



Women's Spirit
Financial Independence for
Women Victims of Violence

**Together We Will Change The
Direction Of The Wind 2019**

Hagit Bekhor / Chair Women's Spirit Board of Directors



I am pleased to submit our annual report summarizing the work of Women's Spirit throughout 2019 to you, our partners. Women's Spirit works in three main arenas: personal empowerment of participants who are survivors of abuse, activities in the community, and actions that focus upon changing policy and legislation – the latter has been a true challenge for all organizations during this year, especially since we have dealt with a transition government in Israel.

2019 was a significant turning point for Women's Spirit, from the aspect of the scope of our work as well as from the point that our efforts received broad recognition.

In 2019 for the first time, our activities focused directly upon the State – the Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare, and we were recognized as an organization that helps women survivors of violence become economically independent. At the same time, our activities became widely recognized

both locally and internationally: we received the Effectiveness Award from the Midot Organization, as well as the Midot Seal, and in addition, were awarded the standing of Special Advisor to the UN ECOSOC with regard to the struggle of women survivors of violence. These are the results of very strenuous, systematic and organized work over several years.

I am very proud of each of you and glad that our tireless efforts have resulted in being heard both in Israel and abroad. I believe that this recognition constitutes a springboard for expanding our activities to eradicate economic abuse, along with strengthening those women who choose to become independent. I am proud to head the board of directors and help the wonderful women who make up the staff of Women's Spirit and do their work with so much dedication and professionalism.

I thank my partners and friends, the board of directors, the volunteers, the staff and CEO of Women's Spirit, and all of the organizations that contribute and help to create collaborations, in the strong belief that violence and abuse of any kind does not have to be the fate of women. Together, we will act, and succeed in eradicating violence and we will bolster economic independence for women in Israel.

Финансовая
независимость

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Financial
Independence

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Tamar Schwartz / CEO



This year, Women's Spirit which I have the honor of heading, celebrated 12 years of existence. Alongside the important achievements in promoting gender equality and economic empowerment for women, we are still worried by the regression at certain levels when it comes to these important issues, both in Israel and in the world. We must all remember, and always remind others, that those among us who are abused, and there are so many, coming from all walks of life, still face challenging obstacles and that these barriers sometimes seem to be insurmountable, and that the women's personal escape from the cycle of abuse does not end with their leaving their abusive partner/spouse! We at Women's Spirit support these women during a long and intensive process, with individual and group interaction, and of course, do our utmost to effect changes in policies, as well as promote legislation and awareness.

Our 2019 annual report consists of a very short summary of the broad work carried out by Women's Spirit. As you can see – the scope of our activities has grown – we have established an additional branch in the southern part of the country, developed additional and varied ranges of solutions for our participants, were awarded the "2019 Effective Association Award" by the Midot organization and received the status of "UN Special Advisor" in the field of abuse against women. In addition, we spearheaded the expansion of the Bank Availability Convention together with the Bank of Israel Supervisor of Banks, members of the Banking Association and the Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare, in order to enable women survivors of violence to open a new economic page when leaving the cycle of abuse, and we conquered other heights when it came to removing obstacles within the system that stand in their way.

I thank the staff, volunteers, Chair of our Friends Committee, Chair of our Board and of course the entire board of directors for all the amazing and tireless work carried out every day, every hour, for the benefit of women survivors of violence in Israel.

I am excited to thank you – our supporters and partners – for your support, encouragement and help. I have no doubt that our work together, our determined and just work will allow us to soar and strive to become an exemplary society, one of social justice and equality.

What happened in 2019?

414 New
Inquiries

435 Women Received
Assistance

1 New branch in the
South, Be'er Sheba

1 Campaign was held prior
to International Women's
Day to raise awareness of
Economic Abuse

18 received Women' Spirit
Scholarships and began:
training to be Teachers;
Social Workers; Cosmeticians;
Professional Stylists; Pilates
Instructors; Parent Guidance
Counselors; Event Producers;
Pre-Law; etc.

226 women chose to be
married in gowns from
our Bridal Boutique

1 Women's Spirit "OWN"
fundraising initiative -
Bridal Boutique

211 Active
Volunteers

2019 Milestones



ECOSOC

Women's Spirit was recognized as a world leader in the domain of abuse against women and was awarded **the status of special advisor to the UN Socio-Economic Council (ECOSOC) 2019!**

Women's Spirit opened a branch in the South – after much field work, and developing partners in the south, our southern branch was opened.

For the first time, Women's Spirit shared our work during an international conference of NCJW (National Council of Jewish Women) in the U.S.A.

We were awarded the **2019 Effective Association Award** granted by the Midot Organization – measurement and grading non-profit organizations.

We received the **Midot Seal** for organizational effectiveness, given to us for three years as opposed to the usual two.



