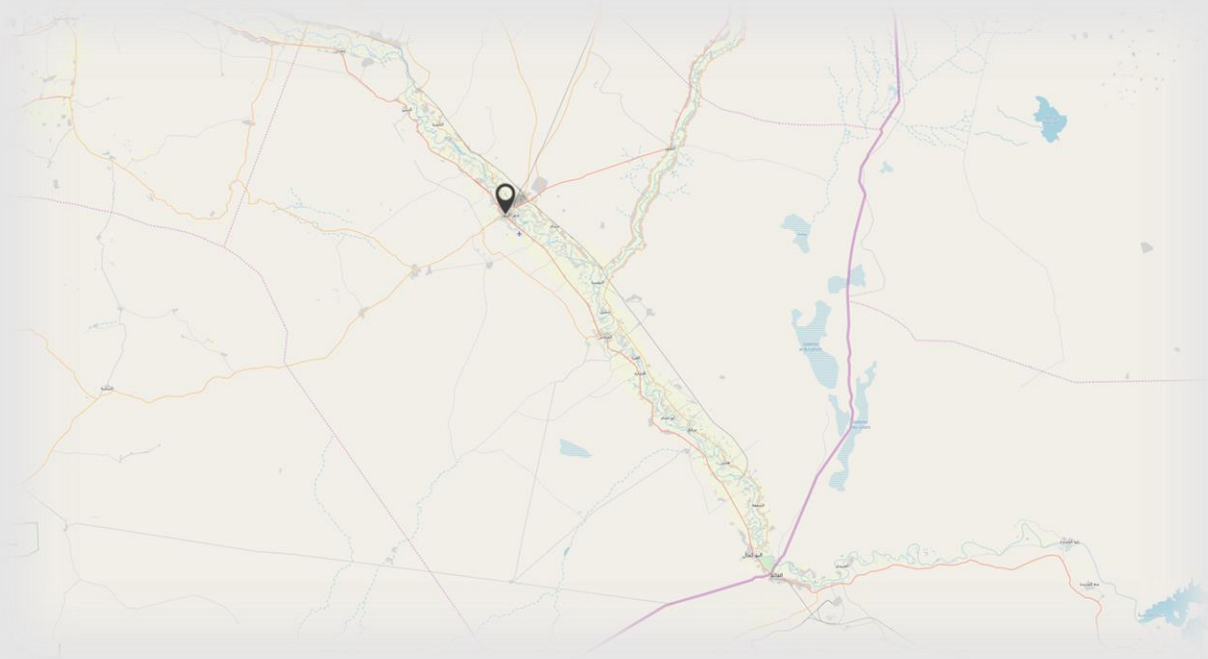


# Deficient Participation

Community Participation in Local Administration in Northeastern Syria - Deir Ezzor as a Sample



منظمة العدالة من أجل الحياة  
Justice for Life Organization



Justice for Life Organization

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About JFL

Justice for Life organization is a Syrian, independent, non-profit, non-governmental that works on promoting human rights, advocacy, and peace-building in Syria.

It was established in 2015 by a number of human rights defenders and actors from Deir Ezzor province. This was a fruit of their individual and team defend for human rights in their communities, and documenting the human rights violations that are committed by different parties and powers who have been in the province since 2011, to make it as a platform and space for those who defend human rights and victims in order to advocate and defend their cases in accordance with a legal and professional course, so these violations and acts do not go by no just accountability. It also aims at promoting the human rights in the Syrian society and state on the political, behavioral, and cultural levels in order to ensure access for the victims and their relatives to their rights. In this endeavor, JFL expanded its work in 2016 to be an active and effective part in the national and international alliances and platforms concerned in human rights and documenting violations in Syria, and preparing the profiles of violations and crimes that took place against the Syrians since 2011 according to mechanism and methodologies compatible with international legal standards.

JFL team includes Syrian male and female activists and human rights defenders along with specialized supporting team that includes experts and specialists such as lawyers, judges, doctors, and journalists, who had a role and experience during the past years in the processes of documentation, defend, and advocacy towards human rights in their communities, and on the national level on the other hand, where they depend on their deep belief in principles and values of human rights.

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## First: Executive Summary

Many questions are raised about the administration of areas in the northeastern Syrian. The narrative of the ruling local powers is talking about a new and promising sample of administration that is inclusive in an effective and diverse manner. On the other hand, there are counter-narratives by the civil society and local civil groups that say there is an intended exclusivity towards the acting powers and disengagement for the local communities as the representation is a pro forma and fruitless one.

Out of the raised questions is; What are the applicable solutions that keep the area stable and ensure that the area is not groining through an unknown destination in the light of a current administration system with more organized manner?, and at the same time this system involves effectively the local communities in managing their affairs?.

Following the US president's second decision of withdrawing the US troops from Syria, the populations' demands have grown more vocal to work in a joint way in order to secure interests and protection of civilians, and a sole party should be singled out for managing the area and holding its fate in their hands. This what was expressed by the populations in their weekly demonstrations and intensified meetings with top officials within the autonomous administration, including those who are not Syrians.

Through research papers, [Justice for Life](#) seeks for having a closer look at the most important problems of the local community and searches for the applicable ways, especially when it comes to the right of the local community in participation and dignified life.

In partnership with Syria local civil society organizations, JFL implemented a survey that targeted a sample of 355 respondents in Al Kasra sub-district in west of Deir Ezzor, and in Hajeen sub-district in the east. Thirty per cent of the sample was females, and thirty per cent was youth aged between 18 and 30.

With the objective of having a clear and in-depth view, JFL held 15 key informant interviews with civil activists, community notables, and staffers of the autonomous administration. JFL also held four focus group discussions. The respondents varied in terms of gender, age, and residency classification as 126 IDPs responded to the survey.

Out of the basic answers by the respondents about the role of the local staffers in the Administration institutions, 38% confirmed that they have no role at all, 24% said that

they have a role in decision making mechanism, whereas 39% said they have no information if the local staffers have a role or not.

This paper focuses on Deir Ezzor province as a sample under the control of the Administration in the northeaster Syria. Out of the most important conclusions of this paper is that we can see many factors that resulted in unsuccess of the [local councils](#) experience, that were formed before the control of “Islamic State” group control, are present now in the current Administration experience such as lack of communication with the local community, poor administrative and professions expertise and competences, and not selecting the Administration staffs in a democratic manner.

Justice for Life recommends the following:

Building connectivity between the local community and the Administration institutions in accordance with clear mechanism that enable those who enjoy the community trust to reach out to the decision-making centers and scaling competence and integrity on the top of the standards. Working on adopting democratic mechanisms that govern the selection and work of civil councils in order to reflect the locals needs. This also lead to promote the culture of democracy, which is one of the most important reasons behind the local administrations. Equitable distribution of the oil resources and supervision of independent civil parties that are up to the standards of competence and integrity. Ensuring the independency of the civil councils from any political party in order to ensure that they play their service-based role.

## Second: Local Administration in Deir Ezzor Province since 2012

During last seven years, a number of administration samples came to the areas that are out of Syrian government control in Deir Ezzor in accordance with the powers that ruled these areas starting with the Syrian opposition, “Islamic State” group, and ending with the civil councils that were established following the control of the Syria Democratic Forces, where it is the theme of this research paper.

The controlling powers sought for establishing administrative structures in order to provide services including medical, education, and humanitarian aid.

The chain of administrations consecution started with the control of the armed Syrian opposition over vast areas in the province; civil activists established civil councils in order to achieve the abovementioned goals. This era witnessed countless developments and attempts of structuring, especially after the step taken by the National Coalition for Syrian Revolution and Opposition Forces to unify the mechanism of forming local councils in all areas out of government control and standardize the legal reference.

As “Islamic State” group could captured the opposition held areas in the second half of 2014, the group confiscated funds and assets of the local councils, and pursued their members after accusing them of being loyal to the “infidels”, the Syrian Coalition, and then, the experience of the local councils became dead.

In the second half of 2017, Syria Democratic Forces, with support of the Global Coalition, were able to capture the areas located in the north of Euphrates River, and established civil councils. These councils received a standing ovation and support by many states. They started providing basic services, especially electricity, water, and education.

## Third: Introduction

After two years of control the areas in north of the river by SDF and establishing the civil councils, many popular actions started as the protestors expressed their demands for enhancing the services, countering corruption, creating job opportunities, and achieving equity, along with engaging the local community in an effective manner in managing this area. The actions included demonstrations in many towns and villages, and meetings between civil activists and autonomous administration officials.

The citizens' demands triggered many questions including how much the local community is represented in the autonomous administration institutions. Thus, what is behind these objections and demands for more effective participation? And what are the suggestions could be taken into consideration to respond to protestors and enhance the living conditions?

The civil society organizations and the acting powers in north east are exerting unremitting efforts to find the best solutions to meet the populations' needs.

Following the US president's second decision of withdrawing the US troops from Syria, the populations' demands have grown more vocal to work in a joint way in order to secure interests and protection of civilians, and a sole party should be singled out for managing the area and holding its fate in their hands. This what was expressed by the populations in their weekly demonstrations and intensified meetings with top officials within the autonomous administration, including those who are not Syrians.

To date, no major changes were made in response to the demands and buying time is the overwhelming in the light of worrying about an uncertain future, and absence of openness and transparency of the controlling powers.

Answering the abovementioned questions makes a necessary introduction to clarify the truth on the ground along with planning for meaningful actions in future.

## Fourth: Methodology and Challenges

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KIIs and FGD sessions' results matched up with those of the survey and contributed to explain them.

Based on the cumulative information that JFL and the partner organizations have along with the results of JFL previous reports about Deir Ezzor, 12 questions were raised. During a two-day workshop, the survey was designed by a specialist, and then the field researchers were trained to conduct the survey.

