

# The Urban Project and the Urban Improvement to the Test of the Participation, Case: Project of Modernization of Constantine

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**Abstract**—In the framework of the modernization of the city of Constantine and in order to restore its status as a regional metropolis introducing it into the network of cities international metropolises, has major urban project was launched: project of modernization and of metropolitanization of the city of Constantine.

Our research project focuses on the management of the project for the modernization of the city of Constantine (PMMC) focusing on the management of some aspects of the urban project whose participation, with the objective assessment of the managerial approach business.

In this contribution, we focus on two cases revealing taken into account in our research work on the question of participation of actors and their organizations. It is "the urban project of modernization of Constantine" and the operation relating to "the urban improvement in the city of the Brothers FERRAD in the district of Zouaghi". This project and this operation with the objective of improving the living conditions of citizens have faced several challenges and obstacles that have been in major part the factors of its failures.

Through this study, we examined the management process and the mode of organization of the actors of the project as well as the level of participation of the citizen to finally proposed managerial solutions to conflict situations observed.

**Keywords**—The urban project, urban improvement, participation, Constantine.

## I. INTRODUCTION

THE city of Constantine is a building work site that is being constantly built but rebuilds itself on also. The image of the city is changing as well with major operations as small.

The modernization of the city of Constantine PMMC's goal is to ensure consistency of specific projects and give the city its metropolitan status of eastern capital of Algeria. One of the projects is the improvement of several urban neighborhood of the city.

However, this improvement is conducted without an overall vision, ensuring consistency of different interventions. In fact, the involvement of people in Algeria and legitimacy to participate in development projects is still at an embryonic stage. Even the erection of nearby cells, (Law of 2000-37 of February 7, 2000), that have the mission to contribute to the

democratization of social action and public participation in local development, could not bring the expected results. In this great initiated urban improvement program, the authorities are facing two major issues: What are the tools, instruments, actors, appropriate scales and intervention schemes relevant for urban redevelopment? This article aims to present a device management action for sustainable urban regeneration or the registered urban improvement process based on an essentially participatory comprehensive action strategy for a common local management, adaptable to changing realities of urban development. What is to be part of a strategic planning (urban design) rather than prescriptive to avoid ad hoc interventions, actions and standards work on the city, often hampered by overlapping actors, confusion and lack of coordination without portage by stakeholders and ending to ephemeral results.

This work is part of an ongoing thesis that aims to integrate the management in the urban project to make it sustainable, urban improvement in this matter within the scope of the modernization project of the city of Constantine, which is case study of this thesis.

Thus, the expected objectives can be summarized broadly to define and develop intervention methods on the town, enrich operational practices implemented in scheduling and systematizing the process of citizen consultation.

## II. THE URBAN PROJECT AND PARTICIPATION

A true urban project must embrace in the most exhaustive manner the three dimensions of sustainable development and try at best to create the balance between these dimensions in his intervention on the space, which is also another dimension and that by creating an iterative process in its approach and interactivity between all its actors. It is a multiscale approach and at the same time a multi temporal one.

However, we must not forget that the sustainability in the urban project should "rely on the transversality, the search for synergy and the participation of actors in order to create a real dynamic of project "[1], it is for this reason that we must take into account all these elements and all these dimensions in order to make the urban project sustainable.

The urban project, which is at the heart of strategic planning, must integrate the dimensions, which make it in itself strategic but also sustainable. These dimensions are various: governance, participation, planning, consultation, multidisciplinary, reversibility...

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However, there are three dimensions called the three 3P: Prospection, Participation and Partnership [2] which make the urban project not only strategic but also durable because "the absence of either of these dimensions automatically deprives the approach of its strategic and sustainable character» [2].

The participation is then a crucial dimension when it comes to making a sustainable town with the approach of the urban project.

As Bertold Brecht said: "So what are the cities built without the wisdom of the people?"

The dimension of the participation in the urban project, which is at the same time a procedure of its process [2], has totally changed the relationship between the actors of the urban project, in passing from a strict hierarchy, where fields skills are defined and where decisions are made by the top of the actors pyramid, to a more flexible approach where the action areas merge and intersect and where decisions are co-produced. Therefore, the urban project has triggered this procedure and benefits from it [2]. This actors organization will be subject to further analysis, but here it is question of the participation as an approach in the urban project.

Today, where there is urban project, participation is, not inevitably but theoretically, urban project can only be successful if it is discussed and shared by all the actors. Participation has become an imperative when it comes to an urban project.

The participation is then an opening and a policy named "i know listen" rather than "I decide all"; therefore, contestation of power and the right to speak but also participatory democracy is the one that «...is questioning more widely the relationship between knowledge and power" [3].

The participation is defined in several ways but generally, participate is to take part [2], it is a synonym for guarantee of the acceptability of the project by its recipients and minimizes the risk of its rejection and the feeling of exclusion of the inhabitants.

The participation is not only involving the public (user and citizen) in the project as many consider it, but this public is very varied, it may be a citizen, shareholders, private actor or public, expert and professional as well as the authorities and private institutions.

