

## Developing Regional Planning within the Framework of Decentralized Management Program: The Iraqi Experience

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### Abstract

The present study was aimed to analyze the Iraqis effort in the field of developing regional planning within the framework of the decentralized management program, which is considered as one of the preliminary prerequisites for the implementation and success of planning. It was found that Iraq took important steps in implementing the decentralized management, but these steps are not enough to establish the active planning. While determining the (Karin) level of several desktop sources, the method was applied on the data of Jordon by limiting the main administrative aspects of the public administration system. Still, there exist many problems that need to be addressed in order to achieve the goals instead of clarification of goals. These problems are covered by the nature of relationship between decentralized management and their levels ranging from weak to medium decentralization. In spite of official attitude to the implementation of decentralized management policies, plenty of these are still theoretic and need to be implemented. Any progress and success regarding the implementation of decentralized management policies indicate a more active role for planning and regional development in the life of people from different parts of Iraq. Hence, the proposals presented in this study are unique in the nature that this topic has never been explored in Iraq. So, it will help the practitioners and the planning managers to understand the problems in coastal areas in the provinces and devise better policy for the betterment of the people. It is necessary to proceed further in implementing the decentralized management policies gradually and continuously to control any unexpected side-effects which might emerge from the implementation of such policies.

**Keywords:** Regional planning; Decentralized management; Development; Frameworks

### Introduction

Governments in many developing countries, after World War II, provided the basic facilities such as education, health, water, and electricity and transportation network to the population. This increase in government responsibilities has led to a concentration of power. The decision of development is controlled by the central governments, which usually lie in the capital of country. This situation has many gaps and development problems such as the intensification of economic disparities and social-spatial, either at the level of regions or communities. This has raised many questions such as "What has often made NGOs and segments of the population dissatisfied with decisions?" May be the development of central governments is responsible for this, since these decisions are often far from being addressed the problems and interests of the local population at different spatial levels. In Iraq, despite of the successive and concrete successes of the developmental plans [1], investment programs and productive projects, the focus of growth and development revenues is still in the cities. The main centres have created an unbalanced regional development, which in turn has increased the phenomenon of polarization and concentrated the development in these cities and centres while the development of other regions remained compromised.

The Iraqi government has realized the situation and has begun to implement a series of actions in order to achieve a balanced regional development, or at least mitigate economic, social and regional differences [2]. Adoption of decentralized management in regional planning and development, since this type of management systems is a prerequisite and a key requirement to guarantee the successful regional planning processes. From top to bottom in its various forms [3] and on the premise that regional development does not materialize from the top only. It happens from below through an active group. It needs a shift from population-oriented to development by taking into account that the developmental process is in the way of development. One of

the required cautions is to consider the complexity of the region that makes it difficult to plan, implement and follow up from the centre.

### Aims of this study

The purpose of this study is to review and analyze the impact of the level of decentralization on its dimensions and its various administrative aspects that are involved in the preparation and implementation of regional planning policies and mechanisms. Moreover, to achieve various goals and objectives, identify the administrative obstacles and find ways to overcome these hurdles, following steps were adopted in current study:

1. The theoretical framework of the study.
2. Structure of public administration and administrative decentralization in Iraq.
3. Levels of administrative decentralization in Iraq.
4. The organizational structure for regional planning in Iraq.
5. Administrative problems faced during the implementation of decentralized regional planning.
6. Conclusions and recommendations.

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## Methodology

The study was based on the descriptive method that was also used for data collection and study information. While determining the level of several desktop sources, the method was applied on the data of Jordon [4], by limiting the main administrative aspects of the public administration system. Each of these aspects has a certain weight according to a scale prepared for particular study, and specifically the level of administrative decentralization. An analysis of the suitability of an appropriate management system was also analyzed for the regional development planning policies and strategies, and identifying the nature of administrative obstacles. Finally, the findings and recommendations were developed.

None of the previous studies on Iraq has focused on linking and finding the relationship between public administration and regional planning. So, a series of previous studies, conducted in the same environment as Iraq, were consulted in the current study as a part of methodology will assessing the literature review, and the most important of these studies are:

### Study of Poppe

This study was published in 1997 [5] and addressed the analysis of decentralized development planning. In Indonesia, where it was highlighted that there existed a degree of coherence and harmony between the type and effectiveness of the structures: The regional planning process, on the one hand, and the applicable regional development strategies on the other hand. This study considered the regional planning process as a management process for the very first time. It was demonstrated by the degree to which the administrative aspects of the planning process were affected over a long period of preparation and implementation of regional development plans.

### Study of Cross and Abramba

This study, which emerged in 1996 [6], showed that how to prepare and implement the development plans. In the light of the administrative decentralization in the Republic of Ghana, the study analyzed matrices of development objectives at different spatial levels (national, regional, and local) and further evaluated the administrative structures involved in the preparation of these objectives, to demonstrate the impact of administrative aspects. This study is important in the effectiveness of the spatial planning process and the scope of its success in achieving its objectives.

### Muller study

This study was published in 1996 [7], in its theoretical part, reviewed the importance of administrative decentralization in the regional and local planning process and proposed several methodologies and mechanisms. It can be used as a reference in decentralized management to ensure the preparation and successful implementation of development plans and regional commissions. The study addressed Ghana's experience of regional planning. It has also indicated the limitations and problems, imparted by the legislation and institutional structure, for decentralized development.

