



NEC's monthly monitor of Palestinian perceptions towards politics and economics

**Special focus:
The Gaza Strip after the Israeli attacks**

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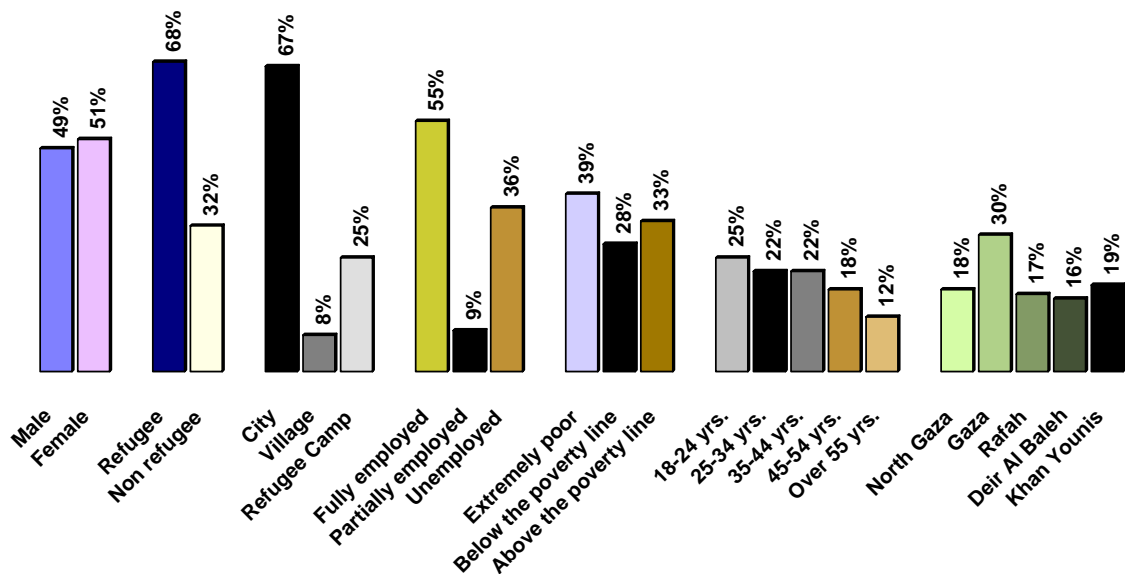
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I. Methodology

Over 605 Palestinians over the age of 18 years from the various governorates of the Gaza Strip were interviewed by phone immediately after the Israeli government declared a unilateral ceasefire. Respondents were randomly selected through random digit dialing.

The sample distribution was as follows. As can be noted below, 18% of the sample was from North Gaza, 30% from Gaza governorate, 17% from the Rafah governorate, 16% from Deir Al-Balah, and 19% from Khan Younis.

Figure 1: Demographic characteristics



The results were cross referenced according to two main independent variables: governorate and factional trust. The poverty variable was based on the reported household income and the household structure. The depression variable was based on five different variables that assess different aspects of the respondent's outlook. These



II. Main findings

A. *The general situation*

- About 96% of Gaza residents feel depressed and disheartened. The highest level of depression is in North Gaza and Rafah;
- 81% of the respondents do not feel secure about their households and family members. This represents an increase of 17% since December 2008;
- The main reason for the concern Gazans have is the absence of security (47%) followed by the Israeli occupation (28%) which was mentioned by a mere 10% in December 2008. Conversely, concern over internal infighting dropped from 29% in December to 8% in January 2008. Concern over the economic condition was very marginal given the need for security and safety;

B. *The economic condition*

- Poverty in January 2009 has increased to reach 67% in the aftermath of the Israeli attacks, as opposed to 57% in December 2008. The highest levels of poverty were observed in the North Gaza and Gaza governorates;
- The proportion of the unemployed in January 2009 increased to 36%, as opposed to 28% in December 2008. The highest unemployment figures were noticed in North Gaza and Deir Al-Balah and among the Hamas supporters;

