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مركز البيان للدراسات والتخطيط
Al-Bayan Center for Planning and Studies

Dialogue and Participation Strategy in Iraq

Dr. Ali Taher Al-hammood - Ali Abdulhadi Al-Ma'mory

Al-Bayan Center for Planning and Studies Series

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Strategy in Iraq**



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About

Al-Bayan Center for Planning and Studies is an independent, nonprofit think tank based in Baghdad, Iraq. Its primary mission is to offer an authentic perspective on public and foreign policy issues related to Iraq and the region.

Al-Bayan Center pursues its vision by conducting independent analysis, as well as proposing workable solutions for complex issues that concern policymakers and academics.

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Context

Although there is seldom consensus on a term or topic in the humanities or theories that deal with politics through various scientific approaches, specialists are united in recognizing the need for discussion and engagement in the democratic process. There will be no meaningful engagement without conversation, and democracy will be meaningless without participation.

Dialogue can be described as a multi-level process. It occurs between active parties in society and the state, and in the pursuit of effective participation in the public policy-making process, we face obstacles at several levels, in a way that necessitates long-term, continuous, and stable solutions, and in degrees that vary from one democracy to another, from one society to another. As well as from central governments to local governments, which require various answers from one locality to another, particularly in a complicated, diverse country like Iraq.

On this premise, this strategy focuses on dialogue and participation in Iraqi local communities. It studies the levels of dialogue and participation, as well as the challenges and hurdles that stand in their way, in order to accomplish the strategy's objectives of building mechanisms to ensure effective dialogue and participation at the level of local governments in Iraq.

The strategy discovered that the problem of dialogue and participation in Iraq is related to three aspects, and the appropriate procedures for addressing them have been put in place, which can be stated as follows:

1. The legal aspect, as the Iraqi legal structure suffers from a number of issues that impede the realization of effective and binding dialogue and participation in the process of making public policy at both the local and national levels, as there is a lack of laws requiring public policymakers, whether in provincial councils or governors' offices, to listen to citizens' views through fruitful dialogue that contributes to local decision-making. Recognizing the existence of non-binding laws governing the participation of local communities and their institutions in decision-making processes, which necessitates an amendment of this legislative shortcoming.
2. The institutional aspect, which is related to the legal deficiency, is subject in turn to the jurisprudence of office holders in local governments, resulting in a significant disparity in the levels of dialogue and participation in Iraq from one local government to another.
3. Public awareness and culture, as citizens continue to be unaware of the legal means that exist, despite their scarcity, or those that will allow them to engage in dialogue and

participate in the process of making public policy at the level of local governments, owing to the novelty of the democratic experience in Iraqi society.

Based on these issues, this strategy was proposed based on a review of existing legal texts, institutional structures, and defect tracking, as well as a wide range of interviews conducted during the strategy's preparation, totaling 25 interviews with a variety of federal and local officials, former officials, those involved with local governments, activists and actors in civil society organizations, and representatives of minorities. The voluntary (working group) formed by a group of high-ranking officials from the General Secretariat of the Council of Ministers, the Ministry of Planning, the Ministry of Higher Education, the National Security Adviser, civil society organizations, and others oversaw and consulted on the development of this strategy.

The result of these in-depth conversations, as well as several months of sessions in which the working group and key specialists examined this recommended strategy for boosting dialogue and participation in Iraq. As the reader will soon discover, this strategy is an example of a scientific effort that we hope will succeed in achieving its goals within the time frames and axes that have been set for it, at multiple levels of both governmental and non-governmental bodies, by forming partnerships between the two parties, and with multilevel support. To establish a dialogue that encourages the people to actively participate in setting public policy at the local and federal levels.

As the most crucial component that must be present in any strategy is its flexibility and its ability to adapt and adjust its course according to experience and what emerges from the implementation process, may it be a starting point for achieving a process of dialogue and effective participation in Iraq, which contributes to strengthen any strategy, we have ensured that the strategy mechanisms are highly flexible, subject to evaluation and correction during the implementation process.

