

## Sexual harassment in India

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### Abstract

Sexual harassment is a pervasive problem throughout the world. Whether its cat calling, lewd staring, inappropriate comments, unwanted touching or harassment in the workplace, there are few parts of the world where sexual harassment is not a serious problem. India is no exception to this. Throughout the country, sexual harassment remains a threat to women's physical safety and personal well-being. In an attempt to learn more about the problem, Project Monma conducted a survey with both Indian women and foreign women who have been to India. We asked women about the different types of sexual harassment that they had experienced where they experienced it and who were the most common perpetrators. We conducted the survey in order to raise awareness about the endemic levels of harassment facing women in India and to draw attention to the severity of it. Much needs to be done to bring sexual harassment to an end in India and continued research can help with this.

**Keywords:** sexual harassment, Indian women, women's safety, eve-teasing

### Background

Violence against women in India is an endemic problem. Whilst there are legal protections for women in India including the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act 2005 and other women friendly laws such as the Dowry Prohibition Act 1961, violence is believed to be widespread throughout the country. According to Renuka Chowdhury, a former minister for women and child development, around 70% of women in India have been victims of domestic violence (Singh 2017 p.34). The National Crime Records Bureau of India has revealed that in India a crime against a woman is committed every three minutes. It is estimated that a woman is raped every 29 minutes, a dowry death occurs every 77 minutes and an act of violence from either a husband or a relative occurs every nine minutes (Shakti, 2017). It is believed the majority of crimes against women go unreported due to socio-cultural stigma and lack of protection from the police.

One of the most pervasive of these problems is sexual harassment. Commonly known in India as eve-teasing, sexual harassment may include bullying or coercion of a sexual nature or the unwelcome or inappropriate promise of rewards in exchange for sexual favours. It is believed to be pervasive throughout the country and to be a serious threat to the safety and well-being of women and girls throughout the country. It is a problem that needs to be addressed seriously and requires action to be taken to ensure that this problem is brought to an end.

In order to contribute to shedding light on the issue, Project Monma<sup>1</sup> conducted a survey to learn more about women's experiences of sexual harassment in India. We aimed to learn more about what women consider to be violence, harassment and discrimination and to what extent sexual harassment is prevalent in their lives. Our participants included women from India as well as foreign women who had visited India. We asked participants about their experiences of sexual harassment as well as where they experienced it and who the most frequent perpetrators were. Our aim is to draw attention to the very serious problem of sexual harassment in India and to try and highlight some of the key factors surrounding the problem.

### **Data and Methods**

In this study Project Monma researchers analysed a sample of 37 women, 20 of the women were from India and 17 of the participants were foreigners who had been to India and were from a variety of backgrounds. The ages varied between 18 and 40 years old. The key outcomes of interests were:

1. To explore how women in India and foreign women who have travelled to India have experienced sexual violence and gender based discrimination in India.
2. To explore what women consider violence, harassment and discrimination and how women from different backgrounds experience violence and harassment within India.

3. How this violence affects their day to day lives and experience of living or being in India. The surveys were conducted in both in person and online. All of the women who participated in the study were assured that they could remain anonymous. We worked in conjunction with Umeed Initiative directed by Siddharth Mehta who assisted us in conducting surveys with women in India. Other women were given the surveys through various online mediums. Some of the interviews in India were conducted in Hindi and then translated into English which was done by the team at Umeed Initiative.

Participants were given the option of whether they wanted their names to be used. In the cases the participants agreed, their real names have been used. In the cases the participants did not agree, and then pseudonyms have been used. We have only used first names.

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<sup>1</sup> Project Monma is a charity organisation that aims to raise awareness about violence and discrimination against women and girls around the world.

