

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTERNATIONAL AND LOCAL AID DURING THE SECOND INTIFADA An Analysis of Palestinian Public Opinion in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip (February - June 2001) - Report II, July 2001

Ten months after the beginning of the Intifada, the promises and prospects of the “Oslo Process” seem far away, not to say vanished. According to recent public opinions polls, popular support for the continuation of the Intifada has increased to 80%, compared to 70% in December 2000. In April 2001, more than 62% of the Palestinian people supported the continuation of both forms of the Intifada (popular and armed struggle), while in June this double form of support has decreased to 54%, in favor of a slight increase for support to the continuation of popular forms of resistance (20% in June against 14% two months earlier).

Alternatively, there is a continuous and steady decrease in Palestinian popular support for the Oslo Agreements. While in June 2000 more than 57% supported the Oslo framework, in April 2001 the percentage has fallen to 40% and in June it went further down to a mere 38%. It seems that middle class and middle aged Palestinians are increasingly viewing the various issues at stake with skepticism. Their attitudes are becoming comparable to those of younger Palestinians who hold “hard-line” positions, especially in relation to the peace process and the PNA.

Despite that, the Palestinian people seem to have some kind of hope in the possibility of a peace process. In April, only 30% (and in June 27%) believed that the peace process is completely dead with no chance of resuming negotiations. Moreover, the results of the poll conducted for this study show that about 50% of the respondents are generally optimistic.

The uncertainties about the peace process and the prospects for peace as well as the continuation and intensification of the conflict raise a number of queries about the approaches and intervention needed to deal with this situation. The lack of confidence between the conflicting parties has obviously prevented all efforts at bringing the cycle of violence to an end.

The political efforts at easing the conflict did not bear any effort so far. Numerous queries are cast on the interventions needed to deal with the hardship that has befallen the Palestinians in the past ten months and which led to hundreds of deaths, thousands of injuries, and to a near economic disaster.

This follow up study aims at examining the attitudes and perceptions of the Palestinian people with respect to the international and local aid efforts. To what extent does this effort help in addressing the real problems? What are the priorities of the Palestinian people? Which areas need assistance? How does the situation today differ from the situation five months ago?

It is the hope that addressing these questions and other relevant issues will help decision makers, donors, and other interested parties better understand the extent of the problem and the needs and priorities of the targeted sectors. Certainly, such an understanding will also assist in the coordination efforts of these parties in their strive to proceed with their work in a more coherent and consistent manner to enable their efforts become more effective and valuable.

METHODOLOGY

A representative sample of 1270 Palestinians over the age of 18 was interviewed face-to-face between the 19th and 23rd of June 2001. In the West Bank (including East Jerusalem) 832 (63.5%) Palestinians were interviewed, and 438 were interviewed in the Gaza Strip.

Results were systematically tested for statistical significance at a 95% confidence level. Whenever possible, consideration was given to data generated from studies and surveys that were made available recently and that cover some issues addressed in this report. It was also deemed appropriate to introduce comparisons between the data presented in the first report of March 2001 and those of this study, to show the evolution of the situation.

The questionnaire for this study was designed in a way to that could provide data on Palestinians in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip on five main topics:

- A general description of the mobility and security conditions of the civilian population.
- A portrayal of the socio-economic conditions.
- The assistance delivered.
- The impact of the assistance delivered.
- UNRWA's strategies.

MOBILITY AND SECURITY CONDITIONS OF THE CIVILIAN POPULATION

Mobility:

In January, 79% of the people interviewed said that mobility was a serious problem. In the June sample this proportion increased to 84%. This increase is correlated with the place of residence. "Only" 64% of Jerusalem respondents said that mobility was a serious problem in January while this proportion went up to 79% in June. To a lesser extent, there is a 10% increase in the West Bank refugee camps and 8% in Gaza outside camps.

Martyrs¹, injuries and damage to properties:

Damages on physical persons seem to have diminished between January and June. The proportion of martyrs went down by 4% and the proportion of injured by a striking 11%. The distribution of martyrs varies considerably by place of residence: In January approximately 30% of martyrs were reported in the Gaza Strip, 20% in West Bank refugee camps, 10% in the West Bank outside camps and 5% in Jerusalem. The decrease of the martyrs proportion is mainly found in Gaza outside camps where it reached almost 10% (27-18%). Everywhere else, the decline was smaller than 3%.