## The Theoretical Framework of the Study

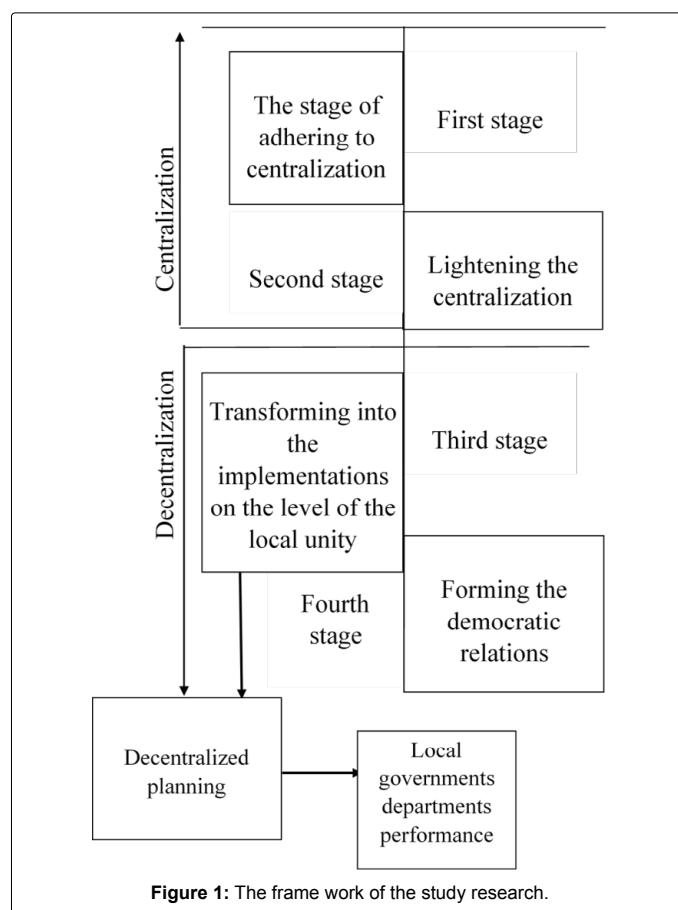
In the management of political and development affairs, states apply centralized management techniques and define decentralization as the situation in which administrative levels are less involved in decision making process, without prejudice to the right to participate. Centralization in decision-making, while decentralization is a work-

based approach in which there is the distribution of decision-making power and powers among the central authority, other independent agencies, different regions and communities (Figure 1).

It implies that the role of administrative decentralization is to activate the role of regional and local authorities, with significant support from administrative and development planning that increases its effectiveness and enhances its role in assuming its responsibilities. It works to integrate the local people into local development processes and leads to achieve the success.

The administrative aspect of the process of preparation and execution of the developmental plans is the general and regional development. Especially this subject should be treated as essential for the success of these plans. The failure of many of the development plans particularly in rural areas of many developing countries is mainly a result of improper management methods used during the implementation of developmental plans. The poverty was never a major failure in this respect. The content of planning process and its management highlights the importance of regional planning compared with centralized planning. A sectoral approach is only mean by which sectoral objectives can be transformed into a general framework which further serves as a regional development strategy that allows popular participation and coherence. Harmonization and integration of the agencies and institutions that participate in the preparation and execution of the regional development plans are also crucial necessities.

Therefore, formal planning bodies at the regional level should have authority and competent management that allow them to play their effective role for making it imperative. Focus on the implementation



of a management strategy that allows linking planning concepts with efficiency and capacity is also important. Management of regional planning bodies and institutions by keeping the importance of decentralized management in the process of regional planning as a key base can highlight the aspects that must be carefully identified before starting a process.

Preparation and implementation of regional development plans are incomplete without the consideration of type of territory, type of regional planning (integral or sectoral), regional coverage at the state or territorial level and the functions of the agencies. Poppe [5] highlighted the regional planning and its powers under the applicable decentralized administration. The process of regional planning under the administrative decentralization must mean the activation of participation.

The role of the target groups in preparation and execution of regional development plans is very crucial. It should be considered as the backbone of developmental strategy as said by "plan from below" [8]. It is very much different from "Planning from above" that reflects the type of management system that is currently applied. The importance of decentralization or planning of the lower part can be well explained by the work of Todaro [9] about the principles of successful development. According to Todaro [9], but not in its own sense, the principle of "self-esteem" is to promote self-esteem. But only in its integral human concept, which allows and magnifies human capacity. In addition, the planning [9] "Power to choose" is also an important query. The lower part helps to identify the regional development objectives that reflect the specificity of the territory under planning. There is always a significant difference between the regional development objectives of planning bodies and institutions.

The regional development objectives of the central planning agencies must be complementary and consistent with public participation. The effective implementation of decentralization in regional planning and development works is also very important in Iraq. Development programs are easily adapted to the needs and requirements of the local population since these allow participation of people from different administrative units in the process of preparation and execution of regional development plans. It also provides the necessary support to mobilize the energies and to mobilize the resources that are creating opportunities. The success of national development plans is to achieve their objectives in a balanced manner which guarantees the provision of an adequate life for the entire population in all regions of the state, and this success contributes to the regional balance and reduce regional economic and social disparities, depending mainly on distribution of decision-making power between central planning bodies and regional planning bodies.

The Implementation of decentralized developmental plans can only be there by considering that the distribution and monitoring of investments and resources in a society are closely related to the distribution of authority and decision making power [10]. Following can be the outcomes of developmental decentralization:

- Regional planning creates a fairly equitable distribution of decision-making authority investments and resources within the state.
- The decentralization of regional planning refers to the decentralization of central planning agencies for the benefit of local planning agencies; these are the elements that coexist with the problems of the population. The local community is constantly aware of its causes and dimensions, and this

situation gives these organisms the capacity to link development programs and projects with multiple and conflicting needs of regions, segments and thus ensure that the objectives of the national development plans are effectively met and positive for public as well.

- Contribute to the creation of direct and continuous contacts between regional planning bodies and the population. This allows the planners to obtain more precise data about the conditions of their regions. It also helps to prepare and implement the realistic and effective development plans.
- The decentralization of regional planning allows equal access to resources and investments of the state to regions and territories, thus reducing the regional economic and social disparities.
- The decentralization of regional planning improves the effectiveness of the central planning bodies, and also assists them to assign tasks and give power to the regional and local bodies. This situation allows the central planning agencies to take enough time to effectively supervise and follow the different development plans.
- The decentralization of regional planning requires the creation of regional planning bodies, which in turn is better possible monitoring and control of development projects and helps in achieving project's objectives.

