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## Urban Planning in Jordan a View towards Decentralization

By Elaf Dawodieh & Nabeel Al-Kurdi

*University of Jordan*

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# Urban Planning in Jordan a View towards Decentralization

Elaf Dawodieh<sup>α</sup> & Nabeel Al-Kurdi<sup>σ</sup>

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## I. INTRODUCTION

One of the most prominent problems that are facing the countries of the world, including Jordan, is the centralization of INVESTMENTS, job opportunities, and services in the capital, which led to the concentration of the population according to the centralization of activities. This study emphasizes the impact of the absence of the role of urban planning on centralization in the capital Amman, which made an unmistakable distinction between urban areas, and has prompted the centralization of investments, job opportunities and services in the capital. CENTRALIZATION URBAN PLANNING CAN CAUSE PROBLEMS THAT CANNOT BE EASILY RESOLVED AFTER APPLIED. This requires reinforcing urban planning policies on orientation at the decentralization to achieve effective spatial distribution of services and job opportunities through the creation of a planning structure to make an adjusted development of urban areas and to achieve a sustainable urban economy of urban communities to reduce the centralization in Amman. In the planning stage to save time, effort and cost. A wide range of polices is available for decentralization planning.

To decide what approach is most appropriate to select the best method for decentralization urban planning. The current literature on decentralization have to be reviewed. Researchers have developed many polices to help reduce the centralization in the capital.

Urban planning Promotes inclusive, and sustainable economic growth, which is playing an important role to achieve a balanced growth between cities to reach a successful distribution of activities, services and job opportunities to reduce centralization in the capital. Urban planning embodies economic development projects to provide job opportunities for the population<sup>1</sup>.

There are several planning methods for decentralization planning, including high-quality urban life, Dimensions of Decentralized Planning, and (SQL) Urban Quality of Life principles as a tool to improve the urban economy.

## II. MATERIAL AND METHODOLOGY

The urban planning policies that aim a smart growth, economic development, and effective urban quality of life are still moving towards the capital Amman and are attempting to expand existing activities, whether economic, education, or health, which will increase the problem of centralization. In this work, we are trying to study the role of the urban planning and urban economy as a tool to resettle the population in their cities and solve the problem of centralization in the capital by using the analytical, descriptive methodology that confirms the problem.

## III. CENTRALIZATION IN THE CAPITAL AMMAN

The concept of centralization in the cities came to express the centralization and accumulation of economic, political, educational, health, wellbeing, and social power in particular urban zones because of the absence of planning policies, which led to the unbalanced development between urban areas. The focal word means the concentration of services in one area meaning all kinds of services<sup>2</sup>. The urban planning policies that aim a smart growth, economic development are still moving towards the capital Amman and they are attempting to expand existing activities, whether economic, education, or health, which will increase the problem of centralization.

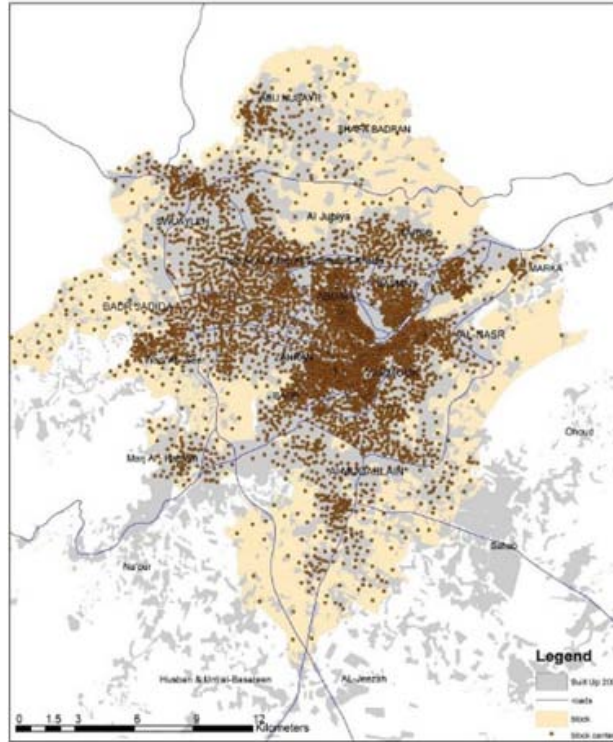
The volume of investments in the capital Amman for the years 2013 and 2014 was (1,607.6) million JD compared to the total investment volume in the same period, which, was estimated (2456.1) million

<sup>1</sup>(Finnveden, Gunnarsson, 2016)

<sup>2</sup>(Marume, Jubenkanda, 2016)

JD in all of Jordan, which contributed to the creation of (3829) job opportunities<sup>3</sup>. Almost, half of Jordan's hospitals are located in Amman, which includes (51 out of 104 hospitals in all of the Kingdom's cities)<sup>4</sup>, and (17

out of 30 universities<sup>5</sup>. This confirms the centralization of economic, health, educational and job opportunities in Amman.