Al Kasra is considered the biggest sub-district in terms of space in Deir Ezzor western countryside and host the largest number of IDPs. Also, the autonomous administration and civil society organizations are headquartered in this sub-district. Hajeen is considered one of the largest sub-districts in the eastern countryside.

The data collection and analysis plan lasted for two months where three researchers, operations department, and programs department followed up the work plan that included the survey, KIIs, FGD sessions, analyzing results, and coming up with conclusions.

Security condition, especially in eastern Deir Ezzor, was one of the most prominent challenges faced by the researchers as movement is restricted, in particular after sunset. Limitations of time was another challenge as this paper requires in-depth understanding within a short time.



The possibility of getting the team harassed by SDF members, due to its work on research papers that might criticize those forces and the affiliated civil administration, forms one of the most prominent concerns as many journalists have already suffered from such harassments.

## **Fifth: The Right of Effective Participation from the International Law Perspective**

Researchers differentiated between the concept of local administration and local governance. Graeme Moodie defines local administration as “An elected council where local unity is concentrated, exposed to political accountability towards the voters

who are the residents of the local unity. It is considered a complementary to the state apparatuses”.

The local governance is known as “a comprehensive system where the central government waives some of its legislative, executive, and judicial powers for in the interests of independent local group that practices its tasks within a specific geographical region”<sup>1</sup>.

Nevertheless, despite this differentiation between the two concepts, both of them are based on the principle of involving the locals in managing the affairs of their own, and accordingly, it is the right of individuals and groups to take part indiscriminately in managing the public and political affairs in their state.

Many international instruments and covenants came to confirm this right; Article 21 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that “Everyone has the right to take part in the government of his country, directly or through freely chosen representatives”.

People participation in government of their country promotes the concept of democracy and contribute to enforcing the political, economic, and social structure of communities. According to Article 1 of the United Nations Declaration on the Right to Development, “The right to development is an inalienable human right by virtue of which every human person and all peoples are entitled to participate in, contribute to, and enjoy economic, social, cultural and political development, in which all human rights and fundamental freedoms can be fully realized”.

The right to participate on a basis of equality in public and political life is a central feature of the concept of democracy. The effective participation of all individuals and groups in political and public life forms the basis of realization of human rights and a key component in the rights-based strategies aimed at eliminating discrimination and inequalities.

Article 8 of the Declaration on the Rights and Duties of Individuals, Groups and Institutions in Promoting and Protecting Universally Recognized Human Rights and Fundamental Liberties states “1. Everyone has the right, individually and in association with others, to have effective access, on a non-discriminatory basis, to participation in

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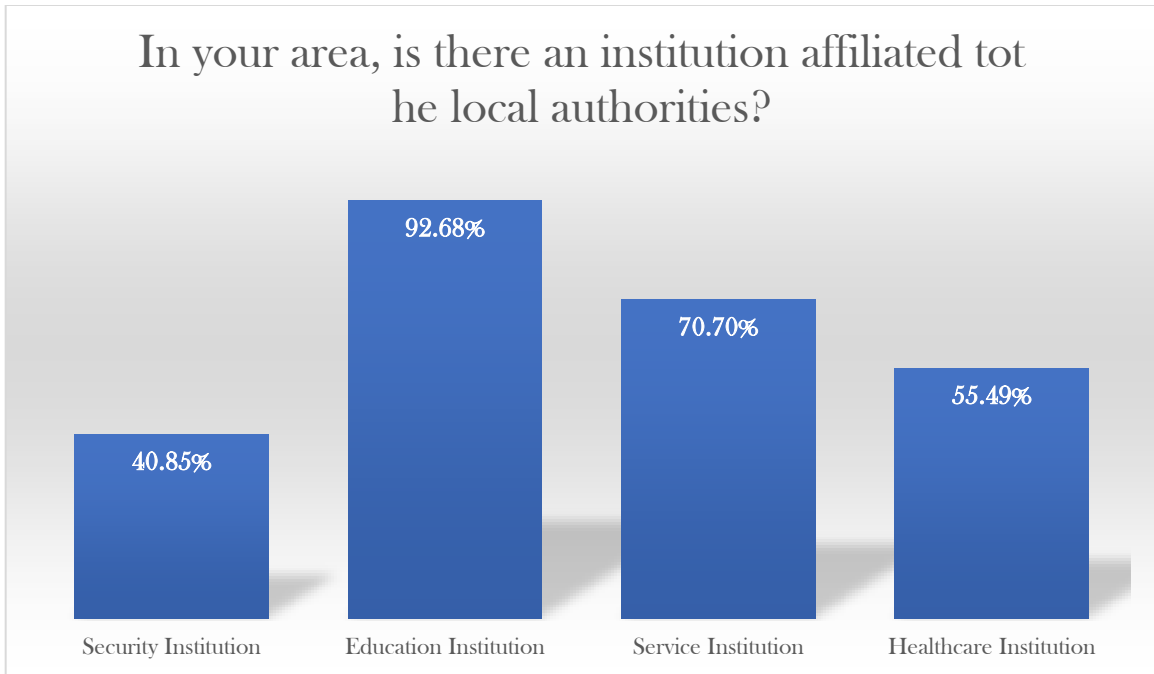
<sup>1</sup> Salem, Akram, Facts and Standards about Local Administration or Local Governance

the government of his or her country and in the conduct of public affairs. 2. This includes, inter alia , the right, individually and in association with others, to submit to governmental bodies and agencies and organizations concerned with public affairs criticism and proposals for improving their functioning and to draw attention to any aspect of their work that may hinder or impede the promotion, protection and realization of human rights and fundamental freedoms”.

## **Sixth: Results of Survey, KII, and FGD Sessions**

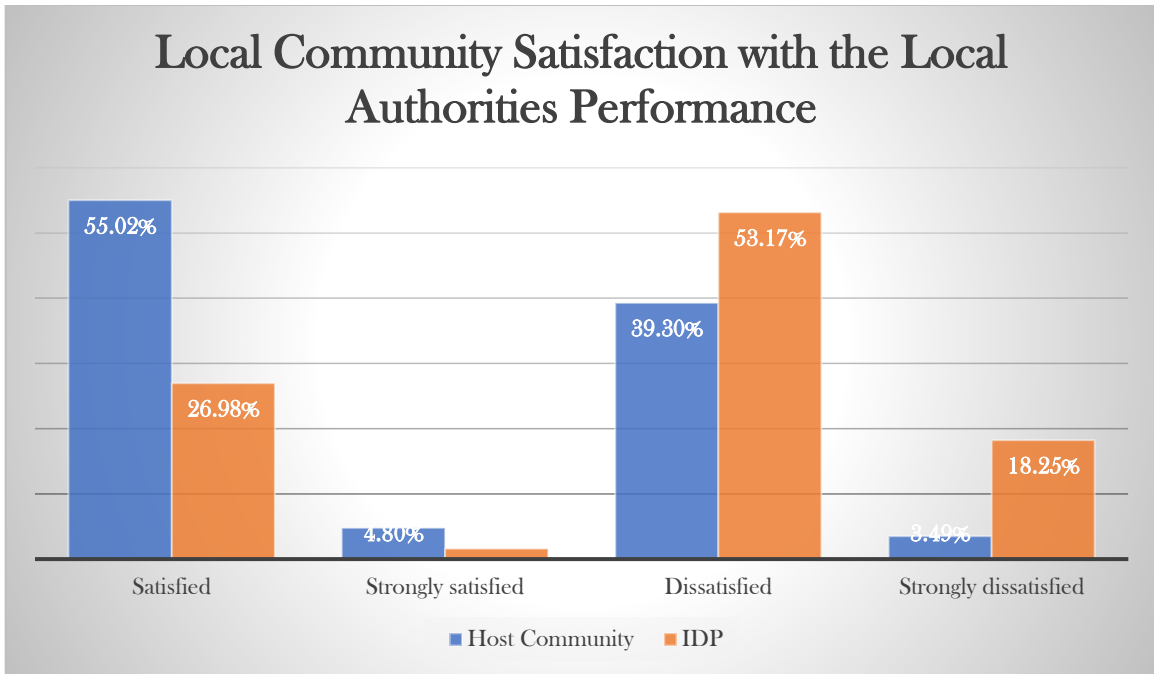
### **Availability of Autonomous Administration’ Institutions and Level of Satisfaction towards their Performance**

The overwhelming majority of the respondents asserted that there are institutions affiliated to the autonomous administration in their areas. According to the survey results, more than 90% of the respondents said that there are educational institutions, about 70% of the respondents said that there are services institutions to provide water, electricity, roads, etc. 55% of the respondents said that there are healthcare institutions such as hospitals and medical units. About 41% of the respondents said that there are security institutions in their areas. *(Figure 1)*



