Rethinking Decentralization and Deconcentration in the Unitary States

Graduate School of International Development (GSID), Nagoya University, Japan
June 18, 2009
Structure of Presentation

- Understanding Decentralization.
- Centralization – Decentralization Debate.
- Unitary States vs Federal States.
- Country Experiences (Japan, China, France, Indonesia, MENA).
Part 1
Understanding Decentralization
Decentralization

(Rondinelli and WB, 1999)

- Political decentralization;
- Administrative decentralization:
  - Deconcentration
  - Delegation
  - Devolution
- Fiscal decentralization;
- Market decentralization.
Decentralization &
deconcentration defined

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Dec. / Dev.</th>
<th>Deconcentration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>World Bank</td>
<td>is the transfer of authority and responsibility for public functions from</td>
<td>is the weakest form of decentralization – redistributes decision making</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>the central government to subordinate or quasi-independent government</td>
<td>authority and financial responsibilities among different levels of the national</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>organizations and/or private sector.</td>
<td>government.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNDP</td>
<td>concerned with the political as well as the economic (and administrative)</td>
<td>concerned mainly with the administrative rationale and to some extent with the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>arguments.</td>
<td>economic arguments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hellmut Wollman</td>
<td>powers and functions (as well as resources) are assigned to sub-national</td>
<td>administrative functions being done through the establishment of regional or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>bodies and actors that possess some political autonomy in their own right</td>
<td>local “field offices” → limited municipalisation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>→ full municipalisation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Decentralization n deconcentration defined cont’d …

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Dec. / Dev.</th>
<th>Deconcentration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Robertson Work</td>
<td>refers to the <strong>full transfer of responsibility, decision-making, resources and revenue generation</strong> to a local level public authority that is autonomous and fully independent of the devolving authority.</td>
<td>can be seen as the <strong>first step in a newly decentralizing government</strong> to improve service delivery.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hutchcroft</td>
<td>involves a much more <strong>extensive transfer</strong> of decision-making authority and responsibility <strong>to local government units</strong> (commonly regions, provinces, and/or municipalities).</td>
<td>involves an <strong>intra-organizational transfer</strong> of particular functions and workloads from the central government <strong>to its regional or local offices</strong>.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Administrative Decentralization

*(UNDP, 1999)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Unit to which Authority is transferred</th>
<th>Aspect of Governance transferred or shared</th>
<th>Generic name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Autonomous lower-level units</td>
<td>Devolution</td>
<td>Devolution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semi-autonomous lower-level units</td>
<td>Delegation</td>
<td>Delegation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-ordinate lower-level units or sub-units</td>
<td>Directing</td>
<td>Allocating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Tasking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Deconcentration</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Disagreement

- **Falleti** (2004): excludes *market* from *decentralization*. Decentralization is a set of *state reforms*; it does not include transfers of authority to non-state actors.

- **Collins & Green** (1994): *decentralization* transfers authority from *centre to periphery*; while *privatization* transfers from *public sector to private sector*.

- **Sherwood** (1969): *decentralization* describes an *intra-organizational pattern* of power relationships; while *devolution* describes an *inter-organizational pattern*.

- **Fesler** (1968): *deconcentration* is not a type of *decentralization* at all. It does not require any decentralization of power since it does not provide the opportunity to exercise substantial local discretion in decision-making.

- **Ribot** (2004): Decentralization comes in two primary forms: *democratic decentralization* (also called political decentralization or devolution) & *deconcentration* (also known as administrative decentralization).
5 Typology of Decentralization

(Smith, 2001)
2 Typology of Decentralization

(Ribot, 2004)
3 Typology of Decentralization
(Brilantes Jr., 2004)

- Central / National Government
  - Deconcentration
  - Debureaucratization / Market Decentralization
    - Devolution & Fiscal Decentralization
      - Field Offices (Central Branches)
      - Local Government
      - Private Sector / NGO / Civil Society
Two senses of decentralization meaning:

- In the *broader sense* → covers *all category*, as far as it deals with any transfer of authority from national govt either to subnational govt or non-govt actors.

