources and environmental problems, poverty, poor health and malnutrition). High pressures and strains on the country's economy have resulted in poor or weak infrastructure and have pushed rural people deeper into poverty. In this situation, the majority of people is forced to live in poor living conditions and is deprived of basic facilities of life (Mohammed, 2005).

¹ Feddan is a land measuring unit in Egypt, 1 ha = 2.34 feddans.

Thus the study is organized in three main sections that helps in fulfilling the current study's main objective which was exploring the existence of a rural development strategy in Egypt and if governance of current plans is applied or not. The first section will provide an overview literature about relevant concepts and characteristics of Egypt's geographic territories, agriculture and rural status in Egypt's rural areas, rural development history, the current agricultural strategy, the socio-economic plan and investments allocated for that purpose and finally governance. The second section will address the questions arising, objectives, materials and methods, and measurement of variables. The last section will deal with the results, conclusions and recommendations.

The geographic territories

There are five main geographical territories apart from Great Cairo territory; Upper Egypt, Middle Egypt, East Delta, West Delta, Middle Delta. The Great Cairo territory includes Cairo, Giza and Shoubra El-Kheima cities, while Upper Egypt territory includes Assuit, Sohag, Quena, Wadi Al-Gadid, and Aswan governorates, as for Middle Egypt territory holds Giza, Beni Suef, Fayoum and Menia governorates. Qualiobia, Menofia, Gharbia, Dakhlia, Kafr Al-Shiekh and Dametta governorates forms the Middle Delta territory, whereas, Sharkia, Port Said, Ismailia, Suez, North and South Sinai forms the East Delta territory and finally the West Delta territory incubates Behira, Alexandria, Nubaria and Marsa Matrouh (Table 1).

The agricultural labor force represents about 26.01% of total labor force (CAPMAS, 2006). The total agriculture production valued in 2012 about 209.3 billion EGP (1 EGP = US\$0.15) (old and new lands) with a net income of 150.7 billion EGP, whereas crop production amounted 117.5 billion EGP which represents about 56.1% of total agriculture production. The animal production valued about 77.4 billion EGP representing about 37% of total agriculture production, finally fish production valued 14.5 billion EGP representing about 6.9% of total agriculture production (MALR, 2009).

The local administrative system

The Egyptian administrative system was developed in 1960; it was an organizational technique by which the country's regions were divided into local units that practice their authority according to the constitution within their regional

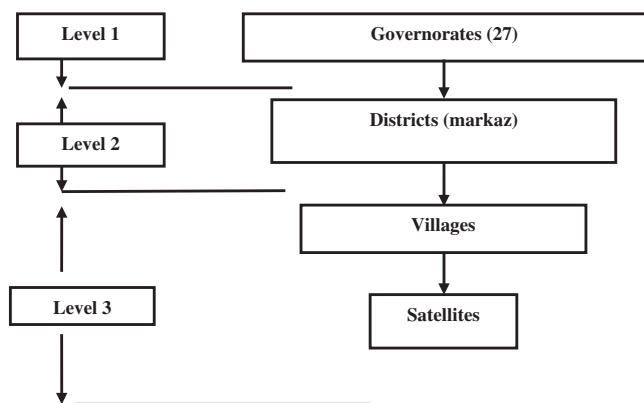


Fig. 1 Local units and villages within the administrative system.

jurisdictions. The local administrative system in Egypt includes four levels: the governorates, districts (markaz), villages and satellites (Fig. 1). The village local unit² establishes and manages all public facilities within its jurisdictions including housing, construction and village development except the national facilities.

The flow of decision making goes via numerous ramified departments related to each other, for instance the local people's council in the village when represents a certain suggestion related to construction, then it should go through the head of the local unit then secretary unit until it reaches the head of the engineering affairs then to the construction department director, similarly when applying for a construction license.

History of rural development policy in Egypt

The traditional rural development definitions are concerned with improving conditions in rural areas through increasing agricultural productivity and relevant projects, targeting low-income groups and assuring fair distribution of wealth, and the balance between individual consumption and improvements in provided social services (Haidary, 1991). Whereas others consider RD as an integral planned change process that occurs in all life aspects (economically, socially and culturally) by participation of local people in a democratic manner along with governmental assistance to achieve integration in development aspects from one hand, and integration of development communities with its national one from another hand (Buller, 1990; Moharam, 1990). The new RD definitions take into consideration governance that guarantees the success of RD programs and projects as illustrated later.

Rural development programs witnessed historically five main phases (Elmenofi, 1995).

First phase: (1882–1922)

Egypt was under British occupation and policy focused on activities that served British interests, so they paid attention to cotton and qualified few agriculture technicians and accountants, whereas the majority engaged in agriculture were neglected. The British authorities paid attention to health issues, particularly epidemic diseases, and established a

quarantine system. The government focused on irrigation and drainage infrastructure projects that have direct impact on agriculture production. In 1909 the cooperative movement emerged by establishing the first cooperative and the local administrative system at that time revolved around the village mayor or “*Omdah*”, who had specific responsibilities without any real development or improving people's livelihoods. The 1919 revolution precipitated the end of this phase and awareness among Egyptian farmers rose and middle class appeared.