Source: Greater Amman Municipality GIS, 2017

Fig. 1: Centralization in the capital Amman

In Jordan, we have unbalanced geographic distribution of the population as a result of absence regional planning, which most of the population is

concentrated in the central regions, however it is the least in the area.



Source: High Population Council, 2014: Modifications by the researcher

Fig. 2: Unbalanced geographic distribution of the population in Jordan

<sup>3</sup> (Capital Governorate Development Program 2016-2018, Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation)

<sup>4</sup> (Ministry of Health, 2015)

<sup>5</sup> (Ministry of Higher Education, 2015)

The Northern Territory area	32.6 %
The central region area	16.2 %
The South Region	51.2 %

*Table 1:* The centralization of the economic activities in Amman

The number of companies	Amman	The state	The rate of companies from the state
Institutions work in industry	10279	20214	51%
Institutions work in transport and communications	1232	1843	67%
Institutions work in trade	39407	89331	44%
Institutions work in contracting	1340	2170	62%
Institutions work in services	18083	33314	54%
Total	70341	146872	48%

Source: (The Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation, 2016)

The previous table shows the concentration of the economic sector in the capital Amman, which lead to creating more jobs in the capital and encouraged the

population in migrate, which resulted to the centralization in Amman.

*Table 2:* The centralization of health services in the capital Amman

Governorate	No. of Hospitals	No. of Beds	No. of Gov. Hospitals	Private Hospital	Ministry of Health hospitals
Amman	47	5325	6	37	4
Balqa	5	532	0	1	4
Zarqa	8	896	1	5	2
Madaba	3	153	0	1	2
Irbid	16	1527	2	6	8
Mafraq	4	229	0	1	3
Jarash	1	135	0	0	1
Ajlun	1	105	0	0	1
Karak	6	365	1	3	2
Tafiela	1	86	1	0	0
Ma'an	2	191	0	0	2
Aqaba	3	199	1	2	0
Total	97	9743	12	56	29

The previous table shows the extent of the centralization of services in the capital Amman. In 2003 (47) of (97 hospitals) were concentrated in the capital Amman (Ministry of Health, 2003). Currently, Planning policies continue in orient planning towards the capital Amman, which increasing the problem of centralization.

In 2017 the Ministry of Health indicates that the number of hospitals in Jordan was 106 hospitals: 52 of them were concentrated in the capital Amman (Ministry of Health, 2012). This confirms the problem of centralization in Amman and the absence of the urban polices in Jordan.

*Table 3:* The capital Amman rich more than half of economic projects in the field of construction

Governorate	Number of contractors	The number of projects	The value of the projects (million)
Amman	1596	6084	758.3
Others Governorate	1014	1096	230.3
The total of state	2610	7180	988.6
The rate of the capital from the state	61%	84.7%	76.7%

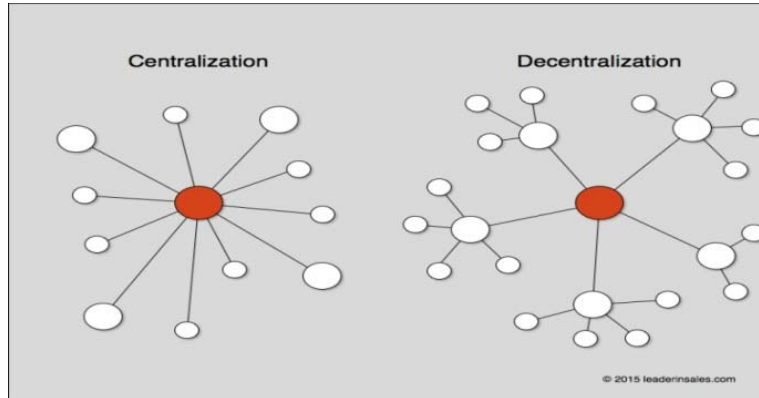
Source: (The Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation, 2016)

The previous table shows that the capital Amman rich more than half of economic projects in the field of construction, which contributed to provide job opportunities for the population in the capital, and increased the problem of centralization in Amman.

The absence of spatial planning leads to the concentration of services, such as hospitals, universities and economic activities in the capital Amman. We need to improve the urban economy to distribute jobs in balance way between cities.

