



Results of an Opinion Poll

The Public Mood

The UN Vote and the Conflict in Gaza

Elections

Reconciliation

Government Performance

Obama's Visit to Palestine

Arab Spring

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Fieldwork: April 2-4, 2013

Sample Size: 1200 Palestinian in the West Bank and Gaza

Margin of error: $\pm 3\%$

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Introduction

These are the results and analyses of the latest Arab World for Research & Development (AWRAD) public opinion poll, focusing on elections reconciliation, the performance of the Fayyad and Haniyeh governments, the approval rates of leaders, the peace process, the Obama visit, the Arab Spring and support for existing political parties and prospective future candidates.

The questionnaire was fielded April 2-4, 2013. For this survey, 1,200 Palestinians were interviewed in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. All socioeconomic groups were represented in the poll (for more details on the sample, please refer to: www.awrad.org). The margin of error in this poll is plus or minus 3 percent. The survey was carried out by AWRAD researchers under the supervision of Dr. Nader Said-Foqahaa, President of AWRAD.

Highlights

- 52 percent of respondents say that Palestinian society is heading in the wrong direction.
- 31 percent of respondents continue to strongly believe that the November confrontation in Gaza and the resulting cease-fire agreement constitute a victory for Palestinians.
- 44 percent prefer the Fatah/Abbas approach to resolving the Palestinian issue, compared to 28 percent who prefer the Hamas approach.
- 85 percent of respondents support the immediate conduct of legislative and presidential elections.
- If elections were held today, 41 percent of respondents say they would vote for Fatah; Hamas follows with 17 percent.
- About one third are either undecided or will not vote.
- In a 12-man race for the presidency, Abbas receives 31 percent, Haniyeh 13 percent and Marwan Barghouti 8 percent.
- In a two-way race, 46 percent will vote for Abbas and 23 percent will vote for Mashaal.
- Optimism about reconciliation declines from 69 percent in February to 58 percent.
- 39 percent perceive the performance of the Fayyad government as negative.
- 27 percent perceive the performance of the Haniyeh government as negative.
- If given a choice, 44 percent would not select the Fayyad government or the Haniyeh government.
- The approval rate of President Abbas stands at 55 percent; Haniyeh at 39 percent and Fayyad at 35 percent.
- 51 percent support an unconditional and immediate return to negotiations.
- 47 percent listened or heard about President Abbas's conference with President Obama in Ramallah.
- At the present time, 44 percent of Gazans are less supportive of the changes in Egypt since its revolution.

Analysis of results

Future Outlook: Decline in optimism in Gaza

The results reveal that the overall outlook of Palestinians towards the future has been relatively stable since February 2013. A decline in optimism is, however, noted in Gaza.

- 52 percent of respondents say that Palestinian society is heading in the wrong direction. In contrast, 43 percent say that Palestinian society is heading in the right direction. The rate in Gaza is 42 percent, declining from 46 percent in February.
- 58 percent of all respondents say that they are optimistic about the future. In contrast, 40 percent are pessimistic. The level of optimism in Gaza declined from 68 percent in February to 60 percent.

After the UN vote on Palestinian statehood and the cease-fire in Gaza: Decline in sense that Gaza conflict was an achievement

While the percentage of Palestinians believing that the UN vote to allow Palestine to become a non-member state constitutes a victory is consistent with previous polls, a lower percentage of Palestinians feel that the cease-fire agreement after the Gaza confrontations is a victory.

- 33 percent of respondents continue to strongly believe that the UN vote is a victory for Palestinians. 40 percent agree but only to some extent. 24 percent disagree. The percentage of those who strongly agree is higher in Gaza (40 percent) than in the West Bank (29 percent).
- 31 percent of respondents continue to strongly believe that the November confrontation in Gaza and the resulting cease-fire agreement constitute a victory for Palestinians. This is a 6 point decline from February 2013. 42 percent agree but only to some extent. 26 percent disagree. Much of the decline is in the West Bank where 24 percent agree compared to 34 percent in February. In Gaza, the rate of agreement continues at 42 percent.
- 44 percent say they prefer the approach taken by President Abbas at the UN over the approach taken by Hamas, which receives the support of 28 percent.

Elections: Majority supports elections

Support for the conduct of legislative and presidential elections continues to be high. Fatah and M. Abbas lead in the popular vote.

Legislative election:

- 85 percent of respondents support the immediate conduct of legislative elections. Support in Gaza is higher (89 percent) than the West Bank (83 percent).
- Fatah continues to be the most popular party, scoring 41 percent; Hamas follows with 17 percent.
- Support for Fatah is higher in Gaza (44 percent) than in the West Bank (39 percent).
- Support for Hamas is also slightly higher in Gaza (19 percent) than in the West Bank (15 percent).
- About one third of the respondents are either undecided (18 percent) or will not vote (14 percent).

