



**Women's Sprit**

Financial Independence for  
Women Victims of Violence

**2021**



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TOGETHER WE WILL CHANGE THE DIRECTION OF THE WIND

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The COVID-19 pandemic was still very much around in 2021, with new variants, more cases and isolations. Women's vulnerability in their own homes has risen dramatically, and the demand for the services of Women's Spirit increased as well. We learned how to work differently; how to protect the health of the staff, the participants and the volunteers and continue to provide the responses to the community and its individuals. This new reality required all of us to be more creative and much more efficient.

Despite the restrictions, we expanded our activities in all arenas. Our dedicated staff and volunteers have shown their commitment, resourcefulness, creativity, and operational-managerial flexibility, thus enabling the expansion of the basket of services offered and the scope of assistance to participants.

We continued to promote laws and regulations that will make it easier for women survivors of abuse. At the same time, we expanded our information campaign and increased public awareness of businesses, organizations, and individuals – so that each and every one of us, everywhere, knows how to name the phenomenon and identify the warning signs hidden in an abusive relationship. Furthermore, we have strengthened and established the financial independence of our organization by diversifying our independent sources of income, and mainly thanks to our flagship venture, the bridal boutique. The boutique offers women quality wedding dresses at affordable prices and provides Women's Spirit with an independent source of income.

For all of this and more, I wish to thank our dedicated volunteers and wonderful and professional staff who choose to engage in these complicated tasks every day. I give my deepest thanks to all involved in this work and to all our partners who view our work as a social mission. Your support gives us strength and provides us with the ability to continue and work towards the economic independence of women survivors of abuse. Thank you, our loyal and devoted partners – Women's Spirit's CEO, directors, staff, and my colleagues on the Board.

**My hope is that 2022 will pave the way for the world to go back on track, free of pandemics, so we can all go back to a healthy routine for growth and financial independence.**



**Hagit Bekhor**  
Chair Board of Directors



**Tamar Schwartz**

CEO

This year, Women's Spirit, which I have the honor to head, celebrated 14 years of existence.

In 2021, together with the rest of the world, we were struck by an enormous economic and public health crisis. COVID-19 worsened the condition of the weaker populations, women in general, and survivors of abuse in particular. In many homes, the violence increased, and with it the number of referrals to Women's Spirit and the intensity of their severity.

We must remember, and remind others, that many obstacles stand in the way of survivors of abuse in our midst; there are so many of them, from all parts of our society, and the obstacles they face are difficult to eliminate. The fact that these women manage to leave their personal vicious cycle of abuse does not end with the separation from their abusive partner! Women's Spirit works closely and intensively with these women with the goal of promoting their economic independence and at the same time, acts to change policy, promote legislation, and raise awareness.

Our 2021 report is a short summary of our extensive and notable work. As you will see – the scope of our activities increased, as did the range of professional responses that were adapted to meet the challenges of the times. In addition, we gained unprecedented public recognition for our work and reached significant achievements in the battle against violence, while fighting for the survivors of abuse by changing policy, regulations, and legislation.

I want to thank our staff, volunteers, Board Chair and board members for their determined and outstanding actions carried out on a daily basis, every hour of the day, for the benefit of survivors of abuse.

It is my duty, and a very pleasant one at that, to thank you – supporters of Women's Spirit – for your confidence, encouragement, and support of our endeavors.

**I have no doubt that our joint, determined, and just work will bring results as we continue striving to become an outstanding society, a culture of justice and social equality.**

# What Happened in 2021?

**426** Participants

**327** Volunteers

**23** Women received Women's Spirit scholarships and began studies in cosmetology, education, website design and more

**364** Chose to be married in gowns from our Bridal Boutique

**102** Lectures and workshops that exposed more than **6,000** people from across society to the complicated issue of violence against women in general and economic abuse in particular

# 2021 Milestones and Achievements

## **Nation-Wide Activity**

we continued to establish our activities in the north and south of the country. Using remote support and assistance, we succeeded in providing ongoing support for women who were physically distant

## **#Economic\_Violence\_is\_Violence**

In November we launched a massive campaign to raise awareness to the complex issue of economic abuse

