



# HELLO READERS

**Welcome to the debut issue of the Local Governance Development in Iraq (LOGDEVI), phase 2 newsletter. Your gateway to the latest updates, inspiring stories, impactful initiatives, and positive changes influenced by the work of the LOGDEVI2 project in Iraq.**

As we step into this exciting journey together, we remind ourselves that we can create positive change in our communities. From devoted stakeholders to influential policymakers, from generous donors to impactful decision-makers, your presence here sheds light on our shared commitment to forging a better, more sustainable future in Iraq.

Through this newsletter, we aim to inform and engage our readers. Each article, feature, and testimonial reflects our principles, the progress we've made, and the potential for the future.

Thank you for being part of our work. Here is to the transformative journey ahead!

**Warm regards,  
LOGDEVI Team**

LEADING  
CHANGE AND  
PROMOTING  
LOCAL  
GOVERNANCE  
DEVELOPMENT



## IRFAD AS IMPLEMENTING PARTNER

The Iraqi Research Foundation for Analysis and Development (IRFAD) is an Iraqi civil society organisation established in 2005, headquartered in Diwaniyah, southern Iraq.

It is registered with the Non-Governmental Organisations Directorate under the General Secretariat of the Iraqi Council of Ministers. IRFAD aims to develop models for positive local change through research, analysis, project development, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation.



Mr Sarmad Alkhazraji, Irfad's Founder and Mr Ali Obaid, CEO

WE STRIVE TO IMPROVE GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES AND THE QUALITY OF LIFE FOR ALL IRAQI PEOPLE

Its focus areas include local governance, decentralisation, and public services. The organisation strives to improve governance structures and the quality of life for Iraqi men and women by building from the ground up.

Firmly rooted in the Iraqi context and committed to contributing to positive social change, IRFAD boasts extensive experience. It prides itself on its long-term strategic partnership with SALAR, which has spanned more than a decade.

Read more on [www.facebook.com/irfad.org/](https://www.facebook.com/irfad.org/)

## KEY PRINCIPLES

**A systems approach to local governance:** also taking vertical and horizontal relationships into account

**Transparency and accountability:** sharing information openly and reporting progress

**Conflict sensitivity:** making sure that our work is not influencing negatively on individuals, organisations or society

**Local ownership and demand-based interventions:** ensuring that our work is aligned with local needs and ongoing official reforms

**Adaptation and incremental planning:** continuously evaluating and changing strategies if needed

**Inclusiveness:** seeking for equal opportunities for different demographics to take part

**Environmental sustainability:** ensuring our work is not harmful for to the environment

**Equal opportunities** and rights for both men, women, boys and girls, as well as **climate change** integration is of particular importance. The reality and needs of all citizens must be reflected in plans, policies, and service delivery. We promote inclusive services and decision-making. By supporting fact-based planning and administratively strengthening the female governorate sections, there is potential to effectively reduce inequalities in society.



## CLIMATE CHANGE

We recognise the critical need to address climate issues wherever possible. Iraq faces multifaceted environmental challenges, ranked fifth most vulnerable globally. Coping with extreme temperatures, sandstorms, intensified droughts, and diminishing water sources. In our project, we seek to embed climate resilience and to equip our partners with the knowledge and skills needed to effectively adapt for the future.



## LOCAL GOVERNANCE GROWTH IN IRAQ

**Phase 2 (LOGDEVI2) leverages the extensive experience of SALAR International<sup>1</sup> and its partner IRFAD in local governance development.**

Running from July 2023 to December 2025, LOGDEVI phase 2 aims to improve inclusive and accountable service delivery through local government institutions, enhancing citizen satisfaction and trust, and contributing to a more peaceful and inclusive society.

The project focuses on improving public service quality and access for all, strengthening local government capacities, systems, and policies for effective administration and service delivery.

