



# Ageing During Covid-19

Survey of Covid-19's impact on the 65+ population in Israel

In collaboration with the ERI Institute

| November 2020 |

# Survey of Impact of Covid-19 Restrictions on the Indicators of Optimal Aging

Impact of Covid-19 on the 65+ population in Israel

01

Participants

Representative sample of Israel's 65+ population  
Wave 2: 642 (Wave 1: 704)

02

Tools

40 (36) item questionnaire (in Hebrew, Arabic, and Russian)  
conducted via phone (60%) and internet (40%) by the  
Midgam Institute  
+/- 3.87% margin of error

03

Data collation period

August 20 to September 7 (This was after an extended period  
without a lockdown. Restrictions on the previous (first)  
lockdown were partially lifted from May 13 – 27)

# Indicators of Optimal Aging

## Health

### Healthy Lifespan

% Years in Good Health  
Men: 56% (11.2 yrs)  
Women: 47% (10.6 yrs)

### Functionality

17% - difficulty with ADL  
33% - difficulty with IADL

## Meaning

### Loneliness

28% feel lonely

### Quality of Life

36 pt. (12-48) in CASP

## Economic Resilience

### Disposable Income

NIS 7,504 (\$2,300)  
[21% are <60% of this amount]

### Ability to Cope

40% struggle to cope financially

## Predictive Indicators for Optimal Aging

### Health Management

50% have low health literacy 

Compliance | persistence

- Rehab 
- Medication

### Healthy Lifestyle

BMI – focus on old age 

Nutrition - 

Mediterranean

16.9% smoke 

1.9 liter alcohol

Exercise - moderate |   
strenuous

### Social Lifestyle

28% employment 

39% participate in social activities 

Networking (Support system: family/friends) 

### Financial Capability

Income | Assets, savings, suitable employment 

Low financial literacy 13.7/21 pts 



**Digital Literacy** – a cross-cutting predictor that influences all metrics

# Changes to the Optimal Aging Indicators

## Indicators of Optimal Aging

### Health

51% reported a deterioration of deconditioning indicators

No change despite the easing of restrictions may indicate the development of chronic deconditioning

### Meaning

89% reported emotional difficulties of some kind

Increased loneliness and depression. More people feel their mental state has suffered multi-dimensional decline, alongside erosion of their family support network

### Economic Resilience

Approx. 20% were adversely affected financially

Employment was adversely affected for about half the working older adults (some 13% of all older adults)

## Predictive Indicators for Optimal Aging

### Health Management

Fewer older adults waived medical consultations

25% have still not completed medical examinations / consultations – mainly for fear of infection

### Healthy Lifestyle

**Back to Routine** : lifestyle habits have returned to pre-Covid-19 levels

### Social Lifestyle

Steep decline in the rate of older adults who have leveraged the crisis towards enriching activities

