Gender Equity Assessment & Report

Jewish Communal Farming – Field Building Initiative

Joanna Ware
JW Consulting

Introduction

Situation Summary

The Jewish Community Farming – Field Building Initiative was established in 2014 with support from the Leichtag Foundation, in an effort to support the emerging field of Jewish Community Farming. In feedback from JCF-FBI gatherings and in data collected by Change Craft in the course of their 2016 Field Mapping Report, gender equity arose as a persistent concern among members of the field. This information led to the creation of a gender equity intervention, initiated in the summer of 2017.

Field Context

Jewish Community Farming is still a comparably young field, with most organization's history dating back less than 15 years. The comparable youth of the field may feel like a liability and challenge, insofar as it is reflected in a lack of diversified funding sources (which can lead to a sense of competition for funding and consolidation of resources with larger organizations), and a lack of established organizational best practices and norms; however, it also presents a real opportunity for enacting cultural and organizational change to create greater gender equity: culture and organizational change is harder the longer it's been entrenched.

The existing culture of the field has been shaped by its timeline, values, and history. Some of the keywords that emerged in describing the field's culture include: scrappy, entrepreneurial, make-it-work, values-driven, and clear insider/outside delineations. By the nature of farming, people in the movement have developed strong problem-solving and make-it-work skills, often achieving significant programmatic (and crop) yields with minimal resources. However these leaders and field members are now facing different kinds of problem, which may require a different set of tools & solutions. There is a clear articulation of shared values across the movement, with an emphasis on environmentalism and food justice, and a strong commitment to the linkages between Jewish values, community-building, sustainability, and popular/informal/experiential education. There is, however, some differentiation around the degree to which an organization's environmental ethics are narrowly or broadly defined as inclusive of wider social justice issues. Additionally, many respondents described a very tangible insider/outsider culture within the field, citing the shared professional development history

(through Teva and Adamah fellowship experiences at similar times) and strong social ties of a core group of field leaders. Though some referred to this as a "boys club," there are a small number of women who are also understood to be "insiders." Notably, not everyone who participated in Teva or Adamah within this shared timeframe feels themselves to be entirely an "insider".

Though this is changing, it is still the case that there is a shared history of leadership development & training among many senior leaders within the movement. One benefit of this is that most organizations & organizational leadership have a broadly shared theory of change and similar pedagogical approaches; this homogeneity however poses a challenge for enacting cultural changes & investing in employees/leaders who emerged from different fields or training programs. Additionally, there is an absence – on the field-wide level – of clear professional development paths and opportunities to move from entry level roles to middle or senior leadership. Many organizations offer entry-level fellowship programs, and the JOFEE fellowship program offers an opportunity for additional professional and leadership development for young professionals with some experience, but there are no field-wide opportunities for advancement upon completing those programs. With regard specifically to gender equity, there is a large concentration of women among fellowship participants, but the proportion of women in the field shrinks at the more senior management and leadership levels.

The Adaptive Challenge

One of the biggest challenges of the work for gender equity within the movement is that it is an adaptive problem. Gender equity within the field is a systemic problem that doesn't have a single obvious solution and the solutions cannot simply be implemented by executive order from those in authority positions. Rather, it requires participants at all levels of hierarchy within the system, and with varying kinds of formal and informal authority[1], to buy in and "own" the problem and be willing to engage with transformation in attitudes, beliefs, loyalties, and values

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[1] "Formal authority" and "Informal authority" are terms borrowed from the field of Adaptive Leadership, based largely on the work of Ron Heifetz and Marty Linsky at the Harvard Kennedy School. Heifetz and Linsky distinguish between the *practice* of leadership: the hard, risky work of moving a group to enact transformative change beyond the group's comfort zone in response to an adaptive problem; and *authority*: a role or position, either formal and informal, toward which people look for direction, protection, and order (particularly in the case of formal authority figures). Formal authority figures are those with positional and hierarchical power, including executive directors, CEOs, board chairs, etc. Informal authority is granted to people based on more horizontal axes of trust; especially relationships and social standing, but also implicit cultural norms and standards of power and privilege.

(including where there is conflict between stated values and less visible competing commitments). Furthermore, this change process will be iterative, require trial and error, and be unique to *this* system. There is room and need for some technical solutions (policy changes and updates), but the bulk of the work falls in the adaptive realm.

Work Completed & Insights

Discovery interviews with stakeholders throughout the JCF field

Throughout the summer and fall of 2017, I completed discovery interviews with stakeholders within the field, through one-on-one conversations and group interviews with over 25 stakeholders, including early career employees, middle managers, senior leaders, and funders. The key findings of these interviews are summarized below:

Key Findings and Issues:

Masculinity, Leadership, and Culture

The prioritization and elevation of "masculine" leadership & communication styles are experienced as barriers for some women to assert themselves and have their contributions valued within the broader field. As interviewees reported:

"The last few years' gatherings have been pretty similar to what the experience always is: a masculine energy that bulldozes conversations forward, which is not my leadership style. People are now trying harder to bring in women's voices, but it still feels like operating in a boys' club: lots of jumping in and speaking over each other. I don't want to have to be more aggressive and more assertive to be seen as an equal among this group of leaders."

"One of the challenges is that there's no clear "bad guy" or villain. It's not like the male leaders in this movement hate women or think that women are weak or inferior — on the contrary, this movement is overwhelmingly led by feminist men. But it is still led by men — it is still predominantly men who are given the mic, the recognition, the kudos, and who hold the power. The problem isn't deliberate, malevolent sexism, but there have been conditions set up that have led to gender biases and unconscious bias."

Group Processes & Explicit Norms

An absence of explicit norms across the field for group processes and communication have resulted in a) a default to masculine-style modes of operating and b) have accentuated the implicit normalization of the shared culture of the "insiders" at the expense of "outsiders".

"In communication and conversations; it's not just gender differences, though those are present. We didn't establish group norms (or at least I wasn't a part of it). There are also East Coast/West Coast differences in communication and the speed of conversation. Gender is one piece, but not the only one. Part of the issue is establishing group norms that allow everyone a range of ways to participate & be included."

"So far at these gatherings, the sessions have been mostly male-led or male-style led; even sessions led by women have been traditional in structure: panels, presentations, and discussions in which the loudest and most assertive voices dominate. Structurally, we're not making space for relationship-building, trust, and more organic processes – which is ironic, considering our field. We could be making space for more diverse types of organizing and modalities."

Insider/Outsider Dynamics

The major players in the field, both those with formal and informal authority[2] and power, largely share a common history in the movement, and many have close personal relationships. While not in and of itself a bad thing, the intimacy and strength of these relationships can appear – and in fact may actually be – impenetrable to those outside of it. This reality is exacerbated by the fact that most of those in the "insider" group are men, many of whom are now directors of their respective organizations. The outliers to this generalization – both the small number of women who are considered (and consider themselves) "insiders," as well as those women who share much of the same trajectory but not the same strong social ties, actually underscore the impacts of this insider/outsider dynamic. The couple of women who are considered "insiders" were also the women who were most likely to be vocally supported and have their ideas championed after they were ignored or repeated by men during the January gathering.

