

July 2017

Opinion Survey of the “Index of Personal Security in Arab Towns” | Summary

Introduction and Background

In recent years, a steady rise in crime rates was measured in Arab communities across Israel. Since January 2017 and until this report was disseminated¹, 39 Arab citizens were murdered, over 380 gunfire incidents were measured and it is estimated that over 301,111 illegal weapons are proliferated in Arab towns in Israel, constituting 81% of illegal weapons in Israel. In parallel, there is growing consensus that over the years Arab citizens were treated differently by the Israel National Police (INP) both inside and out of Arab towns. The INP used both over and under-policing in Arab towns and of Arab communities. Over-policing is characterized by excessive force while under-policing is characterized by low-rate of investigation of crime scenes. The Or Commission, established following the October 2000 events, concluded then that policing services in Arab towns are lower than in Jewish communities.² Over the years, crime rates in Arab towns went untreated and grew worse. Under-budgeting and failed attention given to this problem resulted in Arab citizens' low trust in the INP and the INP is seen as a problem rather than a service provider.

Despite and as a result of the above situation, the Israeli government seeks to advance the economic development of Israel and now understands that special attention needs to be given to Arab citizens of Israel who constitute 20% of Israel's population. The Israel government now publically recognizes that incentives of economic development in Arab towns and that Arab citizens suffered from under-budgeting and discrimination by state authorities over the years. It is recognized that economic development is unobtainable without a sense of personal security. Rather than focusing resources on economic development, Arab citizens are concerned with personal security and survival. This understanding led to GR 922 – GR focusing on economic development of minority populations in Israel 2016-2020,³ and GR 1402 – GR focusing on personal security among Arab citizens and in Jerusalem.⁴

In light of the rising crime rate in Arab towns, Arab society has come to understanding that this cannot be addressed without the involvement of law enforcement and that effective, fair and equal policing services are a right to be demanded by the INP. The INP should therefore provide diverse law enforcement mechanisms with the goal of building trust between the INP and Arab society. This understanding is now recognized within the INP and new administration was established to improve policing services for Arab society. This is a step in the right direction,

¹ July 2017

² Or Commission Report, chapter 1, page 43, 2003 (Hebrew)

³ <http://www.pmo.gov.il/Secretary/GovDecisions/2015/Pages/des922.aspx>

⁴ <http://www.pmo.gov.il/Secretary/GovDecisions/2016/Pages/des1402.aspx>

however its success is doubtful if it will not be backed by a series of additional actions aimed at providing fair and civic policing services in the intra-organizational culture as well.

The Abraham Fund Initiatives recognizes the importance of combating crime and violence in Arab society, and has prioritized this issue in the organization's strategy and activities. A "Safe Communities" department was developed and aims to contribute to safety and personal security in Arab towns through the following activities: Promoting the concept of equal and fair civic policing, establishing regular mechanisms of dialogue between the police and communities, developing and implementing educational programs against violence, introducing emergency services to Arab communities, and more. The project's activity is based on building partnerships with local authorities, communities, civil society organizations, the police and various government ministries.

About the Survey | Concept, Implementation and Quantitative Data

Goals

The survey sought to voice the public's opinion to policy makers – namely governmental agencies, INP and Arab authority leaders. The survey examined the public opinion of Arab citizens in relation to feelings of personal security in Arab towns today. Moreover, the survey examined the willingness and commitment of Arab society to actively take part in countering violence and reducing the crime rate in Arab towns and the preferred methods to address this phenomenon.

We ask decision makers to take a close look at the survey's findings and use this as a baseline for policy change. Alongside widespread insecurity, the data shows that Arab society is willing and committed to take part in addressing the violence and crime phenomenon in Arab towns. Arab citizens seek equal and equitable policing services in their towns and see cooperation with the INP as a key part of eradicating violence and delinquent behavior.

Survey Design and Implementation

The Abraham Fund solicited the services of STATNET to collect and analyze the survey data during May-June 2017. The quantitative survey was conducted through phone conversations held in Hebrew and Arabic and examined the level of personal security among Arab citizens.

The survey used sample method of quotas and included 70 questions and demographic data. The sample, both state-wide and of specific towns, was selected according to their exact distribution in the CBS records of Arab society and Jewish society. The criteria included religion, age, gender and area of residence. The average sampling error is 4.9%.

Two surveys were included in this index, one of Arab population and one of Jewish population. In addition to this state-wide comparative examination, three individual studies examined the

level of personal security in three Arab towns, including Tamra, Jisr Az-Zarka and Kufr Kassem. The three towns were selected for the following reasons: (1) geographic distribution; Tamra is the North of Israel, Kufr Kassem in the Triangle region and Jisr Az-Zarka in the coast; (2) the three communities are included in GR 1402. Two new police stations will be built each in Jisr Az-Zarka and Tamra and the existing police station in Kufr Kassem will be a focal point for law enforcement improvement; (3) the three towns suffer from wide-spread violence and crime and the sense of personal security is lower than the state-average.

Quantitative Data

- Two quantitative surveys were held state-wide.
 - A sample of 422 persons from 156 towns representing the Jewish population of Israel.
 - A sample of 402 persons from 89 towns representing the Arab population of Israel.
- Three opinion surveys were held in the three selected towns (outlined above).
 - A random sample was selected from each extended family in the town. Each family was surveyed in based on its demographic representation in the town.
 - *Tamra*: the survey included a sample of 401 persons.
 - *Kufr Kassem*: the survey included a sample of 300 persons.
 - *Jisr Az-Zarka*: the survey included a sample of 244 persons.