The effective decentralization requires specific political and social requirements (Figure 2) [4], a few of these are mentioned below as:

- The political will of the central government to renounce their collaboration with regional planning bodies and empower them with necessary decision making powers. In this way, the regional agencies may be able to carry and implement new responsibilities sound and effectively.
- The application of decentralized integral regional planning, in a sense that it is empowered and controlled by regional

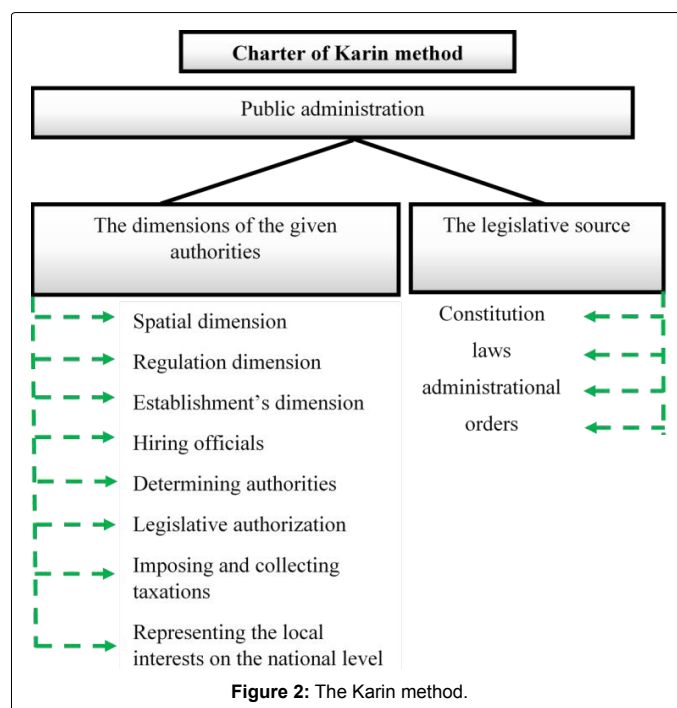


Figure 2: The Karin method.



administrations. The powers of management and planning mean nothing if these are not accompanied by a kind of fiscal decentralization, or in powers of generation of minimum income.

- c. A necessity for a clear and specific role of NGOs in the regional administration.
- d. The creation of awareness and political culture among the inhabitants of the regions, by central government, on the importance and objectives of decentralized management.
- e. Provide regional planning agencies with the infrastructure and skills necessary to carry out their tasks efficiently.

### Structure of Public Administration and Administrative Decentralization in Iraq

According to the Iraq constitution 2005, it is good to present the structure of public administration and administrative decentralization in Iraq. Iraq's system of government is parliamentary. Its "government", therefore, is a collection of national ministries, which are headed by a Prime Minister. These ministries are currently responsible for all government services, provided in administrative units that defined as regions, governorates, districts and sub-districts or in the special case such as Baghdad, and Amanat. Each of these levels of government is made up of different government agencies with different authorities [11]. There is the lack of understanding of these differences and the absence of a way to analyze these differences. This is restricting the Iraq's progress towards achieving the promise of decentralization that is mentioned in its 2005 Constitution. It means that the system of decentralized administration in Iraq is based on the legislative foundations established in the Iraqi Constitution which were represented in several laws, the most important of which are:

- a. Municipality revenues Law No. 130 for the year 1963 and still working until today.
- b. Decentralization Law No.159 which was enacted in 1969 and is still effective until today.
- c. Municipal Administrative Law No. 165 of 1964.
- d. Law of Governorates is not incorporated into a region, aka Law 21 of 2008, as amended by Law 15 of 2010 and footnoted (Law of governorates not incorporated into a region. (Under this law, there are 15 governorates except 3 governorates (Kurdistan region) as shown in Figure 3.

These laws generally include the administrative and development competencies of the agencies of the central, regional and local governmental institutions. These laws are implemented through a structural administration in Iraq, which is divided into two main sections:

#### The central administration

This department is represented by the central government. It is the executive body and has supreme administrative responsibility for the management of internal and external state affairs. The central government consists of the Prime Minister and a number of ministers whose number varies depending on the number of ministries. These ministries have further branches in the regions (Governorates) to follow up the decisions issued by these ministries. Every ministry may be considered as a mini independent government that runs its own affairs and is linked to the minister personally, e.g., customs departments,



Figure 3: Iraq's map.

income tax, land and space, all of these follow Minister of Finance. The Ministry of Planning is the central planning body responsible for the preparation, implementation and follow-up of economic, social and urban development plans at different spatial levels, assisted by a range of other ministries such as Ministry of Municipality and public works the rural planning and urban development, and other sectoral ministries such as the Ministry of Industry, tourism, agriculture, etc.

#### The local administration

The local administration in Iraq consists of two units:

**Local councils:** These include municipal and rural councils that are responsible for administration and development in the specified region. Each region has its own local council elected by public in accordance with the law on the integration of neighboring municipalities. The elected members are nominated by administrative of Ministry of Municipality and public works and appointed by the government.

**General administration units:** these are the departments of administrative areas, which include governorates and districts. Administrative decentralization in Iraq is based on the distribution of decision-making power between the central management bodies and the organs of the local administration in their respective branches. Units of local and public administration are based on the structure of public administration and the nature of the competencies of the agencies and institutions. From the governmental, central, regional and local authorities identified by the laws mentioned above, two type of administrative decentralization can be recognized in Iraq.

#### Regional Administrative Decentralization

This decentralization is based on the distribution of administrative and development competencies of central, local and regional

administration units. It reflects the type of decentralization of the functions and competencies of the local administration units as following:

### Municipal and rural councils

The municipal councils are established in the cities of Iraq under the Law of Municipalities, that are one of emanates of the Constitution. This law establishes that the municipality is a civil institution that enjoys financial independence. The municipal boundaries, functions and powers will be formed, cancelled and delineated under this law, a moral personality that enjoys all legal rights. The municipal administration is an elected municipal council, with the exception of the Municipality of Baghdad. The council is elected according to the law of Iraq elections committee. The council members are determined through percentage of population numbers (one member against 100 thousand people) for example, Baghdad, the capital city of Iraq, the population of the city is around 7 million people which reflect that there are 70 council members. Similarly, this decision is applied to all the municipalities of Iraq in accordance with the scheme mentioned in Figure 4 explained planning and construction of streets, monitoring and construction of buildings and issuance of building permits. Following are some responsibilities of the councils:

- Provide the population with electricity, water, gas as well as the organization of handicrafts and industries.
- Establishment and organization of markets and parking of vehicles and control within the limits of the municipality.
- Supervise the work of hotels and other places such as restaurants, cafes and clubs.
- Establishment of parks, gardens and squares.
- Establishment of health centers, hospitals and schools at various scales.
- Maintain hygiene and public health, collect, transport and dispose waste.