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[2] See previous footnote, re: "formal authority" and "informal authority"

"One of the things that's been challenging to me is how confusing it is how power is playing out in the JOFEE world and how that lands in my own personal operating system. There's a legacy of really tight male buddies who are setting the tone and standards for movement/field - there's this vague and powerful and silent standard. Then there's this dynamic in which our organizations are very casual; we're building community at these gatherings and hanging out and that's part of the work; it's foreign to me as someone who comes from other non-profits."

"I might say "of course I'm a feminist and believe in gender equity" but I still can have a lack of awareness of how gender dynamics play out. Being one of these tightknit bros who loves coming to these things and loves to see my people; I've heard several comments recently about that dynamic, and I wasn't aware of how much other people might be picking up on that vibe or affected by it."

Leadership & Management

The field lacks infrastructure to support a leadership development pipeline between entry-level opportunities (of which there are many) and senior management roles. The leadership development for middle-management is largely informal, and depends on support and skills of direct supervisors. Additionally, because it is a young field with organizations mostly still led by their founders (who largely did not have executive leadership experience prior to founding their organizations), there is also a dearth of formal support & best practices guidance for senior leadership. This lack of formal structures for leadership development, in combination with the masculine-leaning cultural norms and informal network dynamics have all contributed to a present reality in which many more women than men enter the field, but men are disproportionately represented in senior leadership positions. Attrition of women between entry-level roles and middle and senior management roles is high.

"One year, I hired 2 male-identified farm apprentices; neither ended up working out, both had to leave. Part of that was me feeling unsafe in my own position. I felt disrespected, questioned; they didn't listen, didn't show up. I've supervised men though not in that capacity before. It's probably not just gender also personality, but I didn't know how to have a voice in my own role. Felt like I was being attacked so often."

"A lot of us who came up through the JOFEE world and started organizations also didn't have the ED experience. Maybe gender plays out in terms of who is encouraged to start an organization, but I think a lot of people share that same tension."

"I've been working in parallel with some of these leaders for over a decade. I have at times reached out to directors of parallel/peer organizations. My take was: "Hey, we're doing these things in parallel, I find it really helpful to be in conversation with my peers." The responses were positive, we connected, and then nothing came of it. I don't think I am seen as a peer, and yet I know that they are calling up these other men and they are sharing insights, challenges, resources, etc."

Lack of Shared Framework re: Privilege/Oppression/Power

This movement sees itself as part of a broader Jewish social justice landscape but does not have embedded in its core theory of change a shared analysis of social inequity and hierarchical power. There are core shared values, but discrepancies in the ways in which individual leaders understand how the intersections of gender, race, class, etc. impact the work for environmental & food justice, certainly on internal organizational levels. There is greater shared analysis and framework on a global/systems scale on issues of food, sustainability, and environmentalism (i.e. food insecurity as linked to poverty, environmental injustice as linked to racism and class, etc.).

"There is a challenge in not having a common framework [of sexism, power, privilege, etc.], and in a lack of agreement on whether it's even necessary to have a common understanding of how power functions. Among those who have a certain take on how gender oppression & power functions, I've experienced a lot of distrust of people who don't hold that shared analysis. That's not to say there aren't real systemic issues operating, patterns worth noticing; but I'm not sure it's helpful to start there. Often that approach doesn't build trust; people may not express divergence of opinion and are disconnected from the process."

What's At Stake? Losses and Gains

In the course of my discovery interviews and through the facilitated conversations on gender equity at the JCF-FBI convening in January 2018 in Encinitas, California, I attempted to

surface the perceived risks and opportunities of cultural and organizational shifts toward gender equity. When addressing adaptive problems, groups often experience significant tension between the explicitly articulated desired change (greater gender equity within the field), and the sacrifices that may be required to achieve that. Any change process will include some element of loss – something will be let go of in order for something new to emerge or take hold. One of the core challenges of adaptive leadership and addressing adaptive problems is to figure out how to manage those losses, and identifying them is necessary.

The losses that pose the greatest barrier to change may be those that are most difficult to surface, the individual or organizational conflict that emerges when a desired state threatens to undermine or challenge a deep-seated belief or value about who we are, or triggers an unconscious fear. The work to address these conflicts can be deeply individual and personal. Addressing these kinds of values conflicts is beyond the scope of a field-wide consultant, but worthy of reflection and interrogation on the part of individual leaders, potentially with the support of a coach or therapist.

As a theoretical example (not based on any particular member of the JCF field): Exploring why an individual Executive Director struggles to consistently elevate and champion the women who work for him, provide them with opportunities for growth and advancement, etc. despite his stated value and intention of doing so and commitment to feminism may have far less to do with explicit sexism and more to do with his own fears about the source of his self-worth, his value to the team, and the messages and core beliefs he internalized as a young person about his roles, expectations, and responsibilities in life. Expectations of masculinity and sexist cultural messaging may contribute, but are unlikely to be the only factor. (Within the "Interventions" section below, I elaborate on how this kind of personal self-reflectiveness and humility can positively impact this work.)

Anticipated Losses – "What might we have to sacrifice to make the needed changes?"

Professionalization & Hierarchy

"There's some loss in general I've been feeling in regard to the growth of this movement. As someone who was involved when it was just Teva, which was a small haimish group of educators getting funky,
there has been an increase in the direction toward organizational structure & a "corporate"

hierarchical kind of thing and it's kind of sad. This is really important, and it needs to be happening right now, because we've grown and these things exist in the world, but it's sad. It used to feel more fun and innocent; and I feel that loss of innocence."

One of the aspects of the movement's culture that is held dear by many members is a rejection of the stereotypical cultural trappings of "successful" organizations, "professionalism," and "corporate" culture. People strongly value the aspects of the culture that allow space for dirty farmers with soil in their fingers and embodied knowledge of the land to lead this movement; it speaks to core underlying values that people are loathe to relinquish in exchange for palatability or intelligibility to funders, being taken seriously by partner movements, and power structures within the nonprofit landscape.

Though these values are not obviously in direct conflict with gender equity – and, in fact, in many ways may provide fertile ground from within which this work can flourish – a conflict emerges when the recommended (or presumed) interventions have the trappings of a more corporate culture. For example: organizational structures that may promote greater transparency and equity in the arenas of compensation, performance evaluation, retention, and advancement (more structured review practices, formal HR departments, clearly articulated performance metrics, and others) may carry an implicit message that the organization is departing from some of their core cultural norms and values (valuing organic processes, non-linear growth, quality vs quantity, a rejection of "soft" skills or metrics).

One possible solution to address this [perceived or actual] conflict is to be clear about what core values the organization wants to retain, and rather than adopting tools, metrics, or strategies wholesale from other fields, do the more time intensive work of developing an intervention that retains the culture and character of the organization.

As an example: Performance metrics for program professionals that prioritize the quality of program experiences based on participant evaluations, rather than a focus on raw attendance numbers. Exploring ways to measure whether participants are experiencing a deeper, more soulful connection to the land, food production, and an embodied understanding of how Jewish values connect to environmental stewardship and responsible food practices.