- In the *narrow sense* → refers to *devolution* (transfer from public to sector; from central to local).
Decentralization is a “two-edged of sword” (1)

- Combating corruption (Arikan 2004, Fjeldstad 2004, Fisman 2002);
- Reduction in poverty (Braathen 2008, Crook 2001, UNDP 2000, Moore and Putzel 1999);
- Improving service delivery (WB 2001, Kolehmainen-Aitken 1999; McLean 1999, Dillinger 1994);
- Fortifying accountability (WB 2000);
- Preventing conflicts (Sasaoka 2007, Siegle and O’Mahony);
- Leading to significant improvement in the welfare of people at the local level (UNDP 2000);
- Empowering community (Brinkerhoff 2006).
Decentralization is a “two-edged of sword” (2)

- Soft-budget constraints, macro-economic instability, clientelism, and enlargement of bureaucracies (Cornelius 1999; Fox and Aranda 1996; Rodden 2000; Rodden and Wibbels 2002; Stein 1998, quoted from Falleti 2004);

- Increasing disparities; can jeopardize stability; may undermine efficiency (Prud’homme, 1995);

- The rise of decentralized corruption ruled by predatory local officials; the rise of money politics and the consolidation of political gangsterism (Hadiz, 2003).
Paradigm of Decentralization

(Smith, 2001)
Part 2
Centralization – Decentralization
Debate
Centralization – Decentralization

○ What is Centralization?
  ➔ the concentration of administrative power in the hands of a central authority, to which all inferior departments and local branches are directly responsible.

○ What is Decentralization?
  ➔ the weakening of the central authority and distribution of its functions among the branches or local administrative bodies.

Centralization – Decentralization

Which one is more accurate?
- Decentralization is the opposite of Centralization, OR:
- Decentralization is the opposite of Deconcentration ??

How do we explain the relationship between Centralization, Decentralization, and Deconcentration?
Centralization – Decentralization


Centralization V.S. Decentralization

2 variants of centralization:
• Concentration
• Deconcentration

Deconcentration V.S. Decentralization
Deconcentration – Decentralization

dichotomy OR continuum?

- Dichotomy $\rightarrow$ substitute principle.
- Continuum $\rightarrow$ complementary principle.
Deconcentration – Decentralization

- **Cheema & Rondinelli** (2007): *the relationship between deconcentration and devolution should not be seen as a dichotomy or as mutually exclusive, but rather can best be understood as a matrix of relationships.*

- **FAO** (2006): *deconcentration and decentralization, far from replacing each other, have always been considered as complimentary by political decision makers.*

- **Cummings** (1995): *the question of centralization or decentralization is simply a matter of proportion; it is a matter of finding the optimum degree for the particular concern.*

- **UNDP** (1999): *Decentralization is not an alternative to centralization. Both are needed.*
Continuum of Decon – Decent
Continuum of Decon – Decent

Fritzen & Lim (2006)

LOWER  | Degree of Systemic Change required | HIGHER

Administrative
- Program effectiveness
- Breaking through bureaucracy

Fiscal
- Efficiency
- Responsiveness to local preference

Political
- Promoting ethnic harmony
- Enabling democratization
- Empowering civil society

Market
- Bypassing the state
Equilibrium of centralization & decentralization forces

Source: Kauzya (no year)
Centralization / Decon – Decent Interface Model

**Model 1:** Deconcentration comes before decentralization.

**Model 2:** Deconcentration is accomplished alongside decentralization on its own field of authority.

**Model 3:** Deconcentration and decentralization is simultaneously run with varied degree on each side.
Future Possibility

- Brooke (1984): “Probably the most thorough account of the relationship between centralization and autonomy suggested that beliefs will swing towards decentralization unless this is discredited by a series of disasters.”
- Stoner & Freeman (1989): “The clear trend today is toward more decentralization.”
- FAO (2006): “decentralization appears to be the most appropriate policy of today.”
- Fleurke & Hulst (2006): “From the end of the seventies, disadvantages of the centralized administrative system became increasingly obvious.”
Country Trends

- **Myanmar** → is one of the world’s most centralized states, have expressed the need for reforms involving a degree of decentralization (Fritzen & Lim 2006).

- **Britain & France** → Central government has always been powerful in Britain, which, with France, is one of the most highly centralized, unitary states in the western world, but in the last few years the centre has further consolidated its power by increasing its legal, political, and financial control over local authorities (Goldsmith and Newton 1983).