Dialogue and Participation Strategy in Iraq

Dr. Ali Taher Al-hammood* - Ali Abdulhadi Al-Ma'mory**

Introduction

Iraq has the qualifications necessary to build an active dialogue and participation at the national and local levels. With legal and administrative environment that contributes to creating an atmosphere that supports dialogue and participation. However, this process faces obstacles to the completion of this process, which lie in a lack of legal legislation that obliges the establishment of an active dialogue and participation between government institutions and society. In addition to the lack of social and cultural awareness of the means and fields that allow citizens to participate in the dialogue and participation in the making of public policy.

This strategy was based on analyzing the dialogue and participation environment in Iraq. The legal, economic, social, and political and cultural dimensions of this environment that affect citizen awareness and community participation were diagnosed. As well as identifying the aspects affecting the sustainability of dialogue and participation methods.

The strategy of dialogue and participation specifically represents the levels of dialogue and participation, as well as the objectives that can be adopted by the legislative and executive authorities, governorate Councils, and civil society institutions, in order for dialogue to be an approach and participation to be a behavior that enhances the democratic values connected to the Iraqi Constitution and political system after 2003, and to promote communication between the government and society.

The strategy includes three main pillars:

- 1- **The first** involves diagnosing the legislative environment and laws related to dialogue and participation.
- 2- **The second** focuses on building the capacities of institutions involved in the strategy.
- 3- **The third** aims to raise awareness while ensuring consideration of social gender and diversity in Iraq.

This strategy will be implemented over a specified period of four years from its adoption date.

* Executive director at Al-Bayan Center for Planning and Studies - ** Researcher

Vision

An active and participatory society in nation-building.

Mission

- Fair dialogue and participation between society and government to support stability, enhance citizenship, and strengthen institutional effectiveness.

Values

- Active citizenship, justice, initiative, commitment, acceptance of others.

Objective

- To raise societal awareness, develop institutional infrastructure, and improve the legal environment to ensure participation and dialogue that meets the needs of citizens.

References

- The Permanent Iraqi Constitution of 2005.
- Relevant laws: Law of the Governorates not organized in a Region No. 21 for the year 2008 and its amendments, Law of the Council of Representatives and its amendments.
- Sustainable Development Goals.

Terminology

- 1- Dialogue: The process of communication between multiple parties to discuss a specific issue with the aim of gaining a better understanding of it and the positions of the participating parties, as well as their interests.
- 2- Participation: The set of activities in which individuals or groups engage in public affairs to achieve the public interest.

Analysis of the dialogue and participation environment in Iraq

Through analyzing the Iraqi environment, the planners of this strategy adopted the SWOT approach to assess the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats of dialogue and participation in Iraq.

Four decades of political problems and social turmoil accompanying changes in governance

and ideological conflicts in Iraq have created a complex situation. The state's image and its position in collective consciousness have been disrupted, not limited to the nature of the political system, its form, mechanisms of political decision-making, and formulation of public policies, as well as the level of satisfaction with government performance. It extends to how society engages with the state, its desire to participate in policy-making, and its trust in the government stemming from the political system. Additionally, there is a lack of awareness among citizens regarding the importance of dialogue and participation.

On the other hand, political instability has negatively impacted development, weakened social institutions in promoting citizenship, undermined citizenship itself, disrupted political thinking and engagement, and empowered pre-state structures that have taken on the role of providing protection, thereby becoming the primary political influence on participation and its content and nature. Regardless of whether the stance of these structures is perceived as negative or positive, they have had a significant impact on certain forms of political practice.

The post-2003 period, there was no political stability that would have allowed for the development of political involvement, the accumulation of democratic experience, and the ability to learn from past mistakes. The country faced a range of interconnected problems, including terrorism and extremism, rejection of the political system's form, and refusal to participate in the reconstruction process. Additionally, there was chaos in the dissolution of institutions and a disordered reconstruction process, which deepened the gap between the political system and society.

Analyzing the environment of dialogue and participation reveals that the legal framework, since the establishment of the modern Iraqi state until 2003, witnessed fluctuating conditions of local governance. In general, local governance in Iraq oscillated between having powers subject to the central government, with few periods witnessing a revitalization of local governance. Several laws were enacted to grant regions powers for self-administration, but the ongoing political disruptions in Iraq and the instability of political life perpetually affected the status of local governance, leading to its decline.

