Women's Insights into Safeguarding Efforts In the Catholic Church

A GSA research project

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Women in the life of the Church

Women make up 77% of the Catholic Church's workforce in Australia.

In parish staffing, responding parishes averaged about **8 women** and 5 men on staff.

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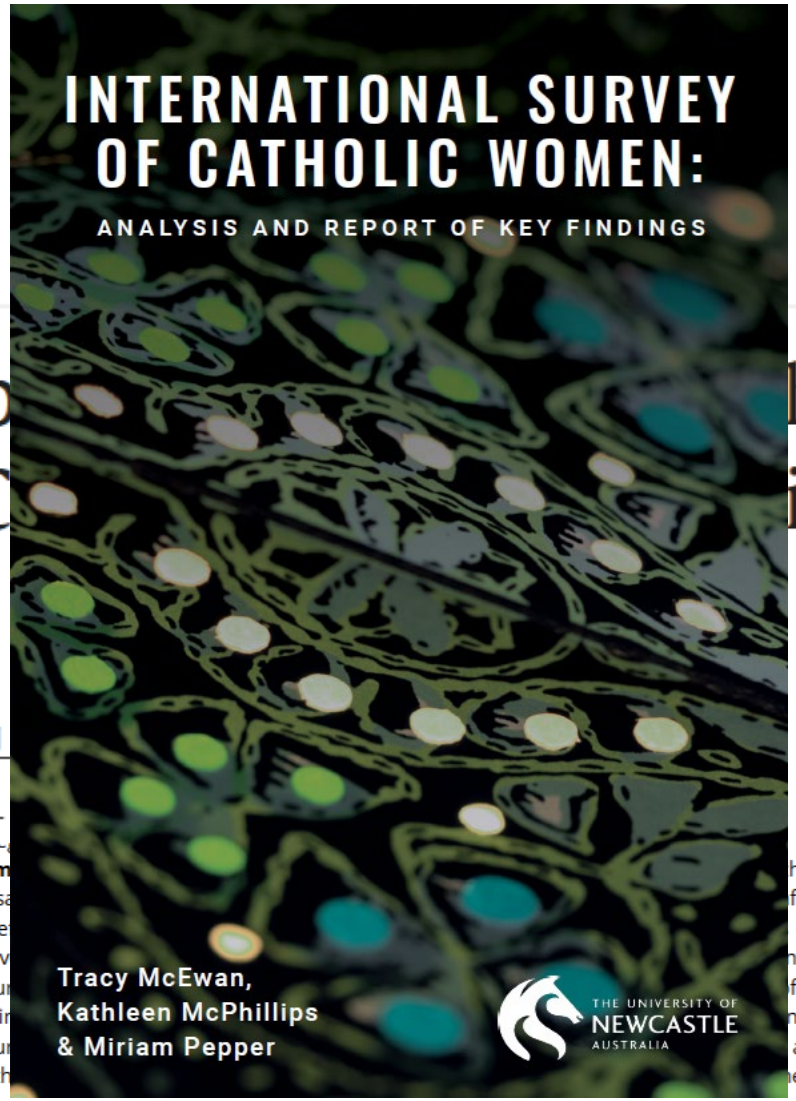
Whose voice are we hearing?



ELSEVIER

Child Protection and Practice

Building b … he Catholic C … ions in Kenya

Jacinta Mary Achieng

Timothy Akombo [c]

6 TEOLOGIA PASTORALNA

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… h in England and Wales in promoting a culture … feguarding culture depens on a balanced and … established within the Church to protect and … ng in the Church, namely all members of the … f God. This article presents the development of … n of minors in recent years, especially in the … as well as theological and pedagogical aspects … ents of actions taken by the Catholic Church in

Often focuses on:

