Strategy for Reducing the Costs of Tribal Conflicts: A Proposed Strategic Project

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Tribal conflicts are a significant problem with a profound impact on the social life in Iraqi society. These conflicts generate social and economic costs that burden individuals, communities, and various state institutions. These conflicts vary, ranging from disputes between individuals from different tribes to those involving entire groups, which escalate into tensions that result in the loss of many lives, injuries leading to permanent disabilities, as well as economic losses, displacement, job loss, and frequent persecution of individuals and their families.

Such conflicts create a state of chaos, security threats, and undermine the opportunities for a peaceful and stable life. They also endanger the prospects for building the country. The presence of these security threats deters investment and disrupts free enterprise, creating an environment unfavorable for business. Certain professions such as medicine, teaching, and public services are facing increased difficulty due to the risks associated with tribal disputes. Moreover, governmental service efforts also encounter the same obstacles when attempting to implement developmental projects. These conflicts have become a source of anxiety even for tribal leaders due to their frequency and the diversity of their sources.

Even issues that were traditionally outside the scope of tribal conflicts, such as social media activity, business transactions, financial speculation, and usurious lending, have become sources of conflict, with significant repercussions on the unity and life of the tribal community. The enormous costs of these disputes have placed individuals at risk, either within their tribal community or individually, and may pose a future threat to the state and its institutions if these disputes continue and diversify. The recurring visibility of these conflicts in Iraqi society adds a new burden to the already strained lives of ordinary Iraqis.

In light of these challenges, it is essential to devise solutions and strategic projects that address this social issue. Therefore, a proposal for a strategy aimed at reducing the impacts of tribal conflicts and their various consequences on the long-term security situation in society is presented. When developing plans and strategies for addressing tribal conflicts, it is essential to have an understanding of the Iraqi social situation, which can be clarified through an examination of key social indicators that support the implementation of these plans. The main indicators to consider are:

1. Understanding the nature of Iraqi society and its cultural specificity, including tribal affiliations, clans, and customary laws.

2. Identifying the region's most prone to tribal conflicts and understanding the reasons for their persistence.

3. Recognizing the true causes that drive individuals to rely on tribal solutions to resolve disputes.

4. Identifying the social and criminal issues that lead tribes to impose harsh penalties and financial demands.

5. Understanding the common ground between customary laws, religious doctrine, and formal legal systems.

6. Assigning a team of researchers to measure these indicators through interviews and carefully prepared surveys that cover all regions where tribal conflicts are likely to occur.

7. Creating a database for specialists that tracks the recurrence of conflicts, their instigators, and the methods used to resolve these disputes.

8. Identifying the tribal entities that resist or oppose official intervention in resolving tribal conflicts, and understanding their reasons for doing so.

Objectives:

1.   Reduce tribal conflicts in Iraqi cities, particularly in Baghdad.

2.   Decrease the social and economic costs borne by Iraqi individuals, tribes, and state institutions.

3.   Maintain security, stability, and social peace in Iraqi cities.

4.   Provide a secure environment for work and investment in Iraqi cities.

5.   Ensure the participation of all institutions in finding effective solutions and contributing as supportive and guiding entities.

Mechanisms:

First: Legislative Aspects

The legislative aspect should focus on enacting laws and regulations that govern various aspects of life in the country, ensuring the proper functioning of the Iraqi social and security framework. A set of laws should be enacted to guide the resolution of tribal conflicts:

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مركز الفيض العلمي
لاستطلاع الرأي
والدراسات المجتمعية

1. Amend certain criminal laws to be stricter in punishing those who commit assaults on individuals or state employees such as doctors, teachers, and service personnel, incorporating compensation principles into judicial decisions that align with the social context of the parties involved. Also, laws should be enacted to limit the possession of weapons and regulate the waiver of personal rights in certain disputes to ensure that judicial penalties are effective and impactful in curbing crime.

2. Enact a law that grants the Directorate of Tribal Affairs broader authority to work with Iraqi tribes, empowering it as a general directorate capable of performing its tasks effectively.

3. Enact a law restricting the importation and use of vehicles such as motorcycles, tuk-tuks, and other three-wheeled vehicles in public areas of Baghdad, allowing them only in designated inner-city regions and ensuring their numbers align with the city's infrastructure capacity.

4. Legislate laws that criminalize the continuous display of tribal military symbols on social media, with severe penalties for individuals who post content that exacerbates tribal conflicts through insults and slander.

Second: Executive Aspects

1. Develop a list of criminal cases where tribal customs do not apply, in agreement with tribal leaders and the Ministry of Interior. These cases should include traffic accidents, assaults on institutions, commercial disputes, thefts, certain ethical issues, and terrorism-related offenses, where legal penalties are harsher than tribal penalties.

2. Foster collaboration between various security agencies in cases of tribal conflicts, focusing on arresting those responsible for instigating conflicts to calm the parties involved and undermine the escalation of the dispute.

3. Establish direct communication lines between the Tribal Police Directorate, other security bodies, and tribal leaders to report tribal conflict cases.

4. Ban the driving of motorcycles and other three-wheeled vehicles by minors or those under 18 without a driving license, with penalties ranging from fines to vehicle confiscation for violators.

5. Enforce strict regulations on weapons, limiting their use to personal residences and prohibiting public carrying. Serious penalties should be imposed on violators.

6. Monitor and regulate unauthorized cafés and recreational venues that serve as breeding grounds for crime and juvenile delinquency.

7. Create job opportunities for youth and reduce poverty in urban areas.

8. Expand residential areas in Baghdad to alleviate overcrowding and provide essential services and recreational spaces for Iraqi families and youth.

9. Monitor and penalize mercenaries who incite division and conflict between tribes, issuing legal warnings through the Tribal Affairs Directorate in the Ministry of Interior.

Third: Tribal Aspects

1. Organize conferences and seminars among Iraqi tribal leaders, in coordination with the Ministry of Interior and other security agencies, to establish common ground among tribes, while leaving internal tribal matters to be handled by individual tribes.

2. Identify and address inappropriate individuals within tribes who claim leadership or are hired tribal leaders by the Ministry of Interior to ensure that only legitimate tribal leaders are involved in dispute resolution.

3. Prevent conflict instigators and armed individuals from engaging in irresponsible actions, empowering the tribal leader to make decisions during disputes with other tribes.

4. Periodically inform tribal leaders of new instructions and decisions related to tribal conflicts.

5. Expel malicious individuals from the tribe and refuse to provide them with tribal protection when they violate the rights of other tribes.

6. Isolate cases that financially and socially burden tribes from tribal demands, placing them under the jurisdiction of state courts.

Fourth: Religious Aspects

1. Highlight religious rulings related to tribal conflicts through:

A. Presenting religious rulings on criminal cases during public sermons and religious gatherings.

B. Creating media programs that focus on the differences between religious law and tribal customs.

C. Strengthening communication between religious leaders and tribal leaders to discuss tribal conflict issues.

D. Distributing publications on religious rulings related to tribal disputes.

Fifth: Media Aspects

1. Increase media programs that facilitate dialogue between tribal figures and government officials to discuss tribal issues.

2. Produce dramatic media content focusing on tribal disputes and the negative aspects of some tribal practices that conflict with modern society.

3. Support intellectual publications and studies addressing tribal issues and their challenges.

4. Direct news programs to cover reports on tribal conflict victims and generate local public opinion that opposes tribal disputes.

5. Highlight the social and economic costs of tribal conflicts that impact individuals, communities, and state institutions in the media.