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Summary of Research Findings

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Qualitative Research Study
Assessment of Public Perceptions towards Decentralization

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Executive Summary

This August, 2017, Jordan will conduct both municipal and governorate council elections. The local 'governorate council' elections are held for the first time, according to the 2015 Law on Decentralization. The objectives of the 2015 Decentralization Law are to improve investment environments in the governorates, sustain and develop the state's assets and resources, provide better basic services to citizens and implement state polices. At the same time, the decentralization process hopes to promote the engagement of Jordanians in political and public life, and to encourage citizens' involvement in the local decision-making process with the goal of better addressing the challenges facing their governorates.

The objective of this qualitative research study was to establish the problems and priorities currently facing Jordanians in their governorates, to assist the elected bodies with the prioritization of problems and/or solutions, as well as to assess the general attitudes and outlooks towards the decentralization process. This study was also designed to gauge citizens' level of participation in local governance, perceived priorities for socioeconomic development, and to identify the role of CSOs assisting local governance and promoting awareness, civic responsibility, and participation in public life.

Forty-eight (48) focus groups across all twelve governorates were conducted to collect relevant data. A total of 338 individuals, males and females, participated in the focus groups in the age brackets 18-34.

These young adults were asked to identify what they thought to be the primary challenges facing Jordan on three distinct levels: national, governorate, and neighborhoods. Across all three levels, study participants typically listed issues such as weak public transportation, education, and health systems, corruption and 'wasta,' and refugees' impact on the job market and eroding social cohesion. Depending on the scale – national, governorate, local – respondents were able to provide more specific concerns relevant to their individual lives. These concerns were subsequently categorized into three general classifications: infrastructure, politics and governance and other livelihood issues. Finally, participants overwhelmingly identified a growing sense of discontent, lack of trust, unequal opportunity and general apathy among Jordan's youth.

Study participants, when asked, identified several types of resources available in Jordan including: green energy sources, agriculture and tourism, natural resources, and – most importantly – human resources. There was a consensus that these resources were either inefficiently managed or poorly exploited. Respondents identified several challenges to the effective utilization of Jordan's resources mainly corruption and 'wasta,' limited financial capital for investment, and a general lack of government support for entrepreneurship or youth as a whole.

Few participants had positive perception of their own municipal bodies. Most respondents, however, made reference (in varying degrees of detail) to the inefficient, untimely, or altogether nonexistent municipal services or municipal responsiveness to citizens' requests or concerns. Several mentions of the provision of services being entirely dependent on 'wasta' or the payment of bribes were made. With the exception of 'safety and security,' municipal services were rated below acceptable levels. Similarly, with the exception of 'police stations,' municipal institutions and community leadership were rated below acceptable levels. Finally, study participants referenced the 'development gap' they perceive between Amman, which receives the majority of the economic rewards, and other governorates, particularly the rural governorates in the South.

There is a general lack of awareness of the roles and duties of municipalities, but a more pronounced level of knowledge and awareness towards what the newly elected governorate councils are all about, including the appointed 'executive councils.' Focus group participants similarly, and due to lack of political awareness, have a misconception of the role of Parliament and the mandate of MPs. Constituents are thus holding the wrong expectations from their elected authorities that subsequently lead them to harboring negative perceptions of the entire system. Youth are likely going to the polls in August of 2017 with little or no understanding of the mandate of the councils they are voting for.

NGOs and CSOs were generally acknowledged as working in many regions across Jordan, though only a select few of these organizations actually garnered praise for their impact on local communities. In fact, a few foreign NGOs concerned with humanitarian aid enjoyed a more positive reputation while several local CSOs were accused of corruption, profiteering, and exclusion. Only a few of the study participants could envision NGOs or CSOs being an active participant in the decentralization process, but did mention their potential to provide volunteers and spread awareness.

While a fair number of participants had learned about decentralization in university or in community workshops, the majority of respondents had a limited understanding of the political process and the mandates of new institutional bodies such as the governorate or executive councils. Youth expectations for decentralization were generally split between support and skepticism. Support for decentralization included hopes that the process would improve: investment in local resources, provision of infrastructural services, and elected officials' relationships with their constituents. On the other hand, respondents voiced several reservations with decentralization including: the limited amount of time in which decentralization can be explained to the people prior to the elections, the possible increase in cost on government operations, the fear of 'tribal manipulation' and the 'general culture of corruption.'

More specifically, focus group participants provided a more detailed insight into the 'electoral culture' and what they perceive their participation in the political process could potentially look like. Some of the respondents believe voting is a national duty and that participating in the democratic process through voting can lead to 'progresses' and a form of 'accountability.' On the other hand, a significant proportion of participants focused on how their vote is ultimately 'ineffective' and that the decision to vote may in fact be 'compulsory' and not a 'matter of choice.' Elaborating, many of the youth explained that the electoral culture is tribally oriented. Tribes wield substantial political power and can pressure their members into voting for their nominated candidates. Respondents also explained that 'vote-buying' is a prevalent practice across the Kingdom and that, for many citizens facing severe economic hardship, selling their vote to a political candidate can be a very attractive option. Finally, participants were united in their concern that, no matter the changes to Jordan's political processes, youth would continue to be marginalized. The general sense is that those who win elections are 'very powerful and wealthy,' that positions in the government are inherited or given as a 'reward,' and that most, if not all, governing or tribal leaders are out of touch with the concerns of Jordan's youth. This study has also uncovered – and for the first time – a strong level of frustration and open criticism towards their own tribal leadership, and the 'tribal influence' in general on the democratic process in the Kingdom.

Finally, despite the reservations about 'corruption and manipulation' of the electoral culture, youth were still willing to engage in the elections process in areas of monitoring, reporting illegal actions such as vote-buying, counting votes, and participating in awareness-raising campaigns.

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Section 1. Research Background, Purpose and Objectives

1.1 Project Background, Objectives and Scope

The *Qualitative Assessment of Public Perceptions Towards Decentralization* project seeks to provide USAID CIS and its partner civil society organizations (CSOs) with information based on field research that will inform decentralization efforts across Jordan. An understanding of how youth (aged 18-35) in all 12 governorates in Jordan perceive decentralization, as well as an understanding of local community priorities for social and economic development and their visions for their governorates, is key to developing relevant projects and procedures for implementing the decentralization process. In addition, gauging anticipated voter and electoral participation is an indicator of confidence in the decentralization process. Finally, this research seeks to measure attitudes towards the role of CSOs in local governance processes, allowing for a better understanding of how CSOs can partake in the decentralization process and the strengths and weaknesses of their current participation.

The research outcomes will inform a nationwide awareness raising campaign on decentralization and capacity building programs for CSOs in governorates. Public awareness will increase informed civic engagement in the decentralization process, hopefully leading to its successful implementation. The overall objective of the research is to capture feedback from Jordanians (M/F aged 18-35, and people with disabilities) as follows:

- Attitudes towards decentralization;
- Understanding of decentralization and the impact on their daily lives;
- Likelihood to participate in local governance processes and elections (voting or running for office);
- Priorities for local social and economic development (needs, resources, investment opportunities, etc.);
- Views on the role of CSOs in local governance and advancing civic participation in public life.

Civil society organizations are key to effective decentralization. As the purpose of decentralization is to "devolve" power from central government and provide more control to local authorities, decentralization theoretically allows for more transparency and accountability at the local level. It also implies trust in locally elected authorities to manage local political and economic affairs.[1] In fact, "local governance is viewed as the primary vehicle for effecting governance at all levels because it empowers local actors to steer their own development process and to design programs which reflect local moods, interests and capabilities of the people whose lives are directly affected."[2]

CSOs can work as pressure groups that can both collaborate with government and work as independent monitors of government activity. CSOs, "being specific purpose and often specialized organizations…, are positioned to augment governments' capacity to develop people-tested policies, design and formulate

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[1] Center for Comparative and International Studies. (2007). CIS Working Paper: The Role of Civil Society in Decentralization and Alleviating Poverty. [Online] CIS. https://www.ethz.ch/content/dam/ethz/special-interest/gess/cis/cis-dam/CIS_DAM_2015/WorkingPapers/WP_2007/2007_WP29_Egli_Z%C3%BCrcher.pdf

[2] Grant, Sheila. (January-June 2000). Role of Civil Society CBOs/NGOs in Decentralized Governance. [Online] Asian Review of Public Administration, Vol. XII, No. 1. http://workspace.unpan.org/sites/Internet/stellent/ARPA-JanJun2000-Grant.pdf

realistic programs and actions and implement development activities."3 Additionally, decentralization implies grassroots participation, whose mobilization in Jordan tends to be through CSOs and community activists. CSOs can also be seen as agents of decentralization, implementing projects on the ground that empower and educate communities to participate in a changing Jordanian political system. This leads to long-term, sustainable change that is specifically targeted to the community and takes into account contextual issues that are social, political, economic, environmental, and cultural.

1.2 Research Methodology

The methodology utilized during the course of this research study is the collection of information via Focus Groups (FG) through all 12 governorates across Jordan, for a total of at least 48 focus groups (4 per governorate).

1.2.1 Subjects of the Research

Forty-eight (48) focus groups were conducted. The main stakeholders involved in the research study are Jordanian youth, representing all 12 governorates in Jordan.

		Males		Females		Total
		Age		Age		
	Governorate	18-25	26-35	18-25	26-35	
Northern Governorates	Irbid	1	1	1	1	4
	Jerash	1	1	1	1	4
	Ajloun	1	1	1	1	4
	Mafraq	1	1	1	1	4
Central Governorates	Madaba	1	1	1	1	4
	Amman	1	1	1	1	4
	Zarqa	1	1	1	1	4
	Balqa	1	1	1	1	4
Southern Governorates	Ma'an	1	1	1	1	4
	Karak	1	1	1	1	4
	Tafileh	1	1	1	1	4
	Aqaba	1	1	1	1	4
	Total	12	12	12	12	**48**

Figure 1. Focus Group Segmentation

3 Abdalah, Cornelius. (1-2 July 2003). The Role of Civil Society In Decentralized Governance For Poverty Reduction: The Experience In West Africa. [Online] UNDESA Workshop On Poverty Alleviation And Social Inclusion. http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/un/unpan011028.pdf

5- Qualitative Research- Perceptions towards Decentralization (As of June 28, 2017)

1.2.2 Data Collection Methods & Tools

Qualitative research explores attitudes; it also investigates probes, gauges spontaneous reactions, and generates lists of parameters. The following qualitative methodology was used for data collection: Focus Group Sessions (informal roundtable discussions), details outlined below. The focus groups were conducted during April, 2017.

Discussion Guide4

A customized Discussion Guide was used to facilitate all 48 Focus Groups that were conducted; designed based on the brief provided by **USAID CIS**. The discussions were held in Arabic. This discussion guide can be found in Annex A of this report. Relevant probes were introduced according to respondent segment.

Individual Assessment Sheets5

A customized Individual Assessment Sheet was utilized during all focus groups. Respondents were asked to revert to the sheets at specific times during the discussion in order to voice their opinions individually before group discussions. A copy of this methodology tool is available as part of the discussion guide in Annex B of this report.

Screening and Recruitment of Participants6

USAID CIS provided the sample size and segmentation of the focus groups. **Analyseize** recruited research participants through an in-depth screening process. A copy of the screening questionnaire can be found in Annex C of this report.

Sample Size

Forty-eight focus groups were held in April 2017. Each focus group was formed of approximately 8 respondents.

Duration of the Focus Groups

The duration of the focus groups was around 2 hours each.

Focus Group Session Recordings

Each focus group was recorded on Audio and video recording, upon signed consent by all focus group participants The information contained in the recordings is strictly confidential and intended only for transcribing purposes done by **Analyseize**. Any dissemination, distribution or copying of the recordings is strictly prohibited.

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4 *The final discussion guide utilized can be found in Annex A.*
5 *The final self-assessment tool utilized can be found as part of the discussion guide in Annex D.*
6 *The final screening questionnaire utilized can be found in Annex B.*
6- Qualitative Research- Perceptions towards Decentralization (As of June 28, 2017)

1.3 Research Participants- Demographic Information

338 Jordanian youth participated in the focus groups. The following section outlines some insights into the focus group participants:

South	By Age:	53 (18-24)	54 (25-35
	By Gender:	52% Male	48% Female
	By Governorate:	27% Karak 25% Ma'an 24% Tafileh 23% Aqaba	
	Total Sample:	**107**	

North	By Age:	61 (18-24)	54 (25-35
	By Gender:	51% Male	49% Female
	By Governorate:	22% Irbid 27% Ajloun 24% Jerash 27% Mafraq	
	Total Sample:	**115**	

Center	By Age:	48 (18-24)	52 (25-35
	By Gender:	50% Male	50% Female
	By Governorate:	27% Amman 25% Zarqa 23% Balqa 25% Madaba	
	Total Sample:	**116**	

Figure 2. Participant Demographics

The figures, infographics, and charts outlined in the following report are created by Analyseize Research based on the research findings, and only represent the views of the participants who took part in the focus group sessions. Quantifiable elements found in the report were made possible given the use of an individual assessment tool. These findings must be examined in a qualitative context. Relevant participant quotes/verbatim have been listed in blue italic font. *For more verbatim, refer to Annex E of the report.*

The following section aims at exploring and uncovering perceptions concerning living in Jordan. To properly depict these perceptions of youth across the Kingdom, several questions were included. These questions included youth identifying problems facing Jordan ranging from the national to the governorate levels to the more narrow priorities of municipalities. In addition to perceived problems and challenges facing Jordan today, respondents were asked to identify Jordan's existing resources, as well as to share insights on whether the resources were being maximized to best serve the interests of the Kingdom. The section also sheds light on perceptions related to community respect, tolerance, social cohesion, and coexistence amongst Jordanians and those of other nationalities residing within the same neighborhood or community.

In addition to the above, perceptions related to the municipality, means of communication with the municipality, as well as the overall satisfaction with the services received were discussed. This section also sheds light on the level of awareness related to the roles and duties of the municipalities, the governorate councils, and the executive councils.

The final section involves perceptions related to CSOs working in the governorates, including perceived strengths and weaknesses of these CSOs. Respondents were also asked to share what they perceive as the role of CSOs in the decentralization process.

Although slight differences were noted in perceptions of youth across each governorate/region, there was overall consistency of findings across groups. To begin with, there was unanimous agreement that the most important challenges facing Jordan are unemployment, poverty, and corruption, and, relatedly, low wages and rising cost of living. In addition, youth voiced their frustration with injustice and inequality of opportunities. Other issues receiving consensus across all governorates involved restricted mobility and weakness in education systems. Specifically, youth discussed the quality and unreliability of the public transportation network, as well as the lack of support for youth education and essential recreational facilities.

With regards to municipal services, there was evident dissatisfaction with the quality of services. Most common, this dissatisfaction involved waste management and garbage collection. Moreover, most youth feel that without the use of Wasta, it is difficult to get any problems solved at the municipal level.

Overall youth do not feel important or well looked after. Instead, most youth feel neglected by authorities, including MPs, who the youth describe as 'selfish,' 'unhelpful,' and 'opportunists' who pretend to care only during their campaign, and who become unavailable and unreachable once elected into the Parliament.