- Systems
- Leadership
- Clergy

- Women's perspectives less visible

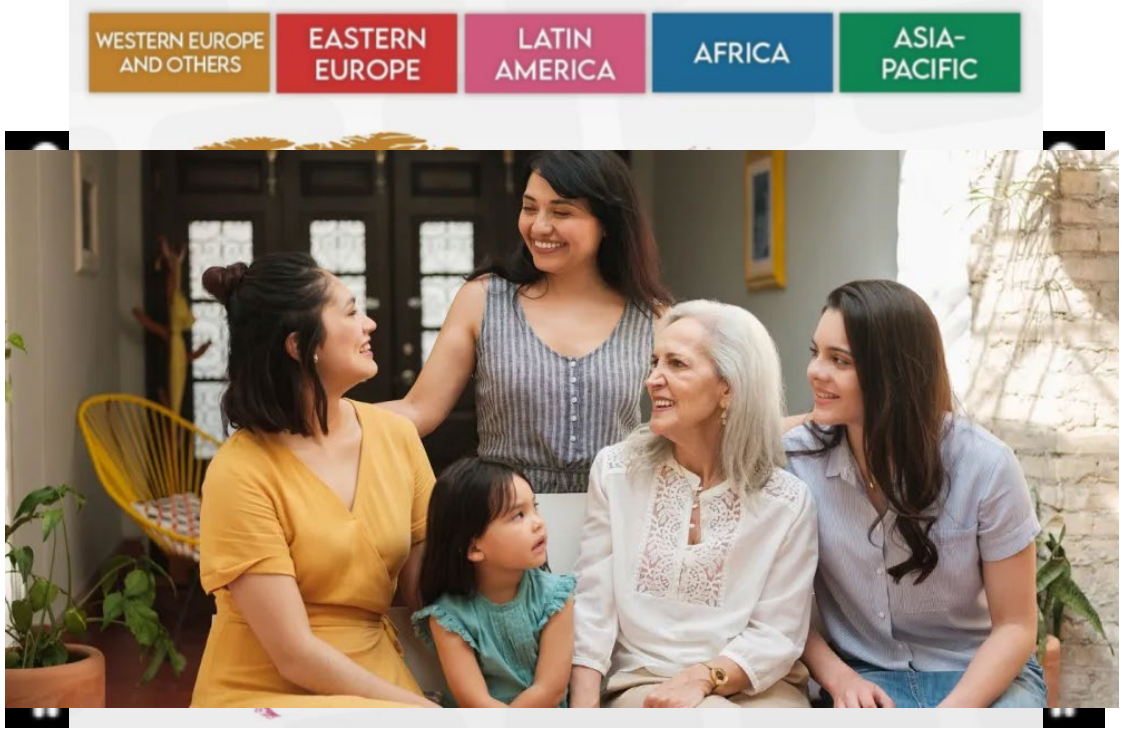
So, we asked…

451 women

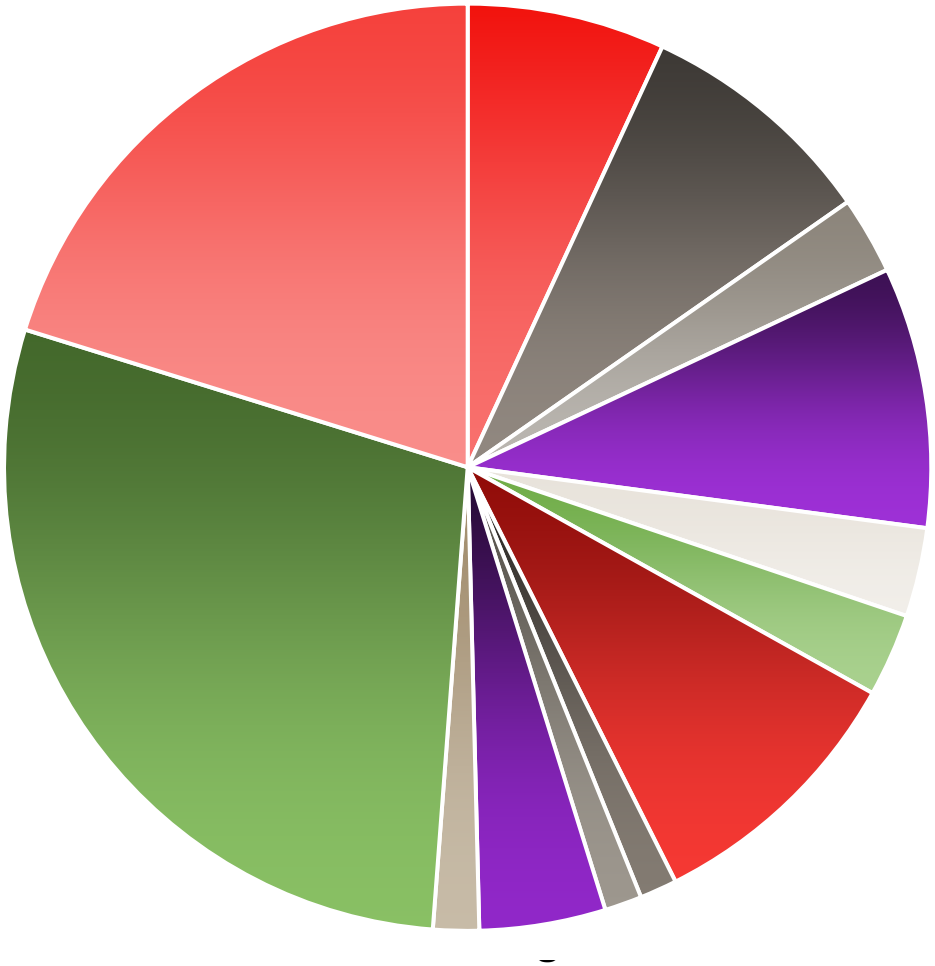
40+ countries

Aged 20 - 91

Mean = 50 y/o



Who we heard from



- Local Community Engagement 6.9%
- Health, Welfare, or Charity Services 8.4%
- Youth and Family Support 2.7%
- Religious or Spiritual Leadership 9.1%
- Mission or Outreach Work 3.1%
- Training/Mentoring (new members, staff) 2.9%
- Office or Organisational Leadership 9.5%
- Media, Communications, or Cultural Work 1.3%
- Specialised Srv (hospitals, prisons, aged care) 1.3%
- Legal, Governance, or Policy Work 4.4%
- Central or International Leadership1.6%
- Education and Teaching 28.6%
- Other 20.2%

