



**Performance of the Government of Prime Minister Faisal Al Fayez
after 100 Days in Office**

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Introduction

The Center for Strategic Studies (CSS) at the University of Jordan conducted an opinion poll concerning the new cabinet of Mr. Faisal Al Fayeze after 100 days in office in the period of the 8-12/2/2004. The size of the national sample was 1379 respondents. As for the public opinion leaders, the sample size was 601 respondents, who were distributed across seven categories (see Table 1). The aim of this poll was to measure the attitudes of Jordanians and their evaluation of the performance of the government of Prime Minister Faisal Al Fayeze government after 100 days in office. Additionally, the poll measured whether citizens believe that his cabinet has been successful in solving the problems and projects outlined in the Royal designation letter to it upon formation. The poll also measured respondents' evaluation of the three most important problems that face Jordan now and that the "government has to tackle immediately". Other issues addressed in the poll included: how convinced Jordanians are by the justifications the government gave for raising prices; to what extent the salary increase of officials working in the public sector will compensate for this hike in prices; and whether the government is sincere in trying to reduce government spending. The poll also measured citizens' expectations toward the role the lower house of parliament will play in increasing prices. Finally the influence of the loans and aid Jordan received in 2003 on increasing household income was measured.

Table 1: Distribution of Public Opinion Leaders Sample by category

Category	Completed interviews	Refused to respond	Total
Business class	76	24	100
Political part leadership	97	3	100
Professionals (members of professional associations)	75	25	100
Writers, journalists and artists	92	8	100
Labor union leaders	87	13	100
High ranking state officials	85	15	100
University professors and lecturers	89	11	100
Total	601	99	700

When the outcomes of this survey are compared to the outcomes of previous CSS surveys on government performance, we notice a gradual decrease in evaluations. This decrease is apparent in the percentage of the respondents who believe that the government was successful "to a great extent" in shouldering its responsibilities in the first one 100 days of its formation. This decrease can be put in contrast with the clear increase in the percentage of the respondents who believe that the successive governments "have not been successful" in shouldering their responsibilities, as shown in attached charts 1 and 2 (end of report). It should however be noted that the government of Mr. Faisal Al Fayeze is the only one for which the percentages of its performance have not experienced a decrease in the general questions on the ability of the government to shoulder its responsibilities in the first phase and its success in performing them. The percentages were almost stable, with a one percent variation at the most (see chart 1). The expectations of the governments' success in individual issues have decreased, as we will

explain below. Chart 1 shows that there is a “gap of confidence” between citizens and successive governments in general (from which the government of Mr. Faisal Al Fayez can so far be excluded). This gap might increase during the term of this government or any successor if governments fail to articulate policies that will reduce poverty, unemployment and corruption in a tangible manner. Poverty, unemployment and corruption are the three most important problems that face Jordan and which citizens believe that the government must resolve immediately. The results further shows that the percentage of those who have benefited from the aid and loans Jordan received in 2003 is 8% of the national sample and 15% of the sample of Public Opinion Leaders.

Concerning the difference between the two samples towards the ability of the Prime Minister and his cabinet to shoulder their responsibilities since the formation of the cabinet the evaluation of the Prime Minister has improved. The evaluation of his cabinet however, has worsened in the sample of Public Opinion Leaders (POL). Immediately after the formation, 68% of the POL sample predicted that the Prime Minister will succeed in tackling his tasks. After 100 days 73.3% of POL said that the Prime Minister has been successful in performing his tasks from the time of the formation of the government until the interview was conducted, which stands in contrast to the expectation by 60% of POL that the cabinet will be successful in tackling its tasks. After 100 days 53% said that the ministerial team (without the Prime Minister) was successful in carrying out their tasks. In the national sample the evaluation of the Prime Minister remained more or less as it was at the time the government was formed. Almost two thirds (64%) believed that the Prime Minister would be able to take on the responsibilities of this governing period. After 100 days 63% believed that the Prime Minister was successful in performing the tasks of his office since taking over the government, while 57% of the national sample predicted that the ministerial team would be successful in handling their duties. After 100 days 55% believed that the ministerial team was successful in performing its tasks.

