

THE ADVA CENTER
Annual Report
2011

מרכז אדפה מרכז אדוה
Adva Center
Information on Equality and Social Justice in Israel

THE PEOPLE AT THE ADVA CENTER



Barbara Swirski,
Executive Director

THE JERUSALEM
POST

Fair and Equal

Opposition to raising the mandatory retirement age for women to equal that of men's points to increasing gender awareness in Israeli society

*By Eetta Prince-Gibson
September 14, 2022*

... But binding women to the labor force by law, insists Barbara Swirski, executive director of Adva, a Tel Aviv-based social-economic think tank, will only make them poorer. The reasons that women are not participating in the work force, she contends, are related to "Israel's highly discriminatory labor market," in which women face the two problems of ageism and sexism.

"The reason so many older women aren't working isn't because they don't want to," she says. "It's because older women are the first to be fired and the last to be hired."

The Jewish Week

"Israel is a classic case of a country whose macroeconomic indicators are good but most of whose households are not invited to the end-of-year celebration," wrote Shlomo Swirski, academic director of the Adva Center think tank, in a recent paper.

Despite having a GDP per capita of \$29,500 in 2009, it also has "one of the highest poverty levels in the OECD" and "one of the highest levels of inequality," Swirski wrote.



Dr. Shlomo Swirski,
Academic Director

דיעות אחרונות

The Contribution of Adva

*By Sever Plotzker
December 19, 2011*

... "The analyses of the Adva Center, which are credible and reliable, make a significant contribution to one's understanding of the processes of economic stratification going on in Israel. It is a pity that Adva researchers do not have a larger budget."

THE PEOPLE AT THE ADVA CENTER

HAARETZ

HEAD TO HEAD

Adva Center head Yossi Dahan, what else should the protest leaders be demanding?

*Interview by Asaf Shtuli-Trauring
August 3, 2011*

Dr. Yossi Dahan, chairman of the Adva Center, a research institute that monitors economic trends and developments in social justice, spoke to Haaretz about the [the protest demands]. I think that a large part of the demands are universal demands that are for the benefit of all. But what is missing is a reference to everything known as a social security network. . . These are demands that refer to those at the bottom of the socioeconomic ladder. . . I would [also] present a demand for direct employment of workers instead of indirect employment ...



Professor Yossi Dahan,
Chairperson, Board of Directors



Attorney Noga
Dagan-Buzaglo,
Researcher



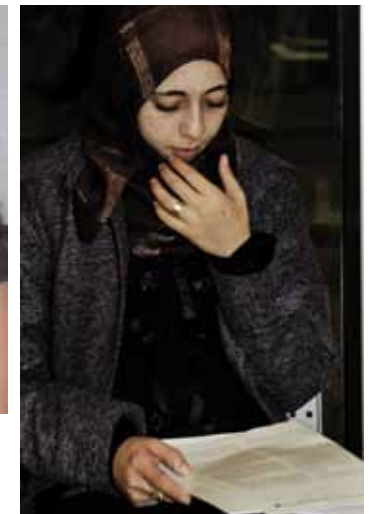
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Treasurer, Board
of Directors



Valeria Seigelshifer,
Advocacy Director
and Ety Konor-Attias,
Research Coordinator



Safa Agbaria, Economist

THE ADVA CENTER

The **Adva Center** is a think tank that analyzes social and economic trends and measures public policy in Israel against the yardsticks of equality and social justice. Adva makes policy recommendations and engages in advocacy work and public education to increase the chances that its recommendations will be adopted. Adva also conducts projects designed to empower disadvantaged groups.

