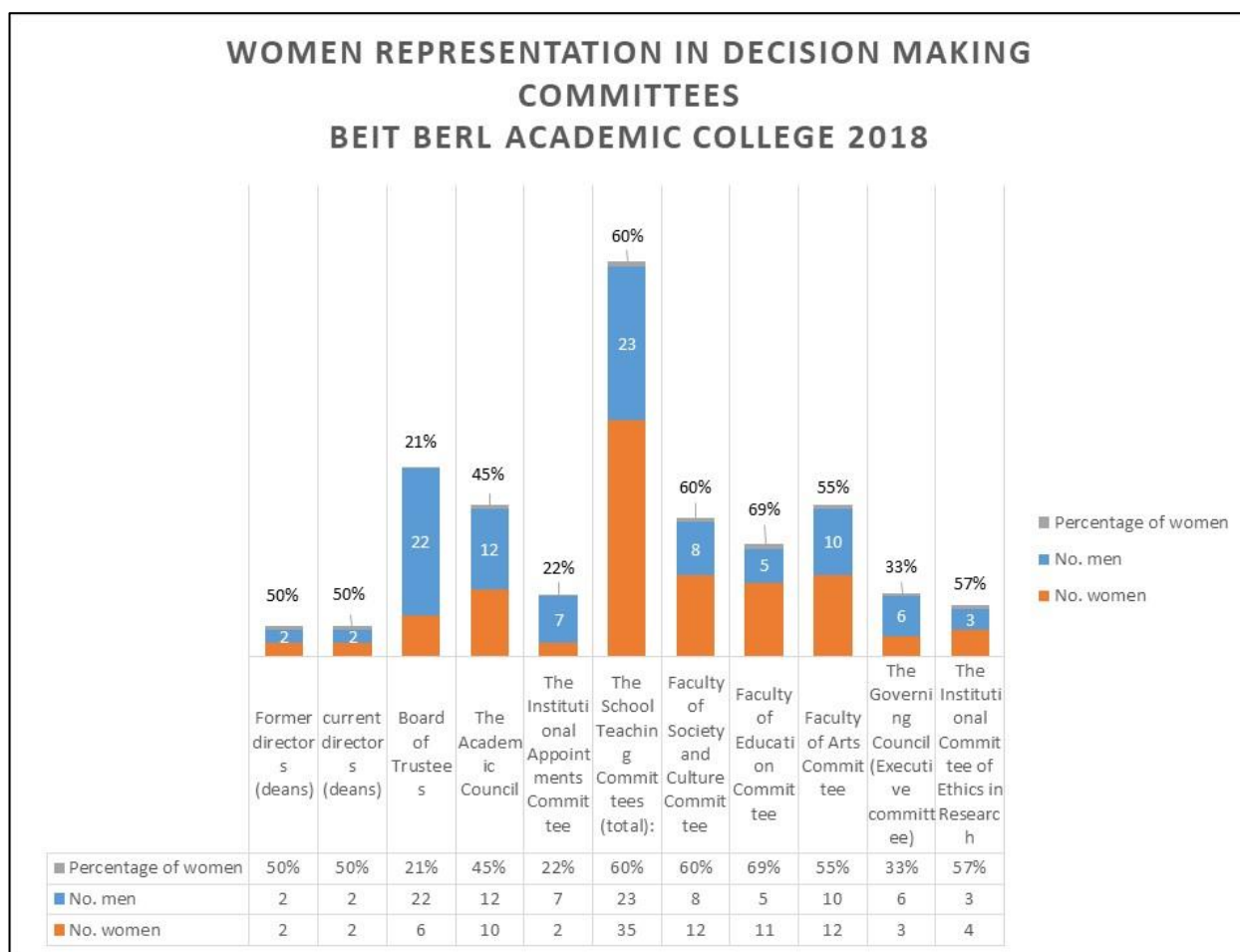# The CHANGE Project:
2019/20 Annual Summary and 2020/21 Objectives
Beit Berl Academic College

Dr. Hana Himi

Beit Berl Academic College (BBC) is a partner in the EU Horizon2020 **CHANGE** project: **CHA**lle**N**ging **G**ender (In)**E**quality in Science and Research[1]. The purpose of CHANGE is to promote gender equality in academia, focusing on the career advancement of women in research and science through the implementation of various activities by institutional Tranfer Agents (TAs). Those activities are aimed at raising awareness and thus enabling individual as well as organizational changes towards more gender-balanced academic work environments. The project's consortium consists of seven research performing organizations in six countries: Austria, Germany, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia and Israel[2].