Relatedly, there is a perception of the loss of innocence, a need to accept that some of the outside pressures they've been resisting for years may have an impact on how the field develops. As a participant in the January convening, who was stepping into a new role as a funder, remarked: *"I'm so grateful this is the first conference I'm attending as a funder, because it feels like a gentle easing in. I can wear casual clothes and still be taken seriously, I don't have to wear professional drag to do my job, here."*

"There's some loss in general I've been feeling in regard to the growth of this movement. As someone who was involved when it was just Teva, which was a small haimish group of educators getting funky, there has been an increase in the direction toward organizational structure & a "corporate" hierarchical kind of thing and it's kind of sad. This is really important, and it needs to be happening right now, because we've grown and these things exist in the world, but it's sad. It used to feel more fun and innocent; and I feel that loss of innocence."

"I like the analogy of a teenager, and I'm thinking about losing funders and losing professionalism and acknowledgement in that way. As a teenager, I really wanted purple hair, and was like "Mom I have to have this, It's part of how I'm going to become myself." I'm worried about losing funders or telling them we have to scale back. It's been disheartening to see male leaders disconnected from the core spirit of the movement; feels like the men have gotten swept up by this professionalization, grant-funded, culture of this world. I want everyone to feel empowered by the work. I think there has to be a loss of scale and potentially achievement."

Efficiency and Focus

Gender equity work still feels to some like it is a side project, rather than as tied to the core mission of many of these organizations. As a result, there is the perception & fear that directing resources to focus on gender equity will mean a loss of focus on the core mission and a loss of efficiency. Homogeneous cultures with a lot of similarities among leaders & leadership styles can be much more efficient than those with greater heterogeneity, and during that transition, it's hard to see the opportunity cost of NOT embracing heterogeneity.

"There's a loss of efficiency; organizations can be very efficient when they just roll over people's feelings - at least in the short term - some organizations seems to operate that way and people live with it and

stay there, other places people get driven out. Process takes time. My organization spends about 10% of time together as a staff doing process-related work (workshops, retreats, staff meetings, learning together, working on the farm together) to connect more fully as people in multiple dimensions across the organizations. I think that's worth it, but it's time we're not spending on our core deliverables and programs."

"There is a loss of doing other things that we would spend that same time and energy doing; we'd have to represent that to donors and stakeholders and that it's important to accomplishing our potential. Also a loss in terms of where that work then leads to runs into the limitations we deal with more broadly in our work; you run into capitalism and other deeper issues."

"The balance of product vs process; I really like getting things done, and don't want to lose that, if we're processing and analyzing too much. There's a risk there of spending too much time navel-gazing and not enough time moving the work forward."

Comfort and Ease

Homogeneous networks provide their members with a great deal of comfort and familiarity; adapting our work styles to accommodate – and even be transformed by – difference isn't easy or comfortable work. Doing so often requires taking a hard look at individual, interpersonal, and collective norms, dynamics, and values, and letting some of those go. That work challenges equilibrium and introduces disorientation.

"From my privileged point of view, I can say there's some loss of comfort, which I welcome, but it is a loss; because these necessary conversations take us to places of shame and guilt and anger. There's a loss of being able to connect on a level that I know that I can, there are things in the way. They were always there, but in recognizing them there's a loss."

"There's a lot of brotherhood & affinity among some of the founders of this movement, and they stand to lose that sense of brotherhood. The way they developed the movement is being criticized. One of the stories in 2016 was from a woman who talked about being at a conference where all of the men were having after-hours socializing together in a hot tub, and the woman didn't feel comfortable joining.

Being more attuned to the subtle ways in which we're leaving people out. Particularly among a group of colleagues who have strong relationships & history together."

Benefits: "What do we stand to gain?"

As articulated above, many of the benefits and gains of new modes of operating and new cultures can be hard to predict and articulate before they are felt: "We don't know what we don't know, and we can't predict exactly what we haven't experienced." However, there was a widespread belief that there is great value in embracing greater diversity, and that it will strengthen the movement in the long term.

"[What do we stand to gain?] Completely revolutionizing the Jewish nonprofit world."

"There's an inherent vulnerability or risk or potential missed opportunity when diversity & leadership across the field doesn't reflect the diversity of constituents, not to mention basic creativity and mix of perspectives that diversity brings."

"The ability to attract, retain, and nurture the best talent; who can help this movement grow and increase our impact on the world. I also see a real possibility in terms of how an increased attention to gender equity can shape and inform our curriculum and pedagogy: there is so much richness within feminist ecology and environmental feminism, and we could do so much more to link that to Jewish values and practices."

Interventions

Series of facilitated conversations at JCF-FBI gathering in January in Encinitas

In January 2018, the JCF-FBI annual convening was held in Encinitas, CA, and facilitated sessions on gender equity were a major component of the gathering. These sessions focused on relationship building, sharing stories across lines of difference, deepening empathy for others' experiences, sharing some of the data and stories collected during discovery interviews, and establishing the power & responsibility for bringing about these changes within the members of

the field themselves, rather than within the outside facilitator. The kinds of internal, personal, and cultural change that appear to be needed will fail if simply imposed by fiat from the outside, they must be embraced and "owned" by members of the system for them to be deeply integrated and lasting.

Two core interventions emerged from this gathering for the gender equity work:
1. Development of new community conversation guidelines (more information below)
2. Articulation of longer term goals to develop a more robust pipeline and leadership development structures for the middle-management gap.

Individual Organizational Gender Equity Audits

Rather than deliver trainings, as initially proposed, we decided to explore individual organizational interventions, by request, in order to tailor intervention experiments within individual organizations to those organizations' needs and cultures. This work is ongoing as of October 2018, with four organizations participating. Of note is that the organizations that opted in to this process were all organizations that have done previous internal work on gender equity and are seen by many others within the field as leaders on this front. This presents an opportunity to collect and share best practices from within the field. However, it also raises a question about what the real or perceived barriers may have been to other organizations opting in to this work. What got in the way? It is not within the scope of this contract, within my power, nor would it be effective to demand that organizational leaders participate in these audits and consultations. As articulated above, cultural change work is only effective and lasting if it is "owned" by internal stakeholders. One question for the movement to consider, however, could be: "In what ways can we, as a field and movement, better articulate our shared investment in and expectations of ourselves to commit deeply to the work of gender equity?"

Emerging Themes

In the course of consultations with individual organizations, a few themes have emerged across multiple organizations:

Surfacing the Challenges

One of the most challenging steps in fomenting any form of culture change within an existing group – including organizations – is the initial step of surfacing the challenges. This work necessitates taking a hard look, and asking hard questions, about what isn't working. It requires the trust and safety to be vulnerable, employees must believe that they can name challenges without experiencing retaliation, and organizational leadership must be able to trust their team's goodwill and faith in them as leaders to open themselves to receiving difficult feedback with humility. It would be a mistake to assume that all organizational challenges rest in the hands of organizational senior leaders, but it is consistently clear that senior leadership has an important role to play in setting, supporting, fostering, and enabling organizational culture. Within JCF-FBI organizations, this work of "surfacing" has taken two primary forms: 1) focus groups & caucuses; 2) organizational surveys.

