



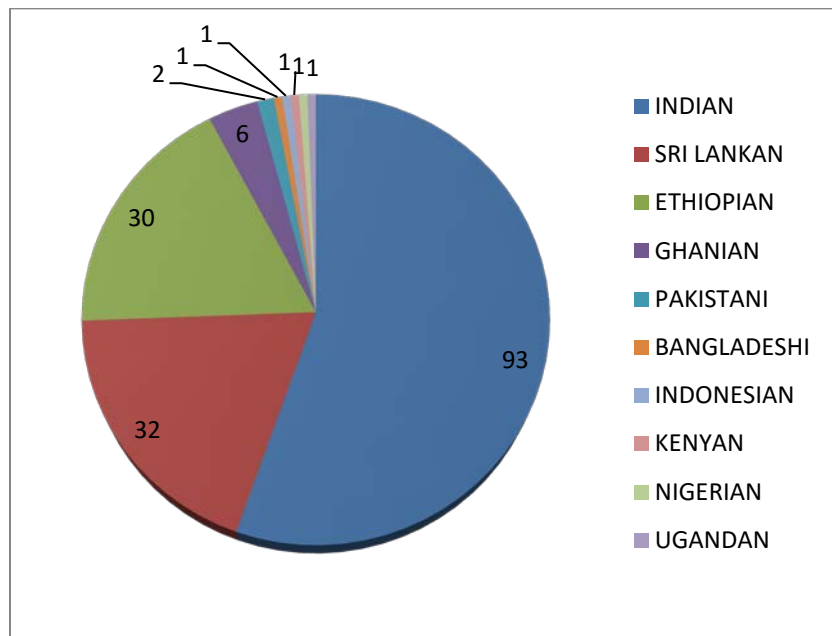
جمعية حماية العمال الوافدين
Migrant Workers Protection Society
(MWPS)

MIGRANT WORKERS PROTECTION SOCIETY (MWPS) SHELTER CONSOLIDATED DATA 2015

NATIONALITY & NUMBER OF WORKERS

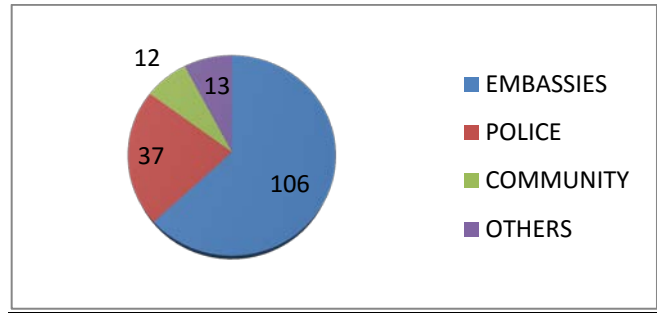
S. No	NATIONALITY	NUMBER(S)
1	INDIAN	93
2	SRI LANKAN	32
3	ETHIOPIAN	30
4	GHANIAN	6
5	PAKISTANI	2
6	BANGLADESHI	1
7	INDONESIAN	1
8	KENYAN	1
9	NIGERIAN	1
10	UGANDAN	1
TOTAL NUMBER OF CASES		168

Breakdown by Nationality of the Shelter residents in 2015



CASES REFERRED TO THE MWPS SHELTER BY:

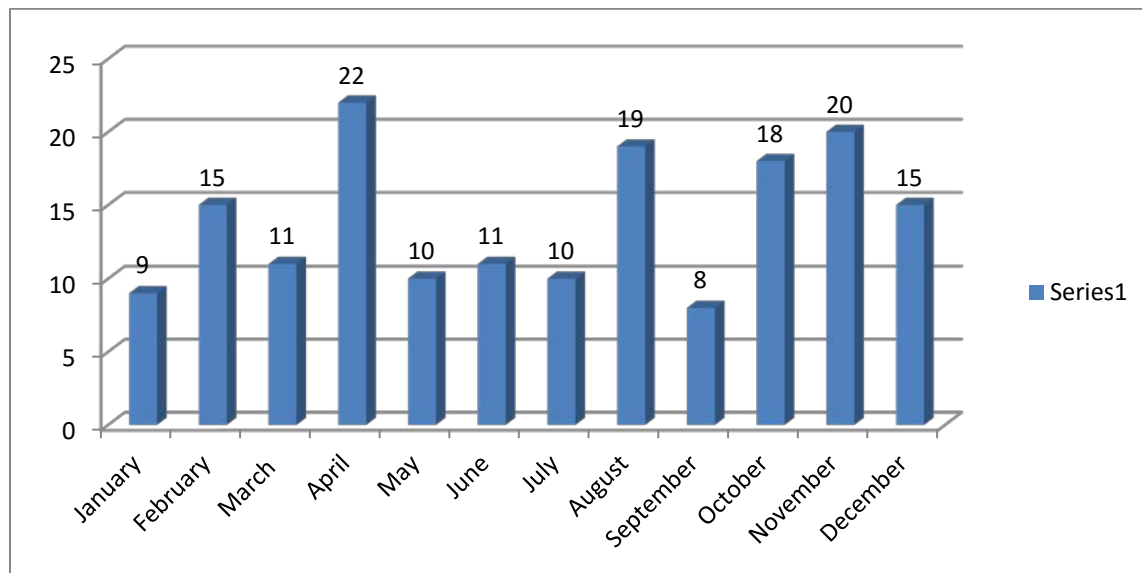
S. No.	CASES REFERRED BY	NUMBER
1	EMBASSIES (INDIAN & SRI LANKAN)	106
2	POLICE STATIONS	37
3	COMMUNITY MEMBERS/ORGANIZATIONS	12
4	OTHERS (CHURCHES, SALMANIYA HOSPITAL, MINISTRY OF LABOR)	13



MONTHLY INTAKE OF SHELTER RESIDENTS IN 2015 (TOTAL 168 CASES)

S. No	MONTH	NUMBERS
1	JANUARY	9
2	FEBRUARY	15
3	MARCH	11
4	APRIL	22
5	MAY	10
6	JUNE	11
7	JULY	10
8	AUGUST	19
9	SEPTEMBER	8
10	OCTOBER	18
11	NOVEMBER	20
12	DECEMBER	15

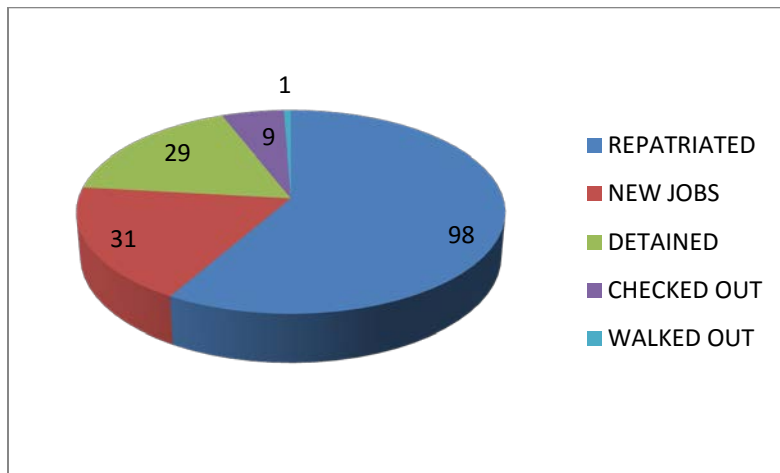
Monthly intake of shelter residents in 2015



OUTCOME OF THE SHELTER CASES IN 2015 (TOTAL 168 CASES)

S No.	OUTCOME	NUMBERS
1	REPATRIATED	98
2	DETAINED AT POLICE STATIONS/IMMIGRATION DIRECTORATE	31
3	NEW JOBS (THROUGH AGENCIES/EMBASSIES /MWPS MEMBERS)	29
4	SELF CHECKED OUT (TO STAY WITH FAMILY MEMBERS)	9
5	WALKED OUT (WITHOUT PRIOR INTIMATION)	1

Outcome of the shelter cases in 2015



ANALYSIS OF THE DATA (Nationality/Referrals/Monthly intake of workers/Outcome of shelter cases)

The MWPS Shelter continues to extend valuable assistance to not only women domestic workers but also expatriate women who may face domestic violence in the Kingdom of Bahrain.