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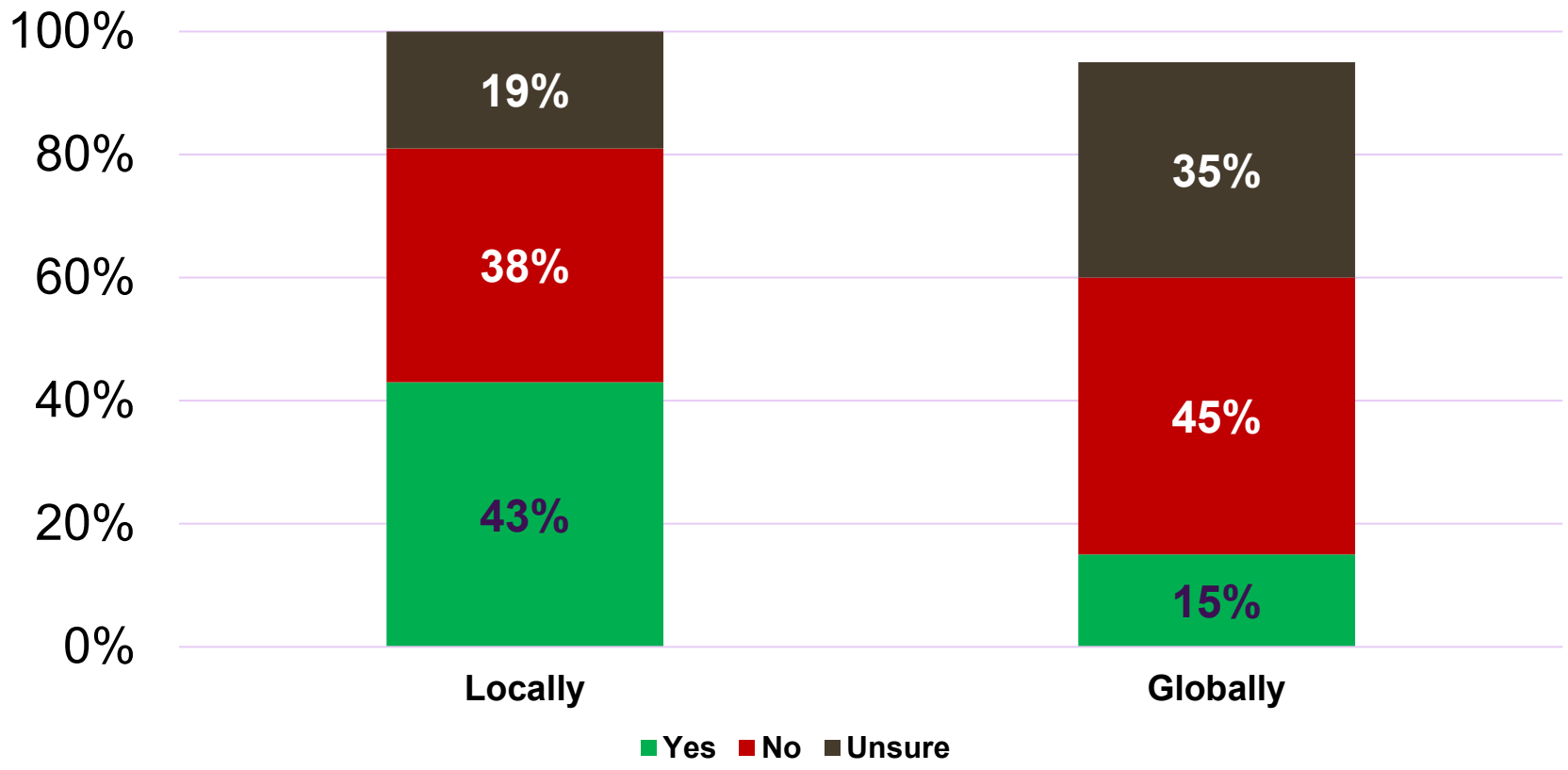
So, what did they tell us?

Women are heard locally, but not globally



Knowing ≠ confidence

How well do you know your community's safeguarding rules and policies?

