



# FEMICIDE AND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE IN THE FAMILY

A Review of Systemic Action in Israel

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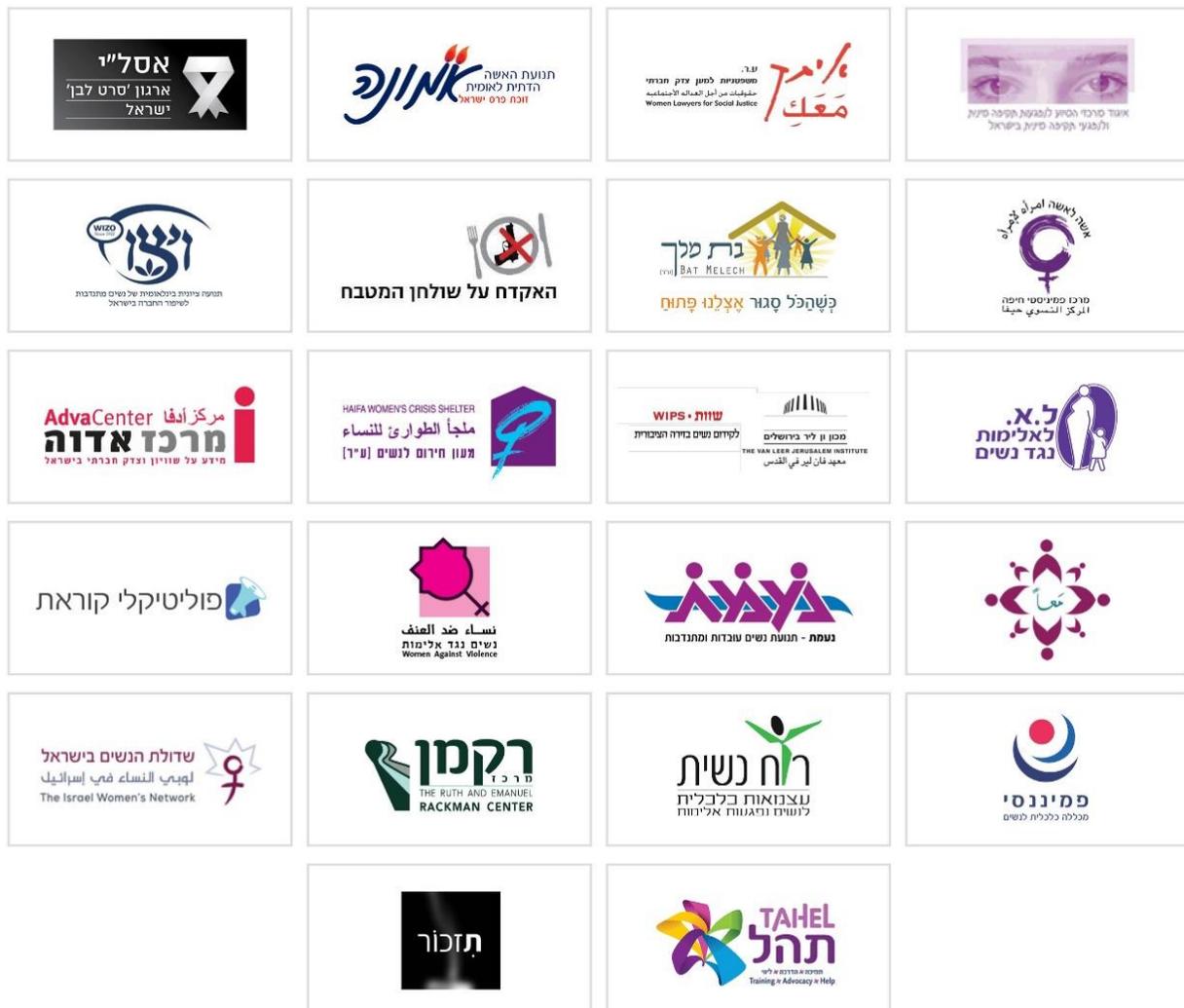


The main purpose of this report is to review and map the systemic actions taken to combat violence against women in the family in Israel, and to offer an initial view of such measures taken elsewhere in the world.

The preparation of the document took about eight months, during which a meeting was held with over 20 representatives of civil society organizations engaged in various aspects of this struggle. The purpose of the meeting was to validate the findings of the mapping we conducted based on the literature and a small number of interviews, and to incorporate the point of view of those who possess a great deal of important knowledge by virtue of where they are and what they do in the field.

Featured on this page is a list all the organizations that contributed to the writing of the report during and after the meeting. Our thanks and appreciation go out to all who participated in the process, shared their knowledge and insights, read our work and commented on it.

We hope that this report - which provides a snapshot from multiple perspectives of diverse organizations - can help promote the activities of all stakeholders in this field, and serve as a tool for finding joint new ways to bring about change.





# INTRODUCTION

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## Background and Objectives

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In recent years, over 20 women have been murdered in Israel each year, many of them by 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, to commemorate the 24 victims murdered up to that date in 2018.<sup>1</sup> All these events involved women and organizations from all facets of Israeli society as well as broad organizing of civil society and social activists - both male and female.

Sheatufim is a non-profit organization specializing in cross-sectoral dialogue and collaborative social impact approaches to solving complex social problems. The organization was 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 mapping of the field was carried out. Its findings are presented in this report.

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## Method and Structure

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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 overview of such systemic actions 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

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<sup>1</sup> More women were murdered in the following weeks, bringing the total number of female murder victims in 2018 to 26.



manager was asked to identify systemic action plans that have been implemented around the world in recent decades in order to deal with the phenomenon of violence against women, in particular with femicide. Additionally, a limited number of interviews and conversations were held with representatives from the government and civil society in order to broaden 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, a chapter entitled “What's next?” was added, to describe the key systemic changes which need to be made - according to specialists in the field - in the wider system addressing, or which needs to address, gender-based violence and femicide in the family in Israel. For a list of the participants in the meeting, which thus contributed to the writing of this report, see the previous page.

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 men who are closely related to them should also involve addressing a range of issues pertaining to violence against women and violence in general.

The report consists of the following seven chapters, each of which focuses on a different aspect of the topic:

**Chapter 1** outlines the boundaries of the report and the definitions of gender-based violence and domestic violence against women.

**Chapter 2** presents a compilation of up-to-date data on gender-based violence and domestic violence against women in Israel.

**Chapter 3** 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 mechanisms and solutions currently in place in Israel to violence against women (including domestic violence in general).



**Chapter 4** presents insights from an initial mapping of the stakeholders in the field. A detailed list of the results of the mapping appears in [Appendix A](#). Please note that this list is not necessarily an exhaustive one, and may even be partial in some respects, due to the evolving dynamics of the field in civil society, especially in recent times.

**Chapter 5** offers a summary of our insights into the treatment of domestic violence against women in Israel, following the data and existing mechanism and solutions presented in the previous chapters.

**Chapter 6** briefly presents a number of systemic models for addressing gender-based violence against women implemented worldwide.

**Chapter 7** outlines courses of action that can promote wide-scale change in this arena. The chapter is based on a joint discussion held with over twenty representatives of civil society organizations dealing with the struggle against gender-based violence in Israel. Some of the suggestions raised by the civil society representatives relate to the expansion or deepening of existing modes of action, while others significantly alter the discourse, the 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 courses of action that could serve as a basis for ongoing planning processes by organizations and partnerships in the future.

## Chapter 1: Boundaries & Definitions

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### Between Domestic Violence and Gender-Based Violence

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One of the main challenges in addressing the phenomenon of violence against women is to delineate its boundaries. Sexual violence, physical violence, psychological violence, and economic violence - are all aspects of violence against women that occur both within and outside the family. These types of violence do not always overlap but are not mutually exclusive, and often, a woman will experience more than one such type of violence. Since defining the scope of the phenomenon dictates how it is handled, the estimated number of victims, and the amount of the resources needed in order to deal with it, the question of boundaries and how to define it is of great significance.

The Istanbul Convention on [Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence](#) offers several key definitions in this area, distinguishing between: violence against women, domestic violence, and gender-based violence. These concepts are described by the



Convention using a wide range of phenomena and incidents, including physical, sexual, economic and psychological violence, with one clear common denominator: they are all acts of abuse that are almost always directed at women, girls and/or children, and stem from gender inequality and social power gaps between the aggressor and victim. Most violence takes place domestically, within the family, hence the term "domestic violence". Violence sometimes takes place outside the boundaries of the family, and is used against women only by virtue of their being women, or women are clearly the main victims of it, which is why it is termed "gender-based violence" or "violence against women."<sup>2</sup>

In Israel, there are various definitions of the phenomenon, which tend to mix the concepts. For example, in the Glossary of [Infomed - Israel's Medical Portal](#), the Hebrew term for "violence against women" appears as the translation of the English term "domestic violence", and is accordingly described as a "*ongoing pattern of behavior by the spouse expressed in assault, coercion, intimidation, terrorization, and use of various control techniques on a daily basis. The behavior is intended to gain control over, and the obedience and submission of, the spouse.*"

By contrast, the [Action Plan for the Implementation of the Recommendations of the Inter-Ministerial Committee](#) of 2017, uses a definition based on those of the OECD and the Istanbul Convention, but does not explicitly address the gender issue, or the unique harm to women, as follows: "*Violence is any action taken with the intention of hurting another person or that is perceived as such. Violence is characterized by a series of abusive behaviors and escalation in the severity of these behaviors. Domestic violence takes place within the family and in the context of inter-family relationships, including spouses or life partners in the present and past, and harm inflicted by a member of the extended family.*"

Either way, whether it is called gender-based violence, violence against women, or domestic violence, there is agreement among those involved in the field that the phenomenon includes various types of violence, including:<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> See the [Istanbul Convention, Article 3](#).

<sup>3</sup> The first six terms, which are more familiar and relatively self-evident, are defined herein based on the definitions of the term "[violence against women](#)" in the Infomed portal; the three other concepts have been added in recent years - see the sources in the following references.



- **Physical violence** - injury inflicted on a woman's body through the use of physical force such as beatings, kicks and punches and sometimes by using various objects, including weapons. The injuries cause immediate and lasting damage, disability and even death.
- **Sexual violence** - treating women as sexual objects; committing molestation; having sexual relations against a woman's will under threat, extortion, coercion or violence or in times/situations so as to pose risk to her health.
- **Mental violence** - is characterized by verbal violence, intimidation and threats, condemnation and criticism of the woman's behavior, her abilities, her functioning as a mother, as well as her mental health.
- **Social isolation** - barring a woman from social and family ties, preventing her from going out to work and/or study or from leaving the house, accompanying her everywhere and having conversations in her place.
- **Economic violence** - preventing a woman from going to work or controlling her wages, from accessing basic needs such as money, food, medicine or clothing, from accessing the family's income, and/or controlling the extent to which she can do any of the above.
- **Stalking** - a concept taken from the world of hunting, which refers to a situation where an animal lays in wait for its victim. In the context of violence against women, it refers to a man laying in wait for, and following around, a woman. Stalking has characteristic verbal and behavioral manifestations such as interrogating a woman, following her around, making threatening telephone calls, and using various forms of harassment. These behaviors result from compulsive thoughts of suspicion and jealousy, combined with a man's perception of ownership and mastery over the woman.
- **Spiritual violence** is mainly used against religious or pious women, and refers to any attempt to harm the spiritual self, spiritual life or spiritual well-being of a woman.<sup>4</sup>
- **Migratory victimization** - a concept that describes a complex phenomenon whereby the State of Israel makes possible - through regulatory tools and legal arrangements - violence by Israeli men against their immigrant spouses.<sup>5</sup>
- **Legal violence** - the use of legal rights and courts of law in order to confront, abuse and control a woman, in the context of legal family proceedings, mainly divorce.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Nicole Dahan and Tzipi Levy. [Spiritual Abuse: An initial conceptualization following an ultra-Orthodox therapeutic group](#). Society and Welfare 31 1 (March 2011): 27-7.

