

The Adva Center

A Valuable Asset for Israel

The Adva Center is a think tank that analyzes social and economic issues and makes policy recommendations; it also engages in advocacy work and public education to increase the chances that its recommendations will be adopted.

The Adva Center measures public policies in Israel against the yardsticks of equality and social justice. **Without Adva**, the trend of increasing inequalities between rich and poor, Jews and Arabs, center and periphery in education, health and wages would continue unchallenged and unabated. **Without Adva**, women's needs would not be translated into budget allocations and the most disadvantaged social groups in Israel – Ethiopian Israelis and Bedouin Israelis – would lack a strategic advocate. **Without Adva**, the phenomenon of increasing numbers of workers with low wages and inadequate social security would receive less public attention

The Adva Center played a pivotal role in the framing of issues that have become central to the Israeli public discourse; for example, the connection between economic growth and the alleviation of social ills. Adva demonstrated that economic growth does not necessarily benefit those who need it most. Another example: the fact that the Israeli educational system does not turn out the man and woman power needed for an advanced economy. Yet another: while the Israeli public health system is very good in comparative terms, it is slowly losing its edge, as a result of under-financing. Finally, the fact that economic development has been taking place primarily in the center of the country, sidelining peripheral areas, minority groups, and middle and low-tech industries and services.

"... I would like to congratulate you on your activities over the years on behalf of democracy in Israel. Despite the fact that we still have a long way to go, it is because of people like you [at the Adva Center] that Israeli society is as strong as it is today."

Binyamin Ben Eliezer, Minister of Infrastructure



Adva's change strategies include

Policy analysis of public education, public health services , labor issues, taxation, the needs of minorities and low-income persons;

Budget analysis, including macro-and micro-economic analyses;

Advocacy work, including consultations for Cabinet ministers, executive officials, legislators and leaders of advocacy organizations;

Creation and provision of leadership for the Women's Budget Forum, a coalition of 30 women's and human rights organizations that advocate for women's fair share of the national budget;

Popular education, through lectures, seminars and courses - among them economic literacy courses for women;

Affirmative action scholarship program for Arab women who are citizens of Israel;

Projects designed to assist low-income persons to realize their social rights;

User-friendly web site, where all Adva reports and position papers are downloadable free of charge, hosting 1,000 visitors a day;

Media work, including provision of background information to the written and electronic media on topics of public interest.

The New York Times

Sunday, December 26, 2007
**"Amid Political Upheaval,
 Israeli Economy Stays
 Healthy"**

By Greg Myre

..."The basic problem is that economic growth has been very uneven," said Shlomo Swirski, the academic director of Adva, a research institute that focuses on the poor. Job growth, he said, has been concentrated in sectors that require a high level of

education. Economic growth has been greatest in Tel Aviv and surrounding areas, the economic hub of the country, while the less developed Galilee in the north and Negev Desert in the south have seen much less progress, Mr. Swirski added.

Adva's achievements include

Concerning legislation:

Changes in the national budget-making process;

Reduction of the Budget Arrangements Law, an undemocratic way of passing legislation;

Changes in the 2008 budget, including non-passage of legislation that threatened the universality of the public health system, non-passage of legislation that would have imposed health and social security taxes on housewives with no incomes, and the reinstatement of social security cuts made in 2002.

Concerning training:

Economists, sociologists and public policy experts who work at Adva take what they have learned at Adva to academia, government, and business;

For the last three years, The National Security College has invited Adva staff members to present lectures to senior IDF officers and government officials;

Adva publications have become standard reading for students of Political Science, Public Policy, Sociology and Social Work.

Concerning imitation - the highest compliment:

Legislators read from Adva Center reports in Knesset committee meetings and in plenary sessions;

The Bank of Israel, The National Insurance Institute and the Knesset Research Department are among the agencies that utilized Adva's materials in their 2007 work.





Adva networks with other Israeli organizations, among them

Physicians for Human Rights and the Association for Civil Rights in Israel, for advocacy on public health issues;

Workers' Hotline, for advocacy for pensions for all workers;

Mahut, on a joint project to empower poor women and to improve public policy;

Ken L'Zaken and the Histadrut Pensioners' Association, in connection with a report on senior citizens' health and social security opportunities;

Local women's councils in Haifa, Beer Sheva, Givatayim, Rosh Ha-Ayin, to increase women's economic literacy;

30 women's and human rights organizations, to advocate for women's fair share of the national budget.

