A person’s security can be affected by his/her ethnicity, ethical or religious beliefs, sexual orientation, or role within an organisation among other things. Each staff member has his/her own specific profile, and each profile will result in different risk levels, depending on the context in which a staff member works.

Employers in the aid sector should put in place reasonable procedures and systems that improve the security of all their staff, while being mindful of their diversity. The first step towards such a policy is awareness of how personal characteristics affect security risks. Past incidents are one of the ways to identify specific risk profiles.

This overview document presents available information on incidents where an aid worker’s or beneficiary’s personal profile was the primary reason for the incident taking place. The report is based on incidents identified by Insecurity Insight’s monitoring of open sources and reported by Aid in Danger partner agencies using the Security in Numbers Database (SiND) between January 2017 and June 2018.

The available information does not give a comprehensive overview of how personal characteristics affect risk. Most incident reports do not disaggregate beyond gender and nationality. The low number of reported incidents (5) highlights how few cases are reported through existing structures.

The available information is shared to highlight the need for greater awareness within organisations of personal risk factors and how they may affect staff security.

REPORTED INCIDENTS
AID WORKERS
Three direct incidents were identified in the DRC, Ethiopia and South Sudan. All were related to the ethnicity of the affected aid workers:

- In the DRC, an NGO upgraded its security protocols following clashes between members of the Hema and Lendu tribes, fearing that a staff member from the Hema tribe could be vulnerable to attack.
- In Ethiopia, one Somali staff member was relocated following deadly clashes between Oromo and Somali people.
- In South Sudan, an NGO security guard was fatally shot at home in the night by members of a rival tribe.

BENEFICIARIES
On at least two occasions beneficiaries were denied aid or arrested because of their personal profiles:

- In Nigeria, an unspecified number of beneficiaries were arrested because of their sexual orientation.
- In Sudan, an unspecified number of Christian South Sudanese refugees were denied food provided by the Sudanese government unless they could recite Islamic prayers.

Any individual who experienced security risks because of his/her personal characteristics is encouraged to contact us to share his/her experience.