### Regional administrative units

In addition, there are many others administrates, development and supervisory functions specified in the Municipalities Law with regard to village councils. These are basically located in villages and fall under the Village Management Law. This law regulates the work in villages and handles all related matters. At the same time, it is also related to the central administration in its composition and functions. The members

## Baghdad's government

Soldiers deployed to Baghdad often must work with government bodies that are very different from the ones they know back home. The names are different, the responsibilities are different and elected leaders often have no direct authority over the ones who actually oversee the city's projects and services—forcing political and service entities to work together on projects. To top it off, Baghdad's structure is different from other Iraqi cities. Here's a look at how Baghdad's government works.

### POLITICAL ENTITIES

Set priorities and makes decisions.

### LEVEL OF GOVERNMENT

### SERVICE ENTITIES

Provide technical expertise and resources.

<b>BAGHDAD GOVERNORATE (PROVINCIAL) COUNCIL</b> <b>Similar to:</b> A state legislature <b>Head:</b> Chairman, elected from the council members. <b>Members:</b> 57 in Baghdad (41 in other governorate councils). Elected by the people. <b>Spending money:</b> A lot. The provincial council is responsible for distributing much of the federal money that flows to the local level. <b>Duties:</b> - The highest elected body in the governorate. - Sets priorities for the governorate. - Monitors and recommends projects.	<b>BAGHDAD GOVERNORATE (PROVINCE)</b> <b>Similar to:</b> A state <b>Chief executive:</b> Governor, elected by the governorate council <b>About:</b> Baghdad is the smallest but most populous of Iraq's 18 governorates. Its borders stretch beyond the capital itself, from Taji in the north to Mahmudiyah in the south.	
	<b>BAGHDAD CITY</b> <b>Similar to:</b> A large city <b>Chief executive:</b> Mayor <b>About:</b> Like American cities, Baghdad is structured differently from its surrounding rural areas, which fall under a deputy governor for rural services instead of the mayor.	<b>AMANAT</b> <b>(One that covers all of Baghdad)</b> <b>Similar to:</b> City hall, with a concentration in infrastructure <b>Head:</b> Amin, selected by the Provincial Council <b>Members:</b> Employees hired to fulfill specific jobs. <b>Spending money:</b> A lot. The Amanat is responsible for improving the city's infrastructure and large-scale services. <b>Duties:</b> - Oversees the city's essential services.
<b>KATI' (DISTRICT) COUNCIL</b> <b>(Nine in Baghdad)</b> <b>Similar to:</b> A city council <b>Head:</b> Chairman <b>Members:</b> Chosen from among neighborhood council representatives. The number of members is based on a district's population. <b>Spending money:</b> Next to nothing. The district council must ask the Provincial Council, the beladiyas or the Amanat to do the work. <b>Duties:</b> - Recommends projects for the district council's area, although the councils do not necessarily oversee these projects unless told to do so. - Works with beladiyas to ensure their residents' needs are met.	<b>KATI' (DISTRICT)</b> <b>Similar to:</b> Boroughs in a metropolis like New York City <b>Chief executive:</b> Qa'im makam, elected by the district councils <b>About:</b> Baghdad has nine kati's, which are frequently referred to as security districts or just districts.	<b>BELADIYA</b> <b>(13 in Baghdad)</b> <b>Similar to:</b> Public works departments <b>Head:</b> Deputy mayor, appointed by the Amanat's deputy amin for beladiyas <b>Members:</b> Employees hired to fulfill specific jobs. <b>Spending money:</b> Modest amounts sufficient to keep the districts running but not enough to expand essential services or embark large-scale projects. <b>Duties:</b> - Maintains the city's distribution systems. - Controls any money collected by the district councils. - Performs low-level improvements to the city such as landscaping or street cleaning.
<b>NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL</b> <b>Similar:</b> A group of representatives from a city ward <b>Head:</b> Council chairman <b>Members:</b> Elected by the people. The number of members is based on the population in the council's area. <b>Spending money:</b> None. <b>Duties:</b> - Closest representative body to the people. - Handles lower-level administrative functions such as initial approval for fuel rations.	<b>HAYY</b> <b>Similar to:</b> Districts of a large city <b>About:</b> Many of Baghdad's 94 hayys have evolved different boundaries from government and service bodies at the equivalent level. Soldiers and officials tend to work around the boundaries of the neighborhood council instead—making hayys an often-overlooked, although still official, tier of government.	
	<b>MUHALLA</b> <b>Similar to:</b> A neighborhood <b>About:</b> Muhallas are referred to by a three-digit number. The first indicates the muhalla's Kati. The last indicates which side of the kati the muhalla is in.	

SOURCE: Maj. Felix Acosta, a governance team member of the 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade Combat Team, 4<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division's Embedded Provincial Reconstruction Team and the USAID District Government Field Manual

**Figure 4:** Scheme here mentioned the structure of Baghdad council of local government (Source: Maj.felix Acosta, a governance team member of the 1st brigade combat team, 4th infantry divisions embedded provincial reconstruction team and the USAID district Government field manual).

of the village council are elected by the local people for a period of three years, in the manner determined by the administrative Governor. One of the members of village council is selected as head of the town council by the administrative governor. The head has the moral personality to be able to effectively exercise obligations and rights, as determined by law. Village councils perform administrative, developmental, financial and supervisory functions. A large portion of the functions of the municipal councils is to establish parks and health institutions. It is also responsible for organizing the educational and cultural activities that supervise the work of shops, hotels and catering as well as to manage public health, street planning and construction.

The regional administrative units are called governorates. The Iraq has been divided into 18 governorates for the purpose of administration and development. According to the Law of Administrative Divisions, each government generally includes one or more districts. The heads of the administrative units are known as the administrative manager and are usually appointed before the Prime Minister takes the charge of office department.

The direct presidential level between the various administrative levels can follow the district to the headquarters or a province directly, as can be followed by the judiciary or the province. The governance centre has an executive board headed by the governor and the membership of the department directors' government organizations in the governorate.

