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## Headington Institute Presents Report on Sexual Violence in Humanitarian Contexts

In the last year, there has been increasing media attention to the largely underreported issue of sexual assault within aid environments. Although several research groups collect data on incidents of violence and attacks on humanitarian staff, sexual violence data is noticeably underreported due to a variety of personal, cultural and organizational factors.

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In June of 2015 the Headington Institute presented a report at the CHS Alliance Sexual Violence Conference in London as part of a day-long conference addressing the continuum of care needed for humanitarian survivors of sexual assault. The Headington Institute presented exploratory data from their own trauma research indicating that out of 1439 aid workers, 10% had reported having been forced into unwanted sexual contact at some point in their life, with 2% indicating their first experience occurred while employed as an aid worker. We estimate upwards of 5,000-10,000 humanitarians experience this during their humanitarian career. However, international data from general populations might indicate that these numbers are still conservative.

Headington is involved in an interagency project to better understand the contributing factors and improve agency response to these situations. Because this is a complicated issue and the cultural considerations have important safety implications, we are engaging in a coalition approach, involving academic research institutions to shape the process. We want any research project we conduct to have safeguards for those involved, and generate outcomes that are useful to both agencies and individuals. Representatives of several humanitarian organizations have also joined the advisory committee, to help us determine the best way forward.

*Care for caregivers worldwide*

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