C. *The consequences*

- 15% of the respondents said that one of their relatives was killed during the Israeli incursions on the Gaza Strip, 19% said that one of the relatives was injured, and 22% reported damages to their homes. As for the economic condition of the work of the respondents, 61% of the respondents said that their business or livelihood was hurt;
- The highest casualty figures were observed in the North Gaza and Gaza governorates while home damages were more observed in Rafah;
- More than half of the respondents said that the children are very fearful (52%), 16% are suffering from bedwetting, 13% scream and cry frequently;
- About 37% of the respondents said that they moved to another place during part of the Israeli attacks. The highest level of displacement was in the North Gaza District, the Gaza District, and Rafah where respectively 44%, 43% and 37% of the respondents said that they did move to stay elsewhere during some of the period of the Israeli attacks;
- Main reason for displacement was to escape attacks. About 9% said that they left their homes due to damages to their homes. The move as a result of damages was more evident in North Gaza and Rafah;

D. *Household needs*

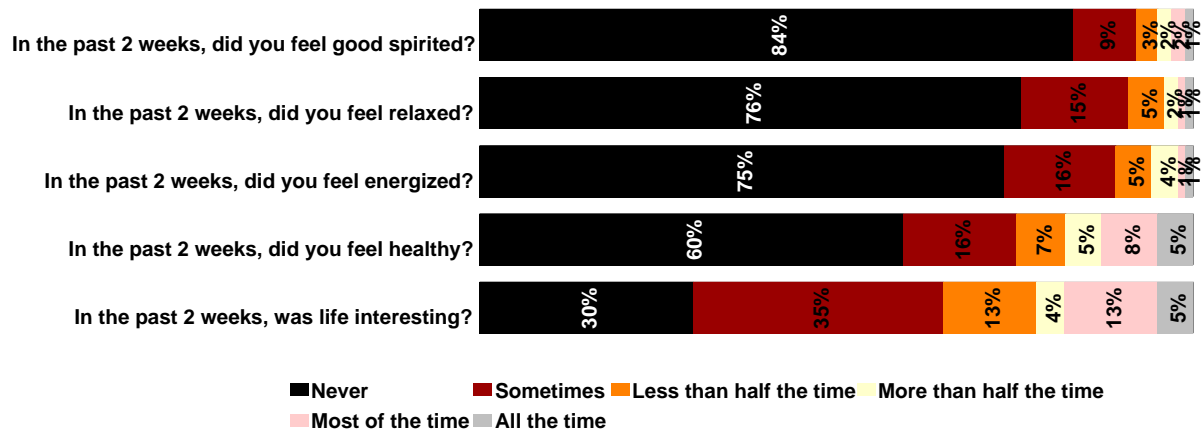
- The majority of the respondents (34%) said that the main need of their households is to find security for children, followed by 21% who want electricity. About 22% of the respondents said that their households require more than one need including clean water, psychological support, in addition to security for children, medication, food, etc.

III. The General situation

E. Depression levels

A set of five questions were asked about some aspects of their lives. As noted below, the majority of Gaza residents were extremely dispirited.

Figure 2: People's feelings about general aspects of their life



Concretely, when these answers were put together, the results show a grim picture about the psychological setup of the respondents. As portrayed in figure 3, below, about 96% are deemed to be depressed and disheartened.

Feeling of depression and concern runs across the Gaza Strip. As indicated in table 1, the highest level of depression is in North Gaza and Rafah. Moreover, the feeling is not very different between respondents trusting Fateh and those trusting Hamas.