There is also a local advisory council in each governorate where it is accredited that leaders elected by the public will be responsible for the appointment of Governor. The composition of this council will be represented by the representation of the various bodies and groups. The branches of the ministries in the provinces are also regional units affiliated with the central ministries and coordinate with the councils departments. The central government is located in the capital, and these branches perform certain functions with powers of a central nature that have emerged by the redistribution of power within the governmental apparatus located in the center and its branches are located in Governorates.

## Decentralization or Annexation

The decentralization is reflected in the public institutions through the establishment of the State and legal law by each public body, or development of any publically interest executive power. The law is a legal entity that allows the public institutions to carry out their functions and activities independently from the authority. There are many public institutions in Iraq, but they all agree on their legal status on functional basis. The facility management is subjected to the principle of technical specialization. These are practiced in the institutions having specific functions based on region and groups while mostly controlled by the executive authority. These institutions not only enjoy legal personality as well as financial and administrative autonomy in practice. With respect to their functions, these institutions are divided into two types:

- Central departments or those bodies located in the centre have powers to control all regions of Iraq e.g., Legislation department, the Department of Statistics, the Department of Urban Development etc.
- The second type is public institutions that are located in the provinces or in the centre, such as the agriculture Bank, Industrial Bank etc. In terms of spatial planning and development, many of these agencies have been established to do so, The local administration in Iraq plays a key role in the

sectoral spatial development process. The local administration has to play dual role, on the one hand, it is responsible for the management of administrative matters such as implementation of laws and regulations, the collection of taxes, etc., while on the other hand it has to develop the areas of its administrative powers. The boards and planning committees of these departments not only plan, but also provide and organize public services along with a land use planning. The formation of different structural bodies through committees is also executed by local government. To identify these roles, it is necessary to define the levels of administrative decentralization and to evaluate the contribution of local administrations to the development decision-making process at both spatial and regional levels.

To determine the levels of decentralization in Iraq, the Karen's method will be here where [4] decentralization is divided into three main levels:

1. Strong decentralization
2. Middle decentralization
3. Weak decentralization

The basis for this division is to identify the main aspects of public administration that administrative decentralization is closely related to, and are therefore examined from two perspectives:

A. The bond or legislative source from which each of these aspects arises, usually determined by legislative sources in three sources that are the constitution; the laws and the Administrative Orders. The constitution is the most powerful legislative source; it is difficult to change its articles and contents. Even if this happens, it is at the highest level of decision making and requires complex and interrelated procedures. Therefore, the aspects of public administration related to the decentralization process are foreseen by the constitution. In the case of administrative laws, these can be changed or modified, but to a lesser extent than in the case of the constitution. Therefore, aspects of the public administration of the decentralization process, which are based on administrative laws, are less powerful than those derived from the constitution. In the case of orders, these can be easily changed, so that aspects of public administration related to the decentralization process that results from such a source are weak; these are subjected to change at all times.

B. The size and type of administrative powers granted. The size and type of administrative powers of the local and regional administrative units are related to the decentralization process. If it is significant and important, the decentralization is also strong. Karen has defined in her method that the size and type of these powers for each part of the public administration and its link with the level of decentralization that it represents.

Following are few important aspects related to the implementation of administrative decentralization:

- The spatial dimension: means the formation of decentralized geographic units. If it is done according to the constitution, decentralization is strong, and if it happens in accordance with the decentralization law, however, if these units are formed by an administrative decision, decentralization is weak.
- Organizational dimension: means the independence of local administrative units in the development of their system. If



these units have sufficient independence in the development of their internal system decentralization is strong. If the central government establishes a general framework for the regulation of the authorities, the location is decentralized and if the central government establishes the rules of procedure of the units, local administration or detailed instructions are specified for this purpose, decentralization is weak.

- **Institutional dimension:** if the local administrative units have the usual institutional structure for the governments of an independent parliament and judiciary, decentralization is strong, and if all institutions are available, with the exception of the judiciary and some other institutions, decentralization is average. But if it is local administrations that are just an administrative authority, decentralization is weak.
- **Appointment of officials:** Appointment of officials in local administrative units, elected by local people, will result a strong decentralization. If officials are appointed in these administrations with the approval of the central authority, then decentralization would be average and in the case of appointment of central government officials the decentralization is also weak.
- **Mandate:** If the powers of the local administrative units are defined, Constitution Decentralization is strong, and if it is through a law that is decentralized, if this determination is based on an administrative decision, decentralization is weak.
- **Jurisdiction:** if the local administrative units have full legislative authority, in certain aspects, decentralization is strong and the power of legislation is in a certain context is distributed between the local administration and the central authority. If there is a lack of ownership by local administrative units of any legislative authority, the decentralization is weak.
- **Imposition and collection of taxes:** if the powers of the local administrative units are fulfilled, the various state taxes in the areas where the powers are exercised are decentralized. However, if powers in this area are limited to collect local taxes, there will be an average decentralization. While in a situation where these units do not have any of their powers to comply with taxes the decentralization is weak.
- **The validity of the expenditure:** If the local administrative units enjoy independence in the disbursement, without conditions, decentralization is strong. If the disbursement is in terms determined by the authority i.e. centralization, decentralization is average. But if this disbursement is with the consent of the central authority, there will be a weak decentralization.
- **Representation of local interests at the national level:** If local interests of the regional organizations are represented in institutions at the national level, such as decentralized parliamentary councils and if the representation of local interests at the national level is limited to one or more people, decentralization is moderate. But if the above conditions are not met, decentralization is weak. To apply this methodology

in Iraq, a hierarchy has been developed. Briefly, by increasing the value of digital weights arithmetically in a fixed amount, the level of decentralization is also increased. In this way strong decentralization can be achieved from a weak one that can be further used as reference point. The degree of decentralization, computationally and numerically, can be considered as equivalence of the level of decentralization. In this, a scale can be computed that has quires in Table 1.

Using this measure, the aspects of public administration, the extent to which the application is completed have been obtained. The decentralization identified by Karen in her nine-sided approach to a total of 23 degrees, an average of 2.5 degrees for all aspects (Table 1). This means that decentralization in Iraq is not weak, but less than average decentralization. The powers granted to regional management units and development councils do not allow these units to prepare, execute and follow regional plans effectively. These units do not have specific, stable and sufficient financing sources, e.g., these do not have the right to charge taxes or the right to issue laws and regulations that adapt to their economic and social conditions and enjoy the freedom to spend on projects and development plans. The regional planning process, such as all forms of development planning, needs funding and budgets for the preparation and execution of regional plans. It also requires laws that take into account the specificities and circumstances of each region as well as allow the exploitation of natural and human resources, available and latent to improve the level of development.