2.1 Problems Facing Jordan

When looking at the lives of Jordanian youth, research findings identify three main areas of stress/burden facing most Jordanians today: 1) economic hardship, 2) social stressors, and 3) basic service related burdens. The following figure includes the three most pressing problems facing Jordanian youth today:

| Poor quality Infrastructure and services: garbage collection, public transportation, health, and education | Corruption, violence, and increased drug abuse. | Lack of job opportunities and justice and equality. |

Figure 3. Perceptions/ Most Pressing Problems Facing Jordan

2.1.1 Problems facing Jordan

Unemployment and poverty were mentioned by all participants as the key problems that exist in Jordan. There were evident trends amongst all 12 governorates who shared the major concern of *economic hardship* they face, which were first and foremost among their list of grievances. Low wages, rising rent rates, rising cost of education, lack of employment opportunities, job security, and general deterioration of the economic situation in Jordan were worrisome.

Having a highly educated population faced with low paying professional jobs has led to much frustration among Jordanians. Purchasing power is very low and the gap between the aspirations of the average Jordanian and what they can afford is seemingly unbridgeable.

All youth spoke about *corruption* within the community – in terms of both financial corruption and administrative corruption – as being a significant issues in Jordan. Corruption is perceived as the single main problem facing Jordan, a problem that impacts most other aspects the Kingdom faces. *Wasta* was mentioned frequently during all focus groups; while many acknowledged the importance of Wasta, they also saw that same necessity as a problem. Additionally, many job opportunities, as well as autonomy in the social sphere, are limited by the heavy influence of Wasta that exists in the country, which fosters a sense of injustice amongst youth.

While many concerns related to the lack of (or the inadequate quality of) **services** in Jordan were shared, mobility (the ability to physically move around) was by far the most pressing and important to youth. Participants also shared concerns regarding the inequality between rich and poor, urban and rural, and even Amman and the rest of the country in terms of development. Of particular importance was **transportation**, both in terms of the weak public transportation system and the increasing congestion of public transportation. Interestingly, while other governorates praised the transport system in Amman, Ammanis themselves seem to be rather unhappy with the quality of transportation in their city. Inadequate transportation is a big burden and a daily stressor to youth around Jordan. Heavy traffic, lawlessness, the unethical conduct of yellow cab drivers and bus drivers who overload their bus for the sake of earning extra money were all areas that were mentioned throughout most focus group discussions. Finally, weak transportation systems were strongly linked to limited educational and employment opportunities. Respondents noted that physical and infrastructural limitations on their mobility had tangible effects on their ability to seek education or employment.

Another issue mentioned throughout most focus groups related to the impact of hosting **Syrian refugees** in Jordan. Jordanian youth feel that hosting so many refugees is an impediment to seeking jobs, to the rising prices of rent and other living expenses, and has increased congestion on public roads. Many participants in Mafraq specifically complained about rising crime rates resulting from hosting Syrians within their community. While respondents from Southern governorates shared similar concerns related to the refugee crisis, their concerns were voiced less intensely compared to Northern and Central governorates.

Many other challenges facing Jordan were addressed, including the lack of recreational facilities for youth as well as the lack of support for youth talents. Several youth also complained about rising violence amongst citizens.

Widespread **drug** and **alcohol** usage was a major concern to youth across all governorates. This included both the rising number of drug dealers and users, as well as the rising number of drunks. Most youth correlated the widespread drug and alcohol usage to their concern that youth are experiencing intense boredom and having a lot of unconstructive free time.

2.1.2 Problems facing Governorates

Problems facing youth on the governorate level involve: poverty, corruption, and unemployment. The lack of or a weak private sector was emphasized throughout all sessions. Many youth complained about the inequality of distribution of investments amongst governorates in Jordan. This was deemed as the reason behind the lack of employment opportunities, a major cause of frustration for youth nationwide. A minority of participants also complained about the centralization of public services and the lack of sufficient branches of governmental institutions.

Public **transportation** is one of the main problems facing youth across the Kingdom. The public transportation system was again described as weak, insufficient, and unorganized. The congestion in public busses poses a major issue for youth, a topic they expressed disdain over. Public services including garbage collection are other issues that the youth expressed significant concern over.

Weak *healthcare* was a concern for some of the Northern governorates, but was primarily a concern for youth from Southern governorates. These issues included an inadequate number of doctors and ambulances in healthcare centers and the absence of specialty doctors in some governorates. This forces many to drive to other cities, or in some cases, all the way to Amman to get the healthcare they need.

Another major problem involved *education*, in terms of the quality of education and curriculum as well as the infrastructure and general educational environment. Many youth complained that education is hindered by congested classrooms and teachers' lack of commitment and qualifications. One concern that was mentioned throughout almost all focus groups was that children leave school after their first break and spend their days on the streets. According to youth, teachers and principals are negligent and there is no clear system in place to report students who leave during school hours.

Increase in violence and drug and alcohol use were also serious concerns shared by the majority of youth. Many of them felt that the increased use of drugs and alcohol is the direct result of a lack of purpose and, more specifically, a lack of places and activities that youth can spend their free time in. Finally, the Syrian refugee crisis has impacted most governorates and dramatically impacting the demographic mix within communities. The increased influx of Syrian refugees is also perceived as having a direct impact on rising rent as well as fewer job opportunities. Youth explain that, given their situation, Syrians are willing to accept jobs with weaker conditions for less pay and thus makes them more competitive job applicants.

The following table outlines the most pressing problems facing youth, as mentioned by the majority of participants, and listed by governorate. The list excludes lack of job opportunities, Wasta, nepotism, and corruption, as they were most pressing and shared issues mentioned throughout all focus groups.

Central Governorates	AMMAN	• Poor public transportation • Lack of awareness and culture among the youth
	Balqa	• Stereotyping and discrimination against them (Salti's) regarding issues of violent extremism and radicalism
	Madaba	• Poor public transportation • Medical services (lack of specialized doctors, equipment or qualified staff) • Poor infrastructure (maintenance, roads, sewage/garbage, lighting) • Lack of leisure facilities & public parks • Widespread drug and alcohol use • Insufficient branding of tourist attractions
	Zarqa	• Weak security and law enforcement; Lack of respect for rule of law • Lack of social cohesion • Domestic violence • Widespread drug and alcohol use • Radicalization and extremism • Lack of leisure facilities & public parks • Lack of political engagement

Figure 4. Most Prominent Problems/ As perceived by Central Governorates

Northern Governorates	Ajloun	- Poor public transportation - Medical services (lack of specialized doctors, equipment or qualified staff) - Quality of education (unqualified teachers, inadequate facilities, weak curriculum) - Lack of leisure facilities & public parks - Lack of political engagement
	Mafraq	- Medical services (lack of specialized doctors, equipment or qualified staff) - Quality of education (unqualified teachers, inadequate facilities, weak curriculum) - Culture of shame ثقافة العيب - Widespread drug and alcohol use
	Jerash	- Widespread drug and alcohol use - Quality of education (unqualified teachers, inadequate facilities, weak curriculum) - Poor infrastructure (maintenance, roads, sewage/garbage, lighting)
	Irbid	- Poor public transportation - Poor infrastructure (maintenance, roads, sewage/garbage, lighting) - Lack of coordination between municipality and other local authorities

Figure 5. Most Prominent Problems/ As perceived by Northern Governorates

Southern Governorates	Karak	- Poor public transportation - Domestic violence - Poor infrastructure (maintenance, roads, sewage/garbage, lighting) - Quality of education (unqualified teachers, inadequate facilities, weak curriculum)
	Aqaba	- Poor public transportation - Medical services (lack of specialized doctors, equipment or qualified staff) - Widespread drug and alcohol use - Overcrowded with tourists from Amman and other cities
	Ma'an	- Lack of government/government official accountability - Widespread drug and alcohol use - Sexual harassment - Poor infrastructure (maintenance, roads, sewage/garbage, lighting) - Lack of leisure facilities & public parks - Quality of education (unqualified teachers, inadequate facilities, weak curriculum)
	Tafileh	- Poor public transportation - Insufficient branding of tourist attractions - Widespread drug and alcohol use* *Families and relatives are willing to remain silent if they are aware of a drug addict, alcoholic, or a dealer among them for the sake of the family's honor and reputation

Figure 6. Most Prominent Problems/ As perceived by Southern Governorates

2.1.3 Problems in the Neighborhood

Public *transportation* was again mentioned as a key challenge faced at the local neighborhood level, especially for those residing far from the city center and in more remote areas. Participants mentioned that when public transportation does not reach their residential areas, it significantly impacts their mobility, whether it be going to university, work, attending training programs, or even volunteering.

Municipal services such as garbage collection, cleanliness of public spaces, and general infrastructure were mentioned as major problems facing youth today. Many stated that their neighborhoods lack basic services – including both the lack of street lighting and that it can often take weeks to months to repair or replace street lights. The vast majority of focus groups also complained about stray dogs, while some participants mentioned the lack of bakeries and supermarkets in their neighborhoods as a frequent problem.

The recruitment process for the focus groups took into account inviting youth from remote areas – not just from central cities. Many of those residing in remote areas suggested that they lack basic services, including access to healthcare, education, and a widespread lack of banks and ATMs. In terms of healthcare at the local level, participants reiterated that the primary issues involved lack of qualified doctors, specialty doctors, and the lack of certain types of medication.

Many expressed concern that local security is not as strong as it used to be in the past and that, combined with rising drug and alcohol use, they feel less secure. This concern was especially shared by female participants, but we did hear of young boys from Rusaifeh who stated that they do not like to leave home after sunset to avoid getting into any trouble on the streets. Females in particular complained about GBV on the streets and being harassed by thugs and drug addicts. In some groups, participants blamed the lack of security and increase in crime rate on the influx of Syrian refugees. Finally, some participants also mentioned that racism as well as violent extremism are also on the rise amongst youth within their communities.

2.1.3.1 Social Cohesion

The following section identifies perceptions of community respect, friendships and social relationships including those with non-Jordanians and neighbors, as well as tribal and family support. A significant number of participants agreed that they all have friends, either from school, neighborhood, relatives, or through work. They also stated that some of them have friends of other nationalities.

	Total	%		
		South	Center	North
Yes	97%	98%	96%	97%
No	3%	2%	4%	3%

Figure 7. Do you have friends?

Most participants felt that family and community ties are not as strong as they used to be in the past; however, the majority agreed that social cohesion is strong with their communities. Social cohesion was particularly strong in the Northern and Southern governorates. It seems that smaller communities in villages and rural areas have stronger linkages between members within the family and within the neighborhood. This was most strongly described by those who live in such communities, where their entire neighborhood is predominantly inhibited by members of the same tribe. The issue of tribal support was also mentioned as support for community and family relations. Tribal support is often achieved through what is referred to as a 'family fund,' controlled and managed by a trusted member of the tribe.

	Total	%		
		South	Center	North
Yes	89%	88%	85%	94%
No	11%	12%	15%	5%
No Answer				1%

Figure 8. Do you feel people in your neighborhood respect each other?

- Youth from **Mafraq** agreed that tribes in Mafraq are their best support system, stating that the police cannot enter certain areas in Mafraq that are completely run by the tribes.
- In **Irbid**, youth agreed that villages and remote areas enjoy a stronger sense of community. It was noted that bigger cities are losing their community and family bonds due to the fast paced lives they lead.
- Youth from **Madaba** mentioned the strength of relations between Christians and Muslims. They also spoke about how youth in Madaba step up and help their community during emergencies.
- **Balqa** resident females mentioned that although there are good social connections, there is a lot of jealousy and bad intentions amongst members of the community.
- **Amman** residents had a different view from other governorates; they believe that relations between members of the community and within the family are not strong and that they witness conflict and friction – often over minor issues. They also spoke of regressing levels of tolerance. Only a small minority of females in Amman thought that community relations were good.
- **Tafileh** residents agreed that communities enjoy very strong bonds – something they are proud of.

When asked about whether their neighbors are all Jordanians, all participants mentioned that they had at least some non-Jordanian neighbors, largely Syrians, followed by Egyptians, Iraqis and Palestinians. It is evident that Syrian refugees are living in all governorates and affecting the Kingdom on different levels. Some governorates, such as Karak, Aqaba and Amman mentioned that they also have Saudi and Bangladeshi neighbors. Youth in Amman mentioned a wide range of foreign neighbors ranging from Yemeni, Sudanese, Filipino, Indian, to Chinese. Ajloun and Tafileh males, in particular, mentioned that Syrians do not like to mingle with Jordanians and that there is evident dislike between Jordanians and Syrians. Mafraq resident males stated that they feel that "living in Mafraq is like living in a jail" due to the large numbers of Syrians living there.

When it comes to tolerance, the vast majority of participants mentioned that there is tolerance amongst and between the different communities. While Irbid residents feel that there is tolerance in Irbid, some females admitted that there are some Shia members of their community and that there is not much tolerance towards them. In addition, some of the older females mentioned that while they are tolerant, they refuse to tolerate ISIS or Jews. Some Ajloun and Mafraq participants mentioned that hosting Syrian refugees within their communities has resulted in increased robberies and a host of other social problems. Residents of both Amman and Aqaba specifically feel that there is not much tolerance within residents of both governorates.

2.1.4 Problems Youth Face/ By Governorate

The following section outlines the most pressing problems facing youth, listed by governorate.