Because of this, participation takes a much more broadly signification than that of citizen involvement even if he is the key actor.

As we have already stated, the urban is complex, building the problem rather than design of the solution (diagnosis sharing), such is the motto of the participation. However, it may go beyond a performance a report on the situations; it allows you to reach higher stages where even the choice of the solution is tope discussed.

### III. THE CASE OF STUDY

#### A. *The Project for the Modernization of Constantine PMMC*

As the majority of large urban projects throughout the world, the major urban project of Constantine (PMMC) is

bornout of urban crisis, but also, it is important to know that "the launch of a large urban project is considered by the metropolises as one of the tools for the implementation of their planning and developing strategies "[4].

The project is supported by a presidential will to change the city and make it be recognized internationally as a metropolis and develop attributes in this spirit. The PMMC is constituted of several structuring ambitious projects which all have the same objective the modernization and the metropolization of Constantine.

From a strong political support and ambition of a wali (mayor of the city) who wants to mark his passage, but also develop his city, was born the modernization of the city of Constantine PMMC, a vision coming within the category of the global, and "Constantine benefits from dynamic leaders dedicated to the urban project "[5].

Indeed, the PMMC as (seemingly) urban project falls into the Great projects category, an umbrellas sheltering several other projects that must be consistent to create a unified strategy. Its purpose is the creation of an urban dynamic for sustainable development of Constantine to change its image and gain a statue of modern regional metropolis and why not international.

Knowing that the approach of an urban project in a metropolis is different from that of an urban project for a small or medium sized city, it is also important to know that the urban project refers to two types of approach when operating on a metropolis namely outside-in and bottom-up [4]. The first approach is concerned with the external attractiveness of the metropolis and the second is the response to the internal needs of the metropolis. In the case of the project for the modernization of Constantine, the two approaches have been combined in order to achieve a vision and an ambitious program for the metropolis of the East of Algeria.

With the ambition to modernize and metropolize the city of Constantine, the PMMC objectives are between solving the urban crisis and the attractiveness and economic takeoff. They can be summarized in the following points[6] :

- Upgrading the image of Constantine;
- Modernization; by equipment;
- Improvement of living conditions and the comfort;
- Revitalization of development; (investment)
- Realization of social equity (cohesion and reduction of disparities);
- Response to the needs and to the crisis...

This project will restore to Constantine the status that it should have and will add other assets to those which it already has such as: the capital of the East, the third large Algerian city demographically and the more central of Algerian metropolises.

The review of the PMMC implicitly and explicitly reveals some principles on which its achievement will be based, among other:

- The strategic and futuristic vision in the long term that will be achieved gradually and progressively;
- Coherence between the internal and external actions

- The participation of various actors in matching the visions which will be accompanied by public debate intellectual but also decision making;
- A good governance with involvement and interaction between all actors;
- The local partnership, national and international

In theory, the PPMC integrates and abides by the principles of an urban project said sustainable including the participation. The question which is then persistent, is does the reality correspond to this vision? And is the realization of the PPMC based on the principle of participation on its global scale and on the scale of its component? The answer to this question will be formulated in the following survey.

*B. The Investigation*

1. The Scale of the Overall Project

Through the survey carried out on field (300 questionnaire distributed to a population divided between the municipalities of the city of Constantine), we found that more than 85.1 per cent of the sample has not heard about the project, even if they had knowledge of its components; 12.8 per cent have had knowledge of the project through the academic publication about the project. These results are shown in Fig. 1.

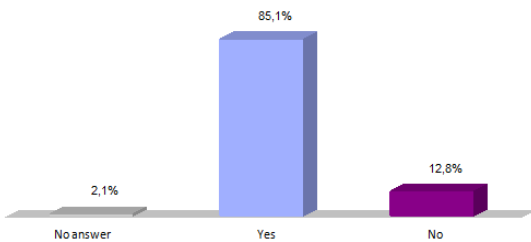


Fig. 1 The involvement of the population in the study of the urban project of Constantine

Thus, we conclude that the project was designed in a closed chamber and the citizen and the inhabitants have not been involved in its process.

2. The Scale of the Project Components

To carry out the survey on this point, we have taken for pilot operation the urban improvement, which is a component of the project for the modernization of CONSTANTINE.

The urban improvement action under taken all along the five-year program 2010-2014, which included the intervention on several work package relating to sanitation, the development, roads and public lighting, has not had the expected impact on the public spaces of the city of Constantine. The operations have denotes deficiencies of both in terms of management, design, implementation and execution.

There has been a lack of urban mediation and consultation, which would have allowed it to succeed the citizen participation. The strategic planning previously devised has made default in this urban improvement.

The survey revealed the following points:

- The urban improvement has not been the subject of a major public information (55.32% of investigations do not know about the existence of the project of urban improving in their neighborhoods); but also has not involved the inhabitants (74.5% of questioned have responded that they are not involved in the project for the improvement. This proves that the inhabitants have not been concerted during the preparation and the project realization). These results are shown in Figs. 2, 3.