<sup>5</sup> Hadar Dancig-Rosenberg and Naomi Levenkron. [Violence Against Immigrants Law Review 37 \(2015\), 341-387](#)

<sup>6</sup> [Legal Violence in Family Proceedings](#), the Ministry of Justice's website.



In light of the diverse phenomena described above, it should be noted that the Ministry of Labor, Welfare and Social Services (hereinafter - the “Ministry of Welfare”), which is the leading government entity in this field, does not address the concept of “gender-based violence” in its schemes, but rather only recognizes and deals with “violence in the family” - directed against women (including teenage girls and young girls), teenage boys and young boys, the elderly, as well as men who are harmed in this context.

## Chapter 2: Compilation of Up-to-Date Data

### Violence against Women in Israel, with Emphasis on Domestic Violence

Following the above discussion about the complexity of defining the phenomenon, it is important to qualify any attempt to present data on violence against women in the family, due to two main difficulties:

1. Most reports do not specify the types of violence they cover, and are therefore likely to present incomplete information about the scope of the phenomenon. Most of the reports seem to relate to physical and possibly also sexual violence, while the other types of violence are not counted - whether because they are not reported, or because they are not sufficiently recognized.
2. Different entities present data based on different sources of information, different methods of collecting information, and different definitions. As a result, data are incomparable and it is difficult to form an overall snapshot.

**According to the Ministry of Welfare**, in 2015, 14,136 new complaints were filed with domestic violence units in municipalities, with 10,686 of the complainants treated - 65% whom were women. During the same year, 738 women who were victims of violence stayed at 14 shelters across Israel, with 989 children. 41% of them were Arabs and 24% - immigrants. Most of the women who stayed at the shelters suffered from ongoing violence, and only 6% of them came to the shelter following a single violent incident. About 17% of all complaints filed with the prevention and treatment of domestic violence units of the Ministry of Welfare in 2015 were by immigrants. Of the immigrants treated at the centers, 71% were women, 26% were men and 3% were children. Furthermore, according to the data, in 2015, more than 1,200 Arab families were treated in 29 designated centers operated by the Ministry of Welfare in Arab communities, which constituted 13% of all families treated by the ministry's centers.



At the 118 hotline - a 24/7 welfare call center operated by the Ministry of Welfare - 1,340 calls were received regarding domestic violence in 2015, of which 923 were from women who reported violence by their spouses, and 69 from men who reported violence by their spouses.

During 2015, 31 women and 73 children stayed in 12 rehabilitative transitional housing, provided by the Ministry of Welfare across Israel, for women who have completed their stay in shelters and require a subsequent treatment facility, with emphasis on rehabilitation and restart in all areas of life.

During 2015, the Adult Probation Service of the Ministry of Welfare received 4,420 referrals for review in order to diagnose and assess the risk inherent in domestic violence offenses, which constitute approximately 21% of all referrals to the Service. Approximately 3,200 of the referrals (72%) involved violent offenses by a male partner, with the rest involving violent offenses against children, parents and other domestic offenses.

During that year, the Probation Service of the Ministry of Welfare handled approximately 1,200 probation orders in the field of domestic violence. A probation order is a probationary period for a person who is found guilty, which is mainly therapeutic - rather than penal - in nature. The orders included approx. 300 men in 22 dedicated treatment groups for men who use violence against their female partners. The Ministry also handled about 30 cases of men who were placed under house arrest for committing violent offenses against their female partners; the men were part of three treatment groups across Israel.

About 70 more men were treated at Beit Noam, an intensive daily therapeutic setting run by the Ministry, which also provides sleeping arrangements; another 70 men were treated as part of the Renewed Dialogue program.

**The healthcare system** received reports of 4,912 cases of domestic violence and sexual assault against women and girls in 2015; the victims received treatment in hospitals, HMOs and family healthcare stations. **The most common cause of injury was physical abuse, followed by mental abuse.** Among girls aged 13-18, the most common cause of injury was sexual assault, with half of the assault cases being within the family. The most common cause of injury among women aged 65 and over was physical abuse.

According to data reported by the **Association of Rape Crisis Centers**, 9,197 new complaints were filed in 2015, 87% of which were by women, teenage girls and young girls. More than a quarter of the injuries in which the identity of the attacker was reported were committed by a family member.



According to data from the **Israel Police** Statistical Abstract, between 2007 and 2016, 169,031 case files were opened following complaints by women on domestic violence. **The number of case files opened for such offenses usually increases from year to year, in proportion to the rate of population growth in Israel.**

### **Thus, how many women in Israel are affected by all types of violence?**

[WIZO's Violence Index](#) reports for 2016-2017 indicate that, according to estimates by welfare officials, there are about 200,000 battered women living in Israel (the terminology was taken from the reports).

According to data from the [Association of Aid Centers](#), **one in three women is sexually assaulted during her life**. These data should take into account the estimates that only **one in four women who are victims of physical violence, and one in ten women who are victims of sexual violence, reports this to a relevant entity**.

Other data that should be added: the number of women who suffer non-physical violence - such as economic violence, mental violence, legal violence, and spiritual violence - phenomena that are almost **unaccounted for and undocumented**; there are also **populations who fail to report violence**, such as women who are asylum seekers and migrant workers.

If combined, these data would yield a very high number of abused women, where the actual figure is still unknown.



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## Data on Femicide in Israel

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In the absence of a common database for the various authorities, the data below describe the phenomenon from different perspectives, depending on their source.

According to a report by the **Knesset Information Center**, in the nine years between 2007 and 2016, 126 women were murdered by their present or past partners. According to data by the **Her Memorial** project, between 2008 and 2018, 218 women were murdered on the basis of gender, not all of whom by their partners.

According to **police data**, in 2013-2016, 113 women in Israel were murdered on criminal grounds. 51% of them were murdered by their spouses or by another relative. 53% of all murdered women are non-Jews. This rate is considerably higher than that of non-Jewish women in Israel's population. About one third of the women murdered by their partners filed a complaint about domestic violence prior to the incident.

In the two years spanning from 2015 to 2016, almost half of the women murdered by their partners were known to the police due to domestic violence. Furthermore, about half of the women murdered by their partners were known to the welfare services, although there is not necessarily an overlap between the two. In other words, not every woman who was known to the police was also known to the welfare services and vice versa.

The data presented so far include, in effect, data dealing with cases where an attempted murder ended in the woman's death. Thus, the data on all the attempted murders presented below are also significant to the understanding of the scope of the phenomenon:

- In 2007-2016, 238 case files for attempted femicide were opened by the Israel Police, other than due to terrorism or security related events.
- In 2015-2016, there was a 67% increase in the number of case files opened for attempted femicide (excluding terrorism or security-related events) compared to their average number in 2007-2014.
- Approximately half of the attempted femicide victims are of Arab origin. The Israel Police did not provide data regarding immigrant victims (there is no segmentation by country of origin).

An interesting case in point, that arises from the data analysis in this context, is that in one third of all **cases of attempted femicide**, the suspect is a family member, with 62% being the women's partners. By contrast, in approximately half of the murder cases (i.e., "successful"



attempts), the suspect is the murdered woman's partner. It may thus be said that, in effect, partners pose a much greater risk to women than other family members.

The following table includes a compilation and segmentation of the women murdered by their partner, by year:<sup>7</sup>

### Women murdered by their partner, by year

Year	No. of women murdered	Nonimmigrant Israeli Jews	From former CIS	Of Ethiopian origin	Arabs	Nonresident women murdered
2013	10	5	4	0	1	5
2014	10	2	4	1	3	0
2015	11	3	3	1	4	1
2016	8	3	2	0	3	0

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## Data on Incarceration and Punishment

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To illustrate the extent of incarceration and punishment of domestic violence offenders, we hereby present data from the Israel Prison Service data (IPS): In 2016, 2,262 inmates were classified as having a domestic violence background (including violence against children). Of these, 1,650 were convicted and 612 were under arrest and yet to be sentenced.

It should be emphasized that inmates are classified as having a domestic violence background if the offense they have been convicted of is directly related to domestic violence, or if they have been convicted of another offense but there is information that they have a background of domestic violence.

98% of those classified as domestic violence inmates are men, about 55% of them with a domestic violence profile are Jews, about 38% are Muslims, and the remainder are members of other faiths.

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<sup>7</sup> From the report: [Murder and Attempted Murder of Women with an Emphasis on a Background of Domestic Violence](#), Knesset Research and Information Center, 2017

**To summarize this data compilation chapter:**

- It is estimated that approximately 200,000 women in Israel are victims of physical violence, but since there are insufficient data on the number of women that are victims of other types of violence - whether sexual, economic, legal, psychological and other, and only a quarter of victims file reports on violence - it appears that the number of women exposed to violence is significantly higher.
- Based on existing data - there is no evidence of a consistent decline in violence and femicide figures over the years.
- The absence of a uniform database, common to all the authorities involved in handling the issue is evident; such a database would provide a clear, comprehensive snapshot of the situation.

## Chapter 3: Ways to Address Violence against Women in Israel

### Key milestones in Handling Violence against Women in Israel

This chapter emphasizes the handling of violence against women by state authorities in Israel; however, it should be noted that many of the steps described below are, in fact, the result of pressure by, and cooperation with, various civil-society entities. In addition, various instances of the handling, such as operation of shelters for women victims of violence, are, in effect, carried out by social organizations. As a result, it is important to recognize the key role of civil society and social organizations in this field, as can be seen from the sequence of events described below.

The first shelter for women victims of domestic violence was established in 1977, on the independent initiative of five female public activists. By the end of 1984, three more shelters were established, all by third sector organizations. During the initial years, the state's involvement in the shelters was low, reflected mainly in the referral of women who needed them or expulsion of violent men from them. Later on, the welfare services became more involved, both in terms of budgeting and supervision.



In 1983, the first treatment center for women affected by violence was established by Naamat. Demand for the service was immense, following which additional centers were opened. In 1986, the first treatment group for violent men opened. Here as well, most of the action on the issue was taken by third sector organizations, with little government intervention, until the early 1990s.