It fosters collaboration between local, federal, and regional authorities to better address the needs of vulnerable groups and supports these in policy and planning reforms, financial management, budgeting, and social protection systems, empowering Iraqi local governments to promote inclusive governance and improve public sector performance. The project is currently implemented in Duhok, Diwaniyah, and Al-Muthanna governorates, with significant sessions in Baghdad and Erbil.

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## THE IMPORTANCE OF LOCAL GOVERNANCE DEVELOPMENT

**Key principles of decentralisation and local governance are established in the Iraqi constitution and subsequent legislation, as is the autonomy of the Kurdistan Region. Since 2008, greater responsibility has gradually been delegated to the provincial level and the scope for local independence in service planning and implementation has increased.**

With a basis in the long Swedish experience of decentralisation, SALAR truly believes that local governance development is important for any country's stable social and economic development. Local independence can in brief be described as the collective action of local government institutions, various government agencies, private sector, and civil society groups to manage common socio-economic and political affairs of a given locality. Thus going beyond the government sector.

Ideally, the end result should be responsive service delivery, inclusive local development, internal and external accountability, and a vivid local democracy. The key focus of the LOGDEVI project is on institutional development.

Grounded in factual evidence, without clarity in roles within and between organisations, sufficient internal systems, effective financial management, administrative procedures, transparent decision-making, and needed policy and planning capacities – any investment in basic services might be short-lived and wasteful.

## OVERVIEW OF THE SWEDISH DEVELOPMENT CO-OPERATION STRATEGY

**Sweden and Iraq have a long standing relationship at both country, organisational and individual levels, including development co-operation.**

In March 2022 the Swedish Government approved the latest strategy for development co operation with Iraq. This is the third bilateral strategy of its kind, with three goal areas (2022-2026). The work of LOGDEVI mainly relating to the first goal:

### PEACEFUL AND INCLUSIVE SOCIETIES

- Improved conditions for sustainable peace, social cohesion and inclusive governance.
- Improved and equal access to basic services.
- Sustainable solutions for refugees, internally displaced persons and host communities, and strengthened conditions for safe, orderly and regular migration.

### HUMAN RIGHTS, DEMOCRACY, AND THE RULE OF LAW

- Strengthened respect for human rights, democracy and the rule of law, including reduced corruption.
- Enhanced equality and fulfillment of human rights and opportunities for vulnerable groups.

### ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

- Improved adaptability and resilience to climate change, including protection of ecosystems.
- Sustainable development and a green transition, through the sustainable use of natural resources and increased access to renewable energy.

1. SALAR International is the international development wing of the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions, a membership association which gathers all of Sweden's 290 local governments and 21 Regions. Read more on: [www.salarinternational.se](http://www.salarinternational.se)



## SALAR INTERNATIONAL IN IRAQ

**IRFAD is at the forefront of the project implementation in Iraq with strong support from SALAR International's team in Sweden.**

While activities are delivered by dedicated national teams of IRFAD in each of the targeted governorates, the international team of SALAR conduct regular visits to the country to meet the project stakeholders, discuss priorities and steer the overall project.

The works of local and national experts are complemented by those of International and Swedish experts traveling regularly to Iraq. In the context of LOGDEVI2, there have been two country visits by the international teams of SALAR. The first visit took place in the KRI during February 2024 where the team met the governor of Dohuk in addition to the directors and staff members from the Governor's Office, General Directorate of Social Care, and the Department of Education.

AMONG THE TOPICS DISCUSSED WITH PARTNERS WAS THE DEVELOPMENT OF A SOCIAL PROTECTION STRATEGY FOR DUHOK, AND THE SUPPORT FOR THE PROVINCIAL CHILD PROTECTION COMMITTEE, JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM, AND INSTITUTIONAL GROWTH OF PARTNERS.



Above: SALAR International team and Irfad in a meeting with Mr Ali Tater, the Governor of Duhok

During these meetings, the delegation noted strong co-operation between the project and local authorities, signifying mutual commitment in delivering on reform support processes.