THE JERUSALEM POST

October 24, 2007

"Knesset group demands more "equitable" share of health spending"

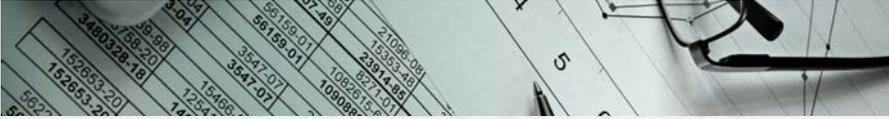
By Judy Siegel

...An informal coalition of MKs, patient groups and other organizations has been formed to fight the sections of the Treasury's Arrangements Bill

that threaten to increase the inequality in the health system and make it even more difficult for disadvantaged groups to get decent medical care.

Six Knesset members, led by MK Haim Oron, appeared Tuesday at the special meeting initiated by the Adva Center (Information on Equality and Social Justice in Israel) and Physicians for Human Rights-Israel. The two-hour event was held in the Knesset lecture hall.

...Among the health-related clauses, said Adva Center Director Barbara Swirski, were: procedures that will increase the gap between new medical technologies and those included in the basket of health services . . . and the plan to establish a fifth health fund that opponents predict will siphon off wealthy, young and healthy members from the four health funds.



Among Adva's products and activities in 2007:

24 budget reports and position papers on budget issues, distributed to Cabinet members, legislators, executive officials, advocacy organizations and the mass media;

4 special Adva-initiated Knesset sessions on the proposed 2008 budget;
annual Adva budget workshop for legislators;

annual Adva conference on budgets and gender;

6 reports and policy analysis papers, on the following issues: the right to higher education in Israel, the right to work in Israel, the absence of plans to significantly improve the situation of the Bedouin in the Negev, threats to the public health system, a recent pension agreement, and the health and social security situation of senior citizens.

3 pamphlets on social rights and budgets in Israel, in both Hebrew and Arabic, for use in the educational activities of Adva and of other organizations;

2 economic literacy courses for women;

100 educational events on a variety of topics, all of them connected with equality and social justice;

1 scholarship for an Arab women to earn a Master's Degree in Economics abroad;

15 appearances in the written media per month and 80 appearances on TV, radio and internet news. A case in point: *Israel: A Social Report – 2007* was the subject of 36 reports in the Hebrew printed media, 4 reports in the English printed media, 16 radio reports and interviews in Hebrew, 2 radio interviews in Arabic, 3 TV appearances, 12 internet news reports and dozens of mentions on the various TV channels by persons not connected with Adva.

1,000 visits per day to the Adva Center user-friendly web site.

Adva's Budget and Staff

The Adva Center has a small staff of 8-10 professionals, not all full-time, and a modest budget of about \$400,000. Due to the amount of work Adva does and the amount of publicity it gets, Israelis tend to think that it is much bigger than it actually is.

Adva's Development Plans

The work of the Adva Center is critical for Israeli society.

Adva Center's modest budget is both an advantage and a liability.

Adva Center needs to offer salaries that are more compatible with salaries the brightest and the best receive in other agencies.

Thus, Adva's development plan for the near future is to increase its budget by \$50,000 in each of the next four years, so that by 2012 the budget is 50% larger than it is today: \$600,000.

If you already award grants to Adva, you can help make Adva sustainable, by increasing your grant to Adva by between one-fourth and one-third.

If you have not made a grant to the Adva Center, you can help make Adva sustainable, by providing a assistance for its operating expenses for a period of three years.

If you have not made a grant to the Adva Center, you can provide assistance for one of its projects.

HA'ARETZ

January 15, 2007

"Israel's beleaguered middle class continues to shrink"

By Ruth Sinai

Israel's middle class is continuing to shrink, and it

currently encompasses only about one-fourth of all households, down from one-third in the late 1980s, according to a report issued yesterday by the Adva Center.

The report, based on income surveys conducted by the Central Bureau of Statistics between 1988 and 2005, also found that the middle class' share

of the national income has fallen by 20 to 24%.

