HIDDEN FIGURES IN ISRAEL
Following UN Recommendations for a Gender-Sensitive Approach to the Corona Crisis

Status Report #2, October 2020
The UN cited several areas in which public policy requires gender-sensitivity if it is to cope adequately with the corona crisis. Here's how they pertain to Israel:

1. Violence against Women
2. Employment
3. Care for Home and Family
4. Poverty and Housing
5. Lone Mothers
6. Older Women
7. Medical Professions
8. Health insurance and health services
9. Education
10. Pregnancy and birth services

Only 10 subjects pertain to the UN. And we add: Decision-making Power.
Women are subject to physical, economic and sexual violence within the family.

- In May-July 2020, 4,700 police files were opened in Israel on family violence cases, compared with 4,050 during the same period in 2019;
- Between March and August 2020, 14 Israeli women were murdered by their spouses or other family members.
Women are employed in more part-time work and precarious jobs, and earn less than men. These gaps widen during crises.

Vacation without pay

The Government Employment office reports that since the start of Israel’s second lockdown (September 19, 2020), 94,000 job seekers re-registered as sent home on vacation without pay, 70% of them women.

Informal economy

Women are over-represented in the informal economy, a category which includes home cleaners, nannies, persons devoid of residency status, refugees and sex workers. They have limited or no access to social insurance, and the economic losses they incur expose them to the dangers of homelessness and hunger.
In June 2020, women did 61% of housework in Israeli two-parent families and 64% of childcare work; Men failed to increase their share of these tasks.
Poor women are in greater risk than others in times of crisis:

- Women constitute **54%** of poor people in Israel.
- Women constitute **62.5%** of Israelis receiving rent subsidies.
- Lone mothers are **47%** of Israelis residing in public housing.
Lone mothers are especially vulnerable to poverty:

Among one-parent families in Israel (84% of which were headed by women in 2018), 26% were poor prior to the corona crisis; 30% are now poor.
Some 1/3 of women aged 65 and over live alone, compared with 12% of men. Public policy needs to make special provisions for women living alone, locked down in their homes as they are during the corona crisis.
### Medical Professions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Profession</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Occupational therapists</td>
<td>96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social workers</td>
<td>90%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nurses</td>
<td>89%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Physiotherapists</td>
<td>75%</td>
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<td>Physicians</td>
<td>43%</td>
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Women constitute 72% of health care workers and the majority of essential workers. They are in more danger than others of contracting Covid-19 due to exposure to people infected with the virus.
While Israel boasts a National Health Insurance Law that covers all residents, some persons have limited or no access to medications and medical treatment, among them persons lacking residency status and migrant workers.
When school schedules are disrupted, mostly women forego or reduce paid work to care for children and assist them with long-distance learning.

Women constitute 76% of Israel’s teachers.
During health crises, the corona epidemic being a prime example, these women-centered services are reduced due to limited health care resources.
To all of the above, we add that women’s influence in decision-making positions in Israel continues to be limited:

Women are no more than:

- 21% of Cabinet ministers
- 27.5% of legislators
- 17% of hospital directors-general
- 20% of the national team on the corona crisis, increased to 61% after women’s protest and court petition!

This needs to change!

Israel needs more women’s input to cope with the corona crisis.

Israel Police, Information about domestic violence toward women and children. Data received on September 25, 2020.

Her Memorial Facebook page: https://www.facebook.com/HerMemorial

Government Employment Administration. 2020. Data received on September 24, 2020


Ministry of Construction and Housing, 2019 Budget Proposal.


Ministry of Health Database: https://institutions.health.gov.il/institutions/01.