

**Capacity building as an approach to managing local units
- a theoretical approach-**



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Abstract:

Local administration is the basis for achieving comprehensive and sustainable development, in terms of the functions it performs at the local level. Accordingly, the development trends have emphasized shifting more towards localities and working to develop local capabilities by consolidating the approach to capacity building, which aims to rebuild and strengthen the capabilities of local administration at all levels (individual, institutional, and environmental). Accordingly, this research aims to show how to build and strengthen the capabilities of the local administration through the entrance of capacity building, and after the study and analysis, the researcher reached several results of the research, perhaps the most important of which are: that improving the performance of local administrations and achieving efficiency and effectiveness in the services provided and development goals will not be achieved except through Consolidate the entrance to capacity building in local administrations.

Keywords : capacity , capacity building, local administrations.

Introduction :

The local administration exercises several service functions, as it is the basis for making and implementing the general policies of the state at the local level and providing services for the public interest. From this standpoint, and within the framework of the transition towards democracy and decentralization, several development trends have emerged that emphasize the shift more towards localities to achieve comprehensive and sustainable development, worse at the central or local level. . Based on the consideration that the local administration is the base of comprehensive development, and it must be adapted to the new functions of the political system and the transformations taking place, and in this context, the development trends emphasized rebuilding and strengthening the capabilities of the local administration in order to adapt to the requirements of development, and this is by consolidating the capacity-building approach that focuses on To reconsider and develop the capabilities of the local administration at all levels (individual, institutional, and environmental) in order to manage change and rationalize local performance, and establish a local administration capable of performing its functions and achieving its development goals.

From this standpoint, we will try in this research paper to address the entrance to capacity building as a modern trend in the management of local units, by answering the following problem:

- How does the capacity building approach contribute to the management of local units and the achievement of development goals?

Study hypothesis: To answer and analyze this problem, we put forward the following hypothesis:
- There is a mutual and complementary relationship between improving the performance of local administrations and the approach to capacity building.

Study objectives: This study aims to:

- Studying the concept of building local capabilities, by addressing the meaning of building the capabilities of local administrations in administrative thought. In addition to this, the concept of building local capabilities was exposed through studying the most important theoretical approaches explaining this term from the perspective of international institutions, and also learning about some academic jurisprudence. In this area.

-This study also aims to identify how to develop the capabilities of local administrations and improve their performance through the capacity building approach, that is, studying the interactive relationship between the capacity building approach and the process of improving local performance.

for analyze this study, the descriptive analytical approach was relied upon to study and analyze the importance of establishing the capacity building approach. capacities at the level of local administrations.

1. The concept of capacity building in administrative thought :

The term capacity building in administrative thought received great attention, in order to build and strengthen the capabilities of administrative organizations to achieve their goals, and this interest was reflected in the divergence of ideas and approaches that sought to clarify the concept of this term, and therefore we will try to address in this topic some of the visions and intellectual perspectives that explain it.

1.1 The concept of capacity building from the perspective of international institutions:

The term capacity building appeared in Western literature by international donor institutions, which considered it an essential entry point in development strategies since the 1990s in developing countries. In this context, donor institutions attributed in the nineties that the main reason behind unemployment and the spread of poverty and illiteracy, as well as the poor conditions in African countries, is due to the lack of their governments' ability to build and implement appropriate development strategies and policies, and to fill this deficit, the entrance to capacity building must be activated as a developmental approach at all levels. In its local institutions and administrations to effectively manage and implement its development strategies. (Other, 2015)

Accordingly, the term capacity building emerged within the framework of a broader concept at the beginning of the nineties of the twentieth century by international donor institutions in the field of development cooperation and assistance provided to developing countries. These judgments can be summarized as follows:

Definition of the **United Nations Development Program**: Capacity building: "It is the process through which individuals, organizations and communities strengthen their capabilities, to the extent that they enable them to define and achieve development goals in a sustainable manner." Accordingly, the **United Nations Development Program** in its definition of capacity building focuses on the element of sustainability, that is, capacity building is the process that aims to improve the capabilities of individuals and organizations and achieve their goals in a sustainable manner.

Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development: Capacity Building: "The process through which organizations and society as a whole create capacity and adapt to it." Based on this concept, capacity building is a process related to the ability of organizations and societies to create capacity and adapt to it.

This definition indicates that the capacity building process starts from scratch, and involves the construction and creation of a new capacity building.