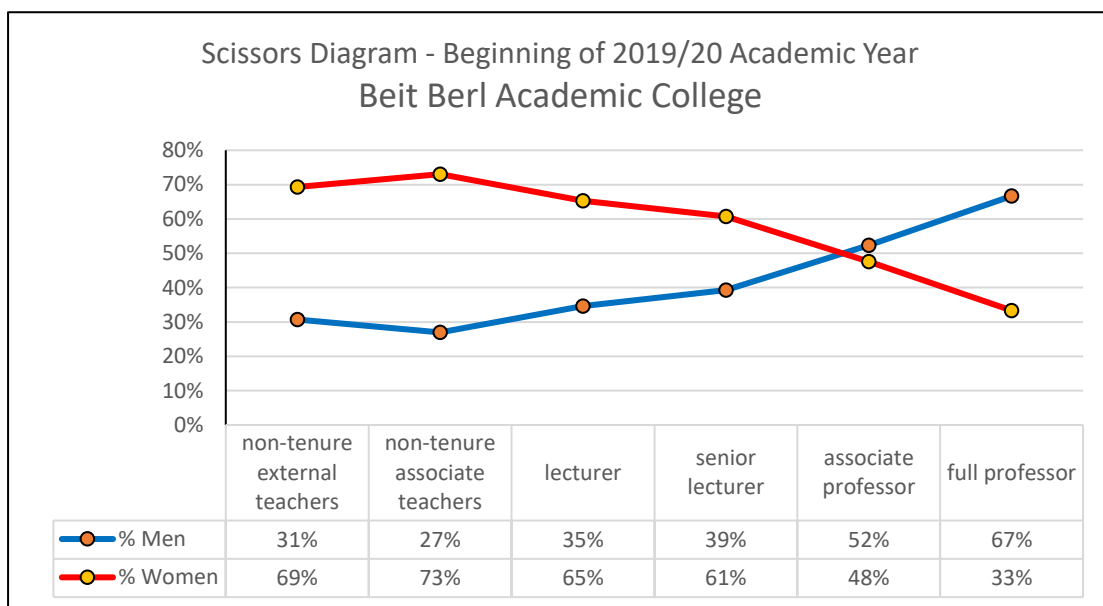**The gender gap in Beit Berl Academic College**

WOMEN REPRESENTATION IN DECISION MAKING COMMITTEES
BEIT BERL ACADEMIC COLLEGE 2018

	Former directors (deans)	current directors (deans)	Board of Trustees	The Academic Council	The Institutional Appointments Committee	The School Teaching Committees (total):	Faculty of Society and Culture Committee	Faculty of Education Committee	Faculty of Arts Committee	The Governing Council (Executive committee)	The Institutional Committee of Ethics in Research
Percentage of women	50%	50%	21%	45%	22%	60%	60%	69%	55%	33%	57%
No. men	2	2	22	12	7	23	8	5	10	6	3
No. women	2	2	6	10	2	35	12	11	12	3	4

Gender benchmarking Beit Berl Academic College 2018 – women representation in decision making bodies

Right at the beginning of the project a gender benchmarking was performed in each of the participating institutions in order to identify gender gaps as well as unique organizational characteristics and suitable tailor-made change actions. One might wonder whether gender gaps exist in a 'feminine' college such as Beit Berl Academic College, both in terms of students, academic staff members and a woman President. Indeed, although women consist about 70% of BBC academic staff members, their percentage in senior positions and decision-making bodies is much lower than that, similarly to Higher Education Institutions, nation and worldwide.