The proportion of injured people is highest in Gaza outside camps (41%) and in refugee camps in Gaza and the West Bank (around 33%). West Bank (excluding refugee camps) and Jerusalem present lower figures (22%). The decline of the overall figure is proportional to the January level.

The negative impact on property and business reported by the surveyed population stayed constant between January and June, but the proportion of the sample that reported to have suffered from trees uprooting rose by 5%. Property damage has risen strikingly in West Bank refugee camps (15-27%), which now becomes the most affected place. Gaza, which was the most stricken place in January, underwent a significant decrease (23-18%). Property damages used to be more or less the same among refugees than non-refugees: ~18% in January. The proportion of property damages decreased among refugees (-2% since January), while it increased among non-refugees (+2%).

¹ The word "martyr" is the term officially used by the PLO/PA in their statistics to designate the deaths due to the Intifada.

Uprooted trees concerned refugee camp dwellers much less in January. In June this proportion tripled in Gaza refugee camps (10-30%) and rose by 16% in the West Bank camps (2-18%). The same phenomenon occurred with the impact on business: camps, which were less hit in January, underwent a very sharp increase in June (34-58% in Gaza, 37-55% in the West Bank).

Impact on Children:

The crisis is harshly affecting the Palestinian children. In the March report, it was shown that over 70% of the overall population noticed changes in their children's behavior. In June, 79% of the parents interviewed noticed a behavioral change in their children. After applying the percentage of parents in June to the January survey, the figure was 84%. There was a decline of 5%, given the remarkable capability of children to adapt to harsh circumstances over time.

The impact on children varies considerably by place of residence. In the Gaza Strip, the impact seems much higher (87%) than in Jerusalem (69%). Refugee children also seem more affected: 84% of the refugee parents reported changes in their children's behavior compared to only 75% of the non-refugee parents.

Sleeping disorders are the most reported problems (as in January); violence comes in second position (unlike January when it was third). In fact, all the effects go down in proportion from January to June except violence and all its combinations.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

Employment status

The results showed that 29% of all Palestinians were fully employed in January and approximately 28% in June. In the March report, the unemployment rate was 30%. The June survey shows a slightly lower unemployment rate of 27% in a labor force that represents 51% of the sample. This decrease is more related to an increase of the partially employed people (from 17% to 19%) than to an increase of the fully employed (53% to 54%). The employment status does not vary significantly by refugee status and by area. Age and gender produce different employment patterns but they are quite straightforward and do not seem to be related to the present crisis.

In Jerusalem, the percentage of fully employed people raised by 10%: from 31% to 41%. This can be explained by a sharp decline of the part-time workers (11%-3%) and by a diminishing proportion of unemployed (10-5%).

In the West Bank outside camps, an increase of students (9%-12%) and housewives (31%-36%) accounts for a decline in both the fully employed (30%-27%) and the unemployed (17%-12%). In the West Bank refugee camps, the significant decline of the unemployed (19%-12%) is a consequence of an increase of the part-time workers (9%-14%) and the students (8%-14%).

In the Gaza Strip (excluding refugee camps), one can note a decrease of the unemployed (18%-16%) and an increase in the part-time jobs (8%-10%). In Gaza refugee camps, both unemployment (17%-22%) and part-time work (8%-11%) raised. The fully employed remained constant at 26%, but students (15%-13%) and especially housewives (32%-26%) proportions receded.

Work occupation:

Between January and June, there is a noticeable decline of workers (41%-38%) and merchants (8%-3%), and an increase in the proportion of employees (34%-40%) and professionals (7%-10%). Area of residence, gender and age has a significant effect on the distribution of work occupations.

The decrease of workers is essentially among women. The proportion of workers among men remained almost constant (46%-47%), but it decreased for the women from 18% to 9%. The increase of employees is sharper in villages (28%-38%) than in refugee camps (33%-38%) and in cities (39%-43%). As for professionals, the increase occurred mainly in cities (6%-11%), less in villages (6%-9%) and not at all in refugee camps (12%).

