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**AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT SYSTEMS**  
**EGYPT PROJECT**

**UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, DAVIS**

**SOCIO-ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES OF LAND RECLAMATION  
COOPERATIVES IN EGYPT**

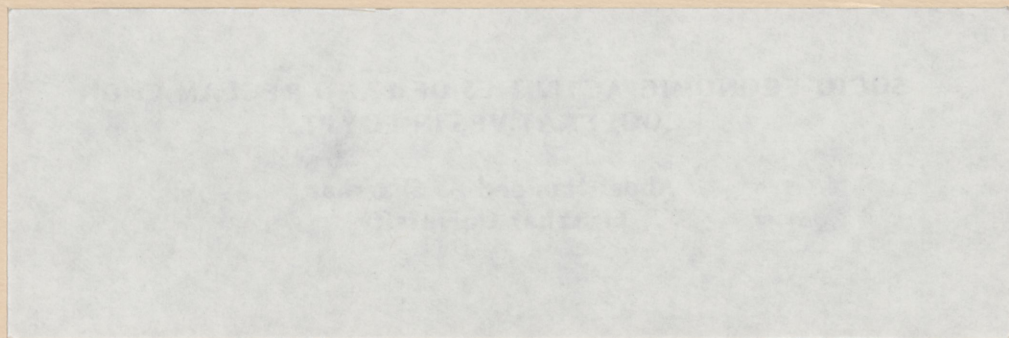
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COOPERATIVES IN EGYPT**

by  
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Agricultural Development Systems:  
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## Preface

Dr. Abdel Hameed A. Sharshar has prepared this paper as part of the Agricultural Development Systems Project entitled: "Improving the Role of Agricultural Cooperatives in Egypt." This project, which began February 1, 1981, aims to assess the role and performance of agricultural cooperatives in Egypt vis-a-vis the national planning goals and the stated interests of cooperative members at the local level. In addition to Dr. Sharshar's paper, other reports providing overviews of rural cooperatives, are also part of the project. The other reports cover: "Agricultural and Multi-Purpose-Credit Cooperatives" by Dr. Faris Shaker; "Agrarian Reform Cooperatives" by Dr. Mohd. Ramadan El Shohnah; "Specialized Cooperatives" by Dr. Fawazy El Shazly and Dr. R. I. Rochin; and "An Historical Analysis of the Cooperative Movement in Egypt" by Dr. Ibrahim Moharrum. All will be available as working papers of the ADS series. The author of this paper would appreciate comments and suggestions for improving this report. For questions about the study of cooperatives in Egypt, write to the following individuals.

### Project Leaders:

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SOCIO-ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES OF LAND RECLAMATION  
COOPERATIVES IN EGYPT

by

Abdel Hameed A. Sharshar

This study provides an overview of land reclamation cooperatives in Egypt and describes the social obligations and economic activities cooperatives offer their members in the land reclamation sector. Published data and annual reports of the general assembly of land reclamation provide the basis for the tables presented below.

Background

From its inception, the 1952 revolutionary government under Nasser was preoccupied with expanding the cultivated land area of Egypt. To achieve this aim, the government started to reclaim land in new areas, such as El-Tahrier, and to develop land reclamation equipment and trained labor. The government also developed annual programs for land reclamation at the national level.

The increase of reclaimed areas and their subsequent settlement in Egypt required a specific type of cooperative geared towards people's needs. By Law No. 317 in 1956 and Law No. 100 in 1964, cooperatives were established. These laws were modified by Law No. 33 in 1967, which covered the principles of cooperation, as well as Law 122 in 1980. The members of these cooperatives must be those who received parcels of the reclaimed land.

The first land reclamation cooperative was registered in the Southern region of El-Tahrier, in the Markaz of Koum: Hamada, Beheira province in November of 1962. Currently, land reclamation cooperatives total 177 (Table 1); 139 for farmers, 18 for high school and college graduates, and 15 at the district level (called common cooperatives). Five have as yet not registered. Approximately 5,000 families live in 515 villages in these areas,

which consist of about 77,400 houses, as detailed in Table 2. Also: there are 110 hospitals, 14 clinics, 4 social organizations, 111 elementary schools, 21 preparatory schools, 8 high schools, 45 postal and telegram offices, 69 consumer cooperatives, 28 police offices, 178 Mosques, and 113 organizations for community development (Table 3). These services are supervised by the social and environmental section of the Ministry of Agricultural Reclamation.