Strategies of the Adva Center

- Publishing information on economic and social policy, and disseminating it to social change organizations, government officials and the general public.
- Articulating alternatives regarding the national budget, as well as education, welfare and housing policy.
- Writing and initiating articles and op-eds on social issues in the written media and promoting coverage of social issues in the electronic media.
- Carrying out direct advocacy with government ministers, executive officials, Knesset committee chairs and Knesset members.
- Organizing conferences to stimulate public debate on issues like Israel's education system and government policy towards Bedouin citizens.
- Building and joining coalitions with relevant non-profit organizations to advocate for specific changes.
- Providing consultations for senior government ministry officials, politicians from the coalition and the opposition and the general public.
- Disseminating ideas for social change through lectures, seminars, workshops and training courses for everyone from senior public officials to students and members of youth movements.
- Conducting courses in socio-economic literacy, how to understand and influence the national budget, and how to mainstream gender into local budgeting – for social activists and women active in their local communities.
- Disseminating information via the Adva Center website in Hebrew, Arabic and English.
- Initiating projects to empower disadvantaged groups.

THE ADVA CENTER AND SOCIAL EQUALITY

POLICY ANALYSIS

Israel: A Social Report, by Dr. Shlomo Swirski and Ety Konor-Attias. December 2011

Most of the data presented in the report reflect social and economic dynamics in the areas of economic growth, investments, wages, education, higher education, health care and retirement income. These hold the key to the phenomenon of deepening inequality, whether during periods of economic growth or recession.

IMPACT OF REPORTS

- This update of the **Social Report** appears after a summer in which almost all the issues raised over the years by the Adva Center became the focus of an unprecedented wave of social protest. Never before in Israel has such widespread public, political and media attention been given to the issues of equality and social justice.
- The high level of inequality in Israeli society became a frequent topic of discussion in the Israeli media.
- The size, income and expenditures of Israel's middle class – first pointed out in an Adva Center report and updated annually in the **Social Report** – also became the subject of many media items. Moreover, it also became a concern in the corridors of power.



Excerpt from the report:

Inequality in Israel is among the highest of countries in the OECD, which Israel joined in 2010. Measured by the Gini coefficient, Israel ranks 5 out of 27 countries on income inequality.

Inequality in OECD Countries

Country	Gini coefficient, late 2000s
Chile	0.494
Mexico	0.476
Turkey	0.409
United States	0.378
Israel	0.371
Portugal	0.353
United Kingdom	0.345
Italy	0.337
New Zealand	0.330
Japan	0.329
Canada	0.324
Spain	0.317
OECD (34)	0.314
Greece	0.307
Germany	0.295
Netherlands	0.294
Ireland	0.293
France	0.293
Luxemburg	0.288
Hungary	0.272
Austria	0.261
Belgium	0.259
Finland	0.259

THE ADVA CENTER, THE ECONOMY AND THE NATIONAL BUDGET

POLICY ANALYSIS

On the Cusp of the Second Year of the Two-Year Budget for 2011-2012.
December 2011

Adva's annual Powerpoint Presentation on the National Budget proposal, posted on the Adva Center website and sent to all legislators and Cabinet members, argued that recent events vindicated Adva Center arguments against a two-year budget. That budget does not allow for changes to meet the challenges of the summer protest and of the prognosis for shrinking economic activity in the wake of the European economic and financial crisis.

PUBLIC LECTURES

Lectures were presented to a variety of groups on subjects such as "Understanding the National Budget," "How to Analyze the Local Budget from a Gender Perspective," "The Structure of Israel's Public Education System," "The Right to Health," and "The Segmented Labor Market in Israel."