## The Structure of Decentralized Regional Planning in Iraq

### Regional planning

It is defined as a set of planned and organized interim actions that are carried out over a given period of time at the level of a region or group of regions with a collective effort and multiple means to optimize the use of natural resources and humans available. Resources produce the desired change in society. For this change in different aspects of life, the negative effects that occur and gather within the desired circle are avoided, with the emphasis that the region can be an administrative territory or a homogeneous region (natural and ecological) or a province functional has been linked to the implementation of planning. Iraq has a set of clear and specific objectives:

- Maximize the use of available local and natural resources and the utilization of local labor.
- Achieve the equitable distribution of the benefits of development and improve the level of development and service in all regions of Iraq.
- Reduce the administrative and developmental burden on the institutions and bodies of the central government.
- Develop the spirit of citizenship and belonging, and deepen the sense of responsibility of both the citizen and the responsible authorities, by consolidating the principle of democracy and expanding the base of public participation in the decision-making process, considering that decentralization is a form and basis of the democratic process.
- Reduce the administrative bureaucracy, accelerate and facilitate the process of administrative and development decision making (Table 2).

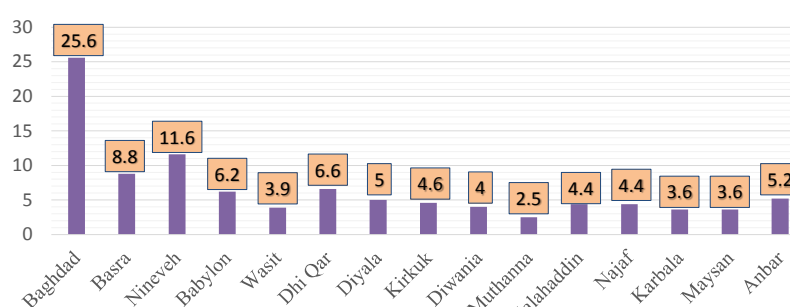
The achievement of these objectives requires, a level of administrative

Decentralization levels	Degree
Strong Decentralization	5
Medium Decentralization	3
Weak Decentralization	1

**Table 1:** Scale of decentralization.

S. No.	Administrative dimensions	Decentralization levels	Notes
1.	The spatial dimension (administrative divisions)	3	Administrative divisions found under Law of Administrative Divisions
2.	Organizational dimension	3	The central authority establishes a general framework for the rules of procedure
3.	Institutional dimension	1	There are no institutions such as: Parliament and the judiciary in administrative units
4.	Appointment of officials	3	Municipal council members are elected by the population
5.	Determination of powers	3	The powers of the departments of the Administrative Divisions were determined by the Law of Governorates not belonging to Region No. 16 of 2010 amended
6.	The power of legislation	1	Administrations of divisions administrative do not have legislative powers.
7.	Charging and collecting taxes	1	No powers to impose and collect taxes
8.	Validity of expenditure	3	Expenditure with the approval of the central administration
9.	Representing regional interests at the national level	5	All administrative divisions (governorates) are represented in Parliament
	Total	23	

**Table 2:** Levels of decentralization with different administrative aspects in Iraq (author).



**Figure 5:** The relative importance of the governorates at the national level based on the number of population (based on Table 2).

decentralization that ranges from a moderate decentralization to a solid decentralization in all aspects of public administration to which administrative decentralization is linked. This means that the financial, legislative and administrative powers are granted to the units. In this way, the regional administration can play its role effectively. In addition, there is an urgent need to establish specialized regional planning bodies and appropriate authorities for regional administrations for the preparation and implementation of regional development plans. Administrative decentralization is not enough to achieve the aforementioned regional planning objectives, where only the division of the Republic of Iraq in the development plan 2006-2010 was limited to three spatial levels. The developmental regions were defined according to the system of the existing administrative divisions, so that each governorate was considered as development zone, and each development region was divided into a number of developmental zones and units. Therefore, the laws for the development of the regions is enacted, through which funds are allocated from the state budget in order to implement development projects in the provinces and petrodollars for the oil-producing provinces such as Basra, Maysan, and Kirkuk and others.

### The decentralization tools

There are different kinds of tools used for decentralization and some of these are as following:

**Program (budget) development of the territories in Iraq:** Due to the lack of interest in the spatial distribution of investment allocations according to the criteria in the provincial development plans and in line with the decentralized approach in the management of Iraq under the constitution of the Republic of Iraq for 2005, (The following articles are contained in the 2005 constitution: Article 110): "Federal authorities will be entrusted with the following exclusive terms of

reference Seventh, "Preparation of the general and investment budget". Article 121: "The provinces and governorates will be allocated a fair share of the revenues collected in a federal manner sufficient to fulfill their duties and responsibilities, taking into account their resources and needs and the proportion of the population in them." A few rights of the sectoral ministries in the preparation and implementation of development plans and programs are transferred to the provinces to determine the infrastructure needs that directly affect the daily lives of citizens.

Consequently, the annual investment budgets for the years 2006 to 2011 dealt with this aspect and endeavored to distribute the investment allocations according to specific economic and social criteria, for the development of the regions and governed from the painful reality that these have lived for decades.

One of the important criteria in the allocation to the provinces is the criterion of the population and its relative importance in each province. Since this criterion provides to a large extent the real need for investments the final objective is based on the human needs. As the population of a province increases, it needs more development and investment. Table 2 and Figure 5 show the relative importance of the size of the population distributed by the governorates of Iraq for 2009, noting that the Baghdad governorate represents (25.6%) or almost a quarter of the population of Iraq, while the population in the Muthanna governorate is just 2.5% of the total population. The relative importance of the study area (Wasit governorate) is 3.9% nationwide. From Table 2 and Figure 5, the relative importance of the governorates at the national level (excluding the Kurdistan region) based on the population for 2009 can be seen in Table 3 and Figure 5.

