

Inhabiting Two Worlds At Once

Experiences of LBTIQA+ women who have been forcibly displaced

NOTE: This report needs to be read in conjunction with the main “Inhabiting Two Worlds At Once” report: <https://fdpn.org.au/survey-lgbtiqa-displacement/>

Demographic data: Forcibly displaced women

SOGIESC data

Total number of women who completed this survey is 32 which is 39% of the whole sample. Gender question was based on self-identification and encompassed both trans and cis experiences.

Eight (n=8; 25%) are trans women. One (n=1) respondent was also intersex.

The most commonly identified sexuality was ‘lesbian’ (40.6%).

Migration status

The most common visa status for participants who were women was citizenship with a previous protection visa. The second most common status was permanent residency visa. Two women were undocumented at some point and one was in the detention centre. Interestingly, when we look at the TPV/SHEV visa, only women were on this visa type.

Table 1.1. Migration status of participants when completing the survey

	Number (total sample)	Percent (total sample)	Number (participants who are women)	Percent out of total sample
BVA	16	19.5%	4	25%
BVB	1	1.2%	0	0
BVC	5	6.1%	2	40%
BVE	4	4.9%	0	0
TPV/SHEV	3	3.7%	3	100%
PR	11	13.4%	7	63.6%
International Student	8	9.8%	0	0%
Migrant	11	13.4%	6	54.5%
Citizen (previously on protection visa)	11	13.4%	8	72.7%
Citizen (previously on migrant visa)	9	11%	2	22.2%
No Visa	3	3.7%	0	0
Total	82	100.0%	32	N/A

Age

Women in this survey ranged across the age range. They also skewed older than the male participants of the survey.

Table 1.2. Gender and Age

	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Cisgender women	1	10	6	6	1	0
Trans women	1	1	6	0	0	0

Ethnic background

Overall, top regions of the origin for participants were:

- Middle East
- Southeast Asia
- South Asia

However, for the women in the survey, the countries of origin differed from the total sample in important ways. Women in the survey were similar in region of origins of the main population in the first and second spot: Middle East and Southeast Asia. However, the third largest region of origin for women was Southern Africa rather than South Asia.

Religion

Most of the participants said they were not religious and this pattern was true for women. Interestingly though, women also formed half of all participants for whom Christianity was their religion.

Disability and chronic health conditions

Three (n=3) women disclosed disability which is approximately 20% of all respondents with disability. Two women had a positive HIV status (one trans and one cis woman). This is an important finding as the focus on HIV traditionally focuses on men who have sex with men in LGBTIQ+ spaces.

Children

Women in the survey mentioned children in the survey at a similar rate to other participants. Participants reported that they were parents to a total of seven children overall. For women, they reported being a parent to three children overall in the sample. Of the three children reported, women reported that they had one child living in Australia while two children were reported as living overseas.

Geographic location in Australia

The state/territory of residency for women who were forcibly displaced slightly differed from the rest of the survey sample. Women comprised the lowest number of participants living in Victoria. The highest number of women lived in ACT and no women participants answered our survey from Tasmania, Northern Territory or South Australia. It is important to understand that this does not mean forcibly displaced women did not live in these areas, but rather that they chose not to answer or did not fill out the survey.

Table 1.3. State/territory of residency of female participants

	Number (total sample)	Percent (total sample)	Number (female participants)	Percent out of total sample
ACT	17	20.7%	9	52.9%

NSW	13	15.9%	7	53.8%
VIC	33	40.2%	8	18.2%
QLD	9	11%	4	24.2%
NT	0	0	0	0%
TAS	2	2.4%	0	50%
SA	1	1.2%	0	0%
WA	4	4.9%	2	50%
Rural /regional location	2	2.4%	1	50%
No disclosure	1	1.2%	1	100%
Total	82	100.0%	32	N/A

Health

Women’s self assessment around health were similar to the total sample. When asked to rate health on a scale of 1 to 100 with 1 being the very poor, women averaged 73 out of 100 for physical health and 56 out 100 for mental health. However, a major difference between women and other participants in the sample, was that women reported the lowest numbers of having access to a general practitioner (GP). Only 44% of all women (n=14) reported having access to a GP compared to 71% of men (n=20) and 58% of non-binary people (n=10).

Mental health stressors

Mental health stressors followed the pattern of the total sample for the most part as to the top five issues. However, the main stressor for women in the survey was “Previous Traumatic Experience” while this ranked third in the overall sample.

Table 2.2. Top 5 of experiences that impact mental health ‘a lot’ are:

Total sample	Female participants
1. Insecure visa status and delays from the immigration to resolve the visa status	1. Previous traumatic experience
2. Minority stress of being a person of colour	2. Insecure visa status and delays from the immigration to resolve the visa status
3. Previous traumatic experience	3. Not having a community in Australia and being isolated
4. Not having a community in Australia, being isolated	4. Minority stress of being a person of colour
5. Worrying about family back in the country of origin	5. Ongoing experiences discrimination

Employment in sex work (n=11)

When examining employment of women in Australia, four women (36.4% of the total sample of women) reported engaging in sex work in Australia. This was similar to men in the survey (n=5; 45.5%), but higher than non-binary people (n=2; 18.25%).

Homelessness

Six women reported having been homeless in the past. When looking at the overall sample, women were 27% of all participants who experienced homelessness.

Violence

This particular section was optional for participants due to the sensitivity of the matter. Twenty women agreed to answer the questions about violence.

Table 4.1. Comparison: experiences of sexual and gender-based violence for the total sample and trans participants.

	Total sample (n=53)	Total female participants (n=20)
Prior to Australia	75% (n=40)	75% (n=15)
Since arrival	57% (n=30)	45% (n=9)

Out of all women who answered the question and experienced violence in Australia:

- Nine cisgender women and six transgender women experienced violence prior coming to Australia.
- Six cisgender and three transgender women experienced violence after arriving in Australia. If we extrapolate the percentage from the total number of cis and trans women in this survey, unsurprising based on broader research, trans women (37.5%) were more likely to experience violence than cisgender women (25%) in Australia.

When disaggregating by types of violence that women experienced the following picture emerges:

- Prior to coming to Australia:
 - Emotional abuse (n=12)
 - Sexual harassment (n=11)
 - LGBTIQ+ related abuse (n=11)
 - Sexual violence (n=10)
 - Verbal abuse (n=10)
- Since arrival in Australia:
 - Sexual harassment (n=7)
 - Verbal abuse (n=8)
 - Emotional abuse (n=6)
 - Physical violence (n=6)
 - Technology facilitated abuse (n=5)

Women were the only cohort who experienced high rates of technology-facilitated abuse in Australia.

Type of violence	Prior Australia (all perpetrators combined)	Since arrival in Australia (all perpetrators combined)
Arranged or forced marriage	6	3
Blackmail and extortion	8	1
Emotional abuse	12	6
Female Genital Mutilation	0	0
Financial abuse	5	1

Forcibly Displaced People Network

Sexuality conversion practices	6	1
LGBTIQ-related abuse	11	4
Physical violence	9	6
Property damage	5	4
Reproductive coercion	2	0
Sexual harassment	11	7
Sexual violence	10	2
Social isolation	5	1
Spiritual abuse	1	0
Stalking	6	2
Technology-facilitated abuse	1	5
Surgeries on an intersex people	0	0
Verbal abuse	10	7