

Participation as a Political Process in Enforced Resettlement Projects: The Bedouin in the Negev, Israel

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The paper discusses the political nature of a participatory process which involved the Bedouin and the Israeli government agencies in an enforced resettlement project during the early 1980s. The heterogeneity of both the bureaucratic apparatus and the target population and the contradictory interests of the actors involved led to drawn out negotiations, inappropriate planning and unsatisfactory outcomes for both sides. A review and analysis of the project more than a decade later allows an evaluation of the process and its outcomes. It is concluded that in order to carry out enforced resettlement projects with the involvement of the target population, a predetermined analysis and preparation of the plans and goals of each side must be carried out at the outset.

The paper analyses the political nature of a participatory process which involved the Bedouin and the Israeli government agencies in an enforced resettlement project during the early 1980s (1980–1984). The Bedouin population involved in this project consisted of some 500 families (encompassing about 5,000 persons) spread over an area of approximately 15,000 ha. in the Negev desert (see Fig.1). This project was part of a larger undertaking aimed at the construction of military airfields for the use of the Israel Defense Forces (IDF), a move made necessary by the relinquishment of airfields ceded to Egypt in the 1977 Peace Treaty. The project included relocating the Bedouin in ‘top down’ planned towns as a replacement for the rural habitats of their illegal spontaneous settlements.

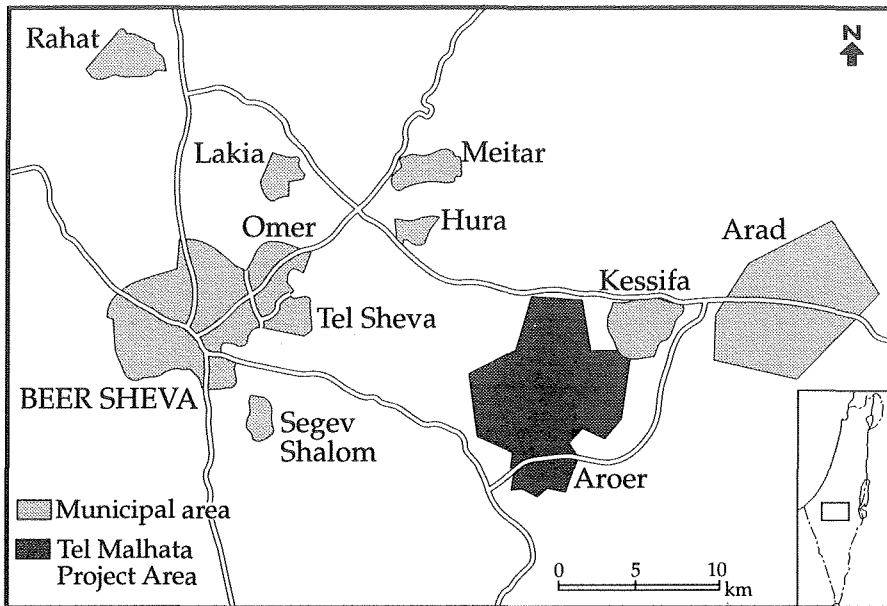
As the Israeli government set great store in establishing good relations with the Bedouin population, it sought their approval for this resettlement project and endeavored to carry out the evacuation in a peaceful manner. For that purpose, a Land Procurement Law was formulated in 1980 in which the basis for Bedouin compensation was determined.¹

This was a typical consumption-oriented project involving the replacement of land, the provision of new housing and the development of infrastructure and services. In such projects, the idea of participation of beneficiaries is usually con-

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sidered only if there is economic or political benefit to be gained by its use by the authorities (Moser, 1989). In fact, in this project the Bedouin were invited to become actively involved in the process because the government considered their involvement to be of political benefit as a means to reduce their objections to the evacuation.

Figure 1: The study area.



The political agenda of such a project is clear—the enforced resettlement of a people against their will. Such projects are usually carried out in order to obtain the land used by one particular group for development purposes such as dams, urban renewal, highway construction, mining, etc. (Cernea, 1988). Thus, using the terminology ‘participation’ in such projects is sometimes odd. However, precisely because of its provocative nature, much can be learned from analyzing the political content of such a process, by highlighting the various actors involved and their interests.