Figure 3: Depression level

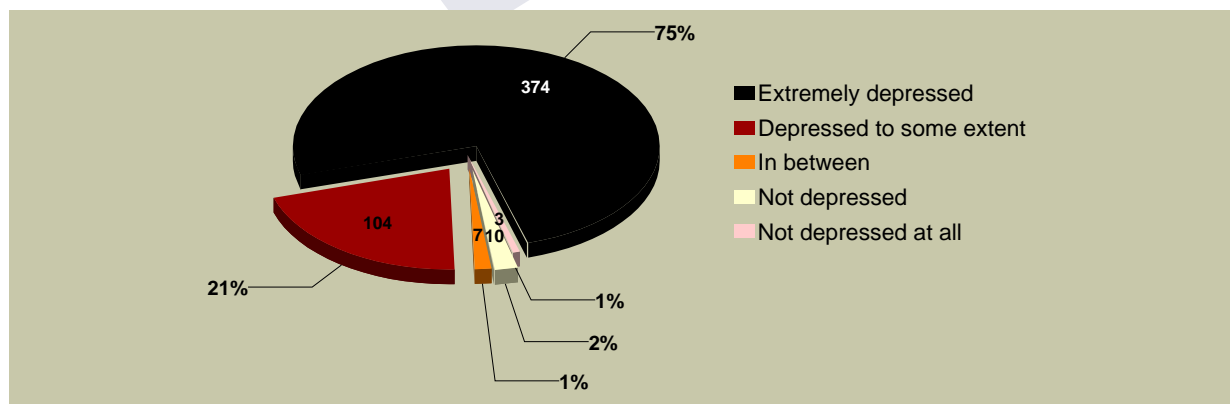




Table 1: Level of depression according to governorate and factional trust

| | Governorate | | | | Factional trust | | | | |
|--------------------------|-------------|------|-------|---------------|-----------------|-------|-------|--------|------|
| | North Gaza | Gaza | Rafah | Deir Al Balah | Khan Younis | Fateh | Hamas | Others | None |
| Extremely depressed | 80% | 71% | 78% | 71% | 76% | 75% | 79% | 78% | 75% |
| Depressed to some extent | 15% | 23% | 18% | 27% | 20% | 18% | 19% | 11% | 22% |
| In between | 2% | 3% | 0% | 1% | 0% | 3% | 0% | 7% | 1% |
| Not depressed | 2% | 2% | 3% | 0% | 2% | 4% | 1% | 4% | 1% |
| Not depressed at all | 1% | 1% | 0% | 0% | 1% | 1% | 0% | 0% | 1% |

F. Feeling of security

High depression levels are reflected also in the feeling of security among Gaza residents. About 81% of the respondents said that they do not feel secure about their households and family members (an increase of 17% over a period of one month). Again, the feeling of insecurity is high on all areas of the Gaza Strip and among the various supporters of the different factions.

Figure 4: Feeling of security

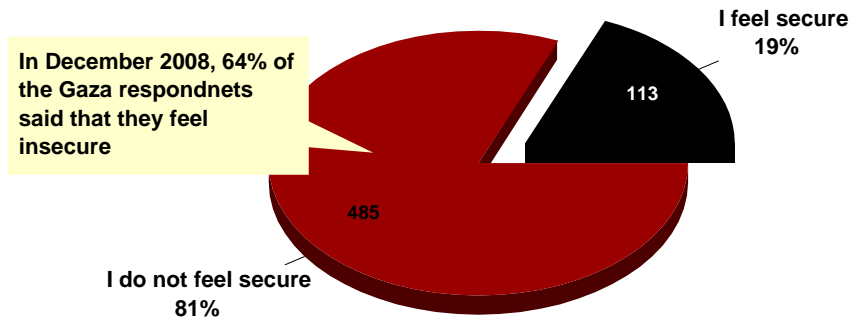


Table 2: Feeling of security according to governorate and factional trust

| | Governorate | | | | | Factional trust | | | |
|---------------------|-------------|------|-------|---------------|-------------|-----------------|-------|--------|------|
| | North Gaza | Gaza | Rafah | Deir Al Balah | Khan Younis | Fateh | Hamas | Others | None |
| I feel secure | 23% | 17% | 23% | 19% | 14% | 18% | 22% | 21% | 18% |
| I don't feel secure | 77% | 83% | 77% | 81% | 86% | 82% | 78% | 79% | 82% |



G. Level of Concern

Feeling of concern amongst the Gazans has been high in recent months. In December 2008, 84% of the Gaza respondents said that they were either extremely concerned or concerned.

Ironically, the level of extreme concern was lower in the North Gaza District where the Israeli attacks were harshest while in Khan Younis, the level of extreme concern was highest. These results are overviewed in table 3, below.

Figure 5: Level of concern

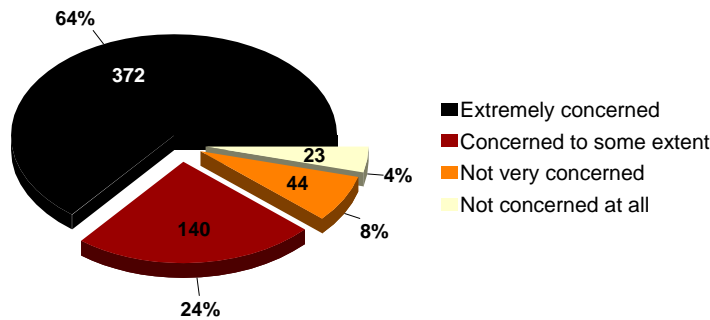


Table 3: Level of concern about the current situation according to governorate and factional trust