Place of work:

One sixth of the employed Palestinians work in Israel or in settlements. Since January, the proportion of people working in Israel diminished by 4% while those working in the Gaza Strip increased by the same proportion. There is a noticeable increase in the percentage of Palestinians who work and live in the same area. This trend shows only one exception: Gaza refugee camps where the percentage of people working in the area where they live decreased from 82% to 77%.

Effect of the Intifada on jobs:

While in January 26% of the respondents had lost their job because of the Intifada and 16% had to change it, the June survey shows that 23% of the respondents lost their jobs and 11% had to change their jobs.

The impact of the second Intifada on the job situation was sharper for the Gaza Strip as a whole and for the refugee camps: roughly one third of the people in Gaza and in the West Bank refugee camps lost their job during the Intifada. In the West Bank (excluding refugee camps), it is the case for one fourth of the respondents and in Jerusalem for one sixth of the respondents. In the West Bank, 22% of the respondents had to and managed to change their job. In the Gaza Strip 10% managed to change jobs, while in the refugee camps approximately 15% changed their jobs.

During the last eight months, 45% of the respondents said that their salary decreased, 52% stated that it had remained the same and only 2% said that their salary had increased. The average decrease seems much less in refugee camps (4%) than in cities (13%) and villages (11%). Non-refugees reported a mean decrease of 13% against 9% for the refugees. Men seem more affected than women as 50% of them reported a wage decrease compared to 35% decrease for the female respondents. Men stated a 12% decrease on the average while women reported it at 8%.

Households' demography and job market:

The average number of people in a household (including children) is 6.9 in June, while it was 7.3 in January. While in January there were 8% of households without workers, the proportion increased to 11% in June. On the other hand, the average number of dependent people in households with workers receded slightly from 4 to 3.8.

The increase in households without breadwinners affects mainly the Gaza Strip and the West Bank refugee camps. Refugee households were less affected in January (5%) than in June (11% against a constant 10% for non-refugees). The rise of households without a breadwinner is sharper in refugee camps (4% to 11%), significant in cities (7% to 10%) but marginal in villages (12-11%).

Loss of workers in households during to the Intifada:

Around 4 households out of 10 reported at least one loss. On the average, nearly 0.5 workers lost their jobs. This figure is alarming when it is compared with the 1.6 average workers per household.

Basic commodities:

The majority of the respondents stated that the price of five basic commodities - flour, sugar, oil, lentil and rice - remained the same throughout the crisis. However, according to those who said that

the prices changed, it appears that sugar and rice most likely increased while oil, flour and lentils most probably decreased. In general, more Palestinians in villages said that the price of flour, lentils, oil, and rice had increased. More respondents residing in cities and villages perceived an increase in the price of sugar.

Households' financial situation:

59% of refugee camp resident estimate their monthly income to be much less than 3'000 NIS per month, compared to 50% of city dwellers and 49% of villagers. Refugee camp residents seem to be much worse-off financially than their counterparts who do not reside in camps.

Over 50% of the respondents said that they barely manage and only 33% of Palestinians said that they could financially manage for as long as it takes. Those who stated that they could financially cope under the current conditions are the financially better off.

Coping strategies:

Since the Intifada started, the overall household expenses were cut significantly. 63% of the respondents said that their household expenses decreased during the last eight months; 29% said that they remained the same and 8% stated that they increased. 82% of the respondents from households in Gaza refugee camps said they reduced expenses, while only 41% of the Jerusalem respondents did.

In general, the mean reported decrease in expenses is 34% of expenses. Gaza refugee camps have the highest decrease (48%) while Gaza in general seems to suffer harder decreases than the West Bank. Respondents from the refugee camps have reduced their expenses by 43% compared to cities (37%) and villages (33%).

Strategies for dealing with the hardship:

While income was sufficient for 4 respondents out of 10, one quarter of them had to rely on past savings and one sixth had to ask help from family and friends.