## Results

### Definition of harassment

All the participants irrespective of their nationality and ethnicity agreed that sexual harassment is behaviour or conduct of sexual nature that is forced to a person, in most cases a woman, in a verbal or physical way. Women agreed that harassment is anything that makes a woman feel uncomfortable whether it is mental, physical or verbal. Some participants also spoke of harassment as being inflicted by those in positions of power, who prey on women who they perceive to be vulnerable. Harassment was also defined as unwanted attention and the use of innuendos that are intended to disrespect a woman and intrude a woman and her privacy. Some participants also described harassment as being the taunting of women and making inappropriate remarks as well as inappropriate and unwanted touching.

Anything that makes a woman uncomfortable in her skin, be it physical, mental verbal or anything for that matter. (Aiswarya, S 2018, Indian).

I define harassment as a male forcing a female into a situation where she feels uncomfortable. (Neava A, 2018, Indian).

Personal power, abusing someone in a lower category then that person...are abusing someone that is seems that that person is more weak in a way, because otherwise the person would answer back.(Saya P, 2018, Indian).

Any undesired advance (touch, staring, whistling, suggestive gestures, singing, comments) made towards a person. (Vaidya M, 2018, Indian).

### Experiences of harassment in India

Harassment in India is so prevalent that participants reported experiences of harassment to be frequent and occurring in most environments. This included the streets, buses, parks, schools and the workplace to name a few. Most participants said that their first incident of sexual harassment was in a public area such as a bus or school. There was also a consensus that sexual harassment commonly begins from age 9 onwards. However, women and girls can be subject to sexual harassment at any age. Most participants reported that their first incidents of sexual harassment included inappropriate comments, touching and aggressive staring. The participants also

mentioned age as being relevant. For example, younger women are more likely to be victimised inside their own households, opposed to older women whom are subject to public harassment.

The worst incident I remember was when I was in 9<sup>th</sup> grade in school and did not know anything about sex. A senior boy who was in 11<sup>th</sup> standard commented about my boobs in the school corridor and said something to the effect that he would like to suck on them. It totally made me feel like a slut. I couldn't face the mirror for several days thereafter. For days and days, I wondered if I had done anything to deserve that comment. Being from a very conservative family, I could not even tell anyone about it. Honestly, I felt bullied and not sexually harassed because I didn't even know about sexual harassment back then. (Aiswarya, S, 2018, Indian).

Yes. At the age of 7 or 8. with uncle. (Saya P, 2018, Indian).

Middle school, boy doing sexual comments. (Beaver B, 2018, Foreigner).

Obvious touches in public places, staring at my body while talking (mostly) from relatives, in educational institutes and ogling in public places (off course). I have experienced child abuse from neighbours and a teacher which I have recently realised. Teenagers in my neighbourhood took me and looked at my private body parts when I was really too young to remember further details if their where any. This lonely uncle in the neighborhood took me on his laps and something moved below me. And this teacher who used to touch and kiss me on my lips when there was no one around. (Busam M, 2018, Indian).

Many participants shared experiences of unwanted stares, groping, non-consensual showing of genitalia, disrespectful bodily comments, catcalling, stalking and abuse by an older male, classmate or even a family member. Foreign women reported having many pictures taken of them, feeling stalked, stared at and more indiscrete harassment such as men blowing kisses at them. Some women also questioned whether they had in some way provoked harassment which was representative of the disempowerment of women feel in India. Following accounts shed light on the above mentioned issues.

In India as a foreigner, it is almost always about the way people look at you. I am running everyday 6-7 km on campus of the university and of course some guys will stop to stare at me, but the people I feel are actually more judging me are the women. They will stop to look at me from feet to head, and like frozen, they seem disgusted or just don't understand why someone would go to run under the sun, at this time with tee-shirt and shorts. But this is only from people I don't know. My classmates and teachers are always saying hi to me, always telling me to continue and encouraging me, whenever any inappropriate comments happen. (Ouellet M, 2018, Foreigner).

I've been sexually harassed in bars, where I asked to be left alone, but was continuously groped or cornered. I was groped on the train. I have been verbally disrespected. (Buys, J 2018, Foreigner).