Decentralization is the process by which the activities, especially those regarding planning and decision-making, are distributed or delegated away from a central, authoritative location or group.

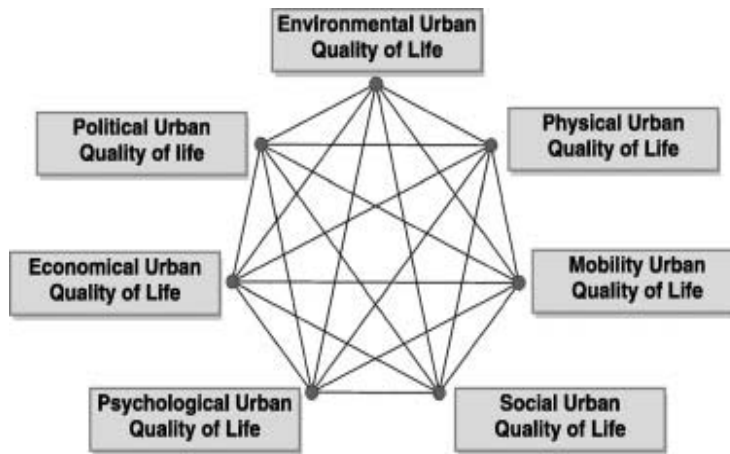
The concepts of decentralization are the distribution of services in different places or in other sense planning to give some services a higher authority than the level of their center<sup>6</sup>.



(Source: <http://leaderinsales.com/business/organizational-structure/centralization-decentralization/>)

Fig. 3: Centralization & decentralization

(SQL)Urban Quality of Life principles as a tool to improve urban economy



(source: Serag El Dina, Shalabya, Elsayed, . Elarianeb, 2013).

Fig. 4: Urban quality of life dimensions – Heptagon Shape

The Urban economy focuses on advancing the urban strategies and policies that reinforce the capacity of cities to realize their full potential as drivers economic development, of wealth and employment creation. Special attention is paid to the formulation and implementation of urban strategies and policies that promote and boost the participation of both men and women, enhance municipal finance and contribute to the creation of decent urban jobs and livelihoods that increase economic strengthening. These are most commonly portrayed as the creation of jobs, wealth, and

improvement of quality of life. Economic the development can also be described as a procedure that impacts development and restructuring of an economy to enhance the economic well being of a community.

<sup>6</sup> (Rondinelle, and Nellis, 1986)

Table 5: Policy Options for Sustainable Economic Development

Policy Option 1	Facilitating a transition to a low-carbon economy by adopting legislation to catalyze investment in renewable energy for electric power generation in the industrial, commercial, residential and government sectors of the local economy.
Policy Option 2	Developing goals and programs for green economic growth in both traditional and emerging industry sectors.
Policy Option 3	Creating sustainable economic development, growth mechanisms, including subsidies, enterprise zones, land use, land purchases, public-private partnerships and business facilitation
Policy Option 4	Systematically, creating new business opportunities for local new economy startups by introducing them to the city's existing base of corporations and industries requiring such products or services.
Policy Option 5	Zoning for mixed-use development: Adjusting zoning codes to allow mixed-use development helps create walk able, mixed-use places.
Policy Option 6	Preservation of open and agricultural space: Preserving natural areas in the city and surrounding region provides important recreational, ecological, and economic benefits that enhance quality of life. Review the city's zoning ordinances and make necessary adjustments to preserve agricultural land, open space, and other environmentally sensitive areas.
Policy Option7	Partnership building. Because smart growth, economic development encompasses many issues, municipal governments often look for partners from the public, private, and nonprofit sectors to help achieve community goals.

A proposed model for the cities of the parties to solve centralization and reduce the migration of the population and their resettlement in their cities

*Prosperous, Vibrant and Sustainable Economy*

1. Attracting new businesses retains, and grow existing businesses through diversity, quality development and reasonable tax support.
  - Attracting investment: Providing tax exemptions for investment in cities of the parties such as Ma'an, Tafilah, and Karak, which suffer from high migration rates towards the capital Amman to create jobs for the population and settle the population in their cities. In addition, work to amend and review the laws to achieve the idea of decentralization so that the tax law, for example, the option of citizens to pay taxes directly to the government or contribute to the construction of services in areas experiencing migrations and lack of services such as universities, hospitals, and public places, which provides job opportunities for the population to develop the economy of the cities of the parties, and helps to settle the population and reduce migration to the capital.