Second phase: (1923–1938)

The first Egyptian constitution was issued, as well as first elected parliament after shifting power from occupation authority to parliament royal power. Middle class started reform efforts, thus first national bank and cooperative law were established in 1923 followed by the establishment of agriculture credit bank in 1931 to finance farmers and cooperatives and consequently rural development efforts. A group of high school and university graduates established various groups that were concerned with reforming the social conditions in the country, which was the spark to improve living conditions of all categories especially among farmers. Though, voices demanded specific rural reform programs which focused mainly on the establishment of rural social centers.

Third phase: (1938–1952)

After the outbreak of World War II, expansion in establishing consumer's cooperative associations and dissemination of agricultural cooperatives, by this rural services emerged but due to lack of coordination led to duplication in provided services. This period also witnessed mobilizing a lobby that seeks improvement of rural people's livelihoods that led to the establishment of ministry of social affairs with a division for farmers and established five rural social centers in 1941, followed by other six in 1942, then due to lack of finance it could not go further. In 1942 a law concerned with rural health was issued which allowed the government to allocate part of its budget for rural health programs and establishment of agricultural units that provides extension services to farmers.

Whereas ministry of education established a specific type of schools named rural schools. After the World War II the high committee for poverty alleviation was established and provided an eight year plan that coordinates among provided services and disseminating it in rural areas, aiming at establishing a social center in each village that includes a clinic, rural school and a rural industrial training center. The committee decided to start its first year plan in one administrative center in one of the governorates and all centers were established, but the fall of the ministry at that time and Palestine war stalled the program. Additionally, in 1949 ministry of commerce and industry established small-scale industries department which aimed at establishing vocational industrial training centers in urban and rural areas.

Forth phase: (1952–1960)

The most important incident that distinguished this phase was the 1952 revolution which abolished the monarchy system and led to the establishment of the republic. Agriculture reform law

² The local unit consists of group of villages and a mother village.

was issued determining the size of land ownership, this action was followed by series of reform processes such as unification of elementary education with no separation between rural education and other educational systems, besides implementation of providing rural areas with clean water. The government established also the economic development council that focused on revitalizing industrial projects in urban areas which helped in attracting unemployed resources from rural areas. This was followed by another action by which the general services council was established in 1953 to support the service programs particularly in rural areas.

In 1956 assembled units were established to provide various economic, social, health and educational services to rural areas. The goal was to create 863 assembled units in five years, yet not all these units were established due to lack of financial resources. In same year the unified cooperative law was issued to push the cooperative movement toward development and to convene cooperative conferences.

Fifth phase: (1960–1994)

This period witnessed adopting of central planning policy during 1960–1973 and the first five years plan took place (60/1965) as the government mainly depended on the agriculture sector to finance development in other sectors. Though various programs that aimed at controlling this sector took place e.g. implementation of organizing agriculture production program that commit farmers to cultivate specific crops in specific areas within the government plan, besides cooperative marketing programs that force farmers to deliver their crops to specific governmental authorities at fixed prices from one hand.

From another hand the government paid attention to disseminating educational and health services mainly in rural areas, but no attention was given to other services e.g. roads and electricity, as most of the exerted efforts focused on industrial development. In 1960 the local administrative law was issued which enabled for the first time people's participation in designing projects and programs in rural areas and to some extent in its implementation. This period witnessed the appearance of farmers and laborers representatives in people's assembly "*Magless Al-Omah*" according to the constitution that gave 50% of the assembly to them as well as in people's councils "*Al-Magaless Al-shabe'ah*" at local level, unfortunately difficulties in application led to scaling other categories in these councils away from farmers and laborers.

The most distinguished rural development experience that crowned this phase was the establishment of Organization for Reconstruction and Development of the Egyptian village (ORDEV) in 1973, as the local governance ministerial committee headed by the prime minister was responsible about designing the general plan of village development in various aspects and assure coordination and integration among various governmental services and ORDEV will be responsible about forming the executive plan, monitoring and evaluation, and each governmental authority is responsible for implementation of its own plan.

One of the important programs that took place was extending electricity facilities to rural areas, but lack of efficiency and enthusiasm among relevant ministries could not achieve "true" integrated rural development. In 1976 the role of agricultural cooperatives was weakened due to the establishment of village

banks that took most of their activities. In the 1980s there was an attempt to revitalize national planning side by side with the economic openness policy "open-door policy" which created a kind of uncertainty, yet economic and social stability were felt, thus various projects and programs funded mostly by foreign institutions and agencies were implemented e.g. small-scale farmer project, productive families, national agricultural machinery, which all aimed at achieving – partially – economic and social changes in rural Egypt, but it lacked coordination and integration from one hand and overall development philosophy from another hand.

The five RD previously mentioned stages in Egypt basically stopped at 1994, yet the five year plan for social and economic development continued, but a **sixth phase** could be added which took place in the period (1994–2017) as it includes a very recent integrated RD program, the National Integrated Rural Development Program "Shorouk" i.e. sun rise, applied through ORDEV, which adopted a specific strategy and notion that incubates all public and governmental efforts to achieve real rural development that assures integration and coordination and people's participation in the developmental process – its philosophy depending on people's participation as the core of development while governmental efforts (financial and technical support) are seen as complementary. The program due to financial problems was terminated in 2005.