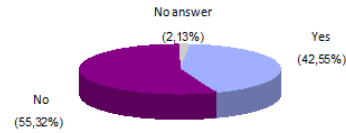


Fig. 2 Are you informed of the project to improve urban in your neighborhood

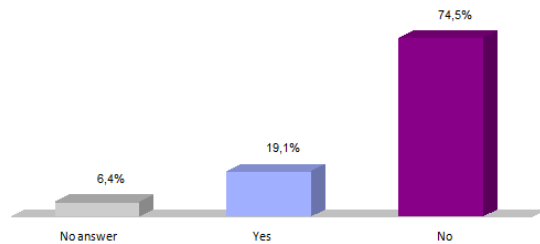


Fig. 3 Are you involved in the project to improve urban?

- 61.7% affirm the existence of a committee in their neighborhood; but which is not active, is not the mediation and does not support the involvement of the inhabitants in the projects. These results are shown in Fig. 4.

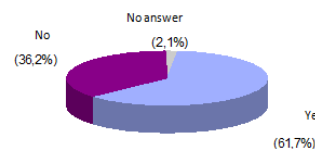


Fig. 4 Is there a committee in your neighborhood?

- The inhabitants have, in great majority (85.1%) the willingness to be involved in the projects developing their town, they do not only want be informed; they are ready to get more involved (by consultation; Co-design and even partnership). These results are shown in Figs. 5, 6.

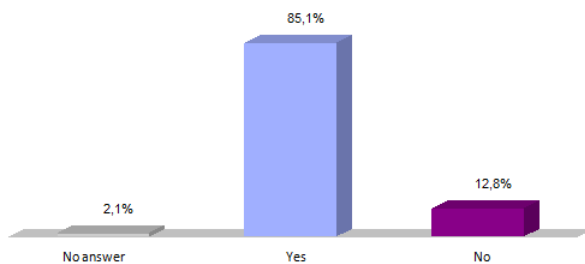


Fig. 5 Introduce yourself the will to be involved in this kind of project which affects your neighborhood or your city?

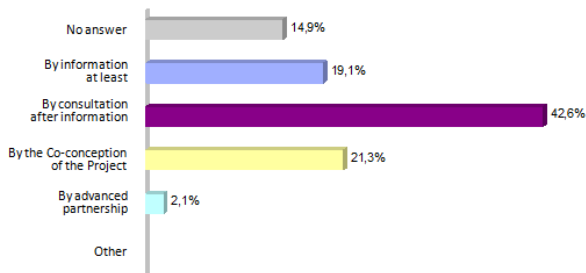


Fig. 6 If yes; how do you want to be involved?

- Respondents assert largely (48.9%) that the best way to create a dialogue and implement a successful collaboration is the creation of neighborhood committee, but it should be given more power and prerogatives after improving its constitution; the inhabitant express their ability to the mediatization of projects before their development and implementation, through consultation and dialogue between the government and the inhabitant. These results are shown in Fig. 7.

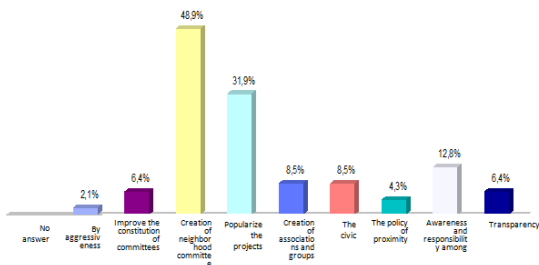


Fig. 7 In your opinion how to create a dialog between decision makers of projects and you as a resident?

The participation is biased being turned away by a bad representativeness of the neighborhood association presidents who do not have credibility and have personal objectives;

### C. Results

So, several points are deducted through this survey:

- The absence of positive urban improvement impact;
- The lapsing of actions and operations,
- A very high rate of dissatisfaction, on 100 questioned 93% have expressed dissatisfaction regarding the quality of the work to improve their neighborhoods, recognizing the problems related to lack of qualification, skills and of incompleteness,
- The absence of the quality in the results of the work of facilities
- The non- appropriation of spaces arranged and landscaped
- The non-accession of the civil society, feeling of discomfort, insecurity, and great frustration.

## IV. CONCLUSION

Within the perspective of sustainable urban regeneration, it is necessary to establish a sustainable urban action strategy based on the enhancement of potential, the inhabitants. These

are supposed to be experts in their own way of life, and have all the skills and knowledge for decision making on the issues that concern them. The created momentum is capable of restoring social cohesion in order to successfully porting the proposed requalification of part of the city by its inhabitants.

Participation is a concept of sustainable development. The management of the participation is central to the management of the urban projects and operations;

Effective and meaningful public involvement is seen as essential to:

- A high quality assurance;
- An assurance of social cohesion and of the public peace,
- A development of citizenship and the social management of proximity,
- A strengthening of civil competences and skills;
- A development and implementation of programs effectively and efficiently;
- A development of urban integration and a production of urbanity.

Finally, through studying the participation in the urban project of Constantine, on the two scales, namely, the global urban project and the scale of the operation, we see the shortcomings of the implementation of participation and their binding with the failings of the project's operations. Thus, participation is a major factor in the success of any project.

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