Testifies to erosion of adaptability

### Financial Capability

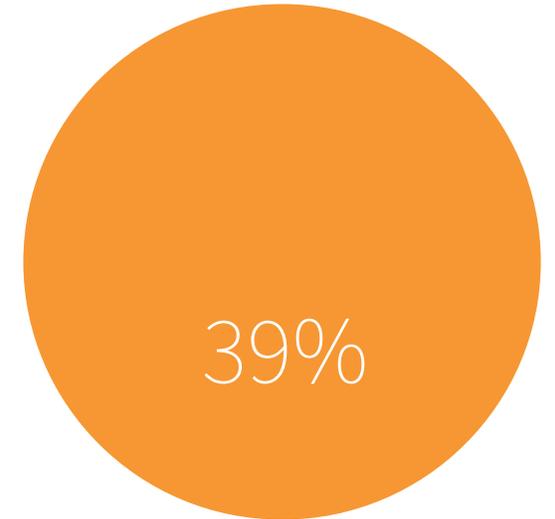
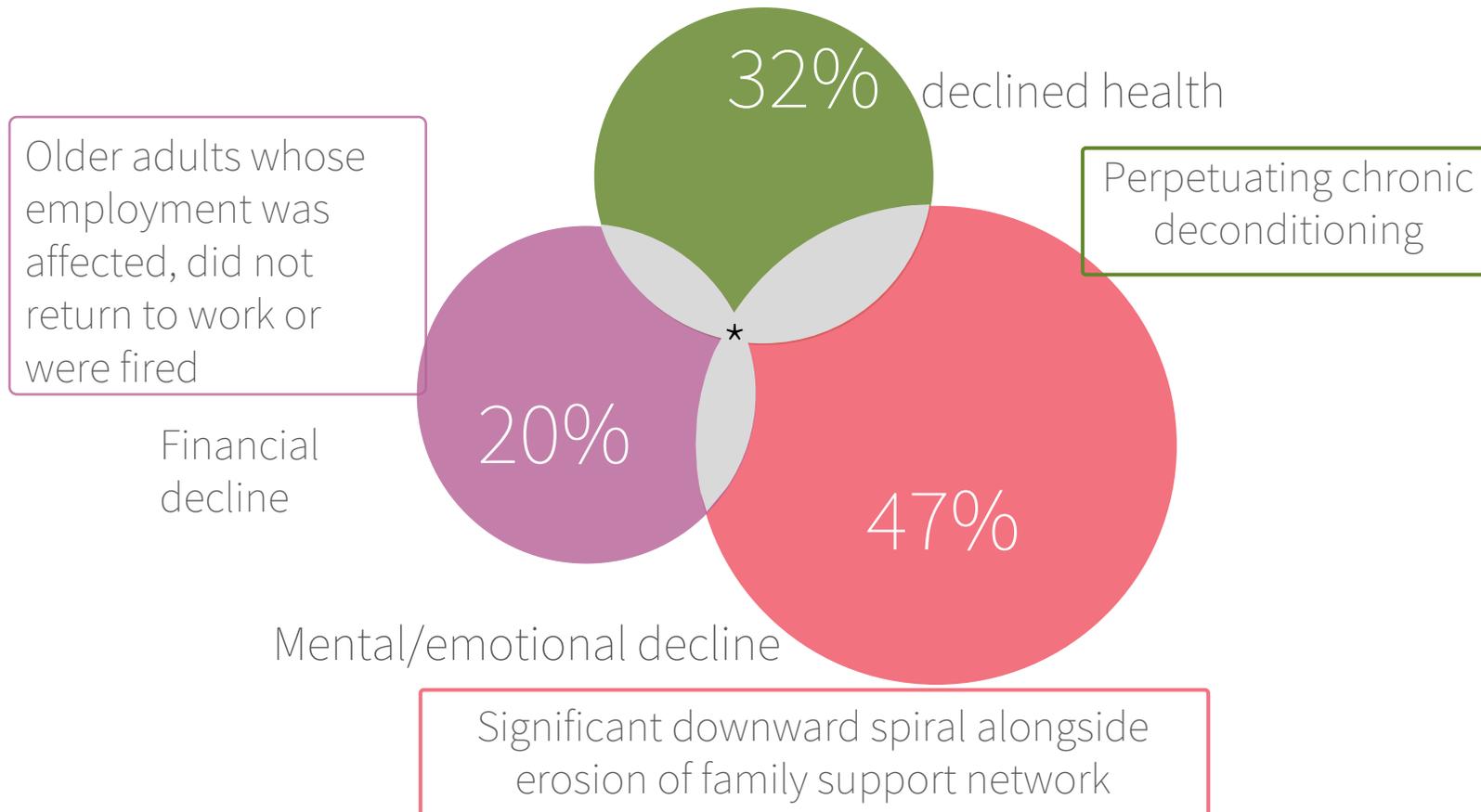
Figures similar to Wave 1

**Digital Literacy:** (1) 25% indicated that they did not receive meaningful support although 80% of these reported emotional / practical difficulty (2) There was a sharp decline in the willingness to receive "remote" assistance

# Changes among older adults who have experienced decline – risk groups

\* 29% experienced multi-dimensional decline (+)

Three of every four older adults who experienced a decline in health or finances, also experienced decline in other dimensions as well