A total of 168 women were admitted into the shelter in 2015, which is the equivalent of one new case entering the MWPS shelter every 2.17 days.

The average intake of cases admitted into the shelter was 14 workers per month.

Indian workers comprised 55.36% of the total number of cases admitted, followed by Sri Lankan workers at 19.05%, Ethiopians at 17.86%, Ghanaian at 3.57%, Pakistani at 1.19% and Bangladeshi, Indonesian, Kenyan, Nigerian and Ugandan workers were at 0.59% each respectively.

From the 168 workers admitted into the shelter, the maximum referrals were from the embassies of India and Sri Lanka that referred a total of 106 cases to the shelter. The Indian Embassy referred 78 of their nationals, followed by the Sri Lankan Embassy who referred 28 cases. Neither of these two embassies operates its own shelter.

Various police stations transferred 37 cases, while community volunteers from different nationalities brought in another 12 cases to the shelter. Thirteen workers were referred through the Sacred Heart Church, Dar Al Aman (government shelter), Salmaniya Hospital, Ministry of Labour and a previous shelter resident, respectively.

The above numbers demonstrate the willingness of the MWPS shelter to accommodate requests received from various sources.

The MWPS Shelter provides free board and lodging, transportation and medical treatment if required. Volunteers also assist the workers fill up Emergency Certificate forms, applications for air ticket support, and submit the same at embassies for completion of their repatriation process.

The residents are kept engaged at the shelter with a schedule of daily activities, conducted by a team of dedicated shelter committee volunteers. Art & craft work, basic spoken English classes, health and hygiene awareness and a skills development program, are some of the activities that are regularly carried out at the shelter. The workers are provided with the above comprehensive services, for as long as it takes for their cases to be followed up and satisfactorily resolved.

The outcomes of the 168 cases of shelter residents were the following: 58.33% were safely repatriated to their home countries and 17.26% left the shelter for new jobs. Due to the enforcement of the 'absconding from work' (runaway) laws under Bahrain immigration rules, that permits an employer to report his employee to the police, 18.45% of the MWPS shelter cases were detained at different police stations. Nine workers or 5.35% opted to self check-out from the shelter, to go and stay with their family members or friends in Bahrain. One case (0.59%) chose to leave the shelter without any prior intimation.

There are no pending cases at the shelter from 2015. Outcome of all cases has been recorded.

COMPLAINT DETAILS OF THE SHELTER RESIDENTS

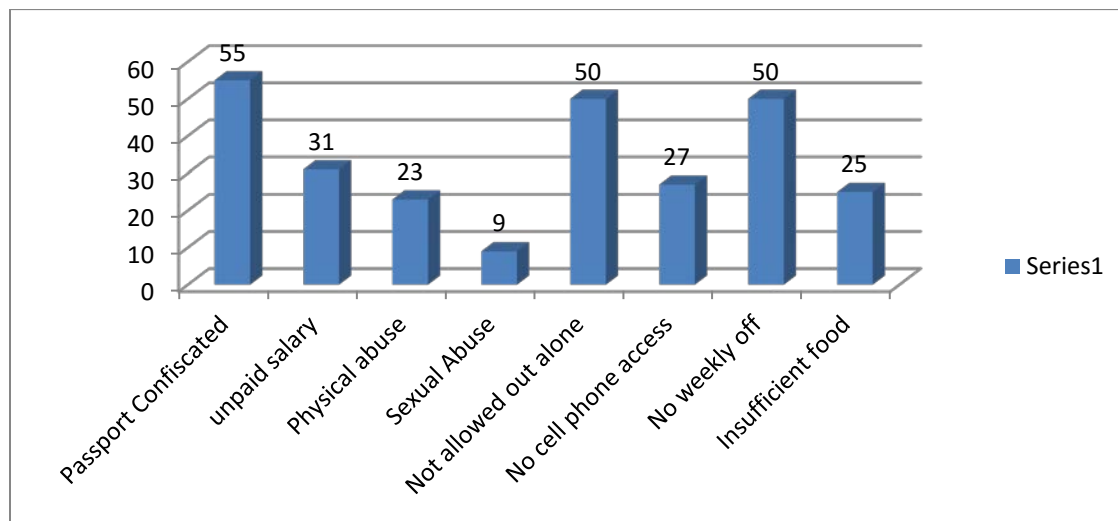
From 1st July 2015, the MWPS shelter adopted a *new case registration form*. Therefore, for year 2015 to ensure accurate reporting, reconciliation of the data, and alignment of all the complaint fields, the complaints section data was collated on a half yearly basis, rather than as a single consolidated data.