Urban Adamah, which began its work to address organizational gender equity prior to my engagement with the field, addressed this need by a series of facilitated conversations – first within identity-based caucuses, and then as an entire team. Multiple team members identified these conversations as one of the most important components of the work, precisely because it brought the issues and challenges to the surface, ensured that everyone had an opportunity to be heard and validated publicly, and offered surprising moments of empathy, identification, and deeper understanding of different experiences. One woman on the UA team reflected:

> I still think about these conversations, and the things I learned in them, all the time. I had no idea these were the kinds of concerns the men were thinking about. [The facilitator] had the men on our staff share with us things that they associate with what it means to be a man. I'd thought about this for women – "I'm too loud." "I'm taking up too much space." "I'm too bossy." – but I hadn't thought about it much for men. I was really struck by the vulnerability of what people said: "I'm not allowed to be indecisive." "I have to choose." "I have to lead." It gave me insight into the other side of how sexism harms people, and I think it gave all of us

helpful insight into the ways in which internalized sexism was shaping and limiting all of us, as a team and organization.

This practice, and the impact on Urban Adamah's team, offers a few important insights and lessons for the field more broadly:

1. Surfacing the issues is a critically important necessary first step. Important because it points toward a direction for interventions and making changes but also, and perhaps even more significantly, because of the trust and empathy -building that can be facilitated through the process. Addressing the impacts of sexism, gender bias, and gender inequity in our society and organizations can be deeply vulnerable work, and doing so can raise questions and doubts about our personal competence and value to the team, may point to ways in which our behaviors don't align with our stated values – which is an uncomfortable psychological experience to sit with, and it can stir up past injuries and traumas. This may be experienced differently by people of different genders, but those challenges and vulnerabilities aren't limited to people of any one gender. This recognition – that all of us are harmed and limited by sexism and gender bias, though those impacts are not proportionally shared or evenly distributed – also allows us to shift from a framework in which some people are simply victims and some are simply perpetrators, to recognizing that the work of healing and transforming the harms of sexism and gender bias benefits everyone, and requires everyone's participation.

2. Well-facilitated surfacing conversations can allow participants to move from the individual to the systemic, with empathy and deeper understanding. Though there are certainly instances in which one or a handful of individual team members display particularly problematic behavior, cultural change is rarely about a single person. Focusing on one individual can be enticing, as it can let the rest of the group "off the hook" of responsibility. This can feel good in the short term (i.e. "well, we fired that jerk, so now the problem is solved") but neglects to address the underlying cultural norms that enabled or tolerated that behavior. These surfacing conversations can help identify patterns, and direct attention toward addressing the underlying cultural norms, rather than focusing blame or responsibility on a single individual.

3. Surfacing the issues is necessary but not sufficient, and is certainly not the end of the work. Once the issues are surfaced and identified, the work of designing creative interventions, implementing and testing for impact, reflecting and evaluating, and iterating as needed can begin. This is where the rubber meets the road, but these interventions can easily fall flat if not undertaken in an environment of deepened trust, respect, and appropriate professional vulnerability.

Humility and Self-Reflection

"In the beginning I was very defensive. I really wanted to see and hear concrete examples; I couldn't hear "it's just a general culture thing". It took me a while before I was able to embrace that Urban Adamah just swims in the punch of gender bias in society, and it's going to play out here in subtle and not so subtle ways, and my best move is to really deeply embrace that this is happening, not to take it personally, and not to be afraid of the change that will come from exploring this issue." – Adam Berman, Executive Director, Urban Adamah

As has been noted previously in this report, and widely acknowledged within the field, the field of Jewish Communal Farming has an awkward challenge when it comes to addressing gender inequity, field-wide: The vast majority of senior leaders and Executive Directors of organizations within the field are men. Even more specifically, all of them are men who are committed to and care about gender equity. Particularly considering the closeness of relationships across the field and within organizations, this can pose a serious challenge to the work of surfacing and addressing issues of gender bias. It is uncomfortable, professionally risky, and often, counter cultural to directly challenge supervisors, close colleagues, and friends on their own behavior; and because of the field's infancy and the reality that most of the senior organizational leaders are also founders, it may feel particularly difficult to distinguish critique of an organization from personal critique of its leadership.

Humility, self-reflection, and a good-faith invitation of feedback can be powerful and effective counter moves to address this power imbalance. Within each of the organizations I worked with independently, the women working most closely with the senior men in leadership (CEOs/Directors/etc.) reflected that they trusted their CEO/Director, they felt empowered to

give direct feedback when necessary, and that they felt professionally safe in doing so. Survey data, however, demonstrated that this wasn't necessarily the case across every level of an organization.

People in positions of authority are often expected to provide their constituents (employees or otherwise) with direction, protection, and order. There is immense pressure to shelter the team from change or disruption, and especially when combined with gendered social expectations on men to be decisive and strong leaders, can feel like an enormous barrier to transparency and publicly acknowledging shortcomings or growing edges. However, and perhaps counter intuitively, doing so can be a powerful and effective means to engendering the trust and goodwill that facilitates lasting organizational cultural change. A Director/CEO who is able to say: *"Here is what I've noticed about my own behavior patterns, and how it might be getting in the way of my goals of fostering greater gender equity. I am committed to doing the following things to change these patterns, and I invite all of you to share feedback with me on this journey. I'm grateful to my colleagues who have helped me see my own growing edges."* is signaling to their team that they are open to feedback and unlikely to retaliate against the source of that feedback. This practice, of course, need not be limited to senior leadership, and can be a powerful practice among all employees. Feedback that is solicited, acknowledged as a gift and received with humility and gratitude, and that becomes a reflexive organizational practice loses much of its stigma, shame, and risk.

Recommendations

Transforming Team, Organization, and Field Culture Through Shared Norms

As noted above, one of the core themes that emerged during the fields' gender equity work in California was the absence of explicit group norms that support equitable participation. This theme mirrors the findings of research on how to create to effective teams. In an article about Google's findings from its "Project Aristotle" (an internal Google research project on building effective teams) in the New York Times Magazine, Charles Duhigg notes:

> *Norms are the traditions, behavioral standards and unwritten rules that govern how we function when we gather: One team may come to a consensus that avoiding disagreement is more*

valuable than debate; another team might develop a culture that encourages vigorous
arguments and spurns groupthink. Norms can be unspoken or openly acknowledged, but their
influence is often profound. Team members may behave in certain ways as individuals — they
may chafe against authority or prefer working independently — but when they gather, the
group's norms typically override individual proclivities and encourage deference to the team.[3]

Within the field of Jewish Community Farming, there are a variety of formal and informal teams
and networks – project teams within individual organizations, those organizations as a whole,
groups or teams of individuals working in corollary roles across organizations that may
collaborate within the Field Building Initiative, participants in JCF-FBI gatherings, the committees
and leadership team of the JCF-FBI project, and the network in its entirety (as represented
both through JCF-FBI, and JOFFEE more broadly). Within each of these groups, teams, and
networks, there appear to be varying sets of explicit and implicit norms.