It remains a subject of a great interest to the State's directions and its future goals that are to be achieved to comply with the investment



S. No.	The governances	The population amount (thousands people)	Relative importance
1	Baghdad	7227.1	25.6
2	Basra	2501.6	8.8
3	Nineveh	3274.0	11.6
4	Babylon	1748.9	6.2
5	Wasit	1095.0	3.9
6	Dhi Qar	1858.2	6.6
7	Diyala	1409.7	5
8	Kirkuk	1302.1	4.6
9	Diwania	1140.5	4
10	Muthanna	617.5	2.5
11	Salahaddin	1249.4	4.4
12	Najaf	1239.2	4.4
13	Karbala	1020.2	3.6
14	Maysan	1017.4	3.6
15	Anbar	1478.4	5.2
	Total	28278.2	100

**Table 3:** The national level (excluding the Kurdistan region) based on the population for 2009 (Source: Ministry of Planning, Department of Government Investment Programs' 2011).

S.No.	Governorates	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
1	Baghdad	754 000	705 000	2 260 418	651 069	637500	645705.5
2	Nineveh	303 000	285 000	702 827	277 950	334534	1130199
3	Kirkuk	122 000	114 000	300 182	117 300	226000	288368.9
4	Diyala	149 000	163 000	522 905	122 400	190953	146705
5	Anbar	146 000	222 300	299 281	132 600	152835	95464.4
6	Babylon	167 000	210 400	579983.6	158 100	152975	169274
7	Karbala	93 000	90 000	247 899	91 800	90475	119247
8	Wasit	111 000	105 000	275339.97	107 100	134319	459846
9	Salahaddin	125 000	121 670	288 244	114 750	187667	96637
10	Najaf	118 000	180 300	363742.04	109 650	114728	66877
11	Diwania	111 000	81 000	265 232	102 000	131475	228133
12	Muthanna	69 000	66 000	163 296	66 300	80772	109495
13	Dhi Qar	179 000	174 000	389 178	168 300	170000	85184
14	Maysan	99 000	96 000	198 053	94 350	125436	235763
15	Basra	258 000	271 000	701 636	237 150	483773	123101.5
	Total	2804000	2884670	7560224.6	2550819	3213442	4000000

**Table 4:** The Assignments of the program of development of regions at national level for the period 2006-2011 (Amount in millions of dinars), except the Kurdistan region.

Governorate	The number of projects 2015/12/31 (1)	Relative importance %	The new projects in this period (2015/12/31)			Total projects deleted during the year 2015/12/31 (3)	Total as at 31/12/2015 1+2+3=4	Relative importance %
			Reinsert	New	Total (2)			
Baghdad	224	5.7	1	1	1		226	5.89
Nineveh	27	0.7			0		27	0.70
Kirkuk	294	7.4			0		294	7.67
Diyala	211	5.3		2	2	1	212	5.53
Anbar	175	4.4			0		175	4.56
Babylon	461	11.7		2	2	130	333	8.68
Karbala	214	5.4			0		214	5.58
Wasit	111	2.8			0		111	2.89
Salahaddin	247	6.2			0		247	6.44
Najaf	166	4.2	11		11	35	142	3.70
Diwania	317	8.0			0		317	8.27
Muthanna	88	2.2			0		88	2.29
Dhi Qar	800	7.6			0		300	7.82
Maysan	269	6.8	1		1		270	7.04
Basra	850	21.5	26	3	29		879	22.92
Total	3954	100.0	39	8	47	166	3835	100.0

**Table 5:** Number of investment projects within the regional development program as of 31/12/2015 (Report on allocations of investment projects and the actual disbursement thereof to 2015/12/31, ministry of planning).

policy, which is being implemented for the considerations of achieving the balance of the population and the development of different areas of the population or rural areas for the next years. Table 4 shows the assignments of the regional development program at the national and governance levels from the beginning of the program in 2006 and up to 2011. It highlights that the financial allocations coincide with the relative importance in Table 3 and Figure 5, based on the size of the population

The program for the development of the territories is a program that aims to allocate the funds from the federal government to local authorities in the provinces in order to establish the projects directly related to the needs of citizens. The funds are limited only to the governorates and are registered in a separate category within the investment budget when the annual plan (regional development plan) is prepared in coordination between the governorates and the Ministry of Planning. The latter informs the governors each year in September about the amount of the financial allocation for each governorate, in light of prepared plans. The Ministry of Planning requires that the provinces provide it with project proposals within the limits of the allocation of each governorate with feasibility studies and schedule of quantities, so that the Ministry of Planning studies the projects proposed by the provinces and compares them with the projects of other ministries to avoid the duplication of projects with the implementation of the ministries in the provinces. Through discussion with the representatives of the provinces and after making the necessary adjustments, the approval of the plan is further expected. Each province will provide the expenses and execution rates periodically to the Ministry Project.

Table 3 shows that the execution rates of the projects through the regional development program, which is one of the methods of budget implementation and the decentralization of the implementation of the projects, Table 5 shows that the number of investments projects within the regional development program. From Table 6, the changes in total costs of the regional development and petrodollar development program can be seen. These are two kinds of application for the implementation of the projects and are the faces of the decentralization as well.

**Problems faced by decentralized regional planning:** The relationship between the central government, regional and local

Governorate	Accredited cost as in 2015/12/31	Amount of change +/-	Cost adjusted to 2015/12/31	Ratio change +/-
Baghdad	8877025.0	59402.579	8936427.579	0.67
Basra	8224358.703	1358415.41	9582774.113	16.52
Nineveh	376463.5	0	376463.547	0.00
Babylon	2935857.724	- 119175.757	2816681.967	-4.06
Wasit	1895434.421	0	1895434.421	0.00
Dhi Qar	1959391.000	0	1959391.000	0.00
Diyala	1086898.970	10000	1096898.970	0.92
Kirkuk	845319.319	0	845319.319	0.00
Diwania	985908.713	65.392	985974.105	0.01
Muthanna	476496.000	5000	481496.000	1.05
Salahaddin	1836045.413	0	1836045.413	0.00
Najaf	1095320.019	-153294	942026.019	-14.00
Karbala	2171529.000	0	2171529.000	0.00
Maysan	1986738.300	450	1987188.300	0.02
Anbar	1803323.025	0	1803323.025	0.00
Total	36556109.154	1160863.624	37716972.778	3.18

**Table 6:** The Changes in total costs of the Regional Development and Petrodollar Development Program (Report on allocations of investment projects and the actual disbursement thereof to 2015/12/31, ministry of planning).

administrations is determined by a set of laws and regulations that have reinforced the control over the work of these departments, which has been reflected, the autonomy and freedom to exercise administrative powers and development are inadequate and non-existent. While being effective, at the level of local administrations, it is evident through the extrapolation of a series of municipal laws that these tips do not include the powers of the health services.