Lectures and Workshops Department expanded - Women's Spirit carries out training sessions, lectures and workshops with the objective to make the public aware of the phenomenon of violence and abuse towards women, in order to enable professionals and the public at large to identify warning signs.

Crossing the Street

Women's Spirit Crossing the Street program is unique and is adapted individually for each participant, depending upon her personal life story, her needs and professional preferences. Its objective is to help the survivor of abuse find work and establish her economic independence, as a tool for escaping the cycle of abuse. Thanks to Crossing the Street, the participants attend employment workshops undergo mentoring and personal coaching by the volunteers, training, professional courses and receive educational scholarships; have private lessons to reinforce computer skills, English and computer languages; are helped to integrate into work situations; undergo unique training for business owners, etc.

Throughout 2019, the program continued to operate throughout the country – in Tel Aviv-Jaffa, in the North in Nahariya, Haifa and Iksal, in the central periphery in Lod, and for the first time, in the South – thanks to the new branch established in Be'er Sheba!



HerStory

The way Women's Spirit offers its services is that it adapts itself to me while guiding me professionally and providing me with emotional support. For me, the connection with Women's Spirit is vital for learning to approach the labor market once again with confidence." A

I came to Women's Spirit with great trepidation and fear about managing in a world without the structure of the therapeutic day center I had been a part of. I knew that going to work is what would provide a healthy framework, but I was completely incapable of approaching this problem by myself - all I felt was fear and massive economic dependency. As frightening as it was to even think about the idea of being independent, remaining completely economically dependent in the future, and to do so with low self-esteem was even more alarming. To this day, I take small steps fearfully, but I do so with the help of a group of the very professional and wonderful team at Women's Spirit. Their loving gentle hands reach out to me, remaining one step ahead of me, while a motherly and confident voice calls to me: you can do it, one more step, come on, you can, we are here with you on this long journey, and this path will be good for you, continue, it will come, you'll see..." M.



"Every meeting was saturated with guidance Exercises to reinforce ME Focus upon MY capabilities, pushing me ahead Listening, a hug and a good word Helping ME get to college - the counseling sessions and the push towards a B.A. these are the gifts from Women's Spirit that were always given to ME with a smile and a hug." Y.

Spheres of Influence

Hundreds of volunteers from the community work as mentors and professional coaches who we trained to work one-on-one for a year with each woman. Women's Spirit's dedicated volunteers build a good and caring connection and help the participants overcome professional and personal barriers.



"As someone who herself was a victim of domestic violence within the family and then in a relationship, I could not stand by and not volunteer to help. I felt that if after several years I could see the positive process that I went through from the moment I decided that abuse would no longer be part of my life, I also wanted to help others find and walk their own paths. I was particularly able to understand that support "the day after" and how very very important it is; that the consequences of abuse do not stop as soon as one breaks the cycle, and that one must rediscover the feeling of trust, ability and self-capability.

I remember the excitement I felt before the first meeting, the fear of the unknown,

Will she connect with me?

Will I be able to help her?

Will I be a good mentor for her?

What will be our relationship?

I learned a lot from my participant, from how to give and get a warm and close hug, belief and courage, honesty, openness, to a strong desire to dream and move forward. I understood the power inherent in being present and listening, when the moments and conversations for which she thanks me were those when I was simply at her side, supportive and listening, without recommending or having a plan."

Hadar, Women's Spirit Volunteer



Breaking the Bind

Women's Spirit works in the public arena in order to, stimulate awareness of the economic state of women survivors of abuse and the legal barriers in which they have to contend with. We promote policy and legislation that can provide solutions and work in cooperation with other organizations and policy makers in the government.

One of the most significant victories of our work in 2019 was the expansion of the contents of the Banking Availability Convention for women survivors of violence; a Convention which provides unique and flexible solutions for women who have fallen into debt as a result of the abuse they endured. Up to now, the Convention only applied to women who had been in shelters.

Thanks to our actions, a pilot was instituted enabling all women in the community (where the majority of survivors of abuse can be found) to take advantage of the Convention. This pilot is the result of cooperation with the Bank of Israel, the Banking Association and the Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare.



Women's Spirit is a member of numerous coalitions

- **The Coalition for Ensuring Payment of Child Support:** This coalition works to change the manner in which the Alimony Law (Payment Guarantee) 5732-1972, is not equitable to divorced women who are forced to choose between an honorable livelihood and child support.
- **Coalition 1325:** This coalition works to implement in Israel UN Security Council Resolution no. 1325, a resolution which reinforces the security of women and ensures they are represented in decision-making.
- **The 2030 Agenda Coalition for the development of global sustainability goals:** This coalition works toward assimilating the global objectives of the UN for sustainable development in Israel by 2030.
- **The "Connecting for Impact" Coalition:** This coalition works to strengthen the field of feminism in Israel.