Furthermore, representatives from the High Commission for the co-ordination of Provinces (HCCP) and the Ministry of Planning from Baghdad as well as Government officials from Al-Diwaniyah and Al-Muthanna participated in a one-day workshop in Ebril with the delegation of SALAR International and IRFAD.

**In May 2024, SALAR International paid a visit to official partners in south and central Iraq to follow-up on project progress and reinforce working relations with new leaders and high officials after the local elections.**

During the visit the delegation met the governorate administrations, planning departments, local decision-makers as well as the female run sections.

This was followed by a visit to Baghdad where the SALAR International and IRFAD team met with key experts and official partners, most significantly the Ministry of Planning and the Higher Commission for the Co-ordination among Provinces (HCCP) under the Prime Minister.)

Similar to the visit to the KRI, the delegation observed strong commitment and co-operation in the support processes being delivered as part of the Project.

The policy dialogue with the project counterparts at the federal level revealed that the processes supported within LOGDEVI phase 2 are highly relevant to the central government's local development reform agenda, a very positive step forward.



Above: SALAR International represented by Mr Gunnar Andersson and the head of HCCP, Mr Aqeel Al-Fatlawi at the Prime Ministers office



Above: SALAR International and Irfad team meeting Diwaniyah officials



Above: SALAR International and Irfad team meet Muthanna officials



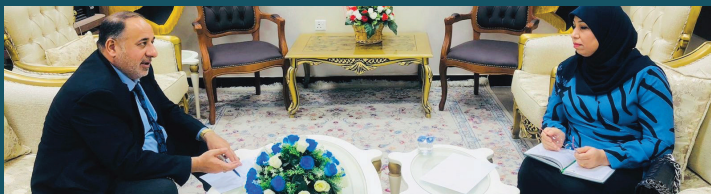
## PARTNERSHIPS AS THE MAIN BASE



Ms Balsam, LOGDEVI process manager meets Mr Haider Mohammed Saleh, Second Deputy Governor - Muthanna

**Mr Haider Mohammed Saleh, Second Deputy Governor of Muthanna Governorate, and Chair of the LOGDEVI project's reference committee.** Mr Haider emphasises how the project's style and team align well with the work approach of his administration, ensuring compliance with legal frameworks and government directives to find sustainable solutions to the issues at hand. This sets the project apart from others, characterised by close partnership, high-level co-operation and co-ordination, with a continuous sense of proximity to the project, its staff, and outputs.

**“With a career spanning various governmental roles, having influence and broad insights into the needs and challenges of governmental systems, thus aiding the committee in aligning the project's objectives and plans with local requirements.”**



Dr Zainab, LOGDEVI process manager meets Mr Mohammed Abbas Jassim, Assistant to the Governor for Financial Affairs - Diwaniyah

**Mr Mohammed Abbas Jassim, Assistant to the Governor for Financial Affairs and Chairman of the Reference Committee of the project has been actively involved in SALAR International projects since 2012, highlights SALAR's and IRFAD's serious commitment to improving local government performance and the clear vision for enhancing public services.**

**“I commend the project's impact on various sectors and can see significant advances in staff performance through training programs and the implementation of the financial reporting system.”**

Grounded in field studies and realistic assessments of local needs, ensuring that support is provided based on actual requirements. This unique approach sets SALAR apart from other organisations, as it focuses on sustainability and addressing genuine needs rather than implementing pre-packaged programs.

Mr Omar Ali Taha, the General Director of Directorate of Education in Dohuk Governorate since 2017, has a firm belief in inclusive education for all children, regardless of their abilities, he strongly supports and stands behind the LOGDEVI project as he sees the need to enhance local rule to have clear mechanisms for obliging all children with special needs.

**“I find LOGDEVI's practical approach appealing. The project has tailored its inclusive education programs to fit the formal educational framework, going beyond teacher training to modify school infrastructure and involve the local community. One of LOGDEVI's notable achievements was forging a strong partnership with the social care sector, promoting children's rights in education.”**

Through collaboration with the regional Ministry of Education, LOGDEVI is facilitating the integration of children with special needs into regular classrooms. Mr Omar praises LOGDEVI's collaborative approach, which values local input and works closely with government entities to drive impactful change.