Presidential election:

- 85 percent of respondents support the immediate conducting of presidential elections. Support in Gaza is higher (89 percent) than the West Bank (83 percent).
- President M. Abbas continues to lead in the polls. With 12 leaders listed in the AWRAD poll, Abbas receives 31 percent, with equal support in the West Bank and Gaza.
- I. Haniyeh is in second place at 13 percent (16 percent in Gaza and 11 percent in the West Bank).
- Fatah candidates combined receive 44 percent of the vote: Abbas (31 percent), Marwan Barghouthi (8 percent), M. Dahlan (4 percent) and Mahmoud Aloul (less than 1 percent).
- Hamas candidates combined receive 19 percent: Haniyeh 13 percent, Mashaal 5 percent, AlZahar and Naser AlShaer (less than 1 percent each).
- Mustafa Barghouthi receives 4 percent.
- 29 percent are either undecided or will not vote; 33 percent in the West Bank and 24 percent in Gaza.
- In general, 44 percent say that they prefer the approach supported by Fatah and President Abbas, while 28 percent say that they prefer the approach supported by Hamas and other militant groups.

Two-way presidential races:

Abbas vs. Mashaal: 46 percent say that they will vote for Abbas while 23 percent say that they will vote for Mashaal. 31 percent are either undecided or will not vote.

Abbas vs. Haniyeh: 46 percent say that they will vote for Abbas while 23 percent say that they will vote for Haniyeh. 31 percent are either undecided or will not vote.

Reconciliation: Decline in optimism

While a majority continues to hope that reconciliation between Fatah and Hamas will take place, the rate of optimism is on the decline.

- 58 percent of respondents say that they are optimistic about reconciliation between Fatah and Hamas. This is a decline from 69 percent in February 2013.
- In contrast, 40 percent say that they are pessimistic.
- Pessimism is higher among Gaza respondents (47 percent) compared to West Bank respondents (35 percent).
- 56 percent believe that Fatah is serious about reconciliation, while 44 percent believe the same about Hamas.

Government performance and evaluation of leaders: Both governments are challenged by public opinion

While the level of satisfaction with the Fayyad government continues to be low but stable, the Haniyeh government loses some ground compared to our February poll.

Fayyad Government

- The positive evaluation of the Fayyad government is at 21 percent. In addition, 35 percent say that the performance of his government is average. 39 percent perceive the performance of the Fayyad government as negative.
- The positive evaluation of the Fayyad government among West Bank respondents declined from 18 percent in February to 13 percent. In contrast, it increased by 4 points in Gaza (from 30 percent to 34 percent).

Haniyeh Government

- The positive evaluation of the Haniyeh government stands at 28 percent. In addition, 36 percent say that the performance of his government is average. 27 percent perceive the performance of the Haniyeh government is negative.
- The positive evaluation of the Haniyeh government among West Bank respondents declined from 29 percent in February to 23 percent now. It is stable in Gaza, with a 27 percent positive evaluation. The negative evaluation in Gaza, however, increased from 33 percent to 38 percent.

Fayyad government vs. Haniyeh government

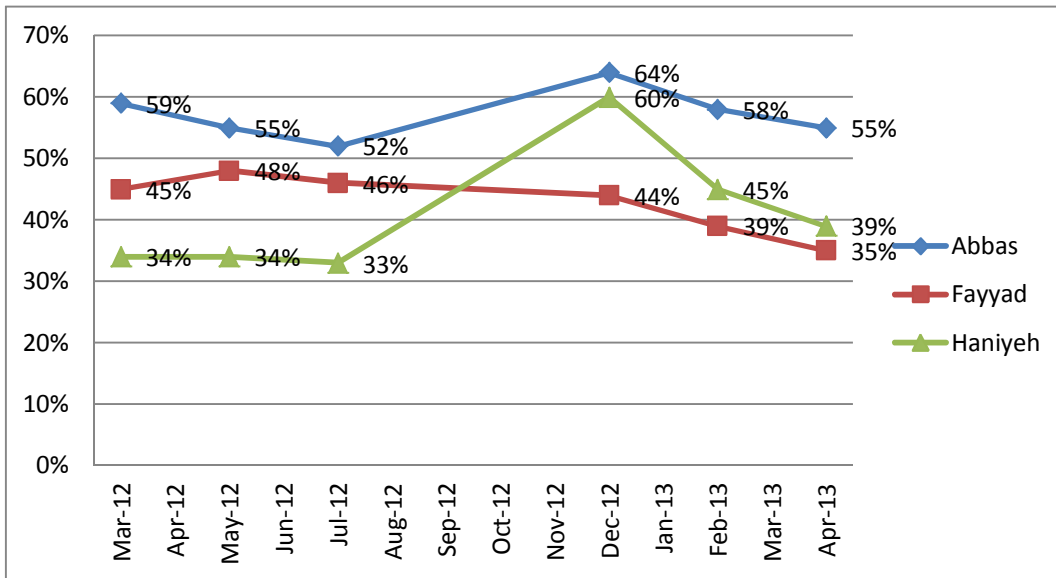
- When asked to select one of the two governments to govern, both governments received almost equal percentages (Fayyad 28 percent and Haniyeh 27 percent). 44 percent did not select either of the two governments.
- While more West Bank respondents selected the Haniyeh government (28 percent) than the Fayyad government (23 percent), Gaza respondents show a reverse trend. 36 percent of Gazans selected the Fayyad government while 29 percent selected the Haniyeh government.
- While 35 percent of Gazans did not select either of the two governments, 50 percent of West Bank respondents did the same.

