

Fairville Labs

GIZA

Facing inequalities and democratic challenges through Co-production in Cities (Fairville) is a Urban Co-Production Research Project Horizon Europe.

Fairville uses knowledge co-production as strategy to address urban inequalities and democratic issues affecting seven urban areas in Europe, and two other mirror cases in Africa.



- ◆ Risk Inequalities
- ▲ Environmental Inequalities
- Planning and Housing Inequalities

Fairville experiments co-production with civil society actors, universities and local authorities to facilitate multi-engagement towards embracing entrenched urban and environmental inequalities with affected residents or community groups. Through coproduction of knowledge and actions-oriented programmes, it contributes to rethinking urban democracy.

Do you want to help? There are many ways to contribute to the project: would you like to participate in the co-production in our project tasks or go on the field in our Fairville Labs?

Contact us!

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CONTEXT

With approximately 55,000 residents, the area of Mansheyat Dahshur in **Giza** Governorate, Egypt, faces challenges due to inadequate waste management and poor disposal practices. This has led to a widespread pollution in close proximity to houses, schools, public facilities and irrigation canals, negatively impacting the environment despite Dahshur's historical and archaeological significance as a tourist destination, home to the Snerefu pyramid complex.

The existing inequalities in Mansheyat Dahshur include:

- **Environmental inequality** caused by inadequate public solid waste management service that fails to serve the community. This is exposing population to disparities in waste collection and disposals, leading to poor waste disposal practices, such as open burning and dumping into irrigation canals, contributing to pollution and poor air quality.
- **Multidimensional inequality in access to public services** persists as the area, despite having a city-like demographic, is classified as a village. This limits the available budget, affecting essential public services such as waste management, sanitation, education, and healthcare, with the greatest impact on low-income residents who cannot afford private alternatives.
- **Economic inequality** resulting from inefficient waste management and inadequate basic public infrastructures, which hinder economic opportunities, particularly in agriculture and tourism – core components of the local economy.
- **Social inequality** exacerbated by the lack of effective waste management and environmental degradation.
- **Health inequality** due to pollution exposure, endangering the residents' health, since the village lacks adequate healthcare facilities, with the nearest hospital located at a significant distance and transportation costs high. A significant example is a major waste collection point in the village placed next to an elementary school.

ACTORS INVOLVED

The organizations involved in the Giza Fairville Lab (FVLab) include the North South Consultants Exchange (NSCE) as leading organization which composed a coordination team of currently 13 persons. The coordination team is continuously growing through the process gathering people from different organisations (NSCE, 10 Tooba, Greenish) and local CSOs (El Reyada, Dahshur Tourism Development, Cairo Waste collectors association), from different fields (urbanism, anthropology, environment, public policy, management) and providing different type of knowledge (technical expertise, academic, grassroots).

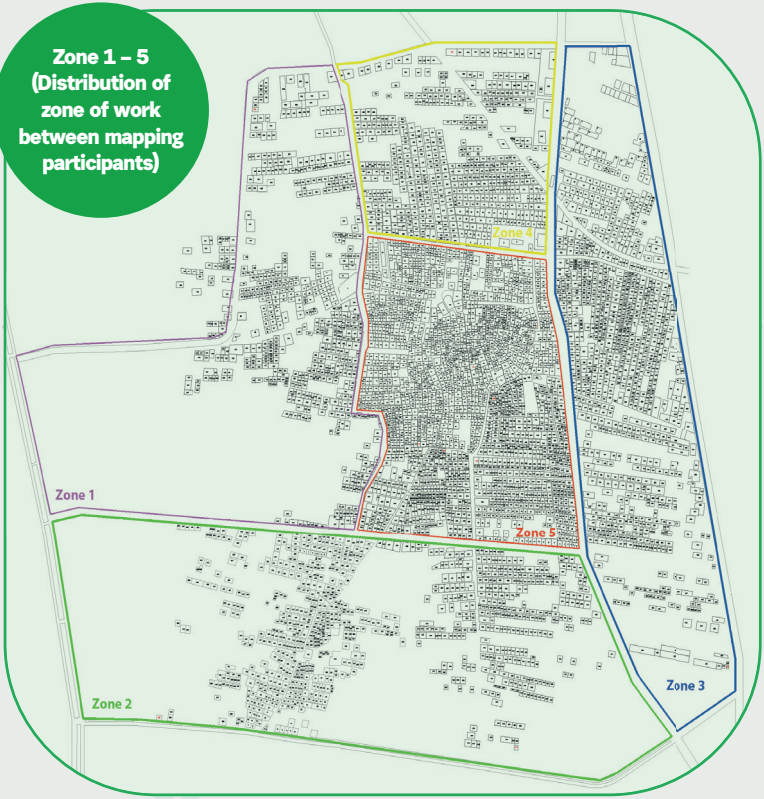


Figure 1: Mansheyat Dahshur map layout (made by the FVLab team in February 2024)