While income was sufficient for 60% of the Jerusalem residents, it was not for more than 60% of the respondents elsewhere. In Gaza camps, 26% of the respondents had to rely on family and friends while this proportion was at a maximum of 13% elsewhere. In the West Bank (excluding camps), more respondents cultivated land (15% vs. max. 7% elsewhere).

Refugees rely more on family and friends than non-refugees (17% vs. 10%). Similarly, people living in refugee camps rely more on family and friends (22% vs. ~11% in cities and villages). In villages people rely more on cultivating land (15% vs 8% in cities and 1% in camps).

Coping mechanisms for the future:

The vast majority of respondents stated that reducing expenses was the only way that they would use to cope with further economic hardship. 9% of the interviewed population said that they are already destitute, and have nothing to rely on to cope with any future economic crisis.

Perception of Israeli vs Palestinian products:

Whilst the majority of Palestinians say that if they were given the choice they would choose Palestinian products over Israeli products, their evaluation of Palestinian products is rather negative in comparison to the Israeli products. In the whole population slightly less than 2/3 say that Israeli products are better, but this proportion goes up to 95% among those who buy Israeli products.

Coping strategies pertaining to work:

Of those who lost their jobs, 85% tried very hard to find another employment, 13% tried but not very hard and 3% did not try at all. There are significant differences according to the gender of the respondents and it seems that women did not try as hard as men did to find another job. 90% of those also said that they would agree to work even with a much lower wage, 7% only with the same wage as before, while 2% gave other explanations. In the Gaza Strip, 96% of the respondents were willing to get a job even for a much lower salary while this proportion is 89% in the West Bank.

ASSISTANCE DELIVERED DURING THE INTIFADA

Distribution of Assistance:

The percentage of people who said they had received assistance rose from 43% in January to 49% in June. Assistance was higher in the Gaza Strip both inside and outside refugee camps and in West Bank refugee camps than in the West Bank. Jerusalem received the smallest share of assistance.

Assistance seems to have been more focused on refugee camps and the West Bank since last January. While aid decreased since January in Gaza (-5%) (excluding refugee camps) and in East Jerusalem (-6%), it went up by 11% in the West Bank (excluding refugee camps) and by 8% in refugee camps in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank.

Type and value of assistance:

The 602 respondents that mentioned one or two types of assistance in June (530 in January), gave 943 responses (853 in January). Slightly less than half of these respondents mentioned two types of assistance, while the rest mentioned only one. Of all the given responses, 72% stated food and 21% financial aid. Only 1% of the responses was related to medication and employment. The remaining 6% related to various types of non-financial assistance.

Food was distributed to four respondents out of ten (respondents estimated that the average value of food came at a little less than 30 US\$). Financial assistance was received by 1/6 of all the respondents while 4% benefited from non-financial aid and only 1% from employment assistance.

84% of Gaza camp residents received food assistance. This was also the case for approximately one half of Gazans living outside camps (53%), less than half of West Bank camp residents (44%) but only 1/3 in the West Bank (excluding refugee camps) and 4% of people in Jerusalem. Financial aid was distributed to 39% of the Gaza camp residents. The same was true for 1/6 of the Gazans living outside camps and of the West Bank refugee camp population. About 10% received financial aid in the West Bank and only 3% in Jerusalem. Non-financial aid was also delivered mostly in Gaza refugee camps (14%). In Gaza (excluding refugee camps) and in the West Bank camps the proportion was 5%, while it was a mere 2% in the West Bank outside camps. Non-financial aid appeared non-existent in Jerusalem.

The refugee camps appear as having been targeted as the main beneficiary, both in the Gaza Strip and in the West Bank. Refugees received more of all types of assistance and villages received proportionally much less than refugee camps and cities.

Since January, the value of food aid in the West Bank has increased considerably (+33 inside camps, +65 shekels outside). In the Gaza Strip camps, on the contrary, the value of food aid has lowered (-29) and in the Gaza Strip (excluding refugee camps) it has remained more or less constant (-4).

Source of assistance:

51% of aid recipients related aid to UNRWA, 22% to PA, 13% to Zakat committees and other religious organizations. Of all the other sources, none received more than 3% of the responses.