Institutional gender gap indices are constantly measured in the framework of CHANGE in order to estimate their causes hence, to develop suitable actions of intervention and mitigation. At this point in time – two out of the project's four-year duration – it is yet too early to determine the effectiveness of all the project's activities. Undoubtedly, current data show much work is still needed to be done to make the change visible…

Scissors Diagram - Beginning of 2019/20 Academic Year
Beit Berl Academic College

	non-tenure external teachers	non-tenure associate teachers	lecturer	senior lecturer	associate professor	full professor
% Men	31%	27%	35%	39%	52%	67%
% Women	69%	73%	65%	61%	48%	33%

Gender distribution within career stages of academic staff members, November 2019

Senior Staff Promotions - 2019/20
Beit Berl Academic College

|	lecturer	senior lecturer	associate professor	associate professor creator	full professor
Men	3	5	1	1	1
Women	1	1	0	0	0
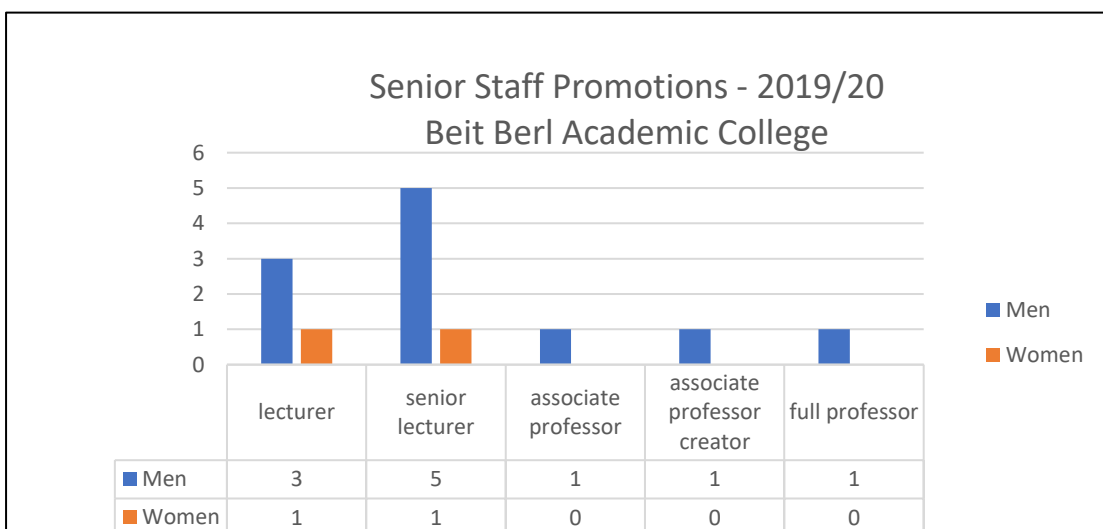
Senior staff promotions after November 2019

Transfer Agents in Beit Berl Academic College

The BBC project team consists of five Transfer Agents (TAs) - Hana Himi is Head of the team as the institutional Gender Equality Officer (GEO), and four additional TAs. Each TA leads a different Gender Equality Plan (GEP) which focuses on certain institutional aspects in BBC based on the gender institutional benchmarking (see figure below), while Hana leads general GEPs which are connected to all the others. This model of multiple TAs in a single institution addresses BBC's unique heterogeneous and multicultural characteristics and has been positively acknowledged and appreciated by the project international leaders.