I was travelling in metro and a man sitting right in front of me was staring menacingly at me with a sinister smile. I realized that his gaze was fixed at my boobs. It was one of the last trains for the day and the coach was almost empty. I took the conscious decision of getting down much before my designated station (Rajiv Chowk) because that station is always crowded and there were less chances of him trying to do anything with me there. I immediately called my boyfriend and asked him to pick me up from that station. But that incident scared the living daylights out of me. I still shudder to think what could have happened had I stayed till my designated station. (Kaur G, 2018, Foreigner).

### **Places where sexual harassment occurs**

Most of the participants spoke of sexual harassment as taking place in public places where it is crowded and easier to touch people without getting noticed, including on public transport.

However, participants also spoke about public places as being dangerous when less crowded and quiet as it was easier to target a victim. Interestingly, more than one participant referred to schools and the household as places where harassment or abuse can happen with the perpetrators being people known to the victim. One participant said: ‘Anyplace except the temple’. This example highlights the severity of harassment in India that it is a common occurrence that can happen anywhere.

In India, it has always occurred at a public location like at a restaurant, outdoor event, or on public transportation. (Naeva A, 2018, Indian).

It can happen anywhere. Even at homes and offices and schools but mostly in metro, buses, trains. (Poulami S, 2018, Foreigner).

It is happening everywhere. At schools, at colleges, at homes (which is supposed to be a safe place for a child), at public places. On roads, buses,... everywhere. (Saya P, 2018, Indian).

As I mentioned beforehand, these instances mostly take place in the public sphere, but that does not rule out the privacy of the home. (Marik M, 2018, Foreigner).

### **Reactions to sexual harassment**

When speaking about their feelings related to sexual harassment, the participants spoke of recurring patterns of feelings of fear and horror. There was a consensus amongst the participants that they felt anger, disgust and oppressed at the thought of sexual harassment. Other answers focused more on addressing the areas in which sexual harassment takes place, such as the streets and crowded spaces. Several participants also spoke about sexual harassment as being an attack on their human rights. They spoke of the oppression of women and gender inequality. Almost all

participants identified harassment as directly affecting the emotional and physical well-being of women and being objectified by a man of power.

Whenever I hear the term sexual harassment, the image which pops up in my mind is that of the streets, because the number of times I have been personally sexually harassed has been on the roads of the cities that I have been in. (Saya P 2018, Indian).

Hopelessness (Saya P, 2018, Indian).

The fact that someone is being wronged and oppressed. (Chatterjee S 2018, Indian).

Men look at women as a sexual object and women are blamed. (Aiswarya S 2018, Indian).  
The participants' reactions toward sexual harassment depended on the person, time and place of abuse. If the harassment was experienced when the victim was young or if the incident occurred at school, then participants reported not being aware of the seriousness of what they were experiencing. This led to many of the victims not reporting or speaking about their experiences. In the cases of adults, more women reported shouting and fighting back against the perpetrator. In most cases women felt unsafe, stopped frequenting the places where they experienced the harassment and changed their behaviour in some way to avoid further harassment.

I didn't realize the intensity or seriousness of the matter, and I told a few of my friends. I deeply regret that I remained silent back then. (Aiswarya S, 2018, Indian).

I just went into a shell. I didn't go to school for two days and thereafter, I avoided going out of classroom for several days. I think I was so afraid and sad that other people would have noticed" (Anika V, 2018, Indian).

I think the immediate aftermath of that incident was that I never travelled in public transport again. Until that time I always had the luxury of a car and it was an impulsive decision to travel in the metro that day. I think this also significantly impacted my personality because later that year, I got a great internship opportunity in Mumbai but knowing that I would have to stay alone and travel in public transport, I rejected that offer. (Kaur G, 2018, Foreigner).