Another relevant highlight of research in this field is that rather than any specific set of
individual characteristics of team members, the development and maintenance of team norms
that promote psychological safety are paramount. In a 2008 study[4] by researchers at Carnegie
Mellon, M.I.T, and Union College measuring collective intelligence (i.e. the degree to which a
groups' collective ability to accomplish tasks and demonstrate other measures of intelligence
was distinct from any individual members' intelligence), researchers found that what most
meaningfully distinguished the most high-performing teams from the lower performing or more
dysfunctional teams was how team members treated each other. The team behavioral norms
didn't have to be identical for teams to be high performing, but the high performing teams
generally shared two major behavioral norms: 1) "equality in conversational turn-taking" and 2)
high "average social sensitivity".

Both of these factors are understood by social psychologists as contributing to
generating a sense of "psychological safety" among group members. Psychological safety is
defined by Harvard Business School professor Amy Edmondson as a "shared belief held by
members of a team that the team is safe for interpersonal risk-taking. [It is] a sense of

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[3] Duhigg, Charles; "What Google Learned From Its Quest to Build the Perfect Team," NY Times Magazine; Feb 25, 2016 https://www.nytimes.com/2016/02/28/magazine/what-google-learned-from-its-quest-to-build-the-perfect-team.html
[4] Anita Williams Woolley, Christopher F. Chabris, Alex Pentland, Nada Hashmi, Thomas W. Malone; "Evidence for a Collective Intelligence Factor in the Performance of Human Groups;" Science Magazine, Oct 29, 2010 http://science.sciencemag.org/content/330/6004/686

confidence that the team will not embarrass, reject, or punish someone for speaking up. It describes a team climate characterized by interpersonal trust and mutual respect in which people are comfortable being themselves."

This research and data hold valuable insights for the JCF-FBI gender equity work. As highlighted in my discovery conversations, there is a strong relational glue among some members of the field (especially but not exclusively senior leaders who have a shared personal and professional history, and formative shared experiences within the field), which appears to have contributed to a high sense of psychological safety. Notably, however, this high psychological safety does not appear to be shared by everyone, and appears – anecdotally – to be lower for and among women within the field. The challenge then, for the field, is not "How do we dismantle the relational ties that have created this for some?" but rather "How do we establish field-wide norms that facilitate psychological safety for all, and in doing so, increase gender equity?"

Emerging from the January gathering in California, a volunteer committee drafted a set of communications norms for the field; many of which – if maintained – can serve to increase psychological safety across the field, and establish a foundation for greater equity in participation and leadership. The volunteer committee drafted the following set of norms:

JCF-FBI Community Conversation Norms
Drafted April 2018

This set of guidelines, practices, and norms is offered in the spirit of experimentation and iteration. Our hope is that individual JCF organizations will experiment with these guidelines and share back their experiences, as the community as a whole continues to work toward a cultural shift that nurtures and supports the widest possible participation of community members and diminishes inequity. Please try them on, tweak as needed for your organization, and share what your organization's existing practices are!

Community Conversation Practices & Agreements:

Practice self-awareness & spiritual basketball

What is spiritual basketball? The practice of approaching a meeting or facilitated conversation like a basketball game, in which the conversation is the ball, with a set of rules for each person to hold themselves to:

- Everyone on the team has to touch the ball once before putting it in the hoop
- No dribbling
- Once you've touched the ball, stop and pass it to a team-mate

Another tool for self-awareness and reflection could be the use of a timer, either on a watch or an unobtrusive sand-timer/hourglass, for people to monitor how much time & space they are taking up in a conversation.

Dialogue Observer

Designating a Dialogue Observer (DO) role in meetings can be a strategy for gaining greater insight into the habits, patterns, and dynamics in your meetings. This role is similar to the concept of "Getting on the Balcony[5]" that we discussed in January. Designating a different

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[5] https://hbr.org/2002/06/a-survival-guide-for-leaders - Has a good summary of the "dance floor/balcony" concept and how this tool can be used to gain perspective and insights into social dynamics at play.

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member of the team or meetings as the DO each meeting is useful for getting a diversity of insights and to minimizing the impact of organizational power differentials in the data collected. Each organization or team can decide whether the DO should be tasked with interrupting the meeting when they notice dynamics that are detracting from equity or efficacy, or they can share a report-back after the meeting.

Things DOs might want to be looking for:

- **Airtime**: who is speaking most, or for longest; who isn't occupying as much air time?
- **Interruptions**: who is being interrupted, and who is doing the interrupting?
- **Repetitions**: are some people's ideas being repeated? Are there instances where Person A offers something to the conversation, but the group doesn't respond to or internalize what they've said until it is repeated by someone else? Who gets the "credit" for their contributions?
- **Roles**: What "roles" are people playing in meetings. Are there particular people frequently reminding the group to stay on track? Or those who often raise tangents? Other roles or patterns you see repeating? What information does that give you about what is beneath the surface?
- **Emotional temperature**: What is the emotional temperature in the room? When, how, and why does it shift? Are some members shutting down when others become more engaged or animated?

Mezuzah - a signal word

Similar to the DO role, this is an invitation for everyone in the meeting to get on the balcony, and a tool for offering an intervention. Like a mezuzah is a reminder to us to live our lives by our Jewish ethics, this tool is to be used as a reminder for when anyone notices the things outlined for the DO, above. This is best paired with self-reflectiveness and an assumption of goodwill, rather than wielded as a tool to shut people down.

Example of how to offer an intervention: "I'd like to offer a mezuzah observation: I'm noticing that so far, we've heard from Rachel and Noah 4 times, but we haven't heard anything from Leah, Abe, Sarah, or Noam. I wanted to flag this for all of us, and as we continue, I'd encourage us to be thoughtful about making space for everyone's voices."

דברתי & שמעתי | **Dibarti & Shamati**

A pair of tools used to communicate when we are done speaking and that we have heard the person who has just spoken. Dibarti means "I have spoken" and shamati means "I have heard [you]".

No side conversations during meeting

Don't separate yourself from the group by having side conversations. If you think of something that needs to be shared with just one or two other people, write down a note to remind yourself to talk to them about it later. Side conversations are often quite noticeable to whomever is speaking, and others, and communicates disrespect, even when none is intended.

Minimize tech distractions

This group (JCF-FBI) is already really good at this - kol hakavod! This is a reminder that if you have an actually urgent need to attend to something outside the room/conversation (a phone call, email, etc.); do so separately from the group, rather than pulling out your phone mid-meeting.

Leave space for silence, pause for reflection

The facilitator can play a role in this, by holding 30 seconds for thought before answering questions, etc., but this is also a reminder to all participants to hold your thought for a moment before responding, to give others a chance to formulate their thoughts and to create space for the more reserved participants in the room to participate.

Think about power

Be mindful of power dynamics in the room: who are you within this conversation - what power do you hold, and how does that affect other people? If you wield a lot of formal or informal authority in this room, think about what weight your words carry, and how they can be used either to invite greater participation, or to diminish it.

Professional Development Pipeline

A rough proposal was sketched out at the January convening for possible professional development interventions to support women rising to positions of greater authority and leadership in the movement. This proposal included: mentorship of women in mid-level leadership roles; investment in professional development that focuses on concrete skill-building opportunities; particularly those skills that are necessary for senior organizational leadership but that may not be learned "on the job" in the programmatic, educational, or farming roles occupied by many women within the field. It is beyond the scope or budget of this contract to design and implement these programs, but could be a valuable investment for those looking to build the field in a manner that centers equity concerns. Attempting this on a large scale would require a meaningful investment in the field as a whole, and could be worth greater exploration in partnership with Jewish funders and other field leaders with expertise in designing leadership development programs. Specific interest in the following professional development opportunities emerged:

- Mentorship opportunities for women in the field, both within and across organizations
- Field-wide training opportunities in concrete organizational skills that facilitate upward growth (personnel, program, and financial management skills; development training; public speaking and presentation skills, etc.)

