



Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the
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The reality of women's and youth participation in decision- making and peacebuilding

(the study in: East Jerusalem, Ramallah, Jericho, Bethlehem, and Hebron)

Prepared to Nisa'a FM Radio

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Executive Summary

The participation of women and youth in decision-making and peacebuilding is a fundamental pillar for promoting political and social development in societies that uphold justice, equity, and equal opportunities. In the Palestinian context, this participation is doubly significant due to complex challenges posed by the Israeli occupation, political division, economic constraints, and social limitations. Despite these obstacles, women's and youth institutions are making significant efforts, supported by international frameworks such as UN Security Council Resolutions 1325 and 2250, which recognize women and youth as key actors in peace processes and decision-making.

Within this context, there is an urgent need to assess the current reality of women's and youth participation in decision-making and peacebuilding, identify gaps and needs, and provide actionable recommendations. This report presents a study conducted by researcher Mohammad Faisal Shuaibi and his research team on behalf of Nisaa FM Radio, in partnership with Search for Common Ground and with the support of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as part of the project Grassroots to Global: The Voice of Communities Reaching the World – Enabling Women and Youth to Strengthen Resilience, Recovery, and Influence Policymaking. The study was conducted between 28 June and 15 August 2025, employing a mixed-methods approach including literature review, field surveys (404 participants across five governorates: East Jerusalem, Ramallah and Al-Bireh, Jericho, Bethlehem, and Hebron), in-depth interviews with 15 experts and activists of both genders in women's and youth issues, conflict resolution, and peacebuilding, and two workshops with youth and representatives of women's and youth organizations.

The main results

The study shows that women and youth have historically played a vital role in national, political, and social struggles through participation in revolutions, national conferences, civil associations, and national institutions. However, their formal participation in leadership and decision-making positions remains limited due to male dominance, weak laws and enforcement, persistent influence of traditional elites, political division, economic hardship, and occupation policies. Participation is higher at the family level but declines at the level of political parties, local councils, and national institutions, where their voices are often symbolic rather than influential. Geographical variations were evident, with Jericho and Hebron showing stronger participation in some areas, while Bethlehem and Jerusalem reflected weaker influence due to stricter social and political constraints. Women and youth face overlapping political, legal, social, and economic challenges that collectively undermine their capacity to influence decision-making effectively.

At the same time, the study highlights a widening generational gap between youth and traditional political elites. While young people are highly active in informal networks, universities, and digital platforms, they feel excluded from formal structures and perceive decision-making processes as monopolized by older generations. This exclusion has created frustration and a sense of alienation but has also generated innovative forms of civic engagement that bypass formal institutions. Women face a parallel struggle, with token representation in committees and councils rarely translating into real authority or policy influence.

The findings also show that Palestinian society places relatively higher trust in women and youth compared to established elites, particularly regarding transparency, inclusiveness, and integrity. Yet

this trust has not been fully harnessed by institutions. Translating it into real leadership opportunities could help rebuild public confidence in governance. Economic empowerment, digital literacy, and institutional reforms that ensure accountability were identified as key enablers to transform symbolic roles into substantive ones and unlock the full potential of women and youth as agents of sustainable peace and democratic renewal.

Recommendations

The study provides a comprehensive set of recommendations aimed at expanding numerical representation and improving the quality of women's and youth participation in decision-making and peacebuilding, including:

Political and institutional representation: Adopt mandatory quota systems for women and youth in legislative and local councils, with monitoring mechanisms to ensure real impact, and establish a virtual youth-women shadow council to provide effective parallel representation.

Capacity building: Develop specialized educational and training programs in leadership, negotiation, politics, and diplomacy, integrate these skills into curricula, and link them to practical opportunities and leadership roles.

Legal and policy frameworks: Review and amend existing laws, issue innovative legislation granting youth the right to direct participation, implement monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, and strengthen transitional justice to enhance public trust in institutions.

Cultural and social transformation: Launch awareness campaigns to challenge stereotypes and patriarchal norms, involve local leaders and institutions to ensure societal acceptance, and consider geographical variations when designing interventions.

Economic empowerment: Provide sustainable funding for women's and youth initiatives, create employment opportunities, and support policies that combine economic security with community and political participation.

Peacebuilding and conflict resolution: Involve women and youth in reconciliation and negotiation committees, expand safe spaces and initiatives, and develop specialized programs in mediation and dialogue to enhance their influence.

Dialogue, education, and volunteerism: Promote dialogue programs, integrate peacebuilding and crisis resolution concepts into educational curricula, and support volunteerism with institutional recognition, and increase women's and youth participation in decision-making across all levels, accounting for geographic distribution.

Chapter one: Introduction and methodology

Introduction

The participation of women and youth in decision-making and peacebuilding is a fundamental pillar for promoting political and social development in societies that believe in equity and justice, based on the principles of equality and equal opportunities regardless of race, color, age, or religious or social affiliation. This vision is based on the need to integrate marginalized groups into power structures and institutions to ensure fair and effective representation that contributes to sustainable development based on distributive justice and community participation. In societies characterized by complex political, social, and economic structures, the participation of women and youth becomes an urgent necessity, not only for the purpose of political empowerment, but also to strengthen social cohesion and ensure that the needs of different social groups are met, from the family to the highest levels of political and social representation. This participation is a tool for strengthening trust between citizens and institutions, and a means of ensuring the sustainability of development processes and achieving social peace.

In the Palestinian context, the participation of women and youth is doubly important given the complex challenges posed by the Israeli occupation, which hinders political, social, and economic development. Politically, the occupation hinders the transition of national institutions to perform their functions as an independent state, in addition to the impact of internal political division, which has paralyzed the Palestinian political system and led to the disruption of electoral mechanisms and the continuity of democratic life in most institutions. Socially, the occupation seeks to dismantle the social structure through arrests, forced displacement, migration, and the destruction of community ties. Economically, the occupation controls natural resources, confiscates clearance funds, and imposes heavy taxes, exacerbating public debt and restricting the state's ability to invest in development.

Despite all these challenges, the Palestinian arena is witnessing effective efforts by women's and youth institutions and human rights organizations that adopt international models and standards for the participation of women and youth in decision-making processes, in line with relevant international frameworks and resolutions, foremost among which are: Security Council Resolution 2250 on youth, peace and security, and Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security. These additional international frameworks provide a basis for strengthening local initiatives aimed at empowering these groups, increasing their representation in national decision-making circles, and providing protection, prevention and relief.

The statements and outlines announced in the Palestinian National Development Agenda 2024–2029 clearly focus on the participation of women and youth in decision-making, considering them an essential part of the development and peace-building process. Although a detailed written version of the goals and indicators has not yet been published, former Palestinian Prime Minister Dr. Mohammad Shtayyeh emphasized in his speech at the Sustainable Development Summit (September 2023) that empowering women and youth is not only a social goal, but also a prerequisite for achieving sustainable development and resilience. He also emphasized the integration of gender equality and youth empowerment issues into various areas of the agenda, particularly in improving service quality and

strengthening governance. The agenda also adopts the principles of the United Nations Plan of Action on Youth, Peace and Security (Resolution 2250) and Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security as key references in planning, meaning that peacebuilding through the empowerment of these groups will be an integral part of the implementation programs.

In this context, there is an urgent need to assess the reality of youth and women's participation in decision-making and peacebuilding, in terms of needs and gaps, and to provide concrete recommendations that will help plan for the future and improve the performance of relevant institutions.

To this end, this report presents a study conducted by researcher Mohammed Faisal Shuaibi and his research team on behalf of Nisaa FM Radio in partnership with Search for Common Ground with support of Dutch ministry of foreign affairs as a part of the project Grassroots to Global: the voice of communities reaching the world- Enabling women and youth to strengthen resilience and recovery, and to influence policymaking through regional and international advocacy that advance a more just and dignified life for all. This study was conducted in the field between June 28 and August 15, 2025, using multiple quantitative and qualitative tools. A field survey was conducted on a sample of young men and women, and in-depth interviews were conducted with experts and specialists in women's issues and peace. Two workshops were also held, one with youth and the other with experts, activists, and representatives of women's and youth organizations. The report provides historical context and analysis of women's and youth participation in decision-making and peacebuilding, a review of international and UN resolutions related to women's and youth participation in decision-making and peacebuilding, and then presents the analytical results of the survey, which will be reinforced by the results of the in-depth interviews and focused workshops. The results and recommendations of the study will then be presented.

Objectives

This study aims to analyze the reality of women's and youth participation in decision-making and peacebuilding processes in five governorates: East Jerusalem, Ramallah and Al-Bireh, Jericho, Bethlehem, and Hebron. It also seeks to monitor the most prominent practices and challenges associated with this participation, leading to the formulation of recommendations that will support women's and youth institutions in this regard. More specifically, the objectives of the study are as follows:

- Historical background and analysis of women's and youth participation in decision-making and peacebuilding
- Review of international and UN resolutions related to women's and youth participation in decision-making and peacebuilding
- Assessment of the level of women's and youth participation in decision-making and peacebuilding in the current Palestinian context
- Diagnosis of gaps and obstacles that limit their effective participation.
- Propose practical and feasible solutions to expand and strengthen participation.
- Provide data and statistics to support advocacy and awareness-raising efforts within Palestinian society.

- Disseminate the results to women's and youth organizations so that they can use them to develop their own advocacy plans.

Methodology:

This study adopted a mixed approach that combines quantitative and qualitative tools to provide a comprehensive understanding of women's and youth participation in decision-making and peacebuilding. Quantitative tools provided us with data on the levels of participation, gaps, and barriers related to youth and women's participation in decision-making and peacebuilding. While qualitative tools revealed the social, political, and economic motivations and criteria, as well as contextual factors that clarified and explained the current reality and provided appropriate guidance, leading to an in-depth analysis for the preparation of practical recommendations. The most important scientific research tools selected were:

A. Literature review:

The available literature on the participation of women and youth in decision-making and peacebuilding was reviewed, with a comprehensive review of the historical background of women's participation and another on youth participation in decision-making and peacebuilding. Mainly, all documents, studies, and reports issued by women's and youth institutions were reviewed, in addition to reports from existing national organizations, legal frameworks, Arab and foreign academic studies, and reports from non-governmental organizations, as well as a review of international and UN resolutions related to the participation of youth and women in decision-making and peacebuilding. (Appendix 1: List of references).

B. Qualitative data

- **In-depth interviews:** fifteen individuals were interviewed, including experts, academics, lawyers, gender advocates, activists working in the fields of human rights, development, conflict resolution, and peace, as well as experts from government institutions and non-governmental organizations working on conflict resolution and peacebuilding. (Appendix 2: List of participants in in-depth interviews)
- **Focus groups:** Two focus groups were conducted as part of the qualitative component of the study:
 - The first group was conducted with young participants (females and males aged 18 to 29) to gain in-depth insights into their perceptions, attitudes, and challenges regarding participation in decision-making and peacebuilding (Appendix 3 a list of participants in the focus group).
 - The second group served as a validation session for the preliminary findings, during which the preliminary findings were presented with the aim of verifying the main interpretations, refining the analysis, and reinforcing the relevance and practical applicability of the study's final recommendations. These were discussed with participants representing active women's and youth organizations and activists in various fields of human rights, conflict resolution, and peacebuilding (Appendix 4 List of participants in the verification session).

C. Quantitative data

Survey: A survey was conducted in East Jerusalem, Jericho, Hebron, Bethlehem, and Ramallah, targeting Palestinians over the age of 18. The survey focused on two groups: youth (females and males between the ages of 18 and 29) as defined by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics. The second group was women over the age of 30. (The questionnaire and survey results are available in Appendix 5.)

The following is a brief description of the stages of quantitative data collection:

- **Questionnaire design and testing:** The survey questionnaire was developed in collaboration with the Nisaa FM radio team. And it was ensured that the questionnaire could be completed in no more than five minutes. The questionnaire was designed in a way that facilitated data collection and entry. A small questionnaire was conducted using a small sample of five participants. This was important in order to test the participants' understanding of the questionnaire.
- **Sample:** A sample of 404 young men and women over the age of 18 (181 women and 232 young female and male) was selected. The survey samples represent the full demographic and geographic distribution of the population in the five regions, including age, place of residence, gender, educational level, and occupation. The questionnaire was answered using a specialized electronic data collection application. The questionnaire was selected and distributed to women and youth. Ordinary women and youth were selected, and we targeted different age, educational, and occupational groups, including university students, housewives, employees, activists in non-governmental and governmental institutions, and volunteers in human rights organizations. The following table shows the distribution of the sample.

Youth sample				Women sample			
Career	%	The governorate	%	The governorate	%	Career	%
Student	36	Jerusalem	23	Jerusalem	18	Student	1
Housewife unemployed/	24	Ramallah	20	Ramallah	29	Housewife	48
Government employee	10	Jericho	17	Jericho	12	Government employee	17
Employee in the private sector	14	Hebron	24	Hebron	25	Employee in the private sector	20
Employee in the private sector	3	Bethlehem	18	Bethlehem	16	Employee in the private sector	6
Freelance work/I have my own project	14	Education	%	Education	%	Freelance work/I have my own project	9
Gender	%	Less thanTawjihi certificate	17	Less thanTawjihi certificate	11	Age	%
Male	42	Tawjihi certificate	21	Tawjihi certificate	11	years 30-40	58
Female	58	Diploma	9	diploma	17.7	years old and above 40	42
Age		Bachelor's	50	Bachelor's	53		
years 29-18	100	Master's degree or higher	3	Master's degree or higher	7.2		

Data entry and analysis: The collected data were entered into [SPSS] for analysis. After entering all the questionnaires, preliminary frequency tables were created for the variables and checked to try to detect any errors in the data using univariate and multivariate techniques, and the validity of the results was verified by performing cross-tabulation.

Significant definitions in the study

Youth: Although there is no universally agreed international definition of the age group of youth, the United Nations defines youth as persons aged between 15 and 24 years¹. The Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics defines them as the age group between 18 and 29 years².

Participation in decision-making: ESCWA defines participation in decision-making as the process of making decisions by identifying a decision, gathering data, and evaluating alternative decisions. Using a step-by-step decision-making process can help in making informed and deliberate decisions by organizing relevant information and identifying alternatives³. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) defines participation in decision-making as the process of involving individuals or groups, especially marginalized groups such as women and youth, in the formulation of policies and decisions that affect their lives and communities, whether through formal positions or community participation mechanisms⁴.

Peacebuilding: The United Nations has defined peacebuilding as the work of consolidating peace and preventing a return to conflict⁵. The inclusion of different segments of society, especially marginalized ones, is a prerequisite for successful reconciliation and peace processes. The term also refers to efforts and measures aimed at preventing conflicts, addressing their root causes, and rebuilding societies after conflict through reconciliation, the rule of law, sustainable development, and inclusive participation.

¹ United Nations. (n.d.). Youth. United Nations .Retrieved from <https://www.un.org/ar/global-issues/youth#:~:text=%D8%B1%D8%BA%D9%85%20%D8%B9%D8%AF%D9%85%20%D9%88%D8%AC%D9%88%D8%AF%20%D8%AA%D8%B9%D8%B1%D9%8A%D9%81%20%D8%AF%D9%88%D9%84%D9%8A,%D8%A3%D8%B9%D9%85%D8%A7%D8%B1%D9%87%D9%85%20%D8%A8%D9%8A%D9%86%2015%20%D9%8824%20%D8%B9%D8%A7%D9%85%D8%A7>

² Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS). (2023). On the occasion of the International Youth Day, the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) issues a press release highlighting the situation of the youth in the Palestinian society. Retrieved from <https://www.pcbs.gov.ps/post.aspx?lang=en\&ItemID=5809>

³ United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UN ESCWA). (n.d.). Decision-making process. Retrieved from: <https://www.unescwa.org/ar/sd-glossary/%D8%B9%D9%85%D9%84%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D8%B5%D9%86%D8%B9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%82%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%B1>

⁴ United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA). (n.d.). Participation. Retrieved from: https://publicadministration.desa.un.org/intergovernmental-support/cepa/participation?utm_source

⁵ United Nations. (2010). Peacebuilding: An orientation. Retrieved from: https://www.un.org/peacebuilding/sites/www.un.org.peacebuilding/files/documents/peacebuilding_orientation.pdf

Chapter Two: Historical Context and International Resolutions on Women's and Youth Participation in Decision-Making and Community Peacebuilding

Introduction

This study examines the participation of women and youth in decision-making and peacebuilding in Palestine within its historical, social, legal, and political context, taking into account the unique liberating context in which the Palestinian cause operates. Despite institutional efforts by the Palestinian National Authority to issue laws and strategies aimed at protecting and promoting this participation—in line with Palestinian basic law and international conventions—academic and political debate continues about the effectiveness of this participation and its ability to achieve tangible impact in society. In this section, the study will focus on analyzing the historical and political context of women's and youth participation in public life, highlighting their roles in decision-making, during conflicts, and in attempts to build community peace. It will also review the most important contributions of women and youth in terms of participation in decision-making and peacebuilding in relation to political and social factors. The study will also discuss the impact of local laws and international agreements ratified by Palestine on promoting the political participation of these groups, in the absence of effective democratic mechanisms.

A. Women's Participation in Decision-Making and Community Peacebuilding:

Palestinian women have played a pivotal role in the national and political struggle since the late 19th century, transcending traditional roles to take an active part in decision-making and peacebuilding. Despite structural and social challenges, Palestinian women have managed to establish their presence in the public sphere, whether through participation in revolutions, the establishment of civil institutions, or the push for greater political representation. However, this path has seen intersecting progress and setbacks, especially at critical junctures such as peace negotiations and the formation of the Palestinian Authority.

Historically, Palestinian women have played an important role in political decision-making, which continued later through the holding of political conferences and the establishment of voluntary charitable associations, in addition to participating in demonstrations against the British Mandate and against Jewish immigration projects to Palestine⁶.

Women played a prominent role in many revolutions since 1936-1939 in political participation, and this participation gained momentum after the Nakba of Palestine in 1948 as a result of their continued leadership roles in various fields, such as establishing charitable associations to care for orphans and refugees. Women also focused their attention on prisoners, health and education services, and raising the level of education for

⁶ **Palestinian National Information Center (Wafa). (n.d.).** *Palestinian women immortalized in memory.* Retrieved August 1, 2025, from <https://bit.ly/3Q6v7b8>

girls⁷. Despite the progress that has been made, it is considered superficial in light of the dominance of male elites. The Union, although a channel for the representation of women and girls, remained subordinate to the PLO structure, raising questions about the political use of women as a tool to legitimize national discourse without granting them real power.

In 1964, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) was established; among its most important branches was the General Union of Palestinian Women, which was the gateway to real participation of women in decision-making in the PLO, the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. Women were also represented in the Palestinian National Council and in various national bodies. The Declaration of National Independence in 1988 reflected this status and this active presence of Palestinian women when it affirmed the principle of full equality of women in rights, duties and responsibilities like men. It must be recognized here that the struggle of Palestinian women under the leadership of the General Union of Palestinian Women and their active participation in the national struggle at various levels and on all fronts has strengthened the position of Palestinian women in national and political life, which supported their presence in the representative bodies of the Palestinian people⁸. Despite the progress that has been made, it is considered a formality in light of the dominance of male elites. Although the Union is a representative channel for women and girls, it remains subordinate to the PLO structure, which raises the question of the political use of women as a tool to legitimize the national discourse without granting them actual power.

Before the signing of the Oslo Accords, peace negotiations saw a significant lack of women's representation in the preparatory period for the agreement. This was a criticism of the Palestinian leadership for marginalizing women's status during the peace process, as only two women out of 21 members participated, while subsequent peace negotiations did not include any women's representation⁹. In addition to their weak representation, their views and influence on the peace process or war with the occupation were excluded.

After the establishment of the Palestinian Authority, women gained significant representation in decision-making positions and made historic progress. For example, the percentage of women in the Legislative Council rose from 4% in 1996 to 13.7% in 2006 after the quota system was approved¹⁰. The Palestinian Cabinet also issued Decision No. 75 of 2005 to approve a 20% quota for women. In the 2005 Palestinian local elections, relating to the system for forming local councils, stipulating that the representation of women in local councils should not be less than at least two seats in councils consisting of nine members,

⁷ Islah, J. (2000). *The Palestinian situation after the invasion*. *Journal of Palestinian Studies*, 55

⁸ Palestine Liberation Organization. (n.d.). *54 years since the founding of the General Union of Palestinian Women*. Retrieved August 1, 2025, from: <https://bit.ly/3Q6v7b8>

⁸ Hawari, Y. (2019, July 28). *The political marginalization of Palestinian women in the West Bank*. Al-Shabaka. Retrieved August 1, 2025, from <https://bit.ly/3Q6v7b8>

¹⁰ Central Elections Commission. (2006, July 5). Final report on the 2006 legislative elections in Palestine. Retrieved August 1, 2025, from: <https://bit.ly/3Q6v7b8>

equivalent to approximately 20% of the seats¹¹. Quotas have pros and cons. They are a means of compensating for structural discrimination, but they can turn women into “numbers” without any real impact on the ground. The weak representation in sovereign positions (such as governorates and government) indicates that reforms have remained superficial in the absence of real political will to make an impact.

Women did not stop at local authorities, but went beyond that to break into government departments, where they achieved many successes in terms of representation. Departments were formed and later became gender departments in various government bodies, leading to the establishment of the Palestinian Ministry of Women's Affairs¹². It was noted that women's continued struggle for liberation from occupation, despite the establishment of the Authority, did not prevent them from playing important roles in social, developmental, and economic issues, such as those specializing in issues of equality, social justice and raising women's awareness¹³. This development reflects a shift in official discourse toward recognizing the importance of women's role, particularly in decision-making and social and economic development, but to a lesser extent in political spheres.

Spotlight: Gaps in decision-making positions between women and men

A report by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics confirmed that there are wide gaps between women and men in decision-making positions in various fields. The presence of women in leadership positions in the education sector is very weak. For example, there are no women in the position of university president. The percentage of women who are members of boards of directors or boards of trustees is 11%, compared to 89% for men. Women are represented as board members in universities such as Al-Quds Open University, Palestine Polytechnic University, Palestine Technical University-Khadouri, Islamic University, Gaza University, Al-Aqsa University, and Palestine Ahliya University.

This gender gap is due to the dominance of traditional male networks in senior appointments, which are often managed through informal alliances. As for women in trade unions and federations, 9% of women are heads of trade unions registered with the Ministry of Labor, compared to 91% for men.

In the PLO, women make up only 5% of the PLO Central Council and 11% of the Palestinian National Council. Approximately 22% of political party secretaries are women, compared to 72% men, and women make up 20% of the members of the Central Statistics Committees. Women make up only 11% of the diplomatic corps. Women make up approximately 6% of the leadership of security institutions¹⁴.

¹¹ Islah, J. (2000). *The Palestinian situation after the invasion*. *Journal of Palestinian Studies*, 55

¹² Ministry of Interior. (n.d.). *Social Gender Unit*. Retrieved August 1, 2025, from <https://bit.ly/3Q6v7b8>

¹³ Islah, J. (2000). *The Palestinian situation after the invasion*. *Journal of Palestinian Studies*, 55

¹⁴ Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics. (2020, June). *Women in decision-making positions in Palestine*. Retrieved August 1, 2025, from: <https://bit.ly/3Q6v7b8>

One of the most important achievements of the feminist movement was pressuring the Palestinian Authority to adopt important international agreements, such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), which was signed by President Mahmoud Abbas in 2014. The most important aspect of this agreement was the elimination of discrimination against women in public and political life¹⁵.

The signing of CEDAW represents a symbolic and legal victory for women, but its implementation faces obstacles, such as contradictions between legislation, with some local laws (certain articles in the Personal Status Law) conflicting with the provisions of the convention. Furthermore, the continuing occupation and Palestinian division weaken the Authority's ability to implement its commitments and shift the priority to security issues at the expense of social rights.

These achievements by women are significant, even though the integration of women into Palestinian sovereign institutions in the West Bank remains weak. Among the 15 members of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization, there is only one woman, Hanan Ashrawi. Of the 16 governorates in the West Bank and Gaza, only the Ramallah and Al-Bireh governorate has a female governor, Laila Ghanem. Similarly, the previous government, led by Mohammad Shtayyeh since 2019, had only three female ministers out of 22 ministers¹⁶. In the current government headed by Mohammad Mustafa, there are four female ministers. These figures reveal that real decision-making positions, especially in sovereign areas, are male strongholds due to reasons related to political and social culture linked to family and military alliances and loyalties that exclude women.

A summary of two studies on women's involvement in politics.

Study one: The role of civil society in promoting Palestinian women's political participation under Zionist occupation¹⁷: This study focused on the pivotal role played by civil society organizations in promoting women's political participation in a society under occupation. The study concluded that civil society organizations played an active role in promoting women's political participation under occupation before the establishment of the Palestinian National Authority. After its establishment, the study confirmed that civil society focused on issues of women's empowerment in society, strengthening their economic presence, and defending them within society. The study highlighted several challenges, including traditional social customs and traditions that diminish women's rights, the legislative and legal environment that imposes obstacles to political participation, the Israeli occupation, and the internal Palestinian division as additional

¹⁵ Al-Danaf, H. (2018, July 11). *Towards enhancing the role and representation of women in decision-making positions within the Palestine Liberation Organization*. Masarat. Retrieved August 1, 2025, from <https://www.masarat.ps/article/2598/>

¹⁶ El Kurd, D. (2016, August 10). *The political marginalization of Palestinian women in the West Bank*. Al-Shabaka: The Palestinian Policy Network. <https://bit.ly/3Q6v7b8>

¹⁷ Al-Majma' al-Madani. (2025). *The role of civil society in enhancing Palestinian women's political participation under Israeli occupation*. *Damascus University Journal*, 41(1). Retrieved August 1, 2025, from <https://bit.ly/3Q6v7b8>

obstacles to efforts to empower women politically.

Study two: The role of national forces and political parties in promoting women's participation in political development in Palestine¹⁸: The study focuses on the role of national forces and political parties in promoting women's participation in political development in Palestine. It aims to identify the reality of national forces and political parties in Palestine, reveal the level of women's participation in political development in Palestine, and shed light on the relationship between national forces and political parties and the promotion of women's participation in political development in Palestine. The study concluded that political parties must develop plans and strategies to develop a political culture around women's representation in the political and social system, develop strategies for internal organization, promote gender equality principles, increase women's representation in political parties and forces, and promote women's independence. It recommended intensifying development projects aimed at women and supporting their practical implementation, evaluating the role of funding, programs, and activities to make them more focused and clear in terms of objectives and results, and conducting future studies to identify patterns that achieve sustainability in results and their impact on different communities.

B. Youth participation in decision-making and community peacebuilding

The participation of Palestinian women in decision-making on the Palestinian issue historically, and even in the question of peacebuilding, is almost identical to that of youth. Both groups share the experience of relative marginalization within the official structures of the national movement, despite their fundamental contributions to the liberation struggle. After World War I, a series of national conferences were held (1919-1928) in which Palestinian youth and the national elite participated, demanding an end to the Mandate and the suspension of the Balfour Declaration¹⁹. In the wake of the Buraq Revolution, Arab nationalists felt that the time had come to prioritize the national dimension of the Palestinian national struggle. In July 1931, they changed the name of the Islamic-Christian Association in Nablus to the Arab National Association and held an armament conference, at which they called for the establishment of a party of Arab youth. Thus, an agreement was reached on the Arab Youth Conference, which held its first conference in Jerusalem in December 1931. This shift seemed to represent a conflict between generations in the national movement. It was noticeable that the role of youth was limited to the executive levels, with the traditional elites retaining leadership positions. In 1932, youth parties such as the Youth Congress Party and the Fatwa Brigade, the youth wing of the Palestinian Arab Party, were established to involve youth in political activity and counter British influence²⁰. The role of young leaders on the ground in the fight against British colonialism grew, with

¹⁸ Al-Masri, D. (2025). *The role of national forces and political parties in enhancing women's participation in political development in Palestine* (Master's thesis). Al-Quds University. Retrieved August 1, 2025, from <https://bit.ly/3Q6v7b8>

¹⁹ Institute for Palestine Studies. (n.d.). *Palestinian Conferences 1918–1934*. Retrieved August 1, 2025, from: <https://bit.ly/3Q6v7b8>

²⁰ Palestine48. (n.d.). *The Palestinian Nakba - Parties - The Arab Youth Conference*. Retrieved August 1, 2025, from <https://bit.ly/3Q6v7b8>

businessmen and students from cities such as Jerusalem and Jaffa leading the largest uprising against British colonialism and Jewish immigration. They organized strikes and demonstrations, forming the first mass youth movement against colonial rule in what is known as the 1936 revolution²¹.