Analysis of this particular project more than a decade later gives us the opportunity to evaluate its outcomes and illustrate other resulting developments more clearly. The paper begins with a review of the concept of community participation in current literature. It then describes the actors involved in the project and analyses their political interests. The paper ends with a discussion of the effects of the participatory process—who gained and who lost from today’s perspective.

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN CURRENT LITERATURE

In reviewing the experience of community participation in urban development projects carried out by different implementing bodies around the world, Moser (1989) has indicated four main constraints which are very relevant to the Bedouin participation in the relocation process. First, no organization has one monolithic approach to community participation, but usually a combination of approaches. Secondly, organizations do not often work on their own, but rather projects are undertaken by a combination of institutions working together. Thirdly, declared objectives of participation do not distinguish explicitly between the different, sometimes contradictory, objectives of the different actors involved in the same project: the government, the donor and the community. Moreover, official objectives may not adequately identify the 'hidden agenda' which can vary depending on the actors involved. A fourth constraint relates to the lack of detailed evaluations of how community participation in practice is implemented. As will be shown, in analyzing the Bedouin involvement in the relocation process, all four constraints were clearly expressed.

In spite of the fact that the political context of participation is acknowledged in the policies arrived at, not enough emphasis is put on the effects of the explicit and implicit interests of the actors involved on the nature and outcome of the process—the government and its agencies and the beneficiary community. Even less attention is paid to the effects of different ethnic origins of the various actors on the process of participation. The few pieces of research that do note these issues include Hollesteiner's (1977) analysis of participation in developing countries, which relates to the power of each of the parties—planners and beneficiaries—in dictating decision-making processes. However, her analysis does not reflect on the effects of heterogeneity and the differing needs or demands of sub-groups within either party on the process itself. Gilbert and Ward (1984), in their evaluation of government attitude towards participation in three cities in Latin America, acknowledge the effects of factionalism within the community, such as owners and residents or the large number of leaders on the process of participation. By pointing out the overlapping jurisdiction of agencies and departments responsible for community participation, they emphasize the weakening of the efficacy of any single body. Esman & Uphoff (1984) express a different viewpoint suggesting that the level of heterogeneity of a community is not a critical barrier for local organizations success.

Paul (1986) takes a practical viewpoint by highlighting crucial questions relevant to development projects, such as: why participation takes place, when to participate, who participates, and how participation should be carried out. He mentions five objectives of community participation, presenting them in a hierarchy. The first two are categorized as ends in themselves and are political in nature. These ends are focused on the beneficiaries well-being: (1) empowerment: community participation should lead to an equitable sharing of power; (2) build-

ing beneficiary capacity: beneficiaries may share in the management tasks of the project by taking an active role in monitoring. The remaining three objectives are categorized as means to increase project functioning: (3) effectiveness: the involvement of beneficiaries contributes to better project design and implementation; (4) cost sharing: beneficiaries may be expected to contribute labor or money to maintain the project; (5) efficiency: participation is used to promote agreement, cooperation and interaction among beneficiaries.

Paul also indicates the importance of participation of the target population when they include people from different ethnic backgrounds, since it increases project effectiveness. The involvement of beneficiaries contributes to better project design and implementation, and better coordination of project services with beneficiary needs.

Moser (1989) provides other distinctions between urban and rural projects. She indicates that early urban projects focused particularly on *fait accompli* consumption issues, while rural projects more often focused on production and infrastructure issues. This difference necessarily influenced the nature of participation in each project. It has become clear that production-oriented projects cannot be undertaken without the participation of the customers, such that participation is more widely accepted either as a means or an end in itself. As we have seen, consumption-oriented projects usually adopt participation only when it is economically or politically useful to do so.

For whatever reason participation was introduced into the resettlement project, much can be learned from the Bedouin case study regarding the different objectives of the different actors involved, and its effects on the nature of participation. But before analyzing the project itself a brief review of Bedouin society in Israel is necessary.