## **Precedential Ruling**

women survivors of abuse are entitled to a study grant from the National Insurance Institute – Women's Spirit and the Rackman Center joined as amicus curia in an important appeal led by attorneys Talia Ramati and Nira Shalev as experts on economic abuse and helped change reality



**The Ministry of Welfare and Social Affairs**

## **For the first time**

Women's Spirit held a conference on occupational rehabilitation for women survivors of abuse, for social workers from Domestic Violence Prevention Centers in the south of Israel, and in cooperation with the Ministry of Welfare and Social Resilience

## **Expanding the Banking Availability Covenant**

to 60 Domestic Violence Prevention Centers nationwide for Women Survivors of Abuse together with the Ministry of Welfare, the Bank of Israel, and the Association of Banks and the Ministry of Welfare and Social Security

## **Extending "Double Allowance"**

A temporary order permitting double allowances was approved until the end of 2022. This allows women who are entitled to child support to receive unemployment payments as well (as part of our activity with the Coalition to Ensure Child Support Payments)

# “Crossing the Street”

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“Crossing the Street” is a long-term community program that provides tools, knowledge, and support for women survivors of abuse to help them build safe and independent lives for themselves and their children. Financial independence allows these women to take control over their lives and escape the vicious cycle of abuse and support themselves. The program includes employment workshops; mentoring and personal training by trained volunteers; training sessions towards owning a business; scholarships to help with tuition; private lessons for reinforcing computer skills and language; assistance in work placement, etc.

**“Crossing the Street” operates across Israel –  
in the North, throughout the  
Central Periphery and in the South.**

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# HerStory

"I came to Women's Spirit at a horrendous time in my life, when it seemed that everything ahead led to a dead end.

At Women's Spirit they listened and did everything they could to help me. Jennifer led group sessions and I learned many things I had not thought of before. I received personal training, 15 sessions, each of which was like an oxygen tank to a drowning person. And if that was not enough, they gave me things that I could not even dream of—a professional scholarship to study to become a medical pedicurist. I graduated a month ago and I am now starting a business support process. My dream is to be independent and make more money in what I like to do."

A.



# “Town Square”

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Throughout the year, despite COVID-19, we continued to hold the “Open Space”, an open group session, on a weekly basis. Every Sunday, on quarantine days, on days of a security crisis – we did not stop meeting. Present and past participants met in an informal setting that included lectures and workshops. Among the workshops we hosted: self-branding, the ever-changing world of employment, personal resilience, dealing with cognitive decline, Pilates, yoga and more.

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*“The Open Space makes me feel loved and gives me a sense of belonging and allows me the opportunity to use my own strengths and be here for someone else.” A.*

# HerStory

"Women's Spirit - Two words that reflect great strength, support, embracing women who stand by you, stick with you on this challenging path, when you are afraid, and find the courage to confide in them.

To regain your confidence - and perhaps for the first time - through eyes that look at you with faith and reflect heroism for the rest of the way.

Tools that only a family can give, and they are like family to you.

Women's Spirit, the wonderful Sarit, without judging and without criticizing, wisely knew how to hear me, without interrupting, while accepting and respecting a delicate and sometimes slow process due to the complexity of my life. With patience, a smile, an attentive ear and strengthening words.

Support through complicated and annoying bureaucracy... she also paired me with a trained volunteer mentor, Sarah, who soon became a central figure in my life that I badly needed and did not even know how much. It's not easy for me to write because I'm still on my path and sometimes I feel that only at its beginning... but it's important for me to write, especially - that the magical power of Women's Spirit in Haifa gave me what I needed most and that is the feeling that I am loved and that I am not alone, no longer, no more! That someone wants my best - That I have rights. There is someone who believes in me."

S.



# Spheres of Influence

Women's Spirit has been blessed with a community of volunteers who wholeheartedly dedicate their time and professional experience to our purpose and social message. As part of our support model, volunteers form significant, beneficial, and authentic relationships with the participants. They help the participants overcome professional and personal barriers and rebuild foundations of trust, self-esteem, and a sense of personal capability.



# HerStory

"A few years ago, at the last minute, and after much persuasion, I joined a mentoring training course at Women's Spirit. I had many concerns that it would be too difficult to be exposed to the content of the course since I went through family abuse as a child. It was challenging and yet, so enveloping and understanding, that in retrospect it was one of the most important decisions I have ever made. To date, I have accompanied 4 women as a volunteer mentor, and it is one of the most empowering things. The two of us together, the participant and I, go through a life-changing process. Knowing that I can be there for her, to help, to listen, to support, and to laugh, expands the heart, and sometimes I feel like I am receiving a gift from life, from the world and from her.