After the Nakba of 1948, the nucleus of the Palestinian national liberation movement Fatah began to form, led by the late President Yasser Arafat and his comrades, a group of young Palestinians who had experienced the Nakba in their youth and later gained organizational experience through their involvement in various Arab nationalist organizations in the Arab East at that time²². The fedayeen movement also emerged within the PLO, and young refugees led the revitalization of political and diplomatic efforts, focusing on rebuilding Palestinian identity inside and outside Palestine. According to PLO statistics from 1970, youth represented 70% of armed resistance fighters, but they occupied less than 15% of seats in the National Council until 1982. This meant that the “founding generation” dominated decision-making centers, turning youth into a “clashing force” without political empowerment²³.

Before the signing of the Oslo Accords, youth had no influence or presence in the negotiations aimed at establishing comprehensive and just peace between Palestinians and Israelis²⁴. The Oslo negotiations and the settlement process were confined to Yasser Arafat's generation (average age 55 and above). After the Palestinian Authority came to the West Bank and Gaza Strip, contrary to expectations, despite the great sacrifices made by youth in confronting the occupation, youth representation in senior positions in the Authority remained very weak. The period following the establishment of the Palestinian Authority in 1994 was a striking example of the “political representation paradox,” where structural contradictions led to the marginalization of the younger generation—despite being the backbone of the resistance during the two intifadas (1987 and 2000)—from decision-making circles. Ministerial positions and senior posts in the Authority and the PLO were concentrated in the hands of the historical leadership generation (mostly over 50 years old), and there was an almost complete absence of ministers or governors from the younger age group (under 35 years old).²⁵

Similarly, in terms of representation in the Legislative Council, in the 1996 and 2006 elections, the proportion of youth (under 35) among Council members was almost non-existent, with seats limited to figures from traditional party and faction leaderships. The electoral law (Law 2007) set the minimum age for candidacy for the Legislative Council at 28

²¹ Al-Shabaka. (n.d.). *Changing Palestinian Leadership: The Role of Youth*. Retrieved August 1, 2025, from <https://bit.ly/3Q6v7b8>

²² Revolutionary Socialists. (n.d.). *The Palestinian Cause: A Revolutionary Vision*. Retrieved August 1, 2025, from <https://bit.ly/3Q6v7b8>

²³ Hamdan, H. A. M. (2018). *Strategic transitions in the Palestinian Liberation Organization's policies towards the conflict with Israel* (Master's thesis). An-Najah National University. Retrieved August 1, 2025, from <https://bit.ly/3Q6v7b8>

²⁴ BADIL Resource Center for Palestinian Residency and Refugee Rights. (2021, August). *Palestinian youth perspectives on the Oslo peace process: Successes, failures and alternatives* (Working Paper No. 27). Retrieved August 1, 2025, from <https://bit.ly/3Q6v7b8>

²⁵ PalThink for Strategic Studies. (2025, April). *Perceptions on enhancing youth access to decision-making positions in the Palestinian*. Retrieved August 1, 2025, from: <https://bit.ly/3Q6v7b8>

and for the presidency at 40, which excluded a large percentage of youth from running for candidacy²⁶. In our view, this is due to a culture that prioritizes seniority, where age is seen as a prerequisite for political ability and perhaps national history, rather than a criterion of competence or a lack of conviction on the part of decision-makers that there are competent youth.

After 2010, Palestinian youth witnessed notable effects resulting from political transformations in the Arab region, particularly with the Arab Spring revolutions. However, this effect was complex and varied, given the specific Palestinian context of continued Israeli occupation and its restrictions on political and social freedoms. This was reflected in the absence of a unified youth position, with attitudes ranging from cautious support to skepticism about the usefulness of these changes and waiting to see what impact they would have on the Palestinian cause. In this context, youth initiatives emerged in the form of peaceful protests aimed at expressing national demands and calling for the promotion of active youth participation in national decision-making, thereby contributing to the promotion of opportunities for building a just and sustainable peace²⁷. This phase also revealed the limited involvement of youth in formal and informal decision-making institutions, prompting them to seek alternative channels of influence through youth movements and grassroots activities in an attempt to impose their agenda on the national debate on issues of liberation and peacebuilding²⁸. The interaction of Palestinian youth with the events of the Arab Spring also led to a reshaping of youth's perceptions of their political role, as the debate widened around the importance of direct participation in decision-making processes, not only in the context of resistance to occupation, but also in addressing internal challenges that hinder the achievement of social peace²⁹.

During the coronavirus pandemic, Palestinian youth played a prominent role in volunteer work and community initiatives, organizing health awareness campaigns, distributing protective equipment, and supporting families in need, using digital platforms and innovative technological solutions to monitor basic needs such as water and health. Despite this active presence in the field and in the community, their role in decision-making and crisis management remained very limited, as they were not involved in formulating health, economic, and social policies related to the pandemic, and decision-making remained confined to senior government leaders. This institutional marginalization deprived Palestinian society of integrating the visions and needs of youth into national policies, and deprived the crisis management process of an important dimension that could have contributed to strengthening community peacebuilding by broadening the base of participation, consolidating trust between citizens and government institutions, and

²⁶ Birzeit University. (n.d.). *Decree Law No. 1 of 2007 regarding general elections*. Retrieved August 1, 2025, from: <https://bit.ly/3Q6v7b8>

²⁷ Masarat – The Palestinian Center for Policy Research and Strategic Studies. (n.d.). *Palestinian youth: From movement to activism*. Retrieved August 1, 2025, from <https://bit.ly/3Q6v7b8>

²⁸ PalThink for Strategic Studies. (2024, July). **Youth political participation of Palestinians in parties**. Retrieved August 1, 2025, from: <https://bit.ly/3Q6v7b8>

²⁹ Al Jazeera. (2011, September 26). *The Arab Spring blossoms within the Palestinian context*. Retrieved August 1, 2025, from : <https://bit.ly/3Q6v7b8>

providing youth with the opportunity to be strategic partners in shaping the post-crisis future³⁰.

The reality of youth in according to statistics

Data from the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics indicates a clear contradiction between the high level of education among Palestinian youth and the high unemployment rates they face. The percentage of youth aged 18-29 with a bachelor's degree or higher reached 18%, with a gender disparity in favor of females, who achieved 23% compared to 13% among males. Meanwhile, the percentage of youth aged 18-29 who are unemployed reached 18%, with a gender disparity in favor of females, who achieved 23% compared to 13% among males. (aged 18-29) is around 18%, with a gender gap in favor of females, who achieved 23% compared to 13% among males, while unemployment rates were high, reaching 59% among females and 32% among males. Youth working in the informal sector represent about 43% of the total working youth, with a large percentage (47%) of youth not engaged in the labor market or education/training, with females exceeding males by 63%³¹. These indicators point to a structural gap in the economic and social empowerment of youth, which in turn limits their effective participation in political and social decision-making, especially on vital issues related to peacebuilding and sustainable development in Palestine. The weak integration of youth into the labor market and their lack of effective representation in government institutions limits their ability to propose innovative visions and solutions that contribute to addressing societal challenges. Therefore, enhancing youth participation in decision-making processes is a necessary strategic step to promote social peace, as it allows them to convey their demands and needs at the official level and contributes to the development of policies that respond to their aspirations, thereby strengthening social cohesion and the national fabric in the face of political and economic challenges.

Highlight: National Strategic Plan for Youth (2017–2022)

The Supreme Council for Youth and Sports, in partnership with state institutions and civil society, developed the National Strategic Plan (2017–2022) after extensive engagement with youth through dozens of national workshops. the most important objectives are:

- **Civic and political participation:** Activating the role of youth in influencing public life and decision-making, and integrating girls and people with special needs into the process.
- **Citizenship and civic culture:** Building awareness of their civil and political rights and strengthening national loyalty.
- **Volunteering and youth work:** spreading a culture of volunteering and participation in associations and clubs.
- **Gender equality:** increasing female participation in youth institutions and decision-making.
- **Employment and economic empowerment:** creating job opportunities, supporting entrepreneurship, and linking education outcomes to market needs.
- **Health and positive behaviors:** Focusing on mental health, nutrition, and physical activity for the 15-25 age group.

³⁰ Masarat – The Palestinian Center for Policy Research and Strategic Studies. (n.d.). *COVID-19 pandemic: Towards economic policies enhancing the sense of security among Palestinian youth*. Retrieved August 1, 2025, from : <https://bit.ly/3Q6v7b8>

³¹ Wafa – Palestinian News & Information Agency. (2023, August 10). *Youth in Palestine: Youth represent 22% of the population*. Retrieved August 1, 2025, from: <https://bit.ly/3Q6v7b8>

- **Technical education and training:** Focusing on practical and technical skills and entrepreneurship.
- **Culture, sports, and creativity:** Supporting artistic creativity, theater, clubs, and recreational activities.
- **Technology and information:** Enhancing the digital capabilities of youth and encouraging new media and digital revolution initiatives.

C. International agreements and resolutions related to the participation of youth and women in decision-making and peacebuilding:

From early on, the United Nations has given special attention to youth issues, issuing several recommendations and resolutions concerning their rights, despite the fact that there is still no comprehensive international instrument on youth rights similar to the international conventions on women and children. One of the most notable of these initiatives is Security Council Resolution 2250, issued in 2015, which recognizes the role of youth in areas affected by armed conflict and emphasizes their active participation in peacebuilding and the construction of stable societies. In this context, the State of Palestine has ratified several international agreements that represent an important legal framework for supporting the participation of youth and women in decision-making and peacebuilding. The impact of each agreement can be described as follows:

- **Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and its Protocols (issued on April 2, 2014):** This convention guarantees the rights of children and adolescents of both sexes, including the right to participation, healthcare, and education³². Affirming these rights is a fundamental basis for promoting youth participation in decision-making by empowering them at an early stage, thereby laying the foundation for a generation capable of contributing to peacebuilding and promoting sustainable development in Palestinian society.
- **Human rights agreements:** On April 7, 2014, the State of Palestine acceded to important treaties that guarantee the civil rights of youth and women. Some of these agreements form the legal basis for civil participation, freedom of expression, and freedom of assembly, and provide greater scope for political and social participation. This is guaranteed by two international covenants: the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR). Palestine also acceded to the Convention against Torture, the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), and the International Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (ICERD)³³.
- **The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) (Palestine acceded to both on April 7, 2014):** These treaties enshrine civil and political rights, as well as economic and social rights, and promote civic participation and freedom of expression and assembly, providing youth and women with a legal framework for engaging in

³² AMAN Coalition for Integrity and Accountability. (n.d.). *Youth shadow councils: An approach to empower youth participation in public affairs*. Retrieved August 1, 2025, from: <https://bit.ly/3Q6v7b8>

political and social spaces. These rights are essential to ensuring their representation in decision-making and promoting their participation in the formulation of national policies that contribute to peace and stability³⁴.

- **Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW):** This convention is central to supporting the participation of women, including young women, in decision-making positions by combating all forms of discrimination against them. In doing so, the convention contributes to promoting diversity and inclusion within national institutions, thereby strengthening the role of women in peace processes and building stable societies³⁵.
- **Convention against Torture, Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), and International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD):** This resolution emphasizes the critical importance of youth participation in peacebuilding and decision-making processes, as well as their pivotal role in combating violent extremism. Although the resolution is general in nature and not tied to a specific geographical context, it constitutes a morally binding international framework that countries, including Palestine, should use as a guide to promote the inclusion of youth in political processes and national policy-making³⁶.
- **Security Council Resolution 2419, June 2018:** This resolution stresses the importance of youth participation in peacebuilding, decision-making, and countering extremism³⁷. Although it is a general resolution, it provides an international framework that Palestine should use as a basis for involving youth in political processes. In the Palestinian context, this resolution can serve as a reference for developing national policies that enable youth to participate actively in negotiations, develop peace strategies, and formulate decisions on major national issues. Adopting this international framework also contributes to strengthening trust between youth and official institutions and opens the door to investing their energies and ideas in building a more stable and just society, which is one of the fundamental pillars for achieving sustainable peace in light of the challenges facing Palestine.
- **Security Council Resolution 2250 (2015) – Youth, Peace and Security Agenda:** This resolution represents the first official recognition at the UN level of the essential role that youth can play in preventing and resolving conflicts, placing their participation at the core of efforts to maintain and build sustainable peace. Although Palestine has not formally signed this resolution, as it is not a legally binding document, many Palestinian institutions and local organizations have adopted it as a key reference for promoting the Youth, Peace and Security Agenda and are calling for its formal adoption given its strategic importance³⁸. This document emphasizes that involving youth in decision-making, especially on issues related to peace and security, is not a secondary option but a necessity to ensure the inclusiveness and success of

³⁴ Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates – State of Palestine. (2018, August 1). *List of international conventions to which the State of Palestine joined as of 1 August 2018*. Retrieved August 1, 2025, from: <https://bit.ly/3Q6v7b8>

³⁵ The previously cited source

³⁶ The previously cited source

³⁷ United Nations Security Council. (2018, June 6). *United Nations Security Council Resolution 2419*. In *Wikipedia*. Retrieved August 1, 2025, from: <https://bit.ly/3Q6v7b8>

³⁸ United Nations Peacekeeping. (n.d.). *Promoting Youth, Peace and Security*. Retrieved August 1, 2025, from <https://bit.ly/3Q6v7b8>

peacebuilding processes. In the Palestinian context, the resolution provides a reference framework through which national policies can be formulated to enhance the role of youth in political dialogue, participation in negotiations, and contribution to sustainable solutions to conflicts. It also provides opportunities to strengthen mutual trust between youth and state institutions and opens the door to innovative youth initiatives that contribute to achieving a just and comprehensive peace.

- **Convention on the Political Rights of Women (Palestine acceded on December 2, 2014):** This convention is one of the fundamental pillars for ensuring full equality between women and men in the political sphere, as it guarantees women's right to stand for election, vote, and participate in political life without any form of discrimination. Palestine's accession to this convention signifies its legal and moral commitment to empowering women, including young women, to access decision-making positions at the local and national levels³⁹. In the Palestinian context, this convention is an important tool for promoting women's representation in legislative councils and government bodies and ensuring their active participation in policy-making. It also contributes to peacebuilding by incorporating women's voices into negotiations and critical decision-making processes, reflecting the priorities and needs of different segments of society. This leads to more inclusive decision-making and increases the chances of reaching more sustainable and equitable solutions that meet the needs of all components of Palestinian society.
- **Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (2000):** This resolution is a fundamental reference in promoting the role of women in peace and security processes, emphasizing the importance of their participation in conflict prevention, their protection during conflicts, and ensuring their presence in all stages of decision-making. Although the resolution and the nine subsequent resolutions up to 2020 did not directly address the reality of the occupation, limiting its full application in Palestine, the state committed to implementing its provisions by preparing two national plans in 2017 and 2021, with a focus on participation. The resolution is based on four main aspects:
 1. Prevention and protection: protecting Palestinian women from the effects of occupation and conflict, and enhancing their economic, health, and psychological security.
 2. Accountability: holding the occupation accountable for violations against women within international legal frameworks.
 3. Relief and recovery: Integrating a gender perspective into relief and recovery plans and involving women in crisis management.
 4. Participation: Strengthening the presence of women in decision-making positions at the local, regional, and international levels, and representing Palestine in international forums⁴⁰.

³⁹ Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates – State of Palestine. (n.d.). *International conventions to which the State of Palestine has acceded*. Retrieved August 1, 2025, from <https://bit.ly/3Q6v7b8>

⁴⁰ Arab Institution for Freedom of Thought and Expression. (2020). *A guide on using UN bodies and mechanisms to promote accountability in the Women, Peace, and Security agenda*. MIFTAH. from: <https://bit.ly/3Q6v7b8>

In the Palestinian context, the implementation of this resolution represents a strategic framework for enshrining women's participation as key actors in national and international decision-making, thereby supporting the achievement of a just and sustainable peace, despite the challenges posed by the reality of occupation and political division.

- **Security Council Resolution 1888 (2009):** This resolution recognizes the need to end impunity as an essential element in ensuring justice and building stable societies, both in conflict contexts and during recovery phases. It stresses the importance of transitional justice mechanisms and national reconciliation in promoting individual accountability for serious crimes, revealing the truth, and ensuring justice and protection for victims⁴¹. With regard to the Palestinian situation, the resolution serves as a reference for promoting responsibility and accountability as part of the peacebuilding process, as the inclusion of women and youth in national reconciliation committees, truth-seeking mechanisms, and human rights programs can contribute to the formulation of more inclusive and equitable policies. Involving these groups in the development and implementation of justice and accountability plans ensures that their experiences and specific needs are represented and promotes trust between society and state institutions.
- **Security Council Resolution 1889 (2009):** This resolution was issued to express deep concern about the continuing obstacles to women's full participation in peace processes and decision-making, including systematic violence, displacement, insecurity, and barriers related to cultural and social discrimination. The resolution emphasizes the need to view women not only as victims of conflict, but as actors capable of contributing to its prevention, resolution, and the building of sustainable peace⁴². In the Palestinian context, this resolution provides a supportive framework for enhancing women's participation in the various stages of conflict management and recovery, through the adoption of practical measures to improve their participation in national institutions, negotiating bodies, and decision-making councils. The scope of this approach can also be expanded to include youth of both sexes, by removing barriers that limit their participation and ensuring their representation in all stages of planning and implementation of peacebuilding and development programs.
- **Security Council Resolution 2242 (2015):** This resolution emphasizes the close link between achieving gender equality and empowering women and girls, and the success of efforts to prevent conflicts and promote sustainable peace and security. The resolution is consistent with the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which places gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls among its core objectives⁴³. Commitment to the spirit of this resolution provides Palestine with an opportunity to align its national policies with international standards for promoting the participation of women and youth in peacebuilding, thereby contributing to social cohesion and supporting sustainable stability.
- **Resolution 2467 (2019):** This resolution expresses concern about the limited number of women in senior positions in politics and in the fields of peace and security,

⁴³ Previous reference

⁴³ Previous reference

stressing that the underrepresentation of women in decision-making positions negatively affects the inclusiveness and sustainability of peace processes. It also draws attention to the fact that sexual violence in conflict situations does not occur in isolation, but is part of an interconnected and recurring series of forms of violence against women and girls, beginning before the conflict and intensifying during it. The resolution proposes a series of measures aimed at reducing sexual violence and strengthening mechanisms for the protection and support of victims, including legal accountability and the provision of relief and care services⁴⁴. In the Palestinian context, this resolution could serve as a framework for strengthening the protection of women and girls from all forms of violence, while at the same time opening the door for them to access decision-making positions, particularly in the political and security spheres.

- **Security Council Resolution 2493 (2019):** This resolution is closely linked to Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000), expressing concern about the weak implementation of Resolution 1325, particularly the severe underrepresentation of women in various official processes, bodies, and national, regional, and international institutions. The resolution urges States to take effective measures to promote all women's rights, including civil, political, and economic rights ⁴⁵ In the Palestinian context, the resolution represents a clear call to intensify efforts to empower women to participate effectively in national and international decision-making positions, thereby contributing to building comprehensive and sustainable peace. It also emphasizes the importance of supporting the participation of youth of both sexes by providing equal opportunities in political, social, and economic spheres to enhance their ability to influence national policy-making and peacebuilding efforts.

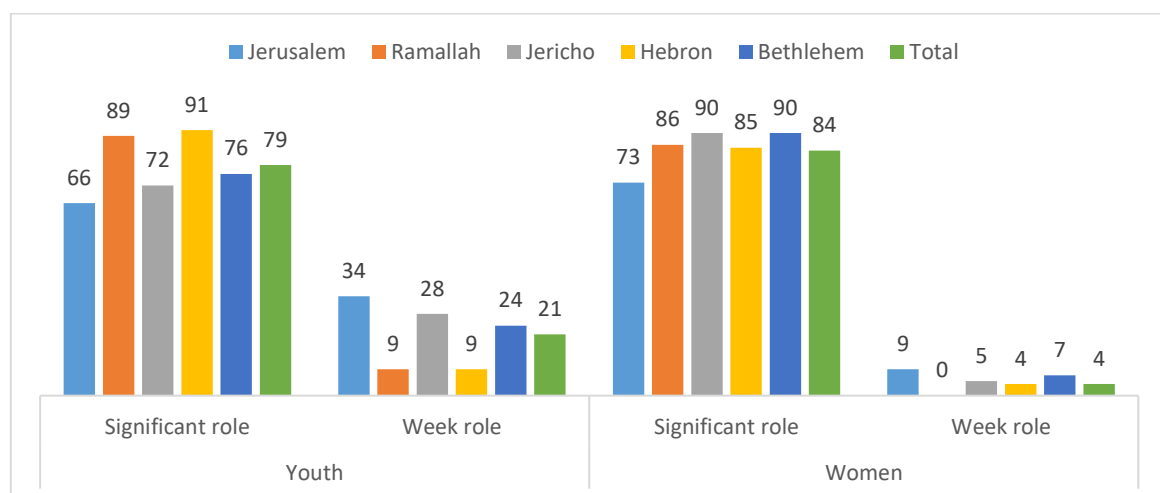
Chapter three: Assessing the level of participation of women and youth in decision-making

This chapter provides an analysis of the results of the field study, both quantitative and qualitative, from the perspective of women and youth. The research questions will be answered by assessing the level of participation of women and youth in decision-making at different levels; the family and the local community, governmental and civil institutions, and parties, the impact of community participation of women and youth in decision-making, and the extent of women's and youth participation in community activities.

A. Assessing participation at the household and community levels

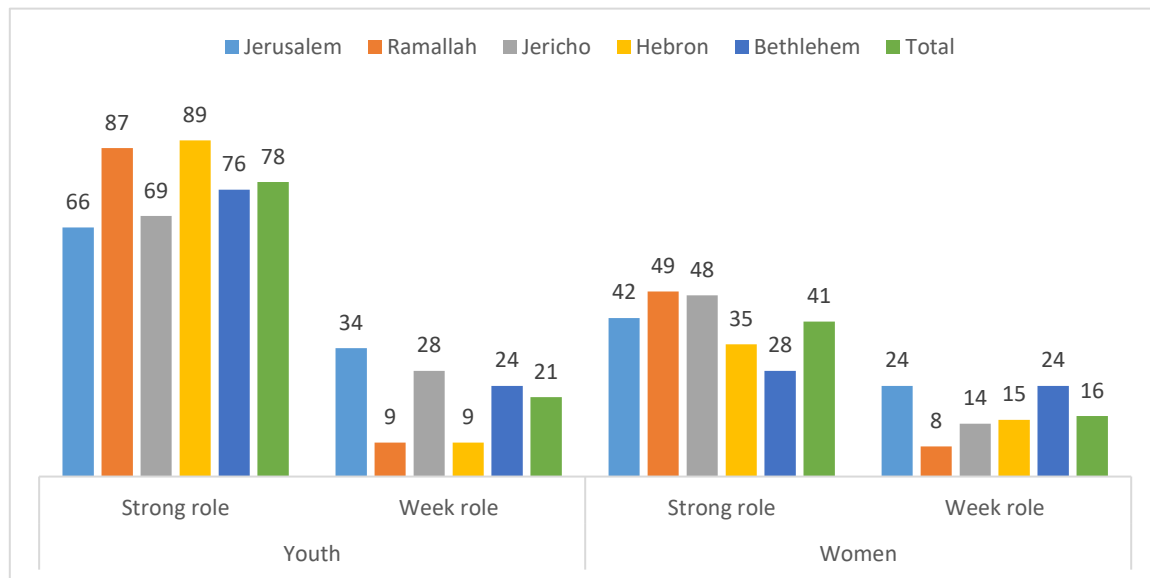
The results indicate that the majority of women (84%) believe that they have a significant or very significant role in decision-making at the household level, while 11% believe that this role is moderate, and 5% believe that it is weak or very weak. The cities of Bethlehem and Jericho recorded the highest percentage of women's belief in the strength of women's role in household decision-making (90% each), while the lowest percentage was in Jerusalem (72%). As for youth, 79% reported that young men and women have a significant or very significant role in household decision-making, compared to 21% who consider this role to be weak or very weak. The highest percentage of youth believing that their role is strong was recorded in Hebron (91%), and the lowest in Jerusalem (66%).

Graph (1) the role of women and youth in decision-making at the household level by region



At the community level, 41% of women reported that women have a significant or very significant role in decision-making at the community level, while 43% believe this role is moderate, and 16% believe it is weak or very weak. The percentage of women believing this role is strongest in Ramallah (49%), while the percentage was lowest in Bethlehem (28%). On the other hand, 78% of youth stated that youth have a significant or very significant role in decision-making at the local community level, compared to 2% who consider this role moderate and 21% who consider it weak or very weak. The highest percentage of youth believing that their local role is significant was recorded in Hebron (89%), while the lowest was in Jerusalem (66%).

Graph (2) the role of women and youth in decision-making at the local community by region



The results show that perceptions of the strength of the role of women and youth in decision-making are relatively high at the household level, but less pronounced at the community level, especially for women, which may reflect their limited representation or influence in local institutional structures compared to the household sphere. It is also notable that geographical disparities, particularly the low rates in Jerusalem and Bethlehem, may be related to political, social and economic factors that limit opportunities for active participation, while the high rates in cities such as Hebron and Ramallah may indicate more supportive environments. These findings support the statements made in the qualitative instruments, the most important of which are:

Women are not able to participate in decision-making despite their competence: *"Women have high leadership skills and have the ability to participate in decision-making, but society does not allow them."* (Government expert on youth and women's issues / Hebron)

Families still practice social exclusion against women: *"The representation of women and youth at the local level is still shy due to the culture of social exclusion practiced by families or the head of the family."* (Expert of international organizations on women and youth issues / Ramallah)

Women bring inner peace within the household: *"The woman is the whole society, she raises the child, moves the husband, and if she wants, she can move the whole world with her emotions and inner peace"* (Feminist academic/Jerusalem)

Women at the family are the most capable of resolving conflicts: *"Mothers are the ones who make decisions and resolve conflicts within the family between sisters and brothers."* (Feminist expert/Ramallah)

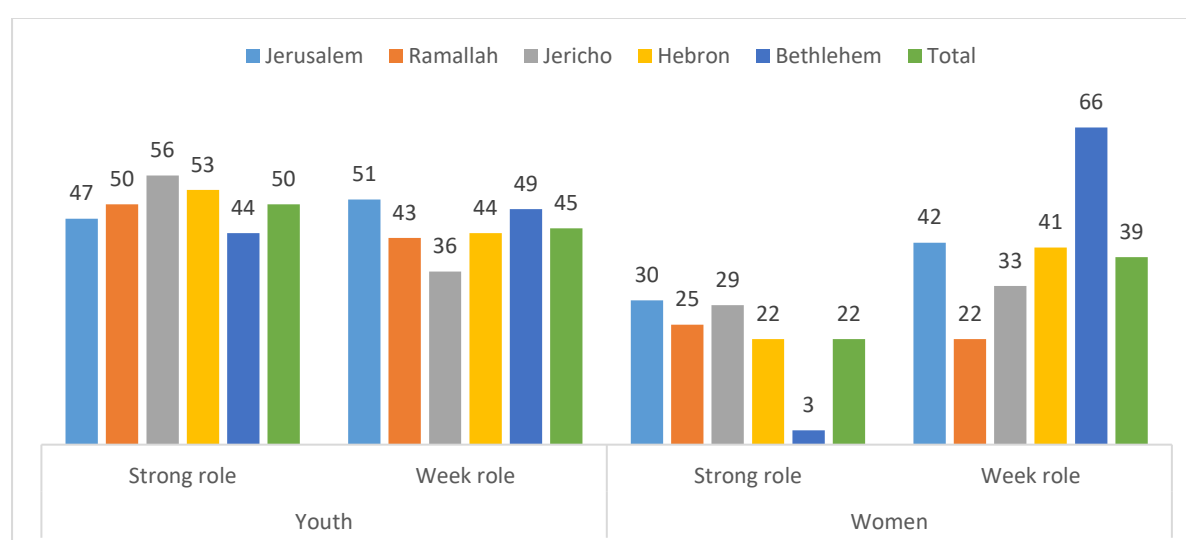
Women are the source of power within society: *"Youth and women are important in society and women represent half of society, so if the household structure is strong, it is because the mother is strong within her household. The Palestinian mother is special"*

because she is the mother of the wounded, the martyr and the prisoner, and she is unique among Arab women" (Governmental expert in gender issues / Hebron).

