



Female Migrant Domestic Workers in Cairo*

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Principal Objectives of the Study:

- 1) To conduct a statistically significant survey of migrant domestic workers that included Sudanese, Ethiopian, Eritrean, Filipina, Indonesian, Nigerian as well as Egyptian domestic workers in Cairo in order that a more statistically reliable analysis of their working conditions and treatment may be revealed.
- 2) To provide a demographic profile of foreign female domestic workers in terms of age, marital status, number of children, education and religion.
- 3) To document human rights violations as reported by migrant domestic workers themselves.



Introduction

- Migrant Domestic Work as a Global Middle-class phenomenon
- Informal Sector/Private Sphere
- Excluded from Labour Law
- Private and Personal Relationship – not a formal employment relationship
- Refugee Rights of Work in Egypt



Migrant Domestic Workers in Cairo

- ESTIMATED POPULATION (March 2006)
 - PHILIPPINES
 - INDONESIA
 - SUDAN
 - ETHIOPIA
 - ERITREA
 - NIGERIA

PROFILE OF THE SAMPLE

■ Country of Origin

Egypt	19%	(n=149)
Philippines	15%	(n=116)
Indonesia	8%	(n= 62)
Sudan	16%	(n=125)
Ethiopia	17%	(n=129)
Eritrea	15%	(n=118)
Nigeria	11%	(n= 82)
Total:		(n=781)

Legal Status Working in Cairo

	% Working Illegally
Filipina	43
Indonesian	66
Sudanese	98
Ethiopian	95
Eritrean	99
Nigerian	99



PROFILE OF THE SAMPLE (cont'd)

■ Religion

	Christian	Muslim	Buddhist	Hindu	N
Egyptian	14%	86%	-	-	(146)
Filipina	92%	8%	-	-	(116)
Indonesia	23%	73%	2%	3%	(62)
Sudanese	58%	42%	-	-	(125)
Ethiopian	92%	8%	-	-	(129)
Eritrean	93%	7%	-	-	(118)
Nigerian	33%	67%	-	-	(82)
<hr/>					
Total	60.2%	39.5%	0.1%	0.3%	(778)



PROFILE OF THE SAMPLE (cont'd)

Religion of Employer (%)

	Muslim	Christian	Other	N
■ Egypt	67	33		(149)
■ Philippines	54	45	1	(114)
■ Indonesia	89	11		(62)
■ Sudan	54	46		(123)
■ Ethiopia	76	22	2	(127)
■ Eritrea	78	22		(113)
■ Nigeria	55	45		(82)
Total	66.6	33	0.4	(770)



PROFILE OF THE SAMPLE (cont'd)

Education (%)

	Egypt	Phil	Indon	Sud	Ethio	Erit	Nig
None	11			18		1	
Partial Primary	23			10	3	4	
Completed Primary	17	4	5	18	9	4	2
Partial Secondary	33	16	11	20	25	25	2
Completed Secondary	5	33	34	19	57	55	50
Partial Post-Secondary	10	30	29	9	5	8	
Completed Post-Second	1	16	21	6	2	3	45
N = (781)	(149)	(116)	(62)	(125)	(129)	(118)	(82)

SALARY LEVELS

%

US\$ monthly

	<\$100	100-200	201-300	301-400	>\$400
Egyptian	31	66	3		
Filipina	2	21	30	19	28
Indonesian	5	49	12	3	30
Sudanese	43	48	8	2	
Ethiopian	1	32	32	29	6
Eritrean	2	40	48	11	
Nigerian		6	82	12	
Total	14	39	29	11	7

PROFILE OF THE SAMPLE

(cont'd)

■ Marital Status (%)

	Never Married	Married	Separated	Divorced	Widowed	N
Egyptian	50	30	5	7	7	(149)
Filipina	45	39	8	1	7	(201)
Indonesian	29	55	3	10	3	(62)
Sudanese	18	56	7	7	11	(125)
Ethiopian	78	15	2	2	3	(129)
Eritrean	80	13	3	4	0	(118)
Nigerian	42	46	6	5	1	(82)
Total	48	36	6	5	5	(781)



PROFILE OF THE SAMPLE

■ Children

Egyptian	44%	(N=149)
Filipina	70%	(N=116)
Indonesian	63%	(N=62)
Sudanese	68%	(N=125)
Ethiopian	18%	(N=129)
Eritrean	19%	(N=118)
Nigerian	51%	(N=82)
Total	46%	(N=781)