***Additional information* recorded between 1st July – 31st December 2015, in the new case registration forms (personal profile, marital status, and educational qualifications, recruitment processes both in the home country and in Bahrain) has also been separately listed.**

1. Between 1st January – 30th June 2015, 78 women were admitted into the shelter
 Number of cases whose complaints were recorded was for 55 residents.

S. No	COMPLAINTS RECORDED (55 from the 78 cases admitted between 1 st Jan 2015- 30 th June 2015)	NUMBERS
1	Passport Confiscated	55
2	Unpaid Salary	31
3	Physical Abuse	23
4	Sexual Abuse	9
5	Not permitted to go out of the employers home alone	50
6	Denied cell phone access	27
7	No weekly off day	50
8	Insufficient food	25

Complaints recorded from 55/78 cases admitted between 1st January – 30th June 2015



Analysis of the Complaints Data (1st January - 30th June 2015)

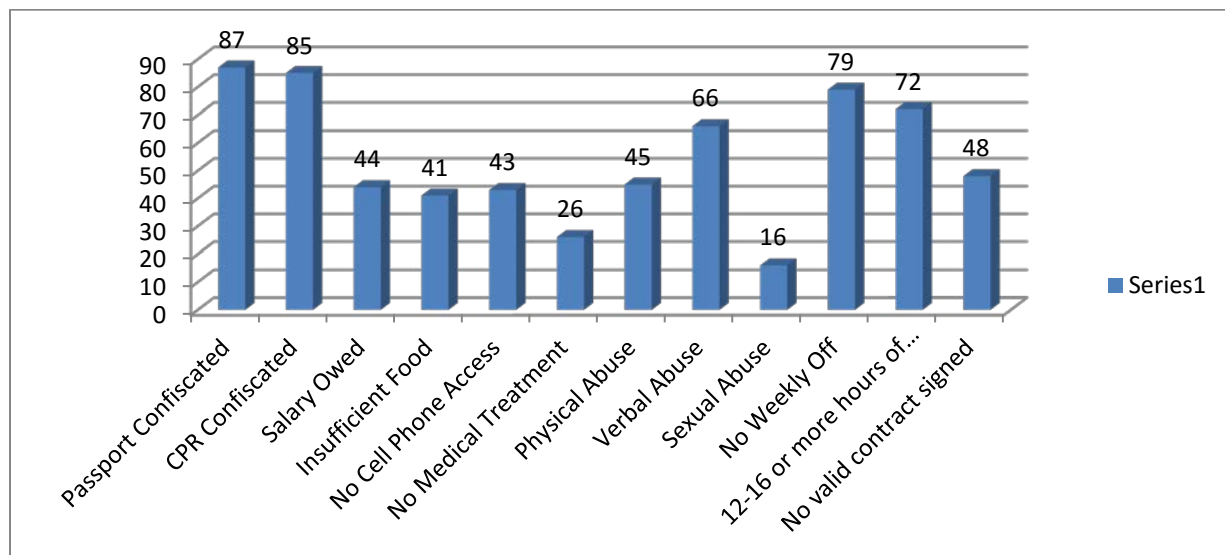
Of the 55 complaints registered and documented during the first six months of 2015, 100% of the workers were not in possession of their passports when they were admitted into the shelter, 56.36% reported unpaid salaries, 41.82% endured some form of physical abuse, 16.36% had faced sexual abuse, 90.91% had not been permitted to go out of their employers' homes alone, 49.09% had been denied access to a cell phone, 90.91% reported no weekly day off and 45.45 % complained of receiving insufficient food.