UNRWA was identified as the main single food aid provider, followed by the Palestinian Authority and the Zakat committees. The Palestinian Authority is the source of 3/4 of the financial aid; UNRWA accounts for 8%, and all the others for 17%.

UNRWA is the main food donor in refugee camps and in cities but Zakat committees and the PA gave more food in villages. The PA is the main financial donor everywhere and it seems to distribute more in refugee camps than in cities and villages. UNRWA seems to give more financial aid in villages and cities than in refugee camps.

Most respondents know only the direct provider. Only few have mentioned the efforts and assistance of non-governmental organizations, or international organizations.

Employment generation programs (EGP):

A low percentage of people said that they benefited from EGP. Less than 8% of the sample reported that someone in their family received help in finding a job.

Of the people living in the Gaza Strip refugee camps, 20% said that they have received assistance through EGP, while this percentage falls down to 4% in the West Bank (excluding refugee camps). Overall, 11% of refugees said to have benefited from EGP compared to only 5% of non-refugees. Only 4% of people inhabiting villages benefited from EGP, those in cities are 7%, and in refugee camps 16%. Among those who benefited from a program, only 1% has received a long-term job, 53% got short-term jobs, and the remaining 46% benefited from unemployment funds.

60% of those who benefited from help got it from the PA or one of its ministries. The second highest donor is UNDP with 18%. The World Bank and UNRWA account for 6% and the EU and the trade unions for 5%. None of the remaining donors exceeds 2%.

IMPACT OF ASSISTANCE DELIVERED

Satisfaction with the provided assistance:

The respondents who benefited from assistance were relatively negative. Only 32% said that they were satisfied or very satisfied with the provided assistance. The remaining 68% of the respondents evaluated aid provision negatively.

Specifically, 55% of respondents rated food aid as satisfactory, and 48% rated financial aid positively. Satisfaction with food aid was highest in the Gaza Strip outside camps (64%) and lowest in the West Bank camps (45%). The Gaza Strip camps rate food aid slightly better (53%) than the West Bank outside camps (49%). Satisfaction with financial aid seems to be highest in the West Bank outside camps (56%) and lowest in the same area in camps (22%). The respondents of the Gaza Strip outside camps rated financial aid slightly better (48%) than camp dwellers (44%).

Individual impact of assistance:

In June, 67% of the surveyed respondents said that they needed help (68% in January). In June, 71% of refugees said that they needed help (75% in January). The percentage of non-refugees who said that they need help remained constant in January and June (64%).

In the Gaza Strip refugee camps, slightly less than half of the respondents (48%) were in need of assistance in January. In June this proportion raised dramatically by 30% to reach 78%. In the West Bank refugee camps, 83% stated that they needed assistance in January, but only 57% in June.

Regarding the type of assistance respondents needed, 1/6 of all Palestinians said that they need food assistance, 1/5 is in need of employment, and 1/4 of financial assistance.

A quarter of the sample thought that job opportunities are mostly needed for their community. The second most cited need is a political one: improving morale. But the same proportion of Palestinians mentioned food and nearly the same number cited financial assistance. Health is only slightly less cited. All the other mentioned needs account for less than 10% of the answers each.

There are significant differences according to the place of residence, refugee status and area of residence. In villages, health is cited by 23% of the respondents (14% in cities and 12% in refugee camps). As for employment, job opportunities are cited by 23% of the respondents in cities and 23% in camps, but only by 17% of respondents in villages. Improving morale is the most important need for 17% of respondents living in villages, 12% of city dwellers and 8% of camps' residents.

Visibility, Importance and Effectiveness of Assistance:

While 3/4 of Palestinians think EGP is very important, less than 5% think that it was distributed efficiently or very efficiently. Health assistance is likewise viewed as very important but half of the Palestinian people evaluated its distribution as efficient. Education was viewed both as important and effective. Food aid was judged slightly less important but much less effective. Infrastructure, although viewed as less important, was evaluated severely concerning its efficiency.