IMPACT

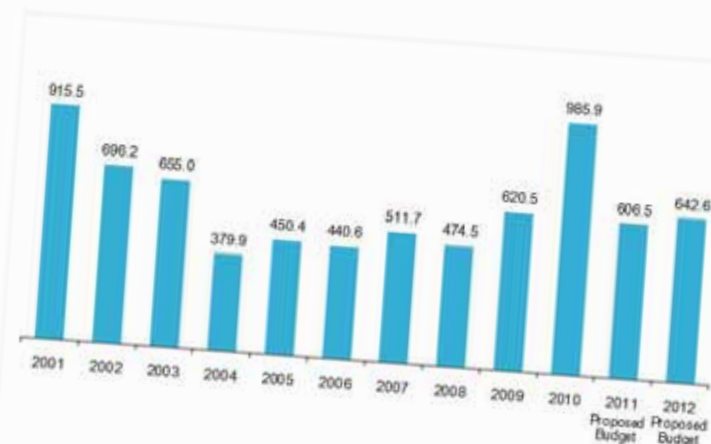
Adva Center's reports on the economy and the national budget are read regularly by executive and legislative officials and are utilized in Knesset committees and plenary debates. They are reported extensively by the mass media and they are utilized by social advocacy organizations. They provide the impetus for changes in legislation, regulations and government planning.

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Adva Center
Information on Equality and Social Justice in Israel

**On the Cusp of the Second Year of the
Two-Year Budget for 2011-2012**

December 2011

Ministry of Education Investment Budget, 2001-2012
In NIS Millions, 2010 Prices



THE ADVA CENTER, EMPLOYMENT AND SOCIAL SECURITY

POLICY ANALYSIS

Workers, Employers and the Distribution of Israel's National Income: Labor Report – 2010. By Dr. Shlomo Swirski and Ety Konor-Attias, May 2011.

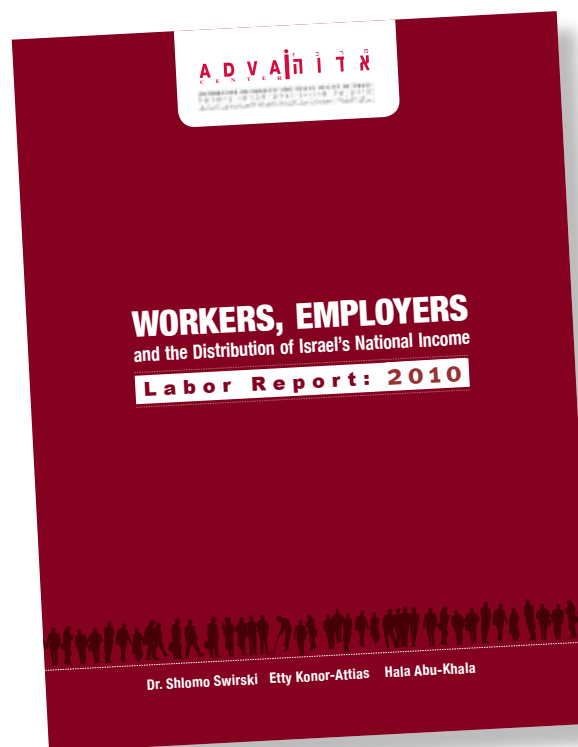
This annual report monitors labor market developments in Israel, including employees' and employers' share of the national income, salary trends and fringe benefits in different sectors of the economy, high and low salaried persons by gender and ethnic group, the kinds of new jobs being created, unemployment rates, and more.

PUBLIC LECTURES

The **Adva Center** receives frequent requests for lectures and workshops on topics like "The Rights of Employed Persons," "Women's Employment Patterns," "Recent Changes in Social Security in Israel," "Changes in the System of Retirement Savings in Israel," and "What Everyone Needs to Know about Saving for Retirement," from voluntary organizations, youth movements, women's organizations, government agencies, and labor unions.

IMPACT

- Thousands of employed women and men have learned about their workplace and social security rights.
- Taking their cue from the reports of the **Adva Center**, business sections of written and internet newspapers began to write about the high management fees of retirement savings plans.
- The government reduced the management fees of some, but not all, of the programs.



Excerpt from the report:

In 2010, the cost of the salaries of senior executives employed by companies listed on the Tel Aviv Stock Exchange rose by an average of 10%.