AMMAN	**Infrastructure**: • Poor infrastructure (maintenance, roads, sewage/garbage, lighting) • Lack of coordination between municipal authorities and other service providers • Lack or shortage of water and electricity • Lack of pedestrian bridges **Basic Services:** • Long waiting time at Government medical facilities • Poor education (unqualified teachers, inadequate facilities, outdated/weak curriculum) • Insufficient number of schools • Public schools lack qualified staff • Stray dogs in Wadi el Seer and Marka areas **Rule of Law & Governance:** • 'Khawa' (protection money) – local mafia imposes on shops in certain neighborhoods • Theft of electricity and water from neighbors or from the streets **Social:** • Domestic violence • Widespread drug and alcohol use • Sexual harassment

Zarqa	**Infrastructure**:
	• Poor public transportation (inadequate service, unethical bus and cab practices)
	• Challenging to launch a startup project & investors prefer to invest in Amman
	• Lack of or poorly maintained leisure facilities, public parks, libraries, and women and youth centers
	• No support or financial aid for local talents, entrepreneurs, or inventors
	Basic Services:
	• Medical services (lack of specialized doctors, equipment or qualified staff)
	• Traffic, pollution, lack of environmentally friendly services and facilities
	• Poor education (unqualified teachers, inadequate facilities, outdated/weak curriculum)Faisal hospital (Poor quality of doctors and equipment) Environmental pollution from the accumulation of garbage Educational facilities are in poor conditions
	    ○ Teachers in gov. schools lack skills or teaching techniques needed by children these days
	    ○ Current education curriculums are old, boring and not related to the practical world
	Rule of Law & Governance:
	• Corruption, Wasta, and nepotism
	• Lacking security, law enforcement presence, and respect for the law
	    ○ Citizens are heavily armed
	    ○ Criminals and outlaws are common
	    ○ Police do not enter certain areas
	• Local central market (Al Sa'adeh) is full of shacks (Bastat) and pedestrians don't know where to walk
	• 'Khawa' (protection money) – local mafia imposes on shops in certain neighborhoods
	Social:
	• Loss of culture, tradition, and youth losing their respect
	    ○ Marginalization of youth
	    ○ Youth have plenty of free time and are bored and disengaged
	    ○ Youth have not been given the space or support to use their skills in public service
	• Rise in numbers of beggars and the homeless
	• Violence and anger:
	    ○ Feud and fights between tribes (Bani Hassan and Jabal Abyad residents)
	    ○ Violence at universities amongst members of different tribes from different provinces
	    ○ Ethnic nationalism (Jordanian vs. Palestinian. Wehdat vs. Faisaly)
	    ○ Radicalization and extremists among Muslims (Muslim Brotherhood, Soufis, Salafis)
	    ○ Manipulated religious hate speech
	    ○ Salafi jihadi's fighting alongside ISIS in Syria
	• Radicalism and extremism:
	    ○ Zarqa and Rusaifeh religiously passionate and prone to extremism and easily manipulated to be recruited by ISIS and radical Salafi Jihadi groups
	• Lack of tolerance and unaccepting of new ideas and communities
	• Widespread drug and alcohol use
	    ○ Drug dealers are living amongst the community and everyone knows of them
	    ○ Bars and drunken people roaming residential neighborhoods
	• Gambling
	• Domestic violence
	• Eroding social cohesion
	• Sexual harassment

"Business and private sectors are pulling out of Zarqa" Zarqa
"We need a business park in Zarqa, like the one in Amman" Zarqa
"Teachers are not supported by their schools or even by the ministry" Zarqa

"English teachers are butchering the English language" Zarqa
"Shack owners are not aware that they are doing something illegal, and when the police come to confiscate their stands (Bastat) they become hostile and verbal towards them…the police are only doing their job as law enforcement" Zarqa
"Children smoke from a very young age" Zarqa
"The way of thinking and the culture among youth needs attention" Zarqa
"Gambling in coffee shops usually ends up in fights in the middle of the night…the drunk men walking the streets pose a safety threat to pedestrians" Zarqa
"I hear of many cases of depressed youth…and depression leads to suicide" Zarqa
"Violence at universities is often because of tribes or people from different provinces…or it's a fight over a girl…things escalate and then MPs and tribal elders interfere to resolve the issues" Zarqa
"Youth have a lot of free time that can be engaged via moderate religious speech to become good and productive members of our society, instead of becoming extremists and joining terrorist and radical groups" Zarqa

Madaba	**Infrastructure**:
	• Lack of or poorly maintained leisure facilities, public parks, libraries, and women and youth centers
	• There are three cemeteries in the middle of a residential neighborhoods
	• Poor infrastructure (maintenance, roads, sewage/garbage, lighting)
	• Lack of coordination between municipal authorities and other service providers utility authorities / construction works are taking over streets and making roads narrower
	• Poor public transportation (inadequate service, unethical bus and cab practices)
	• Traffic, pollution, lack of environmentally friendly services and facilities
	    o Hayy Al Maslakh
	• Hayy Al Maslakh: neighborhood has a lot of livestock, there is a garbage landfill which caused a lot of mosquitos to spread, there is continuous bad smell that it is becoming an unsuitable living environment.
	Basic Services:
	• Medical services (lack of specialized doctors, equipment or qualified staff)
	• Stray dogs
	• Poor education (unqualified teachers, inadequate facilities, outdated/weak curriculum)
	    o School dropouts
	    o Schools are crowded and teachers are unqualified and use old teaching techniques.
	• Garbage collection
	Rule of Law & Governance:
	• Corruption, Wasta, and nepotism
	• Lack of political engagement
	• HM King Abdullah encourages the youth to engage in political life and political parties however, if they do they feel they will be in trouble from law enforcements and it may prohibit them from getting employed
	• Vandalism: The culture of vandalizing public properties including: shooting of street radar camera, breaking street lights and cutting down trees
	Social:
	• Widespread drug and alcohol use
	• School dropouts increasing in Madaba
	• Public violence and fights in the streets between individuals and tribal disputes
	• Fanaticism towards certain sports teams (Wehdat and Faisaly)
	• Sexual harassment

Balqa	**Infrastructure**: • Poor infrastructure (maintenance, roads, sewage/garbage, lighting) • Lack of or poorly maintained leisure facilities, public parks, libraries, and women and youth centers • Street lights (Most street lights are vandalized) • Drainage system - Most areas lack the installation of sewage and drainage networks • Exposure of drainage water might affect existing water wells • Lack of leisure facilities for women only • Increase in traffic jams resulting from a Japanese urban project of rebuilding downtown Al Salt • Lack of pharmacies, bakeries, and supermarkets in some neighborhoods • Poor public transportation (inadequate service, unethical bus and cab practices) • Lack or shortage of water and electricity • Water shortages **Basic Services:** • Garbage collection & street cleanliness • Medical services (lack of specialized doctors, equipment or qualified staff) • Quality of education (unqualified teachers, inadequate facilities, weak curriculum) o Some schools only teach until 10th grade o School dropouts • Lack of decent public bathrooms • Humret Al Sahn is facing environmental disaster due to existing and poorly maintained landfill site • Stray dogs **Rule of Law & Governance:** • Corruption, Wasta, and nepotism o Corruption in public university hiring/appointing • Kidnappings of young girls in Safoot • School dropouts (many boys dropout after the 3rd grade) **Social:** • Radicalism and extremism o Al Salt suffers from high levels of extremism and radicalism as well as stereotyping • Domestic violence • Widespread drug and alcohol use • Spreading prostitution • Students are abandoning their education and seeking early marriage instead • Racism • Parents raise their children on hatred towards Palestinians/Jordanians or Abbabeed/Saltiyeh • Sexual harassment

"Bus drivers drive fast to get as many students as they possibly can, to earn more money" Balqaa
"There is a prostitution facility in Salt… and the officials know about it. But the lady who runs it seems to have strong Wasta" Balqaa

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<td rowspan="1">Ajloun</td>
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Infrastructure:
- Lack of organization between industrial, commercial and residential zones
- Lack of private sector representation
- Lack of or poorly maintained leisure facilities, public parks, libraries, and women and youth centers
- Lack of facilities for persons with disabilities
-
- Poor infrastructure (maintenance, roads, sewage/garbage, lighting)
- Poor public transportation (inadequate service, unethical bus and cab practices)
- Lack or shortage of water and electricity
  - Water purification plant is inefficient

Basic Services:
- Traffic, pollution, lack of environmentally friendly services and facilities
- Garbage collection and lack of cleanliness
- Pollution (air, noise, water)
- Poor education (unqualified teachers, inadequate facilities, outdated/weak curriculum)
  - Lack of public universities and colleges
  - Schools are located far from home
  - School students, especially boys leave school, after first break
- Lack of coffee shops, bakeries, and decent restaurants

Rule of Law & Governance:
- Corruption, Wasta, and nepotism
  - lack of law enforcement at University

Social:
- Gov. elected positions in the municipality and the parliament are only represented by powerful tribes and they only help their networks and their personal interest
- Increasing crime rate / revenge crimes / honor killings
- Lack of political engagement
- Marginalization of youth
- Sexual harassment

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"Some parents prevent their daughters from continuing their studies beyond 10th grade because of the lack of a high school nearby their place of residence" Ajloun
"Youth in Ajloun are neglected" Ajloun

Irbid	**Infrastructure**:
	• Poor infrastructure (maintenance, roads, sewage/garbage, lighting)
	• Municipality gives construction permits for commercial buildings in residential neighborhoods
	• No oversight of tourism commerce
	• Lack of or poorly maintained leisure facilities, public parks, libraries, and women and youth centers
	• Lack of retails shops leading to monopoly of prices
	• Poor public transportation (inadequate service, unethical bus and cab practices)
	• Lack or shortage of water and electricity
	
	Basic services:
	• Lack of health control over food products in shops
	• Garbage collection
	• Poor education (unqualified teachers, inadequate facilities, outdated/weak curriculum)
	    o Students are smoking and using foul language
	    o Many students leave school after first break and spend the day on the streets
	• Medical services (lack of specialized doctors, equipment, or qualified staff)
	Rule of law and governance:
	• Corruption, Wasta, and nepotism
	• Lacking security, law enforcement presence, and respect for the law
	    o 'Turkman' is an area that suffers from a drug problem and lack of security
	Social:
	• Feeling of discrimination…CVs with Irbid as home address are not accepted within the private sector
	• Widespread drug and alcohol use
	• Marginalization of youth

"Construction works take too long to perform…causing traffic and inconvenience" Irbid

"Policemen are often useless" Irbid

"Traffic jams are often caused by traffic police" Irbid

"I have changed my address on my CV from Irbid to Amman in order to get an interview… employers never call if they know you live in Irbid" Irbid

"Some policemen are uncooperative" Irbid

"Those in charge should be young and not old, in order for them to be active and to be achievers" Irbid

"There is no attention from the government to youth" Irbid

"Many doctors are unwilling to perform their jobs properly" Irbid

"The streets are full of kids who leave school after first break and don't return- there is no control over them" Irbid

"School teachers face increased challenges due to the bad conduct of students" Irbid

"Teachers are no longer like they used to be…they are not qualified to raise the new generation of students…in the past we used to fear our teachers, nowadays students are becoming more bold, and rude…teachers should not only focus on the intelligent students, but also target those who need most attention" Irbid

"Lack of public transportation in Irbid after 8 pm…and in the winter some busses stop working after 4 pm, leaving many stranded" Irbid

"Busses are overcrowded, with no seats for passengers… and many times the police will see the overcrowded buses and look away… they might be friends with or related to the driver" Irbnid

Jerash	**Infrastructure**:
	- Road up to SAKEB is extremely dangerous and risky
	- Lack of or poorly maintained leisure facilities, public parks, libraries, and women and youth centers
	- Poor infrastructure (maintenance, roads, sewage/garbage, lighting)
	- Poor public transportation (inadequate service, unethical bus and cab practices)
	Basic Services:
	- Garbage collection/ Lack of garbage containers in the streets;
	- Poor education (unqualified teachers, inadequate facilities, outdated/weak curriculum)
	- Stray dogs
	- Medical services (lack of specialized doctors, equipment, or qualified staff)
	- Lack of private sector presence
	- No ventilation between the urban residential areas.
	Rule of Law & Governance:
	- Corruption, Wasta, and nepotism
	- Lacking security, law enforcement presence, and respect for the law
	    o The spread of unlicensed and illegal firearms in the villages and amongst children
	    o Some policemen are unarmed
	    o Police do not address public intoxication
	    o Robberies are increasing in frequency
	Social:
	- Widespread drug and alcohol use
	- General feeling that Jordanians are not receiving their rights due to the influx of refugees and foreign nationals

"Drugs are spreading in schools amongst students" Jerash
"Children are drinking alcohol and walking around carrying guns" Jerash
"There is a problem of illegal firearms in many villages in Jerash… in some incidents law enforcement have done raids on houses" Jerash
"Some policemen are unarmed, which doesn't make sense… they need to be armed" Jerash
"Public parks are turning into meeting points for young men that spend their time drinking alcohol or sitting in their cars" Jerrash
"There is clear lack of support for farmers" Jerrash
"There are many robberies…pickpocketing of women and tourists by young children and women (usually dressed in Niqab as a disguise)" Jerrash

Mafraq	**Infrastructure**: • Lack of or poorly maintained leisure facilities, public parks, libraries, and women and youth centers • Need for zoning and organization of markets and commercial shops to be distributed • Poor infrastructure (maintenance, roads, sewage/garbage, lighting) • Poor public transportation (inadequate service, unethical bus and cab practices) **Basic Services:** • Medical services (lack of specialized doctors, equipment, or qualified staff) • Poor education (unqualified teachers, inadequate facilities, outdated/weak curriculum) • Students leave school after 10 am, with no monitoring by teachers. • Garbage collection • Stray dogs • High rent **Rule of Law & Governance:** • Corruption, Wasta, and nepotism • Lacking security, law enforcement presence, and respect for the law • Robberies are on the rise • Some Syrians are perceived to be vandalizing the city. Vandalism o Some Syrians are thought to be vandalizing the city **Social:** • Widespread drug and alcohol use • Spreading prostitution- Eroding values • Eroding social cohesion • Radicalization of young men • Feeling discriminated against during job applications • Marginalization; feeling that the government is not supporting the citizens

"Robberies have been on the rise…especially since the Syrians came into our communities" Mafraq

"There are no leisure choices to fill youth time…they become interested in going to join Daesh for money and to feel like they're doing something, and not just sitting around doing nothing all day" Mafraq

"There are many medicines that are unavailable…not to mention the bad treatment in medical centers… the treatment is not close to humanitarian standards" Mafraq

"Teachers are corrupt; they try to make money out of private tutoring" Mafraq

"A while ago they built a park and a playing ground, but it was vandalized by the people… there is no culture of preserving public property…and citizens vandalize public properties" Mafraq

"If you apply for a job in Amman and present your CV, if they realize you are from Mafraq they reject you instantly" Mafraq

"Youth in Mafraq have a careless nature…that's how they are raised" Mafraq

"They feed livestock waste…things that shouldn't be fed to them" Mafraq

Aqaba	**Basic services:** - Stray dogs - Poor infrastructure (maintenance, roads, sewage/garbage, lighting) - Accumulation of garbage and overall general hygiene- lack of garbage containers - Electricity blackouts - Unnecessary speed bumps, lack of sidewalks - No public parks - Traffic, pollution, lack of environmentally friendly services and facilities **Rule of law & governance:** - PWD- Exemptions for Taxes for Domestic Helpers **Social:** - Widespread drug and alcohol use - Students leave school after 10 am, with no monitoring by teachers. - Friday prayer speech lacks awareness against radicalization and extremists - Sexual harassment

"In Alamiyah and Mahdudeh, these are old traditional neighborhoods…we do not plant trees and bushes in empty front yards of residential buildings, for example" Aqaba
"In the past, domestic helpers used to be exempt of tax for persons with disabilities…after the current Prime Minister took over, they are not subject to custom tax" Aqaba
"Many youth take drugs in abandoned utility facilities" Aqaba

Karak	**Infrastructure**:
	- Poor public transportation (inadequate service, unethical bus and cab practices)
	- Poor infrastructure (maintenance, roads, sewage/garbage, lighting)
	- Lack of or poorly maintained leisure facilities, public parks, libraries, and women and youth centers
	- Road maintenance & Lack of speed bumps, pavements and lack of street lights
	- Sewage and Drainage system- not maintained and exposed which can lead to disease.
	Basic services:
	- Corrupt Municipality and lack of monitoring by the municipality
	- Some villages lack retail stores, supermarkets, bakeries
	- Poor education (unqualified teachers, inadequate facilities, outdated/weak curriculum)
	    o School dropouts
	    o Students leave school after 10 am, with no monitoring by teachers.
	- Medical services (lack of specialized doctors, equipment or qualified staff)
	- Lack of Public Library
	- Lack or shortage of water and electricity
	- Water and electricity distribution (blackouts)
	- Lack of garbage containers and garbage collection and disposal
	- Insects (ants, cockroaches, mosquitos)
	Rule of law & governance:
	- Corruption, Wasta, and nepotism
	- Government employee redundancy
	- High influence from the tribe – some tribal disputes can be violent
	Social:
	- Increasing rent prices with the influx of Syrian refugees
	- Vandalism
	- Widespread drug and alcohol use
	- Increasing crime rate/ Honor killings
	- Domestic violence