### The General Structure of Land Reclamation Cooperatives

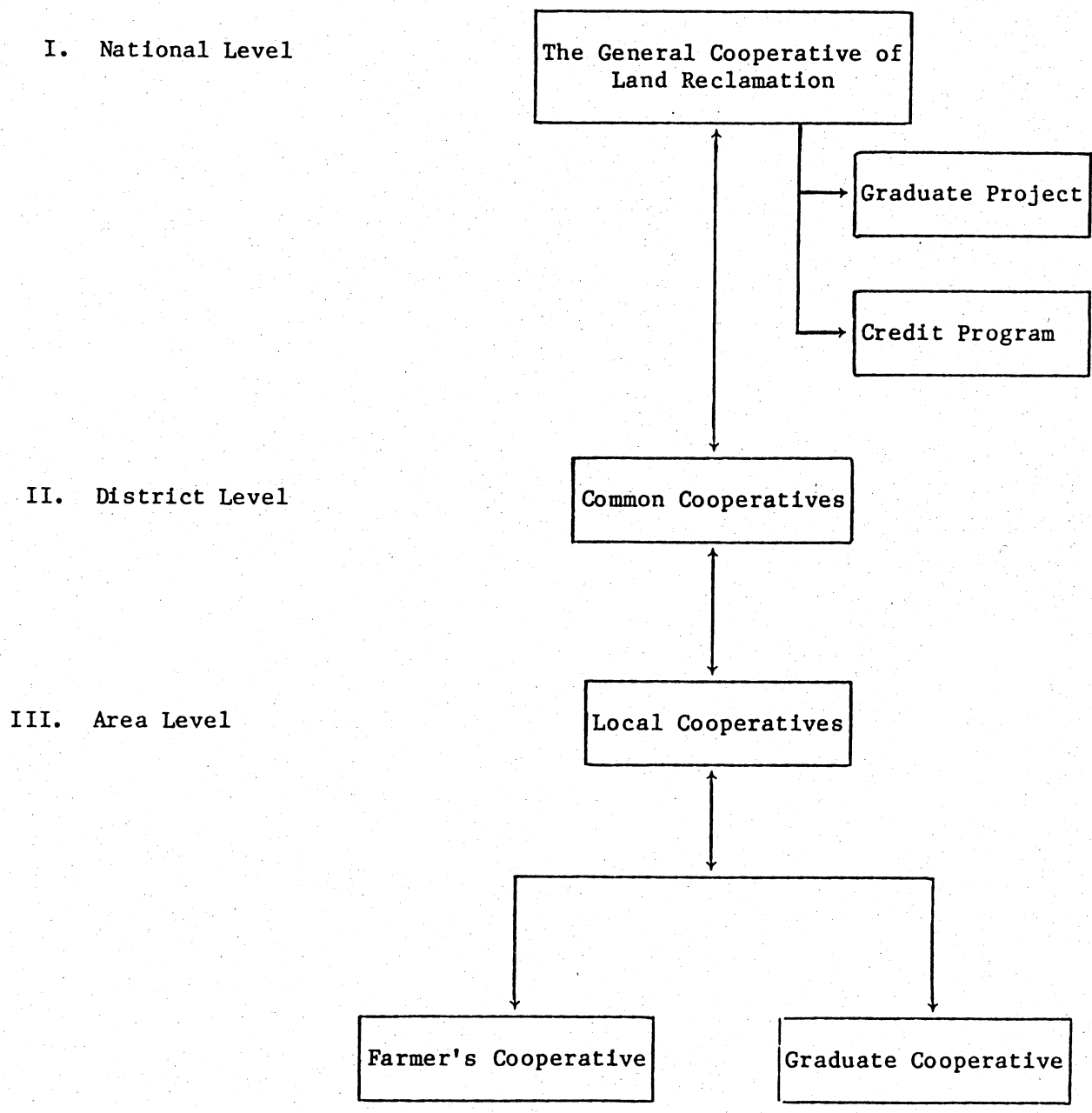
The structure of Land Reclamation Cooperatives is shown in the accompanying diagram. In general, there are three levels of activities.