| | Governorate | | | | | Factional trust | | | |
|--------------------------|-------------|------|-------|---------------|-------------|-----------------|-------|--------|------|
| | North Gaza | Gaza | Rafah | Deir Al Balah | Khan Younis | Fateh | Hamas | Others | None |
| Extremely concerned | 56% | 66% | 66% | 63% | 68% | 64% | 67% | 64% | 65% |
| Concerned to some extent | 28% | 23% | 21% | 28% | 23% | 24% | 21% | 27% | 24% |
| Not very concerned | 8% | 9% | 9% | 5% | 6% | 9% | 10% | 6% | 6% |
| Not concerned at all | 8% | 2% | 4% | 3% | 3% | 2% | 2% | 3% | 5% |

Although the level of concern has increased by a mere 6% during the past four weeks, it is clear that the issues that they are concerned about have changed significantly. Understandably, respondents were more concerned about security and about the Israeli occupation more so than about the economic condition of their household. As illustrated in figure 6, below, while in December 2008 10% said that the Israeli occupation was the main reason for their concern, the percentage in the aftermath of the attacks increased to 28%. Conversely, concern over internal infighting dropped from 29% in December to 8% in January 2008.



When examining the results according to the district of residence and factional trust, it is noticed that concern over the economy were stronger among the respondents trusting Fateh while concern over the Israeli occupation was more pronounced among respondents trusting Hamas., as indicated in table 4.

Figure 6: Reasons for concern

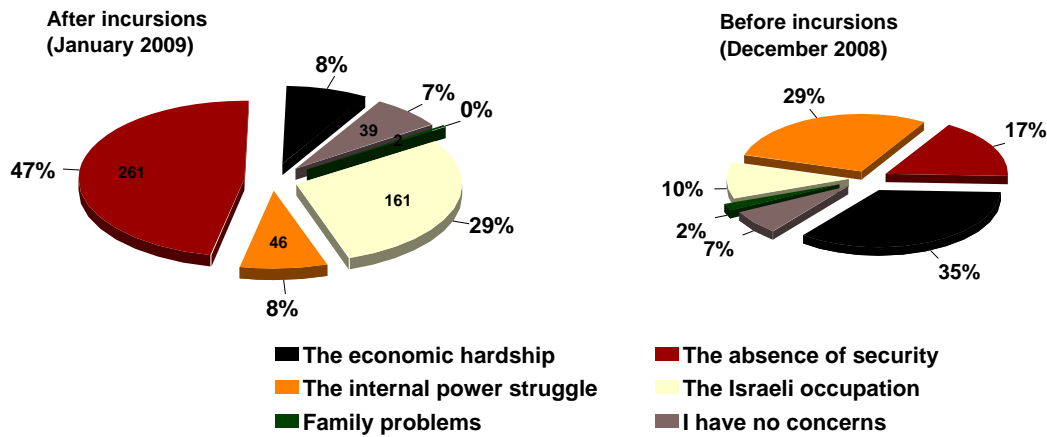


Table 4: Main issue that makes you feel concerned according to governorate and factional trust

| | Governorate | | | | | Factional trust | | | |
|--|-------------|------|-------|---------------|-------------|-----------------|-------|--------|------|
| | North Gaza | Gaza | Rafah | Deir Al Balah | Khan Younis | Fateh | Hamas | Others | None |
| The economic hardship of my household | 6% | 8% | 11% | 10% | 6% | 11% | 4% | 9% | 6% |
| The absence of security for me and my family | 43% | 48% | 45% | 50% | 50% | 47% | 49% | 36% | 48% |
| The internal power struggle | 8% | 6% | 9% | 11% | 9% | 14% | 5% | 9% | 7% |
| The Israeli occupation | 30% | 33% | 26% | 23% | 30% | 22% | 30% | 39% | 32% |
| Family problems | 1% | 1% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 1% | 0% | 0% |
| I have no concerns | 12% | 5% | 8% | 6% | 6% | 7% | 11% | 6% | 6% |

IV. The economic condition

H. Poverty conditions

Level of poverty over the past month has increased over the past month rather significantly. Whereas the poverty level in the Gaza Strip was 57% in December 2008, the percentage in January 2009 has increased to reach 67% in the aftermath of the Israeli attacks.