Capacity building at the Earth Summit 1992: Defined as: “the process of strengthening human, scientific, technological, organizational and institutional capabilities in a country. The primary objective of capacity building is to enhance the ability to assess and address issues related to policy selection and implementation methods, based on an understanding of environmental potentials and limits, and needs perceived by the people of the country concerned.” (Bank, 1992)

Definition of the World Bank: On the other hand, given the complexity of the term capacity building, the World Bank resorted in its definition to defining the levels and elements of the capacity building process, meaning what do we build? In order to identify them more precisely, capacity building according to the World Bank is a long-term systematic process that takes place within the framework of an integrated approach as follows:

-Human capacity: It is represented in the availability of individuals with skills and the indoctrination of knowledge to be able to identify and analyze development needs, as well as design and implement strategies and policies, monitor results and provide services with the best quality and quality.

-Organizational Capacity: It includes improving the internal structures, processes, systems, employees and resources within the administrative organization, to create additional capabilities or to strengthen existing capabilities to achieve the set goals.

-Institutional Capacity: It is represented in creating the institutional context at the central and local level within which organizations operate, related to the formal and informal rules that exist to control the performance of public sectors, as well as ensuring incentives and rewards to improve the performance of employees in these sectors, and providing the necessary resources to enhance performance, And create an enabling environment that allows individuals to engage in the learning process to develop their capabilities in order to adapt to change and achieve development goals (Bank, Capacity Building In African An O.E.D:Evaluation Of World Bank Support, 2005).

Accordingly, it becomes clear that the capacity-building process according to the World Bank is based on the integrated approach, that is, it is an interactive and reciprocal process that enhances coordination between three main levels: the individual, organizational and institutional level. Clarity of organizational structures, processes and procedures within organizations that allow individuals to perform their jobs, in addition to creating an institutional context, i.e. societal, at the appropriate central and local level that provides the necessary capabilities, and an enabling environment for developing the performance of organizations in a way that supports the establishment of a capable public administration that is more effective and efficient in responding to development needs.

1.2 The concept of capacity building from the perspective of academic jurisprudence:

The researcher (**Linnell**) believes that the concept of capacity building in management studies includes in its content: “activities that improve the ability of the organization to achieve its goals, or the ability of the person to define and achieve his goals and do his work effectively.” (**Polytechnics, 2014**) .

As for (**Loubser**), the researcher defines capacity building as: "a process that contains the elements of the basic capabilities that he seeks to build in any sector." These are as follows: (**Abdul Haruna, 2014**)

- Ability to define goals:** including vision, values, policies, strategies, and interests.
- The ability to mobilize efforts:** This includes will, motivation, focus, energy, and work ethic.
- **Monitoring capabilities:** related to intelligence, skills and knowledge.
- **Ability to provide resources:** including human, financial, and technology resources.
- **Ability** to organize work related to planning, design and organization.

Based on the above and through the definitions mentioned above, capacity building is the process of creating new capacities or strengthening existing ones, referring to the assumption that there are existing capacities to start up that we need to develop and develop.

Capacity-building does not require capacity development and institution-building, but rather strengthening existing institutions by improving their capacities or creating new capabilities that add value to the institution so that it can manage its resources and achieve its development goals.

Thus, capacity-building means not just the ability to adapt or survive, but the ability to manage the required changes. Capacity building does not require more training on modern methods or working on the supremacy of a particular method in administrative organization, but rather requires determining when the method is appropriate or inappropriate to solve the problem at hand because capacity building is a process aimed at creating or strengthening: that is, developing the ability of the individual or institution to increase their abilities to solve their problems and achieve their development goals. (**Ghanem, 2007**) .

Therefore, capacity building as a development input aims to build and develop the capacities of institutions at all levels, and for this reason it was recently presented as a development approach within the modern trends in the management of local units, considering that the latter is the basis for achieving comprehensive and sustainable development.

2. Capacity building as an input to local unit management :

In light of the trend towards democracy, the emergence of the concepts of good governance and the political, economic and social transformations, which had a major impact on the imperative of developing local administration, to be more responsive and capable of managing sustainable local development processes, as it is the closest administration to the citizen and most knowledgeable of his needs and it represents the basis for comprehensive development, and as a result Therefore, it has become necessary for the local administration to rebuild and develop its capabilities at all levels to improve the quality of its services provided for the public good, and also in order to achieve sustainable local development goals, and this will only be possible by activating the capacity building approach according to modern trends in the management of local affairs, which focuses on Answer the following questions: **What are the required local capacities that are built, especially in the context of the emergence of good local governance concepts? That is, what do we build to rationalize the performance of local administration? What is the optimal approach to achieving rational local performance? How is the process of building local capacities carried out?**

2.1 Definition of local administration:

Local administration is considered one of the most important branches of public administration. There have been many definitions related to this term in administrative thought, and before addressing the conceptual network of local administration, it must be pointed out that there are three trends in defining local administration as follows: (**Hassoun Al-Taie, 2010**)

- **The first trend:** This trend depends on the variable of functions in defining local administration, but this intellectual perspective is not considered knowledgeable in defining the term, because the functions of local administration differ from one state to another according to the nature of the political system and the ideology followed by the state.