Women's Spirit is a home for me, it's a kind of magic."

Na'ama



# Breaking the Bind

Abuse against women is a broad, social phenomenon that extends far beyond the case of a specific woman. Therefore, to eradicate abuse, the social, cultural, and legal structures that allow it to exist must be changed. Only by raising awareness and altering policies and legislation will substantial change be possible.

Women's Spirit operates in the public arena to raise awareness about the financial state of women survivors of abuse and the many professional, financial and legal barriers they face. We promote legislation and policy change to address these barriers in cooperation with other organizations as well as policy makers in the Israeli parliament and government.



# 2021 Significant Achievements

## Extending "Double Allowance"

Following an initiative we led as part of the Coalition to Ensure Child Support Payments, a temporary order permitting double allowances was extended until the end of 2022, this makes it possible for women who are entitled to child support to receive unemployment payments at the same time.

## Banking Availability Covenant

Women's Spirit, together with the Ministry of Welfare, the Bank of Israel, and the Association of Banks, is part of a pilot to expand the Banking Availability Covenant for Women Survivors of Violence. This Covenant offers suitable responses for women survivors of abuse to facilitate the financial treatment of debts incurred by violent spouses. The pilot started with 8 Domestic Violence Prevention Centers and is currently in 60 nationwide! At the end of 2021 it was decided on a nationwide expansion! We are working to implement the Covenant in the Domestic Violence Prevention centers.

## Precedential Ruling

Women survivors of abuse are entitled to a study grant from the National Insurance Institute, regardless of the time they resided in a shelter – Women's Spirit and the Rackman Center joined as amicus curia in an important appeal as experts on economic abuse and helped change reality. In the appeal filed by Inbal Daga, a single mother with 4 children and a survivor of abuse, the National Labor Court held that the plaintiff is entitled to a study grant for her children, even before her divorce is final, and regardless of the time she spent in a women's shelter. The appeal was led by attorneys Talia Ramati and Nira Shalev. Women's Spirit and Rackman Center helped the court understand two major things: effects of abuse are there long after the abuse stops; without financial assistance, women survivors of abuse have trouble leaving their violent spouse and breaking free from the cycle of abuse.

# Women Building Their Own Business

The program Women Building Their Own Business is designed for women who wish to establish an independent business or women who own a business and wish to promote it. The program opens up the world of entrepreneurship, and allows them to form a solid business vision, build a plan for achieving defined goals, develop knowledge and learn professional tools and skills to manage a business and reinforce their feeling of self-capability.

## HerStory

"I lived with my husband in Canada for many years, and against all odds I was able free myself from a vicious cycle of abuse, return to Israel and save myself and my children and give us all new opportunities. I arrived without anything and turned to Women's Spirit to help me enter the workforce so I could support myself and my four children. For the first three months, Orly, my volunteer mentor, teamed up with me to go through a coaching process. She supported me with professionalism and sensitivity and gave me tools for life. We worked in a not-so-simple period of closures and COVID-19, and still she was by my side the whole way.

After establishing such a good infrastructure and being precise about the goals of the business, I was paired with a volunteer business consultant – Sigi, who professionally and skillfully helped me with all the small and big details. She knew how to say good words and set high standards. She opened for me a world I did not know at all. In COVID-19, I started a business of performances and workshops and managed to do 30 performances in Israel. (Between quarantine and quarantine and under audience restrictions).

At the same time, I began a process of a financial support process. In the past, I did not have a bank account – and when I arrived in Israel, I opened an account but did not really know how to manage myself financially. I was paired with an amazing volunteer professional, Hedva. She taught me that knowledge it's power!

And Sharon – who orchestrates everything. Supports me with every request, conversation, deliberation and always with a bright face and lots of patience and sensitivity.

I want to thank you, Women's Spirit, from the bottom of my heart for believing in me!

You helped me get back on my feet and filled me with belief and recognition that in this life everything is possible..."

S.