BEDOUIN SOCIETY IN ISRAEL

During the last hundred years, the Muslim Bedouin living in the Neg. desert, now numbering some 85,000, have undergone a process of transition from a nomadic or seem-nomadic lifestyle to a sedentarized life in government-planned townships or in officially illegal 'spontaneous' agricultural settlements. These processes of transition attracted much attention from scholars and researchers, especially regarding the effects in education (Meir, 1986), in economic patterns (Ben David, 1982; Marx and Shmueli, 1984; Abu Rabia, 1994), in the process of sedentarization (Ben David, 1982), in government-Bedouin relations (Meir, 1988), in patterns of fertility (Meir, 1984; Meir and Ben David, 1989), in agrosocial characteristics of Bedouin society (Kressel, Ben David, Abu Rabia, 1991) and in the status of Bedouin women (Hundt, 1976; Jakubowska, 1984).

Government-Bedouin discussions focused on two main points: the first and most crucial was the land ownership conflict (Marx, 1988; Ben David, 1982;

Abu Rabia, 1994). The second was the planning concepts for their settlements: whether it was appropriate to plan for only seven towns (as expressed in the official state policy paper), thus robbing the Bedouin of their former spatial freedom, or was there a need to diversify the kinds of settlements and include rural-oriented settlements as the Bedouin wished.

THE POLITICAL ISSUE OF LAND

The political interests of the various protagonists involved in the process were a reflection of the historical relationships between the Arab population as a whole, the Bedouin, and the State over the issue of land ownership. Muslim by religion and Arab by nationality, the Bedouin form one of the small minorities within Israeli society. As Israeli citizens, they have the right to vote and be elected to parliament. Nevertheless, there exists a clear social, cultural and bureaucratic division between Jews and Arabs, which is manifested in separate religious, educational and governmental institutions. This situation has given rise, intentionally or not, to discrimination regarding development policies especially with regard to land ownership issues. Since the founding of the state, the vast majority of development programs have been directed at the Jewish sector, while Arabs, including Bedouin, were largely excluded from such projects, very often because of clashes with the authorities on the fundamental issue of land ownership.

The government claims ownership of the land in the Negev, basing its arguments on the Ottoman Land Law of 1858 which defines the Negev as uncultivable, state-owned land *Mawat* (meaning 'dead land'). The Land Ordinance of 1921 further reinforced the *Mawat* principle by prohibiting all means of laying claim to such land by cultivation. The Bedouin based their claims to Negev lands on longstanding occupation.²

The government tried to resolve the land ownership dispute by announcing in 1975 compensation for expropriated lands. However, neither government nor planners deemed it necessary to consult or negotiate with the Bedouin population, who only came to hear of the government's intentions through rumors and newspaper reports. The compensation arrangements offered by the government were rejected by the Bedouin, largely because of the meagre level of compensation on offer.

In the midst of these arguments the Peace Treaty with Egypt was signed in the late 1970s, bringing in its wake the necessity for evacuation and resettlement of some of the Bedouin living in the Negev. As the pivotal issue proved to be the legal question of land ownership, the Land Procurement Law of 1980 was enacted. This law dealt with compensation for the confiscated Bedouin lands, and obliged the State to build neighborhoods in two towns to house the evacuated tribes.

This was the background to the emergence of various government agencies who were consulted in the project, and to the increasing involvement of the Bedouin in the process.

In the conflict between the Bedouin and the authorities over the number and types of settlements, two fundamental differences were to immediately become apparent: the Bedouin wished to build separate individual settlements for each of their clans, which in practice would mean the legalization of their spontaneous settlements, whereas the government had in mind only two urban-like settlements, to concentrate financial resources, and allow a higher level of infrastructure and services, and better diversified employment opportunities.

THE ACTORS INVOLVED AND THEIR POLITICAL INTERESTS

The heterogeneity of the Bedouin tribes and the friction that developed between the various government agencies illustrates how the different actors and interests within each party contributed to and affected an otherwise seemingly straightforward process. It is argued here that different socio-economic and political positions of each actor created different objectives for their participation. Each party wished to improve their political position by gaining more benefits in the negotiations, sometimes going against the interests of the party as a whole.