Did not experience any significant deterioration during Covid-19

# Research Rationale

## Stage 1 – Who to focus on? (Previous study)

Mapping risk / resilience groups and their predictive profile characteristics

## Stage 2 – What to focus on? (Present study)

Mapping behaviors that may contribute most effectively to reducing the spiral of decline (emphasis on functional and emotional decline)

## Stage 3 – How will this be done? (Future study)

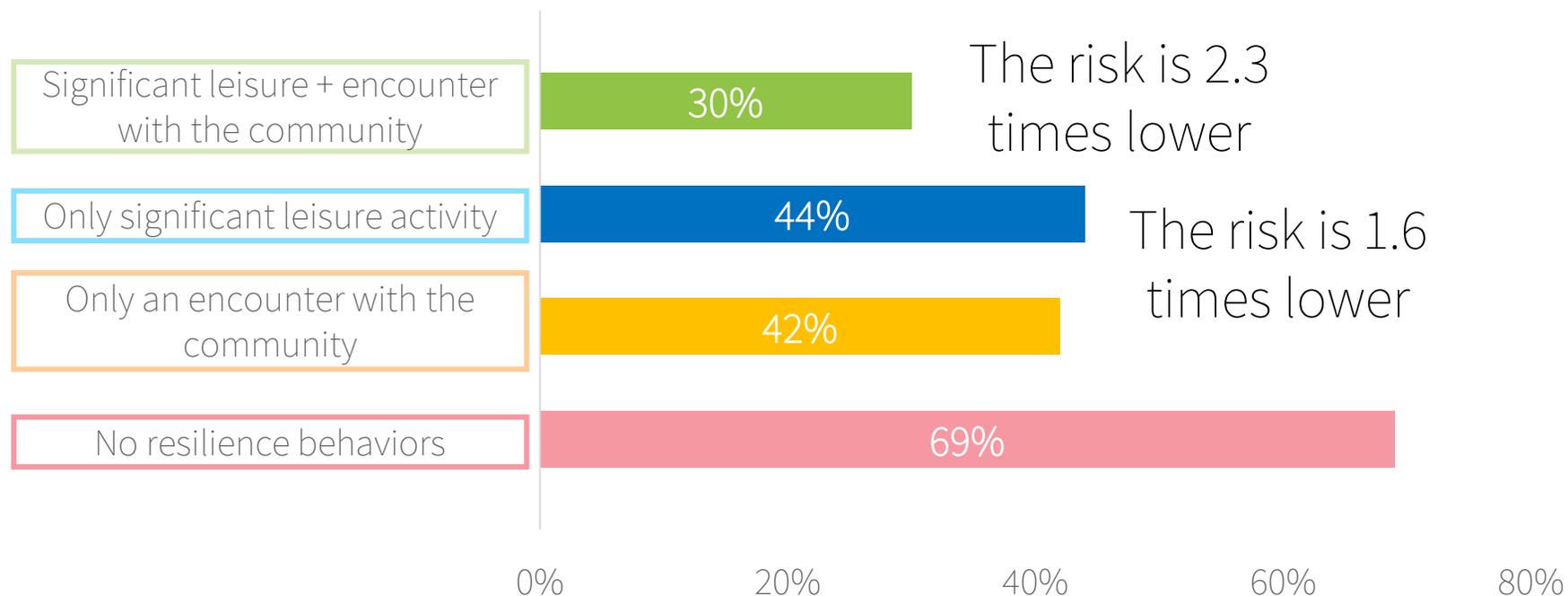
How to translate resilience-promoting behaviors into effective intervention programs

# Behaviors promoting mental resilience

1. Face-to-face encounter with the wider community e.g. neighbors (not family & friends)
2. Significant leisure activity

Encounters with the community and participation in a significant leisure activity each reduce the risk of mental decline to the same extent. Combining the two behaviors is the most conducive to reducing mental decline.