Government Performance on Specific Issues

This opinion poll aspired to measure the performance of the government according to the national sample and the sample of POL towards eighteen economic, political and social issues. These issues were very specific and were related to poverty, unemployment, foreign dept, corruption, justice, political parties legislation, transparency, health, electoral system legislation, enhancing democracy, improving economic legislations and regulations, judicial reform, the role of the private sector in economic development, foreign investment, the role of women and youth in social and political development, and foreign policy.

National Sample

There are three issues out of the eighteen that the majority of the national sample believe the government has begun to address. The number of issues that the national sample does not believe the government will succeed in by the end of its term increased to nine issues. That can be compared to six issues that the national sample did not believe the government could succeed in at the time the government was first formed (see Table 2).

With regard to economic issues, comparing the expectations of the government upon formation to its performance in economic matters after 100 days, we find that the average percentage of citizens who believe that the government has started solving economic problems (mentioned in the letter of designation) did not exceed 38%, compared to 48% of the national sample who expected the government to succeed when it was first formed. This means expectations of the government to solve economic issues did not exceed 50% since formation.

The most important economic issues for which there is a marked difference between the expectations from the government upon formation and the rating of success after 100 days are as follows: reducing foreign debt, the enforcement of justice and equality between all citizens. The differences also included increasing economic growth, renewing economic laws, increasing the role of the private sector in the economy and increasing investment in Jordan. When comparing the expectations of the national sample from the government to its performance and the evaluation after 100 days we notice a decrease of 10 percentage points in the average calculated for economic issues (see the end of Table 2). This might be due to two reasons: first, that the government did achieve very little in these areas and second, that the government did not communicate its successes to the general public through the media.

These findings indicate that the percentage of optimistic citizens regarding the ability of the government to solve the problems facing the country during its term is higher than the percentage of those who expected that the government would solve the problems when it was first formed. That includes issues of poverty (26% when the government was formed vs. 40.4% who now expect the government will be successful at the end of its term), unemployment (36% vs. 47%) and fighting corruption (41% vs. 47.4%). There are,

however, other issues for which the expectations of success have decreased. These issues are as follows: foreign debt (41% vs. 36.6%), increasing economic growth (57% vs. 51.7%), renewing economic legislation (58% vs. 43.4%), increasing the role of the private sector in economic growth (61% vs. 53.6%), and increasing investment in the country (65% vs. 60.5%) (see Table 2).

In matters of political development, the calculated average for such issues indicates that there was a clear decrease – about 10 degrees down from the average calculated upon formation of the government (See Table 2). As for issues of political development in which there was a clear difference between the expectations upon formation and after 100 days, “achieving judicial reform” is notable: the percentage of those who believed that the government would succeed in judicial reform was 61% when the government was first formed vs. 37.9% after 100 days of the formation of the government. However, 44% believe that the government will be successful in achieving judicial reform in the near future. The second issue is modernizing political party legislation. Almost half the respondents expected the government to succeed (49%) in achieving it. After 100 days in office only a quarter (25.2%) believed that the government had started working on modernizing political party legislation. Those who believed that the government would be successful by the end of its term were 32.8%. This percentage is 17 percentage points lower than that revealed in the when the government was first formed, which means expectations on this particular issue have fallen significantly. The third issue is related to achieving modern electoral system legislation. Here the percentage did not decrease at all regarding the success of the government at the end of its governing time. In the issue of enhancing democracy the majority of citizens are still very optimistic about the ability of the government to enhance democracy by the end of its governance (51.2%). This is despite that the percentage of those who believe that the government has started working on enhancing democracy is only 46%.

Among the issues of political development for which the government was able to hold a consistent percentage regarding the expectations of its performance, was the issue of activating the role of the youth in political and social development. The percentage of the expectation that the government would succeed in this was 60% when the government was first formed. In the second poll, 100 days on, the percentage of those who thought that the government had started working on the issue of youth involvement was 50.8%. A simple majority (57.8%) of respondents anticipated that the government would ultimately succeed in activating the role of youth in political and social development.