"The bus terminal that is located far has been closed for the past 3 years now…it's becoming an abandoned site and a perfect environment for drug users and crimes" Karak

"Drugs are widespread because of lack of awareness, and also deception…some drugs come in the form of candy" Karak

"There's tribal disputes between Rawashdeh and Kassabeh… as well as other tribes" Karak

"Successful people in Karak leave and move to Amman in order to maximize profits and to enhance their career…they don't stay in Karak" Karak

"Many youth spend their free time doing drugs…there is no positive productive method to fill their free time…especially those who are unemployed, bored and have nothing better to do to kill time" Karak

"There is no real punishment for drug use" Karak

"There is a lack of speed bumps on the streets to stop cars from speeding on roads where school children are playing, especially in residential neighborhoods" Karak

"Lack of retail stores, supermarkets and bakeries, in some villages such as Shahtur or 3ay" Karak

"Parents avoid reporting their children's drug and alcohol abuse problems as they fear for their reputation…so it's all dealt with in a hush hush manner" Karak

"Infrastructure doesn't reach many villages and areas" Karak

"Lack of libraries and research centers for me to do my studies and research" Karak

" تسيب اداري بالمدارس وتقصير من المعلمين و المعلمات " Karak

"There is a slight level of radicalization" Karak

Ma'an	**Infrastructure**:
	• Poor public transportation (inadequate service, unethical bus and cab practices)
	• Lack of public bathrooms
	• Poor infrastructure (maintenance, roads, sewage/garbage, lighting)
	• Lack of retail market, shopping malls, supermarkets and bakeries
	• Lack of or poorly maintained leisure facilities, public parks, libraries, and women and youth centers
	Basic services:
	• Garbage collection and cleanliness is insufficient and the low number of street cleaners
	• Street lights are damaged
	• Stray dogs
	• Poor education (unqualified teachers, inadequate facilities, outdated/weak curriculum)
	    ○ School dropouts
	    ○ Students leave school after 10 am, with no monitoring by teachers
	• People raise chicken and sheep in residential areas which causes diseases and smell
	• Lack or shortage of water and electricity
	
	• Scarcity of water supply / poor water coverage and distribution
	• No sewage and drainage network for most areas
	• Lack of coordination between municipal authorities and other service providers
	Rule of law & governance:
	• Corruption, Wasta, and nepotism
	• Traffic, pollution, lack of environmentally friendly services and facilities Centralization in Amman, with the need to go to the capital to finish formalities
	• Lacking security, law enforcement presence, and respect for the law
	Social:
	• Radicalization and extremism
	• Gossip among society that is described as judgmental
	• Immigration from Al Shobak
	• Depression is common among youth

"People in Ma'an like to gossip about each other, and they are very judgmental" Ma'an

"For four years there was no government law enforcement forces presence in Ma'an at all" Ma'an

"We miss seeing police cars in Ma'an (نحنا منشتاق نشوف شرطة)" Ma'an

"There are no police cars at night" Ma'an

"The presence of the police in Ma'an causes tension amongst the people…if they don't like the way a person looks they start harassing him…they don't just leave people alone and let them be… they stop them and search them" Ma'an

"Police have made the people of Ma'an hate them…and there is a bad and tense relationship between the people and the police" Ma'an

"Some police officers are respectful and polite… but some individual cases where police offers are provocative result in this hatred towards them (في نسبة من الشرطة محترمة و لكن اخطاء فردية مستفزة بتأدي للكراهية)"

"الطفل بشوف كيف الشرطة بتعامل الناس و بأدي لخلق كراهية عند الأطفال" Ma'an

"There was a period in time in Ma'an when there was no presence of police and only gendarmerie were present… and the gendarmerie are hated in Ma'an…they were considered as infidels (فترة في معان ما كان في شرطة بس كلها درك.. وجهاز الدرك مكروه (كفار))" Ma'an

"The army is beloved in Ma'an, and enjoys great reputation among the people" Ma'an

"If you go to pray in a mosque you may lose your shoes, they may get stolen" Ma'an

"In Liwaa Al Shobak there are 15,000 inhabitants today…many have immigrated…youth are depressed and people are leaving Shobak" Shobak-Ma'an

"Al Shobak is not a popular area among Ma'ani's" Shobak- Ma'an

"Water is usually not supplied and we end up buying water tanks" Ma'an

"Most of the water is consumed by the big hotels in Petra…water distribution is very low and close to none especially during the summer" Ma'an

"Poor water distribution and the existing water distribution network is old and damaged and not maintained well" Ma'an

"In the summer we don't get water for 3 months… Al Dissi is not helping e people of Ma'an even though it is in Ma'an" Ma'an

"There is no coordination between authorities… one day they pave the next day they dig again…. Construction works and road paving are not coordinated… it's a waste of money" Ma'an

"Everything is centralized in Amman… you need to drive to Amman to finish your paper work… there is no government representation in Ma'an... you need to go to Amman in person to get certain things done" Ma'an

Tafileh	**Infrastructure**: • Lack of or poorly maintained leisure facilities, public parks, libraries, and women and youth centers • Poor infrastructure (maintenance, roads, sewage/garbage, lighting) • Lack of sewage and drainage network • Lack of bakeries, supermarkets, and ATMs in some villages • Lack of street lights in some neighborhoods • Lack of coordination between the municipality and other authorities **Basic Services:** • Electricity distribution and supply is low • Poor internet connectivity • Medical services (understaffed hospitals, lack of equipment, medication and medical facilities) o Poor quality of education: lack of high schools in some villages • School dropouts: students leave school after the first few lessons, with no monitoring by teachers. • Garbage collection + garbage containers • Lack of foreign investors, especially private sector presence • Tourist attractions are not branded or advertised **Rule of law & governance:** • Corruption, Wasta, and nepotism • Lack of support and financial aid to local NGOs • Most important government positions in Al Tafileh are filled by Jordanians from other provinces especially Al Karak **Social:** • Radicalization among some youth • Marginalization of youth who feel bored, depressed and neglected

"The most important government positions in Tafileh are filled by Jordanians from other provinces, especially Karak" Tafileh

"Some villages lack high schools for girls, which results in many female students dropping out and not finishing their school education" Tafileh

"The tribal leaders and those in power rejected Sameh Mall to be built in Tafileh, because it would have harmed the existing merchants in Tafileh… but they totally overlooked the fact that this would have hired a lot of people from Tafileh" Tafileh

"Radicalization exists because young men are neglected by the government and the only people who give them attention and support are the extremist group recruiters" Tafileh

"Drug dealers and gang members spend a lot of time on the streets" Tafileh

"University of Tafileh lacks a medical center, even though it has around 3,000 students" Tafileh

"The clothing factory in Tafileh employs laborers from India… it's owned by an Indian man, and most products are exported" Tafileh

"75% of the people in Tafileh and I say even more, are against the government and favor the opposition… and I say there are some who are against the regime as well… during the Arab spring, Tafileh was the province that was most active and willing to act, protest and demonstrate… and were most of those who were part of the Herak" Tafileh

"لولا النشرة الجوية الاردنيين بنسو الطفيله " Tafileh

"The few existing parks are not safe for children" Tafileh

"There is no foreign investment in Tafileh… the Yoghurt factory has been shut down for 8 years now because it was losing money... fresh graduates can't find jobs and end up working in jobs that are not related to their subject of study" Tafileh

"There are many unqualified staff working in medical facilities…we lack specialized doctors, or the proper medicine or equipment" Tafileh

"Villagers suffer from medical services…some medical facilities lack full time doctors, and working hours are only from 10-12pm." Tafileh

2.1.5 Problems Specific to Females

Throughout the focus groups, a list of problems and pressing issues facing females particularly were identified. The following tables list the most pressing issues facing young females, outlined by governorate.

Central Governorates	**Amman**	• Poor public transportation (inadequate service, unethical bus and cab practices) • GBV: sexual harassment and verbal abuse • Lacking security, law enforcement presence, and respect for the law • Lack of or poorly maintained leisure facilities, public parks, libraries, and women and youth centers
	Madaba	• GBV: sexual harassment and verbal abuse • Lack of pre-schools to help working women
	Balqa	• Poor public transportation (inadequate service, unethical bus and cab practices) • Eroding social cohesion • People (neighbors) are always monitoring girls leave home- they gossip and are judgmental • GBV: sexual harassment and verbal abuse
	Zarqa	• GBV: sexual harassment and verbal abuse o Public transportation bus terminals are full of thugs who verbally abuse and harass females
Northern Governorates	**Ajloun**	• GBV: Sexual harassment and verbal abuse • Lack of or poorly maintained leisure facilities, public parks, libraries, and women and youth centers • No facilitations for disabled people in public places and institutes (Some educational institutes lack elevators for disabled people)
	Irbid	• Boredom – there is no life in the village after 6 pm • Poor public transportation (inadequate service, unethical bus and cab practices) • Individuals cannot press charges due to bribes and corruption

	Jerash	• Poor public transportation (inadequate service, unethical bus and cab practices)
		• Social restrictions
		  o Young ladies do not enjoy freedom
		  o Lack of awareness campaigns from the authorities for young girls

	Mafraq	• Poor public transportation (inadequate service, unethical bus and cab practices) • Eroding social cohesion (Jordanians and Syrians) • Lacking security, law enforcement presence, and respect for the law • Lack of or poorly maintained leisure facilities, public parks, libraries, women and youth centers
Southern Governorates	**Aqaba**	• GBV: Sexual harassment and verbal abuse • Social restriction: Parents worry about their daughters around tourists and drunkards
	Karak	• GBV: Sexual harassment and verbal abuse • Social restrictions o Young ladies do not enjoy freedom
	Ma'an	• Social restrictions o Culture of shame – prohibiting young women from studying at universities • GBV: Sexual harassment and verbal abuse • Lack of or poorly maintained leisure facilities, public parks, libraries, and women and youth centers • Poor public transportation (inadequate service, unethical bus and cab practices)
	Tafileh	• Lack of or poorly maintained leisure facilities, public parks, libraries, and women and youth centers • Poor public transportation (inadequate service, unethical bus and cab practices)

Figure 9. Problems specific to females

Following is a list of verbatim shared by female participants related to problems they face:

"If school students are unable to pay for their drugs, they are sexually exploited...and sometimes they even take blackmail videos **طلاب المدارس اذا ما قدرو يدفعوا حق المخدرات بستغلوهم جنسيا و مرات بصوروا...** *Ma'an*
"There is no bus from Kufr Som to my university" Irbid
"Share3 El Sa3adeh is full of thugs...you can't go to the market without being harassed" Zarqa
"Busses are crowded with passengers and girls get harassed" Zarqa
"Transportation is a main issue...I need to walk for 3 km to reach the nearest bus stop. It takes me hours to get anywhere and it is so expensive" Tafileh
"All activities in Mafraq are for males...there's nothing for females to do" Mafraq
"Some managers in the private sector take advantage of women, and harass them" Balqa
"Women are unable to play many sports, and they cannot even walk or jog on the streets" Ajloun
"Many social restrictions, young girls do not have freedom in Jerash...you can't dress the way you want to" Jerrash
"Some drivers who have the phone numbers of girls that call to book a sear end up harassing the girls" Jerrash
"Transportation is an issue...there is no transportation within the villages in Mafraq" Mafraq
"You have to call and book your seat in public transportation by calling the driver on his cell phone...they won't take you in unless you've booked your seat" Mafraq
"Syrians are different, they have a different lifestyle...they stay up very late at night listening to music and dancing...they have nothing to wake up to the next morning anyway...there is a family who have rented a house from us and my father had to go and ask them to lower their voices one night... Mafraq is a very quiet place" Mafraq
"Syrians are fond of late night walks...they entertain themselves and love life...before they came to live in Mafraq, the city would sleep at sunset... now the shops and shopping areas are crowded till 10-11 pm...and the Syrians definitely know more leisure places than we do in Jordan" Mafraq
"I worry about my safety...since the Syrian refugees came to live in Mafraq it's not as safe or as clean as it used to be" Mafraq
"Parents are very conservative and try to prevent their daughters from going out on the streets... Aqaba is filled with tourists and drunken men and they fear that girls will get harassed" Aqaba
"Public transportation does not cover most areas, and therefore women need to pay to take taxis...this means spending more money on transportation" Ma'an
"Boy and girls could go out together in groups, for studying purposes...rarely will you see a young woman go out with a young man, or even walk together on the streets...it's socially unacceptable" Karak

2.2 Jordan's Resources, Exploitation and Obstacles

The following list of resources were most discussed by the research participants:

| Greeen Energy Sources (Wind and Solar) | Human Resources (Youth) | Tourism (Natural and Historic) | Natural Resources and Agriculture: (Phosphate and Potassium) |

Figure 10. Perception/ Resources in Jordan

Most respondents feel that while Jordan is limited with certain resources, the country is not properly investing in 'human resources.' The vast majority of youth who participated in the study agreed that these 'human resources' need to be employed and wisely invested in. Throughout the focus groups, several other resources were identified, primarily related to green energy sources. Both solar and wind sources of energy were mentioned in all focus groups. The majority of participants agreed that Jordan's green energy resources are very important, with huge potential for many governorates.

Agriculture is also considered a main resource for Jordan that is not efficiently utilized. Youth from Tafileh and Ajloun mentioned olive oil as a main product of the agricultural sector, while youth from Irbid, Mafraq and Ajloun also mentioned livestock as an agricultural resource.

Relatedly, participants from Karak, Ma'an, and Mafraq particularly focused on Potassium and Phosphate as natural resources. A popular belief amongst youth from Southern provinces is that Jordan has crude oil that the government is unable to extract, possibly due to bans from Western countries seen to be controlling decision making in the kingdom.

Culture and Tourism resources were mentioned by youth from all governorates. Youth from Ajloun added resources specific to Ajloun including wild forests, public parks, landscape and natural views that could be turned to resorts, and game reserves. Ajloun residents also mentioned the 12th century Rabadh castle and the historic Roman and Byzantine ruins. Youth from Madaba mentioned the Ma'een water springs, as well as the various Mosaic treasures in their area, Mount Nebo, and Makawer Castle. In addition to the port, youth from Aqaba mentioned Wadi Rum as an important touristic attraction, while Ma'an, Karak, Tafileh mentioned Wadi Rum, Petra, and Dhana Natural Reserve.

The following includes a list of all cultural, tourism and natural sites that Jordan has as resources:

	Cultural, Tourism, and Natural Destinations
Amman	*Citadel, Roman theater*
Balqa	*Shuneh al Junoubiyeh, Wadi Shu'aib, Rmeimin Al Aghwar* *Fresh water wells, Waterfalls*
Madaba	*Ma'een hot springs*
Zarqa	*Al Zarqa Stream*
Ajloun	*Wild forests, public parks, game reserve, landscape, waterfalls, natural views and fresh water sources. Ajloun castle, Historic Roman and Byzantine ruins.*
Irbid	*Umm Qais, Forests* *Ruins, ancient treasures*
Jerash	*Dibeen nature reserve* *Historical ruins, wild forests, game reserves*
Mafraq	*Ruins in Hayy Al Qdaim* *Landscape, views*
Ma'an	*Petra, Wadi Mousa*
Aqaba	*Wadi Rum*
Tafileh	*Dhana nature reserve, Tafileh Castle* *Underground cave, natural views, waterfalls, highest mountains,*
Karak	*Karak Castle, Qasr El Bint, Maqamet Al Shuhada' Ain Sara (Fresh water source), Sad Al Mujeb, Muntazah Habes, Muntazah Al Thaher Bibars, Sahel Mira (Fresh water stream)*

Figure 11. Culture and Tourism Destinations in Jordan

Throughout the focus groups, participants discussed the perceived obstacles that hinder the efficient exploitation of and investment in these resources. Participants agreed on several obstacles, outlined below:

Obstacles that hinder use of resources

- *Corruption*
- *Wasta*
- *Lack of Capital*
- *Lack of Government Support*

Figure 12. Obstacles that hinder efficient use of resources

Corruption topped the list of obstacles that Jordanian youth identified. This included Wasta, which poses an obstacle for effectively utilizing human resources, finding the best suited jobs, and having equal access to other opportunities.