By getting angry. I kicked a stone at the wheel of the bicycle of the guy who was riding it. He passed a comment while riding beside me and my friend. (Vaidya M, 2018, Indian).

### **Frequency of harassment in India**

The overall consensus of the participants was that sexual harassment is not only 'common' in India, but is rampant. It was reported that it is embedded in their culture and history and is openly obvious. Participants from abroad also agreed that sexual harassment was frequent.

Furthermore, there was also a general impression that the separation between the genders made it difficult for men and women in India to have a normal, non-sexual relationship.

The society itself is not open and it's related to their culture and religion too.(Nar, 2018, Foreigner).

Very, very common. Routine.(Aiswarya S, 2018, Indian).

I get the impression that so much separation of the genders makes it hard for men and women to have normal, non-sexual relationships. (Carruth, J, 2018, Foreigner).

Really common. I was really shocked to read some articles where guys were explaining why it was not that bad to rape because they are just details. I mean, this level of violence, it's not about harassment, it's like heinous crime and I think it is taking a big importance. (Ouellet, M 2018, Foreigner).

### **Type of perpetrator**

There was an underlying agreement amongst the participants that there was not one specific type of man that harass women and that any man is capable of harassment. However, several participants identified middle aged men in their 30s as being the primary perpetrators. They described these men as usually being men of lower and middle classes and known to commonly harass women in public places. Some accounts included men of higher classes who were more educated and rich. Thus, the consensus was that any man is capable of harassment, regardless of his age or social status.

I think all kinds of men do it. I have experienced it in my Basti (Slum) from boys and when I was working as a housemaid in a very rich household- the owner of that house would sometimes get drunk and force me to expose my breasts. Sometimes, he would give me Rs 200-300 for it. He was so powerful and if I called out his wrongdoing, I would have lost not only his house but other houses in the neighbourhood. Nobody would have believed me and rather I would have been branded characterless. It seemed practical to suffer silently. (Khan E, 2018, Indian).

No, no, all kinds, old young, no, but I do think some areas, I don't want to say just poor people, because it's not. (Saya P, 2018, Indian).

Old men (35-45 years old) who doesn't seem to go to school, or seem as unskilled labour or educated guys of 25-30 years old rich kids who think they are better than anyone. (Ouellet M, 2018, Foreigner).

People blame only uneducated men but even some educated men view women as their objects of entertainment. (Saha, P 2018, Indian).

While the number of people who try to harass you in public spaces are more often from lower class, the instances of harassment at work place or in family or social circle are from the same social class. (Vaidya M, 2018, Indian).

When it comes to getting inappropriate online messages it is just from younger men around the age group of 20. However, I face the most sexual harassment from older men from their late 30s and beyond. They are usually from the middle or lower class. (Naeva A, 2018, Foreigner).

I think perverts can belong to any class. It doesn't make any difference. Even age is not a factor at all. (Verma A, 2018, Indian).

Some women did however also feel that men from higher social classes could perpetrate sexual harassment which most of the participants attributed to the belief that these men would not have to face responsibility for their actions.

I think rich men do it the most because they have the money for it. (Saya P, 2018, Indian).

People blame only uneducated men but even some educated men view women as their objects of entertainment. (Saha P, 2018, Indian).

All men irrespective of class age can harass women. I in fact experienced it from upper class people because they think can be that their actions can be legitimized or they can make others submissive with the power they enjoy with their class. (Busam M, 2018, Indian).

They are present in all classes and age group. The poorer uneducated rapists get caught while the richer one's just escape. (Udayraj S, 2018, Indian).

One woman felt that if a woman was married she would possibly be less likely to get harassed.

Older woman who are already married who may be considered the 'property' of some other man may be less likely to get harassed, though married women can still get harassed. (Busam M, 2018, Indian).