B. Assessing Participation in Governmental Institutions

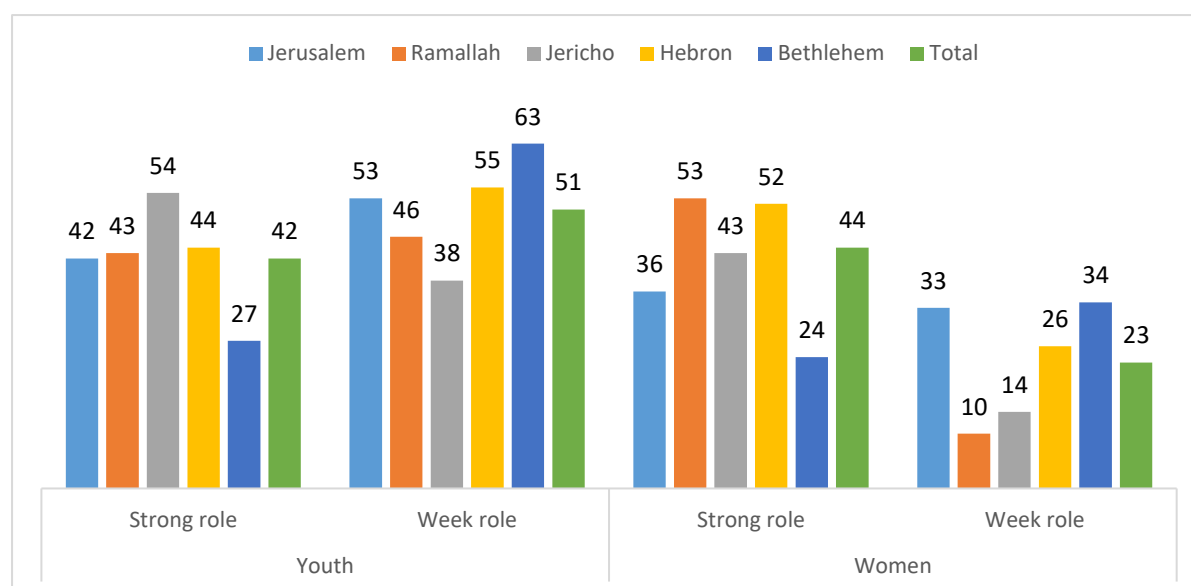
The farther women's role moves away from the household and community, the more their role declines in other places, such as parties and governmental institutions. For example, the results indicates that only 22% of women believe that they have a significant or very significant role in decision-making within Palestinian parties, while 39% see this role as moderate, and 39% see it as weak or very weak. Jerusalem recorded the highest percentage (30%), while Bethlehem had the lowest percentage (3%). As for youth, 50% of them said that youth have a significant or significant role in party decision-making, compared to 5% who consider it moderate and 45% who consider it weak or very weak. The highest percentage of youth believing that their party role is strong was recorded in Jericho (56%), and the lowest in Bethlehem (44%).

Graph (3) the role of women and youth in decision-making at the level of parties by region



As for governmental institutions, 44% of women reported that women have a significant or very significant role in decision-making within governmental institutions, compared to 33% who consider it moderate, and 23% who consider it weak or very weak. The percentage of women believing this role is strongest in Ramallah (53%) and lowest in Bethlehem (24%). On the other hand, 42% of youth indicated that youth have a significant or very significant role in decision-making within government institutions, compared to 7% who consider it moderate, and 51% who consider it weak or very weak. Jericho recorded the highest percentage (54%), while Bethlehem recorded the lowest percentage (27%).

Graph (4) the role of women and youth in decision-making at the level of governmental institutions by region



These results indicate a clear gap in the perception of the extent of women's and youth participation in decision-making at the parties and governmental levels. Relatively low percentages of women in the parties (22%), which may indicate a lack of actual representation and influence in parties leadership structures. Similarly, despite the relatively high proportions of youth in the parties (50%), nearly half of them consider their role to be weak, reflecting challenges in accessing decision-making centers. At the level of governmental institutions, the proportions of women and youth are similar (44% and 42%, respectively), with clear geographical disparities, most notably the lower proportions in Bethlehem, which may reflect less supportive political or institutional environments for the participation of these groups. The results of the qualitative research point to several factors that hinder the participation of women and youth at the party and governmental levels:

The interruption of elections and democratic life in Palestine: *"The lack of periodic presidential and legislative elections due to the circumstances that the State of Palestine is going through has contributed to the decline in the interest of youth and women in belonging to parties"* (Youth Academic/Ramallah)

Lack of new blood within the parties: *"There is no renewal within the parties, almost the same personalities for 20 years and some of them more in the same positions, there is no periodic system of elections in the parties, and there is marginalization of women, while youth participation is temporary when they discover that there is no progress in their status within the parties"* (Feminist expert/Ramallah)

Youth reluctance to participate because they are tools for implementation and not decision-makers: *"Parties are always blamed for using youth as a tool for work and not for decision-making, yet parties complain about youth reluctance to participate in party or organizational work."* (Conflict resolution and civil peace expert/Ramallah)

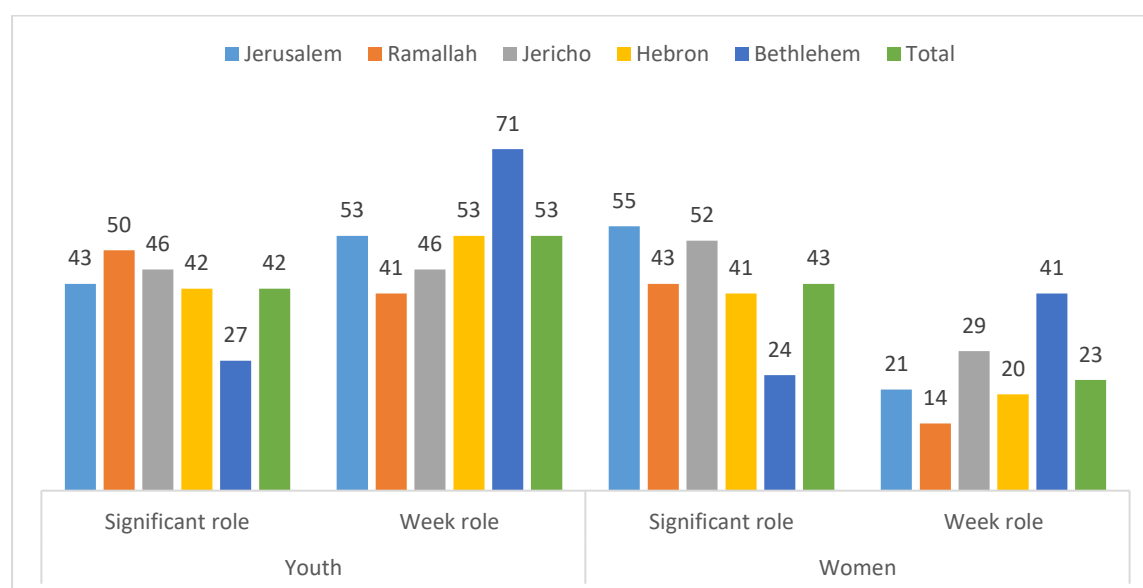
Most women in the government are not decision makers: *"There is an improvement in the presence of women in decision-making positions in the Palestinian Authority, and there is more acceptance of women there, meaning the last government had 3 women ministers and now there are 4 women ministers and directors general, but there are still challenges to women's participation in government work because they are not decision-makers."* (Trainer in women and youth issues / Bethlehem)

C. Assessing Participation in NGOs

The data indicates that only 43% of women believe that women have a significant or very significant role in decision-making within NGOs, while 34% consider this role to be moderate, and 23% consider it weak or very weak. The city of Jerusalem recorded the highest percentage of women's belief in the strength of this role (55%), while the lowest percentage was in Bethlehem (24%)

As for youth, 42% of them reported that youth have a significant or very significant role in decision-making within NGOs, compared to 5% who consider it moderate, and 53% who consider it weak or very weak. The highest percentage believing that the role of youth is strong was recorded in Ramallah (50%), and the lowest in Bethlehem (27%)

Graph (5) the role of women and youth in decision-making at the level of NGOs by region



These results reflect a relatively weak perception of the importance of the role of women and youth in decision-making at the level NGOs, as the percentages are less than half in both groups. It is also notable that more than half of youth (53%) perceive their role as weak or very weak, which is higher than that of women (23%), which may indicate a greater sense of marginalization among youth than among women. The geographical disparity, especially the lower percentages in Bethlehem, is a factor that may reflect different opportunities for participation and empowerment depending on the local environment. Qualitative data shows several factors that hinder the participation of women and youth in decision-making in NGOs:

Lack of renewal of personalities within NGOs: *"NGOs, whether women's or youth, are inherited, so I see that the same names in the management or boards of directors of NGOs do not change them, and there is no retirement age, perhaps because there is no social security to provide them with a decent life after retirement age."* (Feminist Academy/Ramallah)

NGOs prioritize funding, not necessarily the needs of women or youth: *"Many NGOs implement their programs according to the agenda of the funder, the same training or program may be repeated without benefit, we often see the same trainees with more than one institution, which means that these institutions do not care about the target group."* (Feminist Expert/Ramallah)

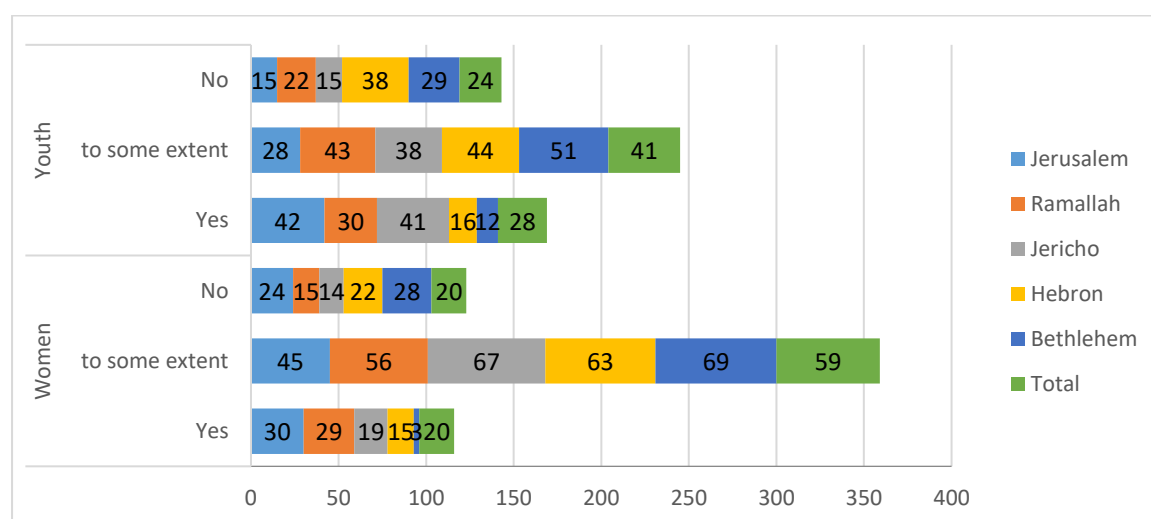
Civil society institutions control youth and women: *"Civil society institutions control all training, initiatives or support and set conditions for us and we have to abide by them. If the youth were together and united, we as youth would have imposed our conditions according to our needs"* (Youth participant in the focus group/Ramallah).

D. The Impact of Women's and Youth Participation on Local Decisions- Making

The results differ when it comes to assessing the level of participation of women and youth at the level of families, communities, parties, or governmental and civil institutions compared to the actual impact of this participation on the level of local decisions. For example, the results indicate that there is a marked difference in the extent to which women and youth feel that their voices have an impact on local decision-making. Only 20% of women reported that their voices are taken into consideration in local decisions in their areas of residence, with the highest percentage in Jerusalem (30%) and the lowest in Bethlehem (3%). In contrast, 59% of women said that their voices are taken into account "to some extent," while 20% indicated that their decisions are not taken into account at all.

As for youth, 28% indicated that their voices are taken into account in local decisions, with the highest percentage in Jerusalem (42%) and the lowest in Bethlehem (12%). Forty-one percent of youth indicated that their voices are taken into account "to some extent," while 20% said that their decisions are not taken into account at all in the local decision-making process.

Graph (6): The Impact of Women's and Youth Participation on Local Decisions- Making



When we asked the experts and activists about the reasons, the following statements were made:

The impact of women in decision-making positions is not tangible: *"All our work on participation and women's voices was ineffective, because even if we as women reached decision-making positions, and I knew women who received decision-making positions, but they did not have an important impact or change"* (feminist activist/Jerusalem)

A stereotypical and societal view of the weak influence of women in decision-making positions: *"If women are present in the decision-making position and are strong, they can communicate their voice against everyone, but due to experience, I have not seen this influence in a real way and sometimes I see that there is a societal view that women in decision-making are weak by default."* (feminist activist/Jerusalem). (Feminist expert / Hebron)

Limited participation of women and youth in decision-making: *"Youth and women can participate effectively, but their participation in decision-making is limited"* (Expert on the government sector / Ramallah)

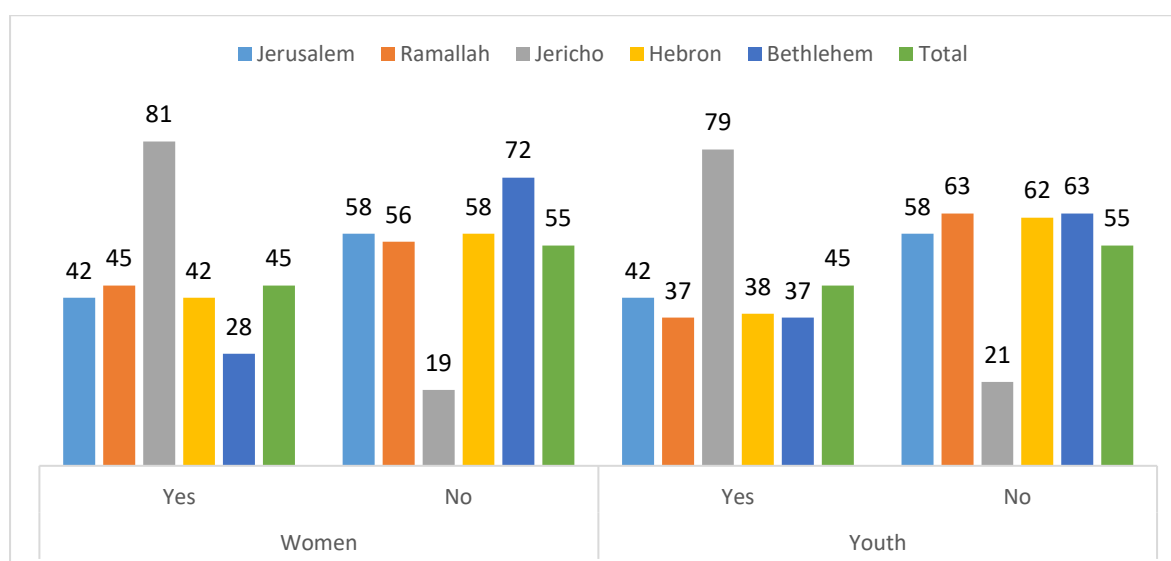
The goal of youth participation at the local level is participation, not influence: *"Youth participation at the local level is not in the required level because its goal is participation, not influence, so we do not find a role for youth in crucial decisions in our region and therefore their voice is not heard"* (Youth community activist / Jericho)

Laws do not encourage youth to take executive and real positions: *"We rarely see youth in real executive decision-making positions, I have never heard of a mayor who is 29 years old or younger"* (youth community activist/Jericho)

E. Participation of women and youth in community- Based activities

The data showed a remarkable similarity between women and youth in the impact of their voices in the decision-making process at the local level with the level of community participation. 55% of women and 55% of youth stated that they had never participated in any community, human rights or political activity, compared to 45% of each group who reported participation. The highest rates of non-participation were recorded among women in Bethlehem (72%) and among youth in Ramallah and Bethlehem (63% each), while the lowest rates were in Jericho (19% for women and 20% for youth).

Graph (7) Participation of women and youth in community activities by region



This means that low levels of community, rights and political participation among women and youth are closely linked to their low sense of having their voices heard in local decision-making. This was emphasized in the interviews and focus groups as follows:

Lack of investment in women's competencies: *"Palestinian women are half of society, they are educated and have potential, but they are not represented numerically or qualitatively, hence the lack of investment in these competencies, which is reflected in the weakness of women's community participation" (Feminist academic/Ramallah)*

The low level of participation of women and youth is reflected in the interest of community activities: *"The lack of elections in Palestine, whether legislative, presidential, student council elections, unions and syndicates, has negatively impacted the reality of community participation of women and youth, meaning that until now women's participation has not reached more than 20%, and youth participation is very simple." (Expert in international organizations on youth and women's issues, Ramallah)*

Chapter Four: Challenges and gaps in the participation of women and youth in decision-making

This chapter presents the challenges and gaps that are reflected in the participation of women and youth in decision-making, which are many, including political challenges such as the policies of the Israeli occupation, Distrust in the government, lack of protection for women and youth, reluctance to political participation, and the spread of corruption phenomena, legal and legislative challenges that limit the participation of women and youth in decision-making, and thirdly, social challenges such as customs and traditions, the subordination of youth on elders, lack of confidence in the abilities of women and youth, lack of awareness of the importance of participation, and economic challenges such as weak economic funding.

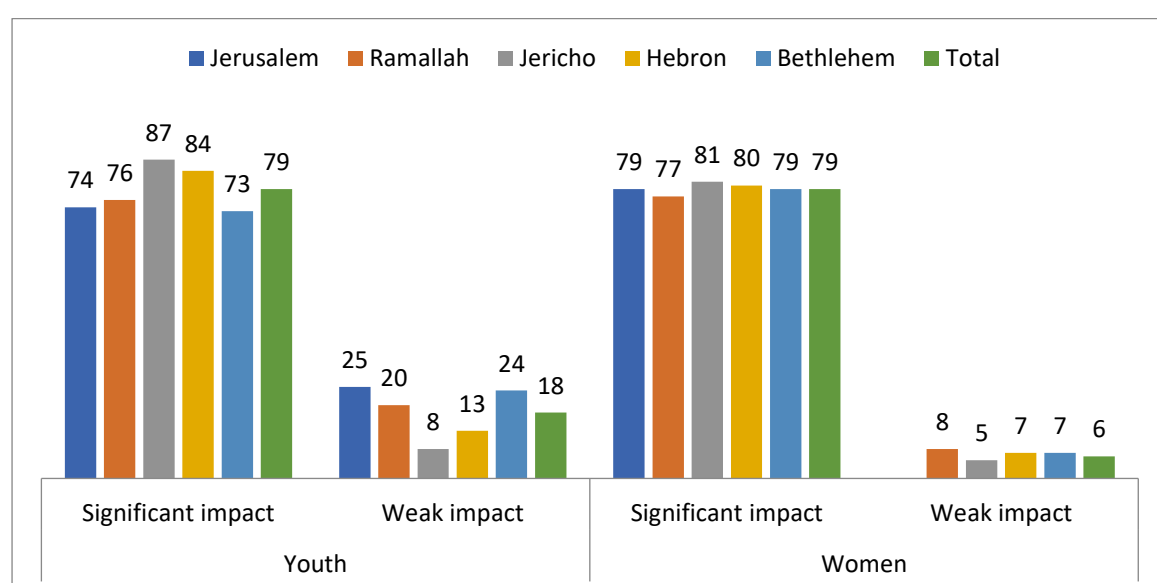
A. Political Challenges

1. Israeli occupation policies

The results indicate that a large percentage of women (79%) believe that Israeli occupation policies, especially arrests and checkpoints, have a significant or very significant impact on their participation in decision-making. On the other hand, 16% reported a moderate impact, while only 6% underestimated its impact, considering it to be weak or very weak. In terms of geographic distribution, the highest percentages were recorded in Hebron (80%) and Jericho (81%), while the lowest percentages were found in Ramallah (77%) and Jerusalem (78%).

Similarly, 79% of youth reported that these policies are a significant or very significant obstacle to their participation in decision-making, while 3% considered the impact to be moderate and 18% described it as weak or very weak. Jericho ranked first (87%), while Jerusalem (74%) and Bethlehem (73%) had the lowest percentages.

Graph (8) the impact of occupation policies on decision-making by region



The results reveal a similar pattern in how women and youth perceive the impact of the occupation's policies on their roles in the decision-making process, as the overall percentage is almost identical (79% each) in assessing the impact as significant or very significant. However, the geographical distribution shows some differences, although they are close between cities; while Jericho ranks high in both categories, Bethlehem and Jerusalem register a decline in the youth's assessment, matched by a less steep decline for women, while Bethlehem and Jerusalem register a decline in the youth's assessment.

The qualitative data shows that many of the occupation's policies negatively impact participation in decision-making in a number of ways:

Fears of arrest and direct assault: *"The Israeli occupation is the biggest part of the challenges that hinder women's participation in decision-making, because any political or national action towards any issue may expose you to arrest or assault by the occupation"* (Feminist expert / Hebron)

The occupation hinders progress in participation in decision-making: *"In Palestine, the challenges of participation in political issues are difficult, and if the challenges in any country reach 10%, in Palestine they reach 100% because we are under occupation that hinders our development and progress and our ability to achieve our rights"* (Feminist academic / Ramallah)

Ban on freedom of expression: *"The arrests carried out by the occupation have prevented many women and youth from participating in decision-making and prevented the right to express their opinions on any issue."* (Government expert on women and youth issues / Hebron)

Checkpoints and closures: *"The biggest obstacle to youth participation is the occupation, which prevents geographical communication between cities and villages and imposes closures and checkpoints... when we want to do an activity or event, it can be canceled at the last minute if there are closures or checkpoints."* (Youth Government Expert/Ramallah)

Interest in political participation declined after the aggression on Gaza: *"The reluctance of youth to participate in politics or decision-making was normal due to the occupation, but it increased after the Israeli aggression against the Gaza Strip in October 2023 and the heinous crimes committed there and here in the West Bank, the fear of the occupation's attacks became much greater."* (Youth Expert/Ramallah)

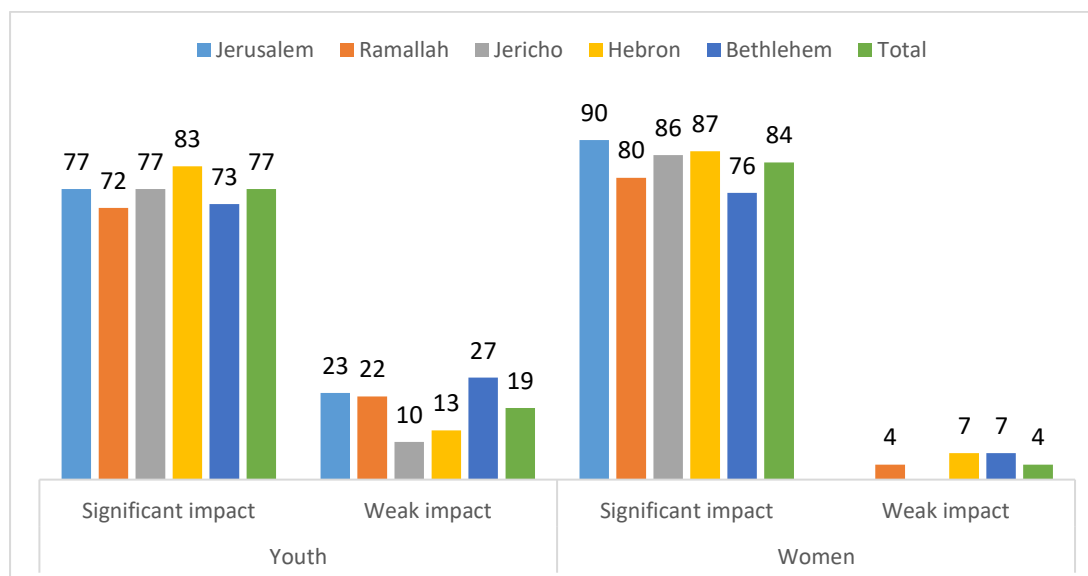
2. Distrust in the Palestinian government

The results indicate that the majority of women (83%) consider the lack of trust in the government to be a critical factor that significant or very significant influences their participation in decision-making, while 12% consider the impact to be moderate, and only 4% minimize it, describing its impact as weak or very weak. Jerusalem recorded the highest percentage (90%), while in Bethlehem it dropped to 76%.

At the youth level, 77% reported that a lack of trust in the government is a significant or very significant influence on their participation in decision-making, compared to 4% who

described the influence as moderate and 19% who considered it weak or very weak. Hebron had the highest percentage (84%), while the lowest percentages were recorded in Bethlehem (73%) and Ramallah (72%).

Graph (9) Impact of distrust of government on decision-making by region



The results indicate that a lack of trust in the government is perceived as a significant influence in limiting participation in decision-making by both groups, with women more likely to agree on the magnitude of the impact than youth (83% vs. 77%). There is also a geographical difference in the strength of this belief; Jerusalem recorded the highest percentage for women, while Hebron ranked the highest for youth. This geographical disparity may reflect a difference in the political and social experiences of each region, or in the level of direct contact with government institutions, explaining the differences in the perception of the impact of the loss of trust on effective participation.

In our attempt to understand the reasons for the lack of trust in the Palestinian government as a challenge to enhancing women and youth participation in decision-making, several factors emerged on the qualitative side:

The ongoing internal Palestinian divide: *"The system of governance in Palestine because of the division has disrupted the presidential and legislative elections and we have two governments, and this has limited the participation of youth and women and their participation in decision-making at the level of planning, policies or their needs."* (Expert of international organizations on youth and women's issues / Ramallah)

The government's weak performance in crises such as the coronavirus and the aggression against the Gaza Strip: *The crises in which the government entered due to the spread of the coronavirus and the war on the Gaza Strip hindered the implementation of many policies, programs and plans related to youth and women aimed at expanding the participation of youth and women in decision-making* (Expert on International Institutions on Women and Youth Issues/Ramallah).

Representation of women and youth in the government: *Women are present in government positions as executives rather than decision makers (feminist expert/Ramallah).*

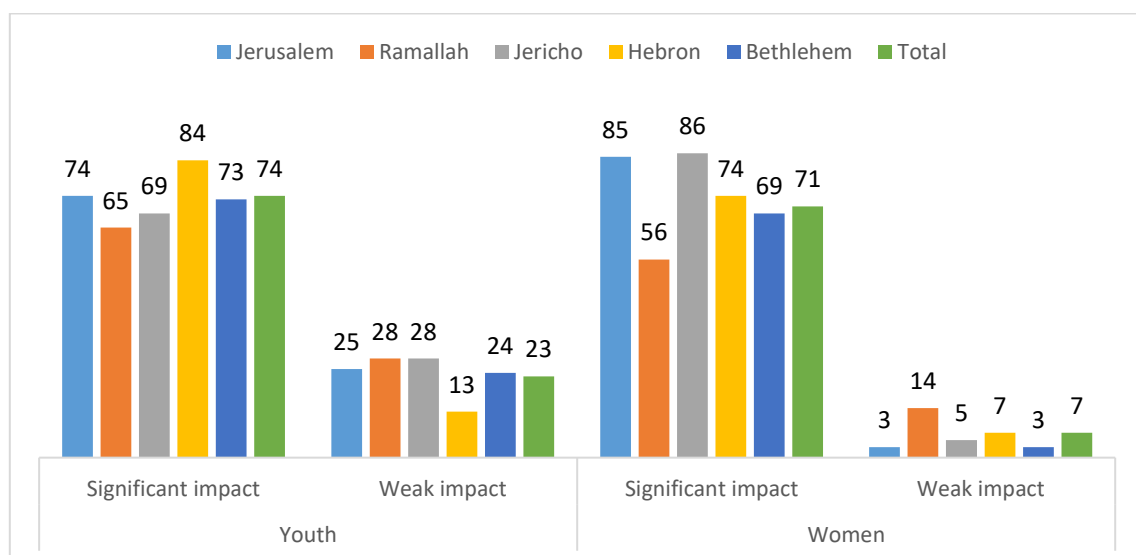
Lack of trust in government activities: *When there is funding coming for an activity with a governmental organization, they treat us as if we are begging from them.. This is supposed to be their social role, and this is their duty as part of their social activity in their program" (Young woman participant in the Ramallah focus group)*

3. Lack of protection for feminist/youth activism

Part of distrust in the government has a lot to do with the lack of protection for feminist or youth activists, because the role of protection is partially provided by the government but fully subordinated to the Israeli occupation, which deprives not only women and youth of protection but all Palestinian society. Therefore, the majority of women (71%) reported that the lack of protection for feminist activists is a critical factor that has a significant impact on their participation in decision-making, while 22% considered its impact to be moderate, and only 7% described its impact as weak or very weak. The highest perception of the impact of lack of protection was recorded in Jerusalem (85%), while the lowest was in Ramallah (56%).

Among youth, 74% indicated that the lack of protection is a major impediment to their participation in decision-making, compared to 3% who considered its impact moderate and 23% who described it as weak or very weak. Hebron recorded the highest percentage (84%), while the lowest percentage was in Ramallah (65%).