When examining the poverty situation according to the independent variables, it is noticed that the highest levels of poverty were observed in the North Gaza and Gaza governorates with 73% of the respondents living on poverty, as opposed to less than 65% in the other districts. Also, it is noticed that poverty level was significantly higher among the respondents trusting Hamas.

Figure 7: Poverty level

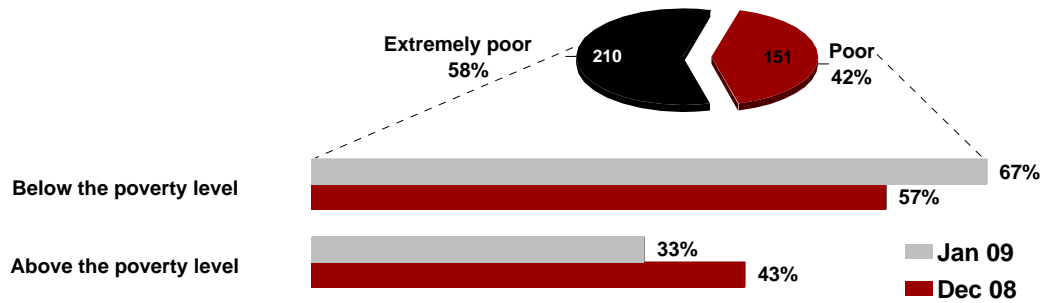


Table 5: Poverty level according to governorate and factional trust

| | Governorate | | | | | | Factional trust | | |
|-------------------------|-------------|------|-------|---------------|-------------|-------|-----------------|--------|------|
| | North Gaza | Gaza | Rafah | Deir Al Balah | Khan Younis | Fateh | Hamas | Others | None |
| Below the poverty level | 73% | 73% | 62% | 61% | 64% | 62% | 71% | 66% | 69% |
| Above the poverty level | 27% | 27% | 38% | 39% | 36% | 38% | 29% | 34% | 31% |

I. The labor force

A 7% increase in unemployment was observed after the Israeli incursions in the Gaza Strip. Whereas 29% of the labor force was unemployed in December 2008, the proportion of the unemployed in January 2009 increased to 36%, as noted in figure 8, below.

The highest unemployment figures were noticed in North Gaza and Deir Al-Balah and among the respondents trusting Hamas. Whereas, for example, 45% of the North Gaza respondents said that they are unemployed, the percentage in Khan Younis is 25%. Also, whereas 42% of the Hamas respondents were deemed as unemployed, the percentage among the Fateh respondents is 28%, as indicated in table 6.

Figure 8: The labor force

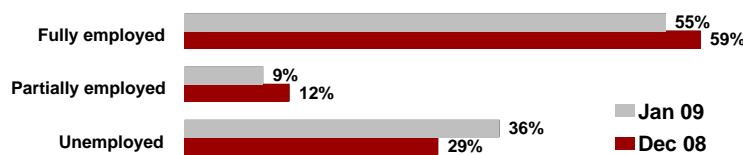




Table 6: The labor force according to governorate and factional trust

| | Governorate | | | | | Factional trust | | | |
|--------------------|-------------|------|-------|---------------|-------------|-----------------|-------|--------|------|
| | North Gaza | Gaza | Rafah | Deir Al Balah | Khan Younis | Fateh | Hamas | Others | None |
| Fully employed | 50% | 56% | 55% | 57% | 54% | 65% | 56% | 72% | 48% |
| Partially employed | 5% | 9% | 8% | 2% | 20% | 6% | 3% | 17% | 11% |
| Unemployed | 45% | 35% | 38% | 41% | 25% | 28% | 42% | 11% | 42% |

V. The consequences

A. The human toll

In addition to the increase in the poverty conditions of the Gazans and in their unemployment, the human toll was much more severe. As pointed out in figure 9, below, 15% of the respondents said that one of their relatives was killed during the Israeli incursions on the Gaza Strip, 19% said that one of the relatives was injured, and 22% reported damages to their homes. As for the economic condition of the work of the respondents, 61% of the respondents said that their business or livelihood was hurt.