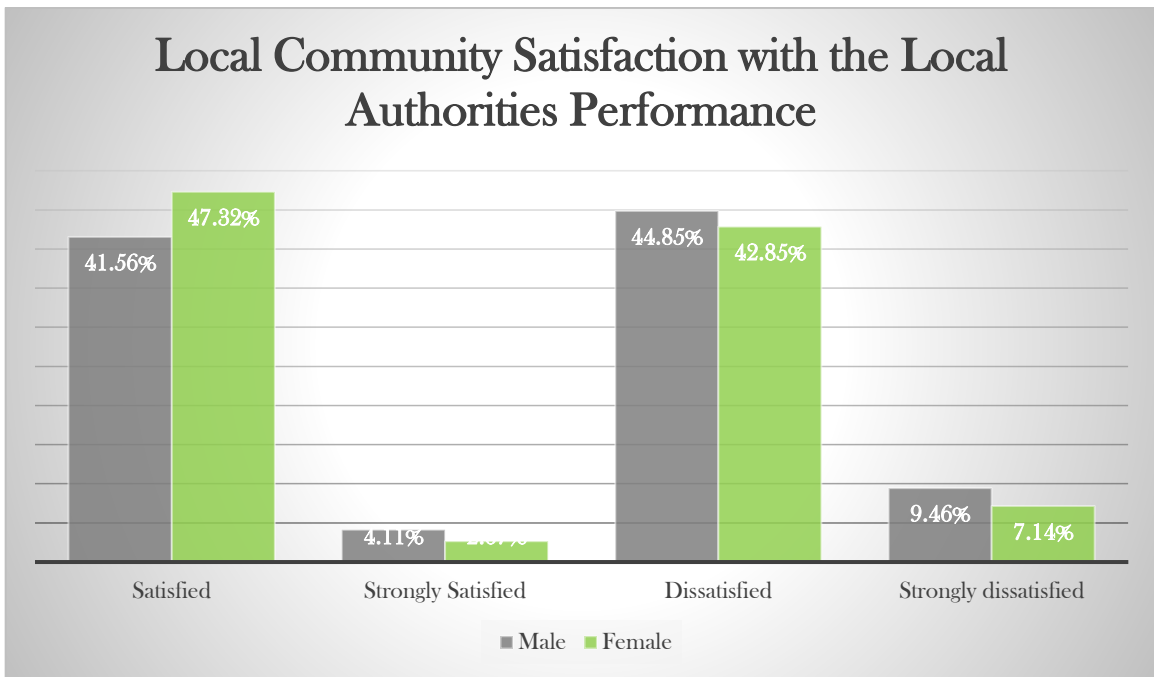
(Figure 1)

The respondents varied between satisfied and dissatisfied with the performance of the Administration' institutions. The differences are remarkably shown between the respondents of host community and IDPs; 55.02% of the host community respondents said that they are satisfied, whereas 44.85% said that they are dissatisfied. As for IDPs, 26.98% of the IDPs respondents expressed their satisfaction, whereas 53.17% said that they are dissatisfied, and 18.25% said that they are strongly dissatisfied. *(Figure 2)*



(Figure 2)

By analyzing the results on gender basis, the answers were close as 47.32% of female respondents said that they are satisfied, whereas 42.85% said that they are dissatisfied. (Figure 3)



(Figure 3)

## Result 1

The results indicate that the Administration basic institutions are available in many areas in the east and west of the province, especially in sectors of education and services.

## Result 2

It is shown that there is dissatisfaction, sometimes more than 50% of respondents, and this percentage increases among IDPs.

In explaining the first result, one of the community notables said in one of the KII sessions that “It is due to the prevailing administrative corruption, neglecting the humanitarian sector, stealing IDPs relief allocations, heating allocations for IDPs and Host communities, along with domination of specific group over decision making”.

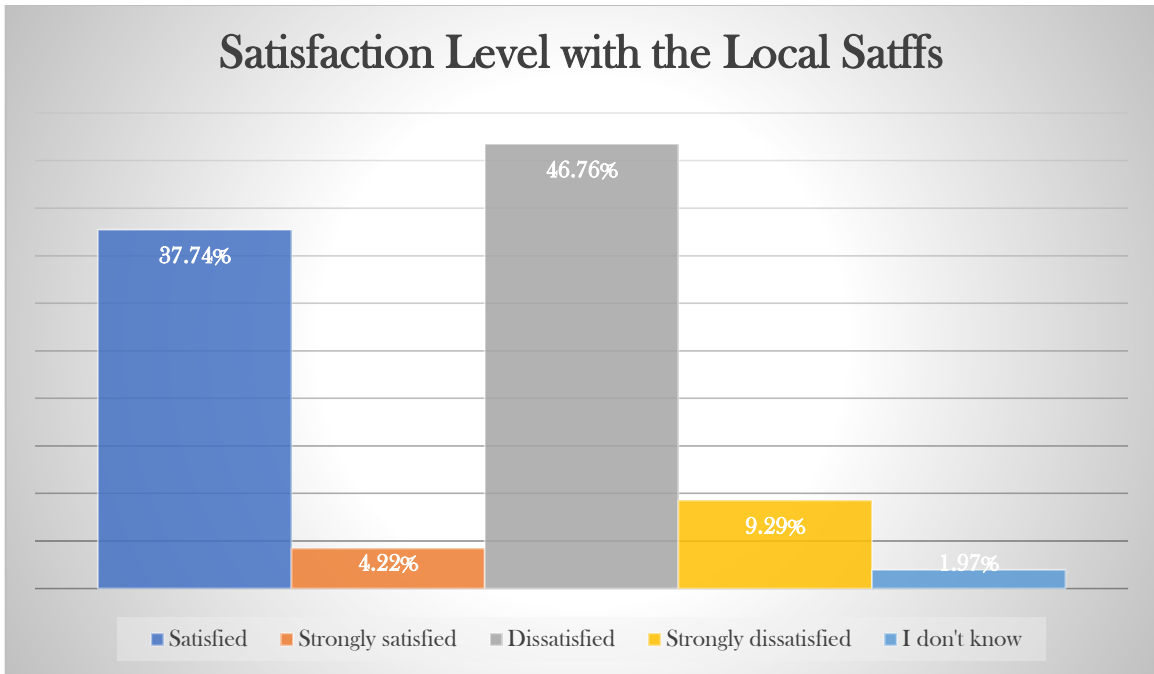
An FGD participant said, “there is limited satisfaction with the performance of the institutions as some municipalities are doing their work within the available resources”. This explains the percentage of acceptance towards the work and services of the Administration.

## Conclusion

The Administration provides basic institutions in vast areas, yet they are not working in a fruitful way due to the prevailed corruption, centralization of power, and lack of competencies.

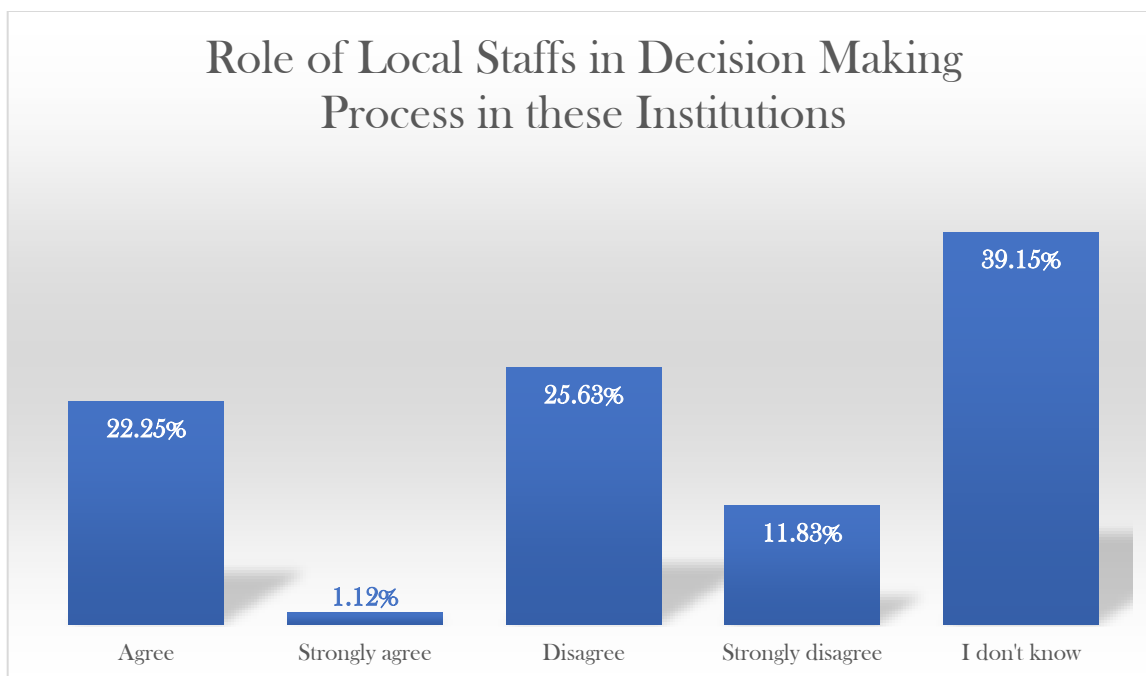
## **Local Staffs and Their Role in Decision-Making Process**

Local staff means local personnel within the Administration institutions, whether they are residents or IDPs. 56.05% said that they dissatisfied with the performance of the local staffs, whereas 41.96% said that they are satisfied. (*Figure 4*)



(Figure 4)

Regarding the role of the local staffs in making decisions within the Administration institutions, 38% of the respondents said that there is no role for them, whereas 24% said that there is a role in making decisions. Also, 39% of the respondents said that they do not know if there is a role or not for the local staffs. *(Figure 5)*



(Figure 5 )

A staffer in one of the Administration institutions said that he is dissatisfied with the work and performance of the local staffs, “Despite demands of repairing water stations and availability of funds, yet local officials have been obstructing the implementation”.

A civil society activist says that “The majority of the staff in these institutions are not up to the required academic standards, and some of them are occupying important positions without having any academic background”.

Another civil society activist says that “The local staffers have no authority to make any decision that is already limited to PYD members, who already locally named “Cadres”. I have an example, the stone quarries located on the riverbank, particularly in Hammar Al Kasra, that negatively affect the farms, cannot be stopped by the local staffs as the PYD members are the sole beneficiaries”.

Concerning the decision-making sole authority in the hands of specific group, another activist says “The head of agricultural committee refused to approve an invoice that has to be disbursed by the financial committee, yet one of the cadres could disburse the invoice without the approval of the head of relevant committee”.



A displaced community notable from Deir Ezzor city who lives in Al Kasra sub-district says that the local staffs have to ability to be a part of the decision making process; “For example, the head of Deir Ezzor military council, Ahmad Al Khbail aka Abu Khawla, can not take a minor decisions even on the local level. For me, and until this moment, I need a sponsor in order to enter al Hasaka or Al Raqqa when I want to go there. No body from the Administration has the ability to solve this problem, which is an obstacle for the populations”.