TheMarker

Adva Center: 2010 was a good year for the Israeli economy – but income disparities grew

By Haim Beor
May 1, 2011

... Two of the most positive developments were the decrease in unemployment from 7.5% in 2009 to 6.6% in 2010, and the creation of 100,000 new jobs (although 42% of them were part-time jobs). The average wage rose by 0.9%, while the average salary of senior executives rose by 10%.

THE ADVA CENTER, EMPLOYMENT AND SOCIAL SECURITY: RETIREMENT SAVINGS

POLICY ANALYSIS

Why is the issue of saving for retirement more important now than it was in the past?

Because in 2010 saving for retirement, implemented through the payroll system, became mandatory for all employed persons.

How does it work?

Retirement savings of between 5% and 7% of gross wage are subtracted from the monthly salary of employees and transferred to their retirement savings accounts. Employers are also mandated to contribute to these accounts at the rate of 6%-13% of gross salary.

The retirement savings accounts are owned and managed by insurance companies and investment houses.

This sounds like a wonderful social benefit? Why is it an issue?

The main problem has to do with the handling of "other people's money."

Firstly, management fees are much too high and may result in as much as 30% of a person's savings being eroded by fees. Secondly, each management company now offers numerous types of savings plans. Agents at insurance companies and banks aggressively offer advice -- for additional fees -- and employees are often at a loss as to what to do. Another problem is how the monies are invested and who does the investing. Firstly, employees have no one representing their interests on the investment committees of the retirement funds. Secondly, most of the monies (70%) are invested in the capital market, which is highly volatile (30% is invested in special government bonds at a guaranteed interest rate of 4.48%, indexed to the cost of living). A third problem is that there is no guarantee on 70% of an employee's retirement savings. Some countries with mandatory retirement savings



do not contribute to the retirement savings of their employees.

What Adva Does

The Adva Center works on the retirement savings issue on two fronts. The first is the person-to-person level: informing workers – both salaried and self-employed – of the importance of saving for retirement, and explaining how the system works, including the alternatives and the advantages and disadvantages of each. This is done by organizing workshops.

The second is the person-to-government level: to advocate for improvements in the present system of retirement savings, working together with other social advocacy organizations. Adva does this by writing and publishing op-eds and position papers, stimulating media coverage of the issue, and meeting with executive officials.

plans guarantee a minimum annual return; Israel does not. Another problem is that of non-compliance with the law. There are employers, many of them small or employing temporary workers, who

