

## Demographics: Who responded to the Survey?

- Average Age = 36 years old
- 12 years of professional experience, 8 in the humanitarian field, average of 7 field missions per participant.
- 76% of the sample holds a master degree
- Sub-Saharan Africa & Indian Ocean is the most represented continent in terms of field interventions
- 60% of the sample currently works for an NGO, 30% for a UN agency and others either for contractors, government agencies, are currently unemployed or have left the field. The sample represents a minimum of 70 agencies such as ACF, CARE, CDC, Concern, Coopi, DRC, GIZ, HI, ICRC, IFRC, IMC, IRC, MDM, Mercy corps, MSF, NRC, OCHA, OFDA, OXFAM, Plan, PU, RC, RedR, SCI, Solidarité, UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, WHO, WFP, World vision, etc.
- The sample represents 83% international women humanitarian workers and 17% nationals.
- The main humanitarian sectors represented are health (19%), protection (18%) and coordination (18%)

## Discrimination

- The ratio between men and women in senior management team is 1 to .69. The number of women in Senior Management Teams (SMT) is higher in NGOs than the UN ( $p < .05$ ; 1/.72 vs. 1/.62).
- 36% of women working in the humanitarian field have felt discriminated against from getting a certain job or promotion because of their gender. The level of objectivity for the discrimination is 6.6 out of 10. 10% of respondents report having evidence of this discrimination.
- 19% of women working in the humanitarian field have felt favoured for getting a certain job or promotion because of their gender. The level of objectivity for said favourism is 6 out of 10 with 10% having evidence.
- 51% of women feel that their organization does not do everything in its power to make them feel safe as a woman in their workplace. This feeling is stronger among international staff than nationals ( $p < .05$ ).
- 60% of women *disagree* that the following phrase applies in the humanitarian field: "between men and women in the humanitarian field, there is equal pay for equal work". International staff disagree more than the national counterparts ( $p < .05$ ).

## Harassment

- In the past month, women have felt badly on average 1.7 times due to gender-related comments made by colleagues. This number is not associated with age or number of years of experience, and is equal between national and international workers.
- 69% of humanitarian female workers have heard male colleagues commenting about their physical appearance or clothing on average of 1.9 times; 6% of women reported that this comment is regular, meaning occurring almost every day. International staff report this comment more frequently than their national counterparts ( $p < .05$ ).
- 42% of humanitarian female workers have heard male colleagues discussing sex on an average 1.6 times; 4% of women reporting this as regular, meaning occurring almost every day.
- 48% of humanitarian female workers have heard male colleagues discussing the intelligence of women as a group on average 1.6 times; 3% of women reported this as regular, meaning occurring almost every day.
- 67% of humanitarian female workers have heard male colleagues discussing how women are 'emotional' with an average of 2 times; 6% of women reported this as regular, meaning occurring almost every day.
- 33% of humanitarian female workers have experienced their male colleagues giving them a diminutive nickname (i.e. sweetie, honey, baby) with an average of 1.5 times; 5% of women reported this as regular meaning occurring almost every day.
- 60% of humanitarian female workers have experienced their male colleagues looking to conform them to a gender stereotype (i.e. serving everyone in the room coffee, taking notes during the meeting, not being good at driving, not being able to play sports) with an average of 1.9 times; 7% of women reported this as regular, meaning happening almost every day. International staff report these behaviours more frequently than their national counterparts ( $p < .05$ ).
- 51% of the women who reported being subjected to at least one of the aforementioned behaviours indicate that they originated from a male superior.

## Sexual Aggression & Assault

- 48% of humanitarian female workers have experienced being touched in an unwanted way (i.e. touched hair, massaged shoulders, embraced) by a male colleague; 27% of women report have had this experience several times with an average of 2.8 times. Women who report this act have higher numbers of humanitarian mission field experiences ( $p < .05$ ) as compared to women who have less humanitarian mission field experience. International staff report this act more than their national counterparts ( $p < .05$ ).
- 55% of humanitarian female workers were subjected to persistent romantic or sexual advances from a male colleague; 33% of women report having had this experience several times with an average of 3.5 times. International staff experience these acts more than their national counterparts ( $p < .05$ ) and when reported, the number of times it was experienced is greater among international staff compared to national counterparts ( $p < .05$ ).
- 20% of humanitarian female workers report having being threatened with physical aggression by a male colleague; 7% of women report having had this experience several times with an average of 1.43 times. *There is no difference between internationals and nationals in the occurrence of this act.* Women who report this experience have higher numbers of humanitarian mission field experiences than those women who did not report it ( $p < .05$ ).
- 22% of humanitarian female workers experienced being touched on breasts, butt, thighs by a male colleague; 7% of women report having had this experience several times with an average of 1.44 times. *There is no difference between internationals and nationals in the occurrence of this act.*
- 27% of humanitarian female workers report that a male colleague kissed or tried to kiss them; 9% of women report having had this experience several times with an average of 1.68 times. International staff report these acts more than national counterparts ( $p < .05$ ).
- 9% of humanitarian female workers report having being touched or submitted to being touched in a sexual way (even while clothed) by a male colleague; 2.5% of women report having had this experience several times with an average of 1.16 times. Women who report this experience have higher numbers of humanitarian mission field experiences than those women who did not report it ( $p < .05$ ). *There is no difference between internationals and nationals in the occurrence of this act.*
- 4% of humanitarian female workers report having being forced to have sexual relations (i.e. oral, vaginal, anal, and/or penetration with hands or objects) by a male colleague; 7 women report having had this experience several times. There is no difference between international and national in the occurrence of this act. But when it occurred, the number of time it happened is greater in national staff as compared to their international counterparts ( $p < .05$ ).
- The number of times that these events have happened to women is not correlated with age, number of years of experience in general or in the humanitarian field or the number of missions. However, these acts are all correlated with one another ( $p < .05$ ). Which means that *there is a strong probability that a woman who reports one of these acts will also have experienced another one.*
- 33% of the women subjected to at least one of the previous acts reported that it came from a male superior.

