



Palestinian Youth

Results of a Specialized Opinion Poll

Press Release (2): Community Participation and Social Activism

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Sample Size: 1200 Palestinian Youth (18-30 years old)

West Bank & Gaza

Margin of error: ± 3 %

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Introduction:

AWRAD recently completed an “Opinion Poll of Palestinian Youth.” In the course of this survey, AWRAD surveyed 1,200 Palestinian youth (18-30 years old) in the West Bank and Gaza, similar to a survey completed in January 2012. The results provide illustrative data on the attitudes, perceptions, and beliefs of Palestinian youth. This current press release is one in a series highlighting findings on the following issues: the peace process, political and social activism, the Arab Spring and its implications on Palestine, evaluation of leaders and political groups, and policy priorities. The focus of this specific release is primarily youth attitudes on their role in the community, as well as participation in social and political activism. The most significant results are listed below:

I. Youth and Policy:

The results of AWRAD’s most recent poll illustrate that youth remain positive about their role in the community. 56 percent of youth believe they have the opportunity to express their views, stable from January 2012. In addition, 23 percent believe that the concerns of young people are largely integrated in public policies and decisions, and 37 percent believe that they are integrated. An overwhelming 87 percent of youth in the West Bank and Gaza express some level of confidence in the abilities of young people to lead Palestine in the future.¹ In contrast to the overall positive outlook, only 34 percent of youth believe they could personally have an impact on public life, a 4 point decrease from January 2012.

-Inclusion in the West Bank, exclusion in Gaza: In the current poll, 64 percent of youth in the West Bank state they have the opportunity to express their view in public affairs, an 8 point increase, while one third of West Bank youth disagree. while 44 percent of Gaza youth agree that they have In contrast, while 44 percent of Gaza youth agree that they have the opportunity to express their views, 51 disagree.

-Concerns of youth integrated in public policy: 61 percent of respondents in the West Bank, and 58 percent in Gaza believe that the concerns of youth were integrated in public policies and decisions to varying degrees.

-Confidence remains very high: Belief in the ability of young people to lead Palestine was equally high between both regions. However, a 5 point drop was recorded among the confidence of West Bank respondents.

-Belief in personal influence remains low: 58 percent of youth believe they do not personally have an impact on public life. This sense of powerlessness was most prevalent in Gaza, where 63 percent of respondents, a 6 point increase, believe they do not have any impact. The rate of 55 percent in the West Bank is stable from 2012

II. Work and Volunteerism:

¹ This refers to all respondents who answered they were ‘very confident’ or ‘somewhat confident’

Similar to AWRAD's January 2012 youth survey, Palestinian youth are most active in the fields of social/community work (46 percent) and voluntary work (43 percent). Participation in political parties (19 percent) was the least popular civic activity. A plurality (48 percent) of youth state that they do not volunteer for public service at all, while 20 percent say they have done so during the last month. Internet activism remains low with only 35 percent stating they have ever participated in electronic lobbying for the improvement of a public service.

-Participation in social/community work and voluntary work falls in Gaza:

Though youth in both regions participate in this field equally, participation in Gaza has fallen by 11 points since the previous survey in January 2012. Similarly, participation in voluntary work has declined by 14 points among youth in Gaza. Participation in social/community work has risen slightly in the West Bank.

-Participation in political activity falls universally: Youth in the West Bank and Gaza also report steep declines in political activism. Among West Bank youth, only 22 percent state that they are active or somewhat active in the field, compared to 35 percent previously. Simultaneously, the rate of activism fell noticeably in Gaza, dropping from 47 percent in 2012 to 27 percent currently.

-Political party activity falls in Gaza: In the present survey, only 21 percent of Gaza youth report being active or somewhat active in a political party, a decrease of 11 points from AWRAD's previous survey.

-Internet activism rises in the West Bank: Though there are no significant geographical differences, participation among West Bank youth in Internet activism has slightly increased. In 2012, only 29 percent stated they had used the Internet to lobby for improvement of a public issue, while the rate has increased by 6 points in the present poll (35 percent).

III. Public Activism:

Palestinian youth are divided on participation in public activism. 48 percent state that they have participated in a protest or demonstration, while 52 percent state the opposite. 75 percent of youth say they would participate in demonstrations against the occupation, while only 25 percent would demonstrate against a political faction. However, when asked about participation in a future Intifada, 60 percent of Palestinian youth say they would be very active or somewhat active.

-Activism remains more popular in Gaza: 52 percent of Gaza respondents state they ever have been involved in some public display of activism, compared to 45 percent of those in the West Bank. Though Gaza youth were more likely to be active, a 5 point decrease was observed in the current poll.

-Youth very active in the past year: Of the respondents who have been active, 83 percent participated in public activism during the past year. This is equivalent to 40 percent of all youth. Once again, participation is higher in Gaza, where 90 percent of active youth say they were active in the past year, compared to 78 percent in the West Bank.

-Gaza youth more likely to protest occupation: 87 percent of respondents in Gaza state that they would participate in a demonstration against the Israeli occupation, compared to 67 percent in the West Bank.

-Gaza youth more likely to be active in a future Intifada: 73 percent of Gaza youth say they would be ‘very active’ or ‘somewhat active’ in a new Intifada, compared to 52 percent of those in the West Bank; an increase of 8 points among Gaza youth, yet a stable situation in the West Bank.

-Gaza youth more likely to demonstrate against political factions: When polled about potential protests against a political faction, 34 percent of youth in Gaza state that they would participate, compared to only 18 percent in the West Bank. Consistent with these results, the amount of youth in Gaza who say they would not join has dropped by 9 points from 2012.

-Discontent with government grows among Gaza youth: The likelihood of participation in demonstrations against either government has risen by double digits among Gaza youth since the previous survey. 25 percent of the Gaza youth state that they would demonstrate against the West Bank government, and 42 percent against the government in Gaza. These are increases of 10 and 13 points respectively. The possibility of participation in protests against the West Bank government has fallen by 4 points (16 percent) among youth in the West Bank.

-Support for PA protests remains issue-driven: The plurality of youth (43 percent) say participation in a PA-sponsored protest would ‘depend on the issue.’ 35 percent of youth in the West Bank would refuse, a 9 point increase, while 25 percent of those in Gaza would refuse, a 10 point decrease.

IV. Current Events:

In general, Palestinian youth are somewhat aware of recent popular protest activities in the territories. 41 percent were familiar with the Bab al-Shams protest camp, which was constructed in January 2013, and a further 42 percent were aware of recent protests against the Praver Plan in the Negev, implemented by Israel in the past few months and affecting the Bedouin.

-West Bank youth more familiar with current events: 52 percent of youth in the West Bank are familiar with the Bab Al-Shams protest camp, and a further 47 percent are aware of protests against the Praver Plan. Conversely, only 24 percent of youth in Gaza are familiar with Bab al-Shams, and 36 percent are aware of protests against the Praver Plan.

-Gaza youth more likely to be active in protests: Though Gaza youth are less aware of Israel’s Praver Plan, they are slightly more likely to express willingness to be active in protests. 45 percent stated they have participated, or plan to participate in various activities protesting the implementation of the Plan, such as marches or Internet advocacy. Conversely, 41 percent of youth in the West Bank state that they have been, or would be active in such protests.