The judgments about importance and effectiveness of some type of assistance vary significantly according to the entire control variables: place, area, refugee status, gender and age. In the West Bank outside camps, all types of assistance, except infrastructure, are viewed as rather important. As for education, health and food, the perceived importance of help in those domains increased significantly since January. Concerning food the priorities of the respondents seemed to match those of the donors: the percentage of respondents who stated that food aid was efficient is both above the average and increased significantly since January. Finally the efficiency of infrastructure assistance is rated efficient by almost double the proportion of respondents than in the average.

Refugees viewed health (74%), education (70%) and food (60%) as more important than non-refugees (respectively 67%, 63% and 54%). Refugees also perceived health assistance (53%) and food aid (26%) as more efficient than non-refugees (47% and 20%).

Women viewed food (60%) and infrastructure (47%) as slightly more important than men (respectively 54% and 41%). They had the same opinion as men concerning efficiency except for infrastructure, which they viewed as being slightly more effective (13% versus 9% for men).

Interestingly, visibility seems proportionally higher in the Gaza Strip (51% in refugee camps, 46% outside camps). In the West Bank, EGPs are more visible inside (35%) than outside refugee camps (27%). In Jerusalem, very few people heard of any EGPs (12%).

Nearly one half (48%) of those who said that they heard of an EGP heard of it from friends, 1/5 from newspapers and from family members, 8% at work, and 6% in the organizations where they work.

THE ROLE OF UNRWA

Distribution of Aid

In January, 34% of the respondents stated that they did receive assistance from UNRWA. This proportion went up to 38% in June. Approximately four persons out of ten received assistance from UNRWA. Almost ten out of ten respondents in the Gaza Strip refugee camps received one form of assistance or another from UNRWA; seven out of ten in the West Bank refugee camps; five

out of ten in the Gaza Strip outside camps); only two out of ten in Jerusalem and in the West Bank outside refugee camps said they received assistance from UNRWA. Since January, UNRWA aid seems to have been increased more in cities (+7%) than in villages (+4%).

Types of assistance provided:

764 of the respondents receiving assistance said that it originated from UNRWA. Three quarters of this assistance is food, 18% financial and 7% is other non-financial.

Food assistance:

40% of all Palestinians receive food assistance and 45% of it comes from UNRWA. Nearly one Palestinian out of five receives food aid from this organization.

According to place of residence, more than half of the respondents got food help from UNRWA in the Gaza Strip refugee camps. Around 34% of West Bank camp dwellers and non-refugee camp Gazans benefited from it compared to only 5% of those who live outside camps in the West Bank. In Jerusalem, no one said to have received food aid from UNRWA.

In refugee camps, nearly one half of the people benefit from UNRWA food aid. In cities, this figure sinks to 20%, while it is only 4% in villages.

Financial assistance:

One sixth of the Palestinian population stated having received financial aid. Only 3% received it from UNRWA. It must be noted that only 1% received this type of aid in January.

According to place of residence, UNRWA seems to target its financial assistance mainly towards the West Bank (8% in camps and 4% outside; in the Gaza Strip less than 1% in refugee camps and virtually inexistent outside; in Jerusalem it is also virtually non-existent).

In refugee camps, 4% received financial aid from UNRWA, compared to 3% who received such aid in cities, and 2% who received it in villages.

Satisfaction:

Over 60% of those who said that they have benefited from UNRWA's assistance evaluated the organization either very satisfactorily or satisfactorily. This satisfaction is stronger in the Gaza Strip than it is in the West Bank and Jerusalem. Whereas 67% of the Gaza Strip's beneficiaries evaluated UNRWA positively, the positive evaluation by the West Bank beneficiaries did not exceed 49%.

Regarding satisfaction towards specific types of assistance, there is an increase in satisfaction pertaining to food. In January 41% of UNRWA food beneficiaries were satisfied or very satisfied. In June this figure went up by 13% to reach 54%.

In the Gaza Strip, satisfaction is highest outside camps (66%). Inside camps slightly more than half of the people (52%) are satisfied and in the West Bank camps 46%. In the West Bank outside of refugee camps and in Jerusalem there were too few beneficiaries to draw any significant conclusion.