THE ADVA CENTER AND GENDER RESPONSIVE BUDGETING

POLICY ANALYSIS

Gender Mainstreaming Calls for Gender Breakdowns

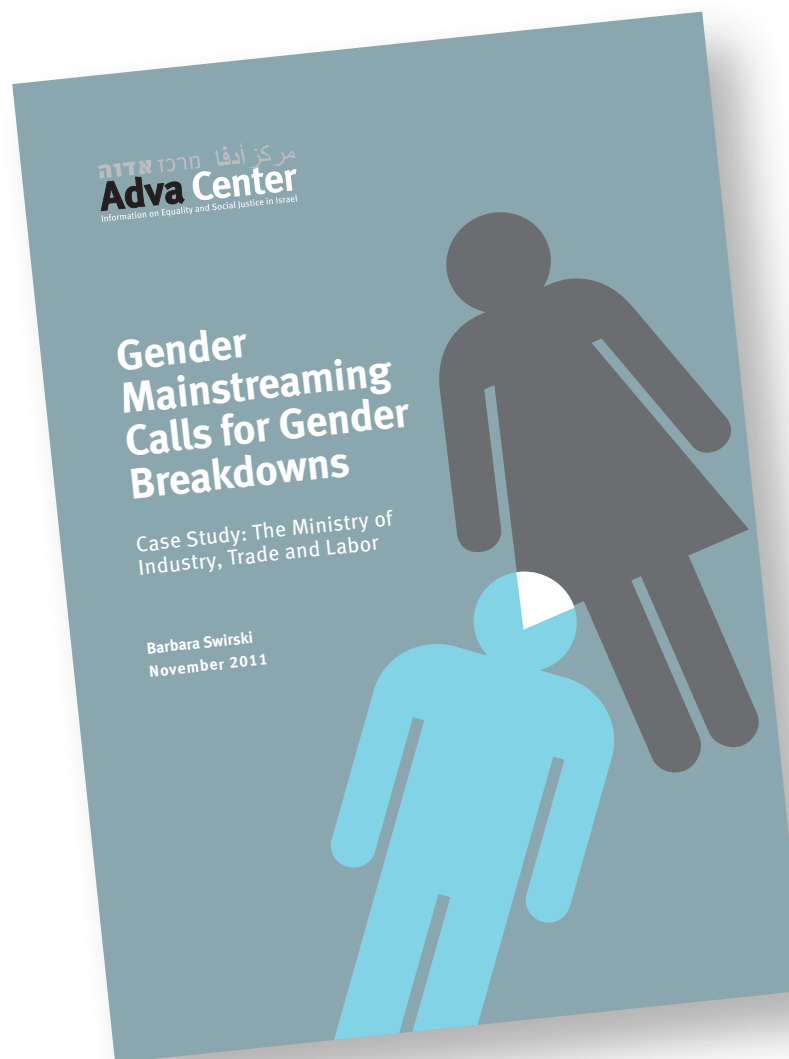
Case Study: The Ministry of Industry, Trade and Labor

By Barbara Swirski, November 2011.

This policy document highlights the departments in the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Labor in which data should be collected by gender and explains the benefits to the economy and to women that might accrue from such data.

IMPACT

The position papers and the advocacy work of the Women's Budget Forum, a coalition of over 30 feminist and human rights organizations led by the **Adva Center**, have led to changes in government programs, new legislation, and new regulations that are more women and minority-friendly.



Advocacy and a Breakthrough

The document was presented to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Labor and to department heads at a meeting held in March 2012.

Following an Adva Center presentation, the minister instructed the director of his Research Department to submit a plan for collecting data by gender within two months, for the purpose of promoting women's employment.

HAARETZ

Israel is not doing enough to promote women's equality

By Merav Michaeli, June 21, 2011

A large number of studies and statistics prove that advancing women's equality is good for the economy, the society and the country; yet the large number of laws that go unimplemented prove that laws are not sufficient.

THE ADVA CENTER AND GENDER RESPONSIVE BUDGETING

TRAINING COURSES FOR WOMEN

In 2011, the Women's Budget Forum conducted nine courses (each consisting of 20-40 hours of training) in social economics (a term coined by the Adva Center) and understanding and influencing the local budget, for groups of women from all around Israel. Several of the courses involved final projects, in which participants applied the principles they learned and the skills they obtained in the course to their own local budgets.

IMPACT

Among the numerous changes made, inspired by the above courses:

- Local sports programs were altered in Herzliya to provide more opportunities for girls;
- The towns of Beit Dagan (Jewish) and Arrabe (Arab) approved a budget for activities designed to promote the status of women in the community – for the first time;
- In the city of Beersheba more women were appointed to municipal committees;
- The municipality of Tel Aviv set up a committee to find ways of raising the status of women employed by the city.

ABOUT THE BOOKLET

The projects presented here were prepared by participants in the course "Gender and Municipal Budgets" – municipal workers and community activists – and are based on material studied in the course. Each project is a model that can be replicated in other municipalities. Most of the projects examine areas of gender inequity, particularly the representation of women in various positions and the terms of their employment.