Transparency, Policy, and Practices

One of the most striking points of data across multiple organizations were the gender disparities with regard to perceptions of compensation & promotion processes and metrics. A few examples:

- Within one organization, survey respondents were asked: "Do you have a clear understanding of your career or promotion path?" 100% of men responded "Yes" as compared to only 40% of women.[6]

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[6] This organization did not include any non-binary or genderqueer identified respondents, at the time of the survey.

- Within another organization, 45% of men versus 13% of women indicated that they understood how compensation (salaries & raises) is set at the organization.[7]

These questions, at their root, get at perceptions of fairness within an organization; perceptions of members of an organization that they will be treated equitably. There are three components to fairness:

1. Distributive fairness: this is a perception that decisions about things like reward, recognition and promotion are made according to consistent criteria applied equally to everyone.

2. Procedural fairness: this is a perception that the process of making those decisions is based on solid principles of transparency, lack of bias and input by stakeholders. An example of procedural fairness might include explanations of why decisions were made and how decisions were made.

3. Interactive fairness is about respect and dignity. Even if decisions don't go the way someone wants, they should perceive they were treated properly and humanely.

The literature on fairness tells us that if even one of these elements of fairness is in place, people inside an organization will tolerate decisions they don't like because they perceive that the organization is fair, and if all three are in place, it substantially reduces claims and complaints against an employer, even in the face of very bad news. Understanding the importance of perceptions of fairness within an organization, combined with the gender disparity in the data from JCF organizations points to an intervention opportunity. Though the question of gender compensation equity is important, the perception of inequity or a lack of fairness can be just as damaging, even if compensation itself isn't significantly inequitable.

In response to this challenge, Urban Adamah developed and distributed a clear set of metrics and processes for determining starting salaries and raises. With their permission, these parameters are shared below, as one example of how an organization can increase transparency, perceptions of fairness, and workplace equity.

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[7] This survey (conducted by another outside entity) did not collect data on responses by non-binary or genderqueer employees.

Urban Adamah Salary Policy Revised March 2018

1. **Factors that determine salaries at Urban Adamah**
   Organizational Situation:
   ☐☐Non-profit Status
   ☐☐Organizational Size/Budget
   ☐☐Organization Financial Health Market Salary
   ☐☐Level of Responsibility Individual Qualifications
   ☐☐Experience/Training/Skills

2. **Annual salary ranges are as follows for various tiers of responsibility:**

Tier	General Level of Responsibility	Salary Range
Apprentice - Farm Apprentice - Site Apprentice - Administrative Apprentice	Responsible for completing tasks assigned by supervisor with ownership of very discreet tasks	$15/hour
Assistant/Associate - Administrative Assistant - Public Programs Assistant - Site Assistant	Directly assisting supervisor and taking on independent responsibility at their supervisor's discretion	$32,000 - $40,000
Program Professional - (Senior) Farm Educator - Group Programs Coordinator	Responsible for coordinating and/or independently implementing specific programs	$35,000 - $50,000
Manager - Farm Manager - Fellowship Manager - Operations Manager - Youth and Family Programs Manager - Public Programs Manager - Site Manager	Responsible for overseeing a significant area of program or operations, including managing staff and managing a budget.	$44,000 - $60,000
Director - Director of Public Programs - Fellowship Director - Youth and Family Programs Director	Responsible for providing high level leadership to a department, developing and piloting significant new initiatives, and in some cases raising funds for their department	$48,000 - $75,000
Executive - Associate Director - Executive Director	Responsible for overall direction, management, and financial health of the organization and its programs	$85,000+ Executive salaries are set by the board and are commensurate with overall experience particularly fundraising ability, organizational needs and available resources.

Note: The wide salary range in the manager and director tiers reflects the very wide range of experience people bring to these positions and the different levels of seniority required in various departments at any given time. An individual with less than four years experience in their field is likely to get hired at the lower end of the scale. And, even with exceptional job performance, this person may take 10 years to get to the highest end of the scale.

3. Raises at Urban Adamah

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- Employees in good standing can expect an annual raise of 1-3% to account for cost of living inflation.
- Raises may be lower or higher than 1-3% depending on the factors listed below. If the organization is having a financially challenging year, salaries may stay flat or be cut.
- Raises could be higher than 1-3% depending on the factors below. Significant raises are in the range of 5-7%.
- Raises are only considered once a year. Factors that determine raises are:
  - Performance reviews and improvement in identified areas for growth
  - Comparable market salaries
    - Changes in job description/responsibility
    - Organizational financial health
- Employees are free to share with their supervisor expectations or desires about salary increases in advance of an annual performance review.
- The Executive Director, Associate Director, and Operations Manager will confer about annual raises for each employee in advance of their anniversary. Raises will be set at the maximum amount the organization feels is appropriate given the above salary guidelines, the employee's performance, changes in responsibility, fairness and equitable treatment among employees, and organizational financial health. The Executive Director makes all final decisions if there is not agreement among the three individuals.
- At or within 7 days following an annual performance review, an employee's supervisor will communicate in writing the annual raise the employee will receive for the following year, along with any changes in job description, responsibilities, or other terms of employment. Staff are free to accept or reject the terms offered for continuing employment.

