



Spatial Planning Scientific Trip to Erbil Report Dr. Aihan Jamal and the 4th Year Planning Students

The planning and Governance course is one of the main courses that had been given to the 4th year planning students. Rewardingly, a scientific excursion had been arranged by Dr. Aihan Jamal for the 4th year planning students accompanied with the Vice Dean Mr. Samir H. Muhyadeen and the Teaching Assistant Mr. Walat to Erbil on December 5, 2022 in order to get familiar with Kurdistan Regional Government's policies and regulations, the authoritative decisions, functions, programs, plans and reform

The visit consists of the following governmental offices:

1. Dr. Chiwas Abdulhadi Saber, General Director of Urban Planning. Ministry of Municipality and Tourism.
2. Dr. Mohammed Shukri, Head of Board, Board of Investment
3. Dr. Haval Sadeeq Ismael. General Director of Promotion Assessment and licensing of Projects. Board of Investment
4. Mr. Karwan Othman Omar. Director of Kurdistan Institute for Public Administration KIPA.

The aim of visiting the following public institutions are as follows:

1. Ministry of Municipality and Tourism in Erbil KRI

The Ministry of Municipalities and Tourism was able to implement 1122 large, small and medium projects in all cities and regions of the region at a cost of more than 68 billion dinars. In addition, two million and 684 thousand and 606 cubic meters of potable water were produced per day through 81 projects and 5,787 wells, in addition to delivering clean water to villages and remote areas by tankers. It is responsible for road, water and sewage infrastructure in cities, districts, suburbs and villages, as well as for supporting and enabling the development of tourism and archaeology.

Strategic road projects have been implemented in major cities, such as 150m Street in Erbil, 100m Street in Sulaymani, and Barzan Road in Dohuk, in addition to operating Sulaymani and Amedi waste recycling plants, and working on the completion of 4 plants in Erbil, Chamchamal, Zakho and Sayed Sadeq, which will contribute to protecting public health and the environment of Kurdistan.

The municipality is responsible for providing the following service for entire Kurdistan region:



- Providing drinking water to all houses in cities, districts, suburbs and villages
- Removing waste and collecting rainwater
- Constructing filtering and cleaning stations to collect waste from streets, shops and public areas
- Constructing roads, bridges and tunnels within cities and villages
- Developing the tourism sector and providing services in parks and other tourist attractions
- Protecting and preserving ancient sites
- Encouraging environmental sustainability in municipal areas
- Maintaining green zones, and
- Treating sewage in cities, districts and suburbs

The objectives are:

- Helping students to increase knowledge and learn about how to manage municipalities in the Kurdistan region of Iraq.
- The students had the opportunity to ask various questions on a variety of topics, including: the municipality's priorities in providing services, how to deal with projects in light of the budget constraint, and about the city of Erbil's plan to provide a sustainable environment to serve citizens.

2. Board of Investment in KRI

The board of investment has prepared two types of plans for the future development of the Kurdistan region of Iraq:

- The first type is investment through projects for the region's economic benefit and market flow.
- The second type is sustainability through environmental planning such as green belt and other means of environmental consideration that was not previously practiced.

The board of investment has permitted 1,176 projects in total but there are currently only 1,084 projects in operation, meaning that the rest have been canceled due to improper responses or not applying instructions from the board. The board of investment extends into four different agencies which are:

- Law agency
- Evaluation and Licensing agency



- Research and Information agency
- Municipality and Industrial zone agency

All the mentioned agencies have their own manager and system. However, the agencies and the board of investment itself work together under the supervision of the general manager Dr. Mohammad Shokri.

- **The Process plan of Project Acceptance by the Board of Investment:**

The process of accepting projects is that the investor has to provide a detailed proposal with the project duration, expected budget, time allocation, and other guidelines that should be available for the acceptance of the project. Furthermore, the project outline is shared with other governmental agencies in order to allocate resources for the project's success. This stage of initiating projects includes 16 agencies in total that provide the required resources such as land, electricity, water, environment, and infrastructure.

Finally, the investors have to deposit money in the bank for guarantee, as well as signing off on official documentation called "red paper". The documentation, along with providing the registration number, falls under the responsibility of Mr. Mohammad Shokri, the head of the KRG's Board of Investment.

- **Future plans**

Regarding the 2023 plans the Board of Investment has installed a unit specifically for international investors. Kurdistan has opened its doors to all investors that are willing to increase investment for the region, such as the recent success of exporting pomegranates.

There are also plans to export more local products with three factories that are producing flour, and wheat. One of those factories, called Xoshnaw, is located in Erbil, Duhok, Qeywan, and also Sulemaniyah.

Other plans of KRG's Board of Investment include allocating 16 locations for industrial use, such as occupying 800 dunams in Zaxo, as well as in Duhok, Erbil, and Sulemaniyah. Another one of their plans is to create a new metropolitan settlement in close distance to Mosul Dam. It is said to be 1,020 dunams that will include commercial, industrial, residential, tourism, and recreation areas. This plan had been set for the upcoming 10 years.



Finally, there's a very crucial plan in consideration for Kurdistan which is the plan for train transportation.

The Kurdistan parliament and Board of Investment is working to possibly get the Iraqi train line to reach Kurdish territories starting from Summel to Duhok then going off to Mosul, Kirkuk, Erbil, and Sulemaniyah. This plan is under the control of foreign companies and investors that will be providing the detailed design and infrastructure to complete the project.

3. The Ministry of Planning in Erbil KRI

The Ministry of Planning in Erbil was visited by students and college professors from the department of spatial planning on December 5, 2022. In the collaboration with relevant ministries, the students have come to understand the crucial role that the ministry of planning plays.

In addition, the ministry of planning is in charge of providing an analysis of the statistics that the Regional Statistics Authority receives. Moreover, is responsible for establishing new funding and donation sources, including the private sector, foreign and domestic investors, implementing a national system of standardization and quality control based on Iraqi and international standards, managing and communicating the nation's resources, providing information on government investment projects, preparing overall plans for the government workforce, increasing productivity, and incorporating e-government, and developing new sources of funding and donations, and examine the jewelry that is imported to the region, follow up on it, and grant jewelry licenses.

The minister, deputy minister, advisors, and all of the staff members who work there have thoroughly defined the ministry's rules, regulations, research, and reports that are all published on the main website of the Kurdistan regional government. By this, it demonstrates how the ministry is using the transparency into their governmental structure.

Furthermore, Mr. Karwan Othman Omar, director of the Kurdistan Institute for Public Administration (KIPA), has described the function of the planning ministry in setting up training programs at KIPA for government employees as well as the procedure for instructing government employees in public contracting and procurement. These helpful training sessions are held in the planning ministry's seminar room. This project of training was formed through the international corporation agency KOICA, the republican of Kuria and the Kurdistan regional government have been cooperating on this project since 2017 till now.



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In addition, Mr. Karwan the importance of capacity building, soft skills, and technological skills emphasized through the training courses for the employees, and then how these employees transfer these skills to their governmental institutions.

Eventually, Mr. Karwan has answered all the students' questions regarding the planning, governance process, decentralization, projects, sustainability, and connectivity of the ministry with the other institutions, challenges and difficulties that face the ministry, and many other questions that were all clearly answered and explained by him.

In the end, the students and the professors have expressed gratitude to the efforts of the Mr. Karwan in this mission, and they took a memorial picture together.