



Early childhood frameworks as leverage to reduce gaps - Daycares in the Bedouin community

Update on Daycares report 2020-2021

In the last year the daycares in the Bedouin communities did not operate for most of the year. Part of the time the daycares were officially open but in reality, because of the Covid-19 pandemic, mothers refrained from sending the children. It should be noted that the morbidity rate in the Bedouin community was high.

The data available now show some progress in the budgeting of daycares in the last 2 years. However, this progress does not make a dramatic change and still does not fulfill the principle of equality and affirmative action of budgeting services as stipulated in government resolution 922.

As stated in the report, the existing budgeting mechanism does not catch up with the deep gaps in funding the essential service for early childhood and for parents who want to go out to work. This is especially so in view of the rate of population growth in the Bedouin society.

In analysing the budget for building daycares in the years 2015-2021, we see that for the years 2014-2016, 745.5 million shekels were allocated for this purpose. Out of this sum, 41.15 million shekels were allocated for the Bedouin localities, which amounts to 5.52% of the total budget. This shows some improvement compared to the previous years.

At the same time, the population growth rate among Bedouins is much higher than the growth rate of the general Israeli population. The natural growth rate of the Bedouin community reaches 3.9% per year, compared to 1.5% in the Jewish population in the south, and 1.9% in the general Israeli population. Each year about 9,900 people¹ are added to the Bedouin community. An extra effort is needed in order to catch up with early childhood services.

According to the Central Bureau of Statistics, approx 47,500 Arab children in the ages birth - 4 live in the Beer Sheva ages². Bedouin children the ages birth to 4 years old make up 5.19% of the general population in the Negev³. Needless to say that the supply of existing daycares in the Bedouin community is very poor, and the pace of building daycares is a far cry from meeting the existing needs.

Our extensive research was completed at the end of 2019. Since then some positive developments have occurred, three are worth mentioning:

¹ Central Bureau of Statistics, Statistical Yearbook for Israel 2020, table 2.13, Population growth sources by population group, religion and district. We did not refer to the allocations under paragraph "construction of daycares 2018" since the data showing lower allocation to the Bedouin community stem also from the many bureaucratic and planning difficulties characteristic to the building in the Bedouin community.

² Central Bureau of Statistics, Statistical Yearbook for Israel 2020, table 2.19, Population according to population group, religion, age and gender, region and district. The data is calculated from the general population compared to data on "Jews and others".

³ Table 2.19 there. Calculated according to the share of Arab toddlers in the south out of the total population of toddlers between the ages of birth and 4 years old.



1. In the Alqasum Regional Council, there has been a turnaround: In 2020 the council received a budget for the construction of 3 daycares with 3 classes in each one. At the end of 2020 work orders were issued to contractors for building daycares in As-Sayyid and Umm Baḥīn⁴. An order for construction is also expected in Makḥūl. Soon Elqasum will cease to be the only regional council in the Negev without daycares.
2. Progress has also been made in the 'Ar'arah an-Nagab regional council: Up till now only one daycare operated here, operating in the community center. In 2020 'Ar'arah an-Nagab received a budget for another daycare with three classes, to be located, as far as we know, in neighborhood 4. In 2021 a budget was allocated for another daycare, probably in neighborhood 9. More daycares are planned for neighborhoods 1 and 5 but so far weren't budgeted yet.⁵
3. In Ḥūrah a new daycare opened in 2021 with 48 children in 2 classes⁶. This, in addition to the existing daycare.

However, in the other localities, there have been no significant developments and there has even been a halt in development:

1. In the years 2018-2019 the local council of Tal as-Saba' has received budgets for a new daycare of 3 classes. As far as is known its building has started⁷, in addition to another 4 new daycares that are in the process of building.
2. In 2019 the local council of Šgīb as-Salām has received a budget for a new daycare of 2 classes, although at that time there were 3 daycares who were not operating. No information is available if there has been any progress in the building of the new daycare⁸. Presently there is only one daycare operating in Šgīb as-Salām.
3. In 2018 the regional council Neve Midbar received a budget for building a daycare in the village Abu Tlūl aš-Šahbī. The daycare was built but its operation was stopped due to disputes among the families in the village. The daycare exists but still is not in operation⁹. In addition, a new daycare was built and is functioning in the village of Abu Grīnāt.
4. In 2018 the town of Raḥaṭ received a budget for another daycare class¹⁰. The class has not yet been built. There is a daycare in Raḥaṭ that has not yet been occupied.

