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Jerusalem - Study: Charedim More Likely To Volunteer, Donate To Charity Than Other Jews

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Jerusalem - Members of the charedi community are more likely to give money to charity than other sectors of the Jewish population and are more likely to volunteer their time to help others, a study has found.

The research was conducted by the Haredi Institute for Public Affairs based on figures from a two year study by the Central Bureau of Statistics from 2015 to 2017.

According to the study, headed by deputy-chair of the institute Nitsa (Kaliner) Kasir, 59% of Israelis give charitable donations, while 21% volunteer or otherwise give of their time.

Whereas 54% of secular Jews give money to charity, of whom 19% give more than NIS 500 a year, fully 89% of haredi Jews give money to charity, and 67% give more than NIS 500.

Indeed, the more religious someone is the more likely they are to give charity and the more likely it is they give over NIS 500.

Some 63% of traditional non-religious Jews give money to charity, 69% of religiously traditional Jews, 80% of religious Jews and 89% of haredi Jews.

Moreover, haredi Jews gave on average some 4.6% of their household income to charity, compared to 1.2% for non-haredi Jews and 2.3% for Arab citizens.

Religious Jews were also more likely to volunteer their time, with 21% of secular Jews doing so, 22% of traditional non-religious Jews, 20% of the religiously traditional, 33% of religious Jews and 38% of haredi Jews.

Kasir explained that there were two main reasons for the higher rates of charitable donations and volunteerism in the haredi community.

The first reason is that giving money to the poor is a religious obligation, with Jewish law stipulating what percentage of one's income should be donated. Haredi Jews, who strictly observe Jewish law, therefore adhere closely to this precept.

The second possible explanation is the strong communal ties within the haredi community and the culture of helping out family, friends, and neighbours, as well as the relative poverty of the haredi sector and the fact that people are often in need of help in one form or another.

Kasir says that members of the haredi community depend on others for mutual support and know that when they help others they will in turn be helped when they are in need of assistance.

Communal loan-associations, known as gemachim, which provide second-hand items for use and financial loans, are an established fact of haredi life and critical for many families to help them provide for themselves and their children.

Contributions to such associations, as well as volunteering to help others in the community, is therefore a noticeable facet of haredi communal life.

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