



## **Results of an Opinion Poll**

***The Public Mood***

***Living Conditions***

***Evaluation of Government Services***

***The Hamdallah Government***

***Elections***

***Reconciliation***

***Arab Spring***

**Publication Date: 3 July 2013**

**Fieldwork: 18-20 June 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 living conditions, government services, elections, reconciliation, the new West Bank government headed by PM Dr. Rami Hamdallah, approval of leaders, negotiations, the Arab Spring and support for political parties and prospective future candidates.

The questionnaire was fielded June 18-20, 2013, less than two weeks after the inauguration of the new ministerial cabinet and right before PM Hamdallah submitted his resignation to Mr. Mahmoud Abbas, the President of the Palestinian Authority.

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](http://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**

- 57 percent of respondents say that Palestinian society is heading in the wrong direction.
- Only 4 percent of West Bank respondents and 6 percent of Gazans evaluate the performance of their government in job creation as "good."
- 52 percent agree with the appointment of Dr. Rami Hamdallah for the PM position.
- 37 percent of Palestinian respondents choose the Hamdallah led-government while 17 percent choose the Haniyeh-led government.
- 61 percent believe that the newly formed government will continue the policies of the Fayyad government or will make minor changes.
- 27 percent view the Hamdallah government as an independent, technocratic government.
- 68 percent do not know the names of any of the ministers in the Hamdallah government. Only 2 percent say that they know the names of all the ministers.
- 54 percent approve of the overall performance of President Abbas.
- 35 percent of respondents approve of the overall performance of PM Haniyeh.
- 94 percent of Gazans support the immediate conduct of elections.
- 67 percent support an immediate return to negotiations if Israel were to freeze settlement activity.
- 17 percent believe that the changes taking place elsewhere in the Arab World positively influence the Palestinian situation.

- 46 percent believe that there is a chance that protests could break out against the government in Gaza and 41 percent believe the same concerning the government in the West Bank.

## **Analysis of results**

### **1: Future Outlook: Optimism on the decline**

The results reveal that the overall positive outlook of Palestinians towards the future has declined since April 2013. The sharpest decline is noted in Gaza.

- 57 percent of respondents say that Palestinian society is heading in the wrong direction. In contrast, 38 percent say that Palestinian society is heading in the right direction.
- Only 33 percent in Gaza believe that Palestinian society is going in the right direction, declining from 42 percent in April.
- 54 percent of all respondents say that they are optimistic about the future, declining from 58 percent in April. In contrast, 45 percent are pessimistic, increasing from 40 percent in April.
- The level of optimism declined in Gaza from 60 percent in April to 54 percent now (6 points decline). In comparison, the rate of optimism declined by 3 points in the West Bank (from 57 percent to 54 percent)
- The results reveal that only 14 percent of respondents evaluate the living/economic conditions of their families as “good.” 47 percent describe the living conditions of their families as “fair.” In contrast, 39 percent describe them as “poor.”

### **2: Government Provision of Services: West Bank and Gaza respondents united in their dissatisfaction**

Palestinians in the West Bank were questioned about their evaluation of services provided by the government. It is important to note that this evaluation took place immediately after the resignation of the Fayyad government and the inauguration of the Hamdallah government in the West Bank, while Ismael Haniyeh continued to preside over the Gaza government. The results show the following overall trends:

- Palestinians are almost equally divided between "good, fair, poor" in their evaluation of services in three areas: Education, Health, and Transportation.
- In contrast, Palestinians in both the West Bank and Gaza were united in their dissatisfaction in two areas: economic development and employment opportunities.

- Compared with previous AWRAD polls, the negative evaluation of the performance of the West Bank government has reached an all-time low, while the performance of the Haniyeh government seems to have stabilized.