Implementation of on-campus GEPs – Gender Equality Plans – began during 2019/20 academic year, including several activities such as gender training workshops, awareness raising events, presentations to senior management forums, data collection by surveys and interviews etc. Additional activities are performed outside BBC as well, aiming at promoting awareness and recommendations for policymakers on a national level e.g. The Council for Higher Education, The Ministry of Science and Technology, private and public research funds, senior managers in Higher Education Institutions etc.
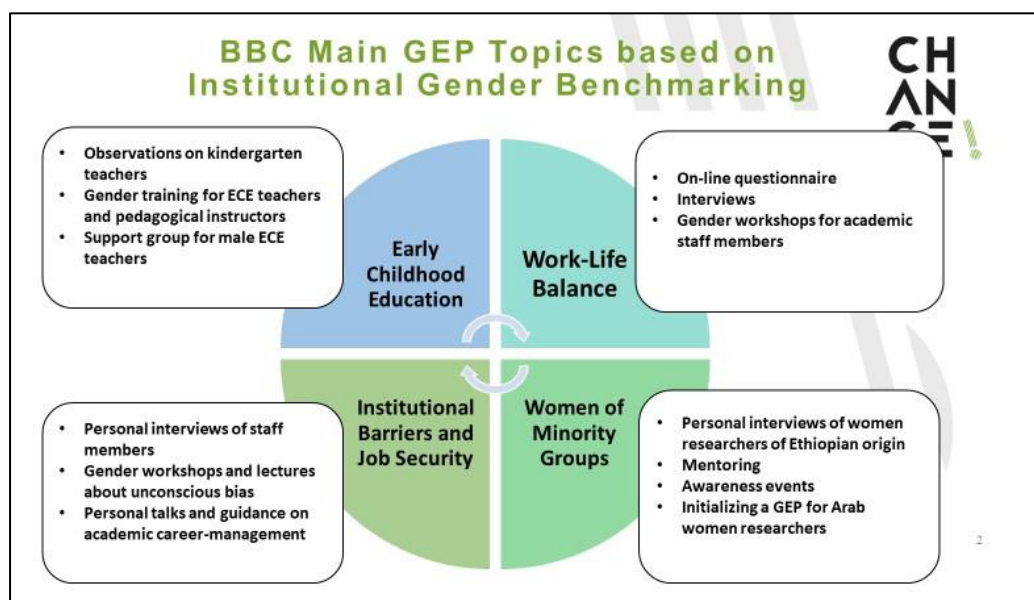
*CHANGE Gender Equality Plans in Beit Berl Academic College*

CHANGE BBC Transfer Agents team, from left to right:
Dr. Yarden Kedar, Dr. Ina Ben-Uri, Dr. Vered Shidlo-Hezroni, Dr. Hana Himi, Dr. Adi Binhas

Implementation of GEP Activities – Annual Summary

Online questionnaire

115 staff members have filled in an online questionnaire about work-life balance, conducted by Dr. Ina Ben-Uri. The results are being analyzed and operative recommendations formulated in accordance with the questionnaire's findings. One of the examined issues in the survey, is the tension between three academic duties of staff members – teaching, research, and administration –their relative weight in academic promotion, and their balance with other professional and life aspects.
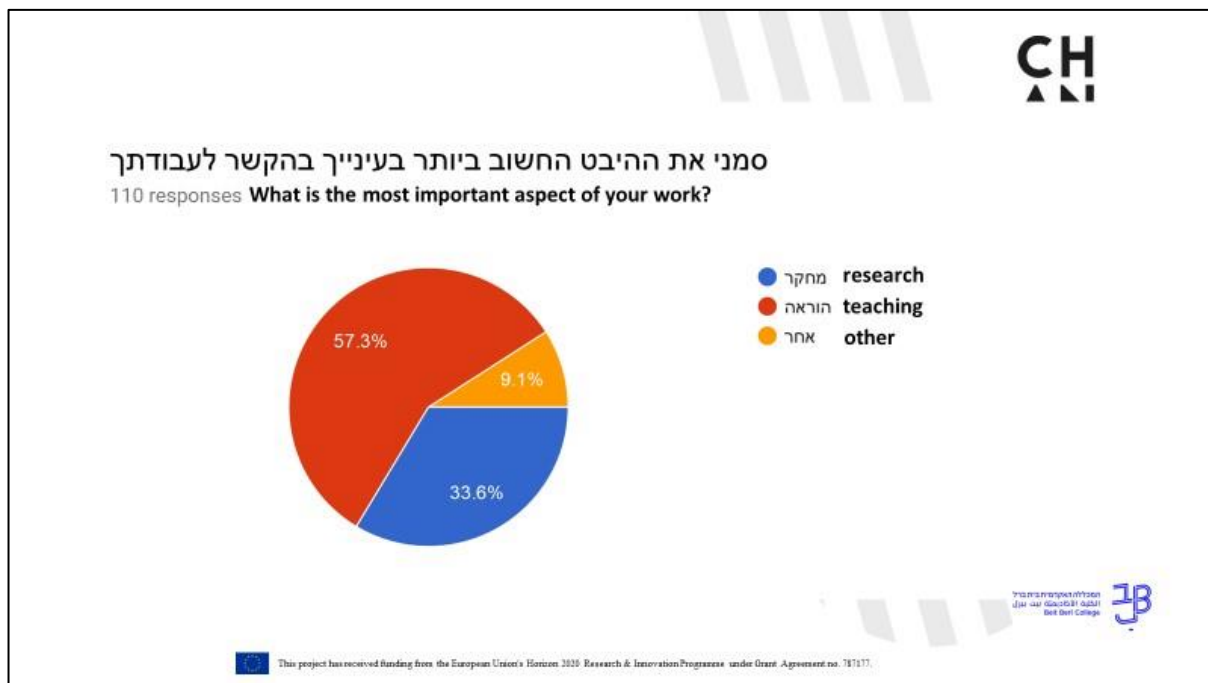
Self-perception of multiple duties – initial findings from BBC work-life balance online questionnaire