### Result 1

The number of respondents, who do not know if the local staffs have a role in decision making process or not, is close to the number of respondents who confirmed that the local staffs have/ have not role. This result could indicate that a major percentage of the community pays no attention to this minor detail. On the other hand, this could indicate that the ambiguity of work and role of the Administration.

### Result 2

The majority of respondents along with those who were interviewed and participated in the FGD sessions agreed on the critical role of the PYD leaderships, including those who are not from Deir Ezzor or Syria, as they have the final decision.

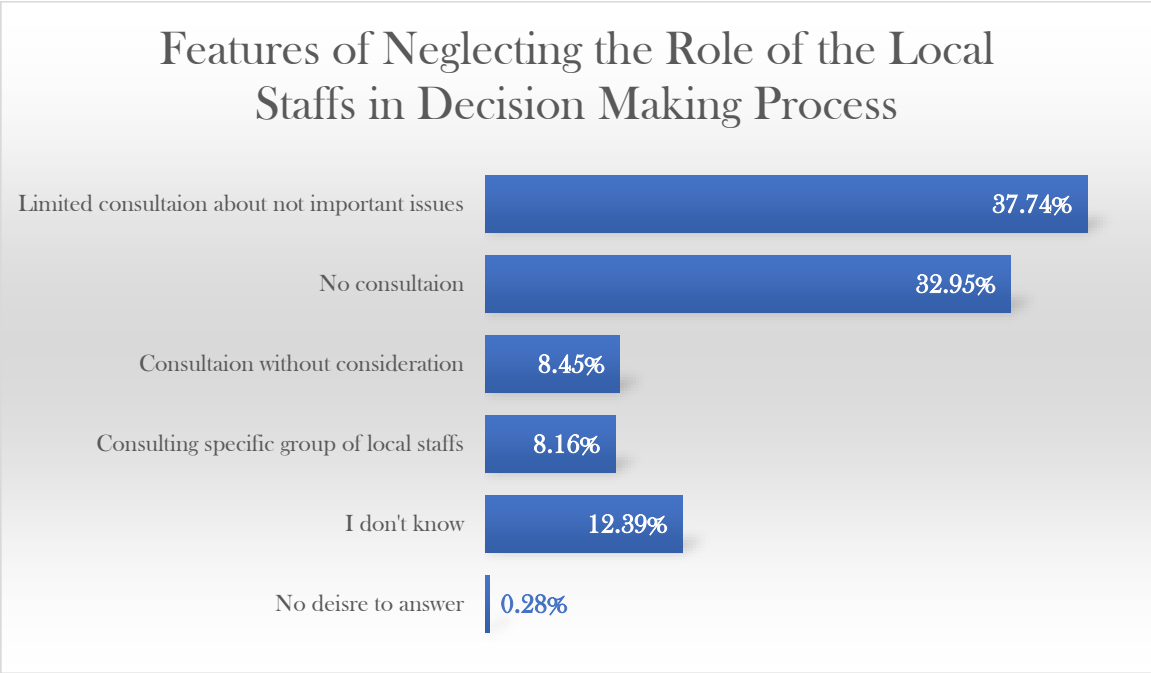
### Conclusion

There is a lack of trust in local staffs within the Administration institutions in the light of poor impact. The local staffs have a partial responsibility for the poor performance of the civil councils.

## **Is there an intended neglect to the local staffs?**

The populations of this area occupy many positions in the Administration and SDF institutions, including those who are in high ranks. By analyzing the respondents' answers, there is not role for the local staffs. The question is: is there a systematic neglect for the local staffs, or part of them? Or it is about the destabilized situation in this area?

More than 70% of the responses said that the local staffs are not consulted with the decision, especially the important ones. About 8% said that there are specific consultations with the local staffs. About 8% said that there are pro forma consultations. (Figure 6).



(Figure 6)

A female activist from Deir Ezzor city says “The consultations taken by the leaderships from the local staffs are too limited and are about pointless issues. For example, community leaders were consulted about blacktopping the roads in Al Kasra town, yet the responsible cadre decided not to implement accordingly”.

A community notable confirms that it is possible to report complaints and provide suggestions for these institutions, but that are not taken into consideration. This what was confirmed by a female staffer in one of the institutions by saying “There are consultations and discussions in many issues, yet the results are not taken into account. For example, one staffer was dismissed despite the results of discussions about this decision”.

## Result

According to the survey results and the abovementioned examples, many decisions are discussed inside the Administration institutions with the participation of the local staffs, yet the final decisions are taken by specific group called “cadre”. This makes a clear neglect for the discussions.

## Conclusion

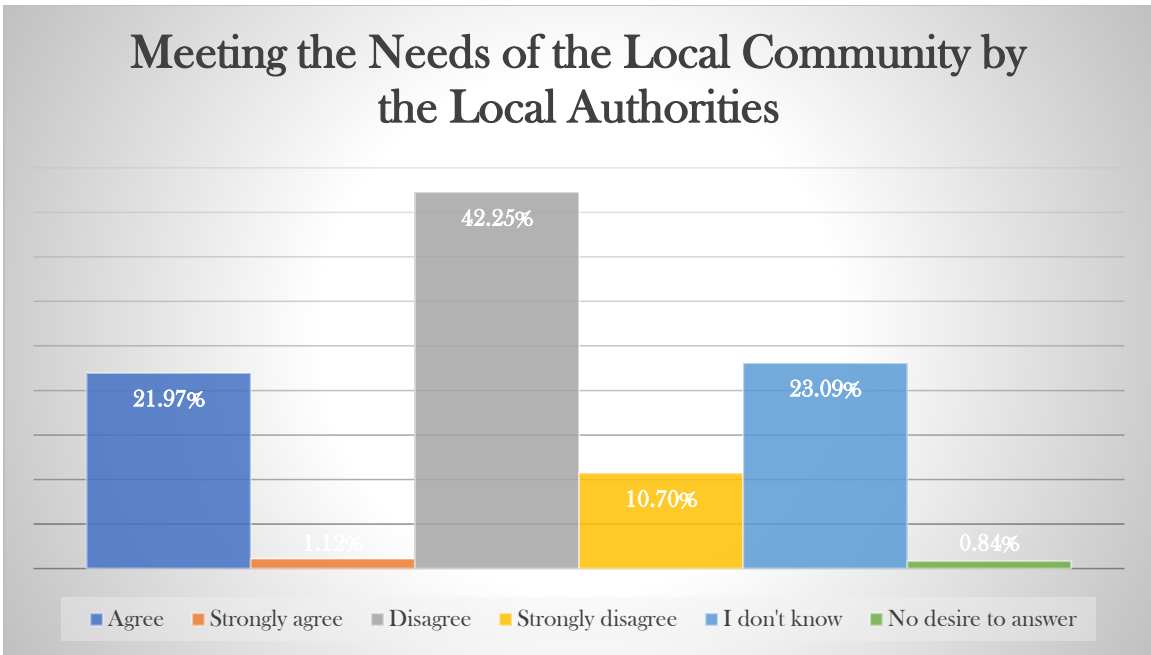
There is a bypass for the role of local staffs and leaderships working in the Administration institutions and limiting this role to execution. This is a policy followed by leaderships in the Administration and SDF by utilizing the absence of accountability mechanisms.

## **Meeting the Needs of the Local Community by the Local Authorities**

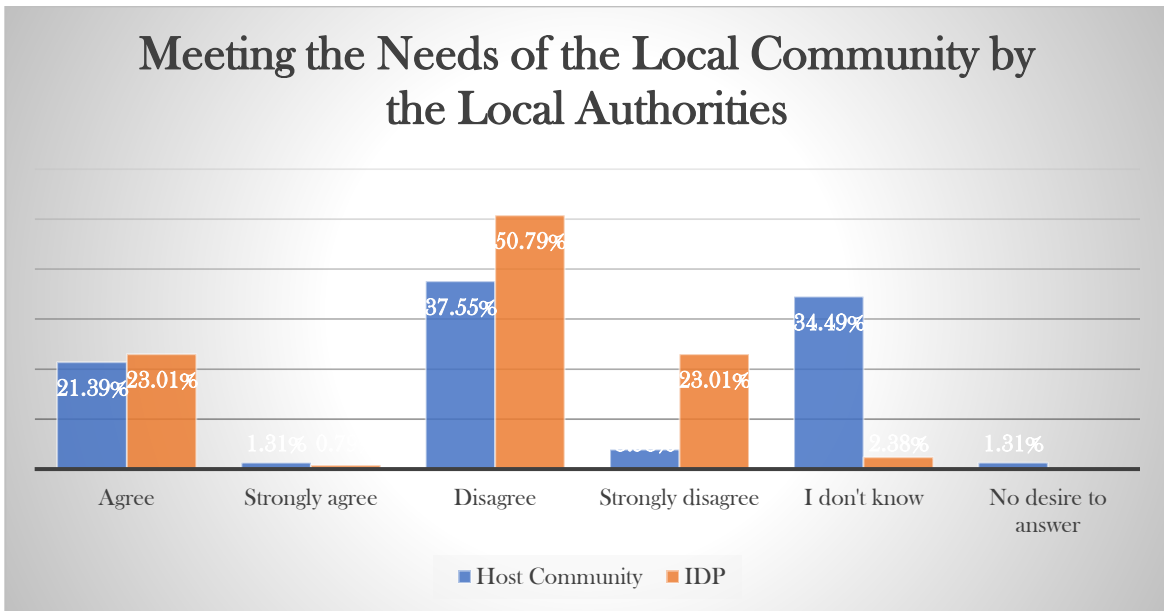
The frequent popular protests against the performance of the Administration institutions in Deir Ezzor focused on meeting the needs of locals and neglecting their basic needs.

About 52.95% of the respondents said that the current authorities and their provided services do not meeting the needs and desires of the local community. (*Figure 7*).