The following is the evaluation of a number of vital services:

- **Transportation:** Both Governments receive their best evaluation in the transportation sector, with 39 percent of West Bank respondents and 45 percent of Gazans evaluating transportation services as "good." In addition, 32 percent of West Bank respondents and 29 percent of Gazans evaluate transportation services as "fair." In contrast, 28 percent of West Bank respondents and 25 percent of Gazans evaluate them as "poor."
- **Education:** 35 percent of West Bank respondents and 39 percent of Gazans evaluate the performance of their respective government in the field of education as "good." In addition, 39 percent of West Bank respondents and 37 percent of Gazans evaluate education services as "fair." In contrast, 25 percent of West Bank respondents and 22 percent of Gazans evaluate them as "poor."
- **Healthcare:** 28 percent of West Bank respondents -decreasing from 32 percent in 2010- and 32 percent of Gaza respondents -increasing from 26 percent in 2010 - evaluate health services as "good." In addition, 38 percent of both West Bank and Gaza respondents evaluate health services as "fair." In contrast, 34 percent of West Bank respondents - increasing from 27 percent in 2010- and 30 percent of Gaza respondents -decreasing from a high of 60 percent- evaluate them as "poor."
- **Economic Development:** Both West Bank and Gaza respondents are highly dissatisfied with the performance of their government in the economic development sector. This is another area where we see relatively large shifts in the evaluation of the West Bank government, and relatively small shifts in the evaluation of the Gaza government. Only 11 percent of West Bank respondents evaluate the performance of their government in this area as "good," decreasing from 24 percent in 2010. As for the Gaza, 9 percent of Gaza respondents evaluate the performance of their government in the same field as "good," increasing from 7 percent in 2010. In addition, 28 percent of West Bank respondents and 24 percent of Gazans evaluate the performance of their respective governments as "fair." In contrast, 59 percent of West Bank respondents gave a "poor" evaluation to their government, increasing from 38 percent in 2010. As for the Gaza government, 63 percent of Gazans evaluate the performance of their government in the economic development sector as "poor," decreasing from 69 percent in 2010.
- **Employment Opportunities:** Both governments receive their lowest evaluations in this area. Only 4 percent of West Bank respondents and 6 percent of Gazans evaluate the

performance of their government in job creation as "good." In addition, 16 percent of West Bank respondents and 14 percent of Gazans evaluate the performance of their government in this area as "fair." In contrast, the majority of respondents give a poor evaluation; 78 percent in both regions.

### **3: Support for the Hamdallah Government**

The President of the PA, Mr. Mahmoud Abbas, appointed Dr. Rami Hamdallah as the Prime Minister of the West Bank government in early June.

- The majority of respondents (52 percent) agree with this appointment. Support for his appointment was higher in the West Bank (54 percent) than Gaza (48 percent). In contrast, 21 percent of West Bank respondents and 14 percent of Gaza respondents "oppose" the appointment. It must be noted that 30 percent of Palestinians are neither supportive nor opposed.
- When asked to choose between the Hamdallah-led and the Haniyeh-led governments, 38 percent of respondents choose neither of the two. Meanwhile, 37 percent of respondents choose the Hamdallah led-government; 39 percent in the West Bank and 36 percent in Gaza. In contrast, 17 percent choose the Haniyeh-led government; 18 percent in the West Bank and 15 percent in Gaza.

### **4: Needs and Priorities Concerning the New Government**

The poll reveals the following results concerning the assessment of internal priorities for the new Hamdallah government.

- Job creation and economic development: 58 percent of respondents selected the issue of "economy and jobs" as their number one priority.
- The second priority is combating corruption with 11 percent of respondents selecting it as their first priority.
- 10 percent selected "rule of law" as their first priority.
- Establishing trust with international donors is the fourth priority at 4 percent.
- Healthcare tied as the fourth priority at 4 percent.
- Lastly, 3 percent of respondents consider education to be their first priority.

## **5: Expectations of the New Government: Widespread ambivalence and some optimism**

On most issues, roughly a third of Palestinians believe that the situation will improve under the new government. Another third believes that things will stay the same.