The FVLab co-production process is seeking the involvement of key priority stakeholders: residents (women, farmers, youth, children, teachers, and CSOs representatives), informal waste collectors, the district unit of Badrashin, Giza Governorate and relevant private sector actors (waste management and recycling organisations). Overall, the FVlab operates through a co-production process involving local community members, civil society, technical experts, public authorities, and the private sector.

ACTIONS

The main objective of the FVLab Giza is to enhance fair space for voicing and decision-making by creating a common platform for different stakeholders to express their challenges and potentials. The FVLab is actively seeking to improve life conditions by co-designing potential solutions for waste management and water quality. It is doing so through the co-production of knowledge to reach the development of a new waste management plan enhancing living quality. The FVLab also organises advocacy campaigns to raise awareness about environmental risks and their intersection with various aspects of living. Finally, it creates effective co-production tools by developing toolkits and tactics that can be reused in other areas, turning the process into a learning experience.



Figure 2: Training physical mapping (Khaled Fathy, February 13 2024)



CO-MAPPING environmental inequalities

The mapping tasks were carried out in multiple phases throughout the project. Creating a base map required updating official maps provided by the local city council. Due to rapid urbanization, the village's borders have expanded over the years, including filling urban pockets. The base map production started in March 2024 and lasted two months, relying on recent satellite images and field verification.

After completing the base map, an additional mapping layer was added to cover physical urban features such as land-use, building uses, heights, street qualities, commercial activity categories, and water canals. The map production required a larger team, so experts and locals were and urban studies students were brought together. The process began with a training session for local residents of Giza Governorate (7 persons), and the map was divided into different zones, each assigned to a mapper (see map layout above). A surveying template was distributed among the team members, and the mapping took place from May until August 2024. Following this, qualitative maps were developed through geographically locating social issues and integrating the outcomes from focus group discussions, which included community mapping activities.

Mapping the physical environment and the social aspects revealed several gaps and challenges for the general solid waste plan. It highlighted the scarcity of basic services like healthcare, types of waste generated, and denser areas needing specific tactics. Mapping canals and waste in public spaces, especially near houses, was crucial for assessing the problem's scale.

The mapping tasks provided valuable access to the local community, facilitating casual and unstructured discussions with local community members in public spaces. Some conversations have led to house visits offering first-hand insight into waste and sewage issues inside households. This outreach raised awareness, advocated for the project, enabling a positive environment to engage the community in co-producing a new waste management strategy. Finally, the connections established will help expand the team, involving more local community members in the next phase of developing the village's solid waste management strategy.



Figure 3: Waste categorization and distribution map done by the Giza FVLab team

- **ACTIVITIES NOT PRODUCING WASTE**
- **MEDICAL WASTE**
- **ORGANIC WASTE**
- **SOLID WASTE**

The team would not have produced such a volume and quality of data without co-production with the local community. Initially focused on youth in the village, the project expanded to include women as key stakeholders and beneficiaries—a shift driven by the co-production process.

At the same time, the local community benefited from the process through understanding how their street- and district-scale issue affects the entire village. Discussions with experts also highlighted economic and social opportunities, increasing community engagement in the process.



Figure 4: Training physical mapping (Paloma Anger, February 13 2024)

However, the project faced few challenges during the process. The co-production process included local community, government, NGOs, and private sector but fieldwork was challenging, as it required multiple official approvals due to specific security constraints. Additionally, conservative social dynamics in the village made it difficult to engage certain stakeholders, particularly women from the beginning of the process. This issue was resolved by integrating more local young women into the core team.

These dynamics are being documented to develop a pilot strategy that can be scaled up and repeated in other villages. The core team includes members from neighbouring villages, who are trained to understand the challenges and opportunities, allowing them to be able to adapt and apply the process elsewhere. This is a key element of our co-production approach.



Figure 5: Co-mapping activity (Paloma Anger, May 29 2024)