The "Shorouk" program, to some extent applied governance techniques when providing its institutional structure and technical support as indicated in Fig. 2 (Moharam, 2005) in order to assure smooth flow in all the developmental process and to guarantee coordination and integration among various actors and full participation either from people or civil society organizations.

These RD experiences in Egypt faced problems that limited its progress, and all lacked coordination and integration, financial problems, political conditions, poor management and most important factor, except "Shorouk" program did not reflect people's priorities and needs, though "good governance" or "rationale governance" could be the key solutions to overcome these problems.

Governance

Governance basically emerged within the developmental context of international organizations (e.g. UNDP, IMF) in 1989 as other stakeholder become partners in the developmental processes (e.g. private sector and civil society organizations) though it was necessary to achieve coordination and integration among these partners from one hand, and to improve "governance" within its structure in order to guarantee the success of any development exerted efforts.

Governance became not only the main goal but a prerequisite for aid allocation to developing countries, but this concept presents a challenge to the current study as it raises a question mark about the "real" purpose of it within the international organizations that created it and whether it have negative or positive impact on the socio-political stability in developing countries?

In spite of the previous concern, the concept tackled different angles which mainly reflect these organizations agenda, but all shared four main features; first improving public management or improving governmental bodies' performance, second

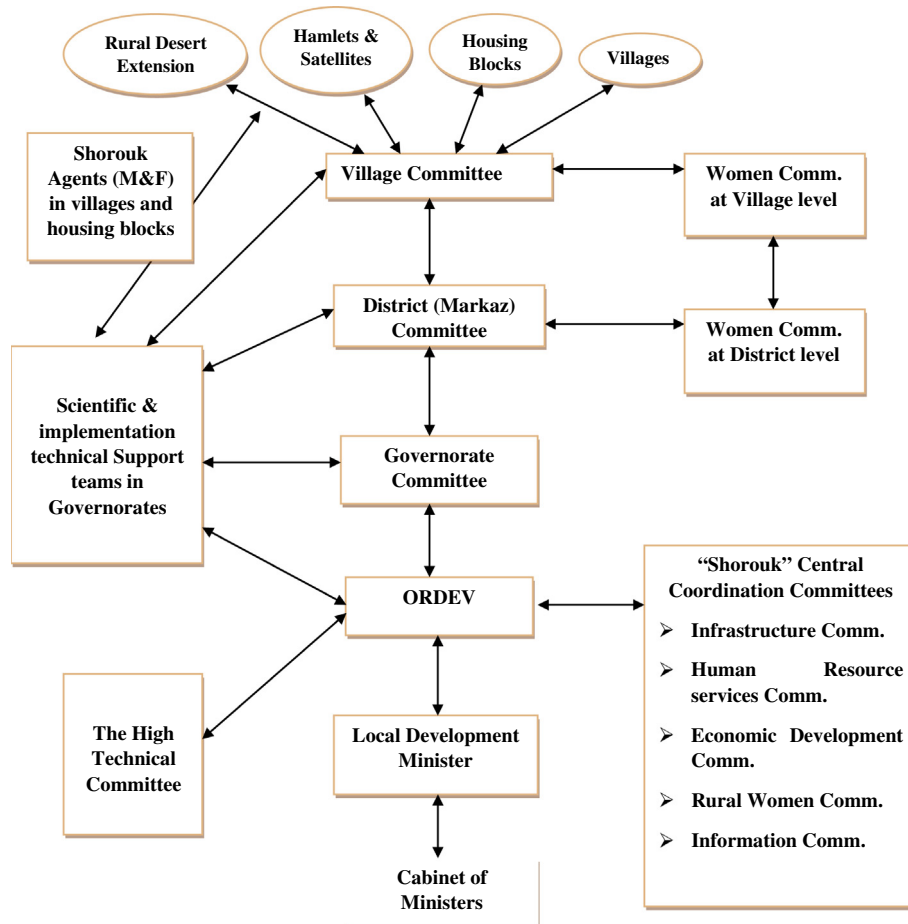


Fig. 2 Shorouk program governance mechanism.

transparency, third accountability and forth is the rule of law. Some organizations widened their scope to include military expenditures and controlling corruption.

This concept evolved since its appearance within each organization in order to achieve a kind of harmony between the concept and the overall policies of these international organizations, and in some cases using the concept led to changes within their policies. The IMF determined three dimensions for governance: the political system form, and the means by which power is exercised in managing the social and economic resources for development and finally the government (state) capabilities to design, formulate and implement policies and distribute tasks (Al-Baradei, 2003).

Though, governance concerns the state’s ability to serve the citizens, it refers to rules, processes and behavior by which interests are articulated, resources are managed and power is exercised in society. Governance is a basic measure of the stability and performance of a society. As the concepts of human rights, democratization and democracy, the rule of law, civil society, decentralized power sharing and relevance, a society develops into a more sophisticated political system and governance evolves into good governance (The European Commission, 2008).