In addition to the fact that these do not have the authority to exercise any economic function the participation in the private sector will keep these councils practically unable to pay the local development process. This situation can be mainly due to different factors such as the lack of material and human resources in these departments, and in addition to this, the lack of the desire of the government to centralize their powers, that are being exercised through its different branches (governorates).

At the level of regional administrations, it also has many administrative problems that negatively affect the effectiveness of the regional planning and development process, the most important of these are as following:

- The weakness of the developmental powers of the local councils; where it is found that the implementation of decisions and development of these councils need the approval of the central government, as these boards often cannot implement these decisions because they have limited financial and administrative potential.
- The role of the regional administrative units in their development councils is still limited and is not enough in the area of regional planning and development due to the many problems associated with the implementation of the administrative decentralization approach and the lack of agreement on solutions to these. Problems due to multiplicity and differences of theories and points of view in this field are also eminent.
- Governors' preoccupation with administrative matters reflected negatively on the implementation of development projects. The regional development experience depends mainly on the capacities of the governor and their skills, especially with regard to activation of local development councils in coordination with the central government.

- Multiple laws and regulations that govern the administrative decentralization approach and the lack of modernization of these laws in line with the great development are observed in Iraq related to the field of space development. It leads to a speculation that the role of administrative units in development has not counted in regional studies. In addition, there is an absence of a clear study based on spatial development.
- The intensive control exercised by the central government over the work of local councils and regional development councils has weakened the role of local and regional administrative units in the area of creativity, production and genuine participation in regional development.
- Poor participation of the local population in the management and development of local and regional administrative units. These units were found to solve their problems and satisfy their needs. This may be due to the weak powers of these units and their weak financial capabilities.
- The total confidence in the opinion of the central government in most decisions, especially in the area of budget. There is also a lack of qualified skills in the areas of urban development and work planning in these councils.

There is no doubt that these problems are obstacles in achieving the regional planning and development objectives mentioned earlier in this study.

Finley, I chose the data I used in this study to showing how the policy change at the larger provincial level, and identified which actors were involved, and what resources conservation organizations had at their disposal, and what strategies were adopted, and how demands were framed to reach the goal of this research.

## Conclusions and Recommendations

The study showed that specialized institutional structures related to the process are lacking. In addition to the fact that the level of administrative decentralization in its main administrative areas and in direct and indirect relation to regional planning and regional development, is still in its performance ranging from a low to moderate decentralization, which in turn negatively affects the effectiveness of

the regional planning and development process. The Iraqi government addressed this issue in recent years, where the Prime Minister issued many decisions authorizing conservatives to spend on development projects. But these decisions were not applied in the field where administrative decentralization has not been implemented correctly and the lack of financial resources is also a major issue there. Budgets to satisfy the aspirations of the provinces are unsatisfactory. Each government department at the local or regional level prepares its budget in coordination with the ministry that follows it.

The factors that prevented the governors from exercising their powers by spending on local development projects, except spending through the budgets provided by the central government, which was further damaged by the administrative bureaucracy. This led to the suspension of many projects and to the regional development program that helped finance. In 2004, annual budgets were prepared in accordance with the population census and the importance of governance and were based on the development priorities of each governorate. Governmental budgets were prepared in the form of an additional annexed to the general budget law so that spatial development councils have the financial autonomy to prepare and execute development projects. According to this, the provincial councils have been granted 15 powers to supervise all the governmental directions at a spatial level in the regions under their administration. The powers of supervision and direct execution of some departments of services are including health and education. There is no doubt that these theoretical tendencies represent a new step in the field of activation. However, there are still some steps necessary for successful regional planning to achieve its objectives:

1. The development of the situation of the provincial councils and granting of the powers and functions that allow them to prepare and execute development programs and projects in various areas of Iraq gradually and the central government has begun to achieve it. The first step in this area was the delegation of governors in the governorates to determine the quality of the development projects needed for their regions in light of national development policies and strategies.

2. There is an urgent need to expand and increase the powers of the development councils in development projects, especially in financial and legislative aspects, so that they can implement their development tasks effectively and successfully. Such councils cannot be allowed to use the product of traffic offences within their borders to finance development projects.

Within the territories, as well as for building taxes, construction license fees, official transaction fees and others must be mandatory. As for in the legislative sphere, these councils may be allowed to issue instructions and provisions that are appropriate for the economic and social privacy of their regions and serve the development process. These instructions and resolutions must be approved by the higher authorities before their implication. After this, there could be a sufficient justification to demonstrate that such provisions are developed, guaranteed and gained the public interest.

The implementation of such advanced steps in the field of administrative decentralization has become an urgent need dictated by the nature of the regional planning process and regional development.

These steps can only be carried out spatially, with the legal base and administrative bodies that are capable of making development decisions which drive different development factors. Successful regional development plans must be prepared by the regional planning agencies that will be created and formed by the government. For these agencies to carry out the development tasks assigned to them, they must have full powers to prepare, implement and monitor the development plans of their regions, provided that these regional plans do not conflict in their content and procedures with the national plans development plans. In the achievement of objectives, it is not enough to ask for local participation in decision-making for the success of administrative decentralization and decentralized regional planning, which must have sufficient financial resources. The local and regional administrative units must not only fulfill their administrative and development tasks, but also the financial resources and the powers to enable them to perform their functions to the fullest i.e. the distribution of administrative and development authority for decision making among planning agencies.

The central and regional levels contribute to the development of a successful administrative and development work, even if the financial possibilities are modest. The creation of successful decentralized planning requires the transfer of powers from the center to the regional administrative units. It must be carried out gradually and cumulatively. If all these elements are available, a successful and effective regional development can be achieved. Iraq took measures in the way of decentralized administration and regional planning. Decentralization is important, but these are still insufficient steps, and further steps must be taken to bring about effective administrative decentralization and effective decentralized regional planning.

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