# Professional Partnerships



קואליציית ארגוני החברה האזרחית  
ליישום החלטה 1325 של מועצת הביטחון של האו"ם

קואליציית ארגוני החברה האזרחית  
ליישום אגידה 2030 בישראל



# Campaign Economic Abuse



for the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, we launched a massive campaign to raise awareness to the complex issue of Economic Abuse. The campaign video (based on the concept of the Surviving Economic Abuse Organization in the UK) shows how the normative course of life turns into a relationship of terror and control. When she finally decides to leave, she discovers that she is trapped. She has a child, no money, no job, and no real ability to leave. The video got tremendous exposure and spread the word about the destructive phenomenon of economic abuse – transparent violence that has no language and no laws against it.

**Together we can change this reality.**

# Lectures and Workshops

we continue to expand the circle of awareness about abuse against women and to recruit partners in this struggle – gatekeepers who can identify signs of abuse and offer support to women in the community, women that the welfare services are unaware of (managers in the business sector, professionals in the field of beauty and cosmetics, Jewish ritual bathhouse attendants and more). We have provided knowledge and practical tools to over 6,000 people from all sectors, in Israel and abroad (Germany, England, USA and even Japan)!



MK Meir Cohen, Minister of Labor, Social Affairs and Social Services at Women's Spirit

# Social Responsibility and the Business World

On November 25, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, we had the privilege of holding the "Social Responsibility of the Business World" project for the third year in a row. We collaborated with leading Israeli companies to expand the circle of exposure and awareness of the issue of violence against women, we held dozens of lectures for hundreds of people!

## יום המאבק הבינלאומי באלימות כלפי נשים 25.11.2021

במטרה להעלות את המודעות הציבורית לסוגיה של אלימות פיזית, מינית, נפשית וכלכלית ממנה סובלות נשים בארץ וברחבי העולם. בבתינו, במקומות העבודה ובמרחב הציבורי, הוכרז על ידי האו"ם יום המאבק הבינלאומי.

המטרה המשותפת - להשאיר את הסוגיה על סדר היום הציבורי, להגביר חקיקה ואכיפה ולקדם יחד, חברה, פתרונות מתאימים.

תודה לחברות השותפות לדרך על חלקן במאבק הבלתי מתפשר באלימות ותרומתן לצדק חברתי ושוויון הזדמנויות בחברה הישראלית.



עמותת רוח נשית (ע.ר. 580474658) זוכת סטטוס יועץ מיוחד לאו"ם (ECOSOC), אות האפקטיביות לעשייה חברתית  
ואות ההוקרה של השרה לשוויון חברתי בתחום המאבק באלימות כלפי נשים.

הצטרפו אלינו | 072-2507770 | [www.ruach-nashit.org.il](http://www.ruach-nashit.org.il)



# Bridal Boutique

Women's Spirit's bridal boutique is a unique social enterprise, which sells a variety of dresses that have been donated by designers and brides at affordable prices. We offer an alternative for affordable bridal gowns while combining social awareness and doing something good for others. Thanks to our dedicated volunteers who are the heartbeat of the Women's Spirit boutique, we can offer a positive, pleasant, and professional experience to every bride. Over the years, the boutique has become an inseparable part of Women's Spirit's financial resources that helps strengthen independent revenues while expanding the circle of exposure and awareness of the importance of financial independence for women in general, and women survivors of abuse, in particular.

*"The experience at the bridal boutique of Women's Spirit was completely different and perfect in every way possible. Starting with the team of amazing volunteers, who gave me a pleasant, welcoming, and lovely feeling! Constantly trying to help, uplifting and in general just wonderful. Next – the wide selection. There are lots and lots of dresses! All the best! And everything looks amazing! We met the seamstress who also volunteers and just looked at me, realized exactly what I was looking for and came up with the perfect dress for me. So, if you are looking for a wedding dress at a great price, while doing something good for others (all proceeds support women survivors of abuse), do yourself a favor and try out this place."*