PROFILE OF THE SAMPLE (cont'd)

■ Age (%)

	<20	20-30	31-40	41-50	>50	N
Egyptian	14	47	26	13	1	(149)
Filipina	1	26	40	27	12	(116)
Indonesian	2	24	56	8	0	(62)
Sudanese	2	23	48	15	2	(125)
Ethiopian	2	69	28	2	0	(129)
Eritrean	2	78	18	3	0	(118)
Nigerian	7	74	17	1	0	(82)
Total	5	52	31	10	2	(781)

PROFILE OF THE SAMPLE (cont'd)

■ Employment Status (%)

	Live-in	Freelance	Runaway (Unemployed)	N
Egyptian	42	58		(149)
Filipina	58	32	10	(116)
Indonesian	50	45	5	(62)
Sudanese	18	82		(125)
Ethiopian	54	46		(129)
Eritrean	32	68		(118)
Nigerian	100	-		(82)
Total	48	50	2	
N=	(372)	(395)	(14)	(781)



PROFILE OF THE SAMPLE (cont'd)

■ Length of Stay in Cairo (%)

	Years<1	1-2	3-4	5-6	7-8	9-10	11-12	13+	N	
Filipina	9	15	23	8	12	10	2	20	(115)	
Indonesian	10	21	46	13	7	3	-	-	(61)	
Sudanese	3	13	33	24	17	7	1	2	(123)	
Ethiopian	4	11	37	20	19	3	5	1	(129)	
Eritrean	9	22	31	16	14	3	3	1	(118)	
Nigerian	13	29	36	18	2	-	-	1	(82)	
Total	8	18	33	17	13	5	2	5	(628)	

SELECTED FINDINGS ON HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES

HOURS OF WORK

PER DAY	Live-in	Freelance	Total	
	%	%	%	
<8	12	2	7	
8	5	2	3	
9-10	6	6	6	
11-12	9	20	15	82% WORK 11 OR MORE
13-14	19	27	23	67% WORK 13 OR MORE
15-16	20	19	19	44% WORK 15 OR MORE
17-18	14	13	13	25% WORK 17 OR MORE
19-20	6	9	7	
Unlimited	9	2	5	
N=	(372)	(395)	(767)	

SELECTED FINDINGS ON HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES

■ DO YOU HAVE REGULAR TIME OFF?

Overall NO = 40%

	Live-in	Freelance
None	43	38
Once per Week	40	49
Twice a week	10	10
Every two weeks	2	2
Every four weeks	2	1
Only with family	3	

SELECTED FINDINGS ON HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES

■ Have your employers yelled at you?

No	41%	(N = 293)
Yes	59%	(N = 316)
once or twice	10%	
sometimes	58%	
frequently	32%	

When asked “who mainly yells at you?” interviewees answered the following:

Female employer	73%	(238)
Male employer	19%	(36)
Both employers	3%	(27)
Other family	5%	(15) (sons and daughters)

SELECTED FINDINGS ON HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES

■ Are you called names? “YES” = 30% (N=233)

Egyptians	30
Filipinas	30
Indonesians	55
Sudanese	38
Ethiopian	21
Eritrean	25
Nigerian	20

SELECTED HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES

■ Name Calling (cont.)
most common names:

“hmara” (donkey or stupid)
“abed or abda (f)” (slave)

Racist – Africans:

“Kalb Aswad” (black dog)
“Ya Khara” (you shit)
“Ya Aswad” (you black one)
“Bint al Wiskha” (dirty girl)
“Bint al kalb” (daughter of a dog)
“Honga Bonga” (no translation)

Egyptians:

“sharmouta” (prostitute)
“hayawana” (animal)
“hashara” (insect)
“khanzeera” (pig)
“Sorsa” (cockroach)
“falaha” (peasant)

Female employer, 51%

‘all of the family’, 23%

male employer, 14%

other family, 1%

SELECTED FINDINGS ON HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES

■ Have your employers physically hit you?

No	73%	(N = 570)
Yes	27%	(N = 211)
Once or Twice	25%	
Sometimes	61%	
Frequently	14%	

When asked “Who hits you?” interviewees answered the following:

Female employer	70%
Male Employer	16%
Both employers	3%
Children of Employers	9%

SELECTED FINDINGS ON HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES

■ Have you been sexually harassed?