Overall, the strong centralization in Iraq remained unchanged throughout the period from 1921 to 2003. The central government retained authority in policy-making, decision-making, participation with local communities, and resource distribution. The only exceptions were in specific circumstances dictated by international and regional conditions, where the central government made exceptional constitutional decisions, particularly concerning the situation of the Kurdistan Region. The Kurdistan Region was recognized as an autonomous region since 1974 in the Autonomous Region Law No. 33 of 1974, and it gained de facto independence following the central government's loss of control over the three governorates

(Erbil, Sulaymaniyah, Dohuk) since 1992, after Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait and the uprising in the south.

However, the real change began after the year 2003. Calls emerged to overthrow the excessive concentration of power in the hands of the central government. In that early period, voluntary councils were established in Baghdad and some governorates. The US military authority dealt with them as representatives of those regions without direct intervention in their selection of members. They consulted with local dignitaries and religious figures to form local councils in their respective areas. At the beginning of 2003, the Local and Regional Governance Support Project Team was formed in conjunction with the Transitional Coalition Authority, the Baghdad City Council, and municipal department directors to rectify the council system for the regions. A design was developed based on three levels: neighborhood councils, district councils, and city councils. The first council formed on this basis was the Abu Ghraib council, followed by the Al-Kindi neighborhood council in Baghdad on April 27, 2003.

The Transitional Coalition Authority issued Order No. 71 of 2003 and its appendix, and Order No. 100 of 2004, to institutionalize the decentralization principle outlined in the State Administration Law for the transitional phase. Subsequently, the Iraqi Constitution for 2005 was enacted, which aimed to move towards the principle of decentralization in the administration of the state and the non-governorate-administered governorates, with the exception of the Kurdistan Region. The constitution also acknowledged the principle of federalism in Iraq. It stated that the Republic of Iraq consists of a capital, governorates, non-governorate-administered governorates, and local administrations. The constitution simultaneously established a dual system of governance for Iraq, being federal in one aspect, which formally applies to the Kurdistan Region, and decentralized in another aspect, which is supposed to apply to the non-regional governorates. Reaching to the Law of non-regional Governorate Councils No. 31 of 2008, and its amendments to Laws No. 15 of 2010, and Law No. 91 of 2013, the latest of which is Law No. 10 of 2018, which is still the law in force in Iraq.

On the economic aspect, the complexities are linked to the differing revenues of each governorate, with some governorates having resources that favor their residents, such as religious tourism and border crossings. This is accompanied by a sense of grievance among the oil-producing governorates, which demand the allocation of a portion of oil resources for the development of oil-producing governorates. They have called for their share of the governorate's revenues, represented by oil and border crossing revenues. They have held the central government responsible for this disparity.

The perception of injustice in the development of governorates and the filling of developmental gaps has led to disparities in employment opportunities between governorates. It has also resulted in a reliance on rentier economy, which weakened the private sector, and the linkage of provincial resources to the federal budget and its investment projects, which require approval from the federal government. This hampers the completion of investment projects and weakens the participation of citizens in the governorates in determining service and investment priorities.

The federal government has often sought to reduce the powers granted to the governorates, such as its annulment of Law No. 20 of 2010, which involved transferring the authorities of nine ministries to local governments. It also challenged Law No. 18 of 2010, which included the decentralization of labor and social affairs departments from the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs and their linkage to the governorates. Both laws were overturned by the Federal Supreme Court following appeals by the central government.

The social environment has suffered from successive shocks and disruptions, as social and cultural upbringing has diminished opportunities for initiative, dialogue, and participation. This is due to a lack of awareness of the rights and duties resulting from the nature of governance in the country.

With weakened communication and acceptance between generations and cultures, particularly after the emergence of new social and cultural phenomena that have influenced the consolidation of a culture of dialogue and participation, the communication between successive generations has been weakened.

The underperformance of official institutions concerned with achieving development and delivering services to citizens, as well as official and non-official institutions involved in developmental stages and some media outlets, has led to a loss of trust in the importance of dialogue and its potential to achieve values of social gender equality, human rights, minority rights, and transitional justice.