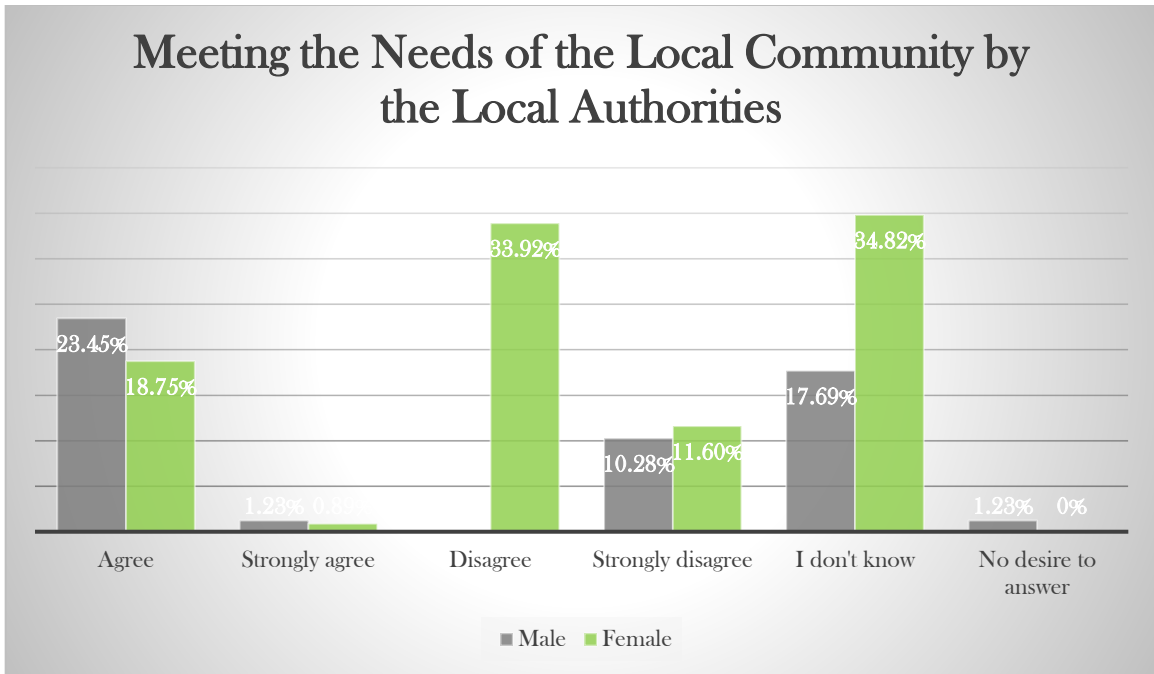
By analyzing the answers on the level of residency, 73.8 % of IDPs consider the services provided by the local authorities are not in accordance with the local needs (*Figure 8*). From a gender perspective, 45.52 of the female respondents confirmed the same result (*Figure 9*).



(Figure 7)



(Figure 8)



(Figure 9)

A female activist says that “The Administration has no clear strategic plans to tackle the problems of the area. For example, after two years of controlling the area by SDF, more than 80% of Deir Ezzor population drink polluted water”. A female staffer in one of the Administration institutions confirms that “There are actions taken, but without meeting the reality needs”.

#### Result

Most of the respondents from different categories (males, females, IDPs, and HC) see that the local authorities do not reflect the local community aspirations.

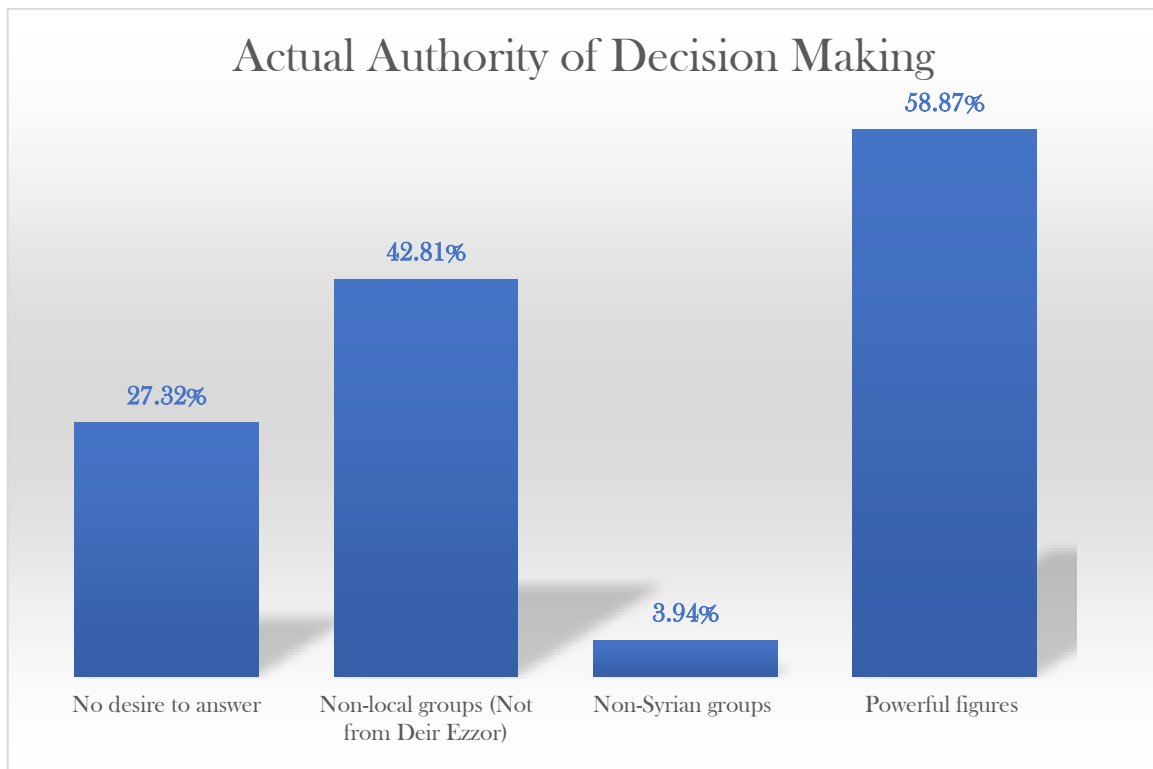
#### Conclusion

It is required to work on exploring and meeting the needs of the populations closely, which is the duty of the local authorities that does not do it in the best manner to reach this goal.

## The Actual Power of Decision Making

In the light of increased discussions on limiting the power of decision making, especially for important decisions, to a specific group, identifying these groups pave the way to set forth mechanisms that avoid such act of exclusivity, focus on participatory in the Administration, and activate the accountability mechanisms.

58.87% of the respondents said that specific groups and figures are dominating the decisions, 42.81% said that the domination is by Syrian figures, and 4% said that the decision is limited to non-Syrian groups. (Figure 10).



(Figure 10)

A female civil activist says that “There are many levels for the decision; the first level is related to the political and security situation along with the general direction of the services sectors. This level is limited to non-Syrian and Syrian figures from out of Deir Ezzor who belong to PYD. These figures control the decision-making process in main

sectors such as irrigation. The second level is related to the direct communication with the locals and receiving complaints. This level is for the local staffs in order to avoid any tension”

In an interview with two staffers who work in the Administration institutions the first one said that “Over the duration of being a head of one of the service institutions, we were holding periodic meetings. We always have been told that no decisions should be made without consulting the cadres”. The second staffer said that “I made a decision within my authority, yet one of the cadres refused it, so the opposite decision was made”.

#### Result 1

The local staffs participate in the responsibility of the decision making.

#### Result 2

The decision-making power is divided into many parties and on many levels, the lowest one is the local staff responsibility.

#### Conclusion

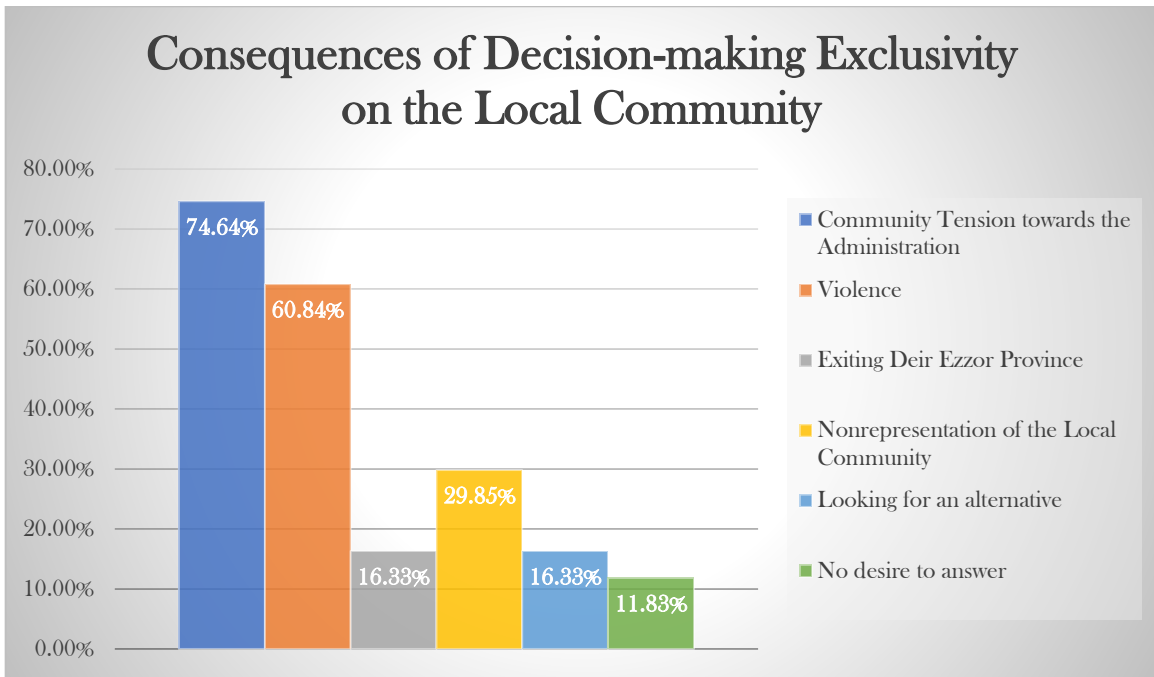
Liability of the Administration’s poor performance cannot be held to the exclusivity of decision making as it is clear that joint interests of many parties, from the province and outside, are behind such performance. This requires imposing comprehensive and firm mechanisms to democratize the Administration institutions.