Graph (10) Lack of protection for feminist/youth activism by region



The results indicate that the absence of protection is a factor that significantly affects the ability of both women and youth to effectively participate in decision-making, noting that women gave more weight to the impact of this absence in Jerusalem than youth in the same city. This can be explained by the fact that women in Jerusalem face complex challenges including local laws, occupation policies, and societal pressures, making the need for protection even more pressing. As for youth, Hebron stands out as an example of a

community that sees the absence of protection as a significant barrier to participation opportunities, perhaps due to the nature of the social and political environment that increases the competition or risks associated with engaging in civic and political action. When we asked the experts and activists about protection, several factors emerged:

The Israeli occupation is the perennial challenge to protection: *"The Israeli occupation remains the biggest violator of human rights and violates the protection stipulated in international resolutions and regulations, and the biggest evidence is the genocidal crimes in the Gaza Strip and the daily violations in the West Bank for all groups of society, including children, women, youth and the elderly" (Expert of international organizations on women and youth issues, Ramallah)*

The Palestinian system as a whole does not provide protection: *"The Palestinian system, including PA and state institutions, lacks protection and job security, which creates a sense of uncertainty for managers, women and youth when exercising their duties or participating in decision-making." (Feminist academic/Ramallah)*

A protection gap between theory and practice: *"Despite the existence of serious institutional efforts to develop decisions for protection and prevention, the level of awareness of the importance of participation and protection of women and youth and the application of these decisions on the field do not reflect theoretical efforts, indicating a gap between policies and actual application." (Feminist expert/Ramallah)*

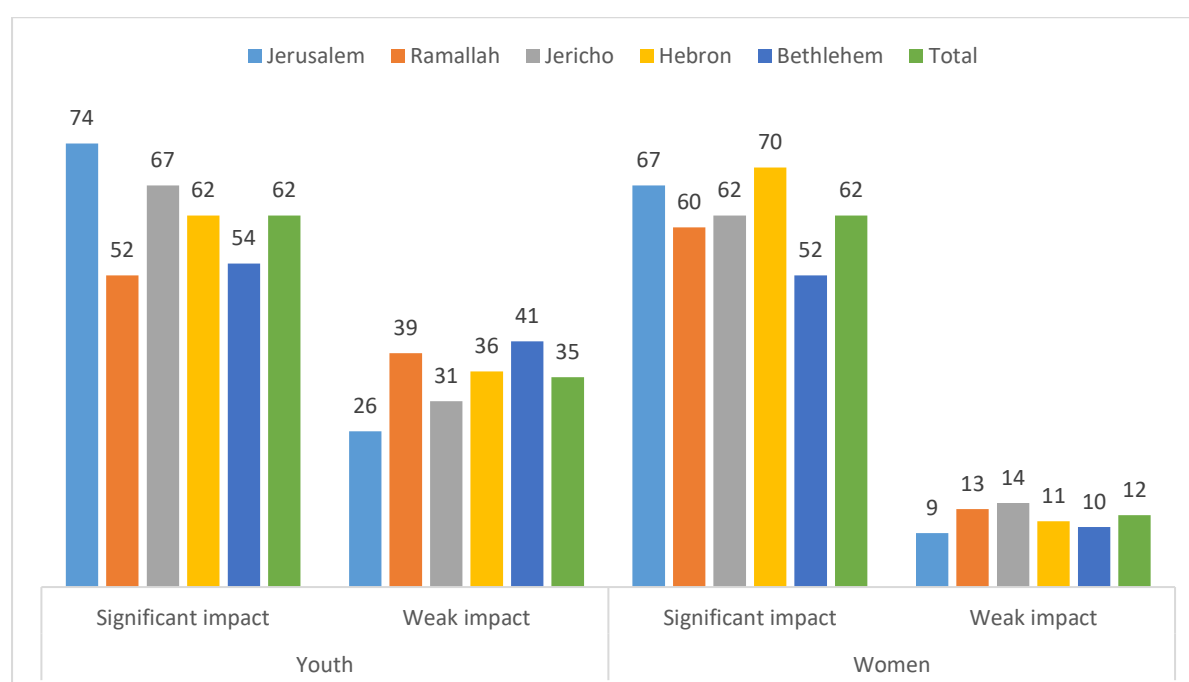
International frameworks and bodies in international law are unable to protect women and youth in Palestine: *"Before the aggression on Gaza, we hoped that Palestinians would be protected, whether women, youth or other groups within the international system, but after the aggression on the Gaza Strip and the genocidal crimes that occurred, there is no protection for anyone" (Youth academic/Ramallah).*

4. Reluctance to participate in politics

Two-thirds of women (62%) reported that the lack of interest in the political sphere is a factor that significant or very significant affects their decision-making ability, compared to 26% who considered it to have a moderate impact, and 12% who considered it to be weak or very weak. The highest perception of the impact of this factor was recorded in Hebron (70%), while the lowest was in Bethlehem (52%).

As for youth, 62% of them said that the lack of interest in the political sphere has a significant or very significant impact on their decision-making ability, while 3% saw it as moderate, and 35% described it as weak or very weak. The perception of this factor was highest in Jerusalem (74%) and lowest in Ramallah (52%).

Graph (11) Impact of women and youth disinterest in politics on decision-making by region



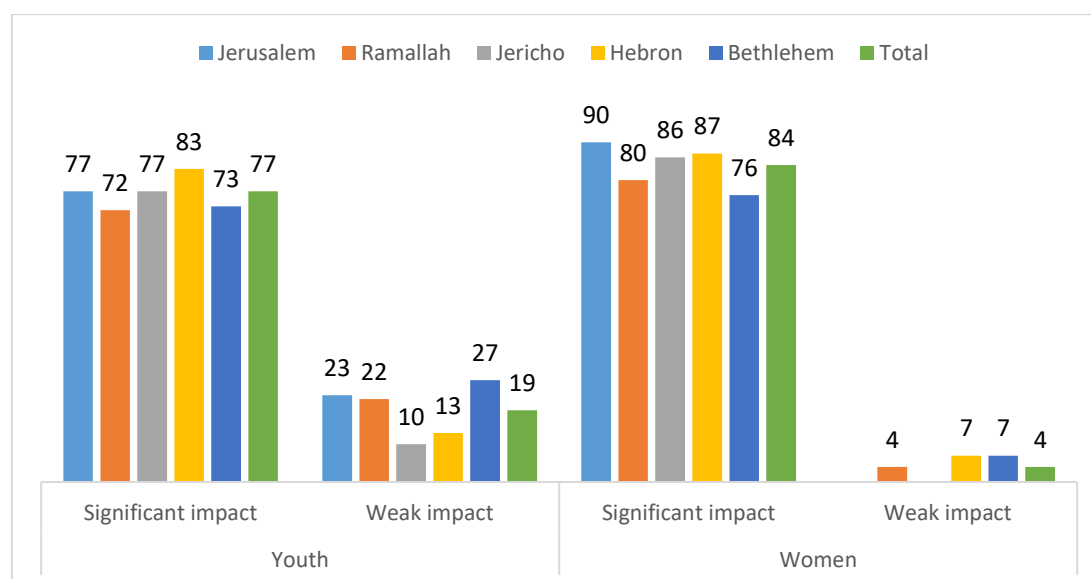
The results shows a significant convergence between women and youth in perceiving the impact of low interest in the political sphere, reaching 62% for both groups. However, geographic variations reveal differences in the local context of each region. For women, the percentage was highest in Hebron (70%), which can be explained by the strong presence of traditional and tribal structures in the community, where low interest in politics may lead to fewer opportunities for women to influence the predominantly male decision-making system. In contrast, the percentage was lowest in Bethlehem (52%), which may reflect a greater relative involvement in civic and community activities, mitigating the impact of the lack of direct political interest. Among youth, Jerusalem topped the list (74%), which can be linked to the specificity of the political and security situation in the city, where political participation is a direct tool for expressing attitudes towards Israeli policies. Ramallah ranked last (52%), perhaps because it is an administrative and economic center that provides alternative channels of influence outside the traditional political framework.

5. The prevalence of corruption phenomena (wasta, nepotism, and exploitation of influence)

Administrative and functional corruption in its multiple forms (such as wasta, nepotism, and exploitation of influence) constitutes a major structural challenge that hinders the effective participation of women and youth in decision-making processes. The seriousness of this phenomenon is reflected in its multidimensional nature, as it negatively affects trust in public institutions on the one hand, and limits equitable access to decision-making for marginalized groups on the other. At the political level, corrupt practices contribute to undermining the principle of competence in leadership positions. Field data indicates that 84 percent of women and 79 percent of youth believe that corruption has a significant or very significant impact on their political participation.

At the social level, corruption reinforces structural patterns of discrimination and inequality, and the data reveals geographical disparities in the perception of the impact of corruption, with Jericho recording the highest percentage among women (90%), while Hebron recorded the highest percentage among youth (84%). In the socio-cultural context, corrupt practices contribute to a distorted value system that prioritizes personal relationships over competence, leading to frustration and apathy among ambitious youth and women. The data shows that only a small percentage of respondents (3% of women and 16% of youth) underestimate the impact of corruption.

Graph (12) the impact of corruption on decision-making by region



Detailed data analysis reveals that perception of the impact of corruption is remarkably high for both genders, with geographic differences worthy of consideration. The high percentages in Jericho among women (90%) may reflect the nature of the fragile socio-economic environment that exacerbates the impact of corrupt practices. In contrast, the relatively low rates in Jerusalem (77% for women and 75% for youth) may be due to the particular political context of the city under occupation, where corruption issues take a backseat to security and existential challenges. The disparity between West Bank cities, as in the case of Hebron (84% for youth) versus Ramallah (76%), can be explained by the different social and economic structures and the degree of competition for resources in each region.

The qualitative results show several corruption related to women and youth participation in decision-making:

Exploitation of authority within community organizations: *"We are doing a youth initiative that has a great impact in our community, supported by a certain community organization, but when it is talked about, we find other people who were not with us in the initiative representing us and talking about us in the media and in local and Arab platforms"* (young woman participating in a focus group in Ramallah)

Participatory values disappear in the government in favor of centralized decision-making: *"At the level of government institutions, empowerment is almost non-existent and converges*

in centralized decision-making or a monopoly for one or two people within the institution, while the rest of the youth and women are absent from any decision” (youth participant in the Ramallah workshop).

Geographical favoritism: *Many projects focus on a specific area and implement a large number of projects for youth and women, while other areas are excluded, for example, Ramallah city. This is a big obstacle to participation and capacity building for youth and women.” (Youth focus group participant in Ramallah)*

Corruption in civil society organizations: *The same personalities in women's and youth organizations and even most civil society organizations have not changed for 20 years, and their sons and daughters have positions in them, even in the boards of directors, as if by inheritance, and this is one of the biggest obstacles to pumping new blood and enhancing the participation of women and youth in decision-making positions” (Feminist academic/Ramallah)*

Highlight: Youth's views on exclusion and corruption

Youth around the world describe their experiences of exclusion as a structural and psychological form of violence that is inseparable from their political, social, economic and cultural vulnerability. This manifests itself in youth's lack of trust in state-society relations, and in the lack of trust in youth by their communities and the wider society.

The forms of exclusion are manifested in multiple forms, the most important of which is corruption, the exclusion of youth from political participation and their lack of trust in patronage and corrupt governance systems that lack the will and capacity to address their exclusion. Youth demanded increased participation in electoral and policy-making processes in youth councils, associations and parliaments, as well as in decision-making at the local, national, regional and global levels, which led to a lack of trust in democratic governance itself.⁴⁶

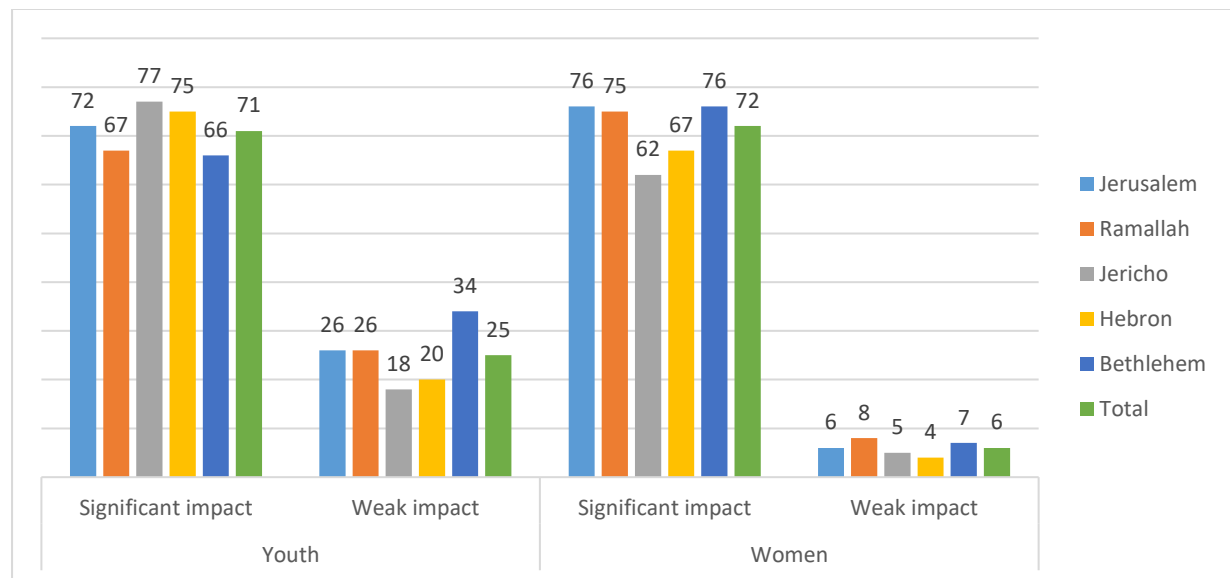
B. Legal and legislative challenges

Palestinian laws and legislation related to the importance of women's and youth participation in decision-making. The results indicate that 72% of women consider the weakness of Palestinian laws and legislation to be a decisive factor with a significant impact on their ability to make decisions, while 22% consider its impact to be moderate, and only 6% consider its impact to be weak. The highest percentage of this belief was recorded in the cities of Jerusalem and Hebron (76%), while the lowest percentage was in Jericho (61%).

⁴⁶ United Nations General Assembly & Security Council. (2018, March). The Missing Peace: Independent Progress Study on Youth, Peace and Security (Document No. A/72/761-S/2018/86). Retrieved August 1, 2025, from https://www.youth4peace.info/files/system/files/2018-03/progress%20study%20on%20youth-%20peace%20-%20security_a-72-761_s-2018-86_arabic_0.pdf

Among youth, 71% reported that weak Palestinian laws and legislation were among the most influential and important factors limiting their ability to make decisions, compared to 4% who described its impact as moderate and 25% who considered it weak or very weak. Jericho had the highest percentage (77%), while Ramallah (67%) and Bethlehem (66%) had the lowest.

Graph (13) Impact of weak Palestinian laws and legislation on decision-making by region



The results reveal a clear similarity in the perceptions of women and youth regarding the impact of weak Palestinian laws and legislation on participation in decision-making, with very similar percentages (72% for women and 71% for youth) assessing the impact as significant or decisive. This reflects a shared awareness of the inadequacy of the legislative framework in empowering community groups to exercise leadership roles or influence decisions. Geographically, the high percentage of respondents who believe that laws are weak in Hebron and Jerusalem (76%) may be related to the specific political, economic, and social realities there. In Jerusalem, women face a complex situation due to direct Israeli policies, the absence of adequate legal protection, and the difficulty of enforcing Palestinian laws due to administrative and political complications. This makes the inadequacy of legislation or weak enforcement even more apparent and acute. In Hebron, where there is geographical division, widespread checkpoints, and multiple authorities, women suffer from poor access to justice and protection of their rights, reinforcing their perception that legislation is weak or ineffective in protecting their role in decision-making.

The quantitative results reinforce many aspects related to the weakness of legislation and laws in force in Palestine in the qualitative results in relation to a number of reasons:

The perception that laws are unfair to women; local council law, labor law, and women's quotas: Unfortunately, women are underrepresented in decision-making in Palestinian society and culture. The problem is structural, rooted in Palestinian culture and laws. For example, I am against quotas because women make up half of society and do not need quotas. There is injustice in the labor law for women, and the same applies to the Local Councils Law. (Feminist academic/Ramallah)

Gap between legal texts and practical applications: *The theoretical texts in the laws are there and clear, but practical and executive application is not binding on legislation and laws. For example, weak accountability and follow-up mechanisms to ensure the participation of women and youth in decision-making are not implemented. (Youth expert/Bethlehem)*

The law must be accompanied by awareness-raising, supportive policies, follow-up, and evaluation: *"The law contributes to building a community culture and teaching the community values and respect for decisions... Individuals reject the application of a particular law at first, but with time and continuous application, it becomes part of the prevailing culture. To ensure the effectiveness of this law, it must be accompanied by supportive policies, awareness raising, monitoring, awareness campaigns, and continuous evaluation to ensure its proper implementation and achieve the desired impact." (Feminist academic/Ramallah)*

Feminist and youth government institutions do not take into account the implementation of policies and laws: *"The Palestinian Ministry of Women and the Higher Council for Youth should, in my opinion, play a supervisory role in monitoring the implementation of policies, following up on activities, evaluating them, and drawing up policies, but today they play an executive role." (Feminist expert/Ramallah)*

Amendments proposed to certain laws to increase the participation of women and youth are ink on paper: *"Despite amendments to certain laws to increase the participation of youth and women in decision-making positions, such as lowering the age of candidacy in local elections and allocating representation quotas, and despite the efforts made by civil society institutions through policies and guidelines based on the Palestinian experience, most of these initiatives have remained ink on paper by the government and relevant institutions (expert on international institutions on women's and youth issues/Ramallah)."*

Absence of a law giving Palestinian youth the right to participate in decision-making: *"There is no law that gives youth the right to exercise their rights or addresses their issues. Older people are the ones who speak on their behalf, but youth are supposed to know their reality and needs best. Therefore, if there is no law for youth, their participation in decision-making will remain limited." (Expert on women's and youth issues/Bethlehem)*

C. Social and cultural challenges

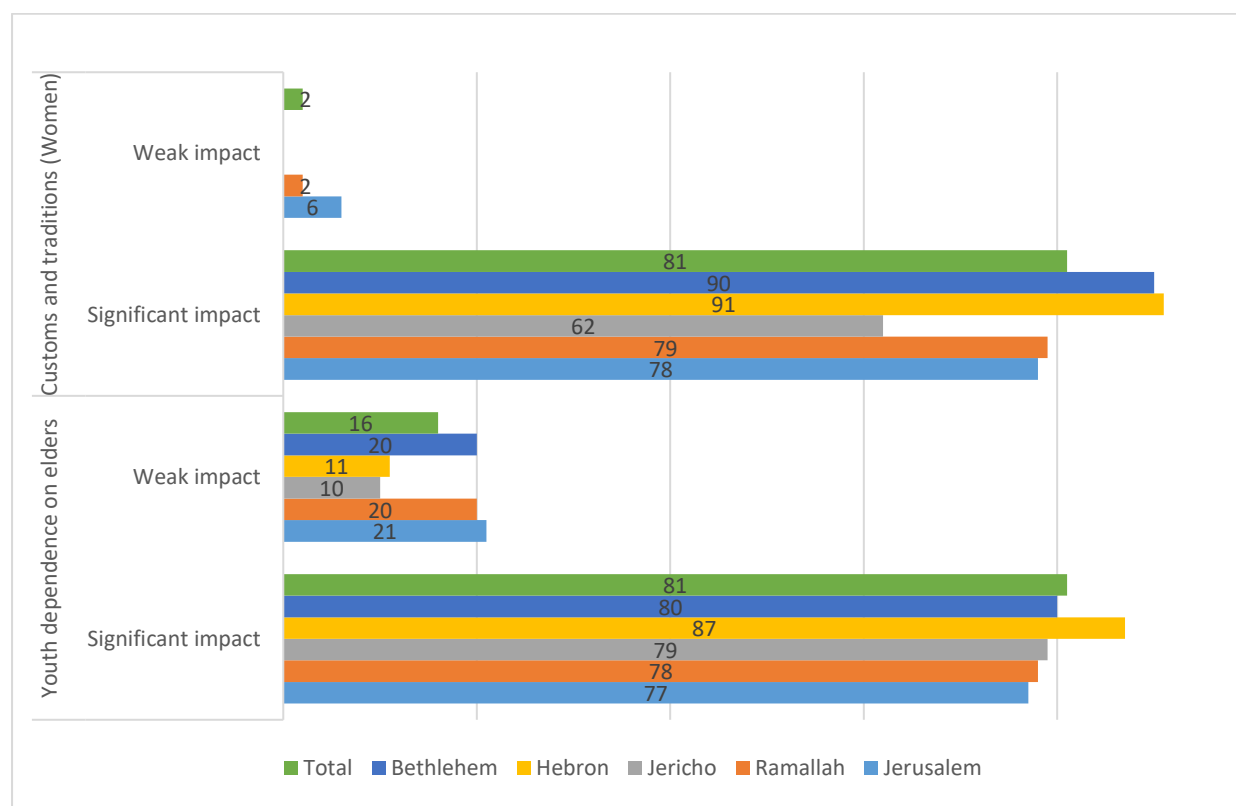
1. Traditions specific to women and youth

The majority of women (81%) indicated that customs and traditions have a significant impact on their participation in decision-making, rating their impact as significant or very significant, while 17% considered their impact to be moderate, and only 2% downplayed their impact, considering it weak or very weak. The highest percentage was recorded in Hebron (91%), while the lowest was in Jericho (62%).

Among youth, the most important aspect of customs and traditions was the subordination of youth to their elders. 81% acknowledged that the subordination of youth to their elders constituted a significant or very significant obstacle to their participation in decision-making,

while 3% considered its impact to be moderate and 16% considered its impact to be weak or very weak. The highest percentage was in Hebron (87%), and the lowest in Jerusalem (77%).

Graph (14) Impact of traditions on women's and youth participation in decision-making by region



The results show that cultural and social factors, such as customs and traditions regarding women and the subordination of youth to older people, remain among the most significant barriers to effective participation in decision-making. The notable increase in Hebron for both groups may reflect the strength of the traditional social and tribal structure, where traditions play a decisive role in determining individuals' roles and limits of participation, thereby limiting the ability of women and youth to exert independent influence.

In contrast, the lowest percentage was among women in Jericho, which may be related to the relatively more open nature of the local community, or to the existence of opportunities for participation in non-political areas that reduce the impact of traditional constraints. The low percentage among youth in Jerusalem may be related to the specific political context there, where field conditions and national challenges impose different priorities on youth, which may reduce their subordination on older people in decision-making.

In the in-depth interviews and focus group, study participants focused on social factors that hinder women and youth participation in decision-making, most notably:

Stereotypes about the role of women: *“The participation of women in decision-making faces challenges, the most important of which are customs and traditions and stereotypes about women in Arab society. Nevertheless, Palestine is in a relatively better position than a number of Arab countries in terms of the ability to participate” (feminist expert/Hebron).*

Masculine culture: *“The participation of women and youth in decision-making faces a number of structural obstacles, the most prominent of which is the prevailing masculine culture” (feminist expert/Bethlehem).*

Traditions prevent women from influencing decision-making: *“Customs, traditions, and societal attitudes are among the most significant obstacles limiting women's participation in decision-making. Women face social and cultural resistance that prevents them from engaging in leadership positions, such as local councils or sports councils, limiting their opportunities for influence and effective participation. (Feminist activist/Jericho)*

Traditions limit women's talents and their freedom of expression and participation: *“Women face restrictions on their talents and abilities as a result of social constraints based on customs and traditions, which limit their freedom of expression and participation and impose strict frameworks that limit their actual potential.” (Feminist activist/Jerusalem)*

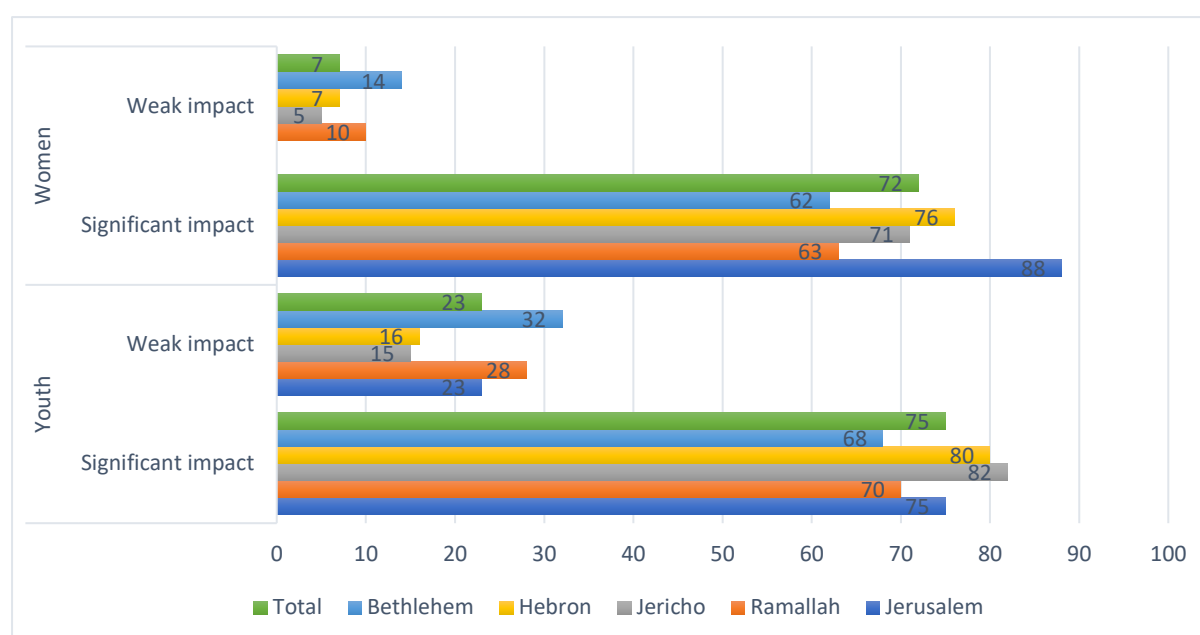
Exclusion are among the most important factors contributing to youth's subordination on older people: *“Exclusion and the monopoly of decision-making by older people are among the most significant obstacles limiting youth participation in decision-making. The 18-29 age group is viewed as a transitional period during which they are excluded and forced into dependency.” (Youth expert/Jericho)*

2. Society does not trust the abilities of women and youth

The results indicate that traditions, whether those associated with women or the subordination of youth to older people, play a vital role in enhancing mistrust in self-abilities, which is reflected in participation in decision-making. The majority of women (72%) indicated that lack of confidence in their abilities is a significant or very significant factor affecting their participation in decision-making, while 21% considered its impact to be moderate, and only 7% described it as weak or very weak. The highest awareness of the impact of this factor was recorded in Jerusalem (88%), while the lowest was in Bethlehem (62%).

For youth, 75% stated that lack of confidence in their abilities was a significant barrier to their participation in decision-making, compared to 2% who considered it to have a moderate impact and 23% who described it as weak or very weak. The highest level of awareness was in Jericho (82%), while the lowest was in Bethlehem (68%).

Graph (15) Lack of confidence in the abilities of women and youth and its impact on decision-making by region



The results show the correlation between cultural and social factors and the level of self-efficacy; societal traditions and reliance on elders contribute to reducing women's and youth's confidence in their ability to participate effectively in decision-making.

Geographical differences reflect the nature of local contexts, with high percentages in Jerusalem among women and Jericho among youth highlighting the severity of the impact of social and political constraints on self-confidence, while low percentages in Bethlehem indicate a local environment that is more supportive of participation and self-empowerment. The qualitative aspect highlights the importance of building confidence in the abilities of women and youth:

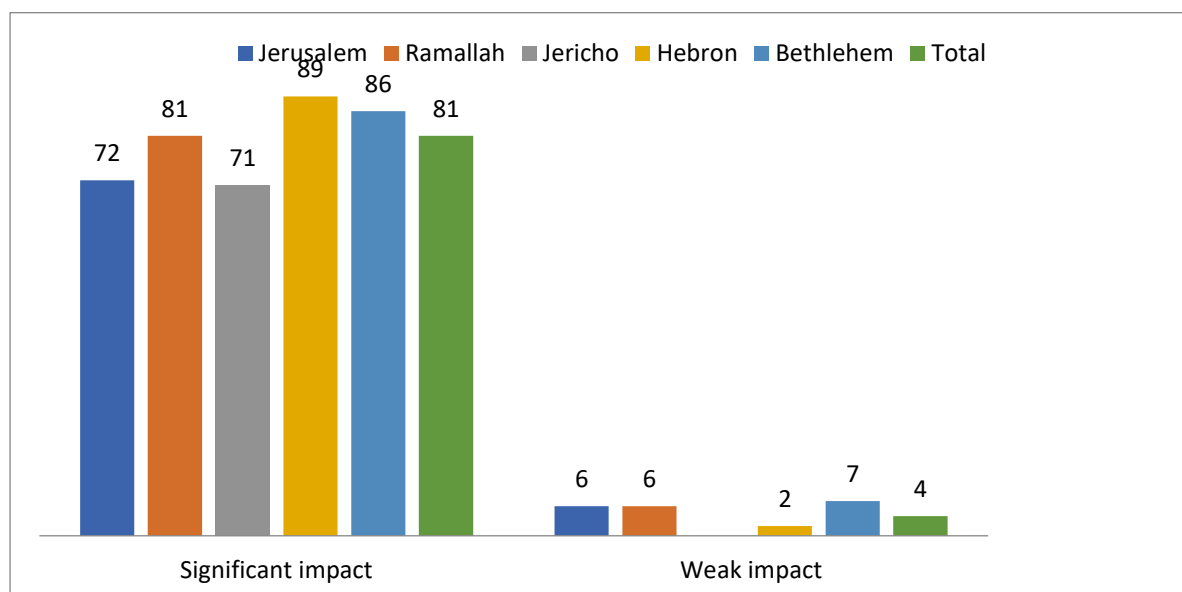
“Psychological empowerment is provided by institutions and is a key element in promoting youth participation, as youth need confidence in their abilities and the psychological motivation to believe that their initiatives can make an impact and provide a safe space for youth.” (Young man participating in the focus group/Ramallah)

“Society is still afraid of youth and women participating in decision-making circles, so there is a need to build their capacities and empower them.” (Feminist expert/Bethlehem)

3. Lack of awareness of the significance of women's participation in society

The vast majority of women (81%) indicated that lack of awareness of the importance of women's participation in society is a major obstacle and has a significant or very significant impact on their ability to participate in decision-making, while 14% considered its impact to be moderate and only 4% considered its impact to be weak. The highest awareness of the impact of this factor was recorded in Hebron (89%), while the lowest was in Jericho (71%).