Index of Personal Security in Arab Towns | Key Findings

Arab citizens experience a deep sense of personal insecurity and believe that there is a problem of violence in Arab society.

- 54% of Arab citizens believe there is a problem with violence in their home-towns, compared to 14% of Jews who feel this way.
 - The average measured in the three selected towns is higher than the state average with 95% of Jisr Az-Zarka, 74% of Tamra and 78% of Kufr Kassem who feel there is a problem with violence in their town.
- 32% of Arab citizens feel a sense of insecurity in their town compared to 12% of Jews who feel this way.
 - The average measured in the three selected towns is more severe than in the state-sample with 88% of Jisr Az-Zarka, 37% of Tamra and 47% of Kufr Kassem who feel a sense of insecurity in their town.

Distrust in the INP is cross-sectoral with both Jewish and Arab citizens measuring high level of distrust in INP services and law enforcement.

- 59% of Arab citizens and 54% of Jewish citizens distrust the police completely or have little trust in the INP. A study conducted by Dr. Badi Hasisi in 2014 on behalf of The Abraham Fund Initiatives, showed that 25.1% of Jews compared to 41% of Arabs distrust the INP.⁵ It can be concluded that distrust in the INP has increased on average in recent years.
 - The rate of distrust in the INP is higher in the sampled selected towns with 83% of Jisr Az-Zarka, 61% of Tamra and 80% of Kufr Kassem distrust the INP.
- Both Jewish and Arab citizens are dissatisfied with law enforcement performance in their town. 53% of Jews and 61% of Arabs are dissatisfied with the INP.
 - Dissatisfaction with law enforcement is higher in the sampled selected towns with 88% of Jisr Az-Zarka, 61% of Tamra and 85% of Kufr Kassem dissatisfied INP services and performance.
- 63% of Jews compared to 36% of Arabs believe that the INP is responsible for law enforcement and personal security. 32% of Arab citizens, compared to 1% of Jews, believe that the family is responsible for ensuring a sense of personal security.

Arab citizens are willing to take an active part in eradicating violence in their community

- 70% of Arab citizens, compared to 39% of Jews, are willing to take an active role in countering violence in their town.
 - The willingness to take part in anti-violence actions is higher in the sampled towns with 79% of Jisr Az-Zarka, 74% of Tamra and 77% of Kufr Kassem willing to take part.
- 79% of Arab citizens are willing to report to the INP if they witness a crime. The percentage is similar in the sampled towns.

Arab society is widely supportive of establishing police stations in Arab towns.

- 77% of Arab citizens support having police stations in Arab towns.
 - Differences were found among towns that have existing police stations and towns where police stations are lacking. 88% of Jisr Az-Zarka of 86% of Tamra support the establishment of police stations in Arab towns. However, only 52% of Kufr Kassem support this initiative. A police station exists in Kufr Kassem but is lacking in Jisr Az-Zarka and Tamra.
- There is wide-spread belief that the existence of a police station in a town will decrease the crime rate in the town. 63% of Arab citizens and 66% of Jews believe this statement.
 - The believe in this statement is differentiated between towns that have established police stations and those who do not. 65% of Jisr Az-Zarka of 71% of Tamra compared to 24% of Kufr Kassem support this statement.

⁵ "Police, Politics, and Culture in a Deeply Divided Society." Badi Hasisi. The Hebrew University of Jerusalem on behalf of The Abraham Fund Initiatives. 2014

Arab society is interested in joining law enforcement.

- 71% of Arab citizens support the recruitment of Arab citizens to the INP. 78% of Jisr Az-Zarka of 76% of Tamra and 51% of Kufr Kassem support the recruitment of Arab citizens to the INP.
- 48% of Arab citizens are willing to have a family member join the INP.
 - This is also reflected in the three towns: 48% of Jisr Az-Zarka of 50% of Tamra and 29% of Kufr Kassem support having a family member join the INP.

Recommendations:

Develop of a multi-year plan to address crime in Arab society: a holistic plan must be designed and developed in cooperation between the INP, the government and the Ministry of Public Security. This should be a national priority with specific towns where crime is higher than average becoming top priority. Necessary resources must be allocated based on this need and include mechanisms including developing human capacity, infrastructure, technological advancements and education.

Establish Joint INP-Community Steering and Advisory Committees: the INP must prioritize transparency in individual towns by establishing an open dialogue with Arab leaders and community members. This must be established as the station, district and state level of command. An example of this model's success is seen in Northern Ireland. Advisory committees are established in each police station (and district and state command) and include local leaders who maintain an open dialogue with law enforcement to identify and jointly address specific law enforcement challenges.

Public Participation: law enforcement authorities must maintain continuous contact with the Arab public. This will increase transparency with a proactive manner and open channels of communication and dialogue between the INP and Arab society. Examples of open channels of communication can include published data at the local authorities' websites, holding public meetings on various law enforcement concerns, etc. The community must be actively involvement to address crime in individual towns and the community's involvement will advance the legitimization of law enforcement actions in individual towns.

Education against Violence: curricula against violence must be developed and included in formal and non-formal education institutions. Youth must be engaged and involvement in countering violence through educational methods so they become active participants in mitigating violence in their towns. The curricula will include content relating to leadership, volunteering, public participation, responsibility and caring.

Integration of Emergency Services: emergency services are severely lacking in Arab towns and must be included in the government plan to mitigate crime in Arab society. The lack of



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The Abraham Fund Initiatives

Building a Shared Future for
Israel's Jewish and Arab Citizens

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emergency services (fire-departments, ambulances and security) contribute to the wide-spread sense of insecurity in Arab towns. These are back civil services that must be equally and equitably provided and included in Arab towns.

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