## **Consequences of Decision-making Exclusivity on the Local Community**

The Administration negative performance in Deir Ezzor is directly reflected on the populations who expressed their dissatisfaction by using different expression means. The answers of the respondents varied in accordance with the Administration response to the local community demands.

74.64% of the respondents said that there is an increasing community tension towards the Administration, whereas violence was considered as a choice for 60% of their respondents as a response for the failure and the unacceptable practices. Due to this exclusivity, about 30% confirmed that the most important result is that the current

Administration does not represent the local community. 16% of the respondents said that they desire an alternative for the current Administration. (Figure 11)

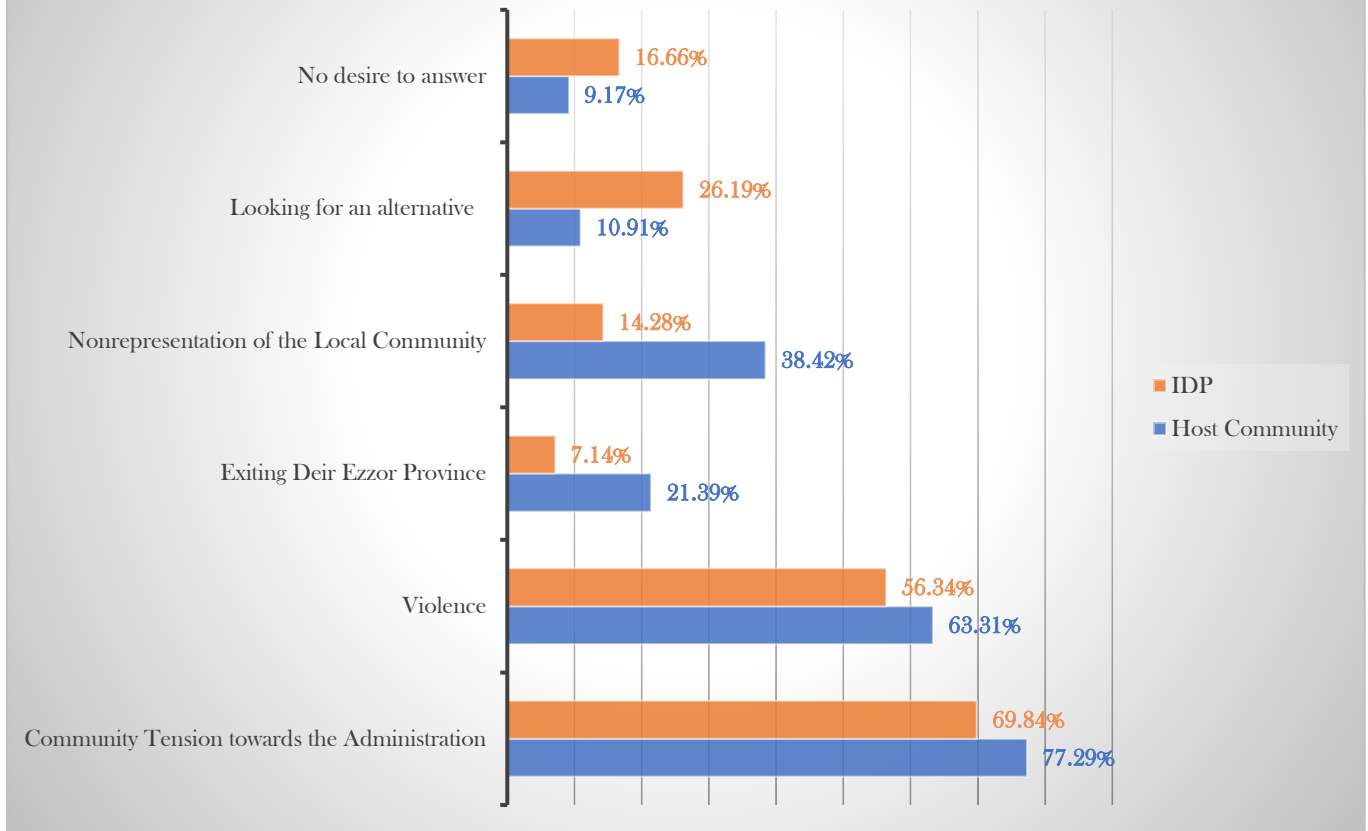


(Figure 11)

By analyzing the results from residence perspective, 21% of the host community respondents might be displaced to out of Deir Ezzor. A lower desire was shown by the IDPs located in the north of the river as only 7% of them considered this choice. (Figure 12)



## Consequences of Decision-making Exclusivity on the Local Community



(Figure 12)

According to a civil activist, “Looking for an alternative is an option as some villages resorted to establish local committees to deal with their daily problems”.

A community figure said that domination over the decision led to losing trust in the Administration, its institutions, and the party, along with increasing tension and raging actions”.

One of the FGD participants says that “The head of agriculture committee was hit due to corruption. This could indicate that resorting to violence is an option”.

## Result

The continuity of the community tension to the extent of a new displacement or looking for an alternative or resorting to violence.

### Conclusion 1

The participants choices and examples show the tendency for options that might bring the area to an unknown destination in case there is a resort to violence as a reaction for the Administration acts and behavior in Deir Ezzor.

### Conclusion 2

There are many indicators for the increasing popular rage with carelessness of the local authorities. Despite the fact that the popular protest took place month ago, the majority of the locals are talking about outrage.

### Conclusion 3

The local initiatives as an indicator for looking for alternatives could be used in a positive manner along with organizing effective communication in order to start a serious dialogue about effective participation.

### Conclusion 4

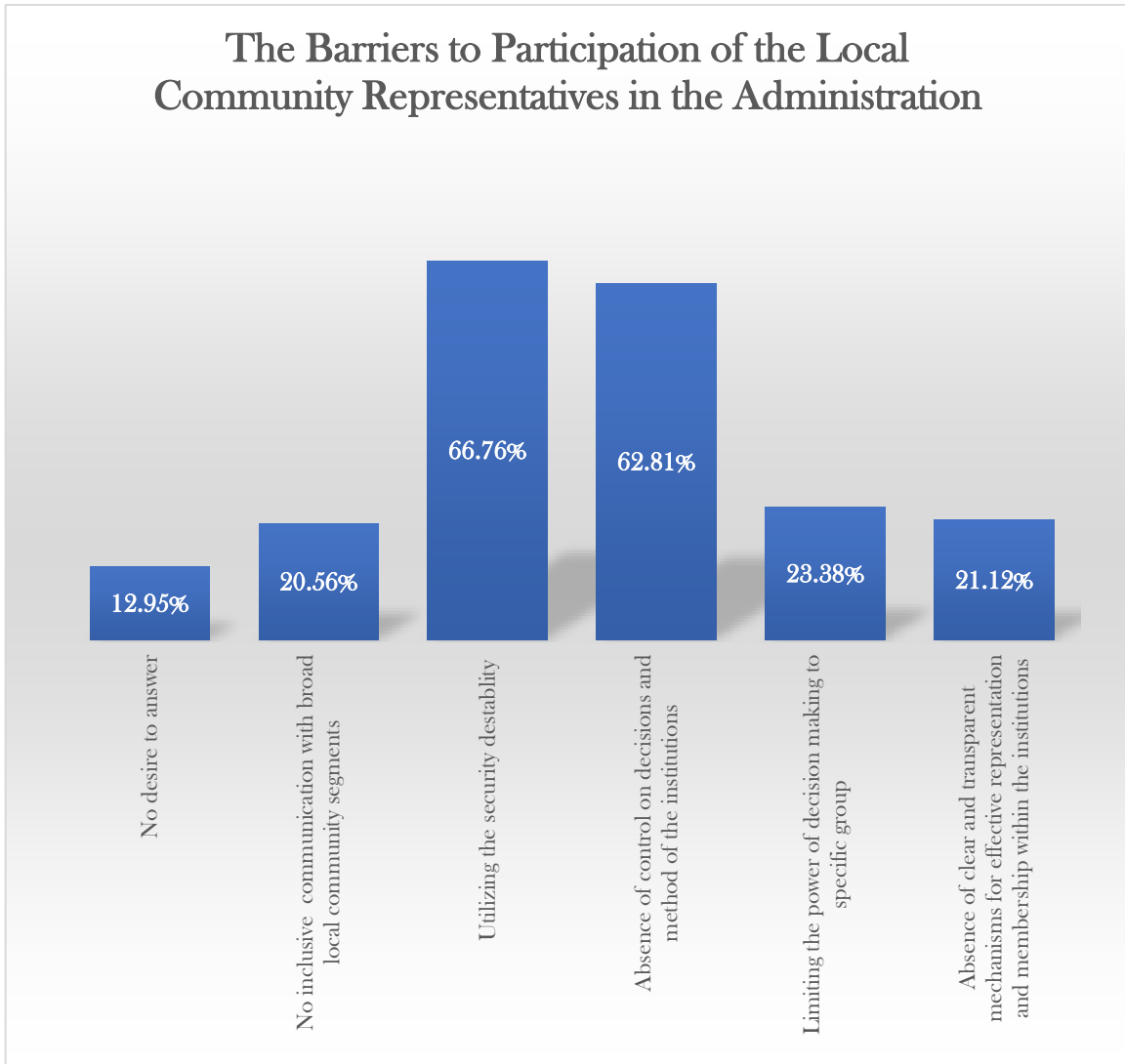
Many people do not desire to go through a new displacement experience following war years that forced thousands of people to be under multiple displacements. This leads to consider “resort to violence” as an option, with excluding the armed violence, that will force the locals to flee and look for safe area.