- **Costa Rica** → centralist tradition in that country is among the strongest in Latin America. Efforts to move away from this tradition (decentralization) over the past 25 years has been done though it is unsuccessful (Ryan 2004).
Part 3
Unitary States vs. Federal States &
Asymmetric Decentralization
Unitary & Federal States in the World

- **Blue**: Unitary States
- **Green**: Federal States
- **Pink**: Special case: Somalia
## Unitary States vs. Federal States

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Unitary State</th>
<th>Federal State</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Encyclopedia</td>
<td>Country whose organs of state are governed as one single unit. The political power of government may well be transferred to lower levels, but central government retains the principal right to recall such delegated power.</td>
<td>A union comprising a number of partially self-governing states or regions united by a central (&quot;federal&quot;) government.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lijphart</td>
<td>Lower-level governments derive their statutory frameworks from parliamentary legislation or an executive order.</td>
<td>Lower levels of government have a constitutional guarantee of sovereignty over specific matters.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Spending by lower-level government remains the responsibility of the national government.</td>
<td>Responsibility for fiscal problems is distributed across different levels of government.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Unitary States vs. Federal States

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
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<th>Federal State</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hoessein</td>
<td>- Organized under and by central government (Strong 1951).&lt;br&gt;- Constitutional government power embedded at national level (Baradat 1979).&lt;br&gt;- Sub-national governments do not have <em>pouvoir constituant</em> (Kranenburg 1955).&lt;br&gt;- Sub-national governments are created by central government with authorities written in the regulation.&lt;br&gt;- Relationship between central and sub-national government represents sub-ordination mechanism (K.C.Wheare 1951).</td>
<td>- The state is organized based on the principle of <em>self rule</em> and <em>shared rule</em> (Elazar 1991).&lt;br&gt;- Both federal and state governments have <em>pouvoir constituant</em> (Kranenburg 1955).&lt;br&gt;- Relationship between central and sub-national government represents coordination and autonomy functions (K.C.Wheare 1951).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Unitary States vs. Federal States

- **Prasojo** → It is impossible to find any country which is absolutely Unitarian, or totally Federalist. The relationship between central and local government in both countries reflects a poly-centric movement instead of mono-centric. It dynamically moves from unitary continuum to federalist continuum, and the other way round.

- **Lidija Basta** → there is no completely unitary state. Every state is at least composed of municipalities as decentralized units. Accordingly, the major question arises as to how to differentiate among a unitary state practicing deconcentration, a decentralized unitary state and a federal state.
Unitary States vs. Federal States

A Constitutional Reform Schemata
(Buchanan, 1995)

- Fully autonomous separate states
- Competitive federalism
- Centralized unitary polity
Dynamics in the development of federal system over time (USA)

Boeckenfoerde, 2007
Unitary States vs. Federal States

Does Unitary States correspond to Centralization, while Federal System corresponds to Decentralization?

- Does a federal system facilitate decentralisation better than unitary systems?
- Is the success of decentralisation efforts greater in a federal rather than in a unitary system?
- Is federalism the logical next step for decentralizing unitary systems?
Unitary States vs. Federal States

- **Lijphart** (1984, in Work 2002): “Federalism is not a necessary condition for decentralization nor is decentralization a sufficient condition for federalism. We can have decentralization in absence of federalism, and federations, like unitary systems, can be classified as more or less decentralized (and even centralized).”

- **Work** (2002): “In practice, the line between decentralisation, federalism, unitary states and centralised systems becomes blurred. There is no broad-based generalisation that can be made about the correlation of federal/unitary states and decentralisation.”

- **Azfar** (1999): “A federal state is not necessarily more decentralized than a unitary government.”

- **King** (1982, in Baldi 1999): “There is no observed degree of centralization / decentralization which commonly and distinctly marks off federations from unitary states.”
Asymmetrical Decentralization

- Asymmetrical decentralization both in Unitary & Federal States is becoming more common.
- **Examples in Unitary system**: France (Corsica); Denmark (Greenland); Tanzania (Zanzibar); United Kingdom (Northern Ireland, Scotland, Wales); Indonesia (Aceh, Papua); Philippine (Muslim Mindanao, Cordillera); China; Japan; etc.
- **Federal system**: Belgium, Malaysia, Spain, Sudan.

![Diagram showing national level of government and sub-units with special competences]
Part 4
Countries Experiences
JAPAN

There are 1,817 municipalities in Japan, excluding Tokyo’s 23 special wards.
JAPAN

- Japan has adopted a two-tiered local administration system consisting of Prefectures and Municipalities.
- Consist of 47 Prefectures. But the number of municipality is decreasing:
  - Great **Meiji** Consolidation: Village & Town decreased from 71,314 to 15,820; 39 new Cities created.
  - Great **Showa**: Village & Town decreased from 9,582 to 2,916; Cities increased from 286 to 556.
  - Great **Heisei**: Village & Town decreased from 2,558 to 1,044; Cities increased from 671 to 777.
- Japan has changed from a rural to an industrial urbanized society.
JAPAN

- Degree of decentralization will be given based on 2 indicators: population size AND economic base (employment center).
- 3 category of Cities:
  - *Designated Cities* (17 till 2007): Cities having populations of 500,000 or more.
  - *Core Cities* or *Chukaku-shi* (37 till 2006): Cities having populations of at least 300,000 but less than 500,000 and land areas of over 100 sq km.
  - *Special Case Cities* or *Tokurei-shi* (39 till 2006): Cities having populations over 200,000.