The turning point took place in 1986, when the Attorney General appointed an inter-ministerial committee on domestic violence, headed by Yehudit Karp. The committee submitted a concluding report in October 1989 with recommendations in four areas:

1. Recommendations to the police as an investigative and prosecuting authority
2. Recommendations to the State Attorney's Office as a prosecuting and appellant authority
3. Additional recommendations for cross-systemic collaboration and training of the enforcement functions
4. Recommendations for legislative amendments

Various government ministries started implementing the committee's recommendations, and since 1990, these authorities have dealt with the issue in an orderly, extensive fashion, including by way of legislation, enforcement and therapeutic solutions.

In 1991, the [Domestic Violence Prevention Law](#) was enacted. The law provides protection to persons who have experienced severe violence in a family setting - whether physical or mental - and who subsequently pursue legal action to seek protection for themselves and the rest of their family. The law does not specify how to deal with violence towards women.

In 1991, the first state-sponsored center for the treatment of domestic violence was established in Haifa.

In 1995, an additional committee was set up to examine response and solutions to domestic violence. The [committee's report](#) was issued in 1998.

In 1998, the [Sexual Harassment Prevention Law](#) was enacted. The law defines five types of behavior as sexual harassment, stating that such behavior constitutes a criminal offense punishable by incarceration as well as a civil tort that allows the court to award compensation without proof of harm.

Another important change that took place during the 1990s was the establishment of more shelters for women victims of domestic violence - for the first time as collaborations between civil society organizations and the Ministry of Welfare. Since 2001, the shelters have been staffed



around the clock, year-round, which allows for women affected by violence and their children to be received and treated at all hours of the day.

The State Comptroller's Report for 2002 included a [chapter on the handling of domestic violence](#). Following the report, it was decided to convene a committee after each femicide - to discuss and draw lessons. Since 2004, the committee has been under the purview of the Director General of the Ministry of Welfare, in cooperation with the Ministry of Public Security, Israel Police, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, and the municipality in which the incident took place. It should be emphasized that the committee has no statutory standing, no definite and clear powers nor a written, clearly- defined work procedure (according to the Knesset Research and Information Center). In addition, the Committee deals solely with murders of women by their partners, but not with murder of women by other family members, although such cases may also be gender-based. Furthermore, the committee does not deal with men in same-sex relationships who were murdered by their partners, nor with cases where the murdered women had no legal status in Israel, since such cases are not under its purview.

One of the main outcomes of the committee's work is the application of a joint work procedure with the Israel Police, called the [Procedure for Improvement of Coordination between the Ministry of Labor, Welfare and Social Services and the Israel Police in the Field of Domestic Violence, with Emphasis on Women under High-Risk](#).

In 2009, the Ministry of Aliyah and Integration issued a [report on the murder of women of Ethiopian origin](#), which included practical recommendations. According to the State Comptroller's report published two years later, these recommendations have not been implemented.

A report published in December 2012 by the State Comptroller included a chapter on the [actions taken by municipalities to prevent spousal abuse and treat its victims](#). The report noted, among other things, the lack of an inclusive entity handling domestic violence, the need for educational and advocacy programs to prevent the phenomenon, as well as the need to develop culturally sensitive solutions for the Arab population, and improve collaboration between welfare services and the Police.

In 2012-2014, civil society organizations took broad action to draft the [Comprehensive Action Plan to Implement UN Security Council Resolution 1325 in Israel](#).<sup>8</sup> The resolution recognizes the importance of the role of women in preventing violent conflicts, and establishes the duty of UN

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<sup>8</sup> The project to create an overarching action plan was led by Itach-Maaki Women Lawyers for Social Justice, the Shavot/WIPS - The Center for the Advancement of Women in the Public Sphere at the Van Leer Institute, and the Anu organization, with more than 40 women's and human rights organizations, women from academia, and feminist activists.



member states to involve women in all decision-making, especially where security and peace are concerned. Over 70 states developed an action plan to promote the resolution, many including reference to actions aimed at eliminating violence against women. A program drafted by Israeli civil society organizations includes a chapter which deals with the struggle against domestic violence directed at women, sections of which were presented to the Knesset in May 2014, in an attempt to [promote the establishment of a national authority to handle, treat and prevent domestic violence as a whole, as well as violence against women](#).

Israel has passed into law Resolution 1325 in the amendment to the Equal Rights of Women Law. Nevertheless, there is still no formal action plan to implement the resolution.

In October 2014 - following a meeting chaired by the Minister of Public Security and the Minister of Labor, Welfare and Social Services - it was decided to establish the Inter-Ministerial Committee for the Prevention and Treatment of Domestic Violence. The objective of the committee was to develop recommendations for improving the systemic handling of the issue.

In December 2014, the Government passed [Resolution No. 2331](#), on the promotion of gender equality and the assimilation of gender thinking. Among other things, the resolution addresses the establishment of an inter-ministerial team to develop a comprehensive action plan to promote gender equality, which will also address the issue of boosting women's safety and protecting them from various types of violence directed against them. To date, the team has not been established.

In late 2014, an inter-ministerial committee began its work on domestic violence. It was headed by the Deputy Director General of the Ministry of Public Security and submitted its recommendations in June 2016. The committee's main recommendations focus on the need for cooperation between the professionals involved in treating victims of domestic violence, as a basis for improving the way Israel handles the issue. It addressed the need for cooperation both through transfer of information between the various entities, and in overseeing and improving the therapeutic continuum of those involved in the cycle of violence.

The Committee also identified several barriers to the treatment of domestic violence, femicide, and treatment of women at high risk:

- Organizational and legal barriers that prevent information that may be relevant to the treatment of a family entrapped in the cycle of violence from reaching entities charged with treatment and enforcement.
- Difficulty in pooling and transferring information between the relevant entities, which may not be a result of legal restrictions



- Absence of an overarching entity at the local and national level; rather, treatment is scattered among various entities
- Existence of three different risk assessment entities that do not collaborate (the Police, Ministry of Welfare and Ministry of Health) and fail to treat unique sectors with adequate cultural sensitivity
- Absence of protective solutions for women for whom the shelters do not provide an adequate solution, including women at high risk and under ongoing risk, who do not wish to remain in a shelter
- Absence of a procedure for dealing with situations in which a high-risk partner who has been imprisoned for committing domestic violence is released from prison and may commit another domestic violence offense without having a protection order issued against them, as well as difficulty in locating and identifying violations of protection orders.

Following the committee's recommendations, an additional inter-ministerial committee - led by the Ministry of Welfare - was set up to implement the recommendations. This committee consisted of ten teams whose recommendations were submitted in June 2017. The teams consulted, among other things, with third sector organizations active in the field and drafted a five-year plan, the cost of which is estimated at NIS 250 million over the five years. The recommendations were adopted by the government as a national plan, but no budgetary resources were allocated to implement them. Charged with the implementation of the plan, the Ministry of Welfare works, in cooperation with the other relevant entities, to prioritize and prepare a budget for various sections of the plan. According to the ministry, it intends to include the cost of the plan in the ministry's basic budget beginning in 2019.

In addition to the sections outlined in the Ministry of Welfare's plan, the recommendations of the implementation committee also included several legislative amendments, for example, adding economic violence to the Domestic Violence Prevention Law. It should be noted that if such legislation is passed, its implementation would involve additional budgetary costs, and it is unclear whether such costs have been taken into account in the Ministry's current cost calculation.

[In July 2017, Amendment No. 2 to the Welfare Services Law \(Adaptation Grant for Women Who Stayed in Battered Women's Shelter\)](#) was passed into law, allocating a rehabilitation grant to battered women who had stayed in shelters. Actions have been taken to implement the amendment, but it has not yet been fully implemented.

Another aspect of handling the issue of victims of domestic violence concerns immigrant women and illegal women immigrants in Israel. According to a recent report published by the Refugee and Immigrant Assistance Center and the Center for Legal Aid for Immigrants in 2018, in 2007 a



special procedure was issued in Israel that allows women who are immigrants or illegal immigrants who suffer domestic violence and are married to an abusive Israeli citizen to attain permanent resident status. Until that time, women immigrants who left their abusive husband before the procedures for attaining citizenship have been completed, faced deportation from Israel, since their status depended on their being married to an Israeli man. The report monitors the implementation of the procedure over the years and the actions taken by social organizations that have sought to provide such solutions to immigrant women. According to the report, despite the procedure, there has been no improvement in the status of women immigrants who are victims of violence, and in recent years, the authorities have made it even more difficult for women immigrants leaving their Israeli partners due to violence to remain in Israel.

**To summarize this section of a brief historical overview:**

- It may be said that in the past forty years, there has been a marked development in the State of Israel's handling of violence against women and domestic violence.
- There is significant legislation in the matter, and it is being handled by government committees on an ongoing basis.
- Civil society organizations are engaged in extensive, pioneering activity leading to significant developments in the public sector.
- Nevertheless, many of the gaps that appear in various reports published in the past twenty years are still in place, and it seems that the right way to solve current issues has yet to be found.
- It also appears that the resources invested in dealing with the issue are inadequate.



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## Current Solutions to Handling Violence against Women in Israel

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This chapter focuses on solutions to violence against women and domestic violence currently in place in Israel, the scope of which has expanded significantly over the years, as aforementioned: there are now a total of 110 centers for the treatment of domestic violence, support hotlines, shelters and safe housing, as well as a wide range of treatment and rehabilitation programs. Nevertheless, there are still many gaps in handling the issue, as is evident from the data presented in the previous chapter, and as shall be described later in the report.

The following is a description of the main solutions currently in place to address the issue, with emphasis on solutions with significant involvement the government - whether they are implemented by the government or that the government is involved in their funding, and whether third sector entities are charged with implementation (the mapping is primarily based on a [report published by the Adva Center in 2017](#), which dealt with the analysis of budgets earmarked for the issue).

### Punishment

A key means for punishing violence is by incarceration. This is a costly solution and we do not have data to assess its effectiveness in preventing repeated violence and in rehabilitating inmates. Due to its high cost, this budgetary item accounts for the highest amounts out of all budgets dedicated to the issue in Israel.

The Adva Center report estimates that in 2015, **NIS 275 million was spent on incarceration for domestic violence offenses**. The figure does not include incarceration costs for offenses of sexual violence or gender-based violence outside the family. By comparison, according to the same report, the **budget allocated to shelters and centers for victims of domestic violence was NIS 60 million**.<sup>9</sup>

The substantial monetary investment in punishment does not mean that the extent of incarceration provides a comprehensive solution to all cases of domestic violence. To illustrate this point - between January and October 2016, 18,907 case files of spousal violence opened by the police, about two-thirds of which were reported by women, and almost 60% of case files were closed (most due to "lack of evidence" or "lack of public interest").

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<sup>9</sup> The report notes that, in the absence of a central database, accurate numbers are difficult to come by. Moreover, these are only government budgets, while shelters and some centers for the treatment of violence also raise funds from philanthropic sources, so it is likely that the actual amount invested in the treatment of the women is higher.