A- The scope of the strategy

The implementing entity is to determine the baseline year.

Time	Procedure	Agenda
	<p>The strategy is implemented over the course of four years, accompanying the governorate Councils' existence, provided that the success is evaluated annually, with a final evaluation occurring at the beginning of each new council following an election cycle, and on the basis of which work developed and the plan is carried out.</p>	<p><u>The first year:</u> an intensive package of awareness courses targeting the sectors identified in this strategy</p> <p><u>The second year:</u> expanding the groups covered and applying the dialogue directly between representatives who are chosen during the election cycles on the basis of their effectiveness and between government agencies in the governorate in the provincial council and in the local government.</p> <p><u>The third year:</u> selecting local policy projects emanating from abstracts presented by the aforementioned representatives.</p> <p><u>Fourth year:</u> Continuation of work and evaluation.</p>
<p>Place</p>	<p>At the first level, Baghdad governorate is chosen in addition to two governorates, one from the north and one from the south, and the work is divided into selecting the governorate center + a specific district to begin implementing the plan, and by focusing on a specific sector according to the agreement with each Governorate. It is proposed to choose the sectors of education and civil society in the center of the governorate and the sectors of education and civil society (tribes, religious, etc.) in the districts.</p>	<p><u>The first year:</u> an intensive package of awareness courses targeting the sectors identified in this strategy.</p> <p><u>The second year:</u> expanding the groups covered and applying the dialogue directly between representatives who are chosen during the election cycles on the basis of their effectiveness and between government agencies in the governorate in the provincial council and in the local government.</p> <p><u>The third year:</u> selecting local policy projects emanating from abstracts presented by the aforementioned representatives.</p> <p><u>Fourth year:</u> Continuation of work and evaluation.</p>

Execution	Procedure	Agenda
<p>The strategy covers what is related to dialogue between society through civil society organizations and the community, finding rules to activate the participation mechanisms that exist legally, and proposing policies and laws that cover the shortfall in the legislative and administrative structure.</p>	<p>Electing community leaders through a variety of means, such as voting, engagement, and social influence.</p> <p>Choosing representatives from partner civil society organizations operating in the fields of rights, freedoms, and public policy</p>	<p>The first year: an intensive package of <u>The first year</u>: an intensive package of awareness courses targeting the sectors identified in this strategy.</p> <p>The second year: expanding the groups covered and applying the dialogue directly between representatives who are chosen during the election cycles on the basis of their effectiveness and between government agencies in the governorate in the provincial council and in the local government.</p> <p>The third year: selecting local policy <u>projects emanating</u> from abstracts presented by the aforementioned representatives.</p> <p>Fourth year: Continuation of work and <u>evaluation</u>.</p>

Strategic Pillar

First: The Legislative Pillar

Amending non-regional governorates' law, the law of the House of Representatives, and related laws to ensure and enhance dialogue and participation in meeting the needs of citizens.

First Pillar: Legislative		
Program One: Amending Non-regional governorates' law no.21 of the year 2008 (amended)		
Program Two: Parliament Law and its amendments		
Program 3: The House of Representatives Rules of Procedure Act		
Execution steps	Short term	Prepare an amendment proposal
	Medium term	Discussion, amendment, voting and publication in the Official Gazette
	Long term	
The body responsible for implementation	Iraqi Council of Representatives	
Participating entities	The Council of Ministers	
Timelines for completion	One year term	
The body responsible for monitoring and evaluation	General Secretariat of the Council of Ministers – non-governmental organizations	

Second: Capacity building pillar

1- Members of local and municipal councils must complete a dialogue and participation training program, and each governorate must choose a representative to oversee this program.

2- Building capacities and designing enrichment programs and curricula in the Ministries of Education and Higher Education aimed at enhancing the language of dialogue and participation among students.

3- Non-governmental organizations, associations and unions adopt programs in cooperation with official institutions or individually aimed at promoting a culture of dialogue and participation in society.

4- Governmental training and educational facilities implement rehabilitative programs that encourage a culture of conversation and engagement for employees and middle management and above.

