Youth Survey: Peace process and domestic issues

Disillusionment among youth in the peace process and Palestinian leadership

28 March 2016

March 18-22, AWRAD conducted a survey of 1,200 Palestinian youth (18-25 years old) in the West Bank and Gaza.

This press release is one in a series to follow that will individually highlight the survey's findings on youth perceptions and attitudes towards political and social activism; political culture and understanding of Palestinian political history; evaluation of leaders and political groups; and elections and policy priorities.

The primary focus of this first release is youth attitudes towards the peace process, negotiations and domestic issues. The results show a deepening of disillusionment among youth especially in the West Bank concerning the peace process and the present Palestinian political system. It is important to note that the majority of the youth surveyed had not been born when the Oslo Accords were signed in 1993.

The most significant results:

- While Fatah continues to be the most popular political party, this can provide little comfort for the party's leadership as more than one third of the youth declare that they are either "undecided" or will not vote in a future election. The degree of uncertainty is much higher among West Bank youth reaching over 40 percent. Furthermore, over 40 percent of political party supporters state that they are not entirely committed to voting for their chosen parties.
- The evaluation of political leaders (President Mahmoud Abbas, Ismael Haniyeh, and PM Rami Hamdallah) is not favorable. Only a quarter of youth view the performance of the President as "good" though the number doing so in Gaza is 10 percent higher than in the West Bank. Gaza youth are also much more critical of their own territory's leader, Ismael Haniyeh, than youth in the West Bank.
- A plurality of Palestinian youth states that they have been negatively affected by the Israeli occupation. For example, 43 percent of West Bank youth say that they have been exposed to harassment by Israeli soldiers or settlers. In addition, more than one third of Gaza youth say that their homes have been damaged by Israeli forces.
- The majority of youth view the protests since October 2015 as an expression of frustration with a failed peace process; the continuation of occupation; and limited economic opportunities.
- While the majority of youth do no support a two-state solution, a two-state solution is preferred over options such as a bi-national state or confederation with Jordan and Egypt. The majority of youth also prefers means including negotiations and non-violent protest over armed confrontation to achieve independence.

Section 1: Elections

1. If PLC elections were held today and the following parties ran, for which one would you vote?

	West Bank	Gaza Strip	**Total**
Fatah	31.2%	46.9%	37.1%
Hamas	12.8%	15.3%	13.8%
PFLP	6.4%	4.0%	5.5%
Islamic Jihad	2.1%	3.1%	2.5%
Al Mubadara	2.1%	2.9%	2.4%
DFLP	1.7%	0.7%	1.3%
Hizb Tahrir	0.5%	0.0%	0.3%
PPP	0.4%	0.4%	0.4%
Nidal	0.0%	0.4%	0.2%
Fida	0.0%	0.2%	0.1%
Another party	0.8%	4.4%	2.2%
I did not decide	20.4%	8.9%	16.1%
Will not vote	21.5%	12.7%	18.2%

2. For those who answered that they would vote for a particular party above, to what extent are you committed to voting for that party?

	West Bank	Gaza Strip	Total
Committed	55.1%	64.6%	59.2%
Somewhat committed	32.9%	31.2%	32.2%
Not very committed	10.6%	3.6%	7.5%
Don't Know	1.4%	0.6%	1.1%

3. Regardless of your present political support, do you believe that there is a need for a new political party that is neither Hamas nor Fatah?

	West Bank	Gaza Strip	**Total**
Yes	17.5%	17.8%	17.6%
No	77.8%	76.7%	77.4%
Don't know	4.7%	5.6%	5.0%

4. How do you evaluate the performance of the following leaders?

		West Bank	Gaza Strip	**Total**
Mahmoud Abbas	Good	22.7%	32.7%	26.4%
	Fair	25.6%	16.0%	22.0%
	Weak	48.9%	50.2%	49.4%
	Don't know	2.8%	1.1%	2.2%
Ismael Haniyeh	Good	27.0%	21.1%	24.8%
	Fair	34.7%	15.6%	27.5%
	Weak	30.7%	62.0%	42.5%
	Don't know	7.6%	1.3%	5.3%
Rami Hamdallah	Good	27.0%	21.1%	24.8%
	Fair	34.7%	15.6%	27.5%
	Weak	30.7%	62.0%	42.5%
	Don't know	7.6%	1.3%	5.3%

Section 2: Israeli-Palestinian Issues

5. In principle, do you personally support a two-state solution?

	West Bank	Gaza Strip	**Total**
Yes	40.9%	44.9%	42.4%
No	56.0%	51.1%	54.2%
Don't know	3.1%	4.0%	3.4%

6. If the following three solutions to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict were equally feasible, which one would you prefer?

	West Bank	Gaza Strip	**Total**
Bi-national state (one state for two peoples)	13.5%	16.9%	14.8%
Two state solution based on the 1967 borders	31.7%	32.9%	32.2%
Confederation of the West Bank with Jordan and Gaza with Egypt	4.3%	4.2%	4.3%
None of the above	46.9%	39.8%	44.3%
Don't know/No answer	3.6%	6.2%	4.6%

7. In your opinion, which one of the following is the best means to reach an independent Palestinian state?

	West Bank	Gaza Strip	Total
Negotiations to reach an agreement between the two parties	19.3%	25.3%	21.6%
An international conference that imposes a settlement on both parties	12.7%	16.0%	13.9%
A non-violent popular uprising	18.5%	15.1%	17.3%
Armed/militant confrontation	38.8%	38.0%	38.5%
Other	3.1%	3.6%	3.3%

Section 3: Protests

8. Which statement best describes your level of interest in the ongoing protests since October 2015 (demonstrations, confrontations at contact areas, attacks on settlers and other Israelis)?