Corruption was also listed as an obstacle to development in Jordan. The common perception is that "only decision-makers and politicians in Amman profit and benefit from development work." Karak residents stated that even those from Karak who reach high positions forget their governorate when in Amman. This type of sentiment was shared by other participants from other governorates as well. Youth generally feel that positions in Jordan are inherited and are assigned which prevents fair and equal opportunities to find good jobs. Ma'an and Tafileh residents specifically see that the 'fourth circle' (commonly used to refer to the Prime Ministry) works on their own with no regard to citizens in the governorates, leaving them feeling marginalized and not a part of the government's interests. They feel that their assets and potential are not taken into consideration or addressed by decision-makers.

Lack of investment on the local level as well as lack of capital funds were obstacles that youth felt hinder the best utilization of resources and development on the local level. A large number of participants feel that unequal distribution of employment opportunities is a main obstacle that also hampers development. The perceived lack of government interest in capitalizing on resources makes youth feel that the resources owned by their governorates are not receiving the required interest from decision-makers. This was a shared sentiment for all governorates that has caused youth to leave to other governorates or countries.

Tafileh residents voiced that youth want to leave Tafileh due to the lack of employment opportunities and the lack of interest by the government to help find them jobs. Ajloun residents feel that "Ajloun is a cemetery for the living," in that they feel neglected and that their concerns are never heard. "The Ministry of Tourism is not paying enough attention to Ajloun, and even some tourism areas have no leading road connection." "Promises were made to build natural resorts and a chain of restaurant, but nothing has happened so far. People in power only deal with the heads of powerful tribes" and were blamed for not supporting or even listening to the ideas of young entrepreneurs with small project ideas.

Youth from Madaba and Jerash feel that the government has failed to support tourism in Jordan and that the tourism sector in both governorates has not been financially invested in. In Madaba, the Christian pilgrim sites are not being branded or taken full advantage of. Tour guides and tourist agencies work for their own interests. Furthermore, farmers in Madaba are also neglected and are constantly losing money. According to youth who participated in the focus groups, farmers claim that it is no longer feasible to farm their lands, and that, in the hopes of saving their farming businesses, they are increasingly hiring cheaper Egyptian and Syrian labor. Finally, the lack of investment in hotels in Irbid hinders tourism, especially in the Um Qais area, which could be an attractive destination for tourists.

2.2.1 Perceived Resources by Governorate

The following section outlines perceived resources specific to each governorate as shared by the research participants:

Central Governorates		
	Amman	- Culture & Tourism - Medical Tourism - Renewable Energy: Solar and Wind Power - Land Availability - Agriculture - Human Resources - Industry & Manufacturing
	Balqa	- Culture & Tourism: Fresh water wells - Human Resources - Educated Academics and Professionals - Agriculture
	Madaba	- Culture & Tourism - Agriculture & Livestock - Fresh Water - Flat Land - Human Resources & Education - Renewable Energy: Solar and Wind Power
	Zarqa	- Culture & Tourism: Al Zarqa stream - Agriculture - Renewable Energy: Solar Power - Human Resources - Industry & Manufacturing - Oil Refinery

Figure 13. Perceived Resources/ Central Governorates

"We have educated academics and professionals" Balqa
"Madaba enjoys a topographic nature that is flat… it's easy to build on" Madaba
"We have trained and qualified human resources" Madaba
"Al Zarqa stream can become a resort or they can have public parks around it… but currently it is polluted by all the factories that dump their waste in it… and it's a risk to public health" Zarqa

Northern Governorates	**Ajloun**	▪ Culture & Tourism: Ajloun castle, Roman and Byzantine ruins, public parks, game reserve, waterfalls, wild forests, etc. ▪ Olive Oil ▪ Land Availability ▪ Agriculture & Livestock ▪ Fresh Water Source ▪ Human Resources
	IRBID	▪ Culture & Tourism: Umm Qais, ruins and ancient treasures ▪ Agriculture & Livestock ▪ Land Availability ▪ Human Resources ▪ Universities ▪ Industries & Manufacturing: Al Hassan Industrial City ▪ Renewable Energy: Solar Power

	JARASH	▪ Culture & Tourism: historical ruins, beautiful landscapes, game reserves
		▪ Agriculture
		▪ Gold
		▪ Renewable Energy: Solar and Wind Power
		▪ Fresh Water
		▪ Human Resources
		   • Youth creativity and entrepreneurship
		   • Highly educated youth
		▪ Handcrafts (Khazaf), textile factory, food (Labneh, olives)

	MAFRAQ	▪ Culture & Tourism: ruins ▪ Agriculture ▪ Land Availability ▪ Livestock ▪ Renewable Energy: Solar Power ▪ Oil Shale, Stone, Potassium ▪ Human Resources

Figure 14. Perceived Resources/ Northern Governorates

"Madaba enjoys a topographic nature that is flat… it's easy to build on" Madaba
"There are many ancient treasures, and are usually stolen by the people" Irbid
"If taken good care of, many touristic attractions in Irbid can bring great income to the province… such as Umm Qais festival" Irbid
"Human resources, youth creativity and entrepreneurship…we have high education level amongst the youth in Jerash" Jerash
"We have homemade products such as Labneh, olive oil, olives and Magdous" Jerash
"Ruins are much more attractive during the nighttime than daytime in Jerash… we have a beautiful landscape and nice views" Jerash
"The soil in Jerash is good for farming and agriculture… if Jerash gets the support it needs for its agricultural sector, they can cover up to half o the kingdom's demand" Jerash
"I hear there are ancient valuable treasures like gold" Jerash
"There's the textile factory that was established by HRH Princess Basma" Jerash
"We have large unexploited land space" Mafraq
"Most of the lands in Mafraq are occupied by members of the intelligence agency" Mafraq

Southern Governorates	**AQABA**	- Culture & Tourism: Wadi Rum - Handcrafts - Human Resources - Sea Port - Fresh Water: Al Dissi
	KARAK	- Culture & Tourism: Castles and ruins, nature, fresh waterfalls and streams, Dana bio reserve and Medical Tourism - Potassium, Phosphate, Dead Sea Salt, Oil Shale, Crude Oil - Renewable Energy: Solar Power - Human Resources - Agriculture - Flat Land
	MA'AN	- Culture & Tourism: Petra & Wadi Mousa - Minerals: Phosphate, Potassium, Stone Mines, Oil Shale, Crude oil - Renewable Energy: Solar and Wind Power - Flat Land - Human Resources - Agriculture - Petrol *Participants believe Jordan has vast oil resources but the government will not let them be extracted*
	TAFILEH	- Culture & Tourism: mountains, waterfalls, Medical tourism - Copper, Potassium, Limestone, Precious Stones, Olive Oil, Silver, Crude Oil, Natural gas - Industry & Manufacturing: cement factory - Agriculture - Land Availability - Renewable Energy: Solar and Wind Power - Human Resources

Figure 15. Perceived Resources/ Southern Governorates

"We had 360 fresh water sources that are not down to 36 due to farmers dispute that lead to fresh water being blocked by the government" Tafileh
"we have smart and educated youth" Tafileh
"Safety and security" Tafileh
"We have fertile lands suitable for agriculture" Tafileh
"we have plenty of crude oil but the government is not allowing us to extract it" Karak
"we have petrol but the government has a policy that prohibits extracting it" Karak
"some say that we are prohibited from extracting it because it has been sold to the US" Ma'an

2.2.2 Perceived Obstacles Hindering Use of Resources by Governorate

The following is a list of the most commonly shared obstacles hindering the use of resources by the governorates, as shared by most of the participants. A list of obstacles shared by each governorate can be found in Annex of the report.

Corruption & Wasta	● Unqualified officials in charge ● Officials give more priority to personal interest ● Lack of supervision ● Nepotism
Lack of Support from the Government	● Government policies do not facilitate/encourage local and foreign investment ● People in charge do not care about improving governorates ● The government does not support entrepreneurs or small businesses ● Complicated & lengthy government procedures (applications, licensing, etc.)
Problems in the Tourism Sector	● Lack of advertisement and branding for tourist attractions ● Lack of financial and logistical support from the government ● Lack of quality hotels and advertisement for tourist attractions ● Many tour providers are run by monopolized agencies or wealthy foreigners ● Lack of capital for locals to finance small tourism projects
Problems in the Agricultural Sector	● Cost of farming is higher than profit ● Low profitability: farmers are turning away from agriculture ● Fertile land is not used properly ● Lack of support from the government
Lack of Investment and Capital	● Lack of encouragement from the government for investment ● Some government policies actually discourage entrepreneurs ● Locals are averse to foreign investors of different cultures ● Investors are wary of opening new projects

Figure 16. Perceived Obstacles / By Majority

2.3 Perceptions regarding municipality, municipal services and other aspects of material living conditions and quality of life.

In an administered individual assessment survey, respondents were asked to evaluate (using a 10-point scale) elements related to their municipality, municipal services, and other aspects of material living conditions and quality of life such as: overall performance, garbage collection/insects/public hygiene, quality of school environment, quality of healthcare services, quality of sewage/public sanitation, safety and security, transportation, water services, public parks and spaces, and public markets.

		Approval Mean Scores			Total
		South	**Center**	**North**	**Mean**
1	Overall Performance of your Municipality	4.5	4.6	3.6	4.2
2	Garbage collection/ Insects/ Public Hygiene	5.1	5.1	4.0	4.7
3	Quality of School Environment	4.3	4.7	3.4	4.1
4	Quality of Healthcare Services	4.5	4.8	3.4	4.2
5	Quality of Sewage/ Public Sanitation	4.2	4.2	3.0	4.8
6	Safety and Security	7.6	7.2	6.9	7.2
7	Transportation	4.6	4.9	3.5	4.3
8	Water Services	5.2	6.3	3.6	5
9	Public Parks and Spaces	3.5	4.4	2.7	3.5
10	Public Market	3.7	4.4	2.4	3.5

Figure 17. Ranking of municipal services, and other aspects of material living conditions and quality of life.

With the exception of 'Safety and Security,' approval ratings or satisfaction levels of various municipal services and facility provision are below acceptable levels. Low satisfaction levels are comparable to the low levels of satisfaction found in the IRI Dec 2016 Municipal Poll results. 'Public Parks and Spaces' as well as 'Public Markets' were both rated exceptionally low at an average of 3.5/10. Of note, central governorates had slightly higher overall ratings than other regions, while Northern governorates had the lowest ratings.

Typically, the level of trust in Police Stations amongst the participants was high, especially compared to trust in the municipality/municipal council, political parties, governorate body, and NGOs/ CSOs. The Tribal leadership is losing some of its standing, a new trend that was witnessed during the course of the study.

		Approval Mean Scores			Total
		South	**Center**	**North**	**Mean**
1	Police Stations	7.3	7.7	7.3	7.4
2	Municipality	4.7	4.9	4.0	4.5
3	Members of the Municipal Council	4.1	3.9	3.6	3.8
4	Tribe Leaders	5.3	5.7	5.4	5.4
5	NGOs/ CBOs	5.5	5.9	5.6	5.6
6	Political Parties	3.3	3.1	2.5	2.9
7	The Governorate Body	4.1	4.2	3.8	4

Figure 18. Trust in municipality/ neighborhood institutions

2.3.1 Perceptions of Municipalities and Responsiveness to Constituents' Demands

Perceptions of municipalities generally included a wide range of negative views with the exception of Jerash and Ma'an. Weak and inefficient service delivery as well as lack of timely response seemed to be the most common pains concerning the municipality. Perceptions of corruption and lack of respect for citizens as well as provision of services based on *Wasta*, were common across all governorates. Lack of coordination between the municipality and other authorities was evident. The most common example shared between all focus groups was related to the state of public roads. Roads are often paved, dug back up again by other authorities (including water or electricity), and then paved again. This causes both a physical inconvenience to citizens and adds unnecessary financial burden to an already struggling municipality.

Furthermore, many youth shared examples of how they have reached out to municipal staff for different services, including fixing of street lights, street maintenance, sewage problems, garbage collection, water, and handling of stray dogs. All participants indicated that the municipality either did not comply or, if they did, the response was almost never timely. According to some accounts, it has taken 2-3 years for the municipality to respond. However, once Wasta is involved, the response becomes rather fast, and the required service is granted.

A common complaint shared across focus groups, and particularly for Northern governorates, was that employees at the municipalities show up to work at 10 am, swipe their attendance cards, and then leave at 10:15 pretending to be doing field work. As many respondents from Karak put it: "many employees at the municipality are the wrong people in the wrong positions."

There were many claims shared across most governorates of payment of **bribes** to get certain services. Participants from Northern governorates claim that garbage collectors have demanded 2 JD to change a street light that was neglected for months, while youth in Irbid claim that a Shawarma meal could be enough to bribe municipal officials. In Balqa, youth claim that there is a going rate for bribes needed to get official paper work done; most often, 5 JD will get all of one's paperwork done in no time at all.

"They (the municipality employees) all take bribes" Balqa
"Municipality takes bribes in order to deliver on services… it took them around two years to pave the roads, and this was only achieved by giving the municipality officials bribes disguised under the label of 'donations'" Balqa
"Bribes rule the floor at the municipality… you need to pay bribes to get things done" Balqa
" You can also bribe your way to get things done at the municipality… 3-5 JD gets the job done, or you need Wasta" Balqa
"One of our main problems in Jordan is increasing need for bribes and Wasta" Zarqa
"Some employees at the municipality procrastinate their work… it feels as though they want to facilitate the usage of bribes to get things done faster… this is becoming a common thing and some employees became known to the public for accepting bribes in order to facilitate paper work or needed procedures" Zarqa
"Street cleaners don't take care of your street unless you give them 5 JD monthly" Zarqa
"Even employees who serve coffee and tea also take bribes to get your formal paper work at the municipality faster" Zarqa
"Bribes and Wasta are very commonly used to get things done at the municipality in Ajloun" Ajloun
"Bribes get thing done in the municipality" Ajloun

"You can't finish your business without Wasta or bribing employees at the municipality" Irbid
"The increasing use of bribes among the municipality and the police- a Shewerma meal can be considered as a bribe in some cases" Irbid
"There is good treatment and respect by municipality employees towards citizens… but that doesn't mean that they are not corrupted or that they cannot be bribed…. Wasta still is powerful" Karak
"You can get street pavements facilitated by using wasta or bribes" Karak
"One of our main problems in Ma'an is the use or bribes to get things done, or Wasta" Ma'an

Zarqa and Ma'an residents agreed that the performance of the municipalities depends on the mayor. At the time of the study, it was evident that mayors from Zarqa and Ma'an were both perceived as having positive influence on the municipality.