### **Type of woman or girl that is harassed**

Most of the participants agreed that there is no specific type of girl or women who is more susceptible to harassment. "Even baby girl not free from it," said one participant implying that perpetrators will victimise all ages of women. One participant referred to an elderly nun who was abused demonstrating that anyone can be a victim of sexual harassment in India. Some participants said that younger girls may be targeted more because they are weaker and are less likely to fight back or understand the severity of the situation. Some participants also spoke of men as being opportunistic rather than having a specific type of girl or woman who they

harassed. Whilst most participants agreed that any woman or girl could be subject to sexual harassment, most participants agreed that the primary target group for harassment was between 10 and 30 years old.

I presume young girls suffer the most because of their ignorance and awareness towards these matters. (Chatterjee S, 2018, Indian).

I doubt it is really about sexual attraction really, but more about any opportunity to touch someone inappropriately. (Saya, P 2018, Indian).

These days it's not age specific, otherwise an elderly nun would not have to face sexual harassment for preventing a robbery. (Saha P, 2018, Indian).

It probably happens to young girls because they are more likely to be intimidated and take no action. With age comes confidence. I think once you're older you are less likely to tolerate it. (Naeva A, 2018, Indian).

I think age is not really a criteria here. These sex-starved perverts can do it to anyone. (Kaur G, 2018, Foreigner).

A young girl of 5 years is facing sexual harassment and a 50-year-old woman is facing sexual harassment. It is more to young girls. (Saya P, 2018, Indian).

It happens to every woman. I have rarely seen it happening to women really old but seen guys staring at or commenting on women who were older than 50. (Vaidya M, 2018, Indian).

There was also much consensus amongst the participants that while anybody could be a victim of sexual harassment, young girls would disproportionately experience sexual harassment which was attributed this to young girls not being able to stand up for herself.

I think maybe as you get older it might happen less, but I don't really know, I only have experience from 11 to 28 but it happens all those ages. (Saya P, 2018, Indian).

Men think that they will get maximum pleasure and think that what they have done will go unnoticed if women are young because they will think and that those young women would be either ignorant or submissive. (Sindhuja, K, Indian).

### **Affects of harassment**

Most of the participants agreed that it was easier to ignore non-physical acts of harassment.

However, all the participants agreed that non-physical forms of harassment could be as damaging to a woman's health and mental well-being as physical harassment. Most of the participants

agreed that both physical and non-physical forms of sexual harassment were offensive and a violation of their dignity and were intrusive and humiliating.

I think in terms of degree of harm, the former is more intrusive and humiliating. But that is not to say that comments etc don't make any difference. They too are very bad. (Bakshin N, 2018, Indian).

I think only the gesture is different. The mental pain and disrespect that a girl faces remains same in both cases. (Saha P, 2018, Indian).

All are same and are sexual harassments only. Sexual harassment is more about the psychological trauma they are causing in most cases than the actual physical trauma. Both aspects equally ruin and change people's lives in ways they do not want or desire. (Sindhuja K, 2018, Indian).

I don't think there is any difference because the end result makes a woman really uncomfortable. But I think physical harassment is more uncomfortable and is a violation of a woman's dignity and hence, it should be punished more strictly. (Verma A, 2018, Indian).

### **Age of experiencing sexual harassment**

The majority of the participants reported unwanted touching as something that had occurred through different moments of their lives, mostly beginning from a young age. In some cases they refer as an increasing level of violence and harassment as they grew up.

I must have been 15 or 16 years old, I was queuing at a bank. There wasn't a separate queue for females. So this guy decided to rest his hand on my shoulder, to which I politely ask him to take off. He obliged, but would keep touching me or pushing me from behind. When I expressed my discomfort, he called out saying I did not know how queues worked in India. All the men on the queue thought it was hilarious! (Handique A, 2018, Indian).

I was first harassed at the age of 7 or 8 by an uncle. (Saha 2018).

The first time I was sexually harassed was when I went to fill water from the Municipal Authority's tanker. I had to literally run for my life with 3 or 4 boys chasing me. (Saya P, 2018, Indian).