The Government and its Representatives³

The dramatic events resulting in Israel ceding the Sinai Peninsula in the late 1970s, forced the IDF to look for alternative training grounds. The land declared suitable for military purposes included nature reserves, industrial parks and the area of Tel Malhata (which was designated as an air base) and where the Bedouin who form the subject of this paper resided. These developments called for a rapid response from the civilian planning authorities. Yet, despite the urgency of the time-table to complete the airfield imposed on the army, no great initiative came from the Ministry of the Interior, which is the body in charge of planning procedures in Israel. The slow, bureaucratic, regulative response of the civil planning sector stood in stark contrast to the very quick initiatives of the military planning system. This lack of a formal response invited informal alternatives, including the creation of a special work team for the Negev. The eventual plan emerged as an informal planning mechanism, created due to the inability of the formal planning system to answer social needs (Lomnitz, 1988). The government established three bodies: The Negev Planning Team, The Team for Bedouin Affairs and the Implementation Authority.

The Negev Planning Team

The creation of the Negev Planning Team came about through the initiative of a Jewish freelance planner who had worked with the military forces on other planning projects and who was concerned with the slow response of the bureaucratic apparatus to the spatial changes occurring in the area. The Negev Planning Team, made up solely of Jews, worked with the military on various issues concerning the changes in land use in the area.⁴

Initially, the Bedouin issue was excluded from the team's activities, as this was already the domain of government institutions—the Advisor on Arab Affairs and the Ministry of Justice. Representatives of these bodies presented the Land Procurement Bill to parliament in 1979, enabling them to expropriate land from the Bedouin and determine compensation. However, this bill and each subsequent version were firmly rejected by both Bedouin and various Jewish political interests.

The strong objections convinced the government that imposing a land ownership law unacceptable to the Bedouin would eventually lead to violent confrontation. The government finally came around to accepting the involvement of the Negev Planning Team, a step that led to the creation of a new special team whose concern was to deal solely with Bedouin issues.

Up to this stage, the idea of Bedouin participation had not been discussed, at least not officially. Unofficially, the Negev Planning Team members met Bedouin leaders (sheikhs), informed them of the situation and unofficially consulted with them on preferable steps that should be taken in the project. These same people were to later become members of the team for Bedouin Affairs.

The Team for Bedouin Affairs

Notwithstanding its promising name, this team, made up of members of the Negev Planning Team, did not include a single Bedouin representative. The team followed its own policy on how to tackle the problems inherent in the evacuation and resettlement of the Bedouin. Its methodology varied from the official top-down line with the institution of unofficial negotiations with the Bedouin.

In contrast to the official state policy which separated land ownership issues from settlement planning, the 'Bedouin Team' considered the land ownership problem an important component before decisions could be made on the provision of basic infrastructure and social services.

Officially, the Bedouin Team' aimed to accomplish its goals via four main channels: (1) Bedouin participation in planning and implementation; (2) formulation of plans for Jews and Bedouin residing in the Negev; (3) encouraging the Bedouin to move to planned settlements by allotting them appropriate compensa-

tion; (4) creating an executive body to implement the evacuation and resettlement of the Bedouin to be called the Implementation Authority (TAHAL, 1982).

However, the hidden agenda of the Bedouin Team was primarily to achieve the evacuation of the Bedouin in a peaceful manner. Participation was used as a means to attain this goal. But it must be emphasized here that although participation was used as a means to improve project implementation, the actual involvement of the Bedouin was considered, at the time, to be a very progressive approach. The involvement of beneficiaries, be they Jews or Arabs was not at all customary.

As previously mentioned, the necessity to create the Negev Planning Team and the Bedouin Team arose from the fact that the formal planning apparatus was not able (or not willing) to render the services required. Both the Negev and the Bedouin Teams assumed the position of pressure groups, to promote policy changes (Marx, 1988). Unfortunately, once the government recognized the Negev Team and appointed it an official planning group, it lost its independence and much of its influence on overall planning for the Negev. Its final report was submitted in 1979 and was shelved. Later, the same fate awaited many of the decisions of the Bedouin Team. This, too, started life as a promising pressure group with major influence, but in the end found itself restricted and hampered by the bureaucratic system (Marx, 1988).