The second pillar: capacity building		
Program 1: Training members of local, municipal and governorate councils		
Execution steps	Short-term	Preparing the training program
	medium term	Program implementation
	Long-term	Feedback, program modification and continuation of training in accordance with developments
The body responsible for implementation	Governorate Councils	
Participating entities	The Council of Ministers	
Timelines for completion	One year term	
The body responsible for monitoring and evaluation	General Secretariat of the Council of Ministers - non-governmental organizations	

The second pillar: capacity building		
Program 2: Training academics and officials in the Ministries of Education and Higher Education		
Execution steps	Short-term	Preparing the training program
	medium term	Program implementation
	Long-term	Feedback, program modification and continuation of training in accordance with developments
The body responsible for implementation	Ministries of Education and Higher Education	
Participating entities	The Council of Ministers	
Timelines for completion	5 years term	
The body responsible for monitoring and evaluation	General Secretariat of the Council of Ministers - non-governmental organizations	

The second pillar: capacity building		
Program 3: Dialogue and participation trainings conducted by NGOs, associations and unions		
Execution steps	Short-term	Preparing the training program
	medium term	Program implementation
	Long-term	Feedback, program modification and continuation of training in accordance with developments
The body responsible for implementation	Non-Governmental Organizations Department – General Secretariat of the Council of Ministers	
Participating entities	The Council of Ministers	
Timelines for completion	3 years term	
The body responsible for monitoring and evaluation	General Secretariat of the Council of Ministers – non-governmental organizations	

The second pillar: capacity building		
Program 4: Trainings in dialogue and participation for employees and middle management upwards.		
Execution steps	Short-term	Preparing the training program
	medium term	Program implementation
	Long-term	Feedback, program modification and continuation of training in accordance with developments
The body responsible for implementation	Training centers in ministries and entities not associated with a ministry.	
Participating entities	The Council of Ministers	
Timelines for completion	5 years term	
The body responsible for monitoring and evaluation	General Secretariat of the Council of Ministers – non-governmental organizations	

Third: Building Awareness

1- Forming joint committees of local councils, non-governmental organizations, federations, syndicates, and officials to assess the reality of the governorate, district, or sub-district, and to adopt appropriate measures to implement them.

2- Emphasis on providing an environment for the inclusion of minorities and components of Iraqi society to ensure dialogue and participation.

3- Integration of gender and youth in all programs of dialogue and participation.

The third pillar: building awareness		
Program 1: Formation of local committees in the governorates to assess the reality of dialogue and participation		
Execution steps	Short-term	Preparing the training program
	medium term	Program implementation
	Long-term	Feedback, program modification and continuation of training in accordance with developments
The body responsible for implementation	Governorates	
Participating entities	Presidency of the Council of Ministers	
Timelines for completion	years term 3	
The body responsible for monitoring and evaluation	General Secretariat of the Council of Ministers - non-governmental organizations	
The third pillar: building awareness		
Program 2: Building awareness through dialogue and participation		
Execution steps	Short-term	Preparing the training program
	medium term	Program implementation
	Long-term	Feedback, program modification and continuation of training in accordance with developments
The body responsible for implementation	Non-governmental organizations	
Participating entities	Non-Governmental Organizations Department	
Timelines for completion	5 years term	
The body responsible for monitoring and evaluation	General Secretariat of the Council of Ministers - non-governmental organizations	

Appendices

Appendix One

THE PROBLEM: LEGISLATIVE FAILURE

Proposed solution

1. A proposal to amend the law of non-region governorates, obligating governorate Councils and a mechanism to be created by governorate Councils and circulated to all governorate Councils, and is distinguished by sustainability and institutional stability, through which the opinions of local communities regarding the general policies of the localities are surveyed, and what must be done in this context, The draft modification is proposed by the Council of Ministers, which is the entity in charge of carrying out the government program mentioned in the paragraph.
2. Establishing a fixed institutional department in the governorate, linked to the governor's office, that is not subject to electoral political changes, through which consultations are held with local communities and their representatives in civil society organizations and other civil society structures; achieving genuine participation that ensures the success of local policies agreed upon in provincial councils.
3. Designing a training program for new members of provincial councils that introduces them to the rules that govern their work and put them in a context of dedication to dialogue with the voters and true involvement in the public policy-making process.