- **The second trend:** This trend focuses on the variable objectives of public administration, and arriving at a definition based on the objectives is considered extremely difficult, given the change of objectives from one stage to another according to the requirements of society and the changes taking place.

-**The third trend:** It depends on the essence of the local administration system, its institutions and bodies, and the structure of the administrative apparatus in definition. This trend is the most widely discussed among thinkers in the study of local systems.

Based on these trends explaining the concept of local administration, it becomes clear that the first trend focused in defining local administration on the variable of functions, and this variable is not familiar with the overall definition of the term, because the functions of local administration

differ from one country to another according to the nature of the adopted system, but the second trend relied on the goals element. To define local administration, and he neglected that the objectives cannot be relied upon in the definition because they are not fixed and change according to the changes taking place in society.

As for the third trend in his definition of the term local administration, it focuses on its system and bodies as a starting point in the definition, and this last trend is the one that we will rely on in our study because it is well known. By giving an understanding of the term based on the variables it depends on, and based on it, we will present the most important definitions of local administration.

The British scholar (**Grame Modie**) defines local administration as "an elected council in which local unity is concentrated, where it is subject to political responsibility to the voters of the residents of the local unit, and is considered complementary to the state apparatus."

The French scholar (**Walim**) defines it as "the transfer of the power to issue administrative decisions to elected local councils." (**Ghadban, 2015**)

Thus, local administration in this sense is an elected local body based on the transfer of powers and the right to issue decisions from the central authority to local units.

Within this direction, (**Dr. Fouad Al-Attar**) defines local administration: "It is the distribution of the administrative function between the central government and elected or local bodies, which exercise their competencies under the supervision and control of the government.

(**Dr. Abdul Razzaq Ibrahim Al-Sheikhly**) also defined local administration: "It is a method of administrative organization of the state, based on the idea of distributing activities and duties between central and local agencies, for the purpose of devoting the former to drawing up the general policy of the state, in addition to managing facilities in the country, and that local agencies can manage their facilities efficiently and achieve their legitimate purposes (**Al-Taamneh, 2003**)

In summary of all the previous definitions, it is clear that local administration is based in its essence on distributing powers and responsibilities between the central government and elected local bodies, with the aim of enabling local administration to be more capable in its performance of managing its affairs and covering the needs and demands of its citizens.

Therefore, local administration we conclude that it includes in its content three Key variables that contribute to strengthening its capabilities to manage its territory, which we list below:

- Recognition of the management of local affairs by an elected local body.
- Transferring powers and responsibilities from the central government to local bodies.

- Central government control and supervision of the tasks of the elected local body.

2.2. Developing local administration from the perspective of the capacity building approach :

In this context, we will present how to manage local units from the perspective of the capacity building approach, as it is the most important approach currently proposed by international institutions (the World Bank, the United Nations Development Programme) and academic efforts in the field of development. Therefore, the management of local units from the perspective of the capacity building approach is a comprehensive, integrated process that includes (individual capacity, institutional capacity, environmental capacity) to build a local administration capable of exploiting its resources and achieving its goals efficiently and sustainably, as follows: **(Siphiwe D.Ndou, 2016)**

-Individual capacity: Capacity building at the individual level requires enhancing the skills, knowledge, behaviors, and values acquired by the individual through training, education or experience, to be used in the performance of his local function.

- Institutional Capacity: Local capacity building at the institutional level includes the provision of human and financial resources, as well as reviewing the organizational structure of the local administration and relations between local and central authorities, in addition to activating community partnership, and institutional capacity refers to the ability of the local administration to obtain new resources, and exploit them in building and strengthening its capacities effectively and sustainably.

- Environmental Capacity: It includes the social and economic composition, values and demographic aspect surrounding the local administration, and in this context, municipalities located in remote areas often face challenges for environmental capacity, as it is difficult for them to find collectible revenues, as they depend largely on the resources granted by the central government, and this affects the ability of local administration to achieve sustainable development in a local context.