Women Building their own Businesses

Women's Spirits workshop "Building Your Own Business" is for women who dream of having their own business, or business owners who are interested in promoting it. The workshop exposes the women to the world of enterprise and within this framework, they create a solid business vision, build a plan for achieving defined goals, develop knowledge, tools and skills for running a business and reinforce their feeling of self-realization.





HerStory

I came to Women's Spirit and took part in the workshop "Building Your Own Business". I learned a lot and opened my own Yoga and Pilates studio. The studio is flourishing and provides a quality of life for many people as well as me as a Yoga teacher and as an independent business owner earning a good living.

Sharon my mentor worked with me for 2 years, she guided my growth and development, she pushed me to soar, and I did!

In fact, my business success unequivocally saved my life!!

From great chaos around me and domestic abuse, I was able to survive the hell, and with the support and encouragement of Women's Spirit, was able to push myself forward'. A

Town Square

Every Sunday afternoon, Women's Spirit opens its living room for present and past participants who come to hang together and take part in weekly lectures and workshops.

Among the workshops we hosted in 2019 are: belly dancing, taking care of oneself, internal empowerment, creative writing, golden rules for proper financial handling, tools for fulfilling desires, affirmative experiences, etc.



The open space is, for me, a safe haven, which makes it possible for me to feel that I belong. A social, inclusive, empowering, advice giving framework, to which I look forward on a weekly basis. The lectures at the Town Square are varied, interesting and provide practical tools for a good life. An island of quiet and stability in my turbulent life."

M. a steady participant in the women's Town Square.



Gratitude for our Volunteers & Partners

In March, we joined together for a very special event to thank Women's Spirit volunteers and partners. During this moving evening, **Dr. Sarab Abu-Rabia-Queder** was awarded the "**KATAN Award**" for her multi-faceted work and her ceaseless and constant efforts fighting for women's rights.

Sarab is one of the most prominent feminist pioneers and activists in the Negev and works very courageously to give a voice to the burning issues in the lives of women in the Bedouin community.

We thank Ms. Nili Katan and her family for preserving the legacy of Professor Yossi Katan, one of the founders of Women's Spirit Executive Committee, by awarding "The Katan Award" to an academia who works for the advancement of gender justice through voluntary work. Prof. Yossi Katan was an outstanding example of the combination of a break-through academic career with extensive social and gender involvement.

Previous winners of the "KATAN Award"

2013 – Professor Daphna Hacker

2014 – Professor Ruth Halperin Kaddari

2015 – Professor Nadera Shaloub-Kervorkian

2017 – Dr. Yofi Tirosh



Economic Independence

Women's Spirit believes that economic independence is necessary for a woman to feel secure and independent. In the same way, we believe that economic independence is necessary to enable Women's Spirit to be strong and secure. Therefore, we initiate projects that generate income, aimed at creating a secure financial base for us. In addition, these projects serve as an important channel for raising awareness regarding the state and standing of women survivors of violence and the concept of economic abuse.



Lectures and Workshops



Women's Spirit offers a series of fascinating and enriching lectures about Women Survivors of Violence; Signs of Abuse; etc. The lectures are aimed at both men and women and help companies and organizations increase the circle of influence around them and helps their employees feel valued and important. Together, we can become ambassadors of change in the workplace, the community and the family.

Trenda

This year, Women's Spirit annual fashion fair, TRENDa, which has already gained a reputation, took place at Abraham Hostel in Tel Aviv, where clothing, jewelry, accessories and bathing suits – all donated by Israeli designers – were offered for sale.



Women's Spirit Bridal Boutique

Women's Spirit Bridal Boutique is a unique enterprise. Brides and designers donate bridal gowns that are then sold at attractive prices which allows them to be part of making a difference in the life of a woman survivor of violence.

In addition to raising funds for Women's Spirit, the boutique helps raise awareness among brides and their individual community of family and friends of the importance of economic independence for women in general, and survivors of violence in particular. The boutique is operated by dedicated volunteers, sensitive and kind women who promise that every bride who comes to the boutique will have a very pleasant and positive experience.



"My thanks to the angels at Women's Spirit boutique. Thank you for the amazing dress that seemed to have been sewn especially for me, for the warm and encouraging attitude, for the rational price, and all in all, for being there! You saved me a lot of running around time and money. My dress? I will donate it back! So that the next bride can enjoy it and so that you can continue to run this wonderful mission that so empowers Israeli women's spirit! Bless you!"