There are eight key principles grouped under three main themes for effective rural governance (Fig. 3). Collaboration includes: crossing sectors (public, private, and non-profit),

and crossing political boundaries and recognizing regions. Whereas, sustained citizen engagement includes: welcoming new voices (especially underrepresented individuals and youth)

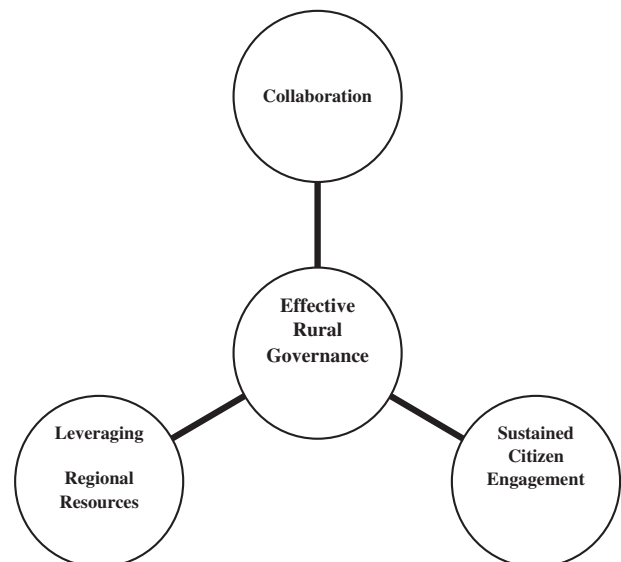


Fig. 3 Key principles for effective rural governance.

and visioning a different future (bottom-up process). Finally the last theme incubates: analyzing a region's competitive advantages (focuses on strengths and identifies clusters), and strengthening competencies of local elected officials and engaging key intermediaries, besides investing local capital (Stark, 2005).

Governance of a sector, and the way in which politics and institutions interact within that sector, will in practice have a critical impact on sector policies and services. This means that governance and political economy tools are increasingly seen as necessary to understand the context of sector reform.

Governance assessments have traditionally focused on formal governance structures and processes and less on the interaction between actors and institutions. Recently, newer generations of governance analysis frameworks have emerged which adopt a more realistic and non-normative approach, and as such are more in line with political economy frameworks and approaches (DFID et al., 2009).

Questions arising

In light of the previous review and analysis, an important key question emerges regarding the current study dilemma; are there any rationale management and smooth flow of the decision-making processes that helps in solving or avoiding some or all threats and weaknesses in Egypt RD? Is there any kind of cooperation and coordination among various actors? What about major problems these actors face and to what extent they manage their projects at operational levels? Are RD programs implemented by these actors reflecting people's needs and priorities? And overall is there any real RD strategy in Egypt?

All these questions reflect the current study's problem and in same time its objectives, as they all combined emphasis the important relationship between governance and achieving successful ARD policy that guarantees its sustainability, since basic techniques are set after tackling the sector problems and providing the governance framework. Because any failure in strategy formation will eventually affect any implemented programs and projects, for instance if centralization persists, corruption in localities continues, then development will not fulfill its goal and objectives and the impact on people's livelihoods and overall GDP will be at minimum levels and there will be no sustainability after project ends.

Objectives

Hence, governance assessments have traditionally focused on formal governance structures and processes and less on the interaction between actors and institutions, the current study will try to focus on the interactions between studied organizations and to investigate whether governance "really" takes place in RD strategy in Egypt or not. Therefore the following specific objectives were formed:

1. Identify the characteristics of public and civil society – internal and external stakeholders (actors) involved in designing, implementing and evaluating RD.
2. Analyzing the relationships and linkages between these actors.
3. Identify rural development strategies and policies in Egypt – agriculture included.

Materials and methods

The work is based on primary information collected by questionnaires and semi-structured interviews carried out in May–September 2013 with representatives of 50 (24 sent by email and 26 by personal interview) public, NGOs and international organizations as well as an extended secondary data review. Highly reliable available secondary data have been collected (studies, statistics, MALR strategy, ministry of local development, and human development reports), analyzed and cross-checked.

Different types of public and civil society institutions and organizations have been considered including among others: ministries, government institutions and executive agencies (e.g. extension organizations); public structures (training and research centers, universities, etc.); national and international NGOs. In particular, the questionnaire was used with key actors i.e. Faculties of Agriculture, Agriculture Extension & Rural Development Research Centre, IDRC, Misr El-Khair foundation and IFAD. Within the questionnaire key questions included the operational level and the geographical coverage of each organization; understanding of "rural development"; involvement of the organization in a RD policy and/or project and in which phase of the policy cycle; level of its cooperation and coordination with other public, civil society and international organizations dealing with RD.

Additional inquiries were about the main problems in Egyptian rural areas as well as regarding RD policy design, implementation and evaluation without forgetting the main constraints that hamper coordination between organizations dealing with RD and/or render it ineffective at each phase of the policy cycle. Conflicts between the different actors were also investigated. Respondents identified also the organization that assumes, according to them, the leadership in coordinating RD issues in Egypt. Apart from coordination among actors, the questionnaire dealt also with coordination of sectoral policies in rural areas. Moreover, various analytical tools were used in order to give a comprehensive overview about ARD in Egypt, including quantitative and qualitative methods. SWOT analysis was used to verify the gaps in the current flow of RD strategy.