The Implementation Authority

The Implementation Authority was a new executive body meant to replace the many existing public and official institutions dealing with Bedouin issues, each one with its own jurisdiction (the Ministries of Housing, Education, Justice, and the Land Authority). As set forth in the 1980 Law, it was to deal with Bedouin claims for compensation and other benefits, to negotiate with the Bedouin and sign contracts with them, including compromise contracts, to evacuate areas and to provide the evacuees with plots to replace the land they had surrendered to the state, and to plan and develop new settlements (TAHAL, 1982).

The Authority incorporated Jewish advisors from the institutions and agencies that had previously dealt with the Bedouin evacuation and resettlement issue. New members were added, but these included only two Bedouin, the other ten being Jews. An internal organization was then devised, comprising a Think Tank, planning team, negotiation team and administrative team. Later, each of these teams became a separate entity, and lack of coordination between them made their contribution to smooth negotiation and implementation extremely difficult.

Confusion between the government agencies led to confusion in policy-making. In the end the government, represented by these four teams, incorporated participation in the process of evacuation and resettlement, only as a means to win the cooperation of the Bedouin and obtain the land they needed for the mili-

tary. Consequently, this was not a participatory process per se, in the sense that it was not aiming at the political target of capacity building or empowerment.

Participation as a Government Expediency

The Implementation Authority was a somewhat puzzling body, a kind of semi-governmental agency, some of its members being civil servants, while others came from the private sector (Marx, 1988). Moreover, the different actors within this group had different objectives for negotiating with the Bedouin, at both decision-making and implementation levels.

The Implementation Authority negotiated with the Bedouin mainly on two main issues: first, to determine compensation for each evacuated household, calculated according to land and dwellings assets the Bedouin surrendered; and secondly, in the planning and design of each of the towns built for them.

Bedouin involvement at the planning stage extended to almost all community members, with the sheikhs and heads of extended families deciding on the general layout of the town and with each nuclear family having a say in determining the neighborhoods and the plot that each household would be allocated (Fenster, 1993).

At each level of the decision-making, planning and implementation, town plans were formulated with the aim of satisfying Bedouin demands. This process required close cooperation between the Chief Negotiator and the Chief Planner. But each of these protagonists had his own approach which at times led to serious disagreement between them. The Chief Negotiator was content to amend the proposed plans according to Bedouin demands, in order to reach expeditious settlements, while the Planner tried to resist any changes that would go against his basic planning guidelines and make implementation more difficult. This had an impact on the standing of the team in the negotiations with the Bedouin, and it usually resulted in the modifying of plans against the will of the planners.

Another problem working against an efficient realization of the process was the lack of information flow between the two entities. As negotiation became more complex, and the army and the government put more pressure on the Implementation Authority to accelerate the evacuation, information sharing and meetings between the teams became increasingly rare. The Negotiation Team was in the thick of it, facing pressure on the one hand from the Bedouin for greater financial compensation if they were to agree to evacuation, and from the Ministry of Defense and IDF on the other to speed up the evacuation. The Chief Negotiator therefore started to accede to Bedouin demands, a strategy which neither the government departments nor the Think Tank could accept. As time went on, in fact, the contributions of the latter became redundant, and it gradually terminated its activities.

The steps taken by the Negotiation Team aroused much criticism. They were accused of going too far in their willingness to concede to Bedouin demands, which in turn contradicted good planning principles and the long term interests of the Bedouin themselves, by permitting the over-expansion of the planned settlements (Fenster, 1993), so as to satisfy the Bedouin's demands to retain former lands, and thus making the supply of infrastructure services far more costly.