- **Human rights:** 36 percent of respondents believe that the situation of "human rights" will improve under the Hamdallah government. 41 percent of respondents believe that it will stay the same; 45 percent of West Bank respondents believe and 35 percent of Gaza respondents. In total, 8 percent believe that the situation will decline.

- **Government transparency:** 32 percent of respondents believe that it will improve, while 41 percent believe that it will stay the same. In contrast, 11 percent believe that government transparency will decline, and 16 percent are unsure.

- **Freedom of the press:** 33 percent of respondents believe that "freedom of the press" will improve, while 40 percent believe that freedom of press will stay the same. In contrast, 11 percent believe that it will decline and 15 percent are unsure.

- **Personal freedoms:** 31 percent of respondents believe that the situation of "personal freedoms" will improve, while 43 percent of respondents believe that it will stay the same. In contrast, 11 percent believe that it will decline and 15 percent are unsure.

- **The role of the Parliament (Legislative Council):** 30 percent of respondents believe that the role of the Parliament will improve, while 38 percent believe that it will stay the same. In contrast, 15 percent believe that it will decline and 18 percent are unsure.

- **Regular elections:** 30 percent believe that the formation of the Hamdallah government will improve the prospects of holding regular elections, while 38 percent believe that the prospects of elections will stay the same. In contrast, 14 percent believe that the prospects will decline and 18 percent are unsure.

-**Political arrests:** 23 percent believe that the formation of the new government will lead to less political arrests, while 43 percent believe that the situation will stay the same. In contrast, 16 percent believe that political arrests will increase and 18 percent are unsure.

-**Personal security:** 33 percent believe that the new government will improve personal security, while 41 percent believe that the situation will stay the same. In contrast, 11 percent believe that it will decline and 16 percent are unsure.

- **Economic Development:** 33 percent believe that the formation of the new government will improve economic development, while 36 percent believe that the situation will stay the same. In contrast, 15 percent believe that it will decline and 16 percent are unsure.

**-Reforming PA institutions:** 33 percent believe that the new government will improve the reformation of PA institutions, while 38 percent believe that the situation will stay the same. In contrast, 13 percent believe that it will decline and 16 percent are unsure.

## **6: Government Policies**

- In terms of government policy, 26 percent of all respondents believe that the newly formed government will continue the policies of the Fayyad government.
- 35 percent of all respondents believe that it will make minor policy changes.
- 23 percent of all respondents believe that it will make major policy changes.
- Roughly, 33 percent of all respondents view the Hamdallah government as "a government of Fatah." Another 16 percent view it as "a government of all PLO parties." In contrast, only 27 percent view it as an "independent, technocratic government." 24 percent of respondents say that they "don't know."
- The current poll shows that 48 percent of respondents believe that the Hamdallah Government will be a temporary one. In contrast, 29 percent of respondents believe that it will last for a significant period of time. Lastly, 23 percent say that they "don't know."
- When asked about the names of the ministers in the Hamdallah government, a majority of respondents (68 percent) said that they do not know any of the names of the ministers. 2 percent say that they know the names of all the ministers, and 4 percent say that they know the names of most of them. 22 percent say that they know the names of a few.
- In terms of women ministers in the new government, 40 percent of respondents believe that having 3 women ministers out of 24 cabinet members is appropriate. In contrast, 31 percent think that having 3 women ministers out of 24 is insufficient. Others (13 percent) believe that appointing 3 women is more than enough.

## **7: The Position of Prime Minister**

In a contest among ten candidates for the position of Prime Minister in a government of national unity between Fatah and Hamas, the poll reveals the following:

- 22 percent of respondents prefer to see Mustafa Barghouthi as the prime minister of a unity government (28 percent in Gaza and 18 percent in the West Bank).
- 19 percent prefer to see Ismael Haniyeh (17 percent in Gaza and 20 percent in the West Bank).
- 14 percent prefer Rami Hamdallah (15 percent in the West Bank and 11 percent in Gaza).
- 11 percent prefer Salam Fayyad (15 percent in Gaza and only 8 percent in the West Bank).
- 8 percent prefer Hanan Ashrawi (10 percent in the West Bank and 4 percent in Gaza).