Today, over 2,600 children facing difficulties attend regular schools in Dohuk, thanks to LOGDEVI. Moreover, the project has trained three schools extensively in inclusive education and maintains 19 specialised teams to ensure ongoing teacher training and support.

Ms Faiza, LOGDEVI process manager meets Mr Omar Ali Taha, the General Director of DOE - Duhok





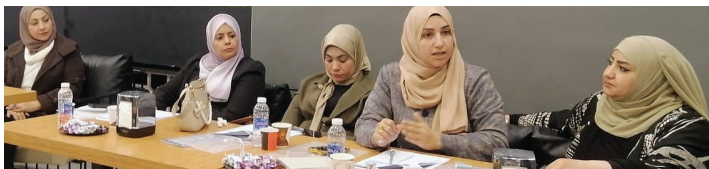
## ENSURING THAT PLANS AND DECISIONS REFLECT THE NEEDS OF ALL MUTHANNA CITIZENS

**As one of its aims, the LOGDEVI project seeks to address the situation of vulnerable and marginalised groups within the framework of Iraqi governmental institutions.**

Attention has been directed towards engaging women in decision-making at various levels, in alignment with Iraqi legislation. The project has conducted in-depth studies and analyses, engaging specialised consultancy firms to help chart a roadmap for local institutions and plans to more effectively integrate the needs of women. Numerous meetings were held at federal and local levels, accompanied by surveys, analyses, and identification of key stakeholders to be directly targeted in Muthanna and Diwaniyah.

This extensive groundwork emphasises the necessity of drafting internal regulations, outlining roles and responsibilities within local sections and councils working with women's affairs, as well as improving local planning in this area.

Workshop with Women's Leadership Institute



## CLARIFYING THE STRUCTURES OF QADA COUNCIL IN MUTHANNA

**Until now administrative dispersal in Iraq has mainly focussed on transferring authorities to the provincial level, allowing for certain boundaries to be overcome, requiring constant updating to be implemented optimally.**

Iraq is no different, especially as a country rooted in centralisation since its establishment. After the application of Article 45 of Law No. 21 of 2008 and the transfer of powers to the provinces, the project took on the important task of activating the work of administrative units in Muthanna governorate in co-ordination with relevant government entities.

Through meetings and talks, a significant aspect emerged: the absence of organisational structures and job descriptions for these units, which form the backbone of local co-ordination committees. To progress in a unified way, field surveys were conducted to gather information on the units' within Iraqi laws.

Additionally, we contracted the National Centre for Information Technology and Development, under the Ministry of Planning, to prepare organisational structures and job descriptions, being the sole authorised entity by the Iraqi state for such structures. We've reached a semi-final draft of organisational structures at the district level, after meetings at local and federal levels. Progress is swift, with great hopes for a highly significant outcome in record time, followed by the drawing up of job descriptions for this structure.

## REGULATION OF CHILD PROTECTION IN DUHOK AND KRI- DUHOK

The LOGDEVI phase 2 initiative has been central in advancing child protection efforts in Duhok and the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI).

Through collaboration with key stakeholders like the Duhok governorate, and the Directorate of Social Care, LOGDEVI has achieved significant milestones in formalising child protection programs and in the strengthening of child protection approaches in the juvenile justice system. In this term, LOGDEVI has supported co-ordination meetings between local government and the Child Protection Committee in the Aqrah district.

As a result, a juvenile police station has been established within the structure of the Aqrah police directorate, marking a milestone in expanding juvenile focused activities beyond Duhok. The representatives of the Aqrah administration have shown a strong commitment to the development of this new entity, expressing interest in engaging in future capacity building initiatives organised by LOGDEVI. These efforts mark our collective dedication to strengthening safer environments and contributing to child protection mechanisms within the juvenile justice system.