#### I. National Level

The central cooperative of land reclamation at the national level is located in Cairo, Egypt. It consists of five bodies. The activities of each body include:

1. Board of Director's Affairs. This body prepares and arranges for meetings of the board of directors and the general assembly, and the follow-up application of reports, studies and recommendations.
2. Follow-up and Cooperative Services. This body is responsible for supervising field work, planning and identifying problems facing local cooperatives of land reclamation. These functions include:
  - (a) following up winter and summer rotations of crops at the local levels and ongoing services for different crops, especially insecticide and herbicide control;
  - (b) following up crop harvesting, storage, and marketing different crop products: especially cotton, rice, and onions;
  - (c) planning crop rotation and estimating the

ORGANIZATIONAL DIAGRAM  
OF LAND RECLAMATION COOPERATIVES





required amount of cultivated land for each crop; (d) following up the use of loans which farmers receive at the local level, to make sure that funds have been used correctly; (e) preparing statistical data for other bodies.

3. Body of Production and Equipment Marketing. This body carries out the following activities: (a) providing supplies necessary for production to local cooperatives which cannot be obtained from a credit bank, such as, potatoes, watermelons, and other vegetable seeds; (b) communicating with research institutes for testing substandard production on land; (c) awareness of the market prices and conducting marketing studies, including prices, local marketing issues, laws and systems.
4. Body of Control, Judgment, and Training. The functions of this body are as follows: (a) field visits for farmers and cooperatives to study individual farm's cultivated crops and assist in solving problems related to their farms; (b) holding meetings and symposiums for teaching farmers new farm practices; (c) examining the efficiency of storage facilities, and repairing the deficient ones; (d) coordinating efforts with other bodies; (e) communicating with companies for marketing crop production; (f) planning and conducting training programs for agriculture officers.
5. Body of Managerial and Financial Affairs. This body has two main functions: (1) Financial activities: (a) controlling financial activities between the general and the local coops, (b) awarding loans and making down payments for crops received from farmers, (c) preparing annual budget sheets with other bodies.  
(2) Managerial activities: (a) maintaining and completing

files of employees, (b) writing periodical reports about employees and promoting them according to the stated rules, (c) organizing secretarial and clerical work and records keeping, (d) carrying out the board of director's decisions.

Furthermore, at the National Level there is a Graduate Project for the Land Reclamation Cooperative.

A: Objectives of Graduate Project:

1. Providing opportunities for graduates to utilize related knowledge and skills gained from schools and colleges.
2. Coordinating agricultural and industrial work by establishing industries in the new land for agricultural products.
3. Creating new job opportunities for graduates.

B: The Function of General Cooperatives for the Graduates' Project:

1. Providing insurance statements for cooperatives to the credit bank.
2. Providing loans for mechanization projects.

The National Level General Cooperative of Land Reclamation also provides 1.5 million pounds yearly as deposit to the credit and development bank to distribute to graduates and member farmers.

II. The District Level: Common Cooperatives

At the district level there are two types of cooperatives: (a) common cooperatives for farmers; (b) common cooperatives for graduates. Common cooperatives for farmers are located in areas reclaimed by the government and are distributed to small farmers who have immigrated from their provinces, ranging in size from 2 to 6 feddans. Common cooperatives for graduates are established in areas of reclaimed land which were given to graduates, from 20-30 feddans for high school and college graduates.

### III. The Local Level:

The main purpose of land reclamation cooperatives at the local level is to assure stability and to raise the socio-economic status of members. To achieve these goals, the cooperatives of land reclamation carry out the following duties.

#### A. Economic activities

1. Provide equipment, facilities and money to members.
2. Buying and reclaiming new land, and producing and storing products.
3. Comprehensive planning geared to maximize land use.
4. Establishing agro-industries and breeding honey bees.
5. Improving animal production.
6. Marketing members' products cooperatively.
7. Utilize extension service facilities to inform farmers about the new varieties of crops.
8. Providing basic consumer goods, such as food and medicine, for members on a daily basis.
9. Planning and constructing the new villages.
10. Participation in food security programs.

#### B. Social Activities:

Land reclamation cooperatives work for members' welfare and security in establishing solidarity between members in the new communities, by instilling a sense of loyalty amongst cooperative members. To achieve these community goals the cooperative carries out the following activities:

1. Providing social aids and services to members to help them to confront and resolve their problems.
2. Helping members to maximize use of spare time and improve the hobbies and talents which they have.
3. Participation in health services.
4. Participation in the diffusion of cooperative knowledge and in training members.
5. Helping other agencies to determine which areas need to be explored and researched.

Land reclamation cooperatives clearly play an important role in improving the community through raising the socio-economic level of members.

#### Size and Distribution of Land Served by Land Reclamation Cooperatives

Data in Table 4 reveals that most land reclamation cooperatives serve areas from 1,000-2,000 feddans. The total number of cooperatives in this range is about 90 (55 percent), while 35 (21 percent) of land reclamation cooperatives are in the category with an average of less than 1,000 feddans. The remaining 37 cooperatives serve more than 2,000 feddans.