Measurement of variables

The questionnaire included both open and closed questions, in order to assess and analyze the obtained responses, the open responses were analyzed using frequencies and percentages. Whereas the close questions were given a numeric code which varied from one variable to another (Table 1).

The type of organization was divided into five categories: ministry, NGO, international organization, research organization and governmental organization, they were given a five-point scale (1, 2, 3, 4, 5) respectively, the work level included five levels: local, national, international, both local and national, and both national and international and were given same previous scale. As for participation in ARD policy/program included two responses: yes (2) and no (1), RD definition included two definitions one considering RD as part of agricultural development and the other as a cross-sector that includes agriculture sector and a third open definition, these were scaled 1, 2, 3 respectively.

As for the item related to tasks carried on by the organization were given a seven-point scale and categorized as follows: design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, and were scaled 1, 2, 3 respectively then for the three tasks combined were given 4, and for design and implementation 5, implementation and M&E 6, finally design and M&E 7. Cooperation with governmental, civil society, and international organizations included two responses: yes (2) and no (1). The level of decision making within the organization was categorized and scaled as follows: centralized (1), decentralized (2) and both (3).

The responses deducted from the item of decision making flow within the organization were based upon coordination and integration separately, and combined were measured as follows: coordination only (1), integration (2), and both (3). Additionally, the item of whether Rd program reflects people's needs was measured by yes (3), partially (2) and no (1), then when exploring the organization's success a continuum of 10° (0–10) was provided in the questionnaire and divided into three categories as follows: (0–5), (5–10), and 10+, then scaled 1, 2, and 3 respectively.

The source of finance was given a six-point scale and categorized as follows: governmental, NGOs, private sector, international organizations, both NGOs, private, and others were scaled 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 respectively. As for consultancy services provided by these organizations it was given two responses either yes (2) or no (1), for years of experience was given a four-point scale and were categorized as follows: less than 5 years, (5–10), (10–20), (20+), as being part of a network was given two responses either yes (2) or no (1). Finally for responses regarding the main obstacles in RD coordination it was given seven-point scale and categorized as follows: political, technical/bureaucracy, strategic, others, all previous three, both political and strategic, and both technical and strategic.

Results and discussion

I. Identification of public and civil society stakeholders (actors) – internal and external-involved in designing, implementing and evaluating RD, and analyzing the relationships and linkages between them

This part represents the results of the two first objectives which are the identification of the organizations involved in RD and analyzing the relationship among them, as they have been combined together due to their relevance to each other. Additionally part of the results were obtained from review of literature and the other part from the survey.

There are various international organizations e.g. UN organizations, UNDP, FAO, JICA and national organizations e.g. ministries, Universities, research centers, private sector and extension agencies all dealing with development in general and RD in particular. Basically, most of these organizations deal with the notion of development that could be agricultural or small-scale enterprises or loan providers or charities.

The following represents examples of some major programs and projects implemented by some international organizations in Egypt. FAO projects in Egypt (1978–2010) include: Egypt-AI-Beheira rural development, irrigation improvement program, assistance in agricultural policy analysis, promotion of agribusiness investment by private sector, strengthening the nation agricultural extension system, assisting small-scale poor

fishermen to increase their fish catch. In general FAO implemented about 150 projects in Egypt within the same period that amounted US\$ 55,234,702 (FAO, 2011). As for JICA, the following represents major projects implemented in Egypt: introduction of clean energy by solar generation system and drainage water quality control for irrigation in Middle Delta (JICA, 2013).

The UNDP continues to focus on poverty reduction via inclusive growth and job creation through the policy environment and supports services for small and medium enterprises and facilitating their access to credit. Also better targeting the poor by enhancing poverty monitoring and promoting policies that enhance integrated social development, social protection schemes. In the area of strengthening sustainable management of the natural environment, UNDP helps the Government of Egypt to build its capacities and develop adaptation options and local solutions to climate change, besides promoting biodiversity.

The UNDP programmatic priorities in Egypt's transitional period after January, 2011 revolution focuses on four major pillars: supporting expanded and effective political participation, supporting greater transparency and accountability, promoting a culture of human rights, and supporting local development, poverty reduction and social justice, which reflect the notion of governance.

Although all international and national actors work within the development policy framework of the state, yet they have their own agendas that serve their visions and missions. Additionally no coordination among all these actors, except some cases, for instance at national level the MLD implements infrastructure projects while the Ministry of Housing, Utilities and New Communities do the same. Some donors implement their projects in collaboration with governmental bodies in order to gain access to targeted areas and people, especially now as people are susceptible toward such organizations and their hidden agendas. As mentioned when preparing the Sustainable Agricultural Development Strategy (SAD) document toward 2030 which reflects national objectives, it was done in coordination with Agricultural Research and Development Council, FAO, with inputs from IFAD and WB.