**THESE EFFORTS MARK OUR GROUP DEDICATION TO FOSTERING SAFER ENVIRONMENTS FOR CHILDREN**



LOGDEVI Process Manager meets the judges at Duhok Juvenile Court



## CROSS-SECTORAL PROGRAM THROUGH INCLUSIVE EDUCATION - DUHOK

In the past five years with the LOGDEVI project, Duhok's pursuit of inclusive education has seen remarkable progress and strengthened collaborative governance through the co-operation with SALAR International and IRFAD.

This collective effort has refined effective local self-governance, exemplified by horizontal partnerships between the governorate, DOE, and DOLSA, setting a precedent for effective ways to address complex social issues. A recent joint mission assessed inclusive education initiatives in Dohuk focusing on evaluating educational institutions' capacity and the effectiveness of support structures.

The evaluation emphasised the importance of consolidating past experiences and promoting inclusive practices, echoing LOGDEVI phase 2 objectives. While recognising positive engagement and transformations, the assessment also identified challenges, notably resource constraints. To address these, tailored action plans for trainers, school mentorship programs, and collaborative support mechanisms with DOLSA were endorsed.



SALAR International expert in Inclusive Education meets the General Director of DOLSA, Mr Sherzad Hamdi and the LOGDEVI team

## SHIFTING TO PROGRAMME AND PERFORMANCE-BASED BUDGETING

The Iraqi government is shifting from its old budget to a Program and Performance based Budgeting platform under the direction of Prime Minister, Mr Sudani. The old system, which focused on financial controls is being replaced by a more precise and outcome-oriented approach.

This type of budgeting involves analysing the needs and costs of each government function and preparing the budget based on upcoming requirements, irrespective of previous budgets. This method promises clearer outputs and better supports the planning process. However, local governments currently lack the vital understanding to effectively implement this new system. This is where LOGDEVI is playing a crucial role in helping to understand this significant transition. The program follows a step-by-step approach, starting with explaining the importance of this type of budget and creating clear planning frameworks.



LOGDEVI Operations Manager Mr Ali Obaid with Diwaniyah Governor, Mr Abbas A-Zamilli

## ESTABLISHMENT OF A LOCAL DEVELOPMENT CENTRE IN DIWANIYAH

The LOGDEVI phase 2 project is dedicated to supporting local development by empowering partners and enhancing their capacities for effective and sustainable local planning.

By helping to equip governmental and local authorities with essential tools and resources, the project seeks to streamline planning and decision-making processes to foster economic and social development in targeted areas. Addressing this critical challenge, the project helped in establishing a Local Development Centre to tackle the absence of integrated databases and statistics, thereby empowering decision-makers to align with the actual needs of communities.

The centre aims to house an inclusive database and electronic archive, clearing the way for local planning across sectors. Additionally, it will feature a central Geographic Information Systems (GIS) to promote sectoral and spatial integration. This will facilitate impartial projects and investment distribution in the province, based on realistic foundations that promote social justice and enhance service provision to citizens.

Workshop for financial staff in Diwaniyah and Muthanna



As we wrap up this edition of the LOGDEVI phase 2 newsletter, we want to express our deepest gratitude for your continued support and collaboration.

Together, we can foster positive change and sustainable developments in local communities. We look forward to continuing this journey with you. Working hand-in-hand to promote a better future for all in Iraq!

Zainab Kareem  
Process Manager  
- Diwaniyah



Yama Omari  
Project  
Manager



Nayef  
Fahd  
Project  
Officer  
- Muthanna



Faiza A  
Wahid  
Process  
Manager  
- Duhok



Sarmad  
Al-khazraji  
National  
Team  
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Gunnar  
Andersson  
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Team Leader



**LOGDEVI**  
دعم الحكم المحلي في العراق

Ann-  
Charlott  
Wretman  
Controller



Ranya  
Abdullah  
Deputy  
Project  
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Balsam  
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Manager -  
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Ali Obaid  
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Suzan Husain  
Project Officer  
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Hayder Baha'a  
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Hallah Hamzah  
Communication  
Officer