The above statistics are an indicator of the 'forced labor'-like conditions of employment for the overwhelming majority of migrant domestic workers. These working conditions are despite the Anti-Trafficking Laws in place in Bahrain since 2008, which prohibit employers from withholding passports and other identity documents of the worker and despite the inclusion of domestic workers in some provisions of the Bahrain Labour Law of 2012.

2. Between 1st July – 31st December 2015, 90 women were admitted into the shelter
 Number of cases whose complaints were recorded was for 88 residents.

S. No.	COMPLAINTS RECORDED (88 from the 90 cases admitted between 1 st July 2015- 31 st December 2015)	NUMBERS
1	Passport Confiscated	87
2	CPR Confiscated or not Processed	85
3	Salary Owed	44
4	Insufficient Food	41
5	No Cell Phone Access	43
6	No Medical Treatment	26
7	Physical Abuse	45
8	Verbal Abuse	66
9	Sexual Abuse	16
10	No Weekly Off	79
11	12-16 or more hours of Daily Work	72
12	No Valid Contract Signed	48

Complaints recorded from 88/90 cases admitted between 1st July -31st December 2015



Analysis of the Complaints Data (1st July – 31st December 2015)

From the 88 case complaints documented at the shelter between 1st July – 31st December 2015, 98.86% of the workers were not in possession of their passports when they were admitted into the shelter, 96.59 % either did not have their CPR's (Central Population Registration ID card) or reported that their CPR's had not been processed, 50% reported unpaid salaries, 46.59% complained of receiving insufficient food, 48.86% were denied cell phone access, 29.55% said that they were denied medical treatment.

51.14% of the women interviewed had encountered physical abuse in some form (pushing, hitting, kicking, pulling of hair etc.), 75% had been subjected to verbal abuse (racial taunts and constant verbal harassment), and 18.18% had faced sexual harassment.

89.77% reported that they did not have a weekly day off, 81.82% worked between 12-16 hours or more daily, without any compensation for the overtime work.

54.55% mentioned that they had not signed any valid and contract with the employer in whose household they had been employed.

The above statistics reinforce the precarious nature of domestic work and the isolation faced by the workers who undertake to do this job in foreign countries.

ADDITIONAL DATA RECORDED IN THE NEW SHELTER COMPLAINTS REGISTRATION FORMS from 1st JULY – 31st DECEMBER 2015

PROFILE OF THE WORKERS

From the 88 cases recorded at the MWPS shelter for the above mentioned period, 28 women (31.82%) were between 20-30 years old, 26 (29.55 %) were between 30-40 years old, 28 (31.82%) between 40-50 years and 6 (6.82 %) were over the age of 50 years.

The data recorded for the marital status of the women was as follows: 18 women (20.45%) were single, 52 (59.09%) were married, 3 (3.41%) were separated, another 3 (3.41%) were divorced and 12 women (13.64%) were widowed.

The educational qualifications of the workers recorded showed that 28 women (31.82%) were illiterate, 17 (19.32%) had received only a primary level of education, while 23 women (26.14%) had completed elementary school.

Only 17 women (19.32%) reported a secondary school level education, while just 3 women (3.41%) had attended college. The 3 women who attended college were employed as beauticians in Bahrain and not as domestic workers.

The above data shows that the majority (68 women or 77.27%) who were interviewed at the shelter acknowledged being either illiterate, or having received only up to an elementary level of education in their home countries. This clearly indicates why women who seek employment abroad for domestic work, continue to remain vulnerable to exploitation, abuse and corrupt practices during their migration journey.

A lack of educational opportunity in their childhood makes it difficult for illiterate or semi-literate women to comprehend the complexities involved in foreign employment. The majority of these women are, therefore, totally dependent upon their recruiters and handlers to complete all the paperwork and other formalities required for foreign employment. Recruitment agents are primarily motivated by greed and monetary profit and have little or no concern for the welfare and well being of the worker.