Prime Minister

- Haniyeh is the most popular choice for the prime minister position of a unity government with 26 percent. Fayyad is selected by 20 percent, followed by Mustafa Barghouthi at 18 percent. They are followed by Muneeb Masri and Hanan Ashrawi (between 6 percent and 7 percent). Jamal Khudari received 2 percent, and Ziad Abu Amr and Mohammad Mustafa received less than 1 percent each.
- In the West Bank, Haniyeh received 25 percent, followed in second place by Mustafa Barghouthi at 20 percent and Fayyad in third place at 15 percent. Mohammad Mustafa received less than 1 percent.
- In Gaza, Fayyad and Haniyeh received equal support (28 percent each), while Mustafa Barghouthi received 14 percent.

Evaluation of leaders

- The approval rate of the performance of President Abbas stands at 55 percent; 38 percent disapprove of his performance.
- The approval rate of Fayyad declined from 39 percent in February to 35 percent (4 point decline). His disapproval rate in the West Bank increased from 56 percent to 63 percent.
- The approval rate of Haniyeh declined from 45 percent in February to 39 percent now (6 point decline). His disapproval rate in the West Bank increased from 42 percent to 50 percent. Haniyeh's disapproval rate in Gaza is 54 percent.
- The approval rate of Mashaal declined from 44 percent in February to 37 percent now (7 point decline). His disapproval rate in the West Bank increased from 43 percent to 51 percent. Mashaal's disapproval rate in Gaza is 54 percent.
- The following graph provides a time-series of the approval rates for Abbas, Fayyad and Haniyeh. The approval rate for Abbas and Haniyeh peaked immediately after the Gaza cease fire and the UN vote (both taking place in November 2012).



Obama's Visit: Interest in the visit

- 69 percent of respondents followed the news of President Obama's visit to the region. Interest was much higher in the West Bank (77 percent) than Gaza (56 percent).
- 47 percent listened or heard about President Abbas's conference with President Obama in Ramallah. Again, more West Bank respondents say that they did (55 percent) than Gaza respondents (32 percent).

Negotiations: Majority support

- 76 percent of Palestinian respondents support an immediate return to negotiations if Israel were to freeze settlement activity. One fifth opposes.
- In addition, 51 percent support an unconditional and immediate return to negotiations. 43 percent oppose.
- At the present time, Palestinians believe that the issue of prisoners is urgent. 74 percent of the respondents believe that the release of prisoners is a measure that would build trust before negotiations. 11 percent believe that a reduction in restrictions imposed on Palestinians and the PA in area C is another measure to build trust. In addition, 9 percent believe that increased access to Jerusalem and the holy sites will help build trust.

Arab Spring: Optimism dwindles

While Palestinians continue to follow the events taking place in Arab countries, their enthusiasm declines.

- 80 percent say that they are following the events taking place in Egypt and Syria.
- In view of the current situation in Egypt compared to the start of the revolution, 35 percent of the respondents say that they are more supportive of the changes that have taken place there. In contrast, 28 percent say that they are now less supportive. In addition, 25 percent say that their views have not changed.
- It is interesting to find that 44 percent of Gazans are less supportive of the changes in Egypt, compared to 19 percent in the West Bank. One third of West Bank respondents say that their views have not changed.
- 32 percent of all respondents believe that the changes taking place elsewhere in the Arab World positively influence the Palestinian situation. In contrast, 31 percent believe that the influence is negative. In addition, 30 percent believe that the changes have no influence.
- A majority of respondents say that they support the demands of the protesters to change the regime in Syria. 16 percent oppose.