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Victims of the Corona Crisis: The NGOs are at a risk of collapsing

The Corona Crisis led to a sharp increase in people who seek help from NGOs, but due to the financial circumstances, and with many of the workers on furlough as a result, the NGOs are having a hard time keeping up with the demand.

Written by Yair Kraus.

According to “Civilian Leadership” – the umbrella organization of the voluntary sector in Israel, more than half of the welfare NGOs in Israel, and organizations that assist people in need or people who are sick, are facing a danger of financial collapse and shutting down due to the Corona Crisis. After two financially challenging years that saw decrease in income, and what with 2020 starting with no set governmental budget, the NGOs leaders and volunteers fear that they will not manage to survive this challenging financial reality any longer.

There are almost 13,000 NGOs in Israel, 4000 of which are providing services to the state, while also being supported by it. If these NGOs face a major blow to their work, it means that some essential services that they provided to citizens in need instead of the state, will be halted. During the pandemic, the NGOs are often required to operate even more intensively. “Our operations are more needed as the days go by. We’re already seeing and realizing the effects of the last few months,” says Inbar Dor Kerbel, ELEM Israel’s CEO. According to her, ELEM has seen a drastic increase in distress. “In April we’ve received three times the inquiries we’re used to, from youth online. We must remember that even during normal times these youth are facing many hardships, so now it’s even more prominent. We’re waiting, just like the rest of the voluntary sector NGOs, for the emergency fund which we need urgently. The outreach is intense – violence, loneliness, anxiety, depression, usage of addictive substances, running away from home – all of it just to find a release.”

ELEM, just like other NGOs, has been dealing with a dramatic decrease of income recently. “We dug deep into our pockets in order to not miss any teen who needs help, and keep all of our programs open. The result is a deficit which we can’t see the other side of, not anytime soon. We put some of the

workers on furlough, obviously, but we've already been bringing them back because of the huge amount of inquiries we've been receiving."

As if that wasn't bad enough, many other initiatives, such as giving ELEM's yearly report to the Israeli President, were cancelled. "Our resources outreach is lacking, and many businesses who give us ongoing support has stopped doing so. We're facing uncertainty, yet must continue and even expand our work."

[This is an excerpt about ELEM's work from a full article about the NGOs' crisis]

[Original article: <https://www.makorrishon.co.il/news/226841/>]