⁴ Department of procurement, contracts and engagement, Alqasum regional council. Transcript of the Committee of Three. Licensing, planning and execution of daycare in Um Batin. December 15, 2020. And also: Department of procurement, contracts and engagement, Alqasum regional council. Transcript of the Committee of Three. Licensing, planning and execution of daycare in Elsaid. December 15, 2020.

⁵ Source for budget - data for 'Ar'arah an-Nagab budget, construction of daycares for the years 2020 and 2021. Source for progress in planning - transcript 'Ar'arah an-Nagab Local Council Plenary 7/1/2019

⁶ Rimah Abu Obeid, Director of the new daycare in Ḥūrah, conversation dated 17/6/2021

⁷ Tal as-Saba' Local Council Budget key data, Daycare budget 2018. Conversation between Huda Abu Obeid and Maison Alaruki, assistant to Tal as-Saba' Head of Council.

⁸ Šgīb as-Salām, budget key data, budget section for daycare construction, 2018

⁹ Alkasum, budget key data, budget section for daycare construction 2018

¹⁰ Raḥaṭ, budget key data, budget section for daycare construction, 2018



5. The local council Ksīfih was budgeted in the years 2018 and 2020 with about 767,000 shekels for the construction of another daycare class¹¹. However, as far as known, no progress has been made in its construction.
6. The local council al-Lagiyyih was budgeted in the past for building an additional daycare. The council also received 1.4 million shekels in 2016 and about 186,000 shekels in 2017¹². The daycare was built but has not yet been occupied.
7. In 2020 , a budget of about 389,000 shekel was approved to 'Ar'arah an-Nagab, as part of the five year plan for the Bedouin localities (government resolution 2397), for subsidizing attendance in 2021 in the daycares operating in the village¹³. The village Hūrah activated a monthly discount of 500 shekels per child for attending the daycare, nevertheless many parents found it difficult to pay the daycare fee¹⁴.
8. In Ksīfih on the other hand, the subsidy for attending day care was stopped as part of what was called “the initiative of the National Economic Council”.

As stated in the summary section of the report, we recommend the following policy measures:

1. **Establishing additional daycares on a considerable annual scale:** The welfare ministry has to allocate a considerable budget for building additional daycares, providing considerable budgetary preference and special budgetary assistance for the implementation of the project by the engineering departments in Arab local authorities in the Negev. The existing gaps are not to be tolerated. The daycares are essential for the education of early childhood children, ensuring the ability of their parents (especially women) to go out to work and lifting up families from poverty and hardship. The existing construction rate of daycares is not enough to narrow the gaps.
2. **Subsidizing attendance in daycares:** A plan for subsidizing daycare attendance for low income families should be activated. This will bring intensive use of daycares in the Bedouin community, encourage women to go out to work and help to pull out families from poverty. The plan that operated as a pilot in Ksīfih and Hūrah was effective and should be expanded to all the Bedouin communities.

¹¹ Ksīfih, budget key data, budget section for daycare construction, 2018

¹² al-Lagiyyih, budget key data, budget section for construction of daycares, 2018

¹³ 'Ar'arah an-Nagab, transcript of town council meeting, 2/9/2020

¹⁴ Conversation between Huda Abu Obaid And Rimah Abu Obaid, 17/6/2021



منتدى التعايش السلمي في النقب من أجل المساواة المدنية
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Negev Coexistence Forum for Civil Equality

3. Involvement in planning and building of daycares: The Ministry of Welfare should demonstrate real involvement in realizing the planning and execution of daycares, and exercise its authority in order to prevent establishing daycares in places that are not agreed upon by the community, or avoiding the establishment of daycares and operating them for some reasons or others. A situation in which a construction budget is not utilized or a daycare that is not utilized is not to be tolerated.