Personal Interviews

15 qualitative interviews with female staff members have been conducted by Dr. Vered Shidlo-Hezroni in the framework of her GEP and are now being processed and analyzed. One prominent theme in those interviews is the staff members' need for clear and transparent promotion processes, along a better understanding of the meaning and consequences of each career path.

In the framework of her GEP Dr. Adi Binhas has conducted 10 interviews with higher degrees female graduates or academic researchers from Ethiopian origin, focusing on their unique challenges as a minority group in academia. The GEP has been recently expanded to a group of Arab women researchers and is now being performed in cooperation with the Center for the Advancement of Shared Society and the Arab Institution.

The Council for the Advancement of Women in the Ministry of Science and Technology

On November 18th, 2019 the CHANGE project was presented by Hana Himi to the Academia committee of the Council for the Advancement of Women in the Ministry of Science and Technology. This committee consists of GEOs of universities and colleges as well as gender equality practitioners and policymakers in the field of Higher Education in Israel. Useful contacts with members of the Council were hence established, leading for further collaborative initiatives in the near future.

the Council for the Advancement of Women in the Ministry of Science and Technology
From left to right: Chairperson of the Council - Prof. Navah Ratzon, Chairperson of the Academia Committee - Prof. Hannah Herzog

Gender workshops

Gender workshops for female staff members were conducted during the year by external moderators (Nov 2019 – May 2020). The workshops were given to two focus groups of junior and senior staff members in three sessions (face-to-face and online due to corona restrictions). Vice President for Academic Affairs, Prof. Amos Hoffman, presented the national and institutional perspectives on academic career tracks, and more specifically the recent shift of BBC to the Council for Higher Education employment criteria. Hana Himi presented the project and its GEP activities aiming at raising awareness and initiating change. The moderators presented gender gaps in the work market and academia. Finally, the participants had group discussions, brainstorming and reflection, concluding with their own perspectives and recommendations. The sessions have proved highly useful and necessary, especially in light of the recent corona crisis, where issues such as gender equality and equity are often overlooked or put aside.

Gender workshop for senior staff – 28/1/20

Gender workshop for junior staff – 20/11/19

Awareness event: Prevention of sexual harassment

The annual event for the prevention of sexual harassment supported by the College's President, took place on January 20. The event included a displaying of the prize-winning Israeli film "Working Woman" (2018), following by a fascinating talk with its creator and director, prof. Michal Aviad. At the opening of the event Hana Himi offered the audience with a gendered perspective on the issue of sexual harassment, quoting from a new book by Prof. Rachel Erhard, "#METOO at the Academy in Israel?!". It seems that sexual harassment is a practice of gender inequality, and therefore the two issues are strongly intercorrelated.

Creator of the film "Working Woman", Prof. Michal Aviad with Hana Himi, 20/1/20

Men and gender in Early Childhood Education

A gender workshop for men practitioners in the field of Early Childhood Education (ECE), led by Dr. Yarden Kedar, took place on February 2. Following the workshop, a new forum of men was established, to share knowledge and ideas and to promote men educators towards a more gender balance in the field of ECE. The GEP focusing on gender equality in the field of ECE will also include interviews with pedagogical instructors and graduates and training workshops focusing on gender balance perceptions and discourse.

