

War survey: 83% of Israeli NGOs impacted, mixed responses to government aid, surge in foreign support

March 20 2024



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A survey conducted at the Hebrew University by Prof. Michal Almog-Bar, head of the Institute for the Study of Civil Society and

Philanthropy, in collaboration with Civil Leadership, the umbrella organization of nonprofit organizations in Israel, analyzed the widespread mobilization effort in Israel following the terrorist attack by Hamas on October 7, 2023.

73% of the NGOs surveyed significantly expanded their activities and services during the war because of the rising needs. 87% of the NGOs established new services, 84% reported a rise in the demand for their services, and 75% reported a sharp increase in the number of clients served.

However, the [survey](#) also revealed that the war negatively impacted 83% of the NGOs' ability to provide services. This manifested in various ways, such as having to cope with staff absences as they served in the reserves and supporting staff who were impacted by the war.

Only 35% of NGOs sought government assistance during the war, mainly because they did not have a prior contract with the government and because of the lack of flexibility and red tape involved in forming such relations, highlighting the gap between additional activities and available resources.

Lack of resources remained a significant issue, with only 10% of NGOs reporting an increase in [government support](#), while 21% reported a decrease in government funding during the war. A significant resource of funding, support from foundations and donors within Israel, also decreased for about a quarter of the NGOs during the war.

However, 35% of the NGOs reported an increase in support from philanthropic foundations and high-net-worth donors from abroad, mainly from North America. About half (48%) reported an increase in the number of volunteers and volunteer hours. Additionally, about a quarter of the surveyed NGOs reported an increase in fundraising from

the public.

Despite all the challenges they faced and the notable lack of resources, 82% of surveyed NGOs believed their activities during the war effectively helped support Israeli [society](#). This underscores the importance of recognizing and supporting the contributions of civil society, especially during crises.

Prof. Michal Almog-Bar says, "The picture that emerges from the study is that a considerable expansion of the activity of civil society in Israel due to the rising social needs during the war was enacted despite the lack of appropriate resources and budgeting on the part of the government and foundations."

"Considering the wearing down of the voluntary activity and civic initiatives that stood out at the beginning of the war. In the long term, the NGOs are a major player in helping the Israeli home front during the war and in helping evacuees and other populations affected by the war. They will not be able to continue their work and assistance to the populations affected by the war without additional resources."

The [final report](#) highlighted an unprecedented mobilization across the civilian sector, with various social NGOs, voluntary civic initiatives, philanthropic bodies, and individuals joining forces under the banner of "Defending Our Home." The findings prove that there is a clear need to focus on the needs and vulnerabilities of civil society in Israel. Strengthening their capacity and providing appropriate support will enable them to continue providing essential services to the population, particularly during crises and in post-war rehabilitation efforts.

Attorney Ron Barkai says "In Israel's most difficult and complex moments as a nation, the social NGOs are at the forefront of dealing with the most sensitive and vulnerable populations in Israeli society,

without proper government support and without basic conditions for success."

Provided by Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Citation: War survey: 83% of Israeli NGOs impacted, mixed responses to government aid, surge in foreign support (2024, March 20) retrieved 27 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2024-03-war-survey-israeli-ngos-impacted.html>

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