

« By involving youth in decision-making, governments meet the challenge of participatory democracy and lay the foundation for a just and equitable society, in which young people, without distinction of sex or age, can draw upon their creative potential and dynamics."

Ms. Karima Bounemra, Director of the ECA North Africa Office

The nationwide protest movement that led to the overthrow of the regime of President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali on January 14, 2011 was a first of its kind in the Arab world. Using social networks, predominantly Facebook, young people across the country organized without the guidance of formal structures such as civil society organizations and political parties. Reacting to years of perceived indignity, economic hardship, unemployment and denial of basic freedoms, Tunisian youth representing diverse social, economic and political backgrounds were truly the engine behind the change that swept across the country.

Based on the results of many research's studies Conducted in 2011

- 1-" the Election of the Constituent Assembly in the Eyes of Youths" national observatory of youths and in cooperation with forum for social sciences.
- 2-Voices of a Revolution: Conversations with Tunisia's Youth Findings from focus groups with young Tunisian men and women conducted March 11 to 24, 2011 Prepared for the National Democratic.
- 3-"Trends in Political Attitudes, Values, Knowledge and Behaviour among Tunisian Young after 14th, January". CUAB September 2011.

It seems that the **reality of tunisian youth participation** <u>does not fit</u> in general with the event named "Youth Revolution"...which raises more than a questions concerning the readiness of this active group that was in the level of its political participation or the level of involvement in the coming electoral course.

The youth participation in parties does not exceed more than 22.3 percent most of them with medium educational level (preparatory or secondary26.8 percent) after the election, October 2011 statistic shows that only 13 % was registred on the electorates' circumstances from 35%.

The youth participation in NGO does not exceed 0. 6% before the revolution.



Barriers to youth participation in Tunisia

- Tunisian youth are eager to participate in their country's democratic transition, but skeptical about available channels.
- Young Tunisians are wary, however, about the political process and the role of the current elite. They express concern about individuals, political parties and civil society organizations attempting to profit from the revolution for personal gains.
- Political parties, which were co-opted and marginalized under the former regime, have poor standing among youth. While civil society organizations fare slightly better, young people remain suspicious about lending formal support to any organized institutions such as National Youth Observatory (still work with the ancien method, in their last events with the UNICEF and Worldbank, they select their Youth NGO) the Minestry of Youth and Sport conserve the Minestry of Football
- The democratic transition is seen as a closed, elite-led process.
- Weakness of the Youth work (limited number of NGO related to the Youth House, related to the minestry).
- Weakness of the Youth NGO in term of bulding capacities, Advocay, framwork and stratigic planing (does not exist in the ancient NGO Law). Although many initiativs took place by New NGO, I watch, Sawty, UGET...
- The concentration of the NGO working with/on youth and their activities in the capital.



Action Needed NOW to increase tunisian Youth participation

- -Innovative strategy for promoting the status of youth through a national and comparative lens, using public opinion methodology tailored for advocay while simultaneousely building and improving on exsisting local efforts.
- -to conduct pratical oriented reaserch and documentation on topical issues: Youth participation...
- -Expand youth opportunities for tunisian youth and provied them skills to participate fully in the economy and public life
- -Enact and enforce Laws (a New platform of NGO working with/on youth start advocating on including Youth Rights in the new constitution, this initiative is initiated by CUAB and Tunisian Youth Center in all the regions of Tunisia).
- -Pursue multisectoral approaches to combine the efforts of various governments departments to enhance youth skills and opportunities.
- Recognition of Youth work and design a new Youth policies responding on the excpectations of youth
- Encourage the process of creation a Tunisian Youth National Council.