## **The Barriers to Participation of the Local Community Representatives in the Administration**

JFL, with other partner organizations, conducted a survey about the most important representatives of the local community. The final results showed that most representatives are located out of the Administration held areas. This result triggers the questions about the disengagement of those who enjoy the community trust including notables, figures, and intellectuals.

66% of the respondents said that the excuse of security conditions raised by the Administration resulted in not recognizing clear participation mechanisms, whereas

62% of the respondents said that the absence of control on the Administration method and decisions. (Figure 13)



(Figure 13)

“The fundamental barrier is the principles of the party; many competent persons apply for employment, but they are rejected. When we discuss the reasons with the decision makers, the answer is that those who underwent ideological courses and

supervision have the priority even if they have no competency”, according to a female staffer shared her experience.

A female civil activist attributed the reluctance of participation to many reasons by saying “The civil council has been established more than two years ago in a targeted manner in accordance with tribal and area-based considerations and loyalty regardless of the competency. The corruption in the civil council and the Administration institutions made the local community representatives and the intellectuals to be reluctant. The exclusivity of decision making has weakened the eagerness to participate. The competent persons headed to the local and international organizations as they believe that they have the opportunity to convey their experience to their communities, along with being offered with salaries that secure a good living for them”.

#### Result 1

The reluctance of large segment of the intellectuals and community figures from working with the Administration institutions.

#### Result 2

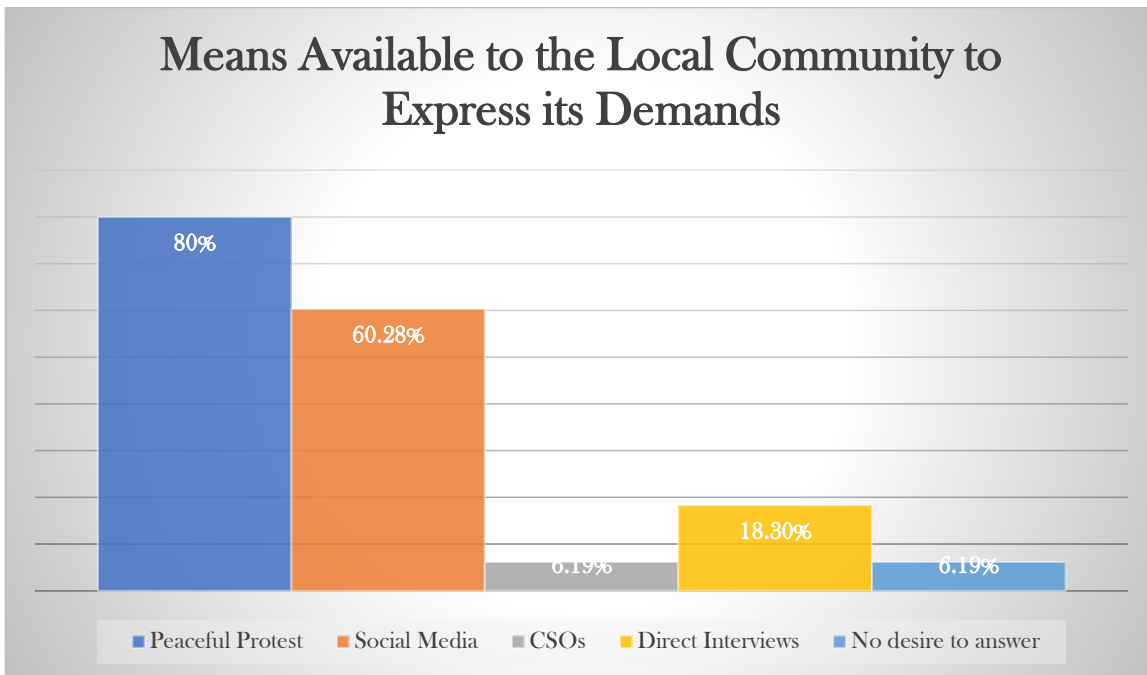
The policy of the current Administration, corruption, and nepotism led to the uselessness of the available academic expertise.

#### Conclusion

The sole color of the Administration and the prevailing corruption considerably decrease the opportunities of making use of the local expertise, currently or in future, which will be further reflected on the Administration work and provision of services.

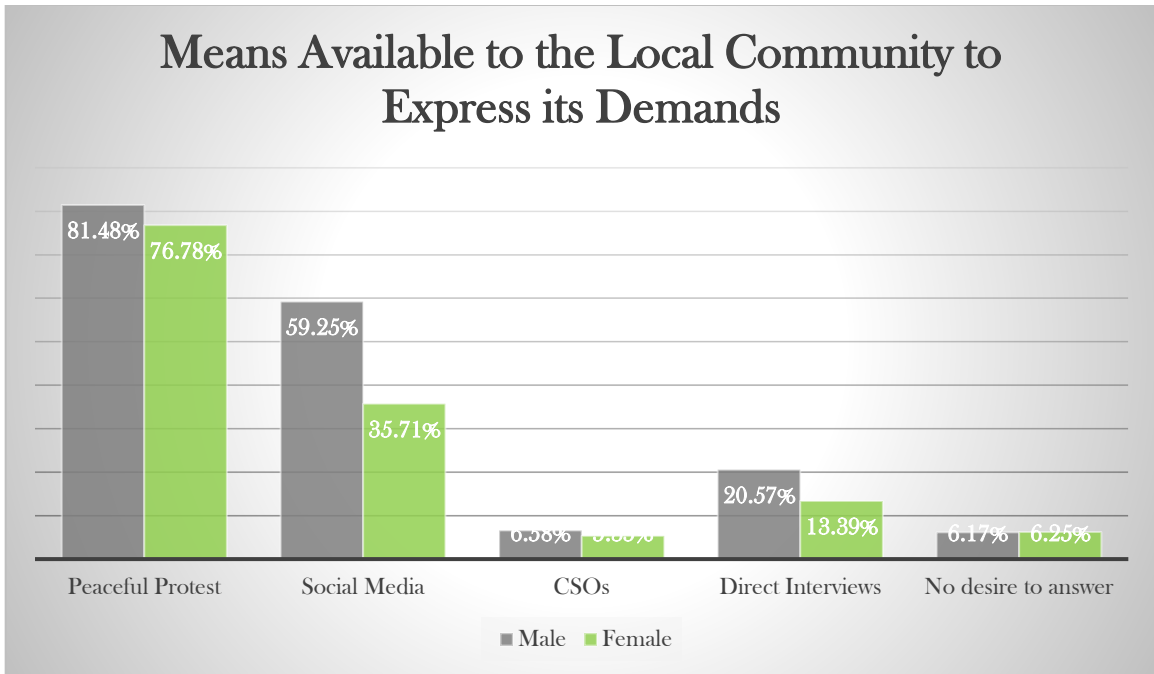
### **Means Available to the Local Community to Express its Demands**

Peaceful protest as a mean to express the demands was on the top of the respondents’ answers as the percentage came at 80%; the locals are still protesting by using chanting and burning tires in each time they object decisions or acts of the Administration institutions. Additionally, using the social media percentage came at 60% of the respondents’ answers. On the other hand, the civil society organizations, as a party that is able to share and express the populations problems, did not win more than 6% of the respondents’ trust. *(Figure 14)*



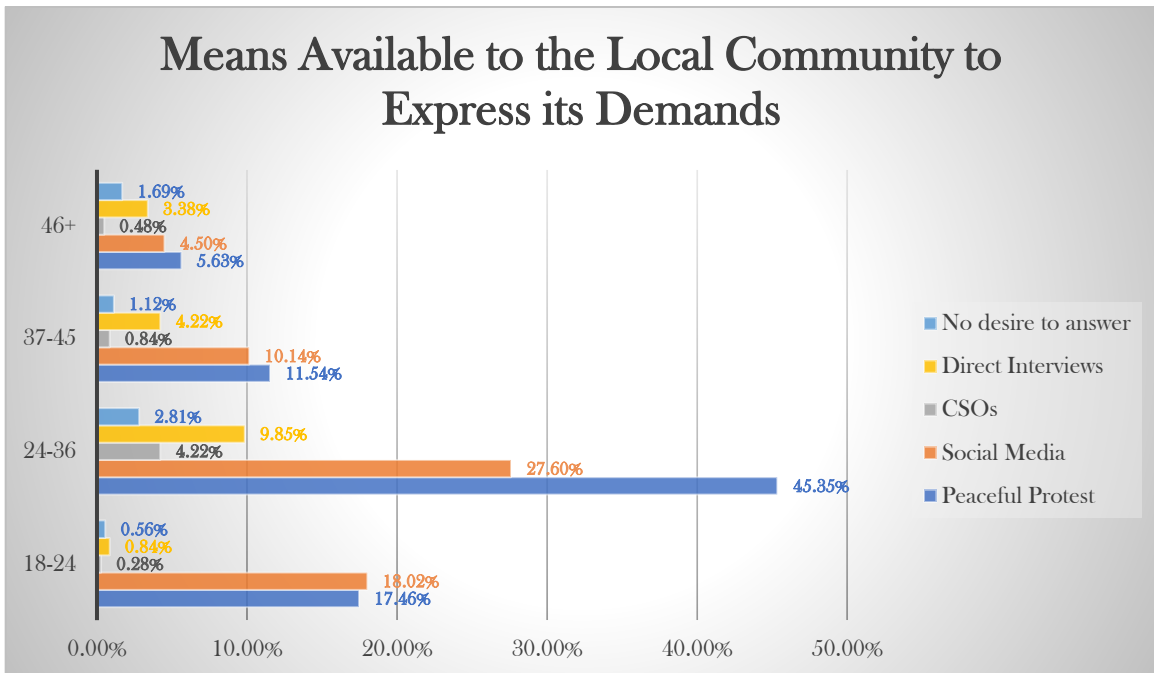
(Figure 14)

By analyzing the results from gender perspective, it is noted that female respondents do not considerably resort to social media as a mean of expression and only 35% of them chose it. Whereas 77% of them chose the peaceful protest as mean of expression.



