

Abstract

Femicide and Gender-based Violence in the Family: A Review of Systemic Action in Israel

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In recent years, over 20 women have been murdered in Israel each year, many of them by the men who were closest to them. From September to November 2018 alone, six women were murdered, bringing the issue to the national agenda and impressively mobilizing a variety of stakeholders seeking broad action. In the wake of the public outcry, hundreds of women took part in protests across the country on October 18; in November, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women was marked more intensively; and on December 4, a women's strike was held during which dozens of companies and authorities were shut down for 24 minutes, commemorating the 24 victims murdered up to that date in 2018 (two more women were murdered in the following weeks, bringing the total number of women murdered in 2018 to 26). All these events involved women and organizations from all corners of Israeli society as well as broad organizing of civil society and social activists.

Sheatufim is a non-profit organization specializing in cross-sectoral dialogue and collaborative social impact approaches to solving complex social problems. The organization has been asked to help brainstorm possible courses of action to minimize the number of female murder victims and reduce the level of violence against women in Israel, particularly to leverage mobilization and raise consciousness in the public arena. As a first step, an initial investigation of the issue and mapping of the field were carried out. The findings are presented in the current document.

The main purpose of this report is to review and map the systemic actions in combatting violence against women in the family in Israel, and to offer an initial impression of such systemic measures elsewhere in the world.

Generating this report involved a number of steps and spanned approximately eight months. In the first phase, relevant core documents from Israel were identified and studied, including Knesset Research and Information Center reports, government commission summaries, state comptroller reports, reports from social organizations, and more. In addition, our information manager was asked to identify worldwide systemic measures that have been implemented in recent decades in order to deal with the phenomenon of violence against women, in particular with the murder of women. Additionally, a limited number of interviews and conversations were held with

representatives from the government and civil society in order to deepen the picture presented.

In the second phase, we sought to validate the findings and the draft report via representatives of civil society organizations engaged in the field. In accordance with the mapping results, we approached some 25 organizations and invited their representatives to read the report and attend a meeting to discuss its findings and implications. This meeting was held in May 2019 at Sheatufim, and resulted in several changes in the document chapters. Likewise, the chapter "What's next?" was added to describe the key systemic changes necessary to combat gender-based violence in Israel, in accordance with specialists in the field.

In this context, it is important to note that while the learning process initially focused on the phenomenon of murder of women (femicide), it soon became clear that one cannot detach it from the broader issue of violence against women in the family. Therefore, the starting point for discussing the data presented here recognizes that a systemic solution aimed at reducing the number of women murdered by close relatives will also involve addressing a range of issues pertaining to violence against women and violence in general.

The report consists of the following seven chapters:

Chapter One outlines the boundaries of the report and the definitions of gender-based violence and violence against women in the family.

Chapter Two presents a compilation of up-to-date data on gender-based violence and domestic violence against women in Israel.

Chapter Three describes how the phenomenon of violence against women has been dealt with in Israel. The first part addresses the major events in the history of systemic treatment of violence against women in Israel, while the second part details the main solutions that currently exist in Israel to violence against women (including domestic violence in general).

Chapter Four presents insights from an initial mapping of the stakeholders in the field. The result of this mapping process, which includes a detailed list of all public, private, and third sector stakeholders, can be found in Appendix A of the report.

Chapter Five offers a summary of our insights regarding the treatment of domestic violence against women in Israel, following the data and existing solutions presented in the previous chapters.

Chapter Six briefly presents a number of systemic models for addressing gender-based violence and violence against women implemented worldwide.

Chapter Seven outlines courses of action that can promote wide-scale change in this arena. The chapter is based on a joint discussion held with some twenty representatives of civil society organizations dealing with the fight against gender violence in Israel. Some of the proposals relate to the expansion or deepening of existing modes of action, while others significantly alter the discourse, the definitions of the relevant actors, and the procedures currently in place. The chapter presents all of these in a concise manner and thus outlines a wide range of possible steps that could serve as a basis for ongoing planning processes of organizations and partnerships.

We hope that this report, which presents an overarching perspective gathered from the multiple viewpoints of diverse social organizations, can help promote the activities of all stakeholders in the field. We also hope that it will serve as a tool for finding new and collaborative ways to work for change.

To read the full document in Hebrew, [click here](#).

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