Graph (16) Lack of awareness of women's participation in decision-making within society by region



These results indicate that lack of awareness is one of the most important social challenges restricting women's participation in decision-making, highlighting the gap between different regions in terms of awareness and practice. The high percentage in Hebron reflects a more conservative traditional social environment regarding women's roles, where awareness of participation is considered a prerequisite for overcoming social restrictions. The lower percentage in Jericho can be explained by the relative openness of the local community or the existence of stronger awareness programs that encourage women's participation, which reduces the impact of lack of awareness as a barrier to participation. The qualitative tools revealed two important issues for raising women's awareness about participation in decision-making:

Raising women's awareness will contribute to changing stereotypical views about women:

“Raising women's awareness, developing their ideas, strengthening their self-respect, and setting internal and external boundaries in their interactions with others will contribute to changing traditional patterns of thinking and patriarchal views in society and will contribute to cultivating modern and creative values” (Feminist Academy/Jerusalem).

Lack of awareness is one of the main reasons for the weakness of women in decision-making positions: *Women participate in decision-making, but often less than desired due to limited awareness of their rights and the importance of this role. (Community activist/Jericho)*

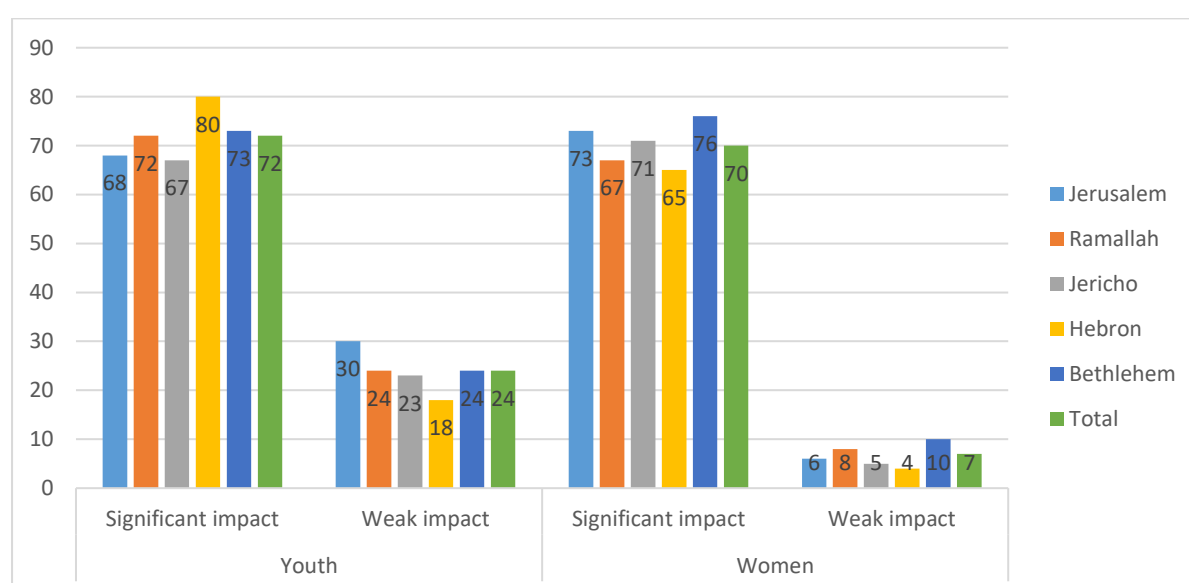
D. Economic challenges

1. Weak economic funding

The majority of women (70%) stated that weak economic funding is a factor that greatly or very greatly affects their ability to participate in decision-making, while 24% considered its impact to be moderate, and only 7% described it as weak. The highest awareness of the impact of this factor was recorded in Bethlehem (76%), while the lowest was in Hebron (65%). The highest awareness of the impact of this factor was recorded in Bethlehem (76%), while the lowest was in Hebron (65%).

For youth, 72% indicated that weak economic financing has a significant or very significant impact on their ability to participate in decision-making, compared to 4% who described it as having a moderate impact, and 24% who considered it weak or very weak. The highest level of awareness among youth was recorded in Hebron (80%), while the lowest was in Jerusalem and Jericho (68% and 67%, respectively).

Graph (17) Impact of inadequate funding for women and youth on decision-making by region



The qualitative results highlighted the importance of economic empowerment in relation to the participation of women and youth in decision-making, as follows:

Gap between the needs of women and youth and funding: *“The private sector and civil society organizations rely on funding to hold courses and programs, with initiatives taking place as long as financial support is available, making their continuity dependent on resources rather than the actual needs of youth.” (Government expert on women and youth issues/Hebron)*

Institutions do not fund initiatives fairly: *“Institutional support encourages women and youth to work and make a tangible impact, but the distribution of financial resources is often unfair, limiting opportunities for youth to participate effectively.” (Young participant in the focus group/Ramallah)*

Repeated funding for the same projects without making a difference: *“We should not be satisfied with simply seeking funding, especially if it does not meet the real needs of young men and women, as projects are often repeated in the same way without achieving the expected results.” (Feminist expert/Ramallah)*

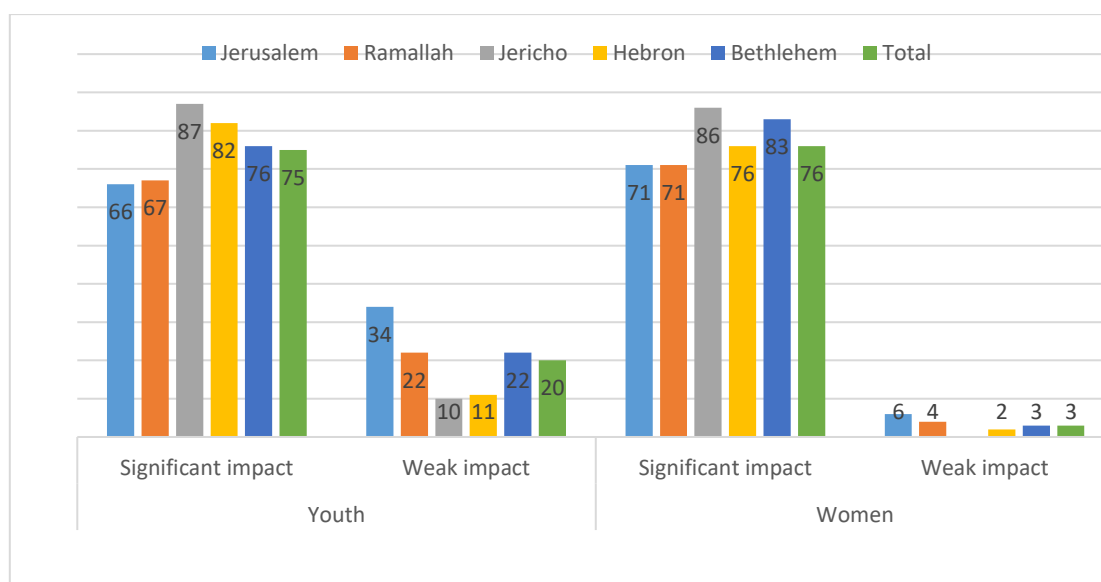
Conditional funding: *Programs for women and youth face many challenges, the most important of which is conditional funding. A number of conditions are imposed that force institutions to comply with these conditions or to have specific proportions of males and females, among other things. (Feminist expert/Hebron)*

2. Priority for women and youth improving economic income

The majority of women (76%) stated that their interest in improving economic income is a significant or very significant factor influencing their participation in decision-making, while 21% considered its impact to be moderate, and only 3% described it as weak or very weak. The highest awareness of the impact of this factor was recorded in Jericho (86%), while the lowest was recorded equally in Ramallah and Jerusalem (71%).

For youth, 75% indicated that their interest in improving economic income strongly or very strongly influences their participation in decision-making, compared to 5% who considered it to have a moderate influence, and 20% who described it as weak or very weak. The highest percentage of awareness among youth was in Jericho (85%), while the lowest was in Ramallah and Jerusalem (67% and 66%, respectively).

Graph (18) Impact of interest in improving economic income on decision-making by region



The results indicate that economic priorities are a determining factor in participation in decision-making, as women and youth appear to focus on improving their economic income before actively engaging in decision-making processes. This reflects that their interest in economic gains often outweighs their interest in community or political participation at this stage. Geographical differences show that awareness of the impact of income is higher in Jericho, perhaps as a result of more pressing economic needs or limited opportunities, while

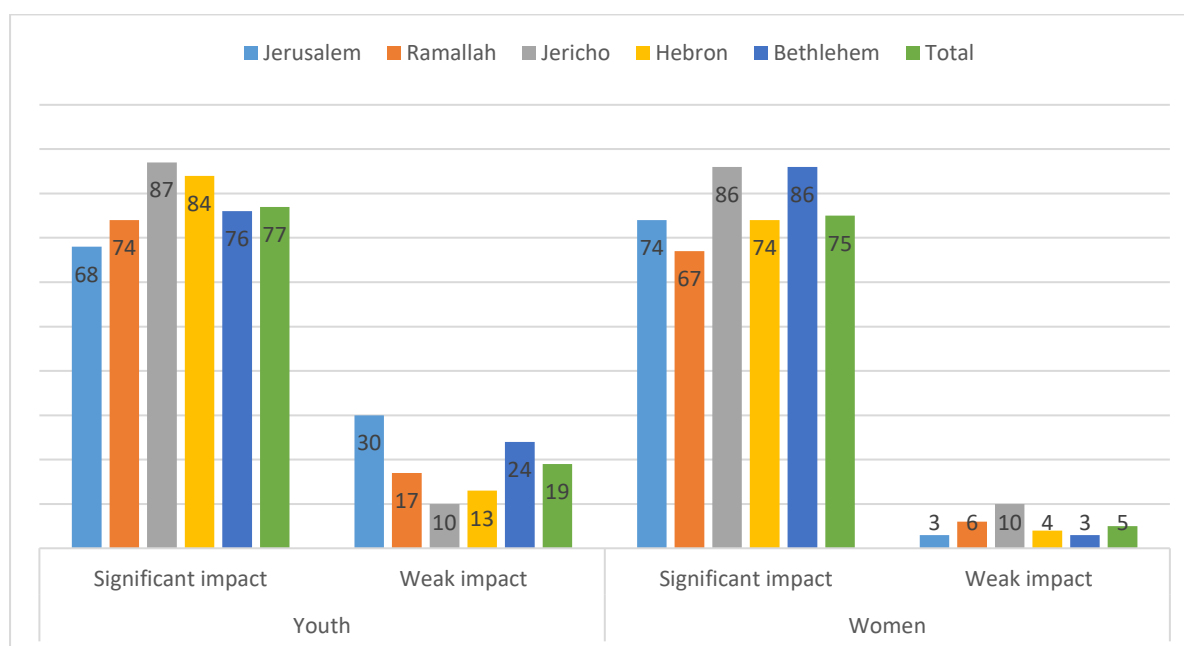
lower rates in Ramallah and Jerusalem may indicate the availability of relative resources or programs that provide some economic security.

3. Priority for women and youth in seeking employment

There was little difference between women and youth in their interest in improving their economic income and seeking employment, given the high unemployment rates in the West Bank. The majority of women (75%) stated that their interest in finding a source of income was a significant or very significant influential factor in their participation in decision-making, while 20% considered its influence to be moderate, and only 5% described it as weak or very weak. The highest awareness of the impact of this factor was recorded in Bethlehem (86%), while the lowest was in Ramallah (67%).

For youth, 77% indicated that their interest in finding a source of income significant or very significant influences their participation in decision-making, compared to 4% who considered it to have a moderate influence, and 19% who described it as weak or very weak. The highest percentage of awareness among youth was in Jericho (87%), while the lowest was in Ramallah (68%).

Graph (19) Impact of interest in seeking a source of income on decision-making by region



The results indicate that finding a source of income is a top priority for both women and youth, reducing their focus on community or political participation. Geographical differences show that the impact of this factor is more strongly felt in Bethlehem and Jericho, perhaps as a result of higher economic pressures or limited opportunities in these areas, while the percentage is lower in Ramallah, where there are relatively more economic opportunities. Qualitative data indicate a number of specific challenges in improving income sources or seeking new opportunities:

Political priorities have declined in favor of economic ones: *“Compared to the past 10 years and more, the priorities of Palestinian youth have changed... Political issues have declined in*

priority in favor of economic ones... Youth have become more interested in providing for their needs, building their future, and securing sources of income.” (Youth activist/Jericho)

The absence of laws and complex living conditions have made youth more interested in economic aspects: *‘Youth suffer from clear injustice, there are no laws to protect them, and their living conditions are complex due to the political and social reality. Youth focus on finding work and building a family, while social and political participation is given less attention, which limits the ability of youth to engage effectively in decision-making.” (Community Academy/Jerusalem)*

The absence of a political system has increased unemployment and frustration: *“The absence of a political system has caused a gap between youth and the political system in general, and this generation has naturally become frustrated under difficult conditions such as unemployment.” (Youth academic/Ramallah)*

Chapter Five: The Reality of Women and Youth in Conflict Resolution and Peacebuilding

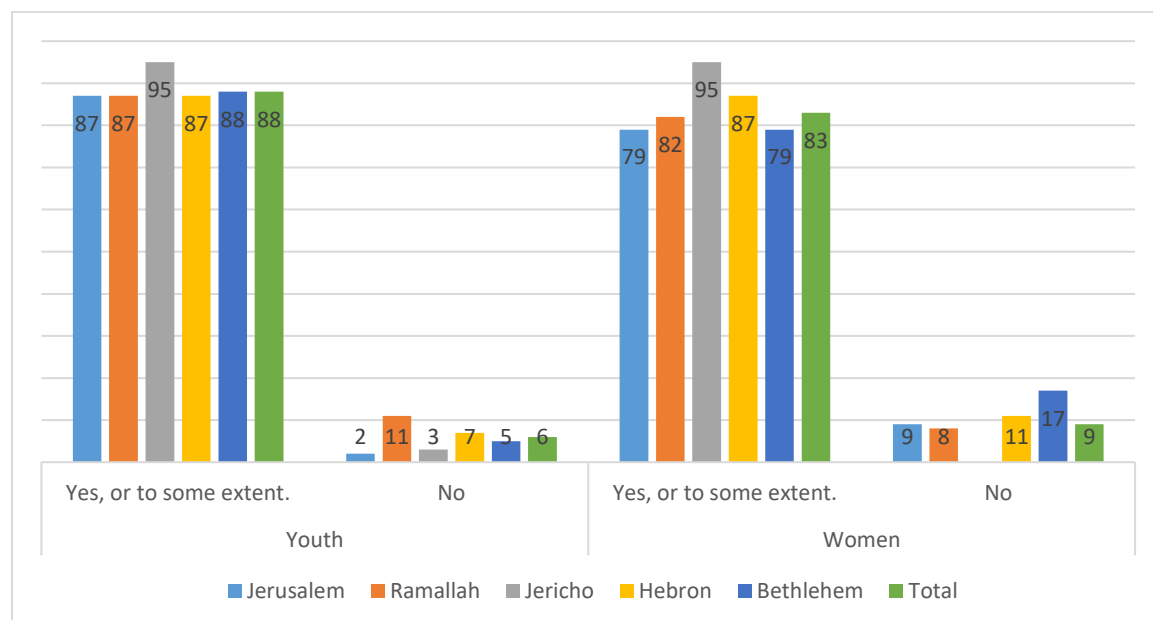
This chapter of the study discusses the reality of women and youth participation in conflict resolution and peacebuilding within Palestinian society, focusing on assessing the role of women and youth in conflict resolution and peacebuilding, their role when conflict occurs, and their role in intervening to resolve conflict and build peace in society.

A. Women and youth participation in decision-making and its relationship to conflict resolution and peacebuilding

The results show that the majority of women (84%) believe that women's participation in decision-making contributes to reducing conflict and promoting peace values, either fully or partially, while a limited percentage (9%) believe that such participation will not make a difference in this area. The highest percentage of this belief was recorded in Jericho (95%), while it decreased in Jerusalem to (79%).

In contrast, 88% of youth reported that their participation in decision-making can reduce conflicts and promote peacebuilding (yes or to some extent), compared to 6% who believe the opposite. Jericho also ranked first with 95%, while the lowest percentages were equal in Jerusalem, Ramallah, and Hebron (87% each).

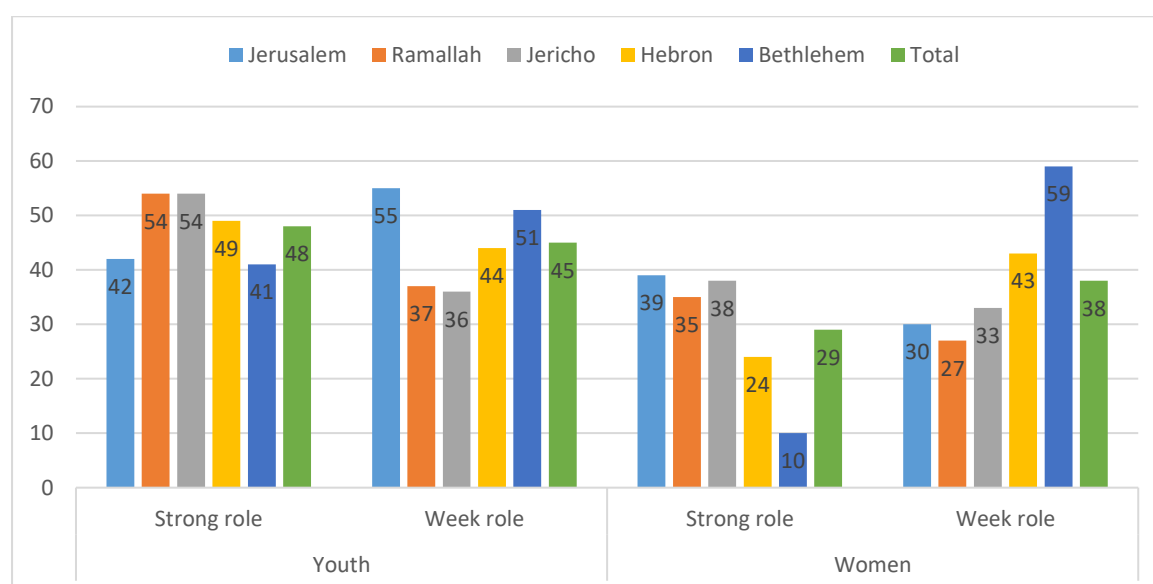
Graph (20) Women and youth participation in decision-making and its relationship to peacebuilding by region



B. The role of women and youth in decision-making when conflict arises within the community

When looking at their actual roles in conflict situations, the results show a gap between belief and actual role, with only 29% of women stating that women play a strong or very strong role in decision-making when conflict arises within the community, compared to 33% who consider it average, and 38% who describe it as weak or very weak. Jerusalem recorded the highest percentage of respondents who believed that women play a strong role (39%), while Bethlehem recorded the lowest percentage (10%). As for youth, 48% said that they play a strong or very strong role in community conflicts, 7% considered it moderate, while 45% considered it weak or very weak. Ramallah and Jericho had the highest percentages (54% each), while the lowest percentages were in Jerusalem (42%) and Bethlehem (41%).

Graph (21) women and youth in decision-making when conflict arises within the community, by region

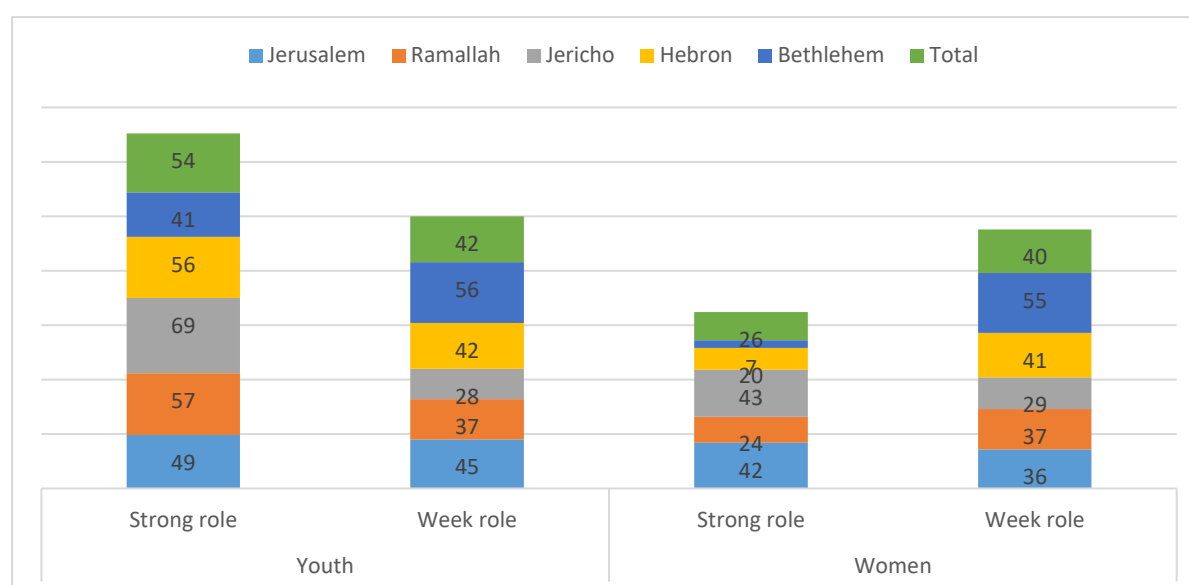


C. The role of women and youth in decision-making when intervening to resolve conflict within the community

In the context of conflict resolution, 26% of women reported that they play a strong or very strong role, compared to 34% who consider their role to be moderate, and 40% who consider it weak or very weak. Jerusalem had the highest percentage (42%), while the percentage in Bethlehem dropped to 7%.

Among youth, 54% stated that they had a strong or very strong role in intervening to resolve conflicts, compared to 4% who described their role as moderate, and 42% who considered it weak or very weak. Jericho recorded the highest percentage (69%), while Bethlehem ranked last (41%).

Graph (22) women and youth in decision-making when intervening to resolve conflict within the community, by region



The results show a clear gap between theoretical perceptions about the importance of participation in decision-making and actual roles during conflicts and peacebuilding within society. While the majority of women and youth believe that their participation can contribute to conflict reduction and peacebuilding (more than 80% in both groups), the actual percentages of those who consider their role to be strong or very strong during conflicts or when intervening to resolve them are much lower (less than 30%), especially among women.

It also appears that youth rate themselves much higher than women in terms of the strength of their roles, both when conflict occurs and when intervening to resolve it, which may reflect differences in self-confidence or in opportunities for actual participation.

On the other hand, the influence of geographical location is particularly noticeable; Cities such as Jericho and Jerusalem show relatively high rates of role estimation, while Bethlehem consistently records the lowest rates among both women and youth, indicating the presence of influential local factors that may be related to the social or institutional context or the nature of conflicts in those areas.

Statements by experts, youth activists, and women indicate that the involvement of women and youth in conflict situations or in conflict resolution is weak. However, even if the space is not available, women and youth are convinced of their ability to resolve conflicts and build peace within society. They believe that their involvement will promote solutions to many complex problems in society:

Youth are more capable of resolving conflicts and have innovative solutions: *“Youth are the most capable of resolving conflicts and have new tools and ideas for resolving conflicts and building peace within society.” (Conflict resolution and civil peace expert/Ramallah)*

Societal stereotypes about the role of youth in conflicts fueling the crisis: *“Youth are seen as the striking force in society, and I often notice that they act according to the orders of the family patriarch.” (Young woman participating in a youth workshop/Ramallah)*

Women are the safety valve in society and are capable of resolving conflicts with humanity and compassion: *“Women are capable of being a safety valve within society because they have the ability to work more at the local level, and most disputes within the local community, when women are involved in the solutions, tend to be more logical, humane, and emotional.” (Feminist academic/Ramallah)*

Women launched initiatives to end the division but faced difficulties in their work: *“In the Hebron governorate, we launched initiatives to resolve the conflict, and before that we launched an initiative to end the division, but as women we faced difficulties in our work because our work was limited and no woman is able to get involved in conflict resolution issues... There was a role, but we need more opportunities in this field”. (Social expert/Hebron)*

Spotlight: Women in peace processes

Women’s participation in peace processes leads to better and more sustainable outcomes. However women remain underrepresented in formal negotiations, here are some critical facts and figures:

Stronger peace deals with women: Studies show that peace agreements with women signatories have higher rates of implementation and last longer.

Lack of women in peace processes: Despite their critical roles, women continue to be largely excluded from peace processes. According to new global data collected by UN-Women through the Women in Peace Processes Monitor, in 2023, women made up only 5 per cent of negotiators, 9 per cent of mediators and 19 per cent of signatories to peace and ceasefire agreements. The proportion of women signatories drops to 3.75 per cent if Colombia’s agreements are excluded [2].

Gender provisions in peace agreements: The percentage of peace agreements with gender provisions has increased since the 1990s. Between 1990 and 2000, only 12 per cent of peace agreements included references to women. By 2011-2020 the share grew to 31 per cent. However, in 2023, only 26 per cent (8) peace and ceasefire agreements mentioned women, girls, or gender.

Women in informal peace processes: A study of informal peace efforts found that in three quarters of cases (27 of 38) women’s groups were actively involved in grassroots-level peacebuilding.

Women leading local peace efforts: Despite women’s exclusion in most formal peace efforts, women place key roles in local peacebuilding. For example, women in Yemen negotiated for civilian access to water and in 2023 in Sudan, over 49 women-led organizations formed the Peace for Sudan Platform to push for an inclusive peace process.

Exclusion of women’s groups in peace processes: In many peace processes, those igniting wars are invited to the negotiating table, while those seeking true peace, such as women’s groups, are sidelined. In 2023, none of the peace agreements reached included representatives of women’s groups as signatories⁴⁷

⁴⁷ UN Women. (2024, October 18). *Facts and figures: Women, peace and security*. Retrieved August 1, 2025, from <https://bit.ly/3Q7V53s>

Chapter Six: Opportunities for women and youth in decision-making and peacebuilding

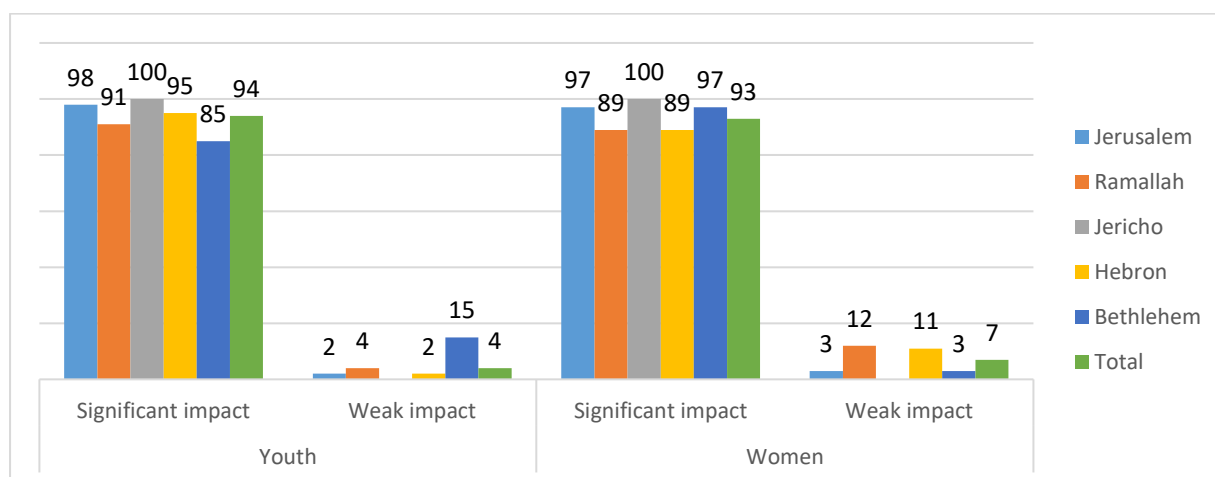
This chapter presents opportunities for women and youth participation in decision-making and peacebuilding by proposing ideas and mechanisms that would enhance the opportunities for decision-making and peacebuilding within the community; such as supporting women and youth initiatives, integrating women and youth in community dialogue, promoting community dialogue and building bridges between community groups, promoting social justice values, provide a perspective the needs of marginalized communities, supporting youth in marginalized areas, developing education curricula on the concepts of crisis resolution and peacebuilding, involving women in decision-making and its relationship with services such as health, education, and the economy, Interest in voluntary work, the involvement of women and youth in efforts to end the internal division, and participation in negotiation and peace committees.