Amman residents stated that there was a lack of credibility in the Greater Amman Municipality; many of the youth referred to the 'Rapid Bus Project' and the 'Sweileh Bridge Project' that have been significantly delayed in implementation. They mentioned the significant lack of coordination between the municipality and utility companies or the various Ministries (construction work often conflicts with utility maintenance).

With regards to the responsiveness of municipalities to constituents' concerns related to basic services and infrastructure, a low rate of success, responsiveness, and speed was reported throughout the group discussions. Again, the issue of Wasta seems to be the main trigger behind a good response from the municipality. As a result, municipalities' treatment of their citizens was rated poorly. Participants shared several stories about citizens taking matters into their own hands due to municipalities' failures to respond to their concerns.

- In Zarqa, one resident stated that his neighborhood had complained frequently about garbage collection. The municipality had not responded, so he and his neighbors tipped the garbage bins onto the street and tied the empty bins together with a net, prohibiting anyone else from using them. Only then did the municipality send someone to collect the garbage.
- Many participants from both Northern and Southern governorates complained that they had made a request for speed bumps to slow down cars – a request that had largely been ignored by their municipalities. They therefore built their own speed bumps. In Aqaba, one account stated that the speeds bumps are made by mixing glass and cement together and are often too large, as they are made by local residents who are not speed bump experts.
- Male Mafraq residents mentioned that they had seen no value added from having a mayor; one participant noted that tribal leaders are more organized and offer better support.
- One female in Jerash claims that her family filed a complaint regarding stray hounds and that it took the municipality a year to respond since her family had no Wasta.
- One participant from Ajloun mentioned that a service that usually takes one year to be done can be done in one month, so long as a 50 JD bribe is paid.
- Female Madaba residents mentioned that it sometimes takes one year to fix street lights or take care of stray dogs.
- Female Balqa residents mentioned that they had waited up to two years for street lights in their street to be fixed; further, those same lights were only fixed after a bribe had been paid.

- One Amman resident mentioned that the municipality fixed the drainage system for his neighbors who had used Wasta. However, because his family did not, the municipality would not fix the drainage system for his section of the street.
- One male participant from Ma'an claims that municipal staff work for their own good, and that they request around 150 JD for services to be provided. Further, those same staff do not provide an official receipt in return for the payment made; because it is not officially declared, it is evidence that the money is a bribe.

2.3.2 Perceptions of MPs and Responsiveness to Constituents' Demands

With regards to MPs, all participants unanimously agreed that MPs, once elected, disappear and even change their phone numbers to avoid responding to requests from their communities. Quotes such as "they only care for us before they are elected," "they are opportunists who are available only when they need us," and "once they are elected they disappear" were repeated from group to group. There was clear misunderstanding and disagreement between youth with regards to the perceived roles and responsibility of MPs in general, with many stating that it is the duty of an MP to find those who voted for him a job. Many youth claim that MPs promise them work during their campaign, and fail to deliver or even engage with their constituents.

2.4 Perceptions on Equitable Service Delivery and Fairness

There was consensus amongst all participants that Amman is the governorate that receives the overwhelming majority of benefits, focus, and opportunities. This is not new, as this so-called 'development gap' is evident from all previous studies of constituent perceptions. Participants from all governorates firmly believe that their governorate does not receive an equal share of opportunities, attention, or support from the government. There was also consensus that Southern governorates are developing most slowly in the Kingdom. Participants indicated that unequal distribution of economic benefits and rewards between the governorates is physically evident, both in terms of financial investment and logistical support from the government.

Mafraq, Ajloun, Ma'an, and Tafileh residents feel that their governorates are rated at the bottom of the priority ladder when it comes to service delivery, whereas Aqaba residents seem to think they are ranked second after Amman in the same. Zarqa, Balqa, Karak and Jerash residents think that their governorates rank in the middle. Male residents of Irbid males think that Irbid also ranks low, whereas females in the same governorate voiced that "compared to Amman, Irbid is disadvantaged, but compared to Mafraq and other governorates it can be considered as heaven." Madaba residents were split between those who felt it was ranked highly and those who felt Madaba was ranked somewhere in the middle.

2.5 Awareness Levels Regarding Roles

This following section assesses knowledge and awareness of youth regarding the roles and responsibilities of the governorate councils, executive councils, and the municipality. Knowledge regarding the roles and duties of the municipality, governorate, and executive councils were very weak and mostly based on guessing. When asked to individually evaluate (using a 10-point scale) how strongly they feel about their awareness levels concerning the various roles, the following mean scores were derived from the individual response sheets:

		Mean Scores out of 10	Mean Scores		
			South	Center	North
1	The role and duties of the Municipality	5	5.5	5.1	4.6
2	The role and duties of the Governorate Council	4.6	5.0	4.8	4.1
3	The role and duties of the Executive Council	3.8	4.4	4.1	3.0

Figure 19. Awareness Levels Related to Roles and Duties

Findings reveal low levels of awareness regarding the duties of the three councils. This implies that Jordanian constituents are going to the polls in August 2017 without much knowledge of the duties and the mandate of the councils they are voting for. This is an urgent call upon the Independent Election commission to raise levels of awareness and knowledge among voters. The discussion revealed a good number of respondents who were clueless to what the municipality should be doing. Most youth agreed that the municipality roles and duties can be summarized between infrastructure and basic services, as outlined below:

	Perceived role
Street Lighting & Traffic Lights	The municipality should handle fixing traffic lights. More important is their responsibility to ensure that street lights are working. Most of the complaints regarding study participants' neighborhoods revolved around street lights that are neglected by the municipality. Lightbulbs need to be replaced, and in many cases respondents have waited for months for work to be done and that sometimes bribing a municipality employee was necessary.
Public Sanitation and Quality of Sewage	It is the municipality's duty to ensure public sanitation and provide a high quality sewage system. Most participants complained about the lack of a reliable sewage system, stating that drainage is often worn out or requires replacement.
Licensing and Fines	The municipality should be in charge of issuing licenses to businesses and should also fine violators. Little was mentioned by participants on the details of these roles.
Garbage Collection	With unanimous agreement, study participants noted that one of the municipality's important roles is waste management and, specifically, timely garbage collection.
Insect Control, Stray Dogs, and Public Health	Another role of the municipality is to spray pesticides to control insects, to take care of stray dogs, to ensure general cleanliness and hygiene of the neighborhoods.
Road Maintenance	The municipality should be responsible for maintaining and fixing roads – without contributing to its own financial burden by commissioning unnecessary work.
Parks and Leisure Facilities	The municipality is a major contributor to having public parks and maintaining them, as well as building leisure facilities for youth.

The vast majority of participants had no idea what the duties of the '**Governorate Council'** are. Only a few of the participants guessed that security and solving community problems were among the various duties. Some Mafraq residents thought that the governorate council is a quasi 'justice department' or the 'security organ of the province.' According to them, the role of the Governorate Council is to compliment the role and duties of the municipality.

Youth from Irbid, Mafraq, and Jerash believe that the Governorate Council supervises the municipality and its staff. Balqa residents mentioned that they jail people but were unable to offer any more than that. Only one Amman resident described the council as a small parliament with "half of the council elected and the other half appointed." Another Zarqa resident claimed that he had heard about the council while doing some online reading on the decentralization law and process. A few residents of Tafileh stated that the council is an administrative body in the province, while only two Ma'an residents described the council as a link between the governorate and Amman.

When it came to the new initiative '**Executive Councils**' all study participants, except for a handful, knew little to nothing about what the Executive Council is or its duties or responsibilities. Some respondents mentioned that all they know is that "these councils have mansaf together, while networking and building stronger connections and Wasta amongst each other," or that "these councils are just created to host parties and mansaf gatherings."

2.6 Perceptions Regarding CSOs

Many participants were aware of the existence of NGOs/CSOs in their own governorate. Participants were mostly aware of and recognized many of the local and foreign NGOs/CSOs working on the ground in their neighborhoods/townships. While respondents claimed to know what type of services and activities these organizations provide, most of them were doing humanitarian work and few were directly engaged in any 'political' awareness activities that promoted understanding of the 'institutional/constitutional mandates' of certain local governance or administrative authorities. The same applies to the understanding of how Parliament works, and what is the mandate of MPs. Therefore, constituents have the wrong expectations, and consequently negative prospects/outlooks.

	Total	%		
		South	Center	North
Yes	**67%**	72%	61%	69%
No	**30%**	28%	34%	30%
Don't Know	**3%**	7%	5%	1%

Figure 20. Awareness levels NGOs/ CSOs

In Central governorates, participants feel that NGOs/CSOs are charitable in nature, for example: working with orphans, funding and raising awareness on various issues, or community development. In Northern governorates, youth mostly feel that the NGOs/CSOs work on charitable causes ranging from alleviating poverty, raising awareness, education, job training, supporting Syrian refugees and orphans, women's empowerment, or helping persons with disabilities. For Southern governorates, participants again claim that NGOs/CSOs are charitable in nature, working with children or refugees in education or employment training workshops.

	Total	%		
		South	Center	North
Yes	**71%**	73%	73%	67%
No	**25%**	25%	25%	24%
Don't Know	**4%**	2%	2%	9%

Figure 21. Do NGOs/CSOs offer services directly to you?

Low levels of direct service were reported in the North, validating remarks shared throughout discussions that Jordanians benefit less than Syrians from the work of NGOs/CSOs.

	Total	%		
		South	Center	North
Yes	**39%**	48%	45%	27%
No	**57%**	51%	52%	67%
Don't Know	**4%**	1%	3%	7%

Figure 22. Do you benefit from NGO/CSO services?

Again, lower levels of benefits were reported in the North, validating remarks shared throughout discussions that Jordanians benefit less than Syrians from the work of NGOs/CSOs.

	Total	%		
		South	Center	North
Yes	**38%**	50%	35%	31%
No	**60%**	50%	64%	67%
Don't Know	**2%**		1%	7%

Figure 23. Are you a member of/do you participate in any of the activities offered by NGOs?

Some participants have worked or volunteered with NGOs/CSOs. Figures 23 and 24 depict the level of engagement with NGOs/CSOs or volunteering in general and show that engagement is more limited in the North and Center regions.

	Total	%		
		South	Center	North
Yes	**47%**	53.5 %	49 %	38%
No	**52%**	46.5%	50%	61%
Don't Know	**0.5%**		1%	1%

Figure 24. Do you engage in any volunteer work?

2.6.1 Most Recalled NGOs/CSOs

The following table outlines the names of the leading NGOs/CSOs as perceived by the research participant by region.

	Leading NGOs/CSOs
Central Governorates	All Jordan Youth Commission (AJYC), UNRWA, INJAZ, UNICEF, Tkiyet Um Ali, Moa'assasat Madaba Bi Eyon Shababha, USAID, Jamiyat Basmet Al Khair.
Northern Governorates	Jamiyat Al-Mohafatha Al Al Quran Al Kareem, All Jordan Youth Commission (AJYC), UNICEF, CARE, UNDP, MAKANI, Sandouq Al Mar'aa.
Southern Governorates	Women's Federation, Princess Basma Center, USAID, Ahl Al Hemmeh, Nadi Al Ebdaa (Creativity Club), All Jordan Youth Commission (AJYC), Jamiyat Al Anwar, UNICEF, Jamiyat Sayidat Al-Tafileh, Danish Refugee Council, Markez Shabab Al Ghad, Jamiyat Zain Al Sharaf.

Figure 25. Leading NGOs/CSOs by Ranking

Both royal NGOs and small CSOs were acknowledged and mentioned during the focus groups, including a considerable number of foreign organizations as well. The NGOs mentioned mostly work for humanitarian causes supporting marginalized segments of society, such as the Jordan Hashemite Charity and Tkiyet Umm Ali, but also include non-charity organizations like the Qur'an Recitation/Memorization Organizations.
All Jordan Youth Commission was mentioned in addition to INJAZ, EU and USAID funded programs, CARE, Caritas, Red Crescent, UNICEF, Mercy Corps (an organization particularly praised for their trustworthy groundwork staff).

One notable youth organization that was heavily involved in raising youth awareness on decentralization and other initiatives is Muassasat Madaba Bioyoun Shababha Liltanmiya (مؤسسة مادبا بعيون شبابها للتنمية). Youth from Madaba stated that there are around 140 NGOs operating in Madaba, but there are only a handful of organizations that are reputable and worth mentioning.
- Princess Basma Youth Resource Center was often mentioned among various governorates, along with JOHUD (Jordan Hashemite Fund for Human Development).
- UNRWA, USAID, UNICEF and the Islamic Charity Center as well as other local charities were mentioned by Zarqa residents.
- Save the Children and USAID were not represented in Ajloun, but their help impacted and reached citizens in Ajloun.
- USAID was again mentioned in Jerash for building schools.
- Jordan River Foundation was specifically mentioned by youth from Mafraq.
- Injaz was mentioned by male participants from Tafileh.
- Karak boasted Nadi Al Ibda'a - the Creativity Club, which today is featured nationally as a role model organization. In addition, they mentioned the Justice Center for Legal Aid, and the Danish Council.

Lower levels of recall were found from urban Amman and Zarqa and females were more active. In Madaba and Tafileh, the majority of both males and females could name active NGOs and CSOs in their area. In Ajloun and Irbid, males were more engaged in contrast to Mafraq and Ma'an, whereas females were more active.

2.6.2 Strengths and Weaknesses of CSOs

The perceived role of NGOs and CSOs varied from providing support to marginalized segments of society, to providing capacity building and spreading awareness among youth and members of the community. It is noteworthy that, with the exception of Madaba, Mafraq, and Ma'an residents, none of the youth from other governorates could see any role for NGOs and CSOs in the decentralization process.

With the exception of Ammanis, participants had very negative perceptions and reviews regarding NGOs and CSOs in general. Accusations of profiteering and personal gains were dominant among the overwhelming majority of participants. Lack of oversight was also a reason for such negative judgment. Participants from Madaba stated that some NGOs are monopolized by the same tribe and the NGO becomes devoted to benefiting the tribe only. "Some NGOs are fake and inactive," as several participants noted. "Donations are going to unknown destinations…there is corruption and theft" as noted by several other participants.