The body responsible for implementation

These bodies were chosen as the bodies directly related to the strategy, as the strategy revolves within the scope of its powers, and to the extent that the official bodies mentioned below are implementing, as they are the first beneficiaries of the presence of active participation and dialogue, which contribute to strengthening the political stability of the country, and drawing up public policies that enhance democracy by meeting the basic needs properly. It includes:

Official institutions (implementing and beneficiaries):

1. The Iraqi Council of Representatives (its role includes bridging the legislative imbalance that requires dialogue and participation).
2. Provincial councils.
3. Governors.
 - Civil society organizations.
 - Supporting international bodies.
 - Iraqi society in general and local communities in particular.

Partners

Partnership with other government entities that will not have direct interaction with the program must be implemented in the first phase, which is accomplished through two components:

1. Including a number of representatives from governmental institutions in the governorates in training programs on dialogue, participation, and the defining of Iraqi laws, as well as means to participate in the formulation and implementation of public policies.
2. Formal networking with newly established offices to monitor the execution of participation and dialogue initiatives in local governments.

Raise social awareness via dialogue and participation (Develop responsible administrative structures and recommend implementers)

- Sectoral level : At educational level

1. In partnership between the Ministries of Higher Education and Scientific Research and the Ministry of Education, a joint program is being designed that targets:

a. Promoting the value of dialogue as an essential pillar of democratic life and an indispensable foundation for developing effective public policies addressing the real problems confronting the local community, as well as training in proposing realistic and applicable solutions based on existing problems.

B. Familiarizing educators and learners at all levels of higher education with Iraqi legislation

that ensure active involvement in decision-making, and incorporating them into all college curricula. It provides an overview of democracy's principles, how to create, establish, and implement public policy at all levels of government, both nationally and locally, as well as practical activities. On this topic, with field visits to institutions concerned with decision-making in public policies at the local and national levels, such as governorate Councils and local executive governments.

- At community level

The activity of civil society institutions in this strategy is closely linked with state institutions in Iraqi localities, within a system of mutual dependence, in which networking takes place between the official state programs for dialogue and participation that target students and workers in government institutions, and the civil society in localities, which is targeted through Civil society institutions, and this is done through a consultative mechanism that includes:

- Designing programs to achieve and manage dialogue between local governments and civil society. In this context, assistance is sought from local social institutions (such as tribal sheikhs (tribe head), religious institutions, etc.) according to each governorate, and may include:

- In agricultural districts, an awareness and training program on understanding dialogue and participation is being developed, as well as the introduction of Iraqi laws that allow participation, channels for dialogue and participation, mechanisms, and hosting government representatives in executive branches that will be created or activated in local governments to manage and coordinate dialogue and participation at the local level.

- Relying on the core sermons of Friday prayers, which include direction and encouragement for dialogue and involvement, participating in government initiatives that are being developed, and soliciting the assistance of religious figures recognized for their social activities and acceptance.

- In collaboration with local government institutions and with international support, an app for smart phones is launched that includes points of contact with government offices developed in local governments to create permanent contact points between citizens and local governments, and an intensive media campaign is launched that includes introducing seminars and training programs that will be its launch, as well as how to use the proposed mobile app.

- Selecting permanent representatives from various civil society organizations that are able to participate in the program, and that they are members who have the right to vote

and have an opinion in the government offices created in local governments to sustain the development of programs entrusted to civil society institutions to develop.

At the level of civil society organizations and local society structures, it is done through:

1. Supporting ongoing awareness programs, implemented in educational institutions and the government sector with international assistance and local government participation, that clarify to the role of a person in the process of dialogue and participation, and introduce him\her to the laws that allow him\her to actively participate in decision-making, managing and supporting pressure campaigns to enact certain policies that affect societal need.

2. Focusing on districts and sub-districts, through informal mechanisms that support official institutions, citizens contribute to developing the necessary solutions to priority social problems, according to specific sectors chosen in accordance with government policies, in which the focus is on the most important issues that are consistent with government programs, and suffer from a lack of understanding and standing on the problem, such as desertification, water crisis..etc.