The survey results which coincide to some extent with the previous literature (Table 2) revealed that about (40%) of studied organizations are governmental, and 34% are NGOs, and about (56%) of them work at the local level. Additionally, 96% of them did not participate in any RD policies in Egypt, besides 76% provided an appropriate definition of RD, indicating that RD is a cross-sector that incubates the agriculture sector, while 10% considered RD as part of the agriculture sector. Moreover, about 46% of these organizations have been engaged in RD field for more than 20 years.

When exploring the tasks carried on by the various studied organizations it was revealed that about 42% are involved in all the RD process meaning design, formation and planning, implementation and M&E. Whereas 34% are involved in two stages i.e. design, and implementation, others involved in implementation and M&E, finally some involved in planning and M&E.

Thus, these organizations are not fully incorporated in all the RD process at the local and national level, which shows a gap between the centralized plan and local level priorities from one side and with civil society organizations from another side. This leads to an important question mark is it

Table 2 Numeric measurement and characteristics of studied organizations. *Source:* Authors' survey.

Item	Mode	Categories													
		1		2		3		4		5		6		7	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Type of organization	5	1	2.0	17	34.0	4	8.0	8	16.0	20	40.0	–	–	–	–
Work level	1	28	56.0	8	16.0	12	24	1	2.0	1	2.0	–	–	–	–
Participation in ARD policy/program	2	2	4.0	48	96.0	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
RD definition	2	5	10.0	38	76.0	7	14.0	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Tasks	4	4	8.0	7	14.0	1	2.0	21	42.0	4	8.0	4	8.0	9	18.0
Cooperation with governmental organizations	2	4	8.0	46	92.0	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Cooperation with civil society organizations	2	6	12.0	44	88.0	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Cooperation with international organizations	2	15	30.0	35	70.0	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Level of decision making within the organization	3	13	26.0	12	24.0	25	50.0	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Coordination & integration within the organization	3	9	18.0	5	10.0	20	40.0	1	2.0	15	30.0	–	–	–	–
Reflection of people's needs	2	14	28.0	24	48.0	12	24.0	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Success of organization	2	21	42.0	29	58.0	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Source of finance	1	27	54.0	7	14.0	2	4.0	5	10.0	6	12.0	3	6.0	–	–
Consultancy services	2	13	26.0	37	74.0	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Years of experience	4	1	2.0	14	28.0	12	24.0	23	46.0	–	–	–	–	–	–
Networks	1	40	80.0	10	20.0	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Main obstacles in RD coordination	5	8	16	5	10	8	16	2	4	20	40	4	8	3	6

required that all civil society organizations to be part of the RD policy and process? And if yes what will be the mechanism?

About 48% of these organizations mentioned that most of the RD programs and projects only partially reflect people's needs which means that these programs are centrally planned – to some extent – and implemented with less participation from people at the grass root level, which was to some extent avoided in “Shorouk” program but could not possess the elements of sustainability due to the previous mentioned reasons.

When analyzing the relationships among these organizations working in RD, it was revealed that most of these organizations cooperate with other governmental, civil society and international organizations, representing about 92%, 88% and 70% respectively, i.e. FAO, UNPD, CARE, NGOs, MALR, local units, and social solidarity directorates.

As for the level of decision making within the studied organizations, it was revealed that about 50% addressed that decision making takes place at two levels, centrally in designing and planning, and decentralized in implementation at governorate level. Whereas about 40% mentioned that this level of decision making is based upon coordination and integration with relevant departments and authorities, but about 30% indicated lack of coordination and integration, which actually reflects what happens on reality that most of these organizations lack coordination and there is duplication in many implemented programs and projects.

Another element that shows how these actors interact with each other is networking, as it was revealed that 80% of them are not members in any networks serving their field of expertise. Also regarding the success of the organizations in

achieving their objectives about 58% considered they are successful on a scale of 5–10, while 42% considered their success on a scale of 0–5°. Finally most of these organizations (74%) do not provide consultancy services, only 26% of them provide such services.

II. Rural development policies and strategies in Egypt

Egypt's rural and agriculture sector faces great challenges, and in order to verify these challenges and provide a clear evaluation of its status, SWOT analysis was carried based on the review of literature as indicated in Table 3.

There are problems that affect the performance of this sector and all those involved in it, institutions, organizations or unions. But ironically, there is a kind of separation between agricultural development and rural development, the three agricultural strategies since the 1980s then 1990s and the current strategy developed in 2009 focused mainly on agricultural development and neglected to some extent rural development until the last strategy which allocated part of it to improving rural people's life and infrastructure and paying attention to improving the human capital via education, health, and socio-economic environment.

There are no doubt that great efforts are exerted to overcome such problems, in order to define such efforts, the current study provides a brief overview on the sixth five-years plan for social and economic development (2007/2008–2011/2012) which is published in two parts; first part provides the financial resources provided for programs related to the administrative body, local administration and services authorities, while the second part is for economic authorities, economic units and special budgets.