A. Supporting Feminist/Youth Initiatives

The results indicate that supporting local initiatives, whether feminist or youth, is a pivotal factor in strengthening their roles within the decision-making process and contributing to the consolidation of peacebuilding in society. The results show that 93% of women consider that supporting women's initiatives would increase the effectiveness of their participation in decision-making and give them an “significant” or “very significant” impact on the peacebuilding process, compared to only 7% who consider this impact to be weak or non-existent. A geographic reading of the data reveals notable differences, with Jericho governorate achieving a 100% approval rating, while Ramallah had the lowest at 89%.

Similarly, youth showed a similar trend, with 94% stating that supporting youth initiatives significantly contributes to maximizing the impact of their participation in the decision-making process and its reflection on peacebuilding efforts, compared to only 4% who thought otherwise. As with the women's index, Jericho led the way with 100% support, while in Bethlehem the percentage dropped to 85%.

Graph (23) Supporting women and youth initiatives in decision-making and peacebuilding by region



The data reflects a strong perception among both women and youth that supporting initiatives is a key mechanism for enhancing their ability to participate in decision-making and contribute to peacebuilding. The high percentages (more than 90%) show that there is a strong societal conviction that these initiatives are not just marginal activities, but are empowering tools that open the way for broader and more influential participation. Geographically, Jericho, for example, reflects a less politically and socially tense local environment, allowing initiatives more space to operate and influence. In contrast, the lower rates in areas such as Ramallah and Bethlehem may be related to structural factors such as intense political competition, limited resources for initiatives, or weak trust between local institutions. The qualitative data reflects the importance of community initiatives in influencing decision-making and peacebuilding, as follows:

Initiatives empower women and youth to strengthen their decision-making and peacebuilding positions: *"Youth and women's initiatives demonstrate their importance by empowering youth and women in the fields of politics and society by providing trainings, creating safe spaces, and promoting participation in decision-making positions, which contributes to strengthening the national presence and highlighting the role of these groups as key actors in the peacebuilding process."* (Community Expert/Jerusalem)

Initiatives can influence political leadership: *"Youth initiatives contributed to creating a space for dialogue between youth and the political leadership, and succeeded in influencing some decisions and changing the views of a number of leaders towards the capabilities and energies of youth, which strengthened their position as an active party in addressing issues of concern to society."* (Conflict Resolution Expert/Ramallah)

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Initiatives are an important tool to promote internal peace and community security: *"Youth initiatives are an essential tool to promote internal peace and community security in Palestinian society, by creating safe spaces to work, interact, and practice community values. Youth today suffer from a lack of a sense of security and reassurance, which makes the need for initiatives and active participation in community activities and events urgent."* (Community Expert/Hebron)

Success Cooperative initiatives without conditional funding: *"Recent years have seen the emergence of several initiatives in the form of community-supported agricultural*

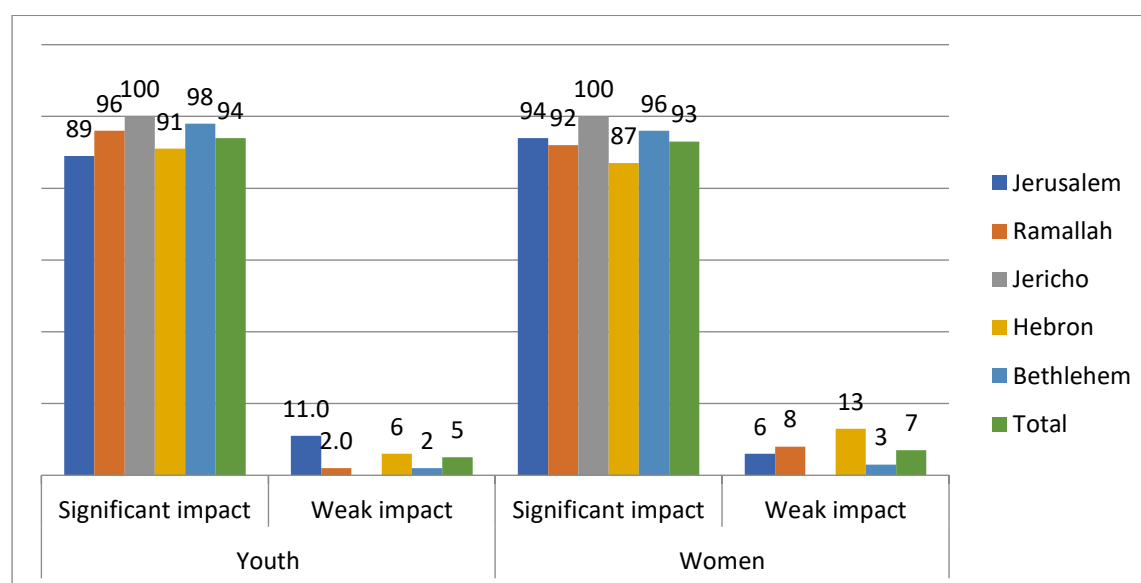
cooperatives in various areas of the West Bank. These initiatives, such as 'Romana' and 'Ard Al Yas', have contributed to providing limited income opportunities for youth and have continued despite the cessation of some forms of partial funding, reflecting their success and the importance of their continuity compared to conditional funding."(International Organizations Expert on Women and Youth Issues/Ramallah)

B. Integration women and youth in community dialog

The results indicate that the inclusion of women in community dialog is seen as a critical factor in enhancing their participation in decision-making and supporting the peacebuilding process; 93% of respondents stated that this inclusion has an “significant” or “very significant” impact, compared to 7% who saw little or no impact. There are notable geographic differences, with Jericho recording 100% support, while the lowest percentage was in Hebron at 87%.

Similarly, 94% of youth confirmed that their inclusion in the Community Dialogue would give their participation in decision-making a tangible impact on the peacebuilding process, compared to only 5% who considered it unimportant. Jericho again had the highest percentage of support (100%), while Jerusalem fell to 89%.

Graph (24) Integration of women and youth in decision-making and its impact on peacebuilding by region



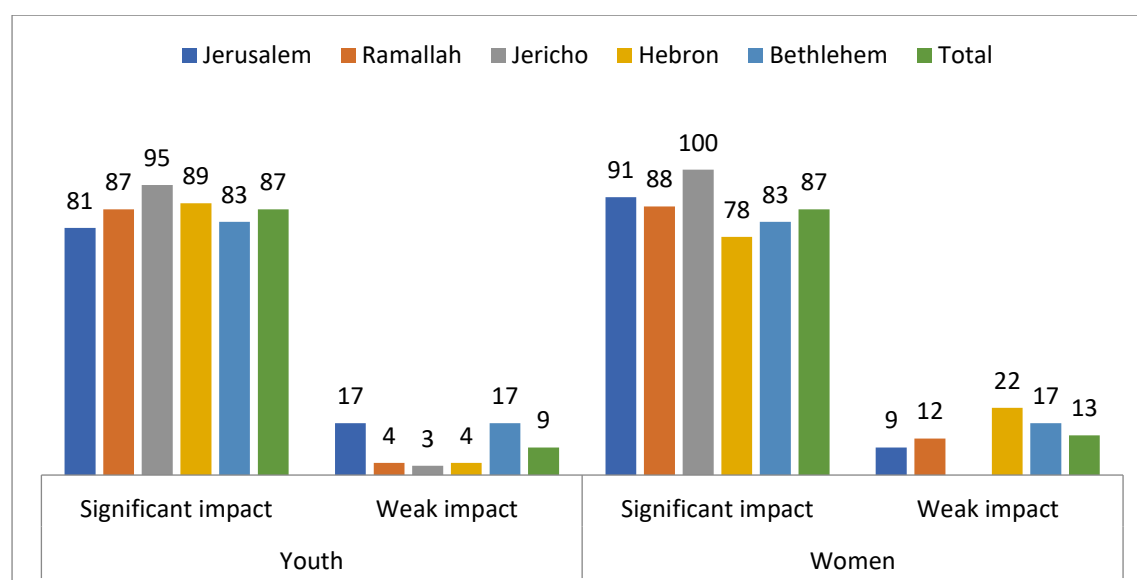
These indicators reveal a vast awareness among women and youth that community dialogue is a pivotal mechanism for enhancing the legitimacy and impact of their participation in peace-related decision-making processes. The geographical differences also reflect the different local contexts in terms of the availability of a supportive environment for participation or the nature of societal and political challenges. Therefore, the integration of women and youth in community dialogue is not only a human rights requirement, but also a practical approach to enhancing the inclusiveness and sustainability of peacebuilding processes.

C. Promoting community dialog and building bridges between conflicting groups

The results indicate that promoting community dialog and building bridges between conflicting groups is seen as a key factor in enhancing the role of both women and youth in decision-making and contributing to peacebuilding. 87% of women stated that it gives their participation a “significant” or “very significant” impact, compared to 13% who felt it had little or no impact. Jericho recorded the highest level of support at 100%, while Hebron had the lowest at 78%.

Similarly, 87% of youth emphasized that promoting community dialogue and building bridges enhances the impact of their participation in decision-making on the peacebuilding process, compared to only 9% who considered it insignificant or very insignificant. Jericho recorded the highest percentage of support (95%), while Jerusalem had the lowest at 81%.

Graph (25) Promoting community dialog and building bridges between conflicting groups by region



Youth are capable of dialogue, negotiation and conflict resolution beyond partisanship and regionalism: *“Youth participating in civil society programs, particularly in Ramallah more than in other areas, have tangible abilities in dialogue, negotiation and mediation to resolve conflicts, but their effectiveness is limited by their motivation and willingness to do so...Youth are more open to dialogue and can transcend party affiliations and geographical regions” (youth in focus group/Ramallah).*

A clear language of dialogue will enable women to build peace: *“Promoting a culture of dialogue is an important tool in empowering women, enhancing their abilities to communicate effectively with society, enabling them to claim their rights and understand their legal frameworks, access decision-making centers, and build peace. These initiatives also contribute to building women's self-confidence, empowering them to express their opinions and programs, and formulating a clear and understandable dialogue language that defines the paths of their interaction and practice in the field.” (Feminist activist/Jericho)*

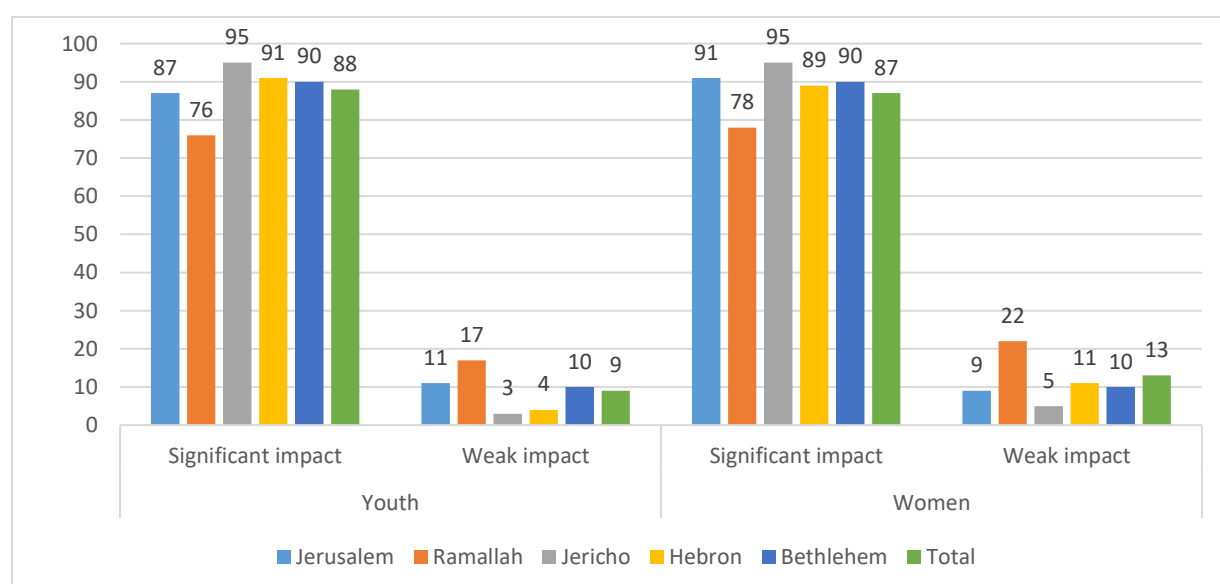
The absence of bridges and joint initiatives among youth has prevented finding solutions to Palestinian crises: *"The youth environment lacks strong and effective bridges and joint initiatives that enable them to overcome the crises of the political and social system, or allow them to actively participate in finding solutions to Palestinian crises. This lack highlights the urgent need to develop programs and initiatives that promote cooperation among youth and enable them to play an active role in addressing political and social issues."* (Youth expert/Jericho)

D. Promoting gender social justice for peace

The results indicate that promoting social justice between female and male is seen as a pivotal factor in increasing the impact of both women and youth participation in decision-making and peacebuilding efforts. 87% of women stated that promoting gender justice gives their participation an "significant" or "very significant" impact, compared to 13% who considered it to have little or no impact. Jericho recorded the highest level of support at 95%, while Ramallah was the lowest at 78%.

Similarly, 88% of youth emphasized that promoting gender social justice enhances the impact of their participation in decision-making on the peacebuilding process, compared to 9% who considered it unimportant. Jericho recorded the highest percentage of support (95%), while Ramallah was the lowest at 76%.

Graph (26) Promoting social justice between gender and its impact on peacebuilding by region



The results show that there is extensive recognition among women and youth of the importance of social gender justice as a key element in enhancing the effectiveness of participation in decision-making and peacebuilding. The geographic variation indicates that certain environments, such as Jericho, provide higher support for the participation of target groups, while the low percentages in Ramallah reflect the existence of social challenges that affect the perception of the importance of gender justice.

The qualitative approach includes two important statements about gender social justice and its impact on peacebuilding:

Women's low status in decision-making positions reduces their role in peacebuilding:

"Women's participation in decision-making positions in Palestine remains relatively limited, despite the fact that they constitute half of society. This effort reflects the importance of achieving social justice between genders and empowering women to actively participate in decision-making and peacebuilding in accordance with the natural distribution of the population and their societal role." (Feminist Expert / Hebron)

Women are more capable of resolving conflicts within the family and society than men:

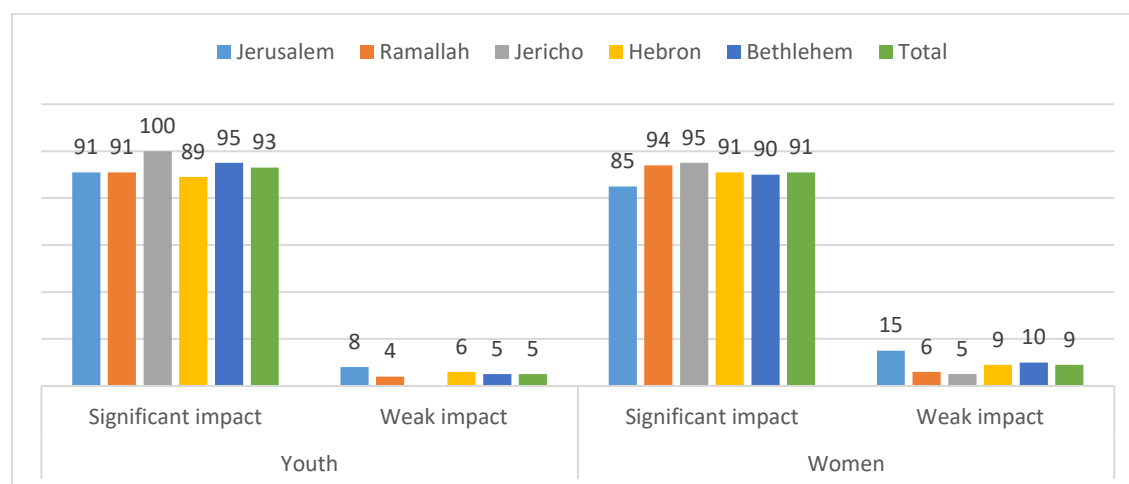
"Looking at the Palestinian household today, we see that it is the mother who is able to resolve issues within the family and satisfy everyone without using yelling or beating, as men do." (Feminist academic/Ramallah)

E. Providing a perspective on the needs of marginalized communities

The results indicate that achieving social justice, with a focus on marginalized communities and families in need, is a key factor in enhancing the impact of women and youth participation in decision-making and community peacebuilding efforts. 91% of women stated that adopting a perspective that takes into consideration the needs of marginalized families and communities gives their participation a "significant" or "very -significant" impact, compared to 9% who felt it had little or no impact. The cities of Jericho and Ramallah recorded the highest level of support at 94% and 95% respectively, while Jerusalem was the lowest at 85%.

Similarly, 93% of youth confirmed that adopting a perspective that takes into account the needs of marginalized communities enhances the impact of their participation in decision-making on the peacebuilding process, compared to 5% who considered it insignificant or non-existent. Jericho recorded the highest percentage of support (100%), while Hebron was the lowest at 89%.

Graph (27) providing a perspective on the needs of marginalized communities and its impact on peacebuilding by region



These results suggest that awareness of the significance of social justice and a deep understanding of the needs of marginalized groups is key to maximizing the impact of women and youth participation in decision-making related to peacebuilding

The geographic variation reflects the levels of support and the local environment available for participation, with Jericho showing the highest levels of support, indicating a more encouraging environment for community participation, while the lowest scores in Jerusalem and Hebron indicate local challenges that may include limited resources or socio-cultural constraints. The qualitative analysis demonstrates the importance of taking into account marginalized needs:

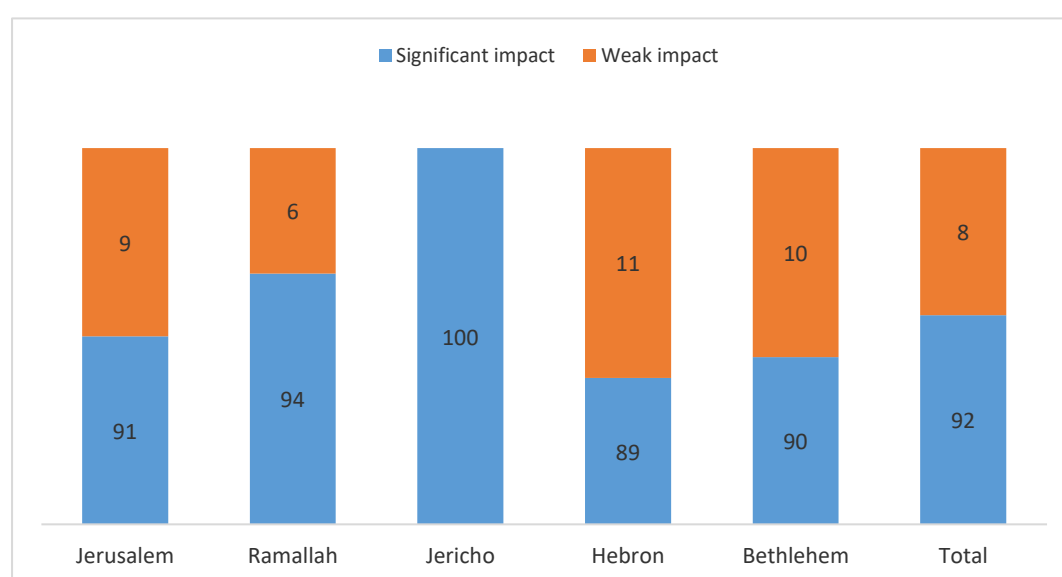
Concentration of training and community activities and initiatives in Ramallah: *“Most training projects and youth initiatives with a budget of up to two thousand dollars are in the north or south, I have never heard of support for an initiative that reached 50 thousand dollars except in Ramallah” (youth in the focus group/Ramallah).*

Lack of attention to areas geographically distant from the city center: *Youth and women in areas such as Al-Jiftlik face a lack of knowledge about community and political participation. However, institutional initiatives and interventions have contributed to increasing the level of interest and participation, especially among girls, by organizing intensive programs and trainings that helped bridge the knowledge gap and enable them to actively participate in society. (Youth in the focus group / Ramallah)*

F. Involving women in services and its relationship to peacebuilding

The results indicate that women's participation in decision-making and peacebuilding is perceived as an influential factor in improving health, education, and the economy. 92% of women stated that it has a “significant” or “very significant” impact, compared to 8% who considered it to have little or no impact. Jericho recorded the highest level of support at 100%, while Bethlehem and Hebron were the lowest at 90% and 89%, respectively.

Graph (28) Women's involvement in the services sector and its relationship to peacebuilding by region



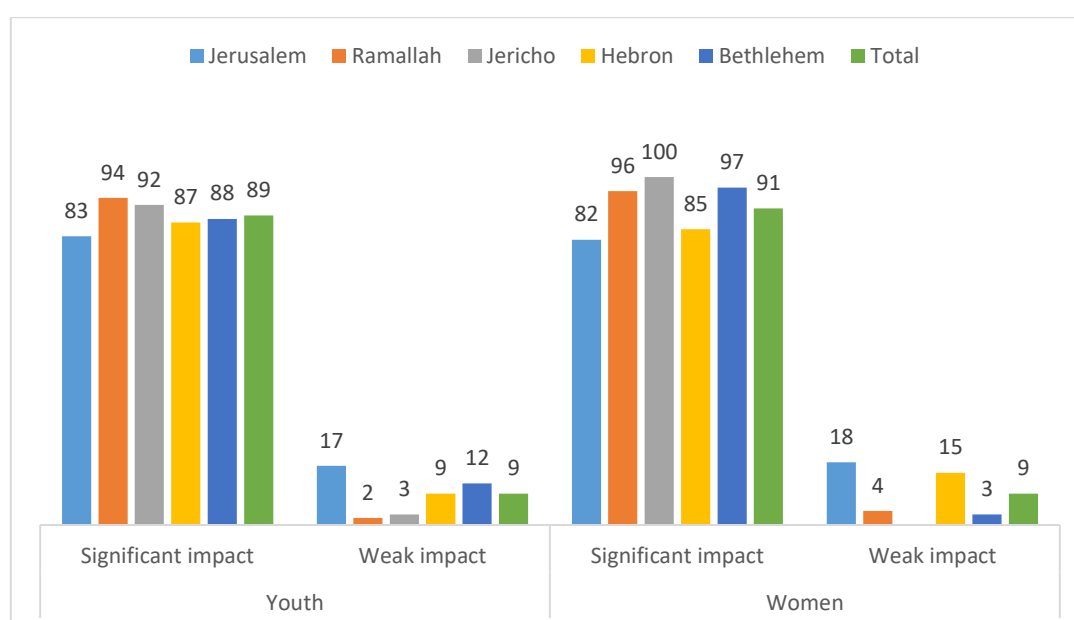
This data reflects women's recognition of the importance of their participation in decision-making, not only in the political sphere or in community peacebuilding, but also in enhancing the quality of basic services and economic development. The geographic variation suggests that the local environment affects the level of recognition of the importance of this participation, with higher percentages in Jericho reflecting a more supportive environment for women's role in various sectors, while lower percentages in Bethlehem and Hebron may reflect social or institutional challenges that limit the impact of women's participation.

G. Developing education programs around crisis resolution and peacebuilding concepts

The results indicate that developing education programs to promote crisis resolution and peacebuilding concepts is seen as a key factor in enhancing the impact of women and youth participation in decision-making and peacebuilding efforts. 91% of women stated that these curricula give their participation a “significant” or “very significant” impact, compared to 9% who considered it to have little or no impact. Jericho had the highest level of support at 100%, while Jerusalem had the lowest at 82%.

Similarly, 89% of youth stated that developing educational curricula in this area enhances the impact of their participation in decision-making on the peacebuilding process, compared to only 9% who saw little or no impact. Jericho recorded the highest level of support (93%), while Jerusalem was the lowest at 83%.

Graph (29) Developing educational curricula about crisis resolution by region



These results reflect an understanding of the importance of education as a mechanism to build the capacity of women and youth to actively participate in decision-making and support societal peace. Geographic variation indicates that the local environment influences the extent to which the importance of education is recognized in this context, with Jericho emerging as a more conducive environment for participation, while lower percentages in

Jerusalem indicate potential challenges related to educational infrastructure or community awareness. The qualitative findings indicate that introducing conflict resolution and peacebuilding concepts into education is important for society:

Educating women on inner peace makes them effective family and community influencers: *"Women's inner peace constitutes an educational foundation for developing their personal and social capacities, as they cannot effectively participate in peacebuilding or drafting community agreements if they have not gained self-awareness and inner balance. Through this internal education, women can transfer the values of peace to their family and community (Feminist Academy/Jerusalem)*

Initiatives that encourage education despite barriers and contribute to poverty reduction: *"Youth initiatives focus on empowering males and females in areas prone to confiscation, by encouraging students to continue their education despite the barriers, and strengthening their steadfastness. These initiatives also include awareness-raising, education, supporting small projects, and providing vocational training courses to enhance the status of youth, meet their needs, and stabilize their presence on their land, thereby contributing to poverty reduction and the empowerment of the community as a whole." (Government expert on women and youth issues / Hebron)*

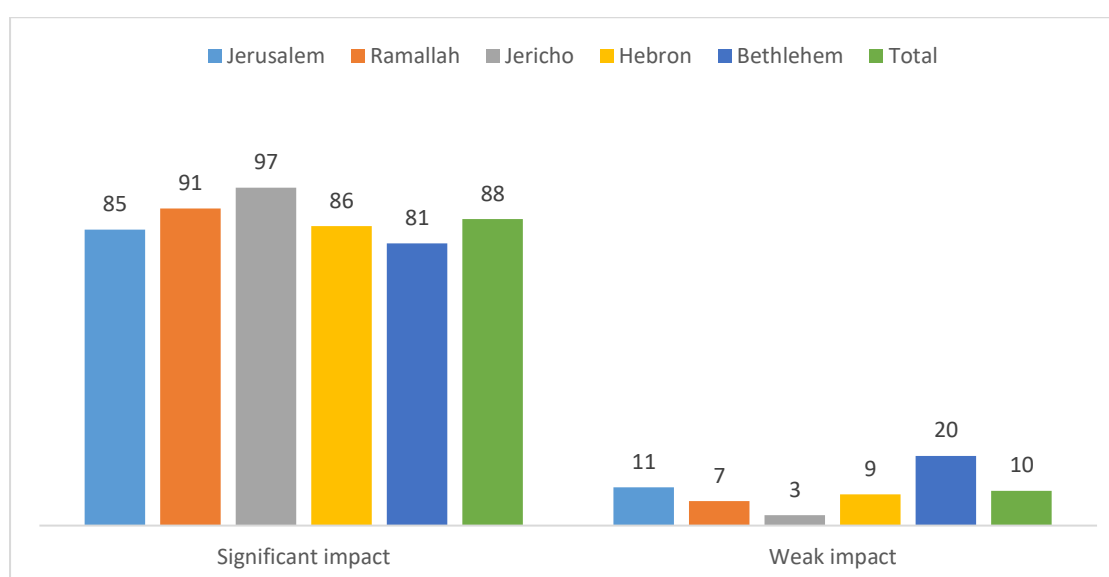
The portrayal of women as victims makes them ineffective and incapable of building peace in society: *"The power of women is manifested in their ability to spread peace within society, as strong women contribute to building a cohesive and influential society if they already have education and awareness, while women who are isolated and confined to themselves weaken societal capacity and are portrayed as victims." (Feminist academic/Jerusalem)*

H. Volunteerism impact on peacebuilding

Volunteerism is not much different from education on the concepts of crisis resolution and peacebuilding. It is an important building block to focus on, as youth of both genders emphasize, despite the decline of this culture at the societal level. The results indicate that youth's interest in volunteering is seen as an influential factor in enhancing their participation in decision-making and supporting peacebuilding efforts; 88% of youth stated that their volunteer participation has an "important" or "very important" impact on the peacebuilding process, compared to 10% who considered it to have little or no impact. Jericho recorded the highest level of support at 97%, while Bethlehem was the lowest at 81%.