(likely to be underreported)

No 90% (706)

Yes 10% (75) (Indonesians, 27% Sudanese 15%)

Know Others? 18%

Once or Twice 48%

Sometimes 45%

Frequently 7%

**When asked “Who sexually harassed you”?
interviewees answered the following:**

Male employer 61%

Employer’s son 19%

Relative of employer 20%

Types of Sexual Harassment

- Demanding sex
- Verbal harassment (asking, commenting)
- Inappropriate touching
- Exposing genitals
- Showing pornographic films, materials
- Exposing genitals
- Attempted rape (including gang-rape)
- Rape (including gang-rape)

Some lost their jobs when they refused sexual favours.

Those harassed were threatened with losing their jobs, physical violence, being sent home or being sent to prison, to maintain their silence.

One interviewee: “The husband comes to my room every night for sex. I can’t say no because he gives me money and helps me with many things.”

SELECTED FINDINGS ON HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES

Where do you sleep?

(Live-in domestic workers only: N = 350)

Have own room	51%
On Floor of bedroom	22%
Living Room (Salon)	12%
Kitchen	9%
Children's Room	4%
Balcony	1%
Storage Room	1%

SELECTED FINDINGS ON HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES

■ Who holds your passport/travel documents?

	Self	Employer	N
Live-in	66%	34%	310
Freelance	87%	13%	308
Philippines		40	116
Indonesia		21	62
Sudan		14	125
Ethiopia		43	129
Eritrea		16	118
Nigeria		0	82
Total			632







111
261

زعفران
جبنة
لحمة
شوكتوبا
رغيف لبننة
بلدي

“Madame Wants Syria Out”





Partnerships

- Egypt and the Convention
- Bilateral Agreements
- Sending Country Responses
 - Philippines
 - Sri Lanka
- Rights Campaigns
 - Jordan
 - Lebanon

Slogan: “A typical day off.”



Slogan: “Reflection”

Wife: “Listen...I will only tolerate your beating and insults in one case only – Get me an Asian maid to take it all out on her...then beat me as much as you want.”



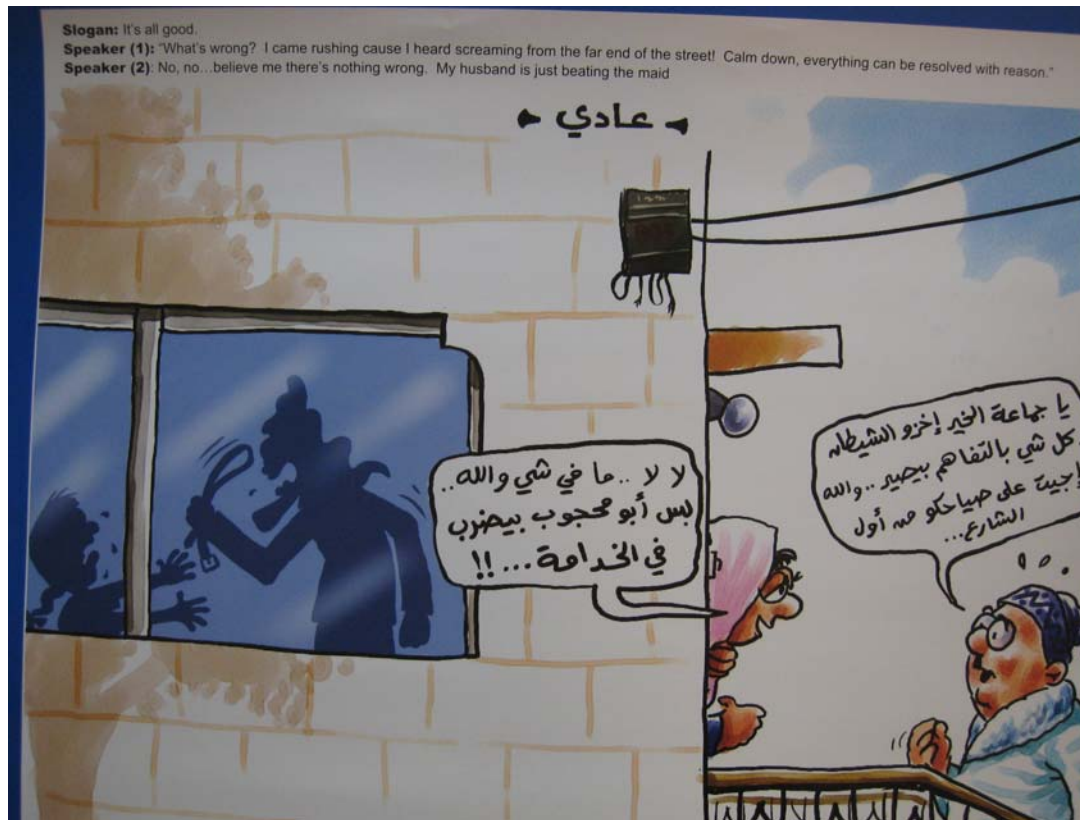
- Right to Left: 1. Caption: “Thank you Sri Lanka”
2. (with boss) “Yes Master”
3. (with police officer) “Move your vehicle Citizen” – “Yes Sir”
4. (with wife) Wife: “I need a maid” Husband: “Yes Master”
5. (Domestic Worker) “Yes Master”.