- *Asymmetric Decentralization*: the bigger the size of population and the economic base of a city, the bigger authority will be transferred by central govt.

- *Eg*: *Designated cities* are authorized to administer the same level of governmental jurisdiction as *prefectures in 19 policy areas*.
CHINA

Central Government

- Special Administrative Region (2)
  - Autonomous region (5)
    - Autonomous prefectures
      - Autonomous counties
    - Towns
  - Cities
  - Counties
  - Towns
  - Villages

- Provinces (23)
- Municipalities directly under Central Govt (4)

Political Decentralization

Villages
CHINA

- The People's Congress of China is the supreme organ of state power. The Local People Congresses at different levels are the *state power organs at local level*.
- There are 4 municipalities *directly under the Central Government* (The State Council of China): Beijing, Chongqing, Shanghai, and Tianjin.
- The relationship between central – local govt. in China reflects a model of *principal – agent relations*.
- The above points indicate that central government has decisive role and intervention over local government.
Asymmetrical decentralization is to be given to:

- 2 Special Administrative Regions: Hongkong & Macau.
- 5 Autonomous Region: Guangxi, Inner Mongol, Ningxia, Xinjiang, and Xizang (Tibet).
- Special economic zones, and development zones → 4 economic zones were created in 1978 (Shenzhen, Zhuhai, Shantou and Xiamen in Hainan province).
- Open coastal cities, along East-cost line → In 1984, 14 coastal open cities were created.
- Inland cities, along the Yangtze River and bordering on Russia → these cities are delegated powers like those of the special economic zones.

Guangdong and Fujian Province were given extensive autonomy to develop their region economically.
FRANCE

NATION
- Executive
- Parliament
- Interior Ministry

REGION
- Executive
- Assembly
- Regional Prefecture

DEPARTMENTS
- Executive
- Council
- Prefecturate

Arrondissement
- Sub-Prefect

COMMUNE
- Executive
- Council

OTHER MINISTRIES
REGION LEVEL BRANCHES OF MINISTRIES
DEPARTMENTS LEVEL BRANCHES OF MINISTRIES/FIELD AGENCIES
LOCAL STAFF
FRANCE

- Consist of 22 Regions (excluding 4 overseas region); 100 Département; and 36,763 Commune.
- Asymmetrical decentralization is to be given to La Corse (Corsica) Region.
- In the political organization of France the so-called ‘Jacobean logic’ plays an important role. The logic is best summarized by the expression ‘the one and indivisible Republic’ which stands for a tendency towards centralization and uniformity.
- Although decentralization reforms 1982 had a strong regionalist element, they were described in terms of Jacobean logic: ‘the decentralization would promote the unity and indivisibility of the Republic’ (Wollmann 2000; Loughlin & Peters 1997; in Edwards & Hupe 2000).
In 2003-2004, 20 years after the great reform 1982, a new impetus was given to decentralization, still in the same spirit of consolidation and a search for balance between central and local powers.

Therefore, France is experiencing a dual delegation of power: on the one hand to local elected officials, which is decentralization, and on the other to the appointed representative in the region, which is deconcentration.

The Prefect is the agent of the state’s authority and the delegate of the prime minister and of each minister in the territory. The Prefect is responsible for national interests, administrative control and respect of the law.
INDONESIA

- Territorial width: 1,919,440 km² (15th widest in the world)
- Number of islands: 17,508 (6,000 of which are uninhabited)
- Cultural: 300 languages
## Local Government

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Govt</th>
<th>1999</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2009</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Province</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District / City</td>
<td>309</td>
<td>434</td>
<td>489</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Number of Village Govt.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Village Govt. (autonomous &amp; administrative)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>69.255</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>69.919</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>70.611</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>73.067</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:**
http://id.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jumlah_wilayah_administratif_di_Indonesia#cite_note-3
http://id.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pemekaran_daerah_di_Indonesia
Degree of centralization – decentralization in Indonesia (1903-2004)
7 rounds of decentralization in Indonesia (1903-2004)

1. 1903-1922 → Efficiency
2. 1922-1942 → Efficiency & Participation
3. 1945-1959 → Democracy
4. 1959-1974 → Efficiency & Stability
5. 1974-1998 → Efficiency
6. 1999-2004 → Democracy
7. 2004 on → Equilibrium Decentralization
INDONESIA

- Governor is the Head of autonomous region, which is decentralization, and *agent of the central government*, which is deconcentration. The Governor is responsible for implementing minimum standard of service and doing supervision to local govt on behalf of central govt.

