



# **Access to Higher Education – Graduates Survey**

## **Executive Summary**

November 2013

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### **Program Description**

The Access to Higher Education program has been operating since 2001 to promote social mobility of young people from southern Israel. The program's vision is to create help advance the Negev by increasing access to higher education in competitive academic subjects. Its main goal is to enable young southern residents realize their academic potential, by reinforcing their self-esteem and school achievements and exposing them to university, while also creating social connections between Jewish and Bedouin youth. In order to achieve this, the program combines school-based support, academic courses at university and empowerment activities.

### **The Research Goal**

The research aims to study the program's effectiveness and long-term impact on graduates.

### **Methodology**

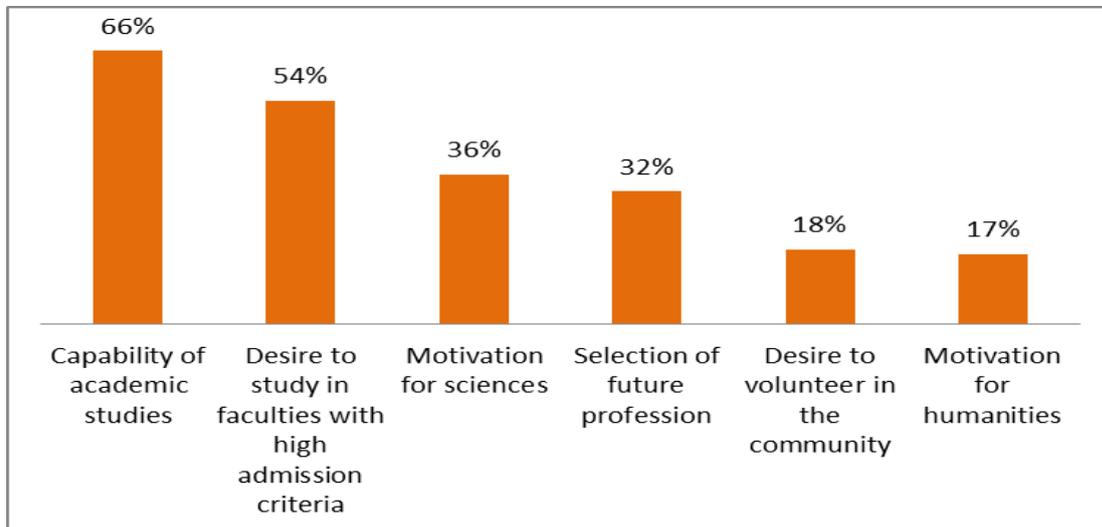
For the purpose of this study, a telephone survey was conducted among 160 program participants who graduated high school between 2004-2008. To these we added data compiled from a previous survey conducted in 2011 regarding 172 graduates.

### **Main Findings**

- The survey revealed that 80% of the program graduates are studying or have studied in the academia and 11% of them are planning to enroll in studies in the near future. This figure is quite high in relation to the percentage of students among high schools graduates in the Negev (45%). still, the program's share in this success is not clear, since 76% of graduates claimed that they would have studied in academia in any case.
- An analysis of the subjects studied by graduates reveals that 80% were defined as prestigious majors with high admission criteria.
- The percentage of graduates attending universities (as oppose to colleges) is 66%, the majority (36%) attending Ben-Gurion University.
- Approximately 55% of the program graduates chose academic studies with majors in science and technology, in comparison with 28% of all students in the Negev.

- Graduates report that the most significant contribution the program involves development of capability and motivation to study in the prestigious faculties. This is particularly significant in the Bedouin sector.

Contribution of participation in the program based on graduate perceptions (N=157)



\*The percentages represent the rate of graduates who agreed with the statements

- The study examined the unique contribution of each component in the program. Based on graduate perceptions, the component that most helped them in achieving their goals was school-based support (75% mentioned this as providing the most help). Only one-third claimed that visits to non-academic scientific institutions and industry helped them. The empowerment workshops were found to have a decisive impact on the desire to continue to live in the Negev.

### **Conclusions and Recommendations**

The analysis of percentages of program graduates attending academia and studying prestigious majors indicates that the program succeeds in achieving its goals, but it is impossible to make definitive conclusions about the program's contribution towards achievement of these goals.

The study reveals that the school-based support and empowerment workshops had the most benefit; therefore efforts should be made to increase the participation in these activities.