Slogan: "It's All Good"

Visitor: "What's wrong? I came rushing because I heard screaming from the far end of the street. Calm down, everything can be resolved with reason."

Woman: "No, no...believe me, there's nothing wrong. My husband is just beating the maid."



Slogan: "Breaking News"

Speaker in Broken English: "Sakiro, come here! Master has something important telling you. Tsunami hit Indonesia a long, long time ago. Master no tell Sakiro because phone bill very expensive. Want to call? Here, quickly, before owner of phone come back."



Slogan: “Sweet Revenge”

Man: “You could not have forgotten us Miss. This is me. Once your dad’s driver. And this is the gardener you guys fired. And that is Rita, the servant who ran away from what you and your mom did to her!! Now move it and get us three cups of tea.”



Slogan: “Return of the long lost son”

The Mother: “My son, you’re back...”

Son, hugging Sri Lankan domestic worker: “Mommy, mommy...”



Slogan: “With tolerance, not violence.”

Man: “No Violence.”



Slogan: “Pay me, don’t enslave me”
Saya Manusia: “I am a human being.”



Slogan: "Denial"

Speaker A: "My god! Does this country need an awareness campaign for servant's rights? What exaggeration!!! It's true, we hit them sometimes, they don't have days off, they work day and night and we treat them like slaves at times. But what happens under my roof is my business and no-one else's!!"

Speaker B: "Right on."



Slogan: “Wrong Number”

Over the Phone: “Allo...Casseiro...I am calling from Indonesia!! Me speak Casseiro? Bring Casseiro phone!! Father die, father die...sob, sniff.”

Response: “Wrong number.”



Slogan: I work and clean, but I am not a machine.

Written on Box: Domestic Worker, country of origin: Philippines, Works 24/7, no days off, no need for separate room, ready for beating & insult, 2 years warranty. **Irespeto Mo Ako:** Treat me with respect.






**HAVE YOU
EVER BEEN
PUNISHED FOR
BREAKING
A PLATE?**

1 out of 3 domestic workers in Lebanon are physically and verbally abused for "breaking a mistake". PUT YOURSELF IN HER SHOES.

**HUMAN
RIGHTS
WATCH**



**HAVE YOU
EVER BEEN
CALLED
A "DONKEY"
AT WORK?**

Calling disabled employees "behaving normal" is a strategy used
by 28% of employers in California.
PUT YOURSELF IN HER SHOES.

HUMAN
RIGHTS
WATCH



**HAVE YOU EVER
WORKED FOR
YEARS WITHOUT
A DAY OFF?**

Over 40 percent of contract workers are given only a few or no days off during their two-year contract in Lebanon.
PUT YOURSELF IN HER SHOES.

HUMAN
RIGHTS
WATCH

A woman with dark hair and large hoop earrings stands with her hands on her hips, wearing a white apron over a light-colored short-sleeved top. The background is a solid grey color.

**HAVE YOU
EVER BEEN
DENIED FOOD
WHEN YOU ARE
HUNGRY?**

*1 out of 3 employees in Lebanon limit the amount
and quality of their domestic worker's food.
PUT YOURSELF IN HER SHOES

**HUMAN
RIGHTS
WATCH**