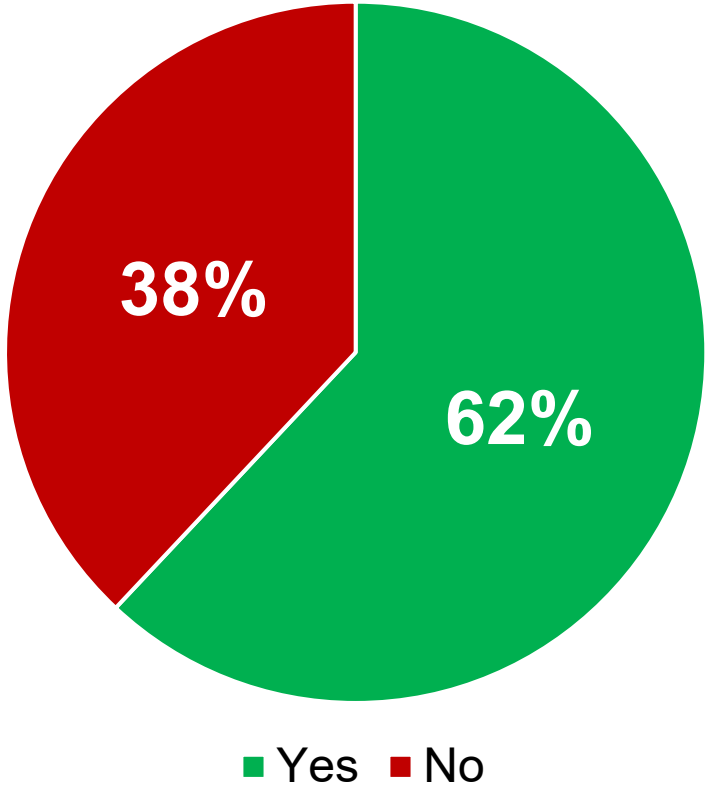
75%

How confident are you that safeguarding concerns are handled openly and fairly in your community?

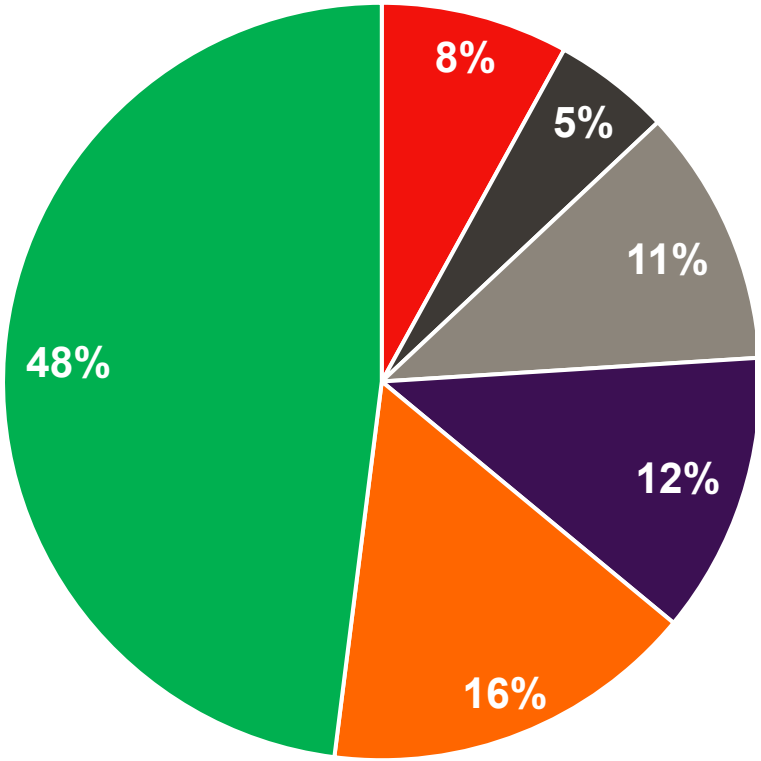
21%

Half of women have reported a concern

…but not all reports are handled well.