4. Non-Salary Financial Benefits for Full-Time Urban Adamah Employees

- Health insurance coverage for self, partially subsidized for dependents
- Paid time off beginning at 15 days; 20 weeks in second year; incremental increase to 25 days.
- Jewish holidays off (up to 12 paid days depending on when holidays fall) and 5 paid national holidays
- Tax-free retirement account after 2 years
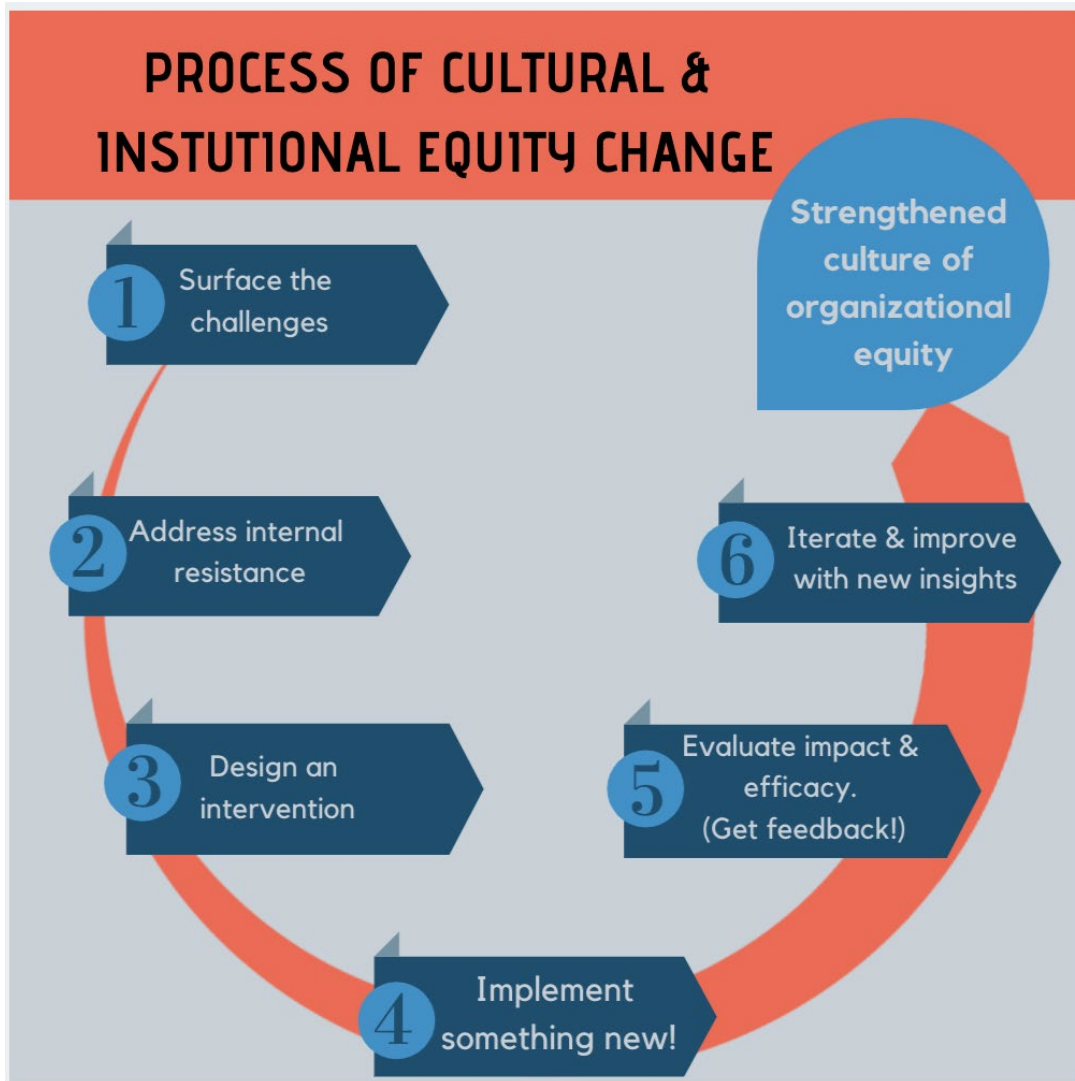- Shabbat harvest

The specifics of Urban Adamah's Salary Policy may not be the right fit for every organization, but the practice is worth recognizing as an attempt to increase transparency across the organization, both with regard to salary and compensation levels, as well as the process and metrics by which people will be considered for raises or promotions. Paired with clear job descriptions and performance evaluations, this could significantly increase employee perceptions of fairness and equity within the organization, and serve as a useful gut-check tool for managers and HR professionals in evaluating employees, setting initial salary offers, etc. with attention to gender equity.

Intersectional scope

The scope of this project was fairly narrowly defined to gender equity, and specifically the disparities between men and women. Individual organizations, the field as a whole, and indeed the Jewish community broadly are struggling on multiple additional equity fronts, including race, disability, gender diversity (i.e. the inclusion & equity of trans and non-binary people). Though this was not a focus of this project, it emerged on more than one occasion as an area of concern, and some organizations are already addressing it internally. (Urban Adamah, Hazon, and Pearlstone stand out, on this front.) Multiple field members named the whiteness of the field as an area of concern, and the reality that most of the employees who are people of color are working on kitchen, maintenance, and housekeeping staff (particularly at those organizations with retreat or conference facilities). Furthermore, one employee of a member organization remarked privately that they were not comfortable being "out" as trans, that nobody in their organization knew of their trans identity or history, and that they did not feel confident their workplace would be a safe and welcoming environment in which to come out.

The Cycle of Cultural & Institutional Equity Change

Many organizations embarking on the work of culture change, especially with regard to issues of equity and inclusion, following a familiar transformation timeline and move through a series of phases in this process:

PROCESS OF CULTURAL & INSTUTIONAL EQUITY CHANGE

Strengthened culture of organizational equity

1 Surface the challenges

2 Address internal resistance

3 Design an intervention

4 Implement something new!

5 Evaluate impact & efficacy. (Get feedback!)

6 Iterate & improve with new insights

JCF-FBI member organizations have been moving through this cycle as individual institutions, and collectively.

Phase 1: Surfacing Challenges

Challenges and sticking points are surfaced in a variety of ways, with more or less buy-in and active participation from authority figures. In the case of JCF-FBI as a whole, and Urban

Adamah, this surfacing was distinctly bottom-up – with stakeholders (employees, members, etc.) asserting the need to address issues of gender equity though it was not already on the agenda. For organizations like Pearlstone and Eden Village, this surfacing process was initiated by senior leadership – by asking direct questions about issues of gender equity, conducting stakeholder surveys, collecting feedback, etc. For Hazon it has been something of a mix, reflecting the breadth and diversity of Hazon's programs and the variety of roles, positions, and experiences staff and stakeholders have with an organization of its size (challenge and invitation from Adamah Fellows, staff-led initiatives, organizational climate surveys, etc.).

Whatever the mechanism, the critical importance of this phase can't be overstated: we can only effectively address challenges that have been brought to light and named. In cases where there is need for healing and/or t'shuvah, failing to explicitly name the ways in which individuals or organizations are falling short of stated values and goals will be counter-productive: rather than deepening trust, transparency, and investment in an organization or project, that trust will be undermined for those who feel they have been harmed, dismissed, or diminished.

Phase 2: Address Internal Resistance

As outlined and articulated above, it is natural, human, and entirely expected that any change process will encounter some forms of resistance. Often, in situations where there is a disconnect between individuals' or organizations' stated values and observable behavior, the sources of that resistance may be surprising, for both outside observers and those experiencing it. Though there may be cases where an individual's resistance is evidence of a fundamental misalignment between an individual's values and the organization's values, in mission-driven organizations like the JCF-FBI member organizations, it is more likely that the sources of resistance are less obvious or less directly connected to the issue. If people in senior positions of leadership are experiencing significant internal resistance, it can be immensely valuable for them to have access to individualized coaching, therapy, or other forms of personal support, as the process can require a great deal of vulnerability and the space or capacity to address sources of shame, self-doubt, outdated personal master narratives, etc. In describing Urban Adamah's early forays in addressing gender equity (as quoted previously), Executive Director Adam Berman identified his personal coaching work with a gender equity consultant as critically

helpful to enabling him to move past initial feelings to defensiveness and dig in deeply to the opportunities for personal and organizational change.