ADVA CENTER AND GENDER ISSUES

P O L I C Y A N A L Y S I S

Among the issues that the Adva Center worked on 2011, in cooperation with other women's organizations:

- Convincing the Knesset not to raise the retirement age for women, as it would have meant that nearly half of women aged 61, who are unemployed, would need to wait two to five more years before receiving social security. An Adva staff person wrote the most influential position paper on the issue and testified at two public hearings.
- Monitoring monies allocated to public day care. The monitor found that, as of the end of 2011, none of the monies allocated had been spent and no new day care facilities had been constructed.
- Hosting Ms. Gertrude Astrom, the Swedish gender expert who created the strategy of gender mainstreaming -- that is, examining public programming and budgeting to see how appropriate they are to the differential needs of men and women -- and arranging for her to appear at a Knesset conference on the gender mainstreaming of local budgets, at a conference of local advisors on the status of women, at the Israel Ministry of Finance, and at the National Insurance Institute.

I M P A C T

- The Knesset ruled that the retirement age for women would not be raised for at least another five years;
- The Trajtenberg Committee appointed in the wake of the summer protests recommended that early childhood education be free of charge from the age of 3, beginning in the 2012-2013 school year, and that public day care be expanded. These recommendations were approved by the Cabinet and the Knesset. The Adva Center will continue to monitor day care services and will also monitor educational services for children from the age of 3. The findings will be used to pressure ministries charged with expanding the services -- the Ministry of Industry-Trade-Labor and the Ministry of Education -- to implement the government decisions.
- The visit of Gertrud Astrom inspired hundreds of women to work to improve opportunities for women in their communities, provided food for thought to a dozen officials at the Ministry of Finance and the National Insurance Institute, and produced three large media features.



"Do Something About the Central Bus Station"

*By Hagai Matar
July 1, 2011*

There are no ramps for strollers in public parks, the doors of shopping centers are too heavy and buses don't run often enough in the afternoons.

Interview with Gertrud Astrom, world-class gender expert, who came to Israel to explain how to make the urban space more woman-friendly.

THE ADVA CENTER AND EDUCATION

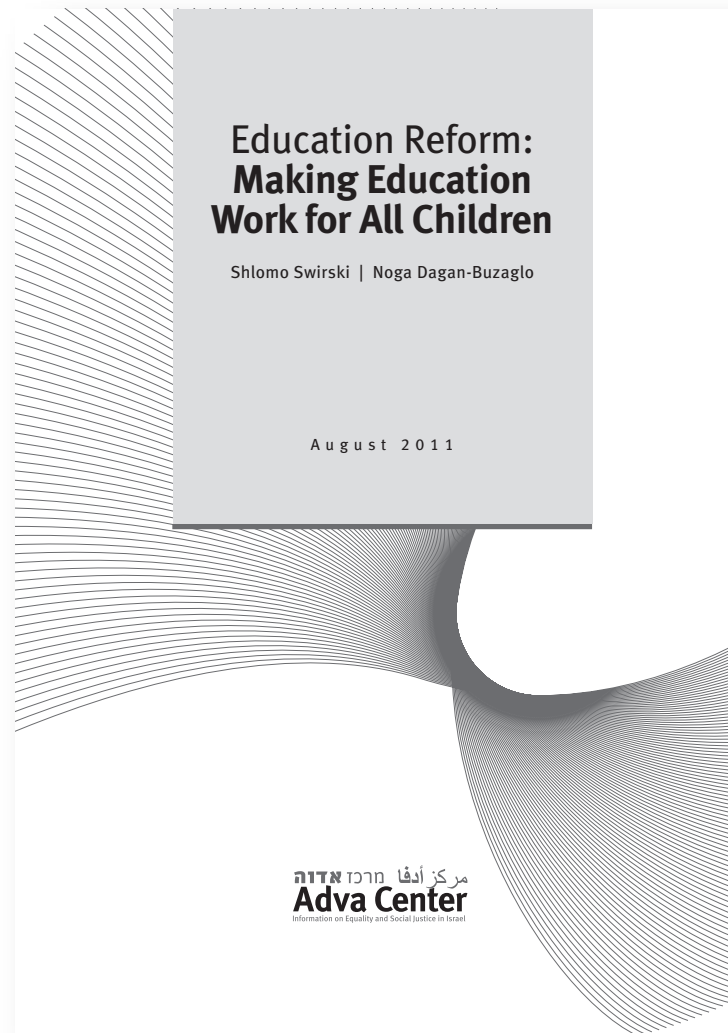
POLICY ANALYSIS

Education Reform: Making Education Work for All Children
By Shlomo Swirski and Noga Dagan-Buzaglo, August 2011.