The highest deaths of relatives were noted in the Gaza governorate were 23% of the respondents there said that one of their relatives was deceased because of Israeli attacks. Worth noting is that the human loss was reported more by the respondents trusting Fateh. As for injuries, the highest levels were noticed in North Gaza and by Hamas supporters. Regarding damages to homes, the highest percentage was reported in Deir Al-Balah. The impact on the business of the respondents was consistent across all areas of the Gaza Strip, as indicated in table 9, below.

Figure 9: Harm inflicted on Gazans

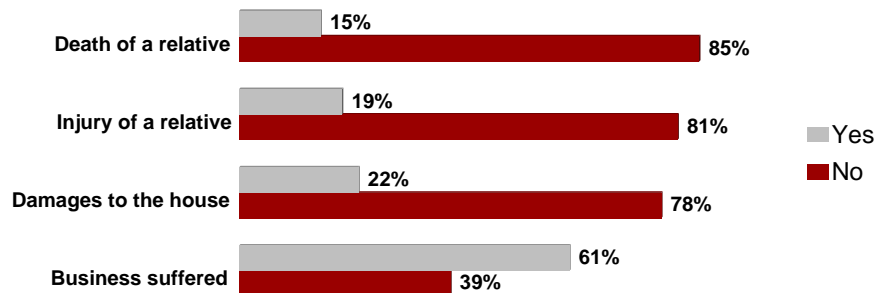




Table 7: Harm inflicted on Gazans according to governorate and factional trust

| | | Governorate | | | | | Factional trust | | | |
|----------------------|-----|-------------|------|-------|---------------|-------------|-----------------|-------|--------|------|
| | | North Gaza | Gaza | Rafah | Deir Al Balah | Khan Younis | Fateh | Hamas | Others | None |
| Death of a relative | Yes | 21% | 23% | 10% | 11% | 7% | 17% | 16% | 6% | 16% |
| | No | 79% | 77% | 90% | 89% | 93% | 83% | 84% | 94% | 84% |
| Injury to a relative | Yes | 29% | 22% | 15% | 14% | 11% | 18% | 23% | 12% | 20% |
| | No | 71% | 78% | 85% | 86% | 89% | 82% | 77% | 88% | 80% |
| Damages to the house | Yes | 28% | 24% | 29% | 13% | 15% | 29% | 27% | 15% | 18% |
| | No | 72% | 76% | 71% | 87% | 85% | 71% | 73% | 85% | 82% |
| Business suffered | Yes | 63% | 60% | 65% | 60% | 56% | 64% | 59% | 67% | 58% |
| | No | 37% | 40% | 35% | 40% | 44% | 36% | 41% | 33% | 42% |

B. Impact on children

The impact of the aggression Gaza has also been hard on children. As illustrated in figure 10, the majority of families indicated that their children are exhibiting some forms of psychological distress. More than half of the respondents said that the children are very fearful (52%), 16% are suffering from bedwetting, 13% scream and cry frequently. These signs are consistent in all governorates, as indicated in table 10, below.

Figure 10: Impact of the Israeli aggression on children

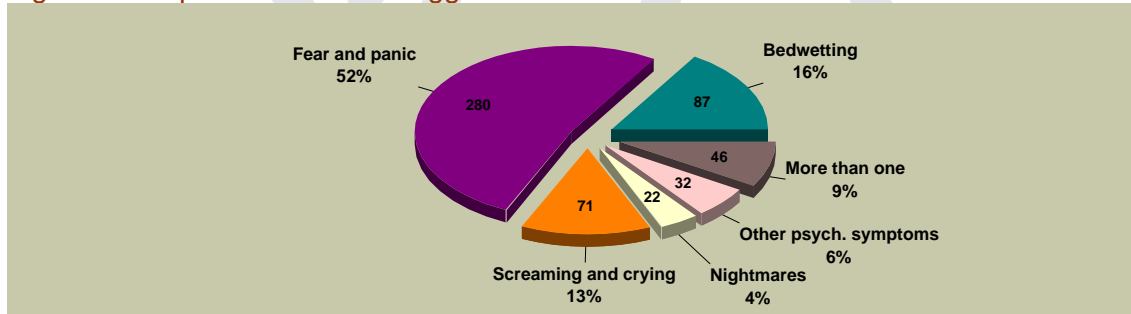


Table 8: Impact of the Israeli aggression on children according to governorate and factional trust