*Jennifer*



# Thank You for your Support

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Black&White

NAAMA BEZALEL



HAGIT KASSIF

- bridal -

TANYA HEATH

*Paris*



STUDIOALMA



BRIDE'S STORY

LIHI HOD

BRIDAL



EISEN STEIN

BRIDAL

Shani**Zimmerman**

LIVNÉ

— White —



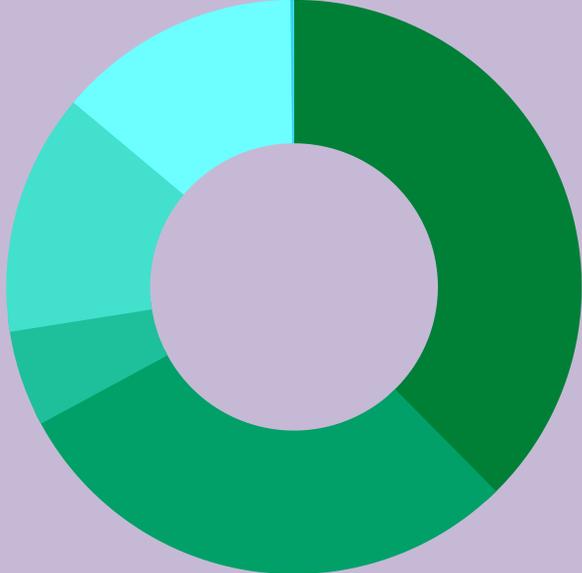
# Expenses and Income

## Expenses



- 74.7% Programming
- 14.2% General Expenses
- 11% Events, Initiatives & Collaboration

## Income



- 37.6% Foundations
- 29.5% Government & Municipalities
- 5.4% Private Donors
- 13.6% Independent Income
- 13.7% Businesses Collaborations

# Team

- Tamar Schwartz**, BSW - CEO
- Amy Slater-Ovadia**, MSW - VP
- Dr. Merav Shmueli**, Adv. - Director Advocacy & Policy
- Rosy Miller Minster**, MSW - Director of Professional Services
- Sharon Shapira-Nachum** - Branch Manager & Building Your Own Business
- Galit Hamal**, MSW - Program Manager
- Maali Abo Mukh** - Program Manager & Arab Community
- Nofar Geva**, BSW - Program Manager
- Lital Waintraub** - Program Manager
- Sarit Bloom** - Program Manager - North
- Ravit Cohen**, MSW - Program Manager - North
- Nardeen Udeh**, BSW - Program Manager Arab Community - North
- Danielle Litt-Halpern**, MSW - Program Manager - South
- Jennifer Isackov**, MSW - Program Manager - South
- Shulamit Fishman** - Intake Coordinator & Community Relations
- Hadi Gal** - Manager of Volunteer Services
- Miriam Peer** - Coaching Manager
- Sharon Rubinstein Mirkam** - Manager Development & Marketing
- Meital Ben-Dor** - Bridal Boutique Manger
- Shlomit Binyamin** - Community Relations Manager
- Michal Geva** - Social Media Coordinator
- Liad Lakritz** - International Community Relations Coordinator
- Karin Rabinovitch** - Program's Operation & Human Resources
- Lea Shani** - Coordinator of Measurement & Evaluation
- Hadas Tsemah Sananes**, Adv. - Coordinator of Advocacy & Policy
- Oshrat Ben Shimshon** - Spokesperson
- Michal Baruch**, Adv. - Office Manager



Board of Directors



Audit Committee



Friends of Women's Spirit

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# Thank You for your Partnership



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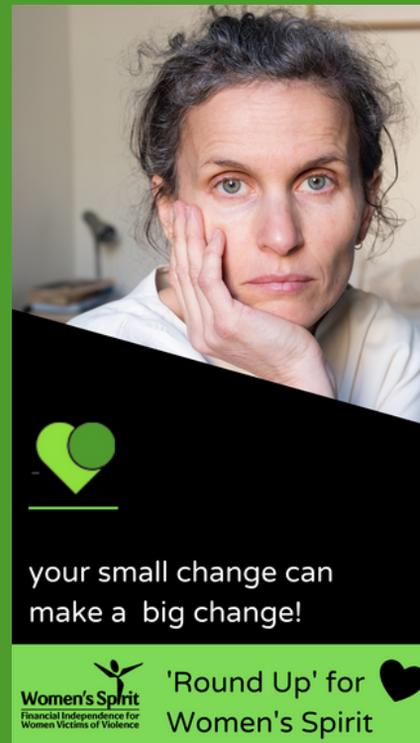
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Women Victims of Violence

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