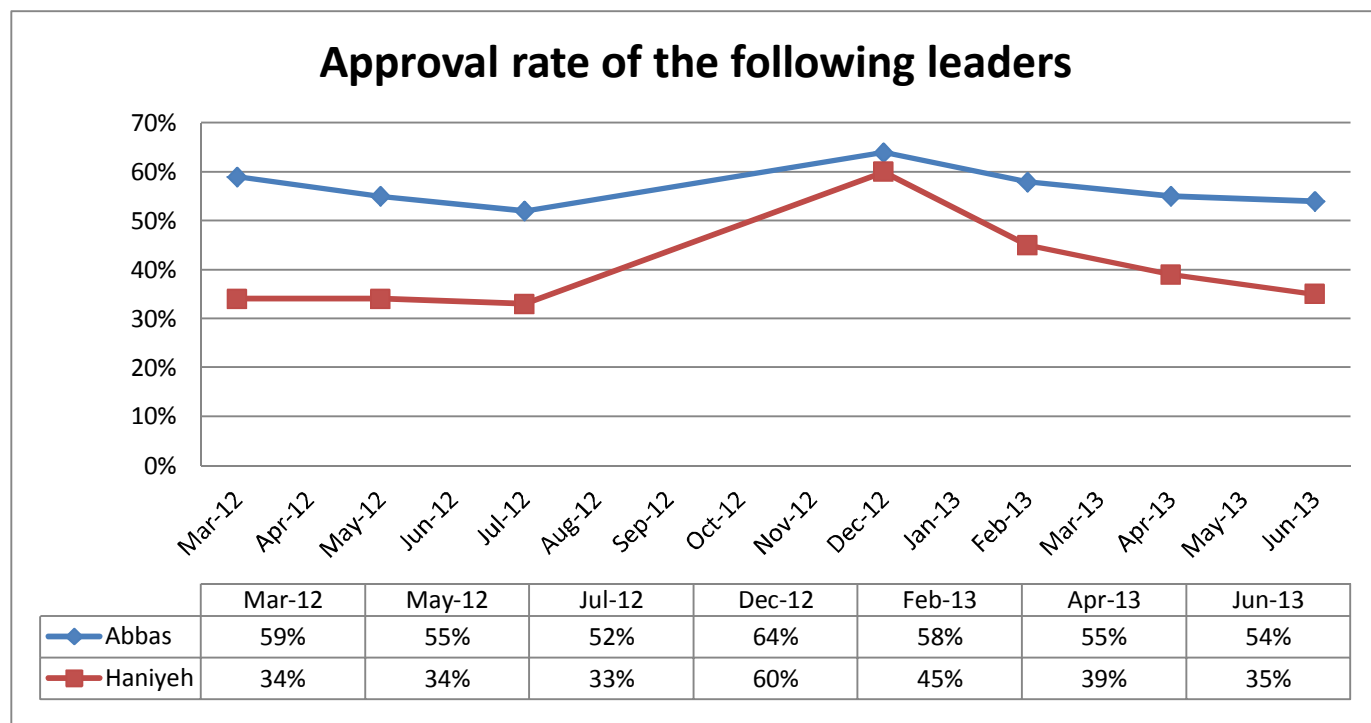
- 8 percent prefer Muneeb al-Masri.
- All other listed candidates receive support of 1 percent or less.

### **8: Approval rates of Abbas and Haniyeh**

Respondents were asked to evaluate the overall performance of President Abbas and Gaza chief Haniyeh:

- 54 percent of all respondents approve of the overall performance of Abbas. 53 percent of West Bank respondents and 55 percent of Gaza respondents approve of his performance. In contrast, 40 percent of respondents disapprove of his overall performance. 6 percent of respondents said that they don't know.