The study noted that the size of the middle class has great significance, both because this is what most people consider "normal" and because the middle class is generally considered the economy's backbone, both as workers and as consumers.

Adva's Partners, without whom it could not carry on with its work

The following foundations, organizations and individuals made generous contributions to the work of the Adva Center in 2007:

Accion Contra el Hambre
 Jacob and Hilda Blaustein Foundation
 Heinrich Boell Foundation
 Boston Jewish Community Women's Fund
 Naomi and Nehemia Cohen Foundation
 Nathan Cummings Foundation
 Friedrich Ebert Foundation
 Ford Foundation
 Hadassah Foundation
 Israel Delegation of the European Commission
 Mr. Howard Horowitz and Ms. Alisse Waterson
 Kahanoff Foundation
 Levi Lassen Foundation
 MAZON: A Jewish Response to Hunger
 Middle East Peace Dialogue Network/Richard Goodwin
 National Council of Jewish Women
 Oxfam GB
 New Israel Fund

HA'ARETZ

December 12, 2007

"The Rich Got More"

Op-Ed by Shlomo Swirski

...The policy of social growth must be goal-based just like the policy of economic growth; for example, increasing the percentage of (high school graduates receiving) matriculation certificate to 80 percent

(similar to the goal that France has set for itself), increasing the proportion of students in academic institutions to 60 percent of each cohort of high school graduates (instead of the 30 percent today) and the full funding of the basket of health services that will halt the splitting of the health system into a system for the wealthy and a system for ordinary folk. The policy that has been

followed thus far, which has left all of the work in the hands of the market forces, ultimately strengthens those who have power in the marketplace and weakens all the rest.

The author is the academic director of the Adva Center

Adva's Board of Directors

Adva has a stable Board of Directors whose members are highly committed and who make significant contributions to the work of Adva by giving freely of their time and expertise.

Board of Directors

Dr. Yossi Dahan, Co-founder and Chairperson
 Ms. Gilberte Finkel, Treasurer
 Professor Ismael Abu-Saad
 Dr. Nitza Berkovitch
 Dr. Dani Filc
 Dr. Rachel Kallus
 Professor Hubert Law-Yone
 Professor Uri Ram
 Dr. Yitzhak Saporta
 Professor Rivka Savaiya
 Professor Oren Yiftachel
 Professor Yossi Yona

Adva's Staff

Barbara Swirski, Executive Director
 Shlomo Swirski, Academic Director
 Ety Konor-Attias, Research Coordinator
 Noga Dagan, Reseacher
 Yael Hasson, Researcher, Co-coordinator
 Women's Budget Forum
 Ola Shtewee, Co-coordinator,
 Women's Budget Forum
 Valeria Seigelshifer, Advocacy Expert,
 Women's Budget Forum
 Nelly Markman, Outreach and Education
 Coordinator
 Mira Asseo-Oppenheim, Office Manager

Audit Committee

Attorney Ovadia Golestany
 Attorney Dori Spivak

THE JERUSALEM POST

December 20, 2007

"Politicians plan to fight proposed housewife tax"

Experts say that certain budget cuts will damage the status of women.

By Ruth Eglash

...A government proposal to levy taxes on housewives as part of the 2008 Economic Arrangements Bill was harshly

criticized and potentially stopped Wednesday during a joint session of the Knesset Committees of Finance and the Status of Women, with politicians calling for that element of next year's budget to be immediately removed.

"We are feeling positive that this tax will not come into effect for the forthcoming year," Valeria Seigelshifer, an advocate at the Adva Center for Equality and Social Justice in Israel, told The Jerusalem Post. following the meetings.

..."We want to make clear that cuts in child support are also harmful to our children," added Seigelshifer, highlighting that the postponement of increasing the minimum wage which was scheduled to have happened in June 2007 but will now take place next summer, also impacts the female population because two-thirds of those earning low salaries are women.



INFORMATION ON EQUALITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE IN ISRAEL
מידע על שוויון וצדק חברתי בישראל
מركز "أدفا" - معلومات حول المساواة والعدالة الاجتماعية في إسرائيل

Adva Center

P.O.B. 36529

Tel Aviv

Phone: 03-5608871

Fax: 03-5602205

E-mail: advainfo@bezeqint.net

www.adva.org