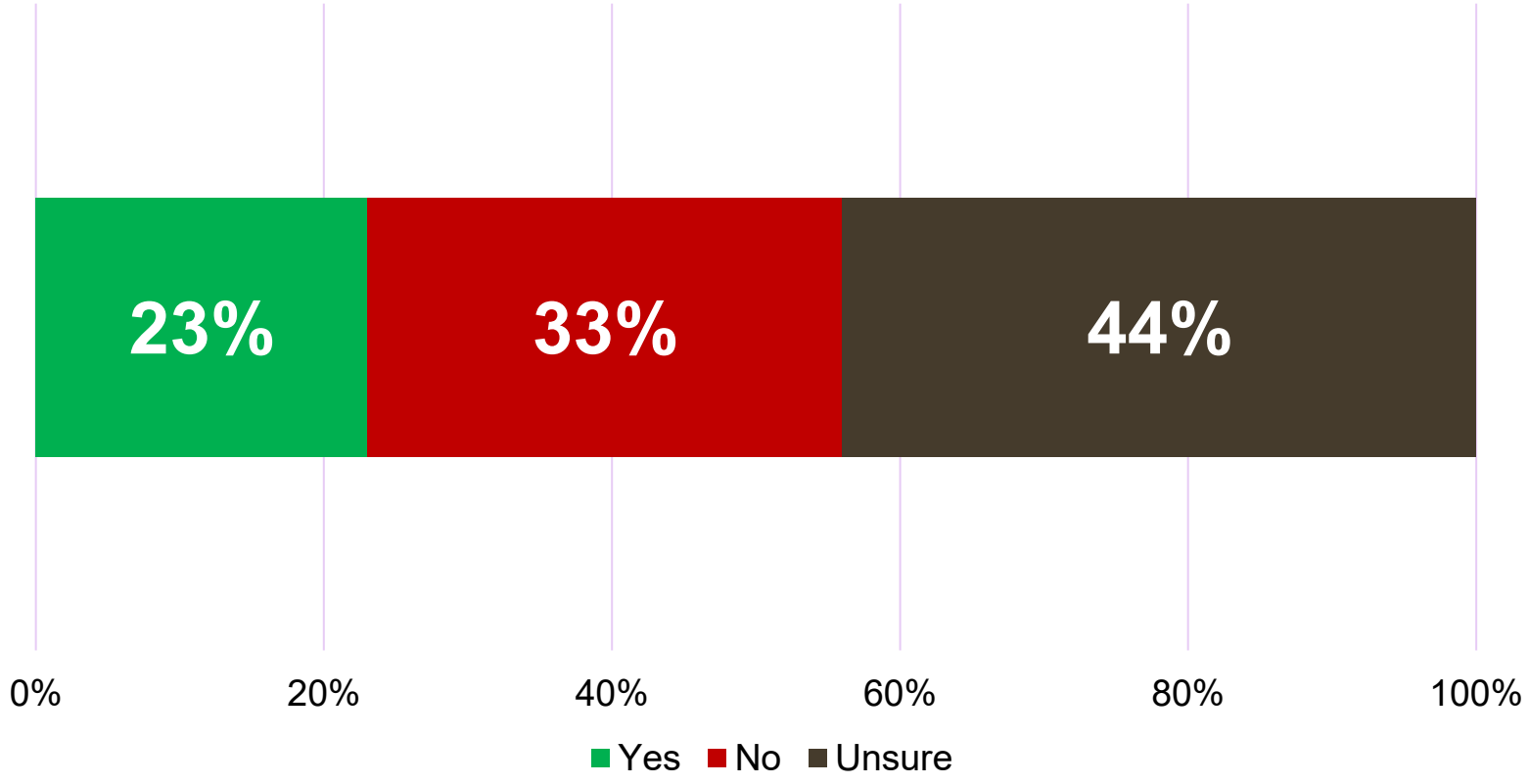


Harm is not only caused by men



What kind of harm was caused?

Accountability when woman cause harm is unclear



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Women want to be part of the solution

89% support women being in safeguarding roles.

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Training is expected

97% support regular training and ongoing formation

What women are telling us

- **Women are involved—but not always heard**
  - Strong local involvement
  - Much weaker global voice
  - Participation ≠ influence
- **Systems are not consistently trusted**
  - High knowledge of safeguarding
  - Low confidence in fairness
  - Reporting does not always lead to good outcomes
- **Safeguarding systems are inconsistent**
  - Mixed reporting outcomes
  - Unclear accountability
  - Variation in how systems operate
- **Women want a stronger role in safeguarding**
  - 89% support women in safeguarding roles
  - 97% support regular training
  - Clear desire to contribute

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Join the Global Safeguarding Alliance as a subscriber

Promote knowledge and worldwide exchange on safeguarding and the prevention of abuse of children, adolescents, and other vulnerable persons.

Create a network of individual initiatives around the globe in an efficient and solution-oriented way in order to increase the effectiveness of each of them by mutual learning.

Serve as visible sign of the Catholic Church's commitment to a safer Church and world.