The results also reveal gender-related differences, with males showing a higher interest in volunteering than females, with 93% of males stating that their volunteering participation has an important or very important impact, compared to 84% of females.

Graph (30) Volunteerism impacts peacebuilding by region



Despite youth's belief in the importance of volunteering as a gateway to decision-making and peacebuilding within society, many statements in qualitative tools emphasize practices that limit volunteering despite its importance to them:

Absence of appreciation and support for volunteers: *"Youth volunteers face challenges related to the recognition of their efforts and participation in initiatives at the local and international levels, despite having invested many years in carrying out intensive community activities. Other participants are often chosen to represent them at conferences and forums, while the efforts of local youth are used to implement initiatives without receiving sufficient appreciation or benefits."* (Youth in the focus group/Ramallah)

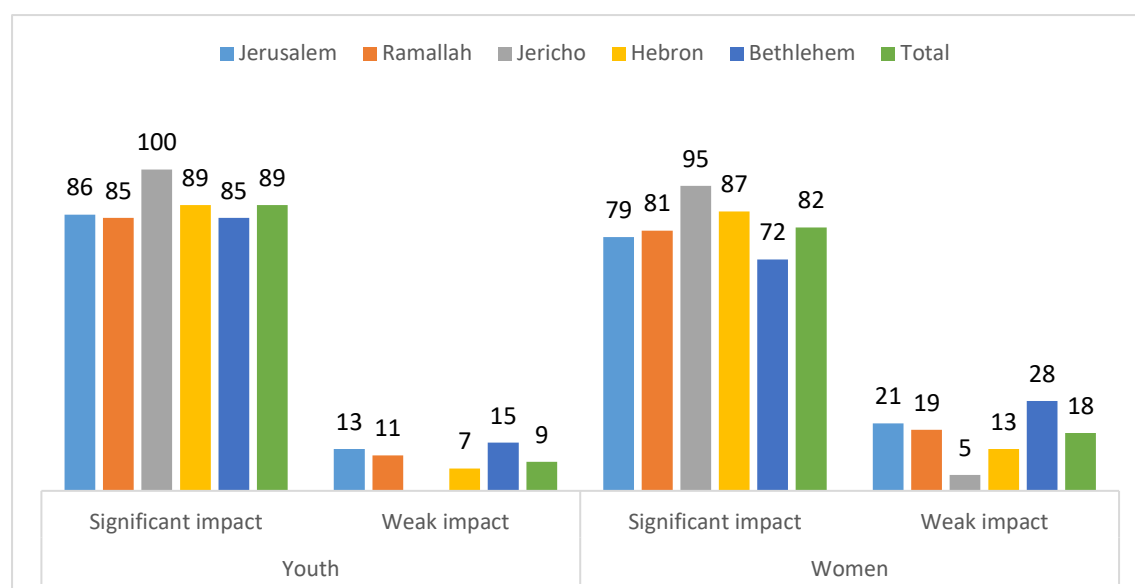
Volunteer work is not taken seriously by youth: *"the youth volunteerism is an effective tool for creating change in society, as it allows them to be visible and influential within their areas. In this sense, youth show the need for action and initiative to face challenges, especially with regard to volunteering, which is not always taken seriously."* (Young woman in focus group/Ramallah)

I. Involving Women and Youth in Palestinian National Reconciliation Committees

The results indicate that the involvement of women and youth in Palestinian national reconciliation committees is perceived as an influential factor in enhancing their participation in decision-making and supporting peacebuilding efforts.

Similarly, 89% of youth said that their participation in reconciliation committees enhances the impact of their participation in decision-making on the peacebuilding process, compared to 9% who considered it to have little or no impact. Jericho recorded the highest percentage of support (100%), while Ramallah and Bethlehem were equally the lowest at 85%.

Graph (31) the involvement of women and youth in reconciliation committees and its impact on peacebuilding by region



The results highlight the importance of involving target groups in formal reconciliation mechanisms to enhance the impact of their participation in decision-making and peacebuilding. Geographical variation also reflects differences in support and the local environment, with Jericho appearing to be a more conducive environment for participation, while the lower percentages in Bethlehem and Ramallah indicate challenges that may be related to social or political constraints. Quantitative and qualitative data on the importance of women and youth participation in reconciliation are similar:

Women's participation in reconciliation has remained in the shadows: *"Women's participation in Palestinian reconciliation and peacebuilding committees is still limited despite its importance, so initiatives were launched to enhance their participation in family and clan reconciliation by conducting practical interventions to resolve family issues first and then move towards achieving a comprehensive reconciliation, but they did not succeed" (Feminist expert/Hebron).*

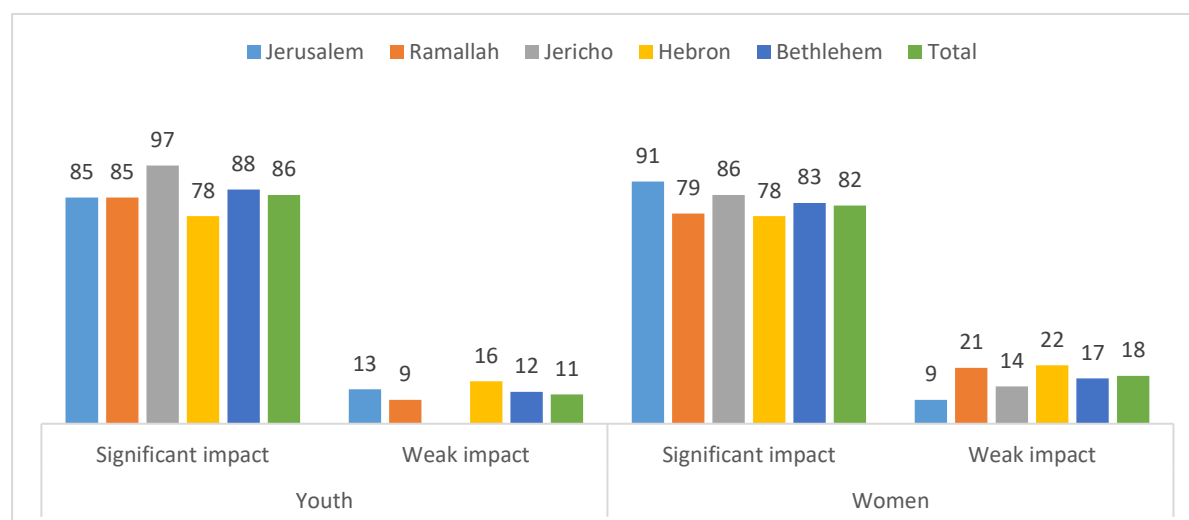
The division prevented renewal in the political system and frustrated youth: *"The Palestinian divide has frustrated youth, as their inability to influence leaders or push the election process has negatively impacted their participation. In addition, the crisis of the political system and the fact that the current leadership remains without renewal or elections has led youth to feel powerless to make a difference or achieve change in society." (Youth Academic/Ramallah)*

J. Women and Youth Participation in Negotiating and Peace Committees

The results indicate that the participation of women and youth in negotiating and peace committees is an important factor in enhancing the impact of their participation in decision-making and peacebuilding efforts. 82% of women stated that their participation in these committees provides an "significant" or "very significant" impact, compared to 18% who considered it to have little or no impact. Jerusalem recorded the highest level of support at

91%, while Hebron was the lowest at 78%. Similarly, 86% of youth emphasized that their participation in negotiating committees enhances the impact of their participation in decision-making on the peacebuilding process, compared to 11% who considered it to have little or no impact. Jericho recorded the highest level of support (97%), while Hebron was the lowest at 78%.

Graph (32) Participation in negotiation and peace committees impacts peacebuilding by region



These results indicate a widespread realization among women and youth of the importance of participation in negotiation and peace committees as a means of promoting inclusiveness and effectiveness in peace-related decision-making. The geographical variation indicates the impact of the local environment and socio-political context on the level of support for participation, with Jerusalem and Jericho emerging as more encouraging environments, while the lower percentages in Hebron indicate local challenges that may limit the effectiveness of the participation of the target groups. Despite the importance of including women and youth in negotiation and peace committees in Palestine, the qualitative data shows a significant weakness in the current reality as a result:

The absence of women who specialize in negotiations: *"My experience with the Women's Negotiation Network revealed a clear gap in the representation of Palestinian women in the fields of social and political negotiation, as no women could be identified in this field." (Feminist Expert/Bethlehem)*

Youth have negotiation skills but are absent from negotiations: *"Youth demonstrate a tangible ability to resolve community conflicts and disputes at the local level, but their influence remains limited on political issues related to the state, because power is often concentrated in the hands of older or historical leaders." (Youth in focus group/Ramallah)*

The Palestinian situation does not encourage the representation of youth in negotiations and peace issues: *"Although there are many efforts to represent women and youth in peace and negotiation issues, in educational programs supported by the government, their impact remains limited because the Palestinian situation is not sufficiently conducive to promoting this role." (Government expert on women and youth issues/Hebron)*

Chapter seven: Conclusions and Recommendations

This chapter presents general and detailed conclusions on the participation of women and youth in decision-making and peacebuilding in society, as well as immediate and long-term recommendations that will enhance the participation of women and youth in decision-making and peacebuilding.

A. Conclusions:

- The results indicate that women and youth played a vital and continuous role in the national, political, and social struggle from the late nineteenth century until the establishment of the Palestinian Authority, through their participation in revolutions and national conferences, the establishment of charitable and political associations, and their contribution to the building of national institutions such as the General Union of Palestinian Women, the Liberation Organization, and the Ministry of Women's Affairs. They also contributed to promoting education and health and formulating national strategies for youth.
- Despite this role, the formal participation of women and youth in decision-making positions remains limited as a result of continuing male dominance and social customs, in addition to political division and occupation, which makes some mechanisms such as quotas more symbolic than actual tools for influence. The absence of systematic policies that promote effective participation, along with social and cultural restrictions, limits the presence of women and youth in decision-making circles.
- All international resolutions emphasize the need to involve women and youth as active representatives, not just as victims or those affected by conflict, in all stages of decision-making, especially in peacebuilding processes. Women and youth are underrepresented in political, security, and formal institutions, limiting their ability to influence national and international policy-making. The impact of violence, especially sexual violence against women, cultural and social discrimination, and security crises are major obstacles to the effective participation of women and youth.
- International resolutions are consistent with the application of justice and accountability mechanisms for violations against women and youth, which contributes to building community trust and forms a necessary basis for sustainable peace. Equality in civil, political, and economic rights is one of the most important factors in promoting the participation of women and youth in decision-making and peacebuilding. The resolutions indicate that involving youth in peacebuilding policies prevents conflicts and enhances security and stability efforts.
- The participation of women and youth in decision-making varies depending on the level; it is high at the family level, where women are considered a central element in managing relationships and resolving internal disputes, while their presence clearly declines as we move to the level of local communities, parties, and institutions. This is due to cultural and societal reasons, such as the continued dominance of families and traditional elites, and weak societal acceptance of the roles of women and youth outside the family framework. The results showed that the voices of women and youth often do not translate into actual influence on local decisions, as their participation is often seen as more symbolic than influential. Geographical differences were observed; while Hebron and Ramallah recorded higher rates of family and community influence, Bethlehem and Jerusalem ranked lowest in terms of family, community, and local

decision-making influence, while Jericho ranked high in terms of youth participation in political parties and government institutions. These differences reflect that more institutionally and politically open environments offer more opportunities for participation, while areas that are more conservative or politically restrictive show lower levels, reflecting the persistence of structural and cultural limitations that prevent the transition from formal to effective participation.

- Women and youth face multiple challenges that obstruct their participation in decision-making, most notably occupation policies that restrict freedom of movement and expression, loss of trust in government institutions, corruption, lack of effective protection, as well as weak interest in politics and social and cultural restrictions. The study reveals significant geographical differences: Jericho and Hebron recorded the highest impact of occupation restrictions and corruption on youth, while Jerusalem and Bethlehem showed the highest impact of loss of trust and limited protection on women. Ramallah appears to be relatively less affected but suffers from centralized favoritism in the distribution of resources and opportunities for participation. The qualitative findings indicate that these challenges overlap between political, social, and economic factors, often making the participation of women and youth superficial or limited in impact, requiring focused interventions to address structural, societal, and political gaps.
- The study shows that weak Palestinian laws and legislation are a major obstacle to the participation of women and youth in decision-making, with clear geographical differences: Jerusalem and Hebron recorded the highest awareness of the impact of weak legislation, given the complex political and social reality that obstructs the application of laws and limits the protection of rights, while Jericho, Ramallah, and Bethlehem recorded lower rates, reflecting differences in the level of practical and legal challenges between regions. The qualitative results indicate gaps between legal texts and actual implementation, inappropriate policies, and weak awareness and accountability, which limit the ability of women and youth to effectively exercise their leadership roles. The absence of specific laws granting youth the right to participate deepens the feeling of inability to influence local and national decision-making.
- Social and cultural factors represent a major obstacle to the participation of women and youth in decision-making, with 81% of women and the same percentage of youth believing that customs, traditions, and the obedience of youth to elders strongly or very strongly influence their ability to participate. Lack of confidence in one's own abilities is also a significant barrier, while lack of awareness of the importance of participation in society is one of the most significant social barriers. Geographical differences are evident: the higher percentages in Hebron among women and youth reflect a strict traditional social environment that limits freedoms and individual influence, while Jericho and Jerusalem have lower percentages, reflecting greater social flexibility or the influence of local policies on the role of youth and women. The qualitative findings indicate that stereotypical views of women's roles, such as patriarchal culture, dependence on elders, and low public awareness, are intertwined factors that limit the effectiveness and independent participation of women and youth in decision-making positions.
- The study indicates that economic factors represent a major barrier to women and youth participation in decision-making. The majority of women and youth stated that weak economic financing greatly affects their ability to participate, while concern for

improving economic income and finding work are key priorities that affect their focus on community or political engagement. Geographical differences reveal disparities in the perception of these barriers: higher percentages among women in Bethlehem and youth in Jericho reflect limited economic opportunities and high living pressures, while lower percentages in Ramallah and Jerusalem result from the relative availability of economic resources or programs. The qualitative results reveal that economic priorities often take precedence over community participation, and that the absence of supportive laws, unemployment, and the complex political reality increase the focus of youth and women on economic issues, limiting their ability to participate effectively in decision-making.

- The study indicates that there is a clear gap between the belief in the importance of the active participation of women and youth in conflict resolution and peacebuilding and their actual roles on the ground. The majority affirmed that their participation in decision-making contributes to reducing conflict and promoting peace, but the percentage of those who believe that their actual role is strong or very strong when conflict arises or when intervening to resolve it is low, especially among women (less than 30%). Youth also appear to rate themselves higher than women in terms of the strength of their roles. Geographical location has a significant impact on participation, with Jericho and Jerusalem recording the highest percentages, while Bethlehem recorded the lowest percentages for both groups, reflecting the impact of social and institutional factors and the local context of conflicts. The qualitative findings confirmed that youth have innovative ideas for conflict resolution and peacebuilding, while women play an active humanitarian and emotional role, but their practical participation is limited due to social constraints and limited institutional opportunities.
- The results indicate that supporting local feminist and youth initiatives is a key factor in promoting the participation of target groups in decision-making and peacebuilding. The results showed that the majority of respondents considered this important, with geographical variation between Jericho, which recorded 100%, and Ramallah and Bethlehem (85–89%). The qualitative results confirm that these initiatives provide training and safe spaces, enhance the ability to influence political leadership and the local community, and contribute to internal peacebuilding and community security.
- The results indicate that 87–94% of women and youth believe that their inclusion in community dialogue and bridge-building between conflicting groups enhances the impact of their participation in decision-making and peacebuilding efforts, with the highest support in Jericho (95–100%) and the lowest in Jerusalem and Hebron (81–87%). The qualitative findings indicate that youth and women are capable of negotiating and resolving conflicts locally, while the absence of joint initiatives limits their impact on addressing national crises. Developing the language of dialogue contributes to empowering women and strengthening their presence.
- The results demonstrate that promoting gender social justice and adopting a perspective that takes into consideration the needs of marginalized communities and families in need increases the effectiveness of women and youth participation in decision-making and peacebuilding, as stated by 87–93% of them, with the highest percentages in Jericho (95–100%) and the lowest in Ramallah and Jerusalem (76–85%). The qualitative results indicate that the underrepresentation of women in decision-making positions limits their influence, while women are more capable of resolving

family and community conflicts, and marginalized areas need additional support to enhance community participation.

- The results demonstrate that developing educational curricula on crisis resolution, peacebuilding, and volunteerism are essential tools for promoting women's and youth participation in decision-making and peacebuilding, with 88–91% of respondents stating that these mechanisms give them “significant” or “very significant” influence, with the highest approval rating in Jericho and the lowest in Jerusalem and Bethlehem. The qualitative results indicate that education develops women's internal capacities and enables them to transfer the values of peace to their family and community environments, while volunteer work contributes to strengthening the presence and effectiveness of youth on the ground, despite the challenges posed by the lack of institutional recognition of some volunteers.
- The results indicate that the participation of women and youth in Palestinian reconciliation committees and negotiations is an important factor in enhancing their influence in decision-making and peacebuilding, with 82–89% stating this, with the highest percentages in Jericho and Jerusalem, and the lowest in Bethlehem and Hebron (72–78%). The qualitative results indicate that women's participation remained limited despite their contribution to resolving family and social conflicts, and that youth possess high negotiation skills but their formal influence is limited due to the dominance of traditional leadership and the Palestinian environment, which does not encourage their representation at the heart of peace processes.
- The results show that women's participation in decision-making and peacebuilding is considered an influential factor in improving the quality of basic services such as health, education, and the economy, with 92% of women stating that their participation has a “significant” or “very significant” impact, with the highest percentage in Jericho (100%) and the lowest in Bethlehem and Hebron (89–90%). The qualitative results indicate that women recognize that their participation not only strengthens the political sphere, but also improves the efficiency of services and economic development, while geographical disparities limit the level of recognition of the importance of this participation.
- The results demonstrate that support for youth in marginalized areas is a key factor in maximizing the impact of their participation in decision-making and supporting peacebuilding efforts, with 90% of youth stating that support gives them a “significant” or “very significant” impact, with the highest percentages in Hebron, Jericho, and Ramallah (91–92%) and the lowest in Bethlehem (85%). The qualitative results indicate that males are more aware of the importance of this support than females (92% vs. 87%), and that training and community initiatives contribute to bridging the knowledge gap and empowering youth and girls to actively participate in society, despite geographical challenges and limited resources in some areas.

B. Recommendations

Expanding the official representation of women and youth in leadership and sovereign institutions, legislative and local councils, with follow-up mechanisms to ensure real impact:

- Adopt a mandatory quota system (for women and youth) within legislative and local councils, accompanied by an independent monitoring committee that issues public annual reports measuring the actual participation rate and its impact on decisions.
- Establish a virtual youth-women's shadow council operating through a digital platform, which discusses all proposed policies and issues binding recommendations for discussion within official institutions, thereby strengthening popular oversight and influential parallel representation.

Seeking to develop educational and training programs that enhance the leadership, political, and diplomatic capacities of women and youth, and supporting civil society and political parties in implementing policies that ensure their independence and effective representation:

- Establish specialized training centers for women and youth in leadership, politics, and diplomacy, in collaboration with universities and civil society, with certified programs and links to job opportunities and leadership positions to ensure the practical application of acquired skills.
- Support digital and field training programs, with decision-making simulations.
- Incorporate leadership, negotiation, and conflict resolution skills into training curricula.

Strengthen political and institutional representation and support active participation in international and local decision-making:

- Adopt community awareness and education campaigns to reduce discrimination and violence against women and youth, and create an environment supportive of their participation.
- Strengthen transitional justice mechanisms that take into account the experiences of women and youth, provide psychological and legal support, and promote economic independence as a key enabler.
- Include women and youth in the design and implementation of emergency plans, recovery programs, and peacebuilding efforts.
- Support youth in adopting technological solutions and digital platforms as a means to increase their political and social participation, and work to translate international agreements such as 1325 and 2250 into national policies with follow-up and accountability.

Develop national policies that ensure a real numerical and quality representation of women and youth within government institutions, political parties, and civil society organizations, with a focus on renewing the elites and opening up leadership opportunities for them:

- Issue national policies that set clear quotas for women and youth in government institutions, political parties, and civil society organizations, with a mechanism for periodic evaluation to renew elites and open up leadership opportunities to ensure effective, rather than formal, participation.

Address cultural and social factors that limit participation and take geographical variation into account when designing interventions:

- Launch community awareness campaigns and educational initiatives aimed at changing traditional perceptions of the roles of women and youth, involving local and family leaders and relevant institutions to ensure community acceptance of this participation.
- Activate community participation through training and rehabilitation programs, and ensure the involvement of women and youth in planning and implementation, not just attendance, while promoting a culture of equality and effective participation through media and education, thereby contributing to reducing geographical and social gaps and transforming participation from a formality to an effective process at all levels.
- Develop comprehensive strategies to address the political, social, legal, and economic challenges that limit the participation of women and youth, including: protecting activists, strengthening trust in government institutions, combating administrative and social corruption, and empowering women and youth to access real decision-making positions, taking into account geographical differences between different regions.

Develop an integrated legislative framework that ensures the participation of women and youth in decision-making:

- Review and amend existing laws to promote female and youth representation, develop innovative legislation that gives youth the right to direct participation, and activate monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.
- Support these efforts with awareness-raising, advocacy, and training campaigns to promote a culture of participation, with additional efforts in areas facing double constraints (occupation and local community) and building on relative successes in other areas.

Strengthen psychological, economic, and social empowerment programs for women and youth:

- Design comprehensive awareness and capacity-building programs, focusing on changing stereotypes and patriarchal culture, and empowering youth to exercise their role without dependence on elders.
- Develop economic support policies and programs targeted at women and youth, including providing sustainable financing for community initiatives and developing stable employment and income opportunities, while integrating these programs with training and capacity building to promote community and political participation in parallel with economic security.

Promoting participation in conflict resolution and peacebuilding:

- Developing specialized programs that provide practical opportunities for women and youth in mediation and conflict management, while raising community awareness of the importance of their active role and combating stereotypes that limit their participation.
- Include women and youth in reconciliation and negotiation committees, with training programs to enhance their negotiation and decision-making skills.
- Expand the scope of women's and youth initiatives and increase the resources allocated to them, with a focus on training and promoting safe spaces to enable youth and women to participate effectively in decision-making and peacebuilding.

Implementing dialogue programs and various educational initiatives:

- Launching dialogue programs that include all groups, developing negotiation and dialogue skills among women and youth, and promoting joint initiatives to overcome local divisions and achieve more effective participation.
- Adopt policies that empower women and youth, with a focus on social justice and inclusiveness, and direct educational and social initiatives to support marginalized communities and families in need.
- Support and expand education and training programs related to peace and conflict resolution, and encourage a culture of volunteerism among youth and women, while providing institutional recognition and support to ensure their continuity and effectiveness.
- Increase the participation of women and youth in decision-making positions at all levels, taking into account geographical distribution to ensure equal opportunities, and encourage the participation of both youth and women, with a focus on bridging knowledge gaps and empowering them to play an active role in society.

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Appendix (2): List of interviews

1. Abdul Rahman Karaja – General Manager of Clubs at the Higher Council for Youth and Sports in Ramallah
2. Alia Qawasmi – Gender Studies Academic – Jerusalem
3. Amani Abu Sina – Head of the Youth and Culture Department in Hebron Governorate
4. Anas Bawatneh -Coordinator of the Community Advocacy, Training, and Awareness Unit at the Independent Commission for Human Rights
5. Dr. Murad Harfoush – Youth academic and political activist
6. Ittidal Al-Jariri – Expert on gender issues in Ramallah
7. Lina Wahdan – Director of the Volunteer Work Department at the Higher Council for Youth and Sports
8. Lubna Al-Ashqar – Expert on gender issues and teacher of democracy and human rights
9. Lucy Thaljiya – Feminist and youth expert in Bethlehem
10. Mahmoud Karaja – Expert on international institutions working on youth and women's issues in Ramallah
11. Mayser Asim – Feminist activist in Jericho
12. Maysoun Qawasmi – Expert on women's and youth issues in Hebron
13. Muhannad Al-Gharouf – Community and youth expert in Jericho
14. Nada Shqirat – Feminist activist in Jerusalem
15. Thaer Hanaysha – Project Manager at the Palestinian Center for Peace and Democracy

Appendix (3): List of youth in the first focus group

1. Ahmed Jumaa – Youth activist and volunteer
2. Amir Qasim – Youth activist and public relations and media officer
3. Aseel Shawahna – Youth activist
4. Bakar Zbeidi – Youth activist and member of the local council in the Jordan Valley
5. Hiba Zbeidat – Social worker at Al-Jiftlik
6. Israa Basharat – Youth activist and volunteer with the Sharek Forum
7. Mahmoud Samar – Member of the Youth Advisory Council
8. Miran Al-Barghouti – Youth activist and member of the Student Union Council at
Birzeit University
9. Mohammed Asila – Youth activist at Sharek Forum
10. Mohammed Zbeidat – Employee at Al-Istiklal University
11. Rania Abu Juhar – Youth activist and employee at World Vision
12. Rawan Abu Fathi – Volunteer at World Vision

Appendix (4) List of Women and Youth Experts in the Second Focus Group:

1. Abdul Aziz Al-Saleh - Miftah Foundation
2. Ahed Al-Shurook - Sharak Youth Forum
3. Bashar Farashat - Academic at Hebron University
4. Hakim Al-Hajj - Youth Activist
5. Hiba Kanana - Women's Rights Activist
6. Lubna Al-Ashqar - Women's Rights Activist
7. Mahmoud Al-Franji - Human Rights and Humanitarian Activist
8. Mariam Hashem - Women's Rights Activist
9. Maysoun Odeh - Director of Nisaa FM Radio
10. Mona Al-Laham - Center for Women's Development and Media – TAM
11. Mohammed Aseiliyeh - Youth Activist
12. Rawan Masalmeh - Youth Activist
13. Riham Al-Jaafari - Journalist and Women's Rights Activist
14. Sajida Ata - Women's Rights Activist
15. Sarida Hussein - Human Rights and Women's Rights Activist
16. Siham Fayyad - Search for Common Ground Foundation
17. Tamer Jawabra - Youth Activist
18. Waad Al-Shurooq - Ministry of Women's Affairs
19. meervat mousleh-Higher Council for Youth and sport

Appendix (5): The tables

Youth questionnaire and results							
1. In your region, do you feel that the voices of youth are taken into consideration in local decisions?							
		Jerusalem	Ramallah	Jericho	Hebron	Bethlehem	Total
Yes		41.5%	30.4%	41.0%	16.4%	12.2%	28.2%
to some extent		28.3%	43.5%	38.5%	43.6%	51.2%	40.6%
No		15.1%	21.7%	15.4%	38.2%	29.3%	24.4%
Have you ever been involved in a community, human rights, or political activity in your region?							
		Jerusalem	Ramallah	Jericho	Hebron	Bethlehem	Total
Yes		41.5%	37.0%	79.5%	38.2%	36.6%	45.3%
No		58.5%	63.0%	20.5%	61.8%	63.4%	54.7%
2. Do you think that youth have a role in decision-making at the following levels/fields?*							
		Jerusalem	Ramallah	Jericho	Hebron	Bethlehem	Total
Household	Very significant role	37.7%	34.8%	46.2%	27.3%	26.8%	34.2%
	significant role	28.3%	54.3%	25.6%	63.6%	48.8%	44.9%
	Moderate role		2.2%				.4%
	Week role	24.5%	6.5%	23.1%	9.1%	17.1%	15.8%
	Very week role	9.4%	2.2%	5.1%		7.3%	4.7%
		Jerusalem	Ramallah	Jericho	Hebron	Bethlehem	Total
Local community	Very significant role	37.7%	32.6%	46.2%	25.5%	26.8%	33.3%
	significant role	28.3%	54.3%	23.1%	63.6%	48.8%	44.4%