| | | Governorate | | | | | Factional trust | | | |
|-----------------------|--|-------------|------|-------|---------------|-------------|-----------------|-------|--------|------|
| | | North Gaza | Gaza | Rafah | Deir Al Balah | Khan Younis | Fateh | Hamas | Others | None |
| Bedwetting | | 10% | 21% | 16% | 17% | 14% | 15% | 14% | 23% | 16% |
| Fear and panic | | 63% | 47% | 52% | 55% | 47% | 51% | 51% | 55% | 52% |
| Screaming and crying | | 9% | 11% | 15% | 13% | 18% | 17% | 14% | 3% | 12% |
| Nightmares | | 3% | 3% | 6% | 4% | 5% | 2% | 6% | 3% | 4% |
| Other psych. symptoms | | 7% | 7% | 2% | 8% | 5% | 7% | 5% | 3% | 7% |
| More than one | | 7% | 11% | 8% | 4% | 11% | 7% | 9% | 13% | 9% |



C. Displacement

The level of home displacement* reached 37% of the households in the Gaza Strip, as indicated in figure 11. The highest level of displacement was in the areas that appear to have been the hardest such as the North Gaza District, the Gaza District, and Rafah where respectively 44%, 43% and 37% of the respondents said that they did move to stay elsewhere during some of the period of the Israeli attacks.

The displacement was evident among all sectors of the Gaza population irrespective of their political loyalties. As pointed out in table 11, 36% of the respondents trusting Fateh and 34% of the respondents trusting Hamas said that they indeed moved to another place.

Figure 11: Home displacement

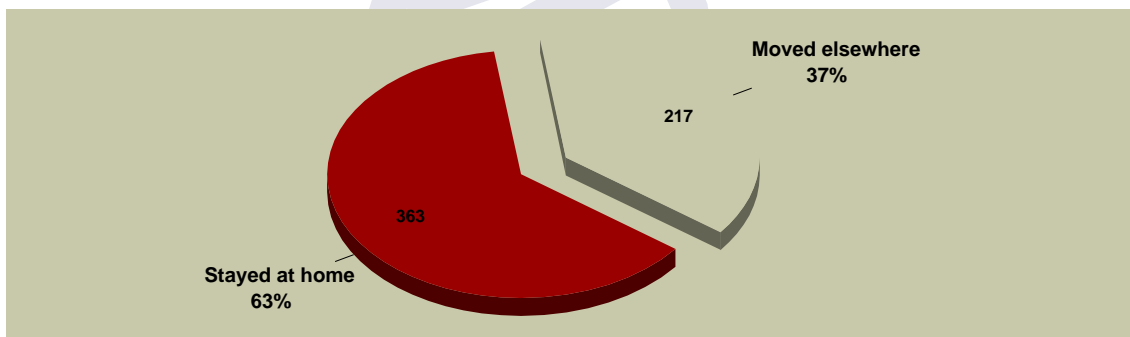


Table 9: Home displacement according to governorate and factional trust

| | Governorate | | | | | Factional trust | | | |
|------------|-------------|------|-------|---------------|-------------|-----------------|-------|--------|------|
| | North Gaza | Gaza | Rafah | Deir Al Balah | Khan Younis | Fateh | Hamas | Others | None |
| Yes | 47% | 44% | 37% | 28% | 27% | 36% | 34% | 53% | 37% |
| No | 53% | 56% | 63% | 72% | 73% | 64% | 66% | 47% | 63% |

When asked about the reason for displacement, 9% of the respondents said because their homes were damaged. The remaining left primarily out of fear and to escape the Israeli attacks.

Moving elsewhere due to damages inflicted on the homes was mainly in the Northern Gaza areas where 18% there said that they left because their homes were damages. As noted in table 12 below, 15% of the respondents trusting Fateh indicated that they left their homes because of damages inflicted on their homes. This percentage was 10%

* Most probably, the displacement of most of the respondents was for a short period as they were able to answer the phone and to return back to their residences.



among the respondents trusting Hamas and 7% among the respondents that do not trust any faction.

