

NA'AM ARAB WOMEN in the CENTER



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Arab Women in the Center
נשים ערביות במרכז



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Na'am Arab Women in the Center: "Na'am" in Arabic, means "yes." Our particular "yes we can!" means claiming for ourselves the right to say no. **No** to violence against women; **no** to the obstacles that keep women from attaining their full potential; **no** to policies that prevent us as Arab women in Israel from obtaining our full rights. At the same time we say yes: **Yes** to the right to determine our own future; **yes** to dignity and social justice; **yes** to the full, positive participation of Arab women in our communities, in society and in the decision-making that affects our lives.

WHAT WE DO

NA'AM was founded in 2009 by Samah Salaime. Salaime, a social worker, saw the need to address the specific problems faced by Arab women in the mixed Arab-Jewish cities in Israel's center, primarily Ramla and Lod. Among other things, these cities have seen a spate of murders – femicides in which women are killed by male family members. In the Arab sector, some 80% the men who commit these crimes do not stand trial. Beyond the horrifying murders, women may face a stark reality that includes domestic violence and abuse, a society that is not responsive to their needs, lack of services or representation; prejudicial ethnic, gender-based and religious attitudes and policies. **Na'am is an independent, grass-roots organization – the only Arab feminist organization in the center of the county.**

CRISIS RESPONSE

As war and ethnic strife followed upon the Covid crisis and the "silent pandemic" of domestic violence engendered with every lockdown and quarantine, Na'am is on the frontlines offering aid and assistance.

- We formed a coalition with Arab women's groups around the country to develop an emergency response;
- We participated in Knesset committee discussions on the needs of minority women in crisis;
- We prepared and delivered humanitarian aid to hundreds of families;
- We doubled our office hours, created shelter and provided legal, financial and mental health assistance to individual women and families;
- We secured scholarships for women who needed help to complete degrees.

Left: Threads of Change: This program markets traditional handiwork produced by women from central Israel and Palestinian women from the West Bank, promoting economic empowerment and strengthening the ties between women in geographically separate groups.

OUR WORK

Women's Rights Center: Since 2016, this center has helped hundreds of women – single mothers, undocumented women and Jewish immigrant women – receive help accessing the rights they are eligible for and deserve, including labor rights and rights to services.

Women's Advocacy and Parliamentary Lobby: Na'am monitors legislation and discussions in the Knesset that affect women. We recently succeeded in preventing the legalization of polygamy, and gained a commitment to added shelter for Arab women.

Community Leaders against Domestic Abuse: Na'am works to coordinate action against domestic abuse and to ensure support for the affected women and girls.

Gender Education: Taught in high schools to groups of girls and boys in single-gender groups, we developed a feminist curriculum that encourages young people to examine their cultural and social assumptions about gender.

Girls for Girls: Young woman and teens are trained to mentor girls, helping them navigate a confusing world and learning to identify signs of possible domestic abuse.