Internal resistance to change processes can derail attempts at creating cultural change, and are inevitable, so it is critically important to foster a culture in which resistance is both expected and presumed to represent a reasonable fear of some sort of loss, rather than presumed to represent animus and outright bigotry. There will be losses in any change process, and the management of those losses is paramount for long term change and widespread buy-in. A few helpful strategies for loss management, many of which were previously or are currently being employed by JCF-FBI member organizations include:

1. Addressing concerns directly, without dismissing or minimizing
2. Allowing people to surface what is beneath their gut resistance without fear of reprisal or shame
3. Supporting people in articulating for themselves why the inevitable trade-offs are worthwhile
4. Being clear about what is not being sacrificed

It is important to remember that any given person's gender identity does not necessarily corollate with the degree to which they will or will not experience internal resistance to gender equity initiatives. For example, women who have reached a level of professional success already may balk at an initiative designed to support other women's professional growth because their sense of self-worth has become invested in having beaten the odds, and they are (often unconsciously) worried that their success will be diminished by lowered barriers for others. And of course, not all objections to a given intervention are indicative of hidden emotional needs being threatened; people of all genders can disagree on the most effective strategies to enhance workplace gender equity, and can hold thoughtful, principled objections and disagreements on which tactics to pursue.

Phase 3: Design an Intervention

Once an organization has surfaced the challenges and begun to address internal resistance, it can become clearer where and how to stage an intervention. If the issues surfaced point toward a particular inflection spot – start there! If the internal resistance is high, begin with something low stakes. At Hazon, women-identified Adamah fellows are invited to use,

Remember also that an intervention designed to enhance gender equity may not always explicitly appear to address gender.

> For example: Multiple JCF-FBI member organizations are working to address issues of organizational transparency in decision-making processes, hiring and promotion, compensation, etc. Greater transparency in these realms can have very direct and tangibly positive impacts for women in an organization (compensation transparency supports pay equity and reduces the gender inequality of negotiated salaries, as one example). Additionally, though, even if there are not direct or concrete changes – in, for example, the number of women on staff or compensation rates – increased transparency deepens trust in the organization and in leaderships' decision making processes, which in turn increases organizational resilience and can contribute to an increase in perceptions of greater equity.

Phase 4: Implementation

There is no single recipe for gender equity interventions in the workplace, but a few of the interventions being implemented and explored by member organizations include:

- Promoting women employees as spokespeople and visible representatives of the organization, internally and externally
- Prioritizing hiring women, including by explicitly inviting and encouraging women applicants (in postings and through direct recruitment) and by keeping a search open until a minimum number of strong women candidates have been found
- Establishing organizational policy to require search committees to be composed of a minimum number of women members
- Establishing compensation transparency and rejecting the practice of salary negotiation across the board
- Establishing organizational gender affinity groups, or other safe spaces for employees to raise issues and access support from colleagues
- Implementing or enhancing parental leave policies to reflect, at a minimum, best practice recommendations for the United States (12 weeks of paid parental leave)
- Implementing or enhancing family-oriented workplace policies to support working parents, including remote work arrangements, flexible hours, etc. (as appropriate for positions and roles)
- Exploring new modalities for meetings, conferences, programming, and activities that prioritize modes of thinking, connecting, reflecting, and learning that are often coded as feminine (process-oriented, non-hierarchical, collaborative, embodied, etc.)

- Highlighting programming for women or that explicitly centers women's experiences, knowledge, expertise, etc.
- Senior leaders committing to only participate in panels, conferences, etc. that have gender equity among presenters
- Examining workplace communication norms that may be inadvertently silencing or de-centering women's contributions
- Pro-actively inviting women in farming roles (as fellows, program participants, or full-time employees) to take the lead in physically demanding roles, or in roles that require the use of heavy machinery, power tools, tractors, etc.
- Collaborative performance evaluation metric design processes, soliciting input from across the organization as to how to measure success, recognizing that some "soft skills" that are routinely coded as more feminine tend to be under-represented in performance metrics, despite the positive impact they may have on outcomes. (e.g. social & relational skills)
- 360° reviews, with the opportunity for all employees to give feedback to senior leadership
- And more!

Phase 5: Evaluation & Reflection

In order to celebrate successes, we have to be able to mark and measure them, and in order to learn and improve from past efforts that weren't fully successful, we have to reflect. Evaluation and reflection are critical, whether the interventions are understood to be successful or not. Not all implemented interventions will work; some efforts may have a long time-horizon, and some interventions may need to be tweaked to more effectively meet the needs of a given organization or group. If widespread data gathering (surveys, interviews, etc.) was not part of an organizations' initial process in surfacing the challenges, this can be a good opportunity to give all stakeholders the chance to provide input, insights, and reflection.

Phase 6: Iterate & Improve

Odds are high that after one year, or an initial set of interventions, an organization will not have achieved full and unassailable gender equity. Our organizations, like the humans that compose them, are messy and complex. Cultural change is arduous and non-linear. Staff leave, priorities shift, new opportunities or limitations emerge, and the circumstances within which we are working are transformed. The most effective organizations recognize that the work of

cultural change for greater equity is ongoing, and take regular opportunities to collect insights, feedback, and reflections, and use new information to tweak, redesign, and iterate.

Conclusions

As reflected throughout this report, the field of Jewish Communal Farming is at a dynamic inflection point, with regard to gender equity and with regard to the growth of the field as a whole. That reality poses both opportunities and challenges for the work of enhancing gender equity.

As a whole, the field is tremendously aware of and attentive to the issues of gender equity – thanks in large part to the persistence and dedication of women leaders within the field and allies who have continued to raise these issues over the last 5+ years, often at the [perceived or actual] risk of professional and personal repercussions. The response of the field has been intentional, thoughtful, and conscientious. Everyone says all the "right" things and is clear and vocal in their commitment to doing the work. And yet, there continues to be work to be done. This seeming disconnect is indicative of the adaptive nature of the work, and the reality that, as Adam Berman articulated so concisely, "[we] just swim in the punch of gender bias in society."

While this work is not easy, and nobody expects change overnight, it is critically important to remember that there is a limit to stakeholders' tolerance for deprioritizing equity issues. The explanation that: "we don't have the time/resources/capacity to focus on this work" has an expiration date. In particular, as the field matures and the stakes are raised for funding, professional legitimacy, long-term visioning and eventual succession planning for founding EDs, and more – the importance of seriously addressing gender equity issues increases. Without ongoing concerted efforts, the field runs the risk of losing out on the wisdom, Torah, and talent of a critical swath of emerging women leaders, who may well determine that Jewish farming doesn't have a place for them.

There is more reason to optimistic than discouraged, however. The member organizations that have invested meaningful resources (of time, money, and attention) in addressing organizational equity are seeing and feeling the impact of those changes. We circle back repeatedly to Urban Adamah in this report as an example of success not because they are perfect or more evolved, but simply because in reflecting on their experience we have the advantage of time, as Urban Adamah began their organizational change process independent of the field building initiative. Though a larger and more complex organization, Hazon offers a

similar example – having invested time, attention, energy, and resources into the work of gender equity, both organizations have seen concrete changes in organizational culture, norms, processes, policies, and practices.

Though the organizations are different, and both continue to face their own challenges, both exemplify that there is a clear line between how resources are allocated and an organization's performance on a variety of equity measures. Resource allocation decisions tell a story about our values, as individuals and organizations, and it's clear that the field of Jewish Communal Farming is still in the process of writing its story of gender equity.