2. Providing the type of mobility options, including parking, that businesses require to thrive reinvesting and appropriately maintains its infrastructure assets.
  - The transport sector is a basic sector that cannot be neglected because it affects the lives of every citizen and has a great impact on the national economy. The decline in services in this sector has negatively affected the lives of every citizen in Jordan. It is necessary to work on restructuring the public transport sector in all governorates of the Kingdom. Also finding and intensifying the means of transport for the development areas in the governorates through:
    - 1-Operating regular transportation to reduce waiting hours for users and not waste their time and effort as they move from one place to another and taking into account the increase in the population, especially users of the public transport service.
    - 2-Transportation: developing A well-connected, safe, and reliable transportation network that integrates driving, walking, biking, and public transit has many economic development benefits. It connects workers to jobs; lets people who cannot drive getting to stores, services amenities, and

disperses users across several modes and routes, which can reduce traffic congestion.

3. Promoting job growth, offering adequate housing options and quality of life amenities.
  - Public-private partnerships: to create job opportunities to accomplish community goals and services to achieve decentralization Most of the investments of the private sector that generated jobs are concentrated in the capital Amman, which led to the migration of a high proportion of the population of the provinces of the parties for jobs opportunities. Engage with the private sector, to ensure that urban and territorial planning coordinates the spatial location and distribution of economic activities, building on economies of scale and agglomeration, proximity and connectivity, thus contributing to increased productivity, competitiveness and job opportunities

#### IV. ACCESS TO RECREATIONAL AND EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

1. Improving the educational environment in the cities of the parties.
  - Settlement and attract population: attract the population through education, to the cities of the parties through the construction of universities in those cities, and to grant scholarships to students in areas that suffer from population migration, Especially in the southern region in Jordan.
  - Improve the quality of education: having a high-quality public school district is an important component to building a skilled workforce. Many schools in Tafileh suffer from the dilapidation of buildings, lack of educational staff and services, resulting in the migration of a proportion of the population of the province towards the capital in search of better educational services. In addition to the weak relationship between universities and the product and industrial sectors. So it is necessary to Link higher education output to the labor market.
2. Attract investment in the cities of the parties (direct invest)
  - It is necessary to work on the development of planning policies in Jordan to achieve decentralized planning by attracting investments to the cities of the parties that suffer from high migration rates, especially Tafileh and Ma'an Governorate. This can be achieved through 1-Creating special zones equipped with infrastructure and services that are provided free of charge to investors provided that they provide 100 jobs to the residents of the region (directed investment).
  - The investor can obtain an interest-free loan to finance for 6-year and operate these investments. 2-

Undertaking the work of the industrial establishment on behalf of the investor by the state.

3. Improving the Urban quality of life environment to attract investment and population

*Maintaining A balance between encouraging the growth of the local economy, while limiting impacts upon the quality of life*

Providing a secure environment and creating job opportunities for the population with adequate income, low cost of living, and compatibility between the place of residence and the workplace through planning and reflection through the establishment of an effectively transport network that takes into account the human first, not the car. This will attract investors and residents to live in cities of the parties to achieve the idea of decentralization in Jordan through:

- Well-paid jobs
- Quality education / lifelong learning
- Medical facilities
- Quality and affordable housing
- Low pollution and environmental damage
- Public amenities
- Low crime
- Low cost of living / low taxation
- Aesthetic build and natural environment
- Preservation of open and agricultural space: Preserving natural areas in the city and surrounding region provides important recreational, ecological, and economic benefits that enhance the quality of life.

#### V. CONCLUSIONS

- Achieving a hierarchy of decentralized regional planning priorities that achieve decentralization by studying the spatial distribution of services to distribute to the regions in a balanced manner through regional planning and work to develop these plans and review it every four years to know the urban growth of the regions and the required distribution of services by demographic growth of regions to reduce the centrality of services in specific cities.
- Maintaining the balance in projects that ensure that all regions of the Kingdom are equal in development projects that contribute to the progress and development of each region process will ease concentration in major cities.
- Infrastructure: directing, planning for infrastructure to increase access to the city because the best access city gives a huge economic advantage to the city.
- Increase access to open space, parks, and recreation: Open space and public gathering spaces, including playgrounds and parks, can raise

property values in residential areas and could attract new residents and workers.

- Attracting new businesses could help increase job opportunities, local employment options and build the city's tax base
- It is important that the nature of each region is commensurate with each project, whether it is an economical, agricultural, or health project. In other words, each region will be characterized by projects that are suitable for its conditions and nature, such as tourist areas) (high educational areas) (agricultural areas) (industrial zones).

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