- Zarqa residents complained that "local CSOs have been working with the same group of youths for over a year, and have not given a chance to other young people." Many feel that there are NGOs/ CSOs that are just there "for show," and one participant mentioned that "while distributing food and clothing to the less privileged is nice, we have to start supporting local talents, creativity and entrepreneurship." Those who were familiar with local NGOs had extremely negative views, and are not impressed by any of their achievements. "Corruption and only benefiting their members and certain people, while gaining personal benefits such as travelling at the expenses of the NGO, living in luxurious houses, buying lavish cars" were also mentioned by a few participants. A term that was very widely used by the youth was (حاميها حراميها) indicating that those who are assigned to protect Jordan (officials, those in power, NGOs…etc) are those who are robbing it.
- In Ajloun, NGOs were accused of "using the young and taking advantage of their potential and energy." Residents had little faith in most of the CSOs with management accused of corruption.
- While Jerash residents had positive perceptions, they complained about the lack of strong relations between CSOs and members of the local community.
- Female Irbid residents accused NGOs of taking advantage of the poor and the disabled in order to put up a façade that will helped them fundraise. According to some participants, 'Nashmeyat Al Shamal' is scamming everybody. They raised the issue of lack of oversight on CSOs, suggesting that establishing a CSO depends on how socially well-connected one is within the community.
- Mafraq residents complained that, while all NGOs have helped and supported them, they mostly offer services to Syrian refugees.
- Aqaba residents claimed that "foreign aid is not distributed to the right people and that those in charge only show fake news related to community service and support to the media, whereas in reality they take all the funds to themselves." Female participants said that most aid goes to hospitality, food, gifts, and accommodation expenses. "They invite us to an event, when we arrive, they ask to take a group photo with all attendees, and post the photo online to pretend that they are at least offering events. Upon taking the photo, they dismiss everyone – we're not even given a lecture or training."
- Karak residents also spoke of corruption and Wasta, mentioning aid that does not reach the people said aid was originally was intended for.
- Ma'an residents complained of the lack of transparency, personal interests, corruption, and limited monitoring or accountability. "People in charge steal and they establish NGOs for their personal benefits. They store food until it expires instead of distributing it to those in need." "They receive a lot of foreign aid, designated for orphans, but they do not give it to the orphans." Males in Ma'an

went as far as point out that some employees were sympathetic towards radical and terrorist organizations.

- Finally, male Tafileh residents spoke of corruption and theft witnessed within NGOs. "Sometimes NGOs receive up to 150,000 JDs , and no one knows where the money goes." "The aid they receive is distributed among the members and the president, and by doing so, no one knows how they help those in need." Some respondents pointed out that "certain CSOs encourage radicalization, and spread radical ideologies." Female residents from the same governorate, on the other hand, mentioned that "NGOs/CBOs do not distribute aid and they give it to their friends and relatives."

2.6.3 Characteristics Required and Role in Decentralization

Respondents were asked whether they felt that local CSOs have the capacity to monitor the work of the elected councils, and hold them accountable. The low expectations and trust further validate the negative perceptions pertaining to NGOs/ CSOs.

	Total	%		
		South	Center	North
Yes	**36%**	44%	33%	31%
No	**58%**	52%	57%	65%
Don't Know	**6%**	4%	10%	4%

Figure 26. Do you think local CSOs have the capacity to monitor elected councils?

Finally, the most important skills that youth feel are needed to enable CSOs to play a tangible role in the local governance include: Integrity, Honesty, Credibility, Monitoring Capabilities, the needed Authority, and Funding, as outlined in the following figure:

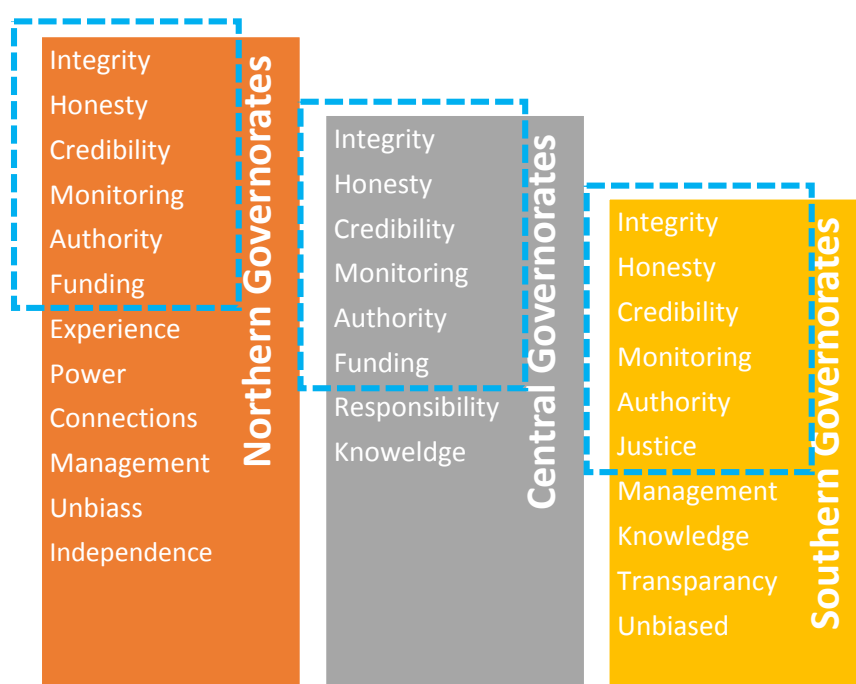| Northern Governorates	Central Governorates	Southern Governorates
Integrity	Integrity	Integrity
Honesty	Honesty	Honesty
Credibility	Credibility	Credibility
Monitoring	Monitoring	Monitoring
Authority	Authority	Authority
Funding	Funding	Justice
Experience	Responsibility	Management
Power	Knoweldge	Knowledge
Connections		Transparancy
Management		Unbiased
Unbiass		
Independence		

Figure 27. Characteristics NGO's/ CSO's need

Section 3. Decentralization

The following section of the report focuses on the "Concept of Decentralization." After acquiring spontaneous responses related to decentralization, its perceived advantages and disadvantages, participants were read a 1 page explanatory concept on decentralization (provided by USAID CIS). A copy of the concept note can be found in Annex 3 of this report. Spontaneous responses, as well as the perceived roles of citizens in the process as well as expectations and reservations of youth were also captured.

<u>Are participants aware that there will be elections later this year?</u>
The majority of participants are aware that elections will be held later this year. However, higher awareness is noted in the North regarding municipal elections rather than decentralization. This is more balanced in the South and knowledge tilts towards the municipal in the Center.

	Total	%		
		South	Center	North
Yes	**83%**	88%	73%	89%
No	**15%**	11%	24%	10%
No Answer	**2%**	1%	3%	2%

Figure 28. Are you aware that there will be elections later this year?

	Total	%		
		South	Center	North
Yes	**68%**	51%	64%	88%
No	**28%**	48%	28%	7%
Don't Know	**4%**	1%	8%	5%

Figure 29. Are you aware of the dates of the elections?

Are participants aware of the election date?
Respondents rarely knew that the exact date of the elections would be August 15th; the majority of participants from the Center and South are not aware. Those responsible are not efficiently advertising these dates to target youth. People are aware of elections taking place, but minorities acknowledge what type of elections and when they are held; needless to mention the mandate of the to-be-elected councils.

	Total	%		
		South	Center	North
August	**20%**	25%	12%	22%
August 15th	**9%**	9%	9%	9%
Don't Know	**62%**	62%	75%	49%
May, June, September	**9%**	4%	4%	20%

Figure 30. Are you aware of the election date?

3.1 Perceptions and Spontaneous Recall of Awareness Concerning Decentralization

The majority of youth knew very little or nothing about decentralization. The lack of interest and/or knowledge is evident, specifically in central governorates, and across the board, with slightly higher levels in the South.

	Total	%		
		South	Center	North
Yes	**49%**	58%	37%	52%
No	**51%**	42%	63%	48%

Figure 31. Did you hear about decentralization prior to the focus group?

Many youth heard about decentralization from university and their studies during Tawjihi. Participants stated that they had heard about decentralization from friends, through the media, news providers (TV and online), or from members of a family. A small group of study participants stated that they had heard about decentralization through local CSOs, or outdoor advertisements on decentralization (primarily in Amman). The low ranking of advertising and CSOs indicates current advertising by IEC is ineffective, as are CSO activities. A very small minority of respondents who attended seminars or workshops on the concept had a fair idea about the law and the process.

Males (26-35) were more cynical about the process, but could not come up with a definition. Some stated it was merely "a new form of corruption," while others said that "decentralization meant new appointments (new positions) and therefore an added burden to the government budgets. Females had similar cynical views, stating that decentralization is "something political" and that it would probably be "an authority without a center."

Madaba and Tafileh participants had been far more exposed to the concept of decentralization than other governorates. "It is like a small parliament for the province, and the council is formed by the locals and can benefit the people in the region better than officials in Amman would be able to." Some females stated that decentralization involved "the distribution of authorities and the councils as well as the management of each province of itself like a small government". Others mentioned "independence from Amman" and "becoming a self-ruling province/governorate." The USA was mentioned by a few participants as an example.

Overall, there was limited trust in the endeavor based on previous experiences with local or central government policies and past election – whether national or municipal. Individual response sheets indicate that only half of the research participants feel that decentralization may solve some of the problems mentioned in section 1 of the report. In the more tribal culture of the South, expectations from tribal candidates are naturally higher than in the center, where, as seen before, the level of interest is lower.

	Total	%		
		South	Center	North
Yes	**53%**	60%	44%	56%
No	**37%**	31%	44%	35%
Don't know	**10%**	9%	12%	9%

Figure 32. Will Decentralization solve perceived problems in Jordan?

There seems to be low understanding and awareness of how decentralization works. Findings reveal somewhat positive expectations of decentralization as a concept for local governance.

	Total Mean	Approval Mean Scores		
		South	Center	North
Decentralization is a positive step towards local governance	**5.7**	5.7	5.7	5.8
I understand how decentralization is going to happen on the ground	**4.1**	4.2	3.9	4.2

Figure 33. Awareness and Trust in Decentralization

Several participants called decentralization (ضحك على اللحى). Others feel that there will be no impact, describing the decentralization endeavor as 'failure,' 'embezzlement,' 'corruption,' 'a financial burden,' and a means to encourage 'Wasta.' Like other election cycles before, youth agreed that they do not stand to benefit from any of it. The current running candidates are simply not wealthy enough to buy votes, and that having or not having decentralization elections is the same (وجودها و عدم وجودها واحد). Some were hopeful that decentralization might change things for the better, but stated that it will depend on what they termed "tribal composition" (راح تتأثر حسب عشيرة المجلس).

3.2 Decentralization Concept Test

Once spontaneous impressions related to decentralization were gathered, a brief background on decentralization was read out.

Upon reading the excerpt on decentralization, some participants were skeptical that things would go in the right direction; to believe in the concept, they would first need to see positive, tangible results. Perhaps one of the most critical insights was observing the body language and engagement with other focus group participants while the concept was being read. In general, respondents seemed fairly uninterested. in a few focus groups the moderator, was asked to repeat the concept as participants had stopped paying attention. A considerable number of the participants also admitted to not understanding anything upon hearing the concept explained. Overall, there was a slight increase in positive expectations of decentralization as a concept of local governance after the concept had been explained, as outlined in the following table. Participants were asked to indicate how strongly they agree/disagree with the sentence that "decentralization is a positive step towards local governance" before reading the concept, and then after reading the concept. This indicates that attitudes regarding decentralization improved as they learned more about the process – something also noted during the focus group discussions.

	Total Mean	Approval Mean Scores		
		South	Center	North
Decentralization is a positive step towards local governance (**Pretest**)	**5.7**	5.7	5.7	5.8
Decentralization is a positive step towards local governance (**Posttest**)	**6.7**	6.6	6.8	6.9

Figure 34. Awareness and Trust in Decentralization

Younger males could identify a higher engagement by citizens in the decision-making process and, substantially, in the form of voting. Others, specifically residents of Balqa and Madaba, expressed disinterest and negative feelings after the text was read out. Most respondents were concerned about the involvement of Wasta and corruption: "it is a great thing if it is implemented as it is supposed to be… however, Jordanians are very talented at manipulating the system and turning it around to their own personal interests, and this often involves corrupt actions." Most of the youth also felt that people will vote for their relatives and members of their tribe. As one participant put it, "90% of those who will vote will vote only for their cousins from their tribe, or vote for someone from their village." There also seems to be an overall consensus across all regions and governorates that "Jordanians have lost trust in the 'so-called' democratic process in Jordan."

Female participants shared slightly more positive views, as many were hopeful that things could become better and that decentralization may help improve their local communities. Some respondents stated that this would be a good link between the people and the government, especially if the process engages youth and includes them in the decision-making process.

3.2.1 Perceived Role of Citizens in the Decentralization Process

How the process of decentralization will link the Governorate Councils and citizens remains unclear to most youth. In general, male respondents had no understanding of what their role in decentralization could be. Female participants understood their role to be participatory through voting or by actually running as candidates. Many respondents also mentioned that "voting for the right candidate," and "spreading awareness of the importance of decentralization" are all important contributions that youth could engage in. Some participants also suggested collaborating with NGOs to try to make the process more successful.

Female participants did not have many questions regarding decentralization. On the other hand, male respondents harbored some serious and legitimate questions primarily concerning the academic qualifications of candidates. Other questions centered on the potential conflicts between the Executive and Governorate councils. For example, what would be the governor's role in the decentralization process? Would he be among the appointed 15%? And what is the relationship between the municipality and the Governorate Council?

Male Madaba residents had more substantial concerns. These included questions such as: why does Jordan have a House of Representatives if there will be a council for decentralization? Are candidates required to have a strong academic background? The absence of a minimal academic requirement is thought to be "in the best interest of the government that candidates are uneducated." According to skeptics of the decentralization program, this lack of an academic requirement and the 15% appointed rule ensures a way for the government to control the process.

Other questions included: will the council be responsible for setting the budget? What is the percentage of women on the council? And how can citizens hold the decentralization process accountable? (كيف يمكن للمواطن محاسبة اللامركزية). The research findings reveal that a rigorous outreach campaign is necessary to better explain the purpose, roles, mandate, council composition, and other candidate requirements of the decentralization process.

3.2.2 Expectations and Reservations

An overwhelming majority of the youth initially had high expectations for the concept of local governance. During the discussions, many mentioned that only time will tell if such positive expectations were realistic.

	Total	%		
		South	Center	North
Yes	77%	80%	70%	82%
No	20%	18%	28%	16%
No Answer	2%	2%	2%	2%

Figure 35. Do you think the Governorate Councils are a good idea to make decisions on governorate needs?

Youth suspected that, because "elections are held within 4 months," it is insufficient time to make all the people aware about the decentralization process, a fact that reflects a suspect image of the Governorate Council. It appeared to several respondents that the "government did not really want people to know what decentralization really is," or that the government does not want to allow enough time for people to examine and question the process.

Furthermore, participants opposed holding both decentralization and municipality elections on the same day. Their fear is that doing so would facilitate tribal influence on the elections.

Female respondents were generally more positively disposed: "it will take time to start affecting the country." Some participants claimed that the success of decentralization depends on whether "the people give their votes to the right candidates or not." Some also felt that decentralization means MPs will no longer be engaged in the local community and that their role will become legislative only. According to the minority of respondents who had a strong understanding of the decentralization process, this effect would be a great step towards prosperity.

There was some hope that decentralization might bring investment to local projects, so as long as those in power govern in a conscientious manner (المهم يشتغلو بذمة و ضمير). The youth felt that, if properly implemented, decentralization has potential to have a significant impact on people's lives, especially if Jordan's youth are involved and their qualifications used to their full potential. Some respondents also stated that it will become easier for citizens to do their business formalities in their provinces without the need to go to Amman for approval or paperwork.

In terms of values, decentralization is expected to benefit the province by naturally shifting authority from Amman to the governorate level. Doing so is expected to result in an increase in accountability by a province's citizens. "The Governorate Council will be in the same region/town, and we can see the members around town, and complain to them directly if they are not doing their job correctly."