Table 3 SWOT analysis of agriculture and rural conditions in Egypt. Sources: MALR, agricultural strategy, 2006 & CAPMAS, statistical reports, 2006, the socio-economic development plan, ministry of economic development, 2007 & various studies and reports.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased population size • Availability of labor force • Increased productivity in many crops • Improved export capabilities • Food gap reduced in some crops • Reformation of owner–tenants relationship • Existence of relevant institutions e.g. ministries, research, extension, finance • Existence of legislations and regulations • Various entities participate in ARD • Diversified production activities (crops, fishery, animal) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of rural development strategy • High population density • Unskilled agriculture labor • Fragmented agricultural lands • Violations over agricultural lands • Youth migration • Water resource problems • High poverty and illiteracy rates • Lack of coordination among ARD stakeholders • Weak role of agriculture extension and cooperatives
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishing rural development strategy • Incentives to attract rural youth • Improve and enhance coordination and cooperation among relevant stakeholders • Enhance and encourage SME's among rural youth • Training for unskilled labor • Centralization with minimum supervision at state level • Improved rural finance and credit • Improve utilization of lakes and seas to increase fishery sector • Improving food exports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased population rates and density • WTO laws and regulations • Limited markets • Losses in agricultural lands • Deterioration in soils • Current political instability • Water scarcity • Degraded rural cultural identity and landscape • Absence of valuing agriculture lands • Increased illiteracy rates and drop-outs • Deterioration in natural resources • Increased food demand and food import • Uncontrolled food production and processing standards • Uncontrolled imported agricultural inputs

The first part indicated that about 1,392,145 thousand EGP is allocated for implementation of programs and projects in Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation (MALR) representing about 0.87% of the total budget allocated for social and development projects coming from various resources; governmental bodies, local general budgetary, foreign general budgetary, non-foreign external loans, and other local and foreigner resources (Ministry of Economic Development, 2007a).

The MALR financial resources are allocated for the implementation of new projects, completion of previous projects and replacement and innovation. The second part shows that 1.1 billion EGP are allocated for MALR for implementing its economic activities e.g. agriculture, irrigation, land reclamation, financial intermediation, insurance and social security (Ministry of Economic Development, 2007b).

The targeted investments for agriculture and irrigation in 2012/2013 are about 12.4 billion EGP with an increase of about 141% of the previous year which were about 5.14 billion EGP due to doubled investments in private sector which were about 7.4 billion EGP (Table 4).

The field results assured that there are problems that affect the performance of rural sector and all those involved in it, so it was important to identify whether the studied organizations were aware of these problems or not from one hand, and to discover whether these problems were resolved or not. The results indicated that all studied organizations identified clearly the main problems as shown in Table 5, but it differed from one organization to another, yet most of the problems still exist and persist.

Poverty still comes at the top of the problems, and comes in same rank the pollution problem, representing about 30% for each, then comes the unemployment problem amounting about 28% of total studied organizations, then the absence of agriculture extension services amounted about 26%. So this could be attributed to the lack of coordination and duplication between all these actors, as each implements various programs and projects which are quite similar to each other, and as noted that two organizations for instance had within their plans paving the same road in same village, this for sure causes two negative impacts declined financial resources due to mis-distribution, as it is allocated for different organizations for same purposes, second abandoning other important priorities people are in need of them.

In spite of all above exerted efforts, yet the survey revealed that there are various problems related to the design, M&E, and implementation of RD policy in Egypt, which can be summarized in Table 6.

Table 5 Problems of rural areas in Egypt. *Source:* Authors' survey.

Problem	Frequency	%
Poverty	15	30
Pollution	15	30
Unemployment	14	28
Absence of agriculture extension (technical support and training)	13	26
Lack of sanitation system	12	24
Illiteracy	12	24
Lack of/and high prices of agriculture inputs	12	24
Poor public facilities	8	16
Lack of clean water	7	14
Lack of community participation	6	12
Lack of financial resources	6	12
Lack of coordination among ministries	6	12
Fragmented agricultural lands	5	10
Lack of marketing	5	10

In addition to main obstacles facing the current RD coordination was obtained from the results and was attributed to mainly (40%) to policy issues related to difficulties in cooperation at all levels whether local or governmental, technical obstacles and bureaucracy, besides the lack of long-term RD strategy (combined) Table 2.

As indicated in the table financial issues are common in the three problem types, as well as the lack of community participation, also lack of qualified staff to carry on design of RD plan, M&E, and implementation is another major problem. Although the most crucial problem is the lack of or absence – to be more accurate – of rural planning strategy, which if existed would solve most of the previous mentioned problems.

Additionally, the survey revealed the lack of coordination among various organizations can be attributed to the absence of planning, qualified staff, and poor training facilities. As for coordination among other sectoral policies in rural areas, about 78% considered that coordination is very poor, while 22% mentioned it was to some extent good. When exploring other sectoral policies apart from agricultural, and relevant to RD policy, about 92% agreed upon the existence of such policies i.e. health, environmental, public facilities, and education.

In regard of the existence of an organization that has the leadership in RD policy coordination, about 66% of the studied organizations assured that MALR and MLD have the lead, while 34% denied its existence. The results also revealed that 86% agreed on some organizations that currently play a weak

Table 4 General investments^a in agriculture and irrigation in the 2012/2013 plan. *Source:* Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation, 2012.