## Treatment and Protection

Following is a description of the main solutions for the treatment and protection of women victims of domestic violence:

Centers for the Treatment of Domestic Violence - Municipalities operate 110 centers for the treatment of domestic violence, a third of which are regional. Some are operated by the municipalities' social services departments and others, under the supervision of the Ministry of Welfare, are operated by non-profit organizations. A few centers also include units for the treatment of sexual abuse.

Shelters for battered women - In Israel, there are a total of 14 shelters for women victims of violence, two of which are for Arab women and their children, two for a mixed population of Jewish and Arab women, and two shelters for religious and ultra-Orthodox women and their children. The remaining shelters are intended for all population segments. All shelters are operated by non-profit organizations, in cooperation with, and for, the Ministry of Labor and Welfare, and under its professional supervision. The shelters are partially budgeted by the Ministry of Welfare but the operating organizations need philanthropic funds to supplement the state budget in order to operate the shelters. In addition to providing protection, the shelters render a range of services aimed at rehabilitating women and children and preparing them for life without violence in the community. There was a gradual decrease in the percentage of women staying in shelters out of the total number of case files opened for women's complaints on domestic violence: from an average of 5.4% in 2007-2012 to an average of approx. 4% in 2013-2017. In this context, it should be noted that the cost of staying in a shelter is 20 times higher than the cost of care in the community.

Support hotlines - The Ministry of Welfare operates a national emergency hotline on various issues, including domestic violence, which operates 24/7 in all languages. Furthermore, the assistance centers for victims of sexual assault have a general assistance hotline and dedicated assistance hotlines for Arab and religious women.

Police social worker in the centers for the prevention of domestic violence - a joint program of 'City Without Violence', the Police, the Unit for Crime Victims in the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Welfare. The program is available in 30 localities and aims to assist in filing complaints on violence in the family and its proximity. The Committee for the Treatment of Domestic Violence recommended to expand the program to 100 localities.

Police social worker in City Without Violence - a solution created to strengthen the relationship and therapeutic continuum from the moment of filing a complaint with the Police. The model includes both the Ministry of Welfare and the Police; it involves a social worker meeting the



woman as early as at the police station, explaining the treatment options in the community, helping her contact, and coordinate with, the various services, and supporting those involved in the incident in engaging with the care services. In 2016, the model was implemented at 16 police stations. In July 2017, the Ministry of Public Security announced the program's expansion by recruiting 30 additional social workers, 10 of whom were in Arab local authorities.

Social workers in hospitals and HMOs - as part of a joint project to prevent domestic violence of the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Welfare.

Risk assessment tools - Three such tools have been developed by the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Welfare and the Police. It should be noted that these authorities do not coordinate their actions, and it is therefore impossible to formulate a uniform picture of an offender's degree of risk and provide appropriate treatment.

District Committees - The Ministry of Welfare operates eight district committees in cooperation with the Israel Prison Service. The committees discuss the cases of inmates serving time for domestic violence and incest as well as families who are victims of crimes.

District Committees for Risk Assessment - 4 such committees are operated and budgeted by the Ministry of Welfare, in collaboration with the Ministry of Health.

Protection orders - In recent years, an average of 8,000-9,000 motions for protection orders are filed with the court under the Domestic Violence Prevention Law each year.

Electronic handcuffs - allow electronic supervision of individuals placed under house arrest. In 2005, there was a pilot for electronic handcuffs, which were passed into law in 2014. The current quota for all needs is 750 people at any given time. The cuffs are not used solely for violent offenses against women.

Panic alarm buttons and personal safety applications - allow victims to immediately report a dangerous situation. A woman for whom staying in a shelter is not an option, and who does not have a state-sponsored emergency response solution, needs to pay for a panic alarm button - that costs hundreds of shekels a month - out of her own pocket. The Committee for Treatment of Domestic Violence (2016) recommended to expand the use of panic alarm buttons and personal safety applications and to formulate criteria for determining eligibility for these tools.

The City without Violence Project is operated in 146 municipalities. It should be noted that the program does not specifically address domestic violence; i.e., prevention of domestic violence is not one of the main schemes of the project.



## Treatment and Rehabilitation of Abusive Men

Treatment and rehabilitation efforts are designed to address violence that has already taken place, while attempting to prevent it from recurring. It is hard to assess if preventive treatment can prevent violence that has not yet occurred. Treatment and rehabilitation of men takes place mainly during and after incarceration, as well as in centers for the treatment of domestic violence. The difference between the number of men treated and the number of women treated, in addition to data regarding the number of women affected, raises a question about the adequateness of the response in relation to the need. In addition, no data were found on the extent to which men resume their violent behavior towards women even after participating in treatment.

Accommodation solutions for men removed from their homes due to domestic violence - In 2017, there were only two accommodation solutions for men who were removed from their homes by court order or by the police due to violence against their women partners and who had no alternative living solution. These homes are operated by non-profit organizations and are supervised and budgeted by the Ministry of Welfare.

"Maftechot" residential hostel for men who were incarcerated for domestic violence was established in 2005 by the Prisoner Rehabilitation Authority under the auspices of the Special Initiative Fund of the National Insurance Institute and the RASHI SKTA Foundation. The hostel is designed for 14 tenants who have served prison time for domestic violence.

Treatment of released sex offenders - The Prisoner Rehabilitation Authority operates preventive rehabilitation centers in the community in accordance with the Public Protection of Sex Offenders Law. According to a 2016 report by Adva, 384 people took part in this program until as of the report date.

Group therapy - The Probation Service operates 25 therapy groups for treatment of violent men.

In-prison programs - The Israel Prison Service operates several programs for treatment of domestic violence convicts. According to a 2015 report published by Adva, approximately 1,200 people participated in these programs and about 130 inmates stayed in treatment wards.

Centers for the treatment of domestic violence - men constitute about 25% of the patients in these centers.



## Rehabilitation of Women Affected by Violence and Unique Solutions

As stated above, women are both the primary victims of domestic violence and form the lion's share of persons being treated by domestic violence centers. In addition to the solution provided by the treatment centers, we shall also mention here additional solutions offered in extreme cases, where it is necessary to remove the woman from her home, as well as solutions customized to the cultural needs of various population segments.

Housing for women affected by violence - There are 15 homes for women affected by violence and their children across Israel. The purpose of these transitional settings is to support the process of reintegration into the community, allow for adaptation to independent accommodation, return to work, and reconstruction of the family unit. Out of 15 transitional apartments, two are intended for Arab women and two for religious Jewish/ultra-Orthodox women.

Financial support - A woman who has stayed in the shelter for over 60 days is entitled to an adjustment grant of NIS 8,000 and an additional NIS 1,000 for each of her children who have stayed with her (up to two children). In late June 2017, a comprehensive rehabilitation basket was approved for women leaving the shelters, which includes: intensive rehabilitation by social workers, family support by a dedicated practitioner, assistance in work rehabilitation, and a flexible basket of solutions to remove barriers for adjustment to the community and employment. In addition, as of June 2017, an amendment to the Income Security Law allows any woman staying in a shelter for more than 30 days to file a claim for income support even if they were not entitled to a benefit prior to entering the shelter.

A treatment program for women and children with special needs in shelters was initially implemented in two shelters as a pilot program funded by the Ministry of Welfare. As of September 2017, all 14 shelters provide mental health services for women and children in need. This program operates under the assumption that a significant proportion of women reside at the shelters suffer from post-traumatic stress and various mental disorders as a result of the violence inflicted on them, and some require mental health support.

The "Gsharim" program addresses both prevention, treatment and rehabilitation and is operated by the Ministry of Aliyah and Integration in cooperation with the Ministry of Welfare. The program operates in about 30 community centers for the prevention of domestic violence, and employs approximately 40 social workers who speak Russian and Amharic, working full and part-time.

Economic and employment rehabilitation for women affected by violence - this area is led almost exclusively by civil society organizations (mainly by the non-profit Women's Spirit), both



as part of economic and employment rehabilitation programs, and in promoting legislation and systemic responses to provide long-term solutions for women who are victims of violence.

The Banking Availability Convention - a voluntary charter<sup>10</sup> formulated by the Bank of Israel, the Association of Banks in Israel and the banking system, to reduce the phenomenon of economic violence against women affected by violence, staying in shelters and transitional homes. The [revised version of the convention](#) stipulates that, due to the importance of creating continuity in the process of financial independence, with the women leaving the shelter, the banks will continue to support them for another year after leaving the shelter. In addition, the banks will adopt the shelters and assist them in providing a financial literacy program, among other things by delivering periodic lectures on various financial topics. According to data from the Bank of Israel, 540 women received assistance under the Convention between January 2016 and July 2018.<sup>11</sup>

Additional solutions are offered by the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Welfare, specifically designed for victims of sexual abuse, as well as many solutions offered by civil society organizations on domestic violence against women. Despite all of these solutions, a question arises as to how accessible and readily available are the solutions to a woman who is a victim of violence seeking assistance (it appears that there is currently no single source offering information on all relevant solutions in this context).

## Education and Advocacy

Generally speaking, the level of awareness and exposure to information on violence against women in Israel is low and is mainly focused on extreme violence. There is also a lack of available information that is culturally-adjusted to various population groups (according to the report of the 2017 inter-ministerial committee).

Education and training on violence prevention - training is provided for police officers and social workers. There is also a program by the Ministry of Education to train staff to identify youth who are in a cycle of domestic violence, as well as training programs for non-violent relationships, life skills, etc. It is unclear how the education system addresses the topic of domestic violence (a question posed to the Ministry has yet to be answered).

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<sup>10</sup> At the initiative of Adv. Oded Peretz, Deputy Supervisor of Banks, in collaboration with the Association of Banks in Israel and social organizations working in the field.

<sup>11</sup> In June 2019, it was decided on a pilot experiment that extends the applicability of the convention to women who have not stayed in shelters but who are supported by centers for the prevention of domestic violence in the community. In the first phase, the activity will take place in eight localities, later to be expanded to additional ones. This follows an initiative launched by civil society organizations, headed by Women's Spirit.



## Chapter 4: Mapping Ownership and Stakeholders

The materials collected show that most of the entities dealing with violence against women in general, and domestic violence against women in particular, are civil society organizations or government ministries that work alongside law enforcement agencies. **No major philanthropic foundations** have been identified as focusing primarily on this area, nor is **the business sector significantly engaged in activity** related to the issue.

Appendix A features an initial mapping of the key stakeholders identified among civil society and public sector entities. It is important to note that there are also quite a few prominent activists - both men and women - focused on this area, and there may be other entities that are not included in the list, but should be. This requires systematic mapping to be carried out not only based on the literature but also on conversations with stakeholders and at a point in time that is relevant for joint action if and when it is decided upon.<sup>12</sup> In such a case, it is, of course, important to first delineate the boundaries of the arena and of the phenomenon, in light of the description presented in the first chapter of this report. It may also be a good idea to extend the mapping so as to include business entities that conduct relevant activities within the framework of corporate social responsibility, research institutes and academia.