It was also understood that decentralization will provide many services that people currently lack, while helping to decrease the number of problems citizens are facing in the neighborhoods. "It will be for the best, duties will be distributed properly and things will get done." "People will be hired and decentralization candidates will be closer to the people than MPs." It was stated that, since a young man can run for decentralization at the minimum age of 25, if youth elect qualified candidates and there is coordination between the committees, the decentralization process would be sure to succeed.

On the other hand, study participants did have some reservations and concerns; they feel that the process will be corrupted like other national elections. Many of the youth agreed that "the electoral culture in Jordan is corrupted and people are hopeless when it comes to any form of elections." Based on experience, youth have lost trust in most candidates running for any kind of governmental position. "We fear it will become like the MPs and they will neglect us and become useless and corrupted, pursuing personal interests." Hence, the Governorate Council could very well not be any different than the existing MPs and can become tribally effected and corrupted easily. Concerns about Wasta and nepotism were evident with underlying fear of discrimination between people based on tribal and family affiliations. There is also fear that the old, wealthy, powerful, uneducated and corrupt tribesmen would then assume these positions.

Male participants had mixed expectations for the decentralization process. While some welcomed it as a positive step, others had their doubts. Youth participants hoped that the Governorate Councils would become a substitute to the MPs and some called the proposal a step forward to positively change the political parties in the provinces. Respondents from Madaba, however, had negative expectations saying: "if the governorate council is formed by old people and tribal leaders (sheikhs), it will negatively impact the lives of youth." The common perception is that elders and tribal leaders have not advocated for the rights of youth in the past.

Many participants expressed the fear that decentralization "will be ruined by the tribes and the candidates relying on their tribes." Many participants stated that most people will vote for their tribe members and not based on qualifications, and that "only those who are educated are willing to vote for candidates based on their qualifications." Interestingly, many participants, especially from Southern and Northern governorates, stated that their tribes were forming alliances with other tribes based on which tribes will run for the municipal elections and which will run for decentralization. This suggestion indicates that the democratic process is heavily influenced by tribal decision-making processes. In fact, many respondents claimed that senior members of the tribe will determine whether the tribe will nominate a candidate and will dictate who will run as a candidate. The general sense is that one will not risk running for elections, (whether parliamentary, municipal or decentralization), without the confidence of having the vote of the tribe. A few youth shared the concern that decentralization might increase ethnic nationalism across the Kingdom, while many feared that the tribal system will rule decentralization and it will become a useless council that will only work for personal and tribal interests.

According to participants, some tribal disputes are so complex that the government cannot hope to resolve them. Statements highlighting that illiteracy and ignorance among many people within the tribe can be an important factor affecting the elections. "It will become like the parliamentary elections and candidates backed by their tribes will end up winning."

Some respondents cautioned it was not the time for decentralization and that it will add an unnecessary burden on the deficit. Increasing costs on the government will in turn reflect itself on the citizens through increased taxes and fees.

Residents of Aqaba stated that "candidates are running for decentralization and asking for support even though most of them do not know what decentralization is." Study participants from Ma'an voiced the same concern: "we fear that the tribes will take control of the process and nominate unqualified candidates who are old and unaware of the problems of the youth."

Finally, a minority of study participants stated that CSOs can play a role in decentralization (ممكن تكون منصة اعلامية). To this minority, CSOs can provide volunteers, contribute to awareness campaigns, and help convey the views and demands of the people to the Governorate Councils.

Most male respondents were not enthusiastic about engagement in the decentralization monitoring process of the Governorate Council while female participants were more inclined. However, there was decidedly more enthusiasm among citizens of Madaba, Ajloun, Karak and Jerash. In the Southern Governorates, more male and fewer female respondents were willing to engage, and citizens from urban Zarqa, Irbid and Mafraq were less enthusiastic.

Youth were, on the whole, interested in monitoring the elections, reporting illegal action and vote buying, preventing groups of influencers at the door of the voting center, counting votes, and spreading awareness.

Part four of the report tackles public engagement of youth in terms of their inclination to vote in the upcoming municipal and decentralization elections, probing several areas including their electoral culture and sense for engagement in the public space.

4.1 Inclination to Vote During the August 2017 Elections

A majority of male respondents reported that they intended to cast their vote for both upcoming elections. One study participant from Tafileh remarked that "it was not up to them anyway whether they vote of not." In the Center region, there was more inclination to participate in the municipal elections than decentralization. This is is to be expected, as since youth from the region are more concerned about municipal affairs and there is less of a tribal culture in these communities compared to most of the North and South regions. A minority of male respondents opted not to vote and these participants were mainly from the Central governorates.

A higher majority of female respondents will be participating in the upcoming elections; some participants did, however, make it conditional on the availability of good candidates. There was hope that the candidates running for office would be young so that they will be active and have a modern vision towards handling the future of the country.

Voting for women candidates was a non-issue, with the clear majority indicating that they would not mind giving their vote to a female candidate.

	Total	%		
		South	Center	North
Yes	17%	18%	16%	17%
No	82%	82%	83%	81%
No Answer	1%		1%	2%

Figure 36. Do you mind giving your vote to a female candidate?

Furthermore, most youth do not mind giving their vote to a young candidate, as shown below:

	Total	%		
		South	Center	North
Yes	18%	22.5%	13%	19%
No	81%	77.5%	86%	80%
No Answer	1%		1%	2%

Figure 37. Do you mind giving your vote to a young candidate?

The majority of those from the South and North regions claim to be participating, although the percentage seems lower for the Southern governorates.

	Total	%		
		South	Center	North
Yes	**66%**	60%	57%	82%
No	**33%**	39%	43%	17%
No Answer	**1%**	1%		1%

Figure 38. Are you going to participate by voting?

4.1.1 Perceptions and Attitudes towards the Elections

Overall, there is recognition of the importance of both elections. Some see voting as a national duty towards the country and a vital part of being active members of the democratic process. Others were hoping for "a time of change," and a positive step forward. Voting is a form of 'accountability' a youth from Zarqa stated: "I can have the right to complain about the mayor or the members of the municipal council when they do not do their jobs properly." Some youth are hoping for good candidates (female participants were more articulate about this hope) and many respondents implied that "decentralization is a new positive concept that youth must support."

However, there are some deep-rooted negative perceptions towards elections across all governorates. This lack of trust in the process is mainly because of the current electoral culture of "buying votes and faking results" and from corruption, bribery, and Wasta. An important aspect of selling votes is justified by the economic hardship people face. As one youth stated: "there are some people whom you cannot blame for selling their votes, as they are really in need of the 50 JD they may earn in exchange for their vote." In some cases, participants mentioned that 30 minutes before ballots are closed, one's vote could be valued at 350 JD or even more.

"Both Ghazi Alayyan and Nasser Qaisi have given bribes for people to vote for them" Amman
"There is widespread behavior of paying bribes and vote buying" Balqa

Respondents generally believe that there is a fake culture among the people related to elections because the electoral culture is tribally oriented and powerful tribes end up winning most positions. "Because Jordan is a tribal country, there is no need to vote for someone not from the tribe," as one youth put it. Most of those who win the elections are perceived as "very powerful and wealthy" – a new trend sweeping the tribal regions. Additionally, there is overall bad experiences with MPs which we have detailed above in previous sections.

One respondent stated that "Atef El Tarawneh has been the speaker of the house forever," questioning whether there are no other candidates for the job. There is a common perception that officials in the country are moving from one position to another, and that the highest positions in the state are inherited or given to satisfy or please certain persons as "tardiyah." Even the position of governor is becoming a position for retired officials who once held high positions in the state.

As such, as one Zarqa resident openly stated, "there is no need to vote as all positions in the country are inherited or appointed and the elections are just a façade, an image to show the world that we have democracy." Participants from Ma'an described the process as "a hopeless case...one that is not worth the

effort. Every time we vote, we see the same results…it is all talk and no action because it is such a corrupt process, with people selling their votes." One participant stated: (ألبرلمان هو عبارة عن لعبة كراسي).

4.1.2 Candidate Choice

Most youth do not know who they are voting for. A few names were mentioned based on the participant experience and goodwill. Reasons why some candidates were chosen include:

- Candidate is perceived to help people and engage in charitable work.
- Candidate is very popular due to his speeches at the parliament and is widely respected because of his integrity and religiosity.
- Candidate is bold and defended the country in the face of Prime Minister Al Mulqi.
- Candidate is praised for doing many good things during his services.
- Candidate is perceived as trustworthy, and a man who knows what he is doing.
- Candidate was described as a man who did plenty of good work for the city, in particularly improving the city aesthetically by planting trees, and making the entrance to Ma'an presentable.

	Total	%		
		South	Center	North
Yes	**29%**	30%	23%	33%
No	**71%**	69%	77%	67%
No Answer		1%		

Figure 39. Do you know who you are planning on voting for?

4.1.3 The Tribal Electoral Culture

Most of the research participants claim that they voted for a tribe's candidate voluntarily or by moral persuasion. As previously mentioned throughout the report, the tribal system is strong in Jordan and some participants in both rural and urban centers harbor negative feelings towards 'tribally influenced' elections.

Young tribal members stated that they would not dare to oppose their elders, even when they know said elders are wrong. Most state that this is the way the Kingdom was founded a long time ago. "The tribes rule political life in the Kingdom." Others endorsed the fact that "tribalism has lots of advantages and that they can nominate great candidates." However, "when racism and fanaticism are involved, tribalism becomes a negative aspect," and the people from the same tribe become only concerned that their candidates will win to show off their tribe's power and influence.

Generally, youth are under the impression that MPs spend time on services and hiring and employment, rather than their real job – which is to vote on legislation. A Balqa resident asked "why change this culture of tribalism, if my tribe member can help me more than help strangers?" As such, many youth end up voting for a member of their tribe, when no other candidates are felt to be worthy of their vote. Some youth also vote for tribal members "due to the lack of positive and productive political parties in Jordan, as they are seen as a taboo" and a way to go to prison.

Some observations on tribal electoral culture include:
- In the villages, women are especially pressured to vote for someone; often a member of a tribe. Many complained that they had been forced to vote for a candidate by their father or husband. Many females from villages and rural areas openly admitted that it was up to their husbands, fathers, or the men in their families to determine whether they would participate by voting or not.
- Some young men and women stated that they would "vote for member of tribe no matter what" is said or done.
- Many young tribesmen claim that they are forced to vote with the family, for fear of being disowned, and therefore feel obliged to support the tribe. (انا مجبور اصوت لعشيرتي)
- Furthermore, participants claim that they must support their family and tribes; one participant stated (انا و اخوي ع أبن عمي).

4.2 Characteristics of Candidate of Choice

Apart from the rhetoric of what can be described as a 'good' candidate (for example, one who 'fears God'), perceived qualifications for candidates of choice typically center around 'good reputation' and the ability to 'understand society and the city needs and demands' and being 'close to the people.' Youth prefer a candidate who is young; religious and God fearing; conscious; honest; educated and cultures; bold (one who does not fear the government); experienced; a person of integrity with leadership qualities. Some mentioned a candidate that was 'not a member of the establishment and not the son of a Ministry or the son of an MP.'

- There is consensus among youth that green energy sources, agriculture, and tourism constitute **main resources that can be put to good use**, apart from the most important resource, the human being. Apart from 'development gap' and, by default, the lack of investments and capital funding in the governorate, corruption, Wasta, and nepotism remain the most important hurdles in the face of putting Jordan's resources to great use and efficient investment.

- There is a **general dissatisfaction and negative perceptions towards municipalities** in the country, and low levels of satisfaction towards basic municipal services and infrastructural planning and maintenance. Participants lamented the general unresponsiveness of municipal staff to constituent grievances and complaints. Again, corruption and Wasta seem to be guiding perceptions in this regard. On the other hand, young participants were not at all aware of the 'constituent-municipal share of responsibility.' Very few spoke of total dependency on municipalities to deal with certain grievances like garbage collection and street cleanliness. They were also less aware of municipal budgetary constraints, and other financial difficulties these communities suffer from. None spoke or even seemed aware of obligations towards municipalities in terms of city taxes and dues. This also seems to be the case when we discuss 'right and duties' and the obligations of true citizenship, an area that CSOs can promote and raise awareness about. Complaining seems to be a national past-time but here specifically, civil society is most to blame.

- With regards to the '**Development Gap**' between urban and rural, Amman vs. other governorates, participants agree on the lack of equal distribution of economic benefits and rewards.

- While study participants were aware of municipal duties and mandates, most participants were much less knowledgeable when it comes to **Governorate Councils** and the 'Executive Councils' under the new Decentralization Law. A more active role in awareness raising can be expected from the IEC, active CSOs on the ground, and state and private media. Whether the public is 'interested' remains to be seen.

- While there is a general **acknowledgement of CSOs/NGOs**, few CSOs garnered any praise for their role in the community. In fact, accusations of corruption, personal interest, profiteering and exclusion, limited outreach, and other grievances were striking. However, several CSOs can be trusted with the duty of awareness building, monitoring, and holding officials accountable. Strangely, foreign NGOs seem to be enjoying a positive reputation – including one local initiative in Karak and one in Madaba.

- There is still a good deal of **social cohesion** within the rural/tribal population centers. There is a strong bond between the family and tribal structures. Some townships complained about crowding in basic services as a result of the refugee influx into the labor market. However, despite some cultural differences, Jordanians seem to have adapted to the fact that Jordan is indeed a welcoming and human place for refugees. Nevertheless, in urban areas, this bond is weakening.

- Where **decentralization** is concerned, there seems to be a very **low level of awareness** of the duties, responsibilities, and mandates of such constitutional-institutional bodies and official structure such as the 'Governorate and Executive Councils.' Youth seem to be going to the polls without adequate understanding of the constitutional mandate of these elected bodies, and the link between citizens, councils, and the central government; a deficit by relevant authorities like the IEC, and active local

NGOs/CSOs. While youth in general see decentralization as 'a step forward,' there is a great deal of skepticism that there will be repetition of what they termed 'manipulated' elections, and already 'doomed' outcomes. Expectations are not high and reservations exist that these bodies 'will be formed by old people and tribal leaders, a fact that will negatively impact out life as they never helped us.' "It will be ruined by tribes and the unqualified candidates running relying on their tribes." This is a new trend of open criticism of the 'status quo.' Comparisons with MPs are made, but the overall attitudes towards the 'services representatives' could be a result of lack of adequate awareness and understanding of what their mandate is. The Parliament is a house of legislation and not a 'job brokerage house,' although other factors are responsible for that state of affairs. This is another deficit on part of various donor-funded CSOs that seem to be holding the 'wrong type of awareness workshops.' Obviously, there is a lack of outreach and information. The IEC must start with a well-designed awareness campaign.

- Finally, there seems to be major **trust gap between youth and government** and widespread apathy and discontent. National sentiments are no better in fact; many youth seem to have given up on governments and civil society. The effect of this is weak participation in the public space and political engagement. There is potential in this area for CSOs to re-invent themselves and their programs. Education is also an important element in the development of responsible and active citizenship.

- The **tribal electoral culture** seems to dominate. The state does not come through as a provider of equal opportunity, fair and equitable service delivery, and above all the mainstay of 'respect and dignity' for all.

- Finally, and most importantly, the focus group discussions revealed for the first time, and in no feeble manner, the **strong frustrations and criticism against tribal leadership** and their monopoly of public life including national, municipal, and proposed decentralization elections.