The next step: Research Design

**RESEARCH PROBLEM**
The majority of new towns in Egypt have not reached half of their population targets, despite having taken up a significant portion of the total national development expenditure to provide the necessary infrastructure. Scholars have blamed this failure on poor planning, the lack of clear understanding of the internal migration patterns, and the socio-economic dimension of the vast majority of Egyptians (Sims, 2012; Shawkat, 2013; Tadamon, 2014; Moustafa, 2015)

**RESEARCH AIM**
Identifying the current identity of desert cities as a perquisite for proper city branding strategy.

**POLICY IMPLICATION**
- Establishing a framework to measure place identity in Egyptian new towns.
- Set grounds for place branding strategies for the older generations
- New towns to increase their competitiveness for high quality workforce, investments, and financial resources.

**Urban Transitions**

As a part of the literature review, 9 cases of new towns were selected from the spectrum of urban transitions when it was applicable, to determine the appropriate inquiry points for the research design phase

The cases were compared according to various factors:

- Socio-political and economic climate affecting the motives behind the new town.
- The stakeholder model
- The size of the designated area
- Planning process
- Targeted/actual population and density
- Evolution of the place brand
- Visual identity, and architectural character

**Place-Identity and Place-Branding**

Proshansky, et al., (1983) define place identity as a sub-structure of the self-identity of the person consisting of, broadly conceived, cognitions about the physical world in which the individual lives. These cognitions represent memories, ideals feelings, attitudes, values, preferences, meanings, and conceptions of behaviour and experience which relate to the variety and complexity of physical settings that define the day-to-day existence of every human being. At the core of such physical environment-related cognitions is the ‘environmental past’ of the person.

This definition from the field of psychology emphasizes the dynamic nature of place identity that is constantly changing during the life cycle of the inhabitants. Kavaratzis and Hatch (2013) have incorporated this dynamic nature in their definition of place branding:

“To establish the link between identity, experience and image, where identity emerges from the continuous conversations between stakeholders and what brings them together as an unforeseen process to identity dynamics; a ‘shadow process’ that takes place at the same time and resonates with all four sub-processes of expressing, impressing, mirroring, and reflecting.”

**The next step: Research Design**

**EGYPTIAN CASE STUDY SELECTION**
Egyptian case study selection will be based on maximum variation of success, possible criteria of success include:

- Population target/ current population ratio
- Percentage of construction completed
- Year of construction
- Variety of housing options, and real estate value
- The existence of an economic base
- Targeted vs. actual socio-demographic profile

Following the selection of the cases, the place identity will be measured according to the definitions stated, through including multiple stakeholders to define the appropriate brand strategy.

**METHODS**

- Interviews with different stakeholders involved in the planning process, which will be qualitatively analysed using Nvivo.
- Survey questionnaires with the local residents that include geographic information to be analyzed using QGIS.

**SAMPLING**

- Selection of interviewees from the government institutions will be based upon their contribution to the planning of the selected case studies.
- Selection of residents will try to be representative of different population groups in districts located in different land uses of the strategic plan of the new town.

**POINTS OF INQUIRY: Residents and Businesses (Identity)***

- Branding strategy adopted.
- The image portrayed for the new town in the branding strategy
- The regulations and systems put to enforce that brand (visual – social – economic – environmental)
- Urban memories
- Personal ideals
- Emotional place attachment
- Attitudes in public and private space
- Personal values, preferences, and meanings
- Conceptions of behaviour and experience
- Metaphorical use of social networks, to figure out how social capital is reflected on social trust trends in new cities (Putnam, 2000)

**REFERENCES**

[7] Poster Conference 2018 28th of February, 2018