The worker is neither made aware of her rights nor the duties expected from her in the destination country.

From the 88 respondents, 41 (46.59%) women mentioned that they had prior foreign work experience, while for 47 (53.41%) of the workers it was the first time they had left their home country to take up foreign employment.

RECRUITMENT PROCESS IN THE HOME COUNTRY

A critical concern for academicians and activists working in the field of migration, to raise awareness about 'safe migration', is the recruitment processes that are prevalent in both, the home country and the destination country of a migrant worker.

Irregular recruitment, human trafficking and debt bondage are some of the recurring issues that reverberates during discussions and deliberations related to the recruitment of workers for foreign employment.

There is an urgent requirement for stricter intervention and implementation of laws by the governments and law enforcement agencies in both the home and destination countries, in order to prevent the exploitation of the vulnerable sections of migrant workers in general and women domestic workers in particular.

Out of the 88 cases recorded at the the shelter (between July-December 2015), who were asked the question **"How were you recruited?"** 53 (60.23%) replied that they had been recruited through informal channels or un-registered individuals who posed as "agents". Another 18 (20.45%) women responded that their recruitment had been arranged or facilitated by their friends or family members.

Three women (3.41%) replied that they did not have any idea regarding who the persons who had recruited them were. Only 14 (15.91%) women replied that they had been recruited through a registered and authorized manpower agency in their home country.

To the question **"Did you pay for your recruitment?"**, 37 women (42.05%) replied in the positive. Of these 37 women, 31 said that they had to borrow money to pay for their recruitment, while 6 women mentioned that they had paid the money from their savings.

A key requirement to prevent cheating and contract substitution is that workers sign valid and enforceable contracts prior to their departure for foreign employment, wherein all the terms and conditions of the job are listed and written in the language understood by the worker.

However, to the question asked **"Did you sign a valid contract in your home country?"** 59 (67.05%) or two-thirds of the women reported that they had not signed any contract before leaving their home country. Only 23 women responded that they had signed a contract prior to their departure from home.

However, when asked **"Did you understand the terms and conditions of the contract?"** from the 23 women who said that they had signed a contract prior to departure from their home country, only 11

women reported that they had understood the contractual obligations. 6 women responded that they could not definitively recall whether they had signed any contract prior to their departure.

RECRUITMENT PROCESS IN BAHRAIN

63 (71.59%), of the women replied in the affirmative to the question **“Was your passport taken away from you by the recruitment agency/agent in Bahrain?”** While confiscation of passports is not permitted under Bahrain Labour Laws, this practice continues unabated. The worker does have legal recourse to recover their confiscated passports, but the reality is that most poor and ignorant workers are unable to access justice, as it is both, expensive and tedious.

When the women were asked **“Did you sign a valid employment contract in Bahrain?”**, only 23 (26.14%) women said that they had been asked to sign an employment contract in Bahrain. 48 (54.55%) had not been asked to sign any employment contract, while 17 (19.32%) had no recollection as to whether they had signed any contract.

From the 23 women who acknowledged that they were asked to sign an employment contract in Bahrain, when they were further questioned **“Was the employment contract signed in Bahrain different from the contract signed in the home country?”** Most of them could not clearly state whether the employment contract signed in Bahrain was different from the contract signed in their home country.

When they were brought first to the shelter, none of the 88 women were in possession of a copy of their employment contracts signed in Bahrain. This is a violation committed by recruitment agencies/agents, as workers are required by Bahrain labour law to be given a copy of the signed employment contract for their personal records.

CONCLUSION

The endeavor of the Shelter Committee has been to accurately report, reconcile, verify and compile the shelter complaints record, so that the valuable data generated can be used for advocacy purposes.

Despite the ILO Convention C-189 for Domestic workers, (passed by the majority of the countries at the historic 100th ILO session in Geneva on 16th June 2011), which set the global legal framework and labour standards for domestic workers, this segment of workers continues to remain “invisible” and vulnerable to labour exploitation.

Report compiled by:

Mehru Vesuvala

Head of Shelter Committee (2015-2017)
Migrant Workers Protection Society (MWPS)
Kingdom of Bahrain