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### The Role of Third Sector and Civil Society Organizations

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As stated above, third sector organizations play a key, significant role in handling the issue of violence against women in Israel. These organizations impact the public and government agenda and render diverse services, as suppliers of the state or independently. The actions taken by the third sector and civil society are too numerous to list here. However, an analysis of all third sector stakeholders yields five main strategies currently being implemented in Israel for combating violence against women, by social organizations operating across all sectors of Israeli society:

- a. **Protection:** Providing an immediate solution to the assault victim, i.e., safe housing, shelter, protection from the assailant, removal of the assailant until treatment is completed and rehabilitation begins. This is done through the shelters for the treatment of victims of

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<sup>12</sup> See, for example, the [mapping tools developed by Sheatufim](#) specifically for joint action, and which may also be relevant in this context, if necessary.



women domestic violence, most of which are operated by non-profit organizations. The non-profits receive a budget from the government for each woman staying at the shelter, but are required to raise considerable additional amounts in order to enable optimal conditions and care.

- b. **Education and prevention:** Various organizations are engaged in self-defense, training of professionals for early detection and referral for treatment, programs to change attitudes and behavior among adolescents and adults, and public education and advocacy. Some of the programs are specific to domestic violence and others focus on violence in general, sexual assault, and more.
- c. **Treatment and rehabilitation:** Listening and support, physical, medical-clinical, mental and economic support and care for victims of violence, empowerment and assistance in finding housing and employment, teaching skills and tools - parental ability, self-confidence, employment skills, economic-occupational rehabilitation, exercising rights, and more.
- d. **Assistance and counseling:** Legal counseling for victims, accompaniment in criminal proceedings, representation in court.
- e. **Policy change:** Political advocacy, struggles to alter budgets and budgetary priorities, media campaigns to change awareness among opinion leaders, legislative and regulatory proposals, legal battles.

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## Partnerships in the Arena

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**Despite there being no cross-sectoral coalition in the fight against violence against women in Israel that encompasses all organizations engaged in the field**, there are quite a few collaborations between social organizations and government agencies, whether temporary or ongoing, around joint projects, measures to formulate and alter policies, procurement of services (such as operation of shelters). In this context, it is important to note that since many of the women's organizations providing treatment solutions also take on advocacy strategies as described above, a delicate relationship is formed at this juncture, with aspects of collaboration on the one hand and challenging and criticism on the other.

In addition, there are numerous, varied collaborations between the organizations, as well as among shared initiatives within civil society that have significantly advanced treatment over the years. For example, the Forum of NGOs Operating Shelters was re-established in 2015; it promotes the interests of women affected by violence in shelters and safe housing and to



strengthen the shelters. Several ad-hoc organizations have recently been formed in the arena, with two notable ones founded during the week preceding the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, specifically following two murders which took place on a single day: A Facebook page entitled “[I Am a Woman I am striking](#)”, which was created ahead of the women’s strike on December 4/2018 - a call answered by hundreds of organizations, as well as the page entitled “[State of Emergency](#)”, backed by about 50 social organizations. It is also worth noting “[Local 2018](#)” - an initiative of women around the municipal elections, as well as the [Coalition of Partnerships](#), which promotes economic and employment equality. Both initiatives brought together numerous women's organizations.

These reflect a growing maturity and preparedness for joint, comprehensive action in the field, especially against the background of the growing public discourse against the effects of gender-based violence and sexual harassment in the past year, as expressed by the #MeToo movement in Israel and around the world.

In this context, it is also worth mentioning intriguing third-sector partnerships with the business sector - collaborations which are usually based on financial support that businesses provide to social organizations involved in the field, as a direct contribution, or through the sale of dedicated products linked to the social organization.<sup>13</sup> A different type of collaboration is based on a joint initiative by the Women's Spirit Association and the Israeli Beauticians' Association, which promotes [dedicated nationwide training in beauty schools aimed at identifying signs of violence of various types, and providing information on referring women to various supportive entities](#). The training is intended to be included both in the initial professional training phase and in advanced training for beauticians working in the field, delivered by the Israel Standards Institution. The initiative has successfully completed the pilot phase, and is a prime example of cross-sectoral cooperation that reflects the core work of each of its partners.

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<sup>13</sup> Examples can be found in Shirley Cantor's **Business-Social Strategy** blog, such as in a post on the question of [how businesses can help eliminate violence against women](#), about a case in Israel, as well as in another one of her posts about [examples from other countries on this topic](#).



## Chapter 5: Insights Regarding the Treatment of Domestic Violence against Women in Israel

Undoubtedly, there has been progress in the field in the past two decades: laws have been promoted, the state increased its investment and veteran and new organizations initiated new solutions. There has been a significant increase in the number of centers for the treatment of domestic violence and the size of budgets allocated to this field.

Despite the sizable investments, growing awareness and developing services in Israel, gaps remain constant over the years, as evidenced by reports. It should be noted that this chapter is based, among other things, on the action plan drafted by the 2017 inter-ministerial committee that was charged with formulating a national plan for handling domestic violence. That is, there is an awareness of the gaps, and even courses of action needed to correct some of them.

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### Key Gaps in Handling Violence Against Women

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**Absence of systemic vision and sufficient coordination between the various entities involved** - the Ministry of Welfare is the government agency charged with leading the field, but experts agree that a national authority is needed to coordinate policies across all ministries and relevant entities; they also agree about the need for a national program to combat violence against women. Various reports have noted, among other things, the lack of a common language and terminology across the various government entities, and sometimes even within the same entity (a fact that was also evident when collecting the data for this report). A case in point is the different risk assessment protocols used by the Ministry of Welfare, Ministry of Health, and the Police. Organizations operating in this field rarely cooperate in a way that would advance their goals.

**Underbudgeting** - the state funds services in the field, among other things, by procuring them from specialized organizations. In many cases, funding is determined according to a minimum standard and is not enough to cover actual costs. To provide high level services, organizations need to raise significant resources. The budget for shelters was up considerably in recent years, but demands have also increased, and the budget gap remains. For example, the budget allocated to a woman staying in a shelter is limited to a woman and two children; however, in shelters intended for populations where the average number of children is higher (such as in ultra-Orthodox and religious families), there is a significant gap with actual needs. Moreover,



and as we were informed by the Shelters Forum, the state does not share the shelters' construction, renovation and equipment costs, and under budgets their day-to-day maintenance, which further increases the budget gap. In this context, the Midot Report presents an analysis of the 2009 state budget, in which it is estimated that **from the state budget invested in this domain, 80% is allocated to punitive measures, and only 20% to protection, prevention, education, treatment, and rehabilitation.** A report by the Adva Center conducted a further review of the budgets for 2015 and although certain items were allocated higher amounts, the overall picture is similar. It should be added that in Arab society there is an even greater budget shortage for the treatment of men to prevent violence.

**Low Involvement of philanthropy in the field** - The Midot Report (2010) shows that state authorities are responsible for funding 79% of all activities in the field, while other sources of funding are private, institutional and business philanthropic investors (19%) and own income of organizations in the field (2%). The vast majority of donations come from abroad. Organizations' administrators attest to the difficulty in bringing foundations and businesses to fund their organizations, as the field is perceived by them as unattractive. The organizations' administrators were of the impression that foundations focused on women's advancement preferred to fund activity that promotes the implementation of Resolution 1325, women's empowerment, and boosting women's participation in decision-making.

**Absence of a central, common database** which will enable monitoring of perpetrators and victims and facilitate research, creation of a common language, and coordination between services.

**Insufficient deployment of services** - Despite the significant increase in the number of centers handling domestic violence, their deployment at the national level is still lacking, in particular for special populations. In addition, government pilot programs need to be scaled.

**Lacking treatment for men** - There are programs to treat violent men in prison, and treatment is also offered in the domestic violence centers. However, all the reports point at significant shortages in this area. Despite the sizable budgets that are allocated to treat violent men, most of the funds are allocated to incarceration, which is very costly but virtually ineffective in terms of eliminating violence. Despite the programs to treat violent men available in prisons or domestic violence treatment centers, the reports still indicate significant shortage in this area, and the need for greater investment in preventive treatment in the community care.

**Lacking prevention and early detection** - It is estimated that only one in four women who are victims of physical violence reports to the police, and only one in ten women who have been sexually assaulted reports the incident to a relevant authority. The significant gap between the



number of victims and the number of those reporting assault incidents requires investment in early detection and in training professionals who are adequate for this purpose. In Arab society, the complex relationship with the police exacerbates the situation. One interviewee noted that, although the police's response has improved, there remained a direct correlation between strained relations with the police within Arab society and the decline in the percentage of reports and complaints.

**Low investment in long-term rehabilitation** - there is a lack of investment in models that include long-term rehabilitation - with economic, psychological, legal and social components - to complement the treatment provided in the immediate term.

**Treatment of children** - When a family has been affected by violence, all members should be treated, including children who have grown up in a violent home and have witnessed violence. Programs that address children should be formulated and operated both in shelters and in the community. There is currently no adequate budget allocated for this purpose as part of the treatment and rehabilitation programs for women affected by violence.

**Inadequate solutions for unique populations and lack of culturally tailored solutions** - there is a lack of adequate shelters, professionals with appropriate training and dedicated intervention programs.

**Insufficient activism and campaigning to raise public awareness about the problem** - this is a highly-complex issue, which requires cultural sensitivity for, and adaptation to, different populations.

**Inadequate knowledge about measurement and evaluation** - a common, up-to-date database is needed, as well as ongoing research on the treatment plans employed. Moreover, organizations in this sphere lack a positive incentive to measure their results and to present real evidence of success. The need for professional measurement and evaluation in order to develop solutions, draw lessons and provide feedback, was also raised in the most recent government program in 2017, regarding all government services in this field.

**Inadequate support for the service providers, not only for the activity and projects** - there needs to be more investment in the physical infrastructure, in professional and managerial training and implementation of technological tools among the organizations, who are struggling to survive, since such investments are essential to the long-term success of any program.

**Legislative gaps** - Israeli legislation in the context of violence against women is relatively advanced, although it does not meet all needs. There is a lack of legislation regarding economic



violence. Legislative amendments are also needed in order to enable transfer of information from one entity to another, to improve coordination and facilitate solutions. Even enacted legislation - such as the [adaptation grant for women who have stayed in shelters for battered women](#) - has yet to be fully implemented. Representatives of social organizations in this sphere even questioned whether the legislative solutions are in line with the actual needs.

**Insufficient solutions for economic violence** - beyond the legislative aspects outlined above, solutions for economic rehabilitation are inadequate and short-term, and in Arab society - virtually non-existent. A case in point is the need for greater leniency on the part of government agencies in charge of debts and debtors (such as the Enforcement and Collection Authority) towards women who have suffered economic violence. There are many debts created by a spouse or ex-spouse, without the women having any control over its creation. Hence a more flexible and considerate attitude is needed in cases where the debtor is a woman affected by violence.

**Limited use of technology** - electronic handcuffs and panic alarm buttons are rarely used, but generally speaking, the phenomenon requires more innovation and greater use of technology.

**There is little work on education** - although there is an educational program on the subject for schools, its actual implementation and suitability for diverse cultures is unclear (as mentioned above, we raised the issue with the Ministry of Education but have yet to receive an answer).