- 35 percent of respondents approve of the overall performance of Haniyeh; 36 percent of West Bank respondents and 34 percent of Gazans. In contrast, 53 percent of respondents disapprove of Haniyeh's overall performance; 62 percent of Gazans and 48 percent of West Bank respondents. Lastly, 12 percent of respondents stated that they don't know.



### **9: Elections**

The majority of respondents (83 percent) support the immediate conduct of legislative and presidential elections. Gazans are almost unanimous in their support for the immediate conduct



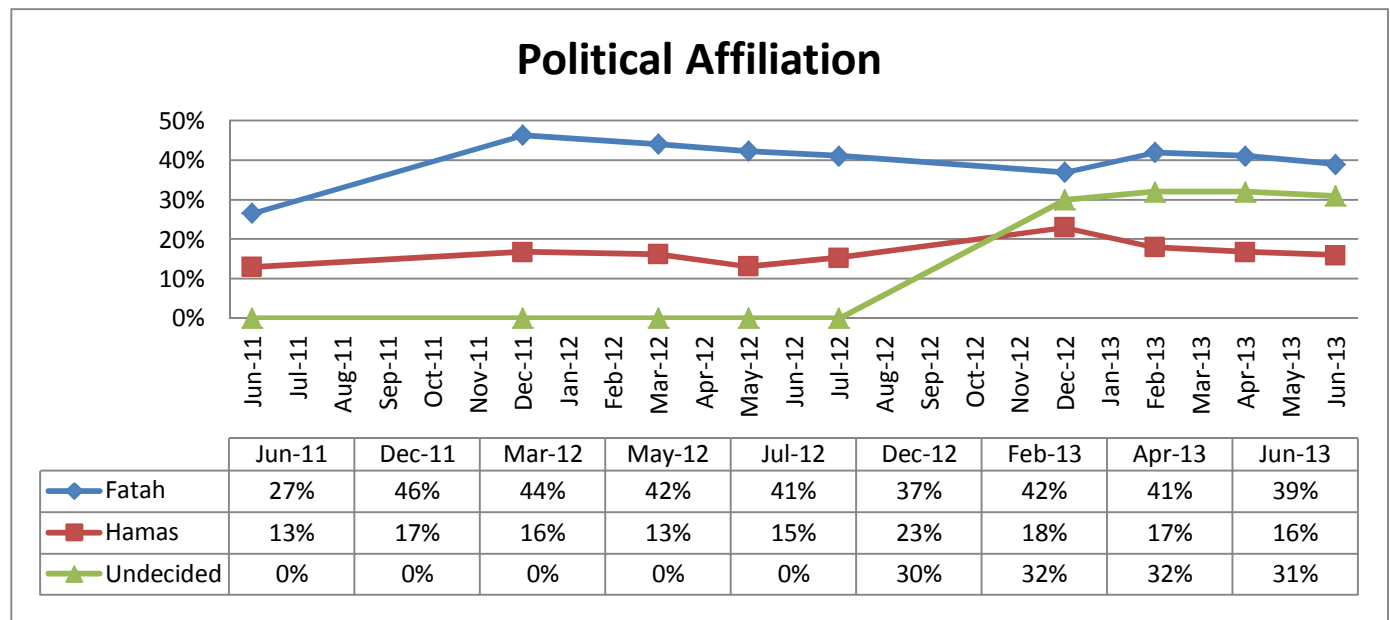
of elections at 94 percent. A smaller majority (77 percent) of West Bank respondents support the immediate conduct of elections.

**PLC elections:**

If PLC elections took place on the day of the poll, and the listed groups (in the attached table) ran, the following results represent their support among the general public:

- **Fatah:** 40 percent;34 percent in the West Bank and 48 percent in Gaza.
- **Hamas:** 16 percent in both the West Bank and Gaza.
- **PFLP:** 3 percent.
- **PNI-Mubadara:** 3 percent.
- **All other groups:** 1-2 percent each.

About one third of the respondents are either undecided (19 percent) or say they will not vote (12 percent).