(Figure 15)

73% of respondents aged 24-36 chose peaceful protest and social media as means of expression. (Figure 16)



(Figure 16)

“Peaceful protests and working with civil society organization are good means as the local community share the most important problem and needs with these organizations in order to convey them to the local authorities, supporting actors, and stakeholders” according to a community figure.

**Result**

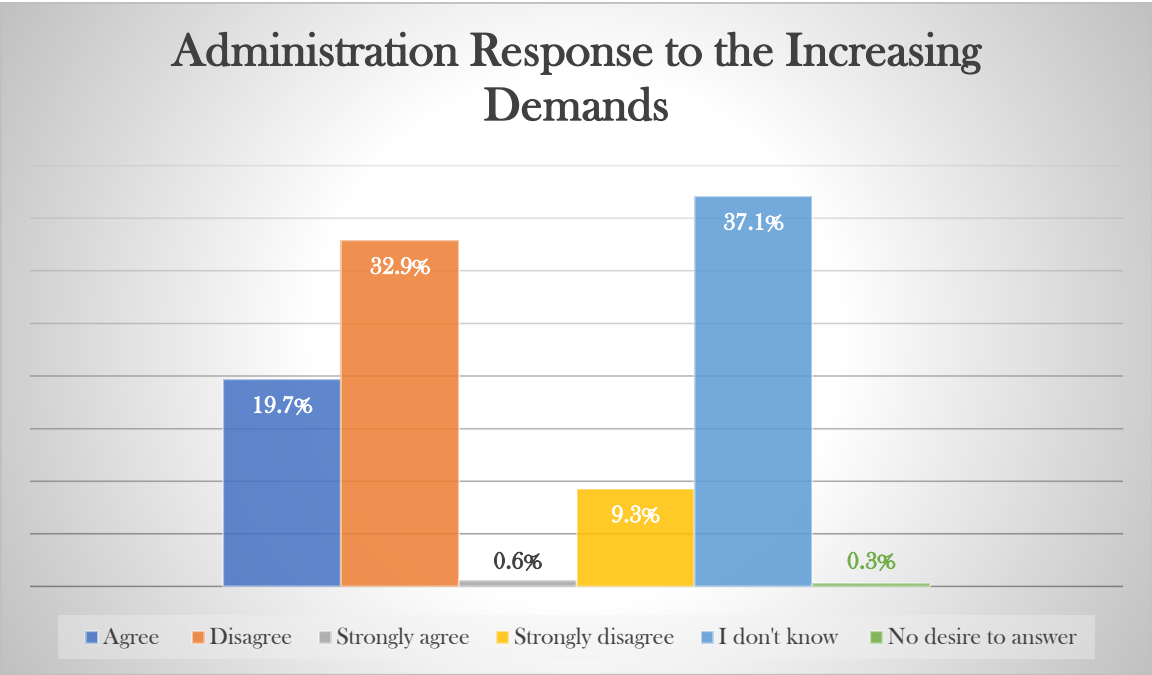
The peaceful means are the preferred ones by different community segments.

**Conclusion**

Despite the fact that there is a possibility to resort to violent options as reactions, yet the peaceful options are on the top of priority as the province populations suffered from war and its consequences. This requires dealing with these demands seriously and blocking any other unpeaceful options.

**Administration Response to the Increasing Demands**

Concerning what the respondents believe about the possibility of the Administration response to their demands in future, more than 40% of them were not optimistic, whereas about 20% of the respondents said that there might be response especially following the recent developments in the northeastern Syria.(Figure 17)



(Figure 17)

“The Administration performance did not change despite a lot of pressure and changing circumstances in the province. For example, despite the continuous demands, the water pumping stations and channels have not been rehabilitated”, according to a civil activist.

## Conclusion

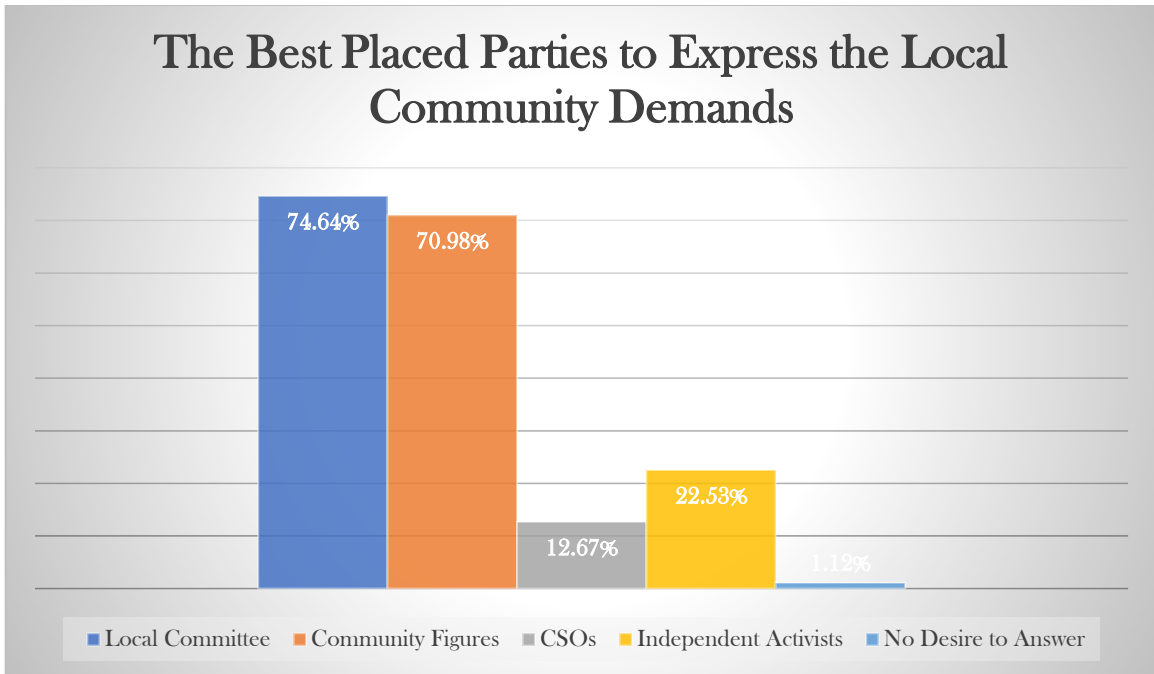
Notwithstanding the high percentage of those who are not optimistic regarding real response by the Administration in future, there are many voices that give opportunity to it counting on pressures and the changing circumstances for the need of real and larger engagement of the local community.

## **The Best Placed Parties to Express the Local Community Demands**

The presence of specific parties that enjoy the trust of the local community helps in identifying and framing the community needs and demands along with conveying them to the local authorities.

74% of the respondents trust in local committees on the community level. 71% of the respondents said that the community figures and notables have the capacity to represent them. More than 22% of the respondents trust in independent civil activists. However, only 12% of the respondents trust in civil society organizations.





(Figure 18)

“Electing local committees by the local community and collaborating with the civil society organizations and stakeholders will strongly draw attention towards the community demands”, according to two community figures.

#### Result

The Community figures and notables are the most capable party that can represent the local community where these efforts can be organized within local committees according to the respondents.

#### Conclusion 1

In each time a community sample is asked about participation, it considers itself unrepresented due to the absence of community figures and notables, who apparently form a sort of representation that enjoys the community trust.

#### Conclusion 2

Despite the increasing number of civil society organizations, yet there is not major count on their role. However, there is a community trust in the independent civil activists. This requires bigger efforts by those organizations to familiarize the local community with its role and playing effective role on the local level.

## Seventh: Conclusion

We can find many factors that led to the unsuccess of the local council experience, that was formed in the period preceding “Islamic State” group control in the current Autonomous Administration including lack of communication with the local community, lack of expertise, management, and professional expertise, and not choosing members in a democratic manner.

There is a failure to apply governance on the local level to promote effective participation for broader segments of the local community in managing their affairs and making decision along with the required mechanisms of accountability, transparency, and the administrative and financial control.

There is no response to the demands that aim at affecting the decisions, which do not reflect the local community demands along with the centralization of assignments.

## **Eighth: Recommendations**

1. Building connectivity between the local community and the Administration institutions in accordance with clear mechanism that enable those who enjoy the community trust to reach out to the decision-making centers and scaling competence and integrity on the top of the standards.
2. Organizing the relation between the military side and the civil one in order to avoid any military intervention in the work of the civil councils. Coordinating the duties in a way that ensures security, which is one of the most important conditions for a proper work environment for the councils.
3. Equitable distribution of the oil resources and supervision of independent civil parties that are up to the standards of competence and integrity.
4. Working on adopting democratic mechanisms that govern the selection and work of civil councils in order to reflect the locals needs. This also lead to promote the culture of democracy, which is one of the most important reasons behind the local administrations.
5. Ensuring the independency of the civil councils from any political party in order to ensure that they play their service-based role.
6. Working on finding an independent judicial party with a clear legal reference, that enjoys transparent mechanism and able to implements it provisions, to deal with the issue of conflict resolution in the province.
7. The Administration institutions has a clear structure and they are present in different areas in the province. This is considered an advanced step in comparison with the rest of administration sample in Deir Ezzor after 2011. However, they suffer from many problems that decreased the community trust level.
8. There is a need for more focus on the role of the civil society organizations in order to play their mandated role especially in terms of enhancing participation, promoting the culture of peace, human rights, and democracy.



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