On women’s issues, the government outdid earlier expectations. The percentage of the expectation to whether the government would succeed in activating the role of women in political and social development was 66% when the government was first formed. After 100 days the percentage of those who thought that the government had started work on the issue of women involvement was 68.9% while 71.1% anticipated that the government would ultimately succeed in activating the role of women in political and social development.

As for fighting corruption, the percentage of the people who believed that the government started working to fight corruption was 40.7%. This percentage is equivalent to the percentage of those who expected the government to succeed in this issue. The expectations that the government would achieve its goals concerning fighting corruption in the near future increased to 54.8%.

Concerning health care for all segments of society, 52% of citizens expected the government to be successful when the government was first formed. After 100 days the percentage of those who believed that the government started working on this issue stood at 46%. However, the expectation of the success of the government in the end was higher than the initial expectation since it reached 54.8%.

Table 2: Percentages of respondents in both samples expecting the new cabinet to succeed in handling the issues listed in the letter of designation

Issue	National Sample			Public Opinion Leaders (POL)		
Eradicating poverty	26	27.1	40.4	35	30.3	28.5
Eradicating unemployment	36	33.1	47.0	34	29.5	31.9
Reduction of foreign debt	41	28.2	38.6	39	35.6	34.1
Eradicating corruption	41	40.7	47.4	48	46.4	39.4
Applying equality, justice, and equal opportunity among all Jordanians	43	33.2	42.3	45	29.5	31.1
Achieving new political party legislation	49	25.2	32.8	56	28.6	31.9
Promoting of transparency and accountability	50	41.4	47.5	56	53.1	48.4
Ensuring access to medical care for all people	52	46.0	54.8	48	38.1	39.8
Promoting democratization and widen circle of political participation	56	49.8	55.3	57	32.4	38.1
Achieving democratic electoral system	56	46.4	51.2	63	68.2	59.7
Achieving economic growth	57	45.5	51.7	57	45.4	44.3
Modernizing of economic legislation	58	36.8	43.4	64	50.4	48.6
Political participation and social involvement of youth	60	50.8	57.5	65	63.9	63.7
Judicial reform	61	37.9	44.0	64	34.1	38.1
Enhancing the role of private sector in economic development	61	48.0	53.6	65	60.2	57.9
Increasing FDI (foreign investment)	65	55.5	60.5	64	53.7	53.1
Women's political participation and social involvement	66	68.9	71.1	71	79.4	74.5
Administration of foreign policy	68	49.2	54.1	75	68.4	54.1
Mean of 18 issues	53	42	50	59	47	45
Mean for economic development issues	48	38	47	50	42	41
Mean for political development issues	55	45	51	60	51	49

Public Opinion Leaders (POL) Sample

There are eight issues out of the eighteen that the majority of POL (more than half) believes that the government has started working on (see table 2). Less than 50% believe that the government will not succeed in twelve out of eighteen issues at the end of its governance period. That can be compared to seven issues that POL did not believe the government could succeed in, when the government was first formed. In conclusion the expectations of success of the government decreased in 16 issues out of 18, and increased in two issues, namely; strengthening democracy and increasing the role of women in political and social life. POL agree with the national sample that the government has succeeded in increasing the role of women in political and social life.

In the field of economics, POL were much more optimistic than the national sample when the government was first formed. After 100 days, we still find POL less pessimistic (see table 2). Both samples, however, are in general pessimistic, since it can be noted that those who believe that the government has started solving the economic problems did not exceed 50% on average. The percentage average of expectations for POL upon formation was 50%, after 100 days it decreased to 42%.

One of the issues most identified in the POL sample is implementing justice and equality for all citizens. Expectation that the government would succeed were 45% at the time of the formation of the government. After 100 days the percentage of those who believed that the government had started working on this issue was 29.5%. Those from the POL sample who believed that the government would be successful at the end of its term were 31.1%. The other important issue in the economic field was concerning modernizing economic legislations: upon formation 64% of POL believed that the government would succeed in modernizing economic legislation. After 100 days the percentage of those who believed that the government has begun to address these issues has reached 50.4%, which indicates a decrease of 14 degrees. Concerning their expectations on whether the government will ultimately be successful, POL are not optimistic, at a percentage of 48.6%.