**High prevalence of firearms** - while most users and casualties of small arms are male, in areas where small arms are highly accessible, there is a clear increase in a woman's likelihood of being killed. [The Gender Opinion on the New Firearms Law](#), published in 2017 by the Gun on the Kitchen Table coalition, lists some of the uniquely gender-based risks arising from the growing proliferation of firearms in the non-military sphere and recommends several prevention measures. These are especially important since in Israel, as elsewhere in other countries around the world, a policy is being promoted to expand civilians' access to small arms.

**Failure to address broader contexts and aspects of the phenomenon** - like any social phenomenon, gender-based violence always occurs within, and is influenced by, context. In Israel, gender-based violence has two main relevant contexts: the first is the fact that Israeli society is one living in an ongoing conflict; and the second is the intensity of gender inequality present in a variety of aspects, such as equal pay, equal representation, participation in high-level decision-making processes, and more. These contexts have a complex effect on the scope and manifestations of the phenomenon, and should be taken into account when solutions and



action plans are being formulated.<sup>14</sup> As outlined in the following chapter, strategic plans to eliminate gender-based violence around the world explicitly address these aspects, which are not adequately reflected in the analysis of the phenomenon as presented in government-issued reports in Israel.

## Chapter 6: What Can Be Learnt from Other World Countries?

### Systemic Models for Eliminating Violence Against Women

A web search yielded few examples of systemic models,<sup>15</sup> some at the local level and others at the national level. It should be noted that most of these models are recent, and there is still no information on, or evaluation of, their implementation. Among the systemic schemes we identified are conventions, papers, and decisions by international entities such as the United Nations and European Union; strategic plans by governments; as well as several unique local partnerships. Following are some key insights into each level.

#### At the International Level

Organizations such as the United Nations and OECD have addressed the issue extensively at several levels: compilation of information and data, issue of statements and resolutions to further the prevention of violence against women, investment of resources in local and global projects, as well as promotion of, and support for, programs. For example, a paper published by the [World Health Organization](#) in 2012 maps the scope of the phenomenon, provides explanations for violence against women at the individual, family, community and societal level, and offers ways of addressing the issue at all of these levels. There is an emphasis on the correlation between gender equality and upholding women's rights in general and the levels of violence against women. There is also emphasis on preventive measures as of grade-school age.

The **United Nations** addresses the issue both under the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (also known as [UN Women](#)) and under the United Nations Human Rights Council. In December 1979, the [Conference on Preventing Discrimination](#)

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<sup>14</sup> [For an example of such a perspective in the Israeli context, see Sarai Aharoni, \*\*Women, Peace, and Security United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 in the Israeli Context\*\*, 2015, Van Leer Institute, Jerusalem.](#)

<sup>15</sup> [Systemic models are ones that address all solutions provided by all parties involved, as well as the relations between them - including common language, terminology and goals.](#)



[against Women](#) was held, as part of the UN's focus on human rights. One of the outcomes of the conference was the establishment of the **Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)** and the [convention drafted by it](#) with the aim of promoting gender equality on many levels, including the division of roles in the family setting, in public life and in careers. The Convention entered into force in 1981, and a committee responsible for its implementation was also established. In 2017, the Convention recognized gender-based violence against women as a form of discrimination,<sup>16</sup> adding an obligation to eliminate violence in the private sphere in addition to the public sphere. By signing the Convention, each signatory state made an international commitment to act in accordance with its recommendations and to submit to the Committee a report, every four years, for the purpose of monitoring the advancement and exercise of women's rights. **Israel is a signatory to the Convention and submits reports to the Committee, but has not met its commitments at all levels.**

In addition, there is a **1994 UN resolution** which calls for a specific action to prevent violence against women, linking gender inequality in general to violence against women. Subsequently, **UN Women** provides guidance to governments and civil society entities for promoting legislation, and implementing, tailoring and evaluating such activity to 85 countries worldwide. The [organization's website](#) contains a large database of material - data from around the world, mapping of all UN resolutions on the topic, programs and material on treatment and prevention - that are too extensive to list here.

The **OECD** also monitors various data related to violence against women. The [organization's website](#) contains data on legislation in different countries, approaches to violence against women and statistics on the scope of the phenomenon.

It is also important to note the [Istanbul Convention](#) already mentioned above - a European convention on the prevention and combating of violence against women and domestic violence, which was signed in 2011 and entered into force in April 2014. The Convention comprehensively addresses violence against women, and consists of four main chapters: prevention, protection, prosecution, and integrated policies. In doing so, it defines violence against women and domestic violence;<sup>17</sup> sets binding legal standards for the prevention of violence against women and domestic violence, for the protection of victims and punishment of perpetrators, and calls for their implementation; as well as emphasizes the importance of collaborating with civil

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<sup>16</sup> See [General Recommendation No. 35](#) which is, in fact, an update to Recommendation No. 19 of 1992, that was the first international document to recognize gender-based violence against women as a form of discrimination.

<sup>17</sup> See the discussion in [Chapter One](#) earlier in this report regarding boundaries and definitions.



society and working with the media and private sector to eliminate gender stereotypes and promote mutual respect. **Israel is not a signatory to this Convention.**

Furthermore, it should be noted that [more than 70 countries around the world](#) have **national action plans to implement UN Security Council Resolution 1325** which address violence against women. **Currently, no such plan is being implemented in Israel.**

In this context, see also the [Women, Peace, and Security Index](#) developed by Georgetown University, which offers, among other things, an index for the level of violence by a partner as well as a sense of security in the community.

## Systemic Programs at the State/National Level

### Eastern Europe - Multi-Sectoral Response to GBV

An interesting example of a comprehensive systemic program can be found in a joint paper published by the East European Institute for Reproductive Health and the United Nations Population Fund. The paper presents a multi-sectoral program in response to gender-based violence, which includes prevention, reporting, training, pooling of information, raising awareness, treatment and coordination. The paper emphasizes the need to coordinate the activities of the various entities involved, and the program is based on several key principles, including: a focused approach to the victim of violence; partnerships that focus on the victim's needs; participation of all relevant entities in planning and evaluation, including the beneficiaries; long-term strategic planning, independent of change of government; emphasis on prevention; as well as accountability of all parties involved in the implementation and measurement.

The paper also provides examples of disparate programs of various entities operating under an integrative framework, including a conceptual framework, and particularly emphasizes the need for an entity that would assume leadership in terms of coordination and integration efforts.

### USA: Joint Government Strategic Program of USAID and the State Department United States Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Gender-Based Violence Globally

This paper regards the struggle to prevent violence against women as a cornerstone to promoting gender equality. The program is aimed at reducing gender-based violence in the world and is not focused on the United States alone. It is interesting to note that the required budgets and financial resources for the implementation of the program appear at the very beginning of the paper. The program emphasizes the importance of primary prevention and prevention of recurrence of violence, by working with civil society, field organizations and community organizations and by involving men and children. This is in addition to granting victims immediate protection and accountability for punishment by strengthening the legal



systems. The program has four main goals: to boost coordination between all systems involved in prevention and response (punishment and treatment); to incorporate prevention efforts into current government work; to improve the use of data and research to boost prevention and response efforts; to develop and promote government programs to combat gender-based violence.

Of particular interest in this program is the concept of mainstreaming content on gender-based violence into existing programs. I.e., an example is given of training programs for farmers, which can include content on prevention of gender-based violence. An interesting emphasis in this program (which is absent from the Israeli five-year plan) is the need to involve women in decision-making and policy-setting at the local and national levels as a way to strengthen the fight against gender-based violence.

The document also includes examples of success metrics in the field, which can support measurement and evaluation. For example, measuring the number of projects in which mainstreaming was used in the fight to eliminate violence against women, the number of new partnerships addressing the issue, an increase in the percentage of people in the population who regard violence against women as unacceptable after the program has been implemented, etc.

#### **UK: Government Strategic Plan for 2016-2020**

Built on the achievements of a previous strategic plan dating back to 2010, this is one of the most impressive, broad-based schemes available. The scheme addresses data-based measurement, and includes clear objectives and execution dates for each section as well as the budget allocations required for local- and national-level services to eliminate violence against women. The scheme addresses both the development of short-term solutions - such as promoting the use of technologies for early detection and assistance to victims of violence, and long-term prevention based on boosting gender equality as an essential basis for reducing violence. In this context, emphasis is placed on educational programs for young children that will promote an equitable and non-violent perception of relationships. In the chapters covering long-term prevention, it is noted, for example, that exposure to pornographic material supports stereotypical gender perceptions that reinforce gender inequality norms. It is therefore recommended to cooperate with Internet and mobile phone service providers to limit the exposure of children and adolescents to such material.

In the chapter covering therapeutic and rehabilitative services for victims, emphasis is placed on allocating resources to municipalities in order to provide services tailored to each municipality's local residents. This allocation depends on meeting defined targets; if these are not met, the resources will be reallocated to the central government. Furthermore, municipalities are committed to promoting partnerships that bring together all relevant players to promote more integrative and effective solutions.



Similar strategic programs exist in other countries, such as [Somalia](#), [Mozambique](#) and [Morocco](#), and probably in other non-Western countries.

## Local Partnerships

**In the UK**, a process called [MARAC - Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference](#) - is held in several counties to address and assess high-risk cases of violence. As part of the process, a monthly meeting is held. It is headed by the police and features various public and civic players involved in handling high-risk domestic violence cases, including: government representatives, the municipality, healthcare and welfare service providers, shelter workers, and independent counselors to prevent domestic violence. The independent counselors represent the positions of the victims, and mediate between them and the various agencies to ensure that their needs are adequately addressed. At each meeting, 20-30 high-risk cases are discussed; it is evident that this process has improved the police's response to domestic violence incidents and the quality of care that the victims receive.

**Taiwan** - [A fascinating example of cross-sectoral collaboration to prevent domestic violence](#): a joint study by private sector entities, third-sector organizations and public entities used data science to develop two applied tools: The first is a community-based interactive risk map that helps professionals develop prevention strategies. The second is a predictive model, used by social workers in the field to identify risk levels for repeat victims, without the need to weigh complex information. The study emphasized the added value for all participants as well as the effectiveness of the tools created.

**Victoria, Australia** - A program was developed by the Victorian Health Promotion Foundation (VicHealth) that [deals with the primary prevention of violence against women](#), with an emphasis on domestic violence. The program offers intervention for the primary prevention of violence against women at three distinct levels: the individual level, the community level, and the societal level. Several principles are derived from the three levels, which serve as the basis for the program, including the following: promoting equitable and respectful relationships between men and women; promoting non-violent social norms; reducing the effects of early exposure to violence; and promoting access to resources and support systems. The program's focus on social norms emphasizes the need for programs that address society as a whole, in addition to programs that are tailored to specific populations and their cultural norms. Furthermore, it is proposed to focus the programs and adapt them to various critical life periods, and in particular to school children, around marriage, around pregnancy and childbirth, and around divorce. It is also proposed to include prevention programs in other existing programs, such as gender equality programs, poverty reduction programs, and others. It should be noted that we found no evaluation of the program's implementation.



