Abstract

"Murder of Women and Gender Violence in the Family - Review of Systemic Care in Israel"

Yasmin Rubin Cooper and Dr. Michal Rom

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, commemorating the 24 victims murdered in 2018. All these events involved women and organizations from all corners of Israeli society as well as broad organizing of civil society and social activists.

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

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

Producing 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, we were assisted by an information manager who was tasked in identifying worldwide systemic measures that have been implemented in recent decades in order to deal with the phenomenon of violence against women, in particular with the murder of women. In addition, a limited number of interviews and conversations were held with representatives from the government and civil society in order to deepen the picture presented.

In the second phase, we sought to validate the findings and the draft report via representatives of civil society organizations engaged in the field. In accordance with the mapping results, we approached some 25 organizations and asked their representatives to read the report and attend a meeting to discuss its findings and implications. This meeting was held in May 2019 at Sheatufim, and resulted in several changes in the document chapters. Likewise, the chapter "What's next?" was added, which describes, according to specialists in the field, the key changes required by the wider system to combat gender violence and the murder of women in the family in Israel.

In this context, it is important to note that while the learning process initially focused on the phenomenon of murders, it soon became clear that the discussion of homicides could not be detached 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 perpetrators close to them will also involve addressing a range of issues of violence against women and violence in general.

The report consists of the following seven chapters:

Chapter One outlines the boundaries of the report and the definitions of gender violence and violence in the family.

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

Chapter Three describes the ways of dealing with the phenomenon of violence against women in Israel. The first part addresses the major points in the timeline of treating violence against women in Israel, while the second part details the main responses that currently exist in Israel in treating violence against women (including domestic violence in general).

Chapter Four presents insights from initial mapping of the stakeholders in the arena.

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

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

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

We hope that this report, which presents an overarching perspective gathered from the multiple viewpoints of diverse organizations, can help promote the activities of all stakeholders in the arena, and that it will serve as a tool for finding new and shared ways to work for change. For the full document, [click here](http://wiki.sheatufim.org.il/w/upload/sheatufim/3/3e/אלימות_מגדרית.pdf).