The point of departure of this policy paper, the third in the Adva Education Series, is that the current functioning of the Israeli school system perpetuates inequality and poor achievements among most schoolchildren, and that this has been happening generation after generation. At the same time, the analysis is based on the belief that all Israeli schoolchildren are capable of attaining normative achievements, and that the school system can be changed to enable them to do so.

IMPACT

The three Adva education reports provided valuable information to the State Comptroller, whose latest report was very critical of developments in Israel's school system as described in the Adva reports.



On the previous report:



Ministry Undergoing Privatization

By Arie Dayan
February 2011

A special report written by Attorney Noga Dagan-Buzaglo reveals a frightening picture: the Ministry of Education, the body charged with limiting and regulating privatization in the public schools, is privatizing itself away . . .

THE ADVA CENTER AND HEALTH CARE

POLICY ANALYSIS

Health Care System: Erosion of Public Financing and Increased Co-Payments

A chapter of *Israel: A Social Report*.

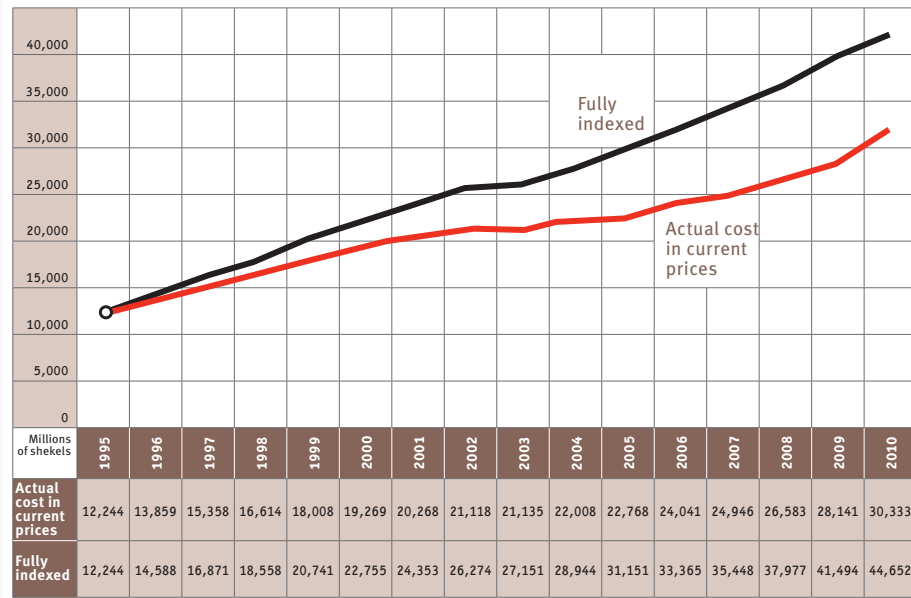
The chapter shows that in 2010, the gap continued to widen between the desirable and actual levels of funding for the basket of health services provided by the health maintenance organizations and that the burden of out-of-pocket payments for health services and for private health insurance policies doubled over the last decade.

IMPACT

- The Adva Center convinced two other advocacy organizations – Physicians for Human Rights and the Association for Civil Rights in Israel – to mobilize to work to preserve and improve the public health system in Israel. Since then, Adva has been working together with these two organizations on many issues connected with public health.
- The work of the Adva Center and of these two organizations has resulted in additional civil society organizations joining the effort.