Table 5 shows that the majority of land reclamation cooperatives are located in upper Egypt: 35 (19.77 percent) of land reclamation cooperatives are located in this area, 33 (18.54 percent) are in El-Nahda, 26 (14.68 percent) are in El-Hamoul, and 23 (12.98 percent) are in San-El Haggar. It is also clear that the regions of North Marioult and El-Tahrier have the lowest number of reclamation cooperatives compared to other areas. North Marioult contains only two cooperatives (1.29 percent), while El-Tahrier has only six cooperatives (3.38 percent).

Also, it is clear from the data in Table 6 that alfalfa, wheat, bean, onion, green beans, tomatoes, potatoes, and sugarcane are the most important crops in land reclamation areas.

#### Animal production activity

Cows, followed by buffalo are the most important components of the animal production sector. Data in Table 7 shows that 39.79 percent of the animals are cows and 23.23 are buffalo. The highest percentages of cows are in the El-Nahda, Abbees, and Edco areas containing approximately (25 percent) in each, while Marioult has the lowest percentage with 2.7 percent.

Data in Table 7 reveals that El-Nahda, with 28.44 percent, and El-Hamoul with 18.87 percent are ranked first and second in animal production. Otherwise, animal production was found to be insignificant for other areas of land reclamation.

On the other hand, the production of milk was 16.15 percent for cows and 27.72 percent for buffalo. Milk production was 43.97 percent of the total animal production return. This illustrates the importance of animal production as a source of earnings for the farmers in land reclamation areas.

#### Mechanization activity

According to available data, the total number of tractors which belong to cooperatives is 267. El-Nahda area contains the highest number of tractors (58) while North El-Tahrier has only two tractors.

On the other hand, the total number of tractors privately owned by members in all areas is 102. Most of these are located in the El-Nahda area (36 tractors) and in San El-Haggar (26 tractors). Members also individually own sprayers and water pumps.

### Food security projects

Food security projects concentrate upon honey bees and poultry production. Data in Table 8 indicates that the total number of private projects for honey bee production is 26. All of these projects are located in the Mansour and South El-Tahrier areas. Poultry production is second in importance in food security projects while fisheries is third in importance.

The general cooperative of land reclamation at the national level gives needed loans to food security projects. Data shows that loans amounted to 100,500 Egyptian pounds in 1979; 8,000 pounds were devoted to animal fattening and poultry production while 20,500 pounds were devoted to honey bee production. These figures indicate that about 8 percent of loans were devoted only to food security projects.

### Summary and Conclusions

The general cooperative of land reclamation at the national level plays an important role in the organizational structure of land reclamation cooperatives.

Most of the land reclamation cooperatives are located in the upper Egypt areas and the average size of land served by each cooperative is less than 1,000 feddans. There is integration between the social and economic activities which are carried out by the cooperatives in land reclamation areas.

The efficiency of cooperatives needs to be evaluated to determine the overall success of local cooperatives of land reclamation from the member's point of view. The performance of economic and social roles of land reclamation cooperatives needs to be evaluated. How well are cooperative

members served? What is the result of the credit program? Do graduate projects function better than farmer projects? Certainly, with the current extension and historical significance of land reclamation cooperatives, it is imperative that further research is done on their roles in agriculture.

Table 1  
Number of Local and Common Cooperatives in Land Reclamation Areas

Area	Number of Cooperatives				Total
	Farmers	Graduate	Common	Under Registration	
San El-Haggar	18	2	2	1	23
El-Hamoul	23	1	2	--	26
El-Mansour	12	--	1	1	14
Shalma	8	--	1	--	9
El-Nahda	24	4	3	2	33
Maroute	5	--	--	--	6
North El-Tahreir	2	--	--	--	2
South El-Tahreir	8	9	2	--	19
Middle Egypt	7	2	--	1	10
Upper Egypt	32	--	3	--	35
<b>Total</b>	<b>139</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>177</b>



Table 2

Number of Farms, Villages, and Houses  
in Land Reclamation Area

Area Name	Number of Farms	Number of Villages	Number of Houses
San El-Haggar	13	52	7,415
El-Hamoul	12	62	11,196
Al-Mansour	9	37	4,305
AlZawia Al-Shamalia	7	28	4,270
Al-Nahda	11	66	12,715
Maroutt	10	25	3,230
North El-Tahreir	8	16	3,399
South El-Tahreir	15	43	5,540
Al-Tahadi	7	28	3,600
Middle Egypt	13	50	5,830
Upper Egypt	11	98	15,900
Total	116	515	77,400