## The Risk of Mental Decline

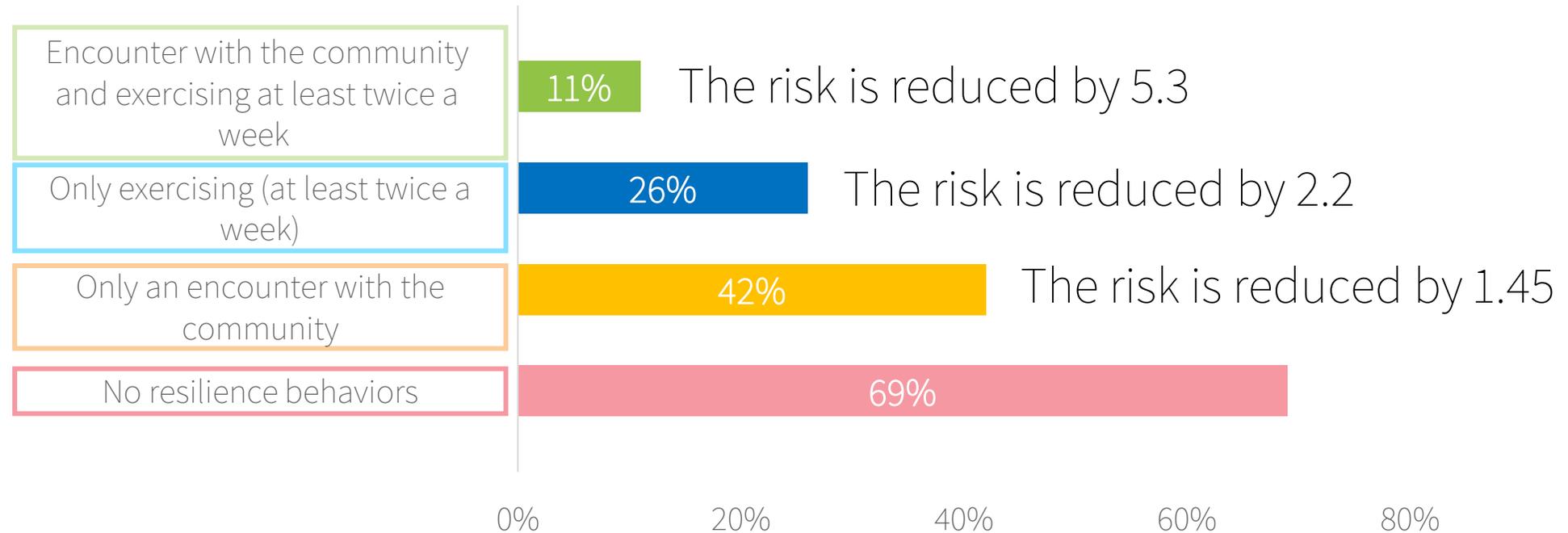


# Behaviors promoting functionality resilience

1. Face-to-face encounter with the wider community e.g. neighbors (not family & friends)
2. Frequency of weekly exercise (at least twice a week)

Exercise reduces the risk of functional decline more than only an encounter with the community yet combining the two yields a greater contribution than the value of each behavior on its own.

## The Risk of Functional Decline



# Who and what should we shine the light on to minimize decline during crisis?

## Resilience predictors

- Digital literacy
- Physical meeting with the community
- Exercising at least twice a week
- Significant leisure activity

## Risk predictors

- Financial difficulties
- Deconditioning and pre-deconditioning
- Arab sector
- No family
- Over 75



Eroded and damaged ability to adapt in all dimensions – functional, mental, and financial – is clear among older adults

The three main assisting factors that the older adult encounters – family | HMOs | community – are eroded and need support

# Operative Conclusions

## Who?

01

Older adults in three-dimensional distress – some 8%



Carrying out effective physical activity at least twice a week

02

Support for older adults in the Arab sector



Strengthening community support of older adults and holding face-to-face encounters

03

Older adults at high risk: financial distress, no family, deconditioned, aged 75+

## What?



Completing routine medical examinations



Digital literacy



Promoting significant leisure activity

## How?



Supporting and strengthening family care networks and community support systems



Mapping effective interventions to encourage resilience-promoting behaviors and retain employment



Developing tools to identify and locate risk populations, focusing on older adults in three-dimensional distress