For political development issues there was a gradual decrease in the expectations of POL. When the government was formed the expectations of POL were high; 60% believed that the government would succeed in achieving political development. After 100 days the average of the percentages of those who said that the government has started work on political reform dropped to 51%. This reflects a drawback in the optimism of POL regarding the ability of the government to achieve political development. What further shows this move is that the average of the percentages of POL who believe that the government will succeed at the end of its term is 49%.

One of the most important issues in political development, in which the government has exceeded the expectations of both samples after 100 days is that concerning activating the role of women in political and social life. In the POL sample 79.4% said that the government had started working on activating the role of women in social and political development compared to 71% upon formation of government.

The issues that led the average percentage of POL expectations to drop after 100 days in office below the levels of expectations upon formation were: judicial reform, where the percentage of those who believed that the government would succeed in judicial reform was 64% when the government was first formed. After 100 days in office the percentage of POL who said that the government had started working on this issue stood at 34.1%. Nonetheless, 38.1% of POL believe that the government will be successful in achieving judicial reform at the end. The second issue is modernizing political party legislation, even though upon formation of government 56% of POL expected that the government would succeed in achieving it, after 100 days of the formation of the government only 28.6% believed that the government had started working on this issue. This is all the more significant considering the percentage of POL believing that the government will be successful at the end was 32%. This means that the government has lost the confidence of a third of POL on this issue. It also indicates that the position of POL has changed from optimism to pessimism after 100 days of the formation of the government. POL opinions might change, however, if the government succeeded in developing political party legislation. The position POL took towards political party legislation was almost identical to the one it took towards achieving modern electoral system legislation. The percentage of those who believed that the government would be successful when the government was first formed was 57%, whereas the percentage of those who thought that the government had already started working on reforming the law was 32.4%. This huge decline reflects the pessimism of POL after 100 days of forming the government.

The government maintained more or less stable results in most of the following issues (although the percentage was a little lower in the issue of transparency and accountability). The first of these issues is transparency and accountability. The percentage of POL who thought that the government would achieve transparency when the government was first formed was 56%. After 100 days the percentage was 53.1%. The percentage of the whether the government would be successful in the long run did not decrease like it decreased when POL were asked about political parties legislation and the electoral system legislation. It did decrease a little however, since it dropped from 50% to 48.4%. The government also maintained stable expectations concerning its success in activating the role of youth in political and social life. The percentage of POL who believed that the government would be successful when it was first formed was 65%, after 100 days 64% of POL believed that the government had started working on activating the role of youth and 64% believed that the government would be successful at the end.

POL believe that the government has exceeded expectations regarding the issue of promoting democratization in general (without looking at the details). The percentage of POL who believed that the government would be successful when it was first formed was 63%. This percentage rose to 68.2% when POL were asked whether the government had already started working on promoting democratization. The expectations of the success of the government at the end fell to 60%, which is still a relatively high percentage.

Evaluation of the Main Problems Facing Jordan

The problem of unemployment came in first place as it was regarded as “the most important problem facing Jordan and the government must solve immediately”. This was the opinion of 40% of the national sample, and 23% of the POL sample. In second place came the problem of poverty: 24% of the national sample and 23% of the POL sample rated as such. The issue of prices’ hikes was considered the third most important problem, since 13% of the national sample and 8% of opinion leaders identified it as such. Finally in fourth place came the issue of financial administrative corruption, according to 4% of the national and 6% of the POL sample.

Price Increases and Decreasing Government Spending

The majority of Jordanian citizens (83.4%) of the national sample believe that the raise in prices is not justified by the reasons government gave. POL share the same position (73.4%). This result indicated that there is a semi-consensus in both samples that the reasons given by the government to increase prices do not justify the increase in prices. Furthermore, the majority of the national sample, namely 90.7% and 88% of POL believe that increasing the salaries of public sector workers by the amount of JD10 for those who earn less than JD 200 and JD5 for those who earn between JD 201 and JD 300 will not compensate these people for the raise in prices.