	Moderate role		4.3%	2.6%	1.8%		1.7%
	Week role	24.5%	6.5%	23.1%	9.1%	17.1%	15.8%
	Very week role	9.4%	2.2%	5.1%		7.3%	4.7%
		Jerusalem	Ramallah	Jericho	Hebron	Bethlehem	Total
Palestinian parties	Very significant role	7.5%	21.7%	17.9%	18.2%	9.8%	15.0%
	significant role	39.6%	28.3%	38.5%	34.5%	34.1%	35.0%
	Moderate role	1.9%	6.5%	7.7%	3.6%	7.3%	5.1%
	Week role	34.0%	34.8%	25.6%	38.2%	31.7%	33.3%
	Very week role	17.0%	8.7%	10.3%	5.5%	17.1%	11.5%
		Jerusalem	Ramallah	Jericho	Hebron	Bethlehem	Total
Government institutions	Very significant role	18.9%	23.9%	23.1%	20.0%	4.9%	18.4%
	significant role	22.6%	19.6%	30.8%	23.6%	22.0%	23.5%
	Moderate role	5.7%	10.9%	7.7%	1.8%	9.8%	6.8%
	Week role	37.7%	32.6%	28.2%	40.0%	43.9%	36.8%
	Very week role	15.1%	13.0%	10.3%	14.5%	19.5%	14.5%
		Jerusalem	Ramallah	Jericho	Hebron	Bethlehem	Total
NGO's	Very significant role	15.1%	17.4%	28.2%	21.8%	7.3%	17.9%
	significant role	28.3%	32.6%	17.9%	20.0%	19.5%	23.9%
	Moderate role	3.8%	8.7%	7.7%	5.5%	2.4%	5.6%
	Week role	34.0%	26.1%	35.9%	40.0%	46.3%	36.3%
	Very week role	18.9%	15.2%	10.3%	12.7%	24.4%	16.2%
3. Do you think that youth have a role in decision-making during:							
		Jerusalem	Ramallah	Jericho	Hebron	Bethlehem	Total

conflicts within the community	Very significant role	13.2%	13.0%	23.1%	20.0%	7.3%	15.4%
	significant role	28.3%	41.3%	30.8%	29.1%	34.1%	32.5%
	Moderate role	3.8%	8.7%	10.3%	7.3%	7.3%	7.3%
	Week role	34.0%	21.7%	28.2%	32.7%	34.1%	30.3%
	Very week role	20.8%	15.2%	7.7%	10.9%	17.1%	14.5%
		Jerusalem	Ramallah	Jericho	Hebron	Bethlehem	Total
Intervening to resolve conflict within the community	Very significant role	11.3%	28.3%	35.9%	21.8%	4.9%	20.1%
	significant role	37.7%	28.3%	33.3%	34.5%	36.6%	34.2%
	Moderate role	5.7%	6.5%	2.6%	1.8%	2.4%	3.8%
	Week role	28.3%	21.7%	15.4%	29.1%	36.6%	26.5%
	Very week role	17.0%	15.2%	12.8%	12.7%	19.5%	15.4%
4. To what extent do the following factors influence the participation of youth in decision-making?							
		Jerusalem	Ramallah	Jericho	Hebron	Bethlehem	Total
The subordination of youth to older people	Very significant impact	20.8%	28.3%	28.2%	30.9%	19.5%	25.6%
	significant impact	56.6%	50.0%	51.3%	56.4%	61.0%	55.1%
	Moderate impact	1.9%	2.2%	10.3%	1.8%		3.0%
	Week impact	15.1%	15.2%	10.3%	10.9%	14.6%	13.2%
	Very week impact	5.7%	4.3%			4.9%	3.0%
		Jerusalem	Ramallah	Jericho	Hebron	Bethlehem	Total
Weak economic funding	Very significant impact	13.2%	30.4%	48.7%	27.3%	31.7%	29.1%

	significant impact	54.7%	41.3%	17.9%	52.7%	41.5%	43.2%
	Moderate impact	1.9%	4.3%	10.3%	1.8%	2.4%	3.8%
	Week impact	30.2%	19.6%	17.9%	12.7%	17.1%	19.7%
	Very week impact		4.3%	5.1%	5.5%	7.3%	4.3%
		Jerusalem	Ramallah	Jericho	Hebron	Bethlehem	Total
Disinterest in politics	Very significant impact	15.1%	13.0%	38.5%	23.6%	17.1%	20.9%
	significant impact	58.5%	39.1%	28.2%	38.2%	36.6%	41.0%
	Moderate impact		8.7%	2.6%	1.8%	4.9%	3.4%
	Week impact	20.8%	37.0%	28.2%	32.7%	34.1%	30.3%
	Very week impact	5.7%	2.2%	2.6%	3.6%	7.3%	4.3%
		Jerusalem	Ramallah	Jericho	Hebron	Bethlehem	Total
Israeli occupation policies: checkpoints and arrests	Very significant impact	47.2%	43.5%	66.7%	50.9%	43.9%	50.0%
	significant impact	26.4%	32.6%	20.5%	32.7%	29.3%	28.6%
	Moderate impact	1.9%	4.3%	5.1%	3.6%	2.4%	3.4%
	Week impact	22.6%	13.0%	5.1%	9.1%	24.4%	15.0%
	Very week impact	1.9%	6.5%	2.6%	3.6%		3.0%
		Jerusalem	Ramallah	Jericho	Hebron	Bethlehem	Total
Weak laws and	Very significant	20.8%	43.5%	38.5%	34.5%	29.3%	32.9%

legislation	impact						
	significant impact	50.9%	23.9%	38.5%	40.0%	36.6%	38.5%
	Moderate impact	1.9%	6.5%	5.1%	5.5%		3.8%
	Week impact	24.5%	21.7%	15.4%	14.5%	29.3%	20.9%
	Very week impact	1.9%	4.3%	2.6%	5.5%	4.9%	3.8%
		Jerusalem	Ramallah	Jericho	Hebron	Bethlehem	Total
Mistrust of youth's abilities	Very significant impact	26.4%	39.1%	35.9%	30.9%	31.7%	32.5%
	significant impact	49.1%	30.4%	46.2%	49.1%	36.6%	42.7%
	Moderate impact	1.9%	2.2%	2.6%	3.6%		2.1%
	Week impact	17.0%	23.9%	15.4%	14.5%	26.8%	19.2%
	Very week impact	5.7%	4.3%		1.8%	4.9%	3.4%
		Jerusalem	Ramallah	Jericho	Hebron	Bethlehem	Total
No protection for youth	Very significant impact	28.3%	34.8%	33.3%	45.5%	41.5%	36.8%
	significant impact	45.3%	30.4%	35.9%	38.2%	31.7%	36.8%
	Moderate impact	1.9%	6.5%	2.6%	3.6%	2.4%	3.4%
	Week impact	22.6%	19.6%	25.6%	9.1%	24.4%	19.7%
	Very week impact	1.9%	8.7%	2.6%	3.6%		3.4%
		Jerusalem	Ramallah	Jericho	Hebron	Bethlehem	Total

My interest is improving income.	Very significant impact	20.8%	43.5%	41.0%	43.6%	36.6%	36.8%
	significant impact	45.3%	23.9%	46.2%	38.2%	39.0%	38.5%
	Moderate impact		10.9%	2.6%	7.3%	2.4%	4.7%
	Week impact	30.2%	17.4%	7.7%	10.9%	19.5%	17.5%
	Very week impact	3.8%	4.3%	2.6%		2.4%	2.6%
		Jerusalem	Ramallah	Jericho	Hebron	Bethlehem	Total
My interest in finding a job	Very significant impact	24.5%	39.1%	43.6%	49.1%	31.7%	37.6%
	significant impact	43.4%	34.8%	43.6%	34.5%	43.9%	39.7%
	Moderate impact	1.9%	8.7%	2.6%	3.6%		3.4%
	Week impact	28.3%	15.2%	10.3%	10.9%	22.0%	17.5%
	Very week impact	1.9%	2.2%		1.8%	2.4%	1.7%
		Jerusalem	Ramallah	Jericho	Hebron	Bethlehem	Total
The prevalence of corruption, such as nepotism, Wasta, and exploitation of authority	Very significant impact	28.3%	47.8%	51.3%	49.1%	51.2%	44.9%
	significant impact	47.2%	28.3%	25.6%	34.5%	29.3%	33.8%
	Moderate impact	3.8%	6.5%	7.7%	7.3%		5.1%
	Week impact	17.0%	15.2%	12.8%	9.1%	19.5%	14.5%
	Very week impact	3.8%	2.2%	2.6%			1.7%

		Jerusalem	Ramallah	Jericho	Hebron	Bethlehem	Total
Distrust of the government	Very significant impact	32.1%	43.5%	51.3%	47.3%	34.1%	41.5%
	significant impact	45.3%	28.3%	25.6%	36.4%	39.0%	35.5%
	Moderate impact		6.5%	12.8%	3.6%		4.3%
	Week impact	18.9%	17.4%	10.3%	12.7%	22.0%	16.2%
	Very week impact	3.8%	4.3%			4.9%	2.6%

5. Do you think that involving youth in decision-making can reduce conflict and peace building?

	Jerusalem	Ramallah	Jericho	Hebron	Bethlehem	Total
Yes	49.1%	54.3%	61.5%	49.1%	48.8%	52.1%
To some extent.	37.7%	32.6%	33.3%	38.2%	39.0%	36.3%
No	1.9%	10.9%	2.6%	7.3%	4.9%	5.6%
Don't know	11.3%	2.2%	2.6%	5.5%	7.3%	6.0%

6. Which of the following would make the participation of youth in decision-making have impact on promoting peace in your region?

Supporting youth initiatives		Jerusalem	Ramallah	Jericho	Hebron	Bethlehem	Total
	Very significant	47.2%	60.9%	76.9%	54.5%	43.9%	56.0%
	Significant	50.9%	30.4%	23.1%	40.0%	41.5%	38.0%
	Not significant						
	Not significant at all	1.9%	4.3%		1.8%	14.6%	4.3%
	Don't know		4.3%		3.6%		1.7%
		Jerusalem	Ramallah	Jericho	Hebron	Bethlehem	Total

Integrating youth into community dialogue	Very significant	32.1%	56.5%	66.7%	52.7%	31.7%	47.4%
	Significant	56.6%	39.1%	33.3%	38.2%	65.9%	46.6%
	Not significant						
	Not significant at all	11.3%	2.2%		5.5%	2.4%	4.7%
	Don't know		2.2%		3.6%		1.3%
		Jerusalem	Ramallah	Jericho	Hebron	Bethlehem	Total
Integrating youth into Palestinian national reconciliation committees	Very significant	49.1%	50.0%	66.7%	49.1%	36.6%	50.0%
	Significant	37.7%	34.8%	33.3%	40.0%	48.8%	38.9%
	Not significant	13.2%	10.9%		5.5%	12.2%	8.5%
	Not significant at all				1.8%	2.4%	.9%
	Don't know		4.3%		3.6%		1.7%
		Jerusalem	Ramallah	Jericho	Hebron	Bethlehem	Total
Supporting youth in marginalized regions	Very significant	41.5%	56.5%	64.1%	54.5%	51.2%	53.0%
	Significant	47.2%	30.4%	28.2%	36.4%	34.1%	35.9%
	Not significant	11.3%	8.7%		1.8%	14.6%	7.3%
	Not significant at all		2.2%		1.8%		.9%
	Don't know		2.2%	7.7%	5.5%		3.0%
		Jerusalem	Ramallah	Jericho	Hebron	Bethlehem	Total
Developing educational curricula on crisis resolution and peacebuilding	Very significant	39.6%	58.7%	71.8%	50.9%	53.7%	53.8%
	Significant	43.4%	34.8%	20.5%	36.4%	34.1%	34.6%
	Not significant	15.1%	2.2%		7.3%	12.2%	7.7%
	Not significant at all	1.9%		2.6%	1.8%		1.3%

concepts	Don't know		4.3%	5.1%	3.6%		2.6%
		Jerusalem	Ramallah	Jericho	Hebron	Bethlehem	Total
Participation in negotiation and peace committees	Very significant	37.7%	50.0%	56.4%	38.2%	39.0%	43.6%
	Significant	47.2%	34.8%	41.0%	40.0%	48.8%	42.3%
	Not significant	11.3%	8.7%		10.9%	9.8%	8.5%
	Not significant at all	1.9%			5.5%	2.4%	2.1%
	Don't know	1.9%	6.5%	2.6%	5.5%		3.4%
		Jerusalem	Ramallah	Jericho	Hebron	Bethlehem	Total
Promoting community dialogue and building bridges between conflicting groups	Very significant	35.8%	50.0%	61.5%	43.6%	41.5%	45.7%
	Significant	45.3%	37.0%	33.3%	45.5%	41.5%	41.0%
	Not significant	17.0%	4.3%	2.6%	1.8%	14.6%	8.1%
	Not significant at all				1.8%	2.4%	.9%
	Don't know	1.9%	8.7%	2.6%	7.3%		4.3%
		Jerusalem	Ramallah	Jericho	Hebron	Bethlehem	Total
Attention to the needs of marginalized families and communities to achieve justice	Very significant	34.0%	50.0%	76.9%	52.7%	58.5%	53.0%
	Significant	56.6%	41.3%	23.1%	36.4%	36.6%	39.7%
	Not significant	5.7%	2.2%		5.5%	4.9%	3.8%
	Not significant at all	1.9%	2.2%				.9%
	Don't know	1.9%	4.3%		5.5%		2.6%
		Jerusalem	Ramallah	Jericho	Hebron	Bethlehem	Total
Promoting social justice between men and women	Very significant	34.0%	47.8%	64.1%	52.7%	53.7%	49.6%
	Significant	52.8%	28.3%	30.8%	38.2%	36.6%	38.0%
	Not significant	9.4%	15.2%		1.8%	7.3%	6.8%

	Not significant at all	1.9%	2.2%	2.6%	1.8%	2.4%	2.1%
	Don't know	1.9%	6.5%	2.6%	5.5%		3.4%
		Jerusalem	Ramallah	Jericho	Hebron	Bethlehem	Total
Interest in volunteer work	Very significant	37.7%	52.2%	69.2%	45.5%	48.8%	49.6%
	Significant	47.2%	39.1%	28.2%	40.0%	31.7%	38.0%
	Not significant	9.4%	4.3%	2.6%	9.1%	14.6%	8.1%
	Not significant at all	1.9%	2.2%			4.9%	1.7%
	Don't know	3.8%	2.2%		5.5%		2.6%

I. Women questionnaire and results

7. In your region, do you feel that the voices of women are taken into consideration in local decisions?

	Jerusalem	Ramallah	Jericho	Hebron	Bethlehem	Total
Yes	30.3%	28.8%	19.0%	15.2%	3.4%	20.4%
to some extent	45.5%	55.8%	66.7%	63.0%	69.0%	59.1%
No	24.2%	15.4%	14.3%	21.7%	27.6%	20.4%

Have you ever been involved in a community, human rights, or political activity in your region?

	Jerusalem	Ramallah	Jericho	Hebron	Bethlehem	Total
Yes	42.4%	45.1%	81.0%	42.2%	27.6%	45.3%
No	57.6%	54.9%	19.0%	57.8%	72.4%	54.7%

8. Do you think that youth have a role in decision-making at the following levels/fields?*

		Jerusalem	Ramallah	Jericho	Hebron	Bethlehem	Total
Household	Very significant	45.5%	49.0%	52.4%	50.0%	65.5%	51.7%

	role						
	significant role	27.3%	37.3%	38.1%	34.8%	24.1%	32.8%
	Moderate role	18.2%	13.7%	4.8%	10.9%	3.4%	11.1%
	Week role	9.1%		4.8%	2.2%	3.4%	3.3%
	Very week role				2.2%	3.4%	1.1%
		Jerusalem	Ramallah	Jericho	Hebron	Bethlehem	Total
Local community	Very significant role	12.1%	15.7%	4.8%	8.7%	3.4%	10.0%
	significant role	30.3%	33.3%	42.9%	26.1%	24.1%	30.6%
	Moderate role	33.3%	43.1%	38.1%	50.0%	48.3%	43.3%
	Week role	15.2%	7.8%	14.3%	10.9%	20.7%	12.8%
	Very week role	9.1%			4.3%	3.4%	3.3%
		Jerusalem	Ramallah	Jericho	Hebron	Bethlehem	Total
Palestinian parties	Very significant role	9.1%	5.9%	9.5%	6.5%		6.1%
	significant role	21.2%	19.6%	19.0%	15.2%	3.4%	16.1%
	Moderate role	27.3%	52.9%	38.1%	37.0%	31.0%	38.9%
	Week role	36.4%	19.6%	28.6%	34.8%	55.2%	33.3%
	Very week role	6.1%	2.0%	4.8%	6.5%	10.3%	5.6%
		Jerusalem	Ramallah	Jericho	Hebron	Bethlehem	Total
Government	Very	9.1%	13.7%	9.5%	10.9%		9.4%

institutions	significant role						
	significant role	27.3%	39.2%	33.3%	41.3%	24.1%	34.4%
	Moderate role	30.3%	37.3%	42.9%	21.7%	41.4%	33.3%
	Week role	18.2%	9.8%	14.3%	19.6%	31.0%	17.8%
	Very week role	15.2%			6.5%	3.4%	5.0%
		Jerusalem	Ramallah	Jericho	Hebron	Bethlehem	Total
NGO's	Very significant role	6.1%	9.8%	9.5%	10.9%	6.9%	8.9%
	significant role	48.5%	33.3%	42.9%	30.4%	17.2%	33.9%
	Moderate role	24.2%	43.1%	19.0%	39.1%	34.5%	34.4%
	Week role	12.1%	13.7%	19.0%	15.2%	31.0%	17.2%
	Very week role	9.1%		9.5%	4.3%	10.3%	5.6%
9. Do you think that women have a role in decision-making during:							
		Jerusalem	Ramallah	Jericho	Hebron	Bethlehem	Total
conflicts within the community	Very significant role	21.2%	9.8%		6.5%		8.3%
	significant role	18.2%	25.5%	38.1%	17.4%	10.3%	21.1%
	Moderate role	30.3%	37.3%	28.6%	32.6%	31.0%	32.8%
	Week role	21.2%	19.6%	23.8%	32.6%	48.3%	28.3%
	Very week role	9.1%	7.8%	9.5%	10.9%	10.3%	9.4%

		Jerusalem	Ramallah	Jericho	Hebron	Bethlehem	Total
Intervening to resolve conflict within the community	Very significant role	9.1%	7.8%	4.8%	4.3%		5.6%
	significant role	33.3%	15.7%	38.1%	15.2%	6.9%	20.0%
	Moderate role	21.2%	39.2%	28.6%	39.1%	37.9%	34.4%
	Week role	27.3%	29.4%	23.8%	23.9%	41.4%	28.9%
	Very week role	9.1%	7.8%	4.8%	17.4%	13.8%	11.1%

10. To what extent do the following factors influence the participation of women in decision-making?

		Jerusalem	Ramallah	Jericho	Hebron	Bethlehem	Total
Customs and traditions	Very significant role	36.4%	50.0%	28.6%	58.7%	62.1%	49.2%
	significant role	39.4%	28.8%	33.3%	32.6%	27.6%	32.0%
	Moderate role	18.2%	19.2%	38.1%	8.7%	10.3%	17.1%
	Week role	6.1%	1.9%				1.7%
	Very week role						
		Jerusalem	Ramallah	Jericho	Hebron	Bethlehem	Total
Weak economic funding	Very significant role	18.2%	30.8%	38.1%	39.1%	41.4%	33.1%
	significant role	54.5%	36.5%	33.3%	26.1%	34.5%	36.5%
	Moderate role	21.2%	25.0%	23.8%	30.4%	13.8%	23.8%

	Week role	6.1%	3.8%	4.8%	4.3%	10.3%	5.5%
	Very week role		3.8%				1.1%
		Jerusalem	Ramallah	Jericho	Hebron	Bethlehem	Total
Disinterest in politics	Very significant role	12.1%	21.2%	9.5%	26.1%	31.0%	21.0%
	significant role	54.5%	38.5%	52.4%	43.5%	20.7%	41.4%
	Moderate role	24.2%	26.9%	23.8%	19.6%	37.9%	26.0%
	Week role	6.1%	9.6%	14.3%	8.7%	10.3%	9.4%
	Very week role	3.0%	3.8%		2.2%		2.2%
		Jerusalem	Ramallah	Jericho	Hebron	Bethlehem	Total
Israeli occupation policies: checkpoints and arrests	Very significant role	36.4%	42.3%	47.6%	63.0%	44.8%	47.5%
	significant role	42.4%	34.6%	33.3%	17.4%	34.5%	31.5%
	Moderate role	21.2%	15.4%	14.3%	13.0%	13.8%	15.5%
	Week role		5.8%	4.8%	4.3%	3.4%	3.9%
	Very week role		1.9%		2.2%	3.4%	1.7%
		Jerusalem	Ramallah	Jericho	Hebron	Bethlehem	Total
Weak laws and legislation	Very significant role	33.3%	32.7%	23.8%	34.8%	44.8%	34.3%
	significant role	42.4%	42.3%	38.1%	32.6%	31.0%	37.6%

	Moderate role	18.2%	17.3%	33.3%	28.3%	17.2%	22.1%
	Week role	6%	8%	5%	4%	7%	6%
	Very week role						
		Jerusalem	Ramallah	Jericho	Hebron	Bethlehem	Total
Mistrust of women people's abilities	Very significant role	45.5%	26.9%	38.1%	39.1%	27.6%	34.8%
	significant role	42.4%	36.5%	33.3%	37.0%	34.5%	37.0%
	Moderate role	12.1%	26.9%	23.8%	17.4%	24.1%	21.0%
	Week role		9.6%	4.8%	4.3%	13.8%	6.6%
	Very week role				2.2%		.6%
		Jerusalem	Ramallah	Jericho	Hebron	Bethlehem	Total
No protection for women	Very significant role	24.2%	25.0%	28.6%	39.1%	34.5%	30.4%
	significant role	60.6%	30.8%	57.1%	34.8%	34.5%	40.9%
	Moderate role	12.1%	30.8%	9.5%	19.6%	27.6%	21.5%
	Week role	3.0%	13.5%	4.8%	4.3%	3.4%	6.6%
	Very week role				2.2%		.6%
		Jerusalem	Ramallah	Jericho	Hebron	Bethlehem	Total
My interest is improving income.	Very significant role	25.8%	23.5%	28.6%	50.0%	37.9%	33.7%
	significant	45.2%	47.1%	57.1%	26.1%	44.8%	42.1%

	role						
	Moderate role	22.6%	25.5%	14.3%	21.7%	13.8%	20.8%
	Week role	6.5%	3.9%		2.2%	3.4%	3.4%
	Very week role						
		Jerusalem	Ramallah	Jericho	Hebron	Bethlehem	Total
My interest in finding a job	Very significant role	29.0%	23.5%	28.6%	52.2%	41.4%	35.4%
	significant role	45.2%	43.1%	57.1%	21.7%	44.8%	39.9%
	Moderate role	22.6%	27.5%	4.8%	21.7%	10.3%	19.7%
	Week role	3.2%	5.9%	4.8%	4.3%	3.4%	4.5%
	Very week role						
		Jerusalem	Ramallah	Jericho	Hebron	Bethlehem	Total
The prevalence of corruption, such as nepotism, Wasta, and exploitation of authority	Very significant role	29.0%	56.9%	52.4%	65.2%	51.7%	52.8%
	significant role	48.4%	27.5%	38.1%	21.7%	27.6%	30.9%
	Moderate role	22.6%	11.8%	4.8%	10.9%	13.8%	12.9%
	Week role		2.0%	4.8%		6.9%	2.2%
	Very week role		2.0%		2.2%		1.1%
		Jerusalem	Ramallah	Jericho	Hebron	Bethlehem	Total
Distrust of the government	Very significant role	29.0%	52.9%	33.3%	56.5%	58.6%	48.3%

	significant role	61.3%	27.5%	52.4%	30.4%	17.2%	35.4%
	Moderate role	9.7%	15.7%	14.3%	6.5%	17.2%	12.4%
	Week role		3.9%		2.2%	6.9%	2.8%
	Very week role				4.3%		1.1%
11. Do you think that involving women in decision-making can reduce conflict and peace building?							
		Jerusalem	Ramallah	Jericho	Hebron	Bethlehem	Total
Yes		33.3%	39.2%	42.9%	17.4%	20.7%	30.0%
To some extent.		45.5%	43.1%	52.4%	69.6%	58.6%	53.9%
No		9.1%	7.8%		10.9%	17.2%	9.4%
Don't know		12.1%	9.8%	4.8%	2.2%	3.4%	6.7%
12. Which of the following would make the participation of women in decision-making have impact on promoting peace in your region?							
Supporting youth initiatives		Jerusalem	Ramallah	Jericho	Hebron	Bethlehem	Total
	Very significant	57.6%	61.5%	42.9%	63.0%	58.6%	58.6%
	Significant	39.4%	26.9%	57.1%	26.1%	37.9%	34.3%
	Not significant	3.0%	11.5%		6.5%	3.4%	6.1%
	Not significant at all				4.3%		1.1%
		Jerusalem	Ramallah	Jericho	Hebron	Bethlehem	Total
Integrating women into community	Very significant	24.2%	48.1%	42.9%	56.5%	55.2%	46.4%
	Significant	69.7%	44.2%	57.1%	30.4%	41.4%	46.4%

dialogue	Not significant	6.1%	7.7%		10.9%	3.4%	6.6%
	Not significant at all				2.2%		.6%
	Don't know		2.2%		3.6%		1.3%
		Jerusalem	Ramallah	Jericho	Hebron	Bethlehem	Total
Integrating women into Palestinian national reconciliation committees	Very significant	39.4%	53.8%	42.9%	50.0%	44.8%	47.5%
	Significant	39.4%	26.9%	52.4%	37.0%	27.6%	34.8%
	Not significant	21.2%	15.4%	4.8%	10.9%	27.6%	16.0%
	Not significant at all		3.8%		2.2%		1.7%
		Jerusalem	Ramallah	Jericho	Hebron	Bethlehem	Total
Developing educational curricula on crisis resolution and peacebuilding concepts	Very significant	42.4%	63.5%	61.9%	50.0%	58.6%	55.2%
	Significant	39.4%	32.7%	38.1%	34.8%	37.9%	35.9%
	Not significant	18.2%	3.8%		15.2%	3.4%	8.8%
	Not significant at all						
		Jerusalem	Ramallah	Jericho	Hebron	Bethlehem	Total
Participation in negotiation and peace committees	Very significant	45.5%	46.2%	38.1%	45.7%	37.9%	43.6%
	Significant	45.5%	32.7%	47.6%	32.6%	44.8%	38.7%
	Not significant	9.1%	21.2%	14.3%	21.7%	17.2%	17.7%
	Not significant at all						
		Jerusalem	Ramallah	Jericho	Hebron	Bethlehem	Total
Promoting	Very	39.4%	43.1%	52.4%	41.3%	41.4%	42.8%

community dialogue and building bridges between conflicting groups	significant						
	Significant	51.5%	45.1%	47.6%	37.0%	41.4%	43.9%
	Not significant	9.1%	11.8%		17.4%	13.8%	11.7%
	Not significant at all				4.3%	3.4%	1.7%
		Jerusalem	Ramallah	Jericho	Hebron	Bethlehem	Total
Attention to the needs of marginalized families and communities to achieve justice	Very significant	45.5%	45.1%	42.9%	43.5%	65.5%	47.8%
	Significant	39.4%	49.0%	52.4%	47.8%	24.1%	43.3%
	Not significant	15.2%	5.9%	4.8%	8.7%	10.3%	8.9%
	Not significant at all						
		Jerusalem	Ramallah	Jericho	Hebron	Bethlehem	Total
Promoting social justice between men and women	Very significant	45.5%	47.1%	57.1%	52.2%	58.6%	51.1%
	Significant	45.5%	31.4%	38.1%	37.0%	31.0%	36.1%
	Not significant	6.1%	17.6%	4.8%	8.7%	10.3%	10.6%
	Not significant at all	3.0%	3.9%		2.2%		2.2%
		Jerusalem	Ramallah	Jericho	Hebron	Bethlehem	Total
The presence of women will improve health, education, and the economy	Very significant	36.4%	56.9%	57.1%	58.7%	62.1%	54.4%
	Significant	54.5%	37.3%	42.9%	30.4%	27.6%	37.8%
	Not significant	6.1%	3.9%		8.7%	10.3%	6.1%
	Not significant at all	3.0%	2.0%		2.2%		1.7%

Table: sample distribution for women and youth

Youth sample				Women sample			
Career	%	The governorate	%	The governorate	%	Career	%
Student	36	Jerusalem	23	Jerusalem	18	Student	1
Housewife unemployed/	24	Ramallah	20	Ramallah	29	Housewife	48
Government employee	10	Jericho	17	Jericho	12	Government employee	17
Employee in the private sector	14	Hebron	24	Hebron	25	Employee in the private sector	20
Employee in the private sector	3	Bethlehem	18	Bethlehem	16	Employee in the private sector	6
Freelance work/I have my own project	14	Education	%	Education	%	Freelance work/I have my own project	9
Gender	%	Less than Tawjihi certificate	17	Less than Tawjihi certificate	11	Age	%
Male	42	Tawjihi certificate	21	Tawjihi certificate	11	years 30-40	58
Female	58	diploma	9	diploma	17.7	years old and 40 above	42
Age		Bachelor's	50	Bachelor's	53		
years 29-18	100	Master's degree or higher	3	Master's degree or higher	7.2		