Table 3

## Number of Social Services Agencies in Land Reclamation Areas

Area Number	Central Hospitals	Local Hospitals	Clinics	Elementary Schools	Preparatory Schools	High Schools	Post Offices	Mosques and Churches	Consumer Cooperatives	Police Offices
1	6	5	1	6	1	--	7	20	5	3
2	5	5	--	11	1	--	4	18	5	2
3	2	3	--	4	--	--	2	6	6	2
4	2	2	--	8	--	--	2	10	2	1
5	5	6	3	9	2	--	4	31	4	2
6	7	7	1	4	--	--	3	10	11	2
7	8	5	1	7	2	1	3	11	6	2
8	6	12	--	23	7	4	8	27	17	5
9	1	4	2	4	1	--	2	8	2	1
10	2	7	2	8	1	--	4	12	4	3
11	3	13	4	27	6	3	6	25	7	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>178</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>21</b>

Table 4  
Size of Areas Served  
by Feddan

Area Number	Less Than 1000 Feddan		1000-2000 Feddan		More Than 2000 Feddan	
	Number of Cooperatives	Percent	Number of Cooperatives	Percent	Number of Cooperatives	Percent
1	--	--	16	17.78	5	13.51
2	--	--	11	12.22	13	35.13
3	3	8.57	8	8.89	2	0.41
4	--	--	7	4.78	1	2.70
5	5	14.29	18	20.00	7	18.92
6	2	5.72	3	3.33	--	--
7	1	2.86	1	1.11	--	--
8	4	11.42	11	12.22	2	5.40
9	4	11.42	3	3.33	3	8.11
10	16	45.72	12	13.34	4	10.82
<b>Total</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 5  
Percentages and Number of Cooperatives  
In Each Area in Land Reclamation

Area Number	Number of Cooperatives	Percentage of Cooperatives
1	35	19.77
2	33	18.64
3	26	14.68
4	23	12.98
5	19	10.73
6	14	7.90
7	10	5.64
8	9	5.08
9	6	3.38
10	2	1.29
Total	177	100

Table 6

## Plant Production and Size of Cultivated Land of Each Crop

Crops	Cultivated Area per feddan	Value of Product per pound	Average per pound
Cotton	26,876	4,656,267	173.25
Rice	45,739	2,675,725	58.50
Corn	30,649	5,516,820	180.00
Beans	12,984	2,596,800	200.00
Watermelon	23,058	7,378,570	320.00
Alfalfa	1,232	308,000	250.00
Tomatoes	5,146	2,470,080	480.00
Potatoes	2,569	2,055,200	800.00
Sugarcane	9,516	1,798,524	189.00

Table 7

## Number of Cows and Buffalo and Animal Production in Land Reclamation Areas

Area	Cows	Buffalo	Cow Milk Production per pound	Buffalo Milk Production per pound	Meat Production per pound	Animal Fertilizer Production per pound
1	8,731	2,717	458,250	407,500	695,600	561,504
2	10,570	7,185	554,850	1,077,750	1,099,000	877,332
3	4,650	2,900	244,050	435,000	460,600	370,920
4	5,650	3,650	296,550	547,500	541,500	448,560
5	15,214	9,440	798,600	1,416,000	1,543,000	1,001,304
6	1,612	706	84,600	105,750	1,007,900	135,264
7	1,684	1,342	88,350	201,250	248,200	16,956
8	7,640	4,712	401,100	706,750	474,100	604,776
9	2,800	2,030	147,000	304,500	390,000	267,912
10	1,966	755	34,400	98,250	200,900	141,948
<b>Total</b>	<b>60,517</b>	<b>35,337</b>	<b>3,107,750</b>	<b>5,300,250</b>	<b>6,133,800</b>	<b>4,578,576</b>

Table 8

Projects of Food Security Which Are Carried Out In Land Reclamation Areas

Area Number	Poultry Projects	Honey Bees Project		Fisheries
		Belongs to Cooperative	Belongs to Members	
1	1	5	2	--
2	--	4	--	--
3	--	6	8	120
4	--	2	2	304
5	2	5	3	--
6	--	1	--	--
7	--	--	--	--
8	1	--	8	--
9	--	1	3	--
10	--	--	--	--
<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>424</b>