## Reporting & Repercussions

- 69% of women who declare having experienced these acts *did not report it officially*. The main reasons given to explain that, by order of importance, are: (1) being worried about professional consequences, (2) not knowing how to qualify these acts, (3) not trusting anyone, (4) the absence of mechanisms in place to denounce these acts, (5) being worried about reprisals from the aggressor or other colleagues.

### *Qualitative Findings:*

- *The most prevalent response to this was a self-evaluation that the incident wasn't serious enough; one comment indicated that the alleged abuse 'was not violent enough'*
- *The second most prevalent response is that women do not trust the system.*
  - *The most common sub-theme here is issues with supervisors. This is more than a "the system is bad" issue – it shows that the people women interact with directly and have power over them are either perceived to be hostile or uninterested.*
  - *The other three major sub-themes have to do more with a system that is indifferent or does not take the problem seriously.*
  - *Corruption or fear of reprisal was a surprisingly small sub-theme*
- *A surprising number of women dealt with their issue on their own (and none mentioned any particular serious consequences).*

- *Lack of proof came up tied for the fifth most prevalent theme, highlighting the need for documentation of issues*
  - *The cultural element makes an appearance here – not the most prevalent theme but coming up five separate times. This implies a need for stronger differentiation between institutional culture and external cultural norms: HR departments and standard of conduct trainings could play a role*
  - *Shame comes up at least three times. This indicates a need to both educate women more and offer better support*
- When women denounce these acts, they reported it first to the head of office/mission, followed by the direct supervisor and then human resources/staff counsellor. The person they reported it to was in the majority of cases a man (56%) that was part of their organisation (95%).

*Qualitative: One interesting findings was the importance of going to someone above your direct supervisor if the direct supervisor seems to be part of the problem. Systems should allow people to “leapfrog” over unsupportive members of the hierarchy*

- Out of the women who reported these acts, 47% declare that nothing happened after their claim.
- Out of the women who reported these acts, 24% declare that an investigation was carried out, 19% that there were punitive consequences for the aggressor, 11% that they were proposed meditation with the aggressor
- Out of the women who reported these acts, 10% report that they were given social support by the organization and 8% that they were referred to a psychologist or a counsellor.
- Out of the women who reported these acts, 22% report that they faced negative professional consequences such as losing their job (25%) or being blocked in professional advancement (18%).

*Qualitative:*

- *The first three most prevalent themes confirm the fears that many women have about why they won't report: women are minimized, judged, and ignored.*
  - *The third and fourth most common themes are encouraging: shows that positive things can happen when women report. In two responses, women were moved to safer locations, demonstrating organizations taking real actions to protect women.*
  - *Two instances of women being fired after reporting – this is a confirmation of everyone's worst fears. It is positive that we only have two responses indicating this, but even one would be too many, and is the confirmation of the fear that keeps many women from reporting or advocating for themselves.*
- When an investigation was carried out, the investigator was in 83% of cases internal to the organization.
  - The level of satisfaction reported about the way the organization handled the incident is 3.7 out of 10, with 36% of women being “not at all” satisfied.

## Impact on Professional & Personal Well-Being

- 38% of women report that these experiences of discrimination, harassment, or sexual assault had a medium to strong negative impact on their psychological wellbeing.
- 26% of women report that *these experiences of discrimination, harassment, or sexual assault had a medium to strong impact on the course of their career*. Out of those reporting that it had an impact on the course of their career, 23% changed missions, 16% quit, 7% left the humanitarian field.

*Qualitative Findings:*

- *The most prevalent response to this question was feeling as if opportunities were being denied to women because of their gender.*
- *The second and fifth most prevalent response has to do with women taking themselves out of the game: either choosing to leave a mission/country/organization, or hesitating/refusing to take a job opportunity because of their experiences with discrimination/harassment/assault. If you combine the two results of these codes, this becomes the most prevalent theme, which means that women are taking themselves out of the game This is a strong result that confirms what we were hearing about women dropping out due to harassment.*
- *The third and fourth most prevalent concerns women altering their behavior and performance due to the stresses of discrimination/harassment/assault.*

- *There were a number of women who felt they successfully navigated the issue and/or actually empowered themselves towards positive changes based on these experiences. These are who we could call “positive deviants”, and if we can identify people like this, we can try to learn from their “success” in overcoming this stuff.*
- *Five women identified being forced to leave because of these experiences – this will relate to the “professional consequences for reporting” result category. These stories confirm many of our worst fears.*
- *Resignation to the situation is also a common reaction to these experiences, illustrating that women are internalizing the “this is what you signed up for, toughen up” mantra.*

*For More information about the Humanitarian Women's Network or our Survey, contact us at [womeninaid@gmail.com](mailto:womeninaid@gmail.com)*