Figure 12: Reason for displacement

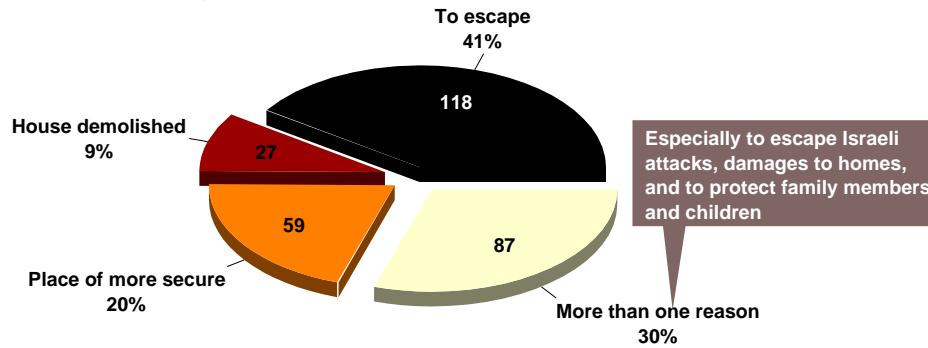


Table 10: Reason for displacement according to governorate and factional trust

| | Governorate | | | | | Factional trust | | | |
|----------------------|-------------|------|-------|---------------|-------------|-----------------|-------|--------|------|
| | North Gaza | Gaza | Rafah | Deir Al Balah | Khan Younis | Fateh | Hamas | Others | None |
| To escape | 43% | 45% | 40% | 41% | 29% | 42% | 36% | 64% | 36% |
| House demolished | 18% | 9% | 4% | 7% | 9% | 15% | 10% | 5% | 7% |
| Place of more secure | 21% | 23% | 16% | 10% | 27% | 13% | 23% | 14% | 24% |
| More than one reason | 18% | 23% | 40% | 41% | 36% | 31% | 31% | 18% | 33% |

VI. Household needs

The majority of the respondents (34%) said that the main need of their households is to find security for children, followed by 21% who want electricity. About 22% of the respondents said that their households require more than one need including clean water, psychological support, in addition to security for children, medication, food, etc.

Figure 13: Basic household requirement

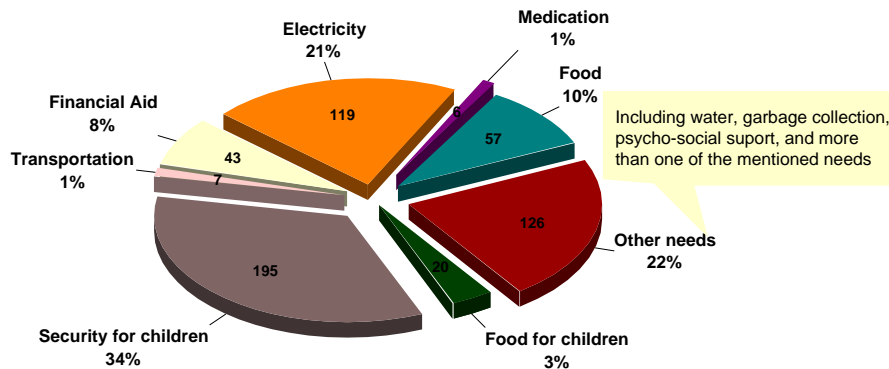




Table 11: Basic household requirement according to governorate and factional trust

| | Governorate | | | | | Factional trust | | | |
|------------------------------|-------------|------|-------|---------------|-------------|-----------------|-------|--------|------|
| | North Gaza | Gaza | Rafah | Deir Al Balah | Khan Younis | Fateh | Hamas | Others | None |
| Food | 10% | 10% | 12% | 3% | 13% | 6% | 12% | 9% | 12% |
| Medication | 2% | 1% | 0% | 1% | 2% | 0% | 1% | 6% | 1% |
| Electricity | 22% | 22% | 16% | 16% | 25% | 23% | 22% | 19% | 19% |
| Financial aid | 9% | 7% | 7% | 9% | 5% | 10% | 7% | 0% | 7% |
| Transportation | 0% | 1% | 2% | 2% | 1% | 1% | 1% | 0% | 1% |
| Security for children | 31% | 28% | 38% | 43% | 35% | 34% | 34% | 47% | 32% |
| Food for children | 5% | 4% | 3% | 5% | 1% | 4% | 4% | 3% | 4% |
| Other needs | 20% | 26% | 22% | 20% | 18% | 22% | 19% | 16% | 24% |