I was travelling on a bus, with my parents, I was probably, 10 or 12 years old. I could feel a man standing behind me, and was heavily breathing on my neck! (Marik A, 2018, Foreigner).

I was 9 years old. When a stranger came up to me and showed me a brochure of how to use a condom properly, he touched me on my private parts, right in front of my school while waiting for my parents to pick me up. (Aiswarya ,S 2018, Indian).

Only one woman reported not having experienced sexual harassment which she attributed to her social class. Coming from a privileged background she believed protected her from sexual

harassment. However, she did express an awareness of knowing the sexual harassment is widespread throughout India.

Being a law student, I come across so many incidents that I know for a fact that it is much more prevalent than it is made out to be. (Verma A, 2018, Indian).

### **Perceptions of sexual harassment in India before coming to India**

This question was specifically for the foreigner interviewees. They all answered that they were well aware of the problems with sexual harassment and sexual violence in India and came prepared for sexual harassment.

I didn't hear about sexual harassment, the only thing I heard about was gang-rape and how many tourists got raped during their trip in India. It was really scary. My University made me sign a letter saying that if something happened to me, then I could not take it up with them and my private insurance would have to pay for everything because India is considered a risky country. (Ouellet M, 2018, Foreigner).

One woman reported that she understood that there was a possibility of experiencing sexual violence in India when she was given explicit instructions about what to wear.

I was concerned and so I chose to bring very conservative clothing, I also chose not to go out at night without a friend. I don't take public transport without a friend. (Carruth J, 2018, Foreigner).

### **Key factors causing sexual harassment**

Many of the participants referred to the culture in India as being one of the greatest causes of sexual harassment in India. A number of participants said that sexual harassment was a problem because women were seen as sexual objects. Some women also attributed a lack of education as being a key cause of sexual harassment and others attributed porn as a factor.

People blame only uneducated men but even some educated men view women as their objects of entertainment. (Saha P, 2018, Indian).

It's the perpetrators' thought process and culture to blame. (Saha P, 2018, Indian).

Uneducated men. (Beaver B, 2018, Foreigner).

Guys trying to impress their friends. (Carruth J, 2018, Foreigner).

A number of foreign women also attributed the sexual harassment they experienced to being white or because they were different.

Because I am different, I am white, I speak English with a French accent, I am not fluent in Telugu neither Hindi. People can rapidly see that I am not a local Indian. Often tourists are

friendly and don't care about Indian guys taking pictures of them. But I don't like them taking pictures of me, so sometimes when they ask for 6-7 times, I can get really rude, because they don't care about your answer, they just want to take pictures of you on the beach. (Ouellet M, 2018, Foreigner).

Looking different and film stereotypes. (Beaver B, 2018, Foreigner).

## **Discussion**

The results of the survey show that sexual harassment is a widespread and pervasive problem throughout India. A notable was that many women only considered physical acts of violence such as groping as sexual harassment. Lewd staring appeared to be so common that women have taken it as the norm and have simply chosen to ignore it. This speaks volumes of the disturbing nature of sexual violence and harassment towards women and girls in India. None of the women or girls who participated in the survey reported going to the police in the case that they were sexually harassed or even reported the incidence to anyone once it had occurred. This goes to show the very serious nature of sexual harassment in India and the lack of protection that exists for women.

The root causes of sexual harassment in India need to first be tackled before laws can successfully be implemented to stop harassers. The patriarchal mindset and deep rooted cultural values in India are one of the primary factors causing sexual harassment. As girls grow up they are often taught to be submissive and are restrained from exercising social, financial or sexual autonomy. Women and girls also face strict restraints on their sexual behavior while boys and men are given considerably more freedom. As a consequence, men are given a more powerful situation within society which leads to feelings of entitlement, all of which play a role in perpetuating sexual harassment.