Accordingly, managing local units according to modern trends from the perspective of building local capabilities is the process of strengthening existing local capabilities and establishing capabilities with additional values, so that they are more capable and responsive to the needs of their communities and the requirements of development efficiently and effectively, and within the framework of a holistic, sustainable approach based on comprehensiveness and mutual interaction between Three levels of capabilities (individual, institutional and environmental), with each capability supporting the others. Therefore, any shortcomings in the process of building on one of the aforementioned capabilities would result in a weakness in performance, the local decisions and policies proposed, and the goals and directions they represent.

That is, the entrance to capacity building in the administration of local units is a set of procedures and processes that work to enhance the knowledge and skills of individuals within the local authorities, as well as developing the structures and processes of local administration to be able to carry out its tasks efficiently.” (aisal Al-Munawar, 2018).

Building local capacities also requires a set of Skills and knowledge to enhance the capabilities of individuals, and also to reconsider the organizational structure and develop administrative processes in order to enable and enhance the capabilities of the local administration to adapt to its environment, ensuring its response to the requirements of its community.

Hence, the approach to building local capabilities aims to develop human resources capabilities by enhancing the individual’s knowledge and skills that enable him to improve his performance, in addition to focusing on rebuilding organizational and institutional capabilities that enable the local administration to respond to the challenges it faces, represented by internal integration and adaptation. The external environment is constantly changing as follows : (Commission, 2007)

1- External adaptation includes: how the local administration deals with the external environment to ensure its survival and continuity. This adaptation requires building organizational capacity, and what it includes reconsidering recruitment policies for the human resource at the local level, in addition to designing appropriate structures within the administration, and re-engineering internal administrative processes. And organizational procedures. Organizational capacity also requires building incentive systems for employees, delegating responsibilities, and using experts to formulate strategies and policies to enhance local capabilities, in addition to creating standards to evaluate the performance of individuals and identify shortcomings in existing capabilities.

2- Internal integration of local administration: It consists of establishing harmonious and effective communication relationships, based on participation, between employees at all levels of local administration to enhance their capabilities.

In addition to this, building local capabilities also requires, in its content, the development of the institutional and legal framework in order to make the necessary legal and organizational changes, to enable the local administration to enhance its capabilities, perform its functions, and achieve its goals without limits or restrictions that hinder its tasks.

Accordingly, and what can be concluded, that the approach to capacity building in the management of local units is not just to establish capabilities to survive or adapt to the surrounding environment, but rather it is a comprehensive and integrated process based on the use of complexity in building and strengthening their capabilities, to establish an adaptive local administration capable of planning and responding to the needs of its citizens and achieving its development goals efficiently and continuously, it is not enough to teach individuals more knowledge and skills

through training and motivation, or build organizational capacities within the administrative structure to ensure the adaptation of local administration. With the internal and external environment, or strengthening institutional capacities, it is necessary to build and strengthen local capacities to also find a comprehensive strategy of integrated change, centered on focusing on the following levels:

- **The organizational structure of local administration:** related to changing buildings, operations, organizational procedures and resources.
- **The individual:** teaching him more skills and knowledge and changing behaviors.
- **Institutional framework:** It includes reconsidering the legal rules, values, trends, and societal environment with all its institutions to establish a possible environment that provides the necessary capabilities to build local capabilities, and is also based on the involvement of those with capabilities and informal actors in strategic planning to build and develop local capabilities.

In light of the above, it can be said that the management of local units according to the approach of building local capacities and achieving local development is only an integrative process that requires changes at the level of administrative processes, buildings and organizational procedures continuously, in addition to reforming the external environment of local administration by reconsidering the rules, policies, systems, values and trends of the community environment to realize the relationship between them and bring about a response, within the framework of an interactive process between inputs, outputs and feedback in a way that enables local administration to build Strengthening their capacities at all levels and responding to the requirements of their local community, as well as activating local participation with partners and local citizens in a way that supports and enhances the creation of local capabilities of added value and achieves quality in the services provided continuously and sustainably.

In addition to this, **the United Nations Development Program** has confirmed that the entrance to capacity building in managing local units is to improve performance and achieve the ruler results. Local units must be managed according to this approach according to an integrated methodology as follows:

1-Involving stakeholders in the process of capacity building and development: Local capacity building and development needs to involve all relevant actors (civil society organizations, the private sector, local citizens) as a starting point in the process of construction and sustainability in order to achieve the planned results, as the construction process requires the contribution of key partners with their opinions in designing it within the framework of local development priorities and the requirements of good governance. Who will do what? And who will make sure that it is implemented? What will be the consequences if it is not implemented?