## Chapter 7: What Next?

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### Courses of Action to Reduce Gender-Based Violence and Femicide in the Family in Israel

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This chapter was written following a joint discussion held at Sheatufim's offices in May 2019 with representatives of approximately twenty civil society organizations dealing with the issue of gender-based violence in Israel from different angles. The aim of the discussion was to reach conclusions about the desired ways to bring about a broad change, to reduce gender-based violence and femicide in the family in Israel, from the perspectives of those who are highly familiar with the arena and work in it.

All courses of action suggested in the meeting were recorded and documented. At a later stage, when processing the information, we realized that the variety of suggestions made by civil society representatives ranged from those designed to improve existing work to those that could alter the system profoundly. We identified a total of three categories of changes across this range:

1. Scaling of existing solutions that are in place and being implemented, but that are at too small a scale or insufficient in terms of quality.
2. Formulating new solutions within the boundaries of the existing system, without changing the assumptions underlying the work and the nature of the partner players.
3. Creating profound changes in the system that may alter it to the core - from the basic assumptions, through how to define the relevant players operating in the arena, to the resulting courses of action required.

**Following is a summary of suggested courses of action in each of these categories:**

**This constitutes a broad picture of the courses of action that emerged from the discussion as having the power to reduce violence against women in Israel. The order of topics does not reflect their possible impact, nor does it constitute a recommendation for a specific sequence of actions, but can rather serve as a possible basis for future organizational and inter-organizational planning processes.**



## Boost Existing Solutions

**Introduce legislative amendments** - as mentioned above, Israeli legislation on violence against women is relatively broad and has even made quite a progress in recent years. Action must be taken to complement the current legislation on economic violence and to fully implement existing legislation. According to various studies conducted around the world, additional legislation designed to reduce the proliferation of firearms could bring about a meaningful change by directly reducing femicide.

**Activate the government's program** - the existing program proposes a wide range of changes, the implementation of which can lead to a significant improvement in the current situation. Some of the changes concern the scaling of existing solutions while others concern new ones. To do so, the program must be allocated a budget and implemented in full. It is important to anchor the issue to the basic budget of the ministries responsible for the implementation of various parts of the program. In addition, Government Resolution 1332 should be fully implemented. The Resolution calls for, inter alia, strengthening the safety of women and protecting them from various types of violence directed against them.

**Strengthen third sector organizations operating in the arena** - as mentioned above, a significant range of professional organizations operate in Israel. Working on the ground, they are highly familiar with the needs of different population groups. The organizations are inherently more flexible than the government, and therefore can potentially challenge and push for government action, offering innovation as well as swift and well-targeted solutions. However, most of these organizations are under-funded and constantly fighting for their survival. The more resources are diverted from public and philanthropic sources to these organizations, the higher their effectiveness and the greater their positive impact on the system as a whole.

**Boost philanthropic involvement in the arena** - philanthropic entities are involved, but not widely enough, and the very issue of combating gender-based violence is almost non-existent as a focus for philanthropic foundations and organizations. Action is needed in order to alter the perspective of philanthropic entities on combating all forms of gender-based violence, to bring about a change in their approaches and activities.

**Broaden the discourse on violence against women and the fight against it** - the discourse needs to be held both among closed societies and among strong populations that seemingly have nothing to do with issue. Some of this is already happening today, but a significant boost is needed here.



## New Solutions Within the Existing System

**Establish an integrative government entity** - such a recommendation appears in the national program and should be implemented. Such an entity could bring about a variety of improvements in existing practice, such as:

- Formulate broad and up-to-date common definitions
- Synchronize and coordinate between the various services
- Gather information from government sources and create a reliable database under broad, agreed-upon definitions
- Transparent, clear and accessible budget
- Formulate clear, agreed-upon objectives and metrics and monitor their implementation

**Promote collaborative work by third sector entities** - currently, there are collaborations between third sector organizations, some ongoing and others - ad hoc. In late 2018, such collaboration between women's organizations and social activists from across Israeli society resulted in activities that resonated with the general public and garnered wide support. Ongoing, joint and better coordinated action among all organizations and activists can advance action in the field and lead to significant achievements.

**Boost the business sector's involvement** - there are early signs of such involvement (see examples in Chapter Five, which focuses on mapping stakeholders in the arena) but it is still marginal. In recent years, the business sector's approach to corporate social responsibility and involvement has grown; it is becoming more aware of the phenomenon of violence against women, and is beginning to understand that business sector entities can play a key role, by virtue of their ongoing contact with women victims and violent men. The private sector's participation in the struggle against the various modes of violence against women can significantly boost and alter the achievements in the field.

**Expand the perception of who the stakeholders and target audiences are** - out of the understanding that women are not the only ones affected by gender-based violence but that, to some extent, abusive men are also victims, and that all of them inhabit a setting which enables, and sometimes even encourages, violence. Furthermore, in order to prevent violence from going from one generation to the next, all family members need to be involved in addressing the issue, as well as anyone who interfaces with them.

**Expand the perception of who the agents of change are in dealing with gender-based violence** - currently, most of the players in the arena are welfare services entities, the police, and women's organizations. Nevertheless, due to the breadth of the phenomenon and the diverse manifestations of gender-based violence, action must be taken to alter perceptions and bring in



many, diverse agents of change, such as: religious leaders and functionaries, kindergarten teachers, school teachers, women media figures, accountants, bank employees, human resources staff members, youth professionals and counselors, various service providers in direct contact with target audiences, and more.

**Expand, develop and improve ways of treating violent men** - development and implementation of effective ways to distance violent men from women victims of violence.

**Expand, develop and improve means of economic and occupational rehabilitation** - build rehabilitation into all solutions for women affected by violence, anchor the issue into legislation and expand public awareness of the need.

**Culturally adapt all existing treatment programs** - an aspect that is not being adequately addressed today, despite the understanding that these adaptations are needed for diverse populations.

**Comprehensive training of all professionals who encounter violence against women** - not only those whose job description is such, but also those who are in continuous contact with the problem in other settings, such as: schools, public sector service providers (e.g. the National Insurance Institute), and more. Such training will improve the ability to identify victims and provide tailored solutions.

## In-Depth Changes

**Substantial reduction of gender-based violence** - set the above as a national goal championed by the government, set clear targets and promote large-scale public measures to achieve them.

**Create cross-sectoral collaboration** - form an ongoing, multi-sectoral, multi-cultural cooperation mechanism based on partnership and the potential inherent in the differences between the different partners to bring about a profound change in the field.

**Adopt a gender-based, feminist approach in any process of policy-making, planning and resource allocation** - in-depth gender mainstreaming measures, the main purpose of which is to adopt gender-based thinking across all planning and budgeting processes, can bring about a profound change in gender-based violence. A case in point is the incorporation of gender-based perceptions into the training of therapists and other relevant professionals, which will provide trainees with a clearer and more accurate view of the problem and its solutions.



**Alter stakeholders' perceptions** - currently, the fight against gender-based violence is publicly perceived as an objective for women and even as a struggle against men in general. There is only one organization founded by men (ASLI) in the entire field. A fundamental change will occur when the struggle will be perceived as a fight by women and men against non-normative behavior.

**Make profound changes in the discourse on masculinity** - the perception of gender-based violence in the context of violence in society as a whole may be significant. Most of the perpetrators, but also most of the victims of violence, in Israel are men. Multiple cultural elements contribute to this. A fundamental change in violence against women will take place, inter alia, as a result of a profound change in how masculinity and power is perceived. Men's circles, sharing and support groups, developing emotional language for men and children can lay the groundwork for reducing violence and seeking help.

**Promote changes in awareness regarding the phenomenon of violence against women** - currently, many victims are afraid or embarrassed to complain about the harm inflicted on them and against their abuser/s. There has been progress. But while it appears that, thanks to the #MeToo movement, women are more willing to come forward and complain about harassment and sexual abuse and receive help and support, and there has been a gradual change of awareness that puts the blame less on the victims' shoulders and reduces society's acceptance of sexual harassment - there is still a long way to go when it comes to violence against women. Such a change would include expanding the concept of "what is violence" in accordance with the definitions that appear at the beginning of this paper. This will allow more women to recognize that they live in a state of violence, not only sexual violence, and empower them to come forward and receive assistance. A supportive public discourse will also facilitate the work of professionals in the field. In an optimal reality, power relations in society will be more apparent in the public discourse, in turn creating a sweeping change in awareness, increasing empathy for victims, and encouraging men to take greater responsibility. Such a discourse will make it possible to treat and address the phenomenon even when it is not taking place in welfare populations.

**Develop innovative technology** - dubbed 'startup nation', Israel is considered a high-technology nation, one that has invented innovative technological solutions to a variety of everyday problems. Harnessing technological creativity to improve detection, treatment and rehabilitation of gender-based violence could lead to a breakthrough in the way the field is addressed.

**Incorporating the education system as a key factor** - The education system deals with the prevention of violence from an early age. Nevertheless, it rarely addresses with the issue of



gender-based violence, certainly not broadly or systemically. As a wide-reaching entity in Israeli society, the education system has the potential to play a key role in changing awareness. Moreover, engaging in the subject - in manner that is tailored to both genders - could facilitate early detection of domestic violence, and prepare teens for non-violent relationships (as stated above, there is a program in place, but it is not widely implemented).

This section could also have appeared under the heading New Solutions Within the Existing System. We have chosen to address to the role of the education system in this subsection for two reasons: First, since it is a change agent which is hardly a partner in dealing with the issue. Second, since broad involvement of the education system will generate a fundamental change in relation to investment in long-term prevention, especially if such an investment is made through feminist perspectives, by disputing and questioning the existing discourse on masculinity as early as at school age.

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## Conclusions

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Each of the directions outlined above has the potential to contribute to the advancement of the struggle against gender-based violence in Israel. The broader the implementation of these directions is, and the better its adaptation to the Israeli reality, the greater the expected reduction in gender-based violence and femicide in Israel. That said, it should be added that an optimal result will be achieved only after examining the inter-connections between the various directions, as well as due diligence and planning of the right course of action according to the current circumstances in Israeli society, and in general. All of these go beyond the scope of this paper, which, as expressed earlier, aims to present a preliminary mapping of the arena of the struggle against gender-based violence in Israel from a systemic perspective.

Moreover, we did not analyze what goes on within specific systems (such as the welfare system, the health system, the legal system and law enforcement agencies), or in social groups with unique characteristics, such as Arab society, ultra-Orthodox society, immigrant populations, etc. Undoubtedly, a unique look at these is needed too, and this should be an important component in reaching a comprehensive solution.

However, despite all the reservations, we hope that this mapping, which provides a snapshot from multiple perspectives of diverse civil society organizations, can help advance the joint efforts to bring about the desired change, and serve as a tool in the hands of all stakeholders to boost their efforts, whether separately or jointly.



# Information Sources

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## Sources of Information about Israel

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The following sources are classified by type: legislation, procedures, data compilations, public reports, position papers, academic papers, and miscellaneous.