As the Think Tank ceased to function and the various pressures increased, the Negotiation Team became more centralist in its decision-making approach. Decisions dealing with negotiation tactics, compensations, and changes in, and decisions about, the layout of the planned settlements were now solely in the hands of the Chief Negotiator and the head of the Authority, who only needed the approval of the executive committee. Without the Think Tank there was no longer any feedback on the Authority's decisions, which led to a situation where the main criterion motivating the Negotiation Team went back to being the evacuation of the Bedouin as rapidly as possible.

This description clearly shows how the different parties had different interests which affected the progress of the whole process. Using Paul's (1986) terms, the objectives of participation on the authorities side were project efficiency, and promotion of agreement between them and the beneficiaries. The objective of participation of the Bedouin, as seen in the next section, were to gain as many assets as possible in terms of money, land or political power.

The Target Group—The Bedouin

The Bedouin involved in this process were made up of three major social groups: the 'real' or 'noble' Bedouin, the Fellahin (peasants), and the Abidin (literally 'slaves'). The relationships between these groups, which had been very clear cut in their former nomadic life, have been altered as a result of the sedentarization processes of the last five decades. The fact that they are an Arab ethnic minority in Israel has also had an impact on the changing roles of each of the groups within Bedouin society. It is argued that these interrelationships had major effects on the different objectives of each group, which in fact helped the government to manipulate the Bedouin.

The 'real' Bedouin, whose ancestors came from Saudi Arabia, are the original nucleus, and form the upper class. They are considered the traditional land-owners in Bedouin society and are fighting to preserve their traditional superior status mainly by owning large tracts of land.

The Fellahin originate in the coastal strip of Gaza where they were landless peasants. They came to the Negev at the beginning of the 19th century to cultivate the lands of the 'real' Bedouin, while the latter wandered with their herds. Although with the passage of time most of the Fellahin purchased plots of land from their masters, this has not changed their inferior position in the eyes of the 'real' Bedouin who, till today, consider them 'the landless'. But while the Fellahin

are attached to, and subordinate to, tribes of 'real' Bedouin, they are now making efforts to become economically and politically independent.

The Abid, a synonym for the black people residing in the tribe, were originally brought in from Africa as slaves. The term is still applied today, even by the Blacks themselves, although slave holding was prohibited by the Ottoman authorities at the turn of the century. The Abid consider themselves to be more Bedouin than the Fellahin and feel a strong attachment to the tribe to which they belong.

The exposure of the Bedouin to modern life has unavoidably changed the dynamics between the strata. The dominance of the 'real' Bedouin has declined as the Fellahin have broadened their economic horizon, and slowly freed themselves from dependence on the 'real' Bedouin. Notwithstanding the blurring of social boundaries in more recent times, the age old taboo of intermarriage between the three classes, is still upheld.

The Political Interests of the Bedouin

Despite these class divisions, the Bedouin appeared as one united front during the first stages of negotiation with the Implementation Authority. They felt themselves to be in a strong position, as they had what the Government wanted—the land—and the negotiations started with them being the powerful party. Furthermore, the Bedouin realized that the land issue would not remain confined to those who were to be evacuated and resettled, but that the outcome of the negotiations would have far reaching consequences for all the Bedouin living in the Negev region. In light of these circumstances they set up a leadership composed of tribal chiefs and elders.

The Bedouin's demands throughout the negotiations never wavered: they continually focused their interest on their financial claims for expropriated land, and on the type of settlement being planned for them. They opposed

the towns allotted to them according to the Land ownership Law of 1980 and insisted on separate agricultural villages for each of their tribes or clans to best express their ethnic affiliations. If these demands were to be accepted, it would entail building between eighteen and twenty such settlements for the evacuees alone, and tens of additional settlements for the remaining Bedouin in the Negev.

At the outset, the Bedouin were united in their objections to the government plans, rejecting, in particular, the Land ownership Law. As the government wanted to avoid friction, the Bedouin, and especially the 'real' Bedouin land-owners, found themselves able to dictate the conditions of agreement. However, it appeared that this position of power was less significant for the 'real' Bedouin than for the Fellahin, whose position would now be improved by the new land allocations. The Authority, being well aware of the heterogeneous character of, and divisive factors within Bedouin society, decided to exploit this aspect of Bedouin life. To this end, they looked amongst the 'lower class' for a group will-

ing to start any kind of negotiation. Suddenly the Fellahin found themselves in the unique position of having strong bargaining power.