Appendix Two

The problem: the various needs of each governorate in creating the required atmosphere for discourse and participation.

Proposed solution

The actual programs for each governorate are designed based on the general foundations and principles of this strategy, taking into account the local specificities and the needs of each governorate, which was revealed during the interviews, as each governorate has needs and priorities, as some governorates suffer from the monopoly of a particular political party or leader and its directing of state resources through its influence. In order to support his presence in the governorate, other governorates suffer from the hardening of representatives coming through the elections in the local councils, and their refusal to involve civil society organizations or civil society representatives in the process of making public policies at the local level.

In Baghdad, it is proposed dividing the project into two levels:

a. Choosing a number of municipalities, specific neighborhoods, one in Karkh and one in Rusafa, and that they be mixed neighborhoods and not ethnically categorized, from neighborhoods that are not classified as upscale neighborhoods or as downscale neighborhoods, implying a medium description, transforming them into something similar to municipalities and applying the experience in them, the experience of dialogue and participation on the level of direct dialogue between municipalities according to the allocations granted.

B. Choosing two districts (north and south) or (east and west), and what was previously proposed (sectorally) is applied to the selected districts.

1. Different needs between city centers, districts and sub-districts:

2. In each local government, there is a variance and disparity between the demands of the center, districts, and sub-districts. The needs of the center are directly related to services and participation in governorate policies, whether in the service or health sectors, and so on, whereas the attention of the districts and sub-districts is primarily devoted to the approved economic activity in them, such as agriculture. Or direct requirements connected to environmental damage to industrial facilities such as oil-producing governorates, which involves taking the difference in needs into consideration when establishing dialogue and participation programs and determining what should be spent on local government activities.

The body responsible for implementation

- Provincial councils
- Local governments

Partners

- Civil society organizations
- Community representatives from the training courses and stakeholders

Appendix Three

The problem: Minority problem

A- Minorities' status

Because it is coupled with deeply entangled political issues, this is possibly the most challenging area of the strategy.

Although Article 125 of the Constitution guarantees minorities' rights, minorities in large governorates, outside their areas of concentration, face the problem of a lack of platforms for dialogue between minorities and large blocs, and there are no texts that guarantee minorities' rights from a legal standpoint.

As a result, legal legislation must be enacted to safeguard minorities and allow them to freely and uninhibitedly pick their representatives.

As a result, the strategy proposes a legislative path to ensure the establishment of a climate of dialogue and participation between minority communities and their representatives, as well as another executive path, in addition to the path of supporting civil society in places of concentration of minorities in the various governorates, based on mechanisms for explaining the legal rules regulating the work of localities and the means of participation that were adopted in the strategy.

1. **Legislative:** A law is proposed by the Council of Ministers to the House of Representatives, which includes the separation of electoral lists for minorities and the separation of voter bases from minorities to ensure that large blocs do not interfere in the course of elections.

2. **Politically:** The government and the concerned provincial councils launch a political dialogue, with the aim of concluding an agreement between the large blocs not to interfere in matters of minority representation. The Council of Ministers, through the Dialogue and Community Peace Committee, sponsors this dialogue.

3. **Societal:** Minority populations face a number of difficult issues, which can be stated as follows:

a. **Generational balance:** There is a gap between youth and elders in minority societies. As the older generations dominate the decision-making process and do not allow young people to actively participate in decision-making regarding minority societies. Dialogue must begin on the horizontal level between the generations before turning to vertical dialogue with representatives of these minorities in local governments.

B. The gender gap: By virtue of the general conditions and the confusion of the status of minorities, women are still unable to work equally with regard to the public affairs of minority communities. The strategy proposes to place a quota ratio also on representatives of minority communities.

Because of displacement and the dispersion of minorities in Iraq, there is an imbalance in rights and benefits between places where minorities are concentrated. Ensuring everyone's rights is tied to Proposal (1), which is regarding enacting legislation that protects minorities' rights in every area of Iraq based on the constitution.

The body responsible for implementation

- Provincial councils
- local governments
- Minority representatives in provincial councils and in local communities

Partners

- Civil society organizations
- Community representatives from the training courses and stakeholders



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