Workshop for men in the field of Early Childhood Education, 2/2/20

**Awareness event: personal stories of women in academia**

Another awareness event took place on March 8, the International Woman's Day, right before the corona lockdown. The event focused on women of minority groups in academia, presenting personal stories of two extraordinary and inspirational women – Mrs. Belaynesh Zevadia, former Israeli ambassador to Ethiopia and Rwanda; and Dr. Aida Nassrallah, writer, artist, and teacher at Beit Berl Academic College. Their stories provided a unique perspective on gender in a cross-section of multiple ethnic identities, factors that should be well taken into consideration when dealing with academic careers of both women and men of minority groups.

Awareness event: personal stories of women of minority groups in academia, 8/3/20

Expert interview in research funding organizations

In addition to CHANGE activities within campus, the project aims at promoting gender equality in research funding organizations and processes. To this end, each partner performed several expert interviews with seniors or policymakers in research funding organizations. Hence, 11 interviews were conducted in Israel by BBC's representative Hana Himi in major public funds, research performing organizations (universities, institutes) and with policymakers in the field of gender and/or higher education. The results of these interviews will base a series of stakeholder workshops planned for next year to form a Community of Practice and to promote the project's objectives on a national level.
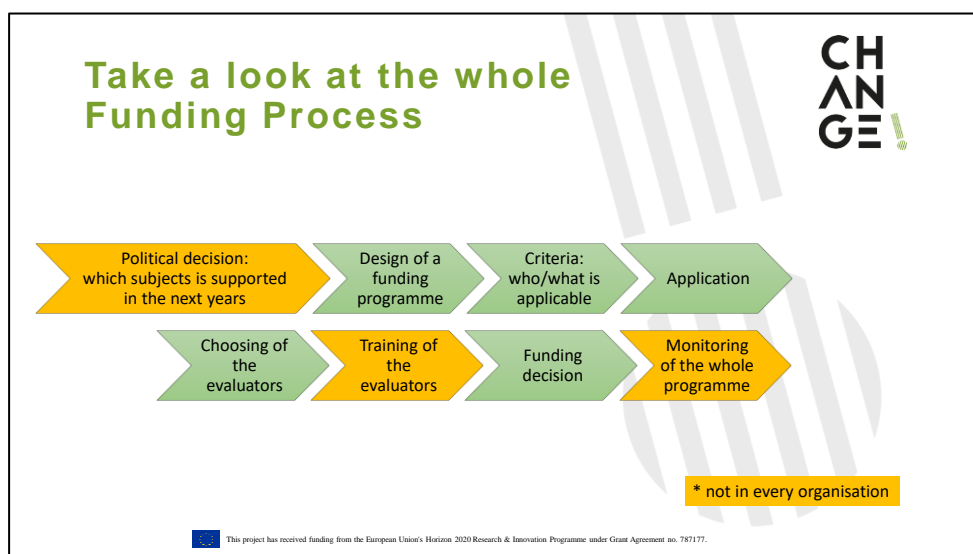
Major milestones in research funding processes

Planned Activities – 2020/21

2020/21 academic year will be in fact the last year for significant implementation of CHANGE actions, following by a few months of reflection, conclusions, and recommendations. The actions will focus on all three levels of impact – individual, institutional, and national. Staff members, managers, colleagues, and stakeholders are all welcome and invited to take part in our activities and to contribute their experience and insights to promote a better-balanced, diverse, inclusive, and just society.

Forthcoming activities:

Individual
- Mentoring and guidance for new staff members
- Inclusion of at least one adapted lesson about gender in various courses on campus
- Developing a training program about gender in education for novice teachers
- Raising awareness events for Arab women researchers in collaboration with the Center for the Advancement of Shared Society and the Arab Institution
- 'Top Researcher' event with women professors

Institutional
- Promoting knowledge and awareness among staff members regarding promotion criteria and processes
- Gender unconscious bias training for senior management
- Promoting gender-neutral language and gender mainstreaming in formal documents – e.g. Ethics committee form for research studies
- Establishing an organizational gender equity website

National
- Active participation in the Council for the Advancement of Women in the Ministry of Science and Technology
- Initiating a steering sub-committee in the Ministry of Science for academic promotion issues in colleges
- Establishing a national Community of Practice (CoP) through the implementation of workshops for research funding organizations and other stakeholders

Wishing us all a most fruitful and successful year!