The Fellahin group which started negotiations with the government numbered some 1,000. They came up with a number of proposals most of which aimed to improve their economic situation, and more importantly their political status, i.e. to become an independent tribe and free themselves from subordination to the 'real' Bedouin. They demanded an extra town (not mentioned in the 1980 Law) which, in keeping with tradition, was to be located on land owned by them. They wished to become a tribe in their own right, and to be officially recognized as such, and including their brethren dispersed throughout the Negev as subordinates to various 'real' Bedouin tribes. The Fellahin were amenable to the idea of letting other tribes settle on their land. This would provide a solution to the planning constraints caused by the custom forbidding Bedouin from settling on land belonging to other Bedouin tribes without their explicit permission. With these more flexible negotiating partners, both the head of the Authority and the Chief Negotiator were so anxious to reach an agreement that they were willing to comply with virtually all the Fellahin's demands, even if it contradicted the Think Tank's or the Planner's earlier recommendations. For such an overall agreement they were willing to pay a price, and they set about convincing the government decision makers to build the town, beyond the scope of the 1980 Law, along Fellahin lines.

The hidden agenda of the Fellahin was very clear. Through negotiation they wanted to gain a chance to free themselves from the 'real' Bedouin, while the latter wanted to remain powerful by having more land assets.

Thus, a relatively small group, that even belonged to the lower class, had achieved what the other Bedouin had been seeking to attain in the negotiations—a settlement on their own land, and modifications to the settlement draft plan, a part of the agreement that subsequently was to cause many problems in the implementation phase due to difficulties in supplying infrastructure.

The other 'real' Bedouin, other Fellahin and some of the Abid groups—failed to profit from the success of this specific Fellahin group, as they remained divided in the pursuit of their goals. For example, one of the leading 'real' Bedouin tribe wanted to legitimize their two spontaneous settlements, each belonging to one of their two clans, so as to retain the agricultural character of their habitat. The Authority, under the impression that an agreement with the leading tribe would serve as a catalyst that would induce the other Bedouin to move, agreed to integrate one of the spontaneous settlements (where one of the leading tribe's clans resided) into one of the planned towns outlined in the Law. The other clan failed in their bid to legitimize their spontaneous settlements.

Then another factor came into play. In another 'real' Bedouin tribe, the generation gap played a role. The resettlement proposals had been categorically rejected by the old Sheikh, on the grounds that the area of his tribe's land which was to be included in the new town was insufficient. He died in the midst of the

negotiations, and his successor, a young man who had been 'out in the world', readily accepted the Authority's offer, which provided modern facilities not available in their spontaneous settlement.

EVALUATION OF PARTICIPATION—WHO GAINED, WHO LOST?

In general, participation is a very complex process, and therefore it is little wonder that the literature on its evaluation is sparse. It is generally a highly politically-oriented process, involving many interest groups whose agendas are not always revealed. The fact that the process also often involves numerous supervising institutions only further complicates efforts at analysis.

Participation is usually about power relations among as well as between the different actors involved in the process. During the course of negotiation, the fulcrum of power may change according to momentary needs, and the fluctuating nature of the process allows little scope for the development of planning guidelines.

The involvement of the Bedouin in their relocation only serves to illustrate how the declared objectives of both parties failed to reveal the often contradictory objectives of different interests within each of those parties. Overall it can be said that the participation of the Bedouin was manipulated by the authorities in order to achieve the smooth and peaceful implementation of the project, and this was made possible precisely because of contradictory interests of different voices among the Bedouin tribes. The many internal conflicts within the Authority on the one hand, and the fragmentation within Bedouin society on the other, greatly impeded smooth progress, so that instead of the total period of three months proposed in the 1980 Law to complete the evacuation, the last of the Bedouin left the airfield site some three years after initial negotiations. The fact that the process lasted so much longer than planned, though not negative in itself for the Bedouin, was extremely costly for the government, whose financial interest was to complete the project as quickly as possible.