- No deconcentration in local level (city and district).

- Asymmetrical decentralization is to be given to Jakarta (capital city), Aceh, and Papua province.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Iran</th>
<th>Yemen</th>
<th>Egypt</th>
<th>West Bank/Gaza</th>
<th>Tunisia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Central Government</strong></td>
<td>Ministry of Interior (MoI)</td>
<td>Ministry of Local Administration (MoLA)</td>
<td>Ministry of Local Development (MoLD)</td>
<td>Ministry of Local Government (MoLG)</td>
<td>Ministry of Interior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ministry</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Deconcentrated System</strong></td>
<td>30 provinces (Ostan)</td>
<td>22 governorates</td>
<td>26 governorates</td>
<td>16 governorates</td>
<td>24 Governorates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Province</strong></td>
<td>316 districts (Shahrestan)</td>
<td>332 districts</td>
<td>180 districts (markaz)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>District</strong></td>
<td>854 rural counties (Bakhsh)</td>
<td></td>
<td>213 cities (madina)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>County</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>74 districts (hay)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Appointed by</strong></td>
<td>Provincial governor (Ostandar) is appointed by the President</td>
<td>Governor is appointed by the President</td>
<td>Governor is appointed by the President</td>
<td>Governor is appointed by the President</td>
<td>Governor is appointed by the central government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>District Governor (Farmandar) is appointed by MoI</td>
<td>District governor is appointed by the Prime Minister</td>
<td>Chief of markaz is appointed by the Prime Minister</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rural county administrator (Bakhshidar) is appointed by the Ostandar</td>
<td></td>
<td>City and district chiefs are appointed by the minister of MoLD</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Governor is appointed by the governor</td>
<td>Village chief is appointed by the governor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Council</strong></td>
<td>Provincial Planning and Development Council (Chair: Ostandar, Line Ministry reps)</td>
<td>Governorate council directly elected by people</td>
<td>There are two councils at each local government level</td>
<td>Regional assembly is made up of members of the Parliament of the region, municipal mayors and other appointed members.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>District Planning Committee (Chair: Farmandar, Line Ministry reps)</td>
<td>District council directly elected by people</td>
<td>Elected People’s Council and centrally appointed local Executive Council</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Executive council is composed of representatives of central government ministries and departments.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Decentralized System

<table>
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<th>West Bank/Gaza</th>
<th>Tunisia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Urban Municipalities</strong></td>
<td>More than 1000 municipalities (Shahr)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>119 municipalities</td>
<td>262 municipalities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rural Municipalities</strong></td>
<td>More than 68,000 rural municipalities (Deh/Roosta)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>251 village councils</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Elected by</strong></td>
<td>Mayor of an urban municipality (Shahrdar) is jointly appointed by the MoI and City Council, which is directly elected by people.</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>49 joint service councils</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mayor of a rural municipality (Dehyar) is jointly appointed by the MoI and Village Council, which is directly elected by people.</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
<td>Municipal mayor and council members are directly elected by people.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Village councils and joint services committees are appointed by the MoLG.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
MENA Countries

- Most of the countries have adopted a two-tiered local govt system consisting of province and municipalities.
- Decentralization is applicable for municipal level, while province govt implement deconcentration functions. Head of municipal govt is elected by people, while head of province is appointed by central govt.
- There is no any record for asymmetrical decentralization practices.
Decentralization has multiple meaning, interpretation, and implementation in different country and different context. But there is common essence of decentralization, that is, strengthening local authorities through transfer of power and resources from the central govt.

It must never be forgotten that the purpose of decentralization is not to reinforce local powers or to preserve central power but exclusively to ensure the best service to the citizen, service that is closer, more comprehensible and less costly. By quoting Bernard: “Decentralization cannot be forced. It must be made alive for and by the inhabitants of the City of Mankind.”

Consequently, contrasting unitary and federal states, or contrasting decentralization and deconcentration, is no longer relevant. The more important thing to be noticed is that both unitary and federal states have equal opportunity to promote asymmetrical decentralization.

Asymmetrical decentralization constitutes a win-win solution to resolve any conflict between Unitarian supporters and separatist movement.
Thank you for kind attention
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