Item	Million EGP	%
Agriculture and land reclamation	1697.9	100.0
– Land reclamation	282.0	16.6
– Plant production services development (extension and research)	1194.1	70.3
– Veterinary and fish services development	221.8	13.1
Irrigation	3312.6	100.0
– Irrigation and drainage networks and stations	1796	54.2
– Improvement and support of irrigation facilities and high dam and Egyptian shores	670	20.2
– Development of water resources	846.6	25.6

^a Includes government, economic authorities and companies of the law 97.

Table 6 Problems of RD policy and governance in Egypt. *Source:* Authors' survey.

Type of problem	Problems	Frequencies	%
Design	Lack of rural planning strategy	35	70
	Lack of coordination among various RD actors	21	42
	Lack of community participation	17	34
	Lack of financial resources	14	28
	Lack of government support	14	28
	Declined professional and technical local cadres in Rd departments	12	24
	No utilization of neither research results nor successful RD lessons	9	18
	Centralization	6	12
M&E	No M&E plans	35	70
	Lack of M&E technical cadres	18	36
	Lack of financial support	10	20
	Lack of rural people's cooperation with M&E personnel	7	14
	No clear objectives and indicators for M&E	6	12
Implementation	Financial problems	30	60
	Lack of qualified cadres for implementation	22	44
	Absence of planning and monitoring system	17	34
	Bureaucracy	15	30
	Lack of community participation	8	16

role in RD policy, but possess the potential to play a key role i.e. MALR, research centers, cooperatives and MLD, representing about 24%, 22%, 20%, and 22% respectively.

When diagnosing whether there is any conflict between current studied organizations and any other organizations or authorities, 72% of studied organizations indicated no conflicts, while 26% said there is conflict, yet reality contradicts these results.

Conclusions and recommendations

In light of the previous literature and fieldwork data it is evident that "good governance" is not achieved regarding the overall state policies and plans in general and RD in particular, besides there are no direct rural development strategy as it is included briefly within the agricultural strategy, even though enhancing the agriculture sector will eventually lead to improving those involved in the agriculture yet no improvement in the quality of life of rural people more generally, which is the core of RD. Additionally, socio-economic state plans are scattered among various ministries of RD (i.e. Ministry of Health, Ministry of Housing, Ministry of education), and authorities that creates duplication and lacks coordination, also this is the case in the international organizations dealing with.

It was evident that even great number of organizations are working in one way or another in socio-economic programs and activities, still major problems persist i.e. poverty still comes at the top of these problems as revealed from the survey, besides pollution and unemployment. Also, these organizations are not fully incorporated in all the RD process at the local and national level, which shows a gap between the centralized plan and local level priorities from one side and with civil society organizations from another side.

When comparing the results and three dimensions for governance determined by the IMF (Al-Baradei, 2003): (1) political system form, (2) the means by which power is exercised in managing the social and economic resources for development and finally and (3) the government (state) capabilities to

design, formulate and implement policies and distribute tasks, it could be withdrawn that the political level was not an objective of the current study and in same time requires a long term process, but if this is reflected at the ministries level, it could be accomplished as a step toward achieving good governance of the state political system.

So identification of the MALR system and defining the gaps were revealed by the current study, besides decision making flow is basically centralized as about half of the studied organization mentioned that decision making takes place at two levels, centrally in designing and planning, and decentralized in implementation at governorate level. Yet there is a kind of "disorder" when exercising power and decision making, as most of the plans are formed at the central level, and investments are allocated for each governorate, but at the governorate level via its local councils they set their own plans and send it to the central level to be approved or re-prioritized, so it is considered that the members of these councils represent people's point of view, which is not the case all time. There is no "good governance" regarding the socio-economic resources i.e. irrigation is joint decision between two ministries MALR and Ministry of Irrigation, so problems occur, power may be exercised against the farmers' will or benefit, also agriculture labor is unskilled and there is no national or local program that helps to improve this important category, besides rural landscape is destroyed.

Finally, it was indicated that the government have the capabilities to design, implement and monitor to some extent, and distribute tasks, but corruption and unqualified personnel hinder any exerted efforts. All these represent another evidence that governance is not practiced at the MALR level, even this institution is nominated to take the lead in the formation of the RD strategy in Egypt.

Though, the study fully agrees with the EU "governance" perspective that it concerns the state's ability to serve the citizens, it refers to rules, processes and behavior by which interests are articulated, resources are managed and power is exercised in society. Through, concepts of human rights, democratization and democracy, the rule of law, civil society,

decentralized power sharing and relevance, a society develops into a more sophisticated political system and governance evolves into good governance.

Therefore the paper recommends changing both policies, legislations and institutions relevant to RD, though the state plan that depends on centralization, without participation of relevant actors should be changed, and Ministry of Agriculture should be responsible about RD policy in Egypt or Ministry of Local Development to be changed and take that part with involvement of various actors. Additionally, local people representatives should participate in any RD policy to reflect their basic needs, yet their awareness about “governance”, is required so they can set their priorities on real basis. Research and extension should be empowered and practice their role with farmers, but this requires changes in the structure of the current institutions and budget to be suitable to carry on this role. Finally farmers should be gathered in organizations (e.g. cooperatives, associations) to have a more influential and decisive role in the governance and decision-making processes.

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