Participation was not part of the project's agenda, it was rather a means to reduce the potency of Bedouin objections. Because of a lack of awareness and knowledge of the process, it developed into personal and group manipulations determined by the interests of the actors involved.

These contradictory objectives of the various protagonists actually led to negative results for both sides. Because of the constraints of negotiation and the conflicting interests of the different Bedouin groups, the government, anxious to evacuate them, created towns which were widely dispersed, very costly and therefore hard to implement. The contradictory objectives amongst the Bedouin as a whole caused them to lose financial benefits as well as land.

From a planning point of view, the dispersion of the towns, a result of modifications to the plans dictated by Bedouin demands, has made it difficult for them

to function as one entity. Infrastructure is not yet completed, especially sewage systems, and it seems as if the towns are actually an aggregate of small 'villages'—a 'village' in each neighborhood. It is clear today that a more diversified solution should have been offered to the Bedouin and not only an urban lifestyle.

Even in hindsight, it is hard to evaluate the process. The evacuated Bedouin express a wide range of opinions regarding the effects of their evacuation. Most of them complain that the compensation provided for their lands was insufficient, although the money definitely helped them to establish a fairly reasonable standard of living in the new towns. Most of them, moreover, expressed great nostalgia for their former lifestyle in the spontaneous settlements, and this is also seen in the fact that in some neighborhoods one can find many tents constructed alongside their modern houses—a symbol of the strong connection of the Bedouins to their past.

To a certain extent participation empowered Bedouin groups. It increased the power of the Fellahin who gained large amounts of money and land, but it caused damage to the other groups. It empowered the younger generation, in that the process actually accelerated the hidden conflict that already existed between the older and younger generations over leadership. As a result of their participation, the young Bedouin became more dominantly involved in community affairs, and most town representatives to the regional council elected in 1984 (this regional council included the two towns of Aroer and Kssifa and later Segev Shalom—see Fig. 1) came from the younger generation.

Today, the three towns accommodating the evacuees are still represented by the regional council nominated by the Ministry of the Interior, and the head of this council is a Jew. The Bedouin have expressed a wish to disband the council, and the Ministry of the Interior intends to allow elections to create new separate councils for each of the towns. In this we can see that participation has led to the gradual growth in a sense of political identity among the Bedouin. Despite the heavy-handed approach of the government in the resettlement project, Israel has for some time wished for a transition towards de-centralized government, wherein groups like the Bedouin could begin to look after their own affairs.

But meanwhile, what can be learned from this whole process? Governments which approach negotiating partners only with short-term goals, and only with expedients in mind, ultimately pay dearly. Anticipating beneficiary goals, and allowing participation from the outset may be far more effective, and having a long-term vision of how to employ participation as a tool in educating members of the community in empowerment is clearly necessary. This in turn, it is suggested, will lead to the gradual development of autonomy in local government.

NOTES

1. The amount of compensation depended on the amount of land surrendered to the government. Those with larger areas of land were allotted more. Compensation was translated into plots for housing in their new towns, whose size was relative to the land surrendered, as well as plots for agriculture with irrigation, and further financial compensation.
2. The Bedouin do not possess any official documents to prove their land entitlement, because official documents are not considered a proof for ownership according to their tradition. During the Mandate period, the British authorities allowed the Bedouin to register their lands and have official documents of ownership (kushan). However, the majority did not register because they did not want to pay taxes on the land.
3. The information in this section is based on personal interviews with former members of the Negev and Bedouin Teams and on official documentation.
4. The Negev Planning Team worked with the military planning authorities on vital issues, such as the division of the Negev according to land use for both military and civilian purposes, solutions to conflicts between military and civilian interests, drafting of housing and service facilities. The Negev Planning Team included a regional planner, an architect, two people who had worked with the Bedouin in the past, and an anthropologist, all of them non-government employees. Later the Water Commissioner, a senior civil servant, joined the group, and was appointed its chairman as he had access to senior officials and politicians.

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