Cost of the Basket of Health Services

1995-2010 in NIS millions



HAARETZ

Health budget eroded 30% over past decade, report finds

By Roni Linder-Ganz and Hila Weisberg
December 18, 2011

... The health budget has been eroding because the 1995 state health law does not include any automatic update mechanisms. Instead, the budget is set through negotiations between the finance and health ministries and is influenced by unrelated factors such as the relative strength of each minister.

THE ADVA CENTER AND THE ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CONFLICT

POLICY ANALYSIS

The Costs of Occupation

This is a Powerpoint presentation based on a semi-annual report of the same name that shows that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict...

- Undermines Israel's economic growth,
- Burdens its budget,
- Constrains its social development,
- Sullies its vision,
- Harms its international standing,
- Wears its army,
- Divides it politically, and
- Threatens its future as a Jewish state.

IMPACT

- Since the report was first published in 2006, it has received more and more public attention, and many public figures have adopted phrases from it in their speeches and interviews.
- Subsequent to publication of the first Adva Center report on the costs of Israel's continuing occupation of Palestinian territories, other researchers have examined the same phenomenon.



The Costs of Occupation

Shlomo and Barbara Swirski
Adva Center
November 2011

THE ADVA CENTER'S PARTNERS

The Adva Center receives no funding from government sources and relies solely upon the support of individuals, organizations and foundations, such as those who made generous contributions to the work of the Adva Center in 2011:

Jacob and Hilda Blaustein Foundation
Heinrich Boell Stiftung
The European Union
Friedrich Ebert Stiftung
Ford Israel Fund
Hadassah Foundation
Mr. Howard Horowitz and Ms. Alisse Waterston
MAZON: A Jewish Response to Hunger
National Council of Jewish Women
New Israel Fund
Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung

The Adva Center works on a small budget and transforms small investments into the largest possible impact on people's lives. **Much more work remains to be done and with greater support we can:**

Strive for increased social justice and equality. We can submit more op-eds on social issues to the written and electronic media, provide more opinion pieces and offer more lectures on social equality issues to government officials, aspiring politicians and members of youth groups.

Work to strengthen the sustainability of the Israeli economy. We can analyze in greater depth the structure and implications of current economic policy and present our recommendations for more effective policies more often and to more government forums and officials.

HOW TO CONTRIBUTE

Contributions are tax-deductible if made to The New Israel Fund, with a donor-advised recommendation that they be used for the Adva Center.

Train more women and men to make national and local budgets more gender-responsive, that is, more reflective of the differential needs of women and girls and men and boys. We can provide more training courses on how to understand the budget to women and men in communities throughout Israel and actively work with national and local governments to make budgets more transparent and more equitable.

Advocate for improved national health care. We can conduct more research on the access of health care for all segments of the population, analyze where gaps or shortfalls in service exist and recommend changes.

CONTACT US

We would be happy to answer any questions you may have and discuss how you can become more involved. To learn more, please contact Barbara Swirski, Executive Director, at 972-(0)3-5608871
Fax: 972-(0)3-5602205
Email: advainfo@bezeqint.net

THE PEOPLE AT THE ADVA CENTER

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

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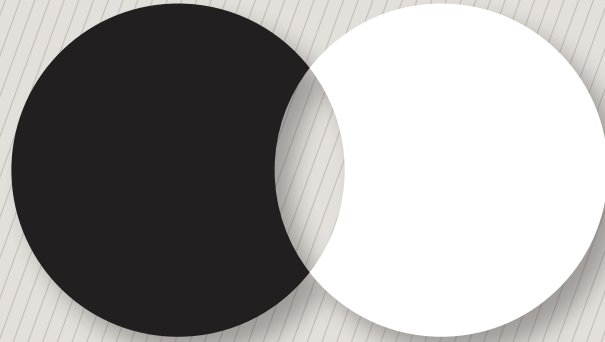
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