Concerning decreasing government spending, POL were more optimistic than the national sample concerning the ability of the government to decrease spending by JD 80 million, which is the figure the government gave in its annual budget. More than half (53%) of POL said that the government would be able to decrease government spending by that amount. In contrast only 39% of the national sample believed this possible. More than three quarters (78.7%) of POL believed that the elected parliament would agree to the price increase exactly as the government has planned vs. 57% of the national sample. As for those who have benefited from the loans and aid that Jordan has received in 2003, only 8% of the national sample said that their household incomes have indeed improved as a result of aid and loans. This is in contrast with 15% of POL.

Conclusions

- Unlike all the previous governments, excluding the government of Dr. Fayez Al Tarawneh (and in the POL sample only), there was no decrease in the evaluation of the two samples concerning the ability of this government to shoulder its responsibilities. On the contrary, there was a one percent increase. As Chart 1 shows, all the governments which have been formed since 1996 experienced a decrease in public evaluation of their performance after 100 days in office. The government of Mr. Abdel Kareem Al Kabariti for example, experienced a decrease from 38% to 32.2% of those who believed that the government was “capable of shouldering its responsibilities to a great extent”. In the government of Dr. Abdel Salam Al Majali the percentage fell from 42.2% to 27.9%. In the government of Abdel Raouf Al Rawabdeh the percentage fell from 43.6% to 33.7%. As for the first government of

Ali Abu Ragheb the percentage fell from 31.5% to 22.1%. It is likely that the reason behind the stability of public evaluation of the Al Fayezi government is that it started out with much lower expectations than the previous governments (upon formation) and was able to maintain these expectations.

- The percentages and averages in national sample responses concerning the specified issues – political and economic – indicate the following:
 - **Performance was less than expected** in the following issues: unemployment, reducing foreign debt, implementing justice and equality between all citizens, achieving new political party legislation, and promoting transparency and accountability, ensuring medical care of all citizens, enhancing democratization and widening the circle of political participation, achieving economic growth, modernizing economic legislation, activating the role of youth in political and social development, enhancing the role of private sector in economic development, achieving judicial reform, increasing foreign investment, and administration of foreign policy.
 - **Performance matched expectations of the people** in: fighting corruption and fighting poverty.
 - **Performance was better than expected in:** activating the role of women in social and political development. In this issue the government surpassed the expectations of both samples as compared to the time of formation. Furthermore, both samples believe that the government will achieve even more by the end.
- The percentages and averages for the answers of the **POL** sample concerning the detailed issues indicate the following:
 - **Performance was less than expected** in: eradicating poverty, eradicating unemployment, reducing foreign debt, fighting corruption, implementing justice and equality for all citizens, achieving new political party legislation, promoting transparency and accountability, ensuring medical care of all citizens, achieving economic growth, modernizing economic legislation, activating the role of youth in political and social development, enhancing the role of private sector in economic development, achieving judicial reform, increasing foreign investment, and the administration of foreign policy.
 - **The performance was better than expected** in: enhancing democratization and activating the role of women in political and social development.
- The most important problems that the government has to address immediately are unemployment, followed by poverty, then price increases.
- The majority of Jordanian citizens believe that the price increase was not justified by the government, although both samples believe that the elected parliament will approve the price increase.
- POL are optimistic about the ability of the government to cut its spending by JD 80 million.

- The aid and loans Jordan received in 2003 helped improve the household income of 8% of the families in the national sample and 15% of the POL families.
- There was an increase in the evaluation of the Prime Minister and a decrease in the evaluation of the ministerial team in the POL sample. Whereas the Prime Minister maintained a very close percentage to the expectations the national sample had of him when the government was first formed. Furthermore, there was no significant change in the evaluation of the national sample to the performance of the ministerial team, despite the slight decrease after 100 days of the formation of the government.

CHARTS