	West Bank	Gaza Strip	Total
I am following the news and posting/reposting pictures/videos related to the protests on my Facebook page	13.6%	20.4%	16.2%
I am frequently following events through the media, including social media	36.6%	31.1%	34.5%
I occasionally follow events through the media, including social media	40.2%	38.0%	39.4%
I am too busy to follow the ongoing events	8.1%	9.1%	8.5%
Don't know/No answer	1.5%	1.3%	1.4%

9. Do you believe that the current protests (since October 2015) will…?

	West Bank	Gaza Strip	Total
Expand into a Third Intifada	38.0%	39.6%	38.6%
Continue for some time the at same level	36.8%	29.6%	34.1%
End soon, with little achievement	20.1%	25.3%	22.1%
Don't know/No answer	5.1%	5.6%	5.3%

10. In your opinion, which statement best describes the true cause of the current protests?

	West Bank	Gaza Strip	Total
An expression of frustration by youth at the failure of the peace process and the continuation of the occupation	27.0%	36.4%	30.6%
An expression of frustration with the PA in the West Bank and Hamas in Gaza	12.7%	17.3%	14.4%
An expression of frustration by youth over few economic prospects	33.8%	22.9%	29.7%
An expression of patriotism by youth too young to have participated in either the first or second Intifada	22.9%	20.4%	22.0%
Don't know\No answer	3.6%	2.9%	3.3%

11. Do you believe that the current protest will lead to….?

	West Bank	Gaza Strip	Total
Favorable outcomes for Palestinians	43.3%	47.6%	44.9%
No real change on the ground	38.2%	37.3%	37.9%
Negative outcomes for Palestinians	12.1%	10.7%	11.6%
Don't know/No answer	6.4%	4.4%	5.7%

12. Do you support or oppose the continuation of the protest as is?

	West Bank	Gaza Strip	**Total**
Support	59.1%	80.4%	67.2%
Oppose	33.9%	16.4%	27.3%
Don't know\No answer	7.0%	3.1%	5.5%

13. Please tell us if you have ever been directly exposed to the following?

		West Bank	Gaza Strip	**Total**
Harassment by Israeli soldiers or settlers	Yes	42.5%	12.2%	31.1%
	No	57.5%	87.8%	68.9%
Damage to property (land, house, crops, cars, etc) by Israeli forces or settlers	Yes	25.4%	33.6%	28.4%
	No	74.6%	66.4%	71.6%
Arrest or detention by Israeli forces	Yes	22.2%	3.6%	15.2%
	No	77.8%	96.4%	84.8%
Injury in confrontations with Israelis (soldiers or settlers)	Yes	10.2%	9.8%	10.0%
	No	89.8%	90.2%	90.0%

Section 4: Teachers' strike

14. Did you follow the news about the teachers' strike?

	West Bank	Gaza Strip	Total
Yes, constantly	45.7%	15.1%	34.2%
Yes, to some extent	45.0%	51.8%	47.5%
No	9.1%	31.6%	17.5%
Don't know/No answer	0.3%	1.6%	0.8%

15. Do you believe that the PA responded to the strike in a reasonable, somewhat reasonable, somewhat unreasonable, or unreasonable manner?

	West Bank	Gaza Strip	Total
Reasonable	9.9%	8.4%	9.3%
Somewhat reasonable	36.0%	33.3%	35.0%
Somewhat unreasonable	29.6%	31.3%	30.3%
Unreasonable	19.4%	11.6%	16.4%
Don't know/No answer	5.1%	15.3%	8.9%

16. Who do you believe resolved the strike?

	West Bank	Gaza Strip	Total
President M. Abbas	66.5%	34.4%	54.5%
PM R. Hamdallah	13.4%	21.8%	16.5%
One or more Fatah leaders	3.3%	8.7%	5.3%
Other national figure	1.1%	3.6%	2.0%
Don't know	15.8%	31.6%	21.7%

17. In your opinion, what was the teachers' strike about?

	West Bank	Gaza Strip	Total
Teachers' rights	86.6%	73.8%	81.8%
Popular demand for democracy in the PA	3.5%	3.1%	3.3%
Frustration with current leadership	1.5%	2.9%	2.0%
A continuation of political conflict between Fatah and Hamas	1.9%	9.6%	4.8%
An Israeli attempt to divide Palestinian society	2.5%	3.1%	2.8%
Don't know	4.0%	7.6%	5.3%

18. Do you believe that the teachers emerged victorious from this strike?

	West Bank	Gaza Strip	Total
Yes	30.3%	27.1%	29.1%
No	61.5%	53.8%	58.6%
Don't know	8.2%	19.1%	12.3%

Sample distribution

District	%	Gender	%
Jenin	7.1	Male	51.8
Tulkarm	4.4	Female	48.3
Qualqilya	1.6	**Marital status**	**%**
Nablus	8.8	Single	73.8
Salfeet	1.5	Married	23.1
Toubas	1.4	Others	3.1
Ramallah & al-Bireh	8.8	**Refugee status**	**%**
Jerusalem	9.9	Refugee	48.5
Jericho	1.5	Non-Refugee	51.5
Bethlehem	4.4	**Occupation**	
Hebron	13.1	Labor	13.2
Jabalia	7.2	Employee	8.6
Gaza	14.6	Farmer	.5
Der Al Balah	5.3	Merchant	4.4
Khan Younes	5.3	Professional	.9
Rafah	5.3	Crafts	3.4
Education	**%**	Student	44.5
Less than 9 years	7.4	Housewives	13.2
9-12 years	38.5	Don't work	11.3
More than 12 years	54.1	**Sector**	%
Income (Relative to community)	**%**	Government	10.1
Above average	9.2	Private	80.6
Average	72.8	NGO	4.9
Less than average	18.0	Others	4.4