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[Prevention of Sexual Harassment Law, 1998](#)

[Laws and procedures on domestic violence, Ministry of Health](#)

[Legal Violence in Family Proceedings](#), Information on legal aid provided by the Ministry of Justice.

[Amendment No. 2 to the Welfare Services Law \(Adaptation Grant for Women Who Stayed in Battered Women's Shelter\)](#)

[Police Procedure for Handling Complaints of Violence by a Spouse](#)

[Identifying and Treating Women Victims of Domestic Violence - Circular of the Director General of the Ministry of Health, 2003](#)

[Services of the Ministry of Labor, Welfare and Social Services on Domestic Violence](#), information and data from the ministry's website

[Press release by Spokesperson of the Ministry of Labor, Welfare and Social Services on International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, 2016](#)

[Compilation of Data on Gender-Based Violence for 2018, Her Memorial project](#)

[Compilation of Data on Violence Against Women in 2016, Knesset Information Center](#)

[Compilation of Femicide Data by Year, Haaretz, 2018](#)

[Femicide and attempted femicide, with an emphasis on domestic violence - the Knesset Research Center, document submitted to the Committee for the Advancement of Women and Gender Equality, November 2017](#)

[Implementation of the Recommendations of the Inter-Ministerial Committee for the Prevention and Treatment of Domestic Violence, 2017, Knesset Information Center](#)



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[Midot Report on the Prevention of Violence Against Women, 2010](#)

[Report of the Inter-Ministerial Committee on Dealing with the Murder of Women of Ethiopian Origin, 2009](#)

[State Comptroller's Report on Local Government for 2011-2012 on the Activity of Municipalities for the Prevention of Spousal Violence and Treatment of Its Victims \(link to the full report\)](#)

[State Comptroller's Report 52B for 2002: Dealing with the Phenomenon of Spousal Violence](#), pp. 794-771

[The Phenomenon of Violence Against Arab Women - submitted to the Committee for the Advancement of Women and Gender Equality on the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, 2015](#)

[Comprehensive action plan for the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325, 2013, on the website of Itach-Maaki Women Lawyers for Social Justice](#)

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[Women's Shelters in Israel: From Voluntary Innovation to Adoption by the State](#). Uri Yanay. **Social Security** 70, December 2005, 109-77.

[Addicted to Their Wives: Men Who Murder Their Wives Who Wished to Separate From Them](#). Ronit Lev Ari, **Homeland Security**, Issue 6, 2014.

Development of the social reaction to the phenomenon of women battered by their partners in Israel. Orly Ines Koenig, Ronit Lev Ari.

[The Banking Accessibility Charter](#) - A voluntary financial charter aimed at assisting women affected by violence in shelters and transitional housing in their financial struggles, from a press release on the [Bank of Israel's website](#), July 2018.

[Domestic Violence Against Women - Definitions](#). **Infomed - Israel's Medical Portal**. Viewed in May 2019.

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## Sources of Information from Around the World

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[The Istanbul Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence](#)

[Lethal Violence against Women and Girls, Geneva Convention](#)

[World Health Organization's Report on Violence Against Women](#)

[Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women, 1994](#)

[UN Report on Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, 1979](#)

[UN Women - the UN's website to eradicate violence against women](#)

[OECD data - a comparative table on various data related to violence against women](#)

[Compilation of action plans to implement UN Resolution 1325 by various world countries](#)

[Women, Peace, and Security Index on the Georgetown University website](#)



[Data for Social Good: A Case Study of Building an Effective Public-Private Partnership on Domestic Violence Prevention 2017](#)

[Multi sectoral response to GBV 2015](#)

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[Preventing violence before it occurs A framework and background paper to guide the primary prevention of violence against women in Victoria 2007](#)

[Case Study: The Multi-agency Risk Assessment Conference between London police, local authorities and service providers \(United Kingdom\)](#) UN Women Security Sector Module, December 2011.

[Violence against Women and Girls Strategy 2016 – 2020: Actions the government will be taking towards its strategy of ending violence against women and girls.](#) Policy papers. Gov.uk  
Published 8 March 2016, Last updated 7 March 2019

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## Women Interviewed for this Paper

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**Ayala Meir** - Director of Individual and Family Services, Ministry of Labor, Welfare and Social Services.

**Hamutal Gouri** - (former) CEO of the Dafna Foundation

**Yael Hasson** - Adva Center

**Naila Awad** - CEO of Women Against Violence

**Ronit Lev Ari** - Director of Beit Ruth, a village for at-risk girls and the founder of the first center in Israel for the treatment and prevention of domestic violence (correspondence interview)

**Tamar Schwartz** - CEO of Women's Spirit

As stated in the introduction to the paper, in addition to the women who were interviewed in the initial phase, numerous women who are active in the fight against gender-based violence in Israel contributed their knowledge and information. In this context, please see the list of organizations on the first page and the list of participants in the meeting in Appendix B.

**Also assisted in the preparation of the paper and in drafting its final version:**

Or Seri and Tamar Zakbach Edelstein

**Translation to English:** Ella & Co. [www.translators.co.il](http://www.translators.co.il)



## Appendix A: Mapping of Key Stakeholders

As aforesaid, this appendix includes an initial mapping of key stakeholders from civil society, the public sector, as well as prominent social activists in the arena. There may be other entities that have not been included in the list and should be added to it, since they are engaged in - albeit indirectly - in the fight against gender-based violence. This requires systematic mapping to be carried out not only based on the literature but also on conversations with key players.

### Civil Society Organizations

This list includes key entities that work directly to prevent and/or treat domestic violence. As stated, this list is not necessarily exhaustive and is updated frequently when new players enter the arena. The list does not include many important activists who focus on the issue, women in academia who research it and journalists who give it a media platform - all of whom are significant stakeholders and key, influential players. Moreover, due to the loose boundaries of the issue, the mapping of the relevant civil society players does not have definite, clear boundaries, and should therefore be re-examined in real time according to the relevant point in time.

- ASLI - White Ribbon Israel Organization - Men say no to violence against women
- Women Lawyers for Social Justice - legal aid and representation for women from discriminated groups; advancement of gender equality policies at the national and municipal levels, including the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (including a plan to prevent domestic violence)
- Woman to Woman - operates shelters and transitional housing, provides legal aid and engages in dissemination of information.
- El HaLev - teaching women self defense
- Emunah - Emunah operates family counseling and therapy centers for mediation and legal counseling in partnership with ILIS, the Israeli Association for Mediation and Conflict Resolution to the general public, across Israel.
- Bat Melech - provides assistance to abused Orthodox and Ultra-Orthodox women. Operates shelters, transitional housing, legal aid, therapeutic and rehabilitative assistance
- The Gun on the Kitchen Table - a coalition of organizations that works to reduce the proliferation of small arms in civilian space and to eliminate the violence that the availability of firearms allows and encourages.
- Counter Gender Terrorism Unit - feminist activism against sexual and gender-based violence
- The Center for Legal Aid for Immigrants of the Israel Movement for Reform & Progressive Judaism in Israel (IMPJ) - addressing immigrant victims of domestic violence



- The Ruth and Emanuel Rackman Center for the Advancement of Women's Status - legal aid
- WIZO - operates two shelters for women, a treatment center, a hotline for men and an educational program for youth
- Yad Sarah - The Family Center in Sderot - community care and work
- No2Violence - operates shelters, transitional housing, hotlines and educational activities.
- By Your Side - an NGO for men victims of violence
- Hotline for Refugees and Immigrants - treatment of female and male victims of domestic violence
- Haifa Women's Crisis Shelter - operating a shelter and transitional apartment housing and providing culturally and verbally sensitive solutions to women victims of violence and their children, carrying out educational activities
- Ma'an - operates a legal aid center for Bedouin women in the Negev.
- Maslan - Aid center for victims of sexual assault in the Negev.
- Adva Center - Research on gender budgeting
- Sexual Assault Victim Assistance Centers - The Association of Centers and nine regional centers operates a hotline and provides assistance and support for women victims of sexual assault
- Noga Center - to aid and support victims of crime, public advocacy activity, and to accompany and represent victims of crime.
- Center for Women's Rights in Rishon LeZion
- Na'am - Arab Women in the Center - education, raising awareness and support
- NAAMAT - Operation of a treatment center (Glickman Center) and hotline
- Women and Their Bodies - dispersing information
- Women Against Violence - WAVO - The association operates a shelter for women and performs advocacy work
- Assiwar - Feminist Arab Movement
- Forum of Associations Operating Shelters - performing advocacy and educational activities
- Legal Forum for the Representation of Women in Shelters
- Forum Takana - Treatment of sexual assault by an authority in the religious community
- Feminanci - independent economic conduct for women
- Hotline and violence prevention programs.
- Kolech - Religious Women's Forum is not directly engaged in the issue, but the organization is relevant due to its involvement in religious feminism.
- Women's Spirit - promoting economic independence for women affected by violence. Therapeutic solutions, advocacy work, influencing public opinion.
- The Israel's Women Network - fighting discrimination and exclusion of women - advocacy
- Tahel - Crisis Center for Religious Women and Children
- Compilation - is a project that focuses on commemorating women who have been murdered on the basis of gender or sex



## Government Ministries and Entities

- Ministry of Labor, Welfare and Social Services
- Ministry of Health
- Ministry of Public Security
- Ministry of Social Equality
- Ministry of Education
- Ministry of Aliyah and Integration
- National Insurance Institute
- Ministry of Justice
- Israel Police
- Israel Prison Service
- Prisoner Rehabilitation Authority

## Social Activists

As mentioned, there are quite a few such key players in the arena, whose action is significant and influential.



## Appendix B: List of Participants in the Validation Session for the Paper\*

Debbie Gross, Director, Tahel - Crisis Center for Religious Women and Children

Dina Havlin Dahan, Director General of the Emergency Center for Women and Chair of the Forum of Associations that Operate Shelters

Adv. Dana Eisner Lavie, Director, MNA Municipal Women's Rights Center, Rishon LeZion

Hadass Ben Eliyahu, Scientific Director, WIPS, Van Leer Institute

Yotam Konstantini, Chairman of ASLI (White Ribbon Israel Organization) - Men say no to violence against women

Yael Gold, CEO, No2Violence

Dr. Yael Hasson, Head of Gender Research, Adva Center

Dr. Carmit Keller Halamish, Head of Research, Association of Aid Centers

Liron Cohen, Writer, Politically Correct

Miriam Gvaram, Founder, Her Memorial

Adv. Miriam Zalkind, Policy Advocate and Lobbyist at Israel Women's Network

Adv. Netta Loevy, Itach-Maaki's Policy Advocacy Director

Aliya Darijat, Director, Maan

Tzilit Jacobson, chairman of Bat Melech

Adv. Keren Horowitz, CEO, Rackman Center

Social worker Rivka Neuman, Director of WIZO Israel's Division for the Status of Women

Social worker Ruth Ozeri, Director of the Department of Domestic Violence, Naamat

Dr. Shoshana Greenwald, Director of the Family Care Centers, Emunah

Tamar Schwartz, CEO, Women's Spirit