It is essential to increase educational programs in that draw attention to harmful cultural practices that place women and girls in a low position in society and to ensure that they are challenged. Educational programs centered on women's rights should be encouraged in schools. Women's security and gender based crimes also need to be given greater attention in the legal discourse. The women and girls who did not report the crimes perpetrated against them most likely did not do so because they did not expect to receive any help from the Indian police or judicial system. The young girls, who reported experiencing sexual harassment in her school, also did not report

the incidence to anybody. As a consequence, the perpetrators of sexual harassment were let off. It is essential to call for greater reforms in the Indian legal system where police officers take cases of sexual harassment and assault seriously and where perpetrators are dealt with quickly. Attitudes that blame women and girls for crimes perpetrated against them also need to stop. Shame surrounding sexual violence is one of the greatest factors preventing women and girls from reporting sexual harassment and violence. Cultural attitudes that perpetuate such concepts of shame need to be stopped.

### **Limitations**

One of the primary limitations we faced during this study was finding women to participate in the study. When trying to recruit participants a number of women said that they did not feel comfortable participating, which they attributed to the cultural taboos surrounding sexual violence in India. One woman even commented that that we would never find anyone to participate in our survey because the cultural taboos surrounding sexual violence in India would prevent women and girls from participating. Such perceptions of shame may therefore have prevented from some women and girls from including incidences of sexual harassment or violence in their answers on the survey. There may also have been some differences in understandings as to what constitutes as sexual harassment. Some women seem to not have not assumed that staring or sexual comments would constitute as sexual harassment, so have not included such incidences in their responses.

### **Conclusion**

Much needs to be done to change the endemic problem of violence against women in India. Sexual harassment, against women; both physical and psychological is embedded in Indian culture. The abuse of women was reported by participants as being rampant with no specific type of perpetrator. Participants also reported that women of all ages, appearances and social status are subjected to sexual harassment and objectified by men. As female victims can be of diverse backgrounds, it appears to be the same case for male abusers; there is not one type of perpetrator, rather any male can victimize a woman. Overall sexual harassment in India is pervasive and it will take a culture restructuring to begin the process of creating cultural values

centered on equality and respect to bring an end to this very serious problem of sexual harassment.

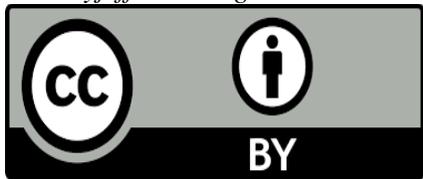
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*Johanna Higgs was born in Mt Isa in the desert of Australia but grew up in Perth, Western Australia. Johanna has an undergraduate degree in Anthropology and Politics and wrote her honor's thesis about the child soldiers of the Lord's Resistance Army in Uganda. She has a Masters degree in International Development and is currently working on her PhD in Anthropology about the child combatants of the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC) in Colombia. She has travelled through many parts of the world including the Middle East, Africa, Latin America, North America, Asia, the Pacific Islands and Europe. She has a passion for women's rights and founded the organization Project Monma which advocates for women's rights around the world.*

*Brittany Jeffries is a Psychology and Business student at Curtin University in Perth, Western Australia, where she was born and raised. Through her studies she developed her passion for women's rights and since 2016 she has been on a mission to be a part of the eradication of gender inequality. Brittany's first project was in Cambodia where she volunteered in Psychological support for victims of human trafficking and has since been working closely with the organisation on various needs projects. Her time spent in Cambodia opened up the opportunity for her to be a part of this report, coinciding with Project Monma which was her first published piece of writing. Upon the completion of her degree, she wishes to continue travelling and working in support of women's rights. She desires to become a global advocate for educating the world on female victimisation and this can hopefully begin with her upcoming trip to India at the end of this year! If you wish to contact Brittany, please do so via email at: [brittanyjeffries95@gmail.com](mailto:brittanyjeffries95@gmail.com)*



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