Shani Zimmerman



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Haute Couture

ANYA FLEET
l'air



ARAVA POLAK
— BRIDAL COUTURE —



LEE PETRA GREBENAU



SHIR KOLTON
שכלות כלה



LAROS



BRIDE'S STORY



התחנה
תרבות, בילוי ופנאי



GALIA LAHAV
HOUSE OF COUTURE



EISEN STEIN
BRIDAL

GALI KARTEN
BRIDAL COUTURE

HELENA KOLAN
BRIDAL COUTURE



David Hasbani
FASHION DESIGN



LIHI HOD
BRIDAL

AI
ADA HEFETZ
haute couture



ANAELLE
HAUTE COUTURE

LUMINARY
By Lihi Shamrich Cohen

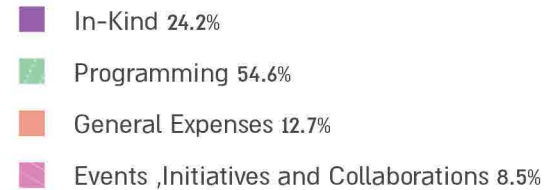
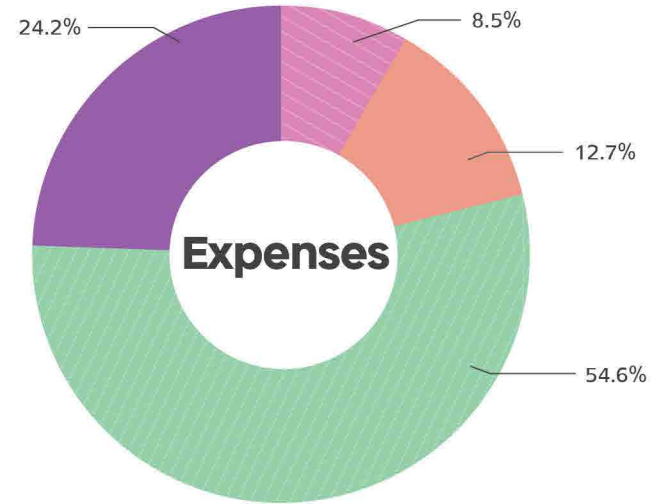
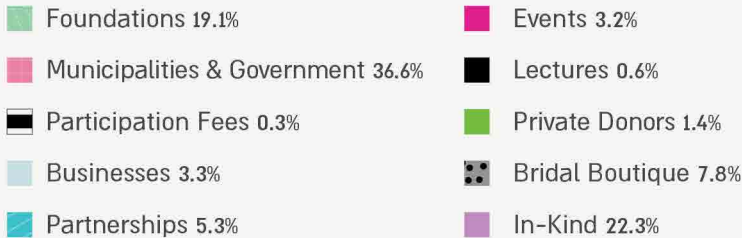
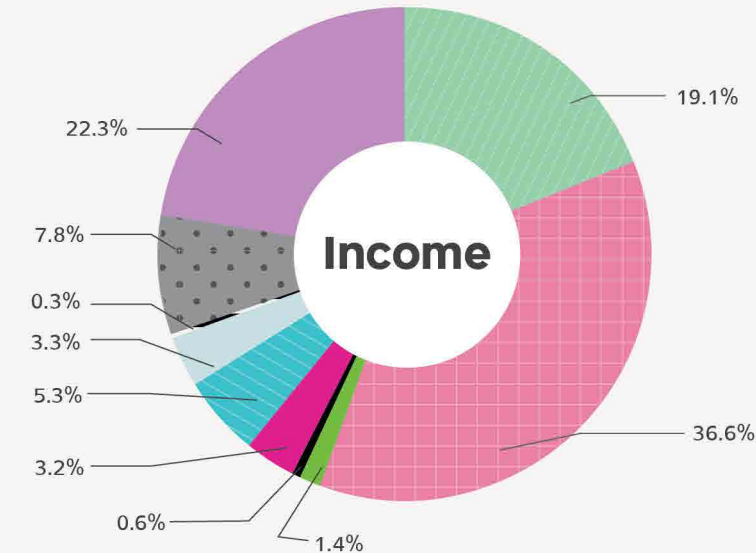
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— White —

VICTOR V|V BELLAISH

Michal Azachi | Makeup Artist
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Income & Expenses



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Attorney Dr. Merav Shmueli - Director Advocacy & Policy
Rosy Miller Minster, MSW - Director of Professional Services
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Sharon Rubinstein Mirkam - Development Coordinator
Shlomit Binyamin - Community Relations Coordinator
Meital Ben-Dor - Bridal Boutique Manger
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Lea Shani - Coordinator of Measurement and Evaluation
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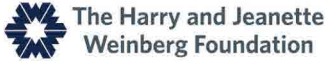
Audit Committee

Anda Barak
Alla Felder
Orna Tamir



Motty Reif, President Friends of Women's Spirit
Yael Abecassis, Women' Spirit Partner and Volunteer Mentor since its founding

Thank You To Our Partners



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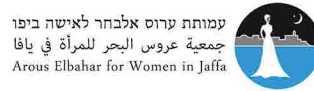


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