2- Capacity assessment: It consists of assessing capabilities and needs while clearly defining the goals that the local administration seeks in the process of building and developing its capabilities, through comparison between existing capabilities and required capabilities. In this context, the United Nations Development Program has identified key levels that must be taken into consideration. In the evaluation process: the level of the enabling environment that determines the general framework for the capacity building and development process. Which includes (policies, legislation, and customs existing in society), the organizational level (the internal structure, organizational policies and procedures that determine the performance of the local administration), the individual level (the skills and knowledge that allow each individual to perform his tasks), in addition to evaluating the technical capabilities and existing functional capabilities, which are In the ability to accomplish tasks, formulate and implement strategies at all levels of local administration.

In the context of the capacity assessment process, the United Nations Development Program has identified the main steps in the assessment process that the local administration needs to build and develop its capabilities, as follows:

A/- Mobilization and design: The capacity assessment process is based on the presence of a clear design, and this process is based on the fact that there are existing capabilities that can and should be built upon and developed.

B/- Conducting a capacity assessment: This is done by comparing the existing capabilities and the required capabilities. During the capacity assessment process, data and information are collected about the existing capabilities at all levels, while determining the goals that the local administration seeks to achieve.

C/- Summarizing and interpreting the results: This is done by comparing the existing capabilities with the required capabilities, in order to provide ideas for forming an appropriate response to the process of building and developing local capabilities, and when explaining the results of the evaluation, the evaluation team is able to identify the required capabilities and the gaps that exist at the level of the capacity building process.

3-Formulating a response to capacity building and development: Determining an appropriate response to capacity building and development depends on the results of the capacity assessment, and formulating the response requires the involvement of stakeholders to discuss programs and projects, and calculate the cost of the capabilities required to come up with realistic funding for the budget required for capacity building. **(Programme)**

4- Implementing a response to capacity building and development: Implementing an appropriate response to the process of building local capacity in a sustainable manner requires planning, more skills and training for employees, as well as strategies, program development and

gathering of means, as well as consulting experts in the field required to manage implementation and in order to obtain the best results.

5- Evaluation of capacity building and development: Evaluating the success of the response process to build and develop local capacities cannot be reduced to transforming inputs into outputs or increasing financial resources. The evaluation process must reflect the extent to which the outcomes are achieved as a result of the construction process, as well as the change in performance, which can be measured. Through standards of efficiency and effectiveness, and the ability of local administration to adapt to the current changes. (Ibid)

And from him, it is clear that the entrance to capacity building in the management of local units depends on consistent stages that help to monitor the gaps between the current capabilities and the required capabilities with added development values. Starting with the stage of evaluating the existing local capabilities and identifying the ailment relationships, and the capabilities required in the building process: that is, the resources in the design stage, then formulating an appropriate response by involving stakeholders in formulating the strategies and programs required in the process of building and developing local capabilities, as well as providing all material resources, and providing individuals with skills And the knowledge necessary to create a response in implementing the capacity-building and development process in order to assess the success of the local capacity-building and development process, i.e. the results achieved.

Conclusion:

From the foregoing, it can be said that the approach to building local capabilities in local administrations is a modern development trend that relies on a comprehensive integrated approach that requires making changes at the level of administrative processes and buildings, organizational structure, organizational and legal procedures continuously and also strengthening and enhancing the capabilities of human resources, in addition to reforming the environment. external to the local administration by reviewing the rules, policies, systems, values, and trends of the societal environment in order to realize the relationship between them and create a response within the framework of an interactive and reciprocal process between inputs and outputs, and feedback to social actors in a way that enables the local administration to build and strengthen its capabilities at all levels.

Therefore, the most important findings of this study include:

- The process of building the capacity of local administrations is a process in its entirety concerned with establishing local systems capable of building and developing their capabilities sustainably in a way that reflects the existence of a rational local administration based on efficiency and effectiveness in performance, which leads to achieving the principle of bringing the administration

closer to the citizen and providing services for the public interest with the best quality and in the fastest time and less.

- There is an interactive and complementary relationship between the approach to building local capacities and improving local performance, as the more the capacity building approach is activated at the level of local administrations, the greater the likelihood of rationalizing local performance and achieving sustainable local development goals.

Therefore, the recommendations proposed in this paper include:

- Improving performance at the level of local administrations in line with the new functions of the political system requires the consolidation of the capacity-building approach in the management of local affairs.

- Local administrations to rebuild and develop their capacities and add development capabilities should activate the capacity-building approach, which focuses on developing and strengthening the capacities of local administrations at the individual, institutional and environmental levels, in order to enable local administrations to provide services to citizens with the best quality and quality, and to manage and implement local development projects in order to achieve the planned goals.

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