**Presidential election:**

- President M. Abbas continues to lead in the polls. With 7 leaders listed in the AWRAD poll, Abbas receives 28 percent support;23 percent in the West Bank and 37 percent in Gaza.
- I. Haniyeh and Marwan al-Barghouthi are both in second place at 13 percent with equal support in both regions.
- All Fatah candidates combined receive 41 percent of the vote: Abbas (28 percent), Marwan Barghouthi (13 percent).

- Hamas candidates combined receive 18 percent: Haniyeh 13 percent, Mashaal 5 percent.
- Mustafa Barghouthi receives 7 percent.
- Ahmad Saa'dat of the PFLP receives 4 percent.
- 29 percent are either undecided or say they will not vote; 34 percent in the West Bank and 21 percent in Gaza.

### **Two-way presidential races:**

**Abbas vs. Mashaal:** 43 percent say that they will vote for Abbas while 20 percent say that they will vote for Mashaal. 37 percent are either undecided or will not vote (42 percent in the West Bank and 28 percent in Gaza).

**Abbas vs. Haniyeh:** 43 percent say that they will vote for Abbas while 21 percent say that they will vote for Haniyeh. 37 percent are either undecided or will not vote.

**Fayyad vs. Haniyeh:** In a two-way race between Haniyeh and Fayyad, 29 percent of respondents will vote for Fayyad, while 23 percent say that they will vote for Haniyeh. It is important to highlight that 34 percent of respondents will not vote if such a race occurs and 15 percent are still undecided. Among West Bankers, 57 percent of respondents say they will not vote or are undecided under this scenario.

### **9: Reconciliation: Decline in Optimism**

When asked about the preferred approach to ending the division between the West Bank and Gaza, 44 percent of respondents believe that a Fatah-Hamas unity government is the best approach. 30 percent prefer elections as the approach to end the division. 27 percent prefer neither or don't know.

- 49 percent believe that Fatah is serious about ending the division, a drop from 56 percent in April, while 36 percent believe the same about Hamas, which is a drop from 44 percent in April.
- 12 percent of respondents believe that Fatah is solely responsible for the delay in the formation of the unity government, while 19 percent believe that Hamas is solely responsible. In contrast, 64 percent of respondents believe that both Fatah and Hamas are equally responsible.
- With reference to the newly formed Hamdallah government, 42 percent of respondents believe that the formation of the new government will not change the prospects of a unity government. 27 percent believe that it will help advance the formation of a unity government. In contrast, 22 percent of respondents believe that it will delay the formation of a unity government.

## **10: Negotiations: Majority support**

- 67 percent of Palestinian respondents support an immediate return to negotiations if Israel were to freeze settlement activity; a 9 percent drop from April 2013. 29 percent opposes.
- 51 percent continue to support an unconditional and immediate return to negotiations. 47 percent opposes; an increase by 4 percent from April 2013.

## **11: Arab Spring: Optimism dwindles and higher chances of protest in Gaza**

While a majority of 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 Syria.
- 62 percent of respondents say that they support Syrian popular demands to change the regime. This is a decline from 74 percent in April. In contrast, 26 percent say that they oppose the demand to change the regime.
- 49 percent of respondents are following the events taking place in Turkey.
- 17 percent of all respondents believe that the changes taking place elsewhere in the Arab World positively influence the Palestinian situation. This is a significant decline from April where 32 percent of respondents believed that the changes taking place elsewhere in Arab World positively influence the Palestinian situation. In contrast, 30 percent believe that the influence is negative. In addition, 45 percent believe that the changes have no influence.
- When asked about the changes in the region and the chances for similar protests breaking out against the governments in the West Bank and Gaza. The results reveal higher chances of protest against the government in Gaza.
- 46 percent of respondents believe that there is a chance that similar protests could break out against the government in Gaza. In contrast, 44 percent of respondents believe that there is no chance that similar protests could break out against the government in Gaza.
- 41 percent of respondents believe that there is a chance that similar protests could break out against the government in the West Bank. In contrast, 48 percent believe that there is no chance that similar protests could break out in the West Bank.