

SAFE CITIES FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS



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FOREWORD

This publication is to supplement the document, An Updated Strategic Framework for Women's Safety in Delhi, produced on April 28th, 2015. with support of UN Women. The Strategic Framework document (2015) was written by Dustin Smith and Prabhleen and has been further updated by Nicole Richardson, American India Foundation fellow, Jagori with inputs from Suneeta Dhar, Kalpana Viswanath and Krati Sharma. As a women's empowerment agency, we consider measurements and reports of our progress to be of the utmost importance in determining where we are and how far we have until full equality. Therefore, the report below updates the reader on different research findings, new policies, and ongoing work that is currently happening in the Delhi-National Capital Region.

This document is intended to help educate individuals within and representatives of civil society, public offices, and nongovernment organizations who share the same overlying mission as us: To make Delhi a safer city for all, free from both violence as well as the fear of violence.

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“Failure of good governance is the obvious root cause for the current unsafe environment eroding the rule of law and not the want of needed legislation.”

-Justice Verma Committee

INTRODUCTION

Growing Urbanization

In the release of the United Nation’s Sustainable Goals, the target of Goal 11 of 17 is titled as “Make Cities Inclusive, Safe, Resilient and Sustainable.” This comes at a time when cities are expanding rapidly. In fact, by 2030, an estimated 60 percent of the world’s population is predicted to be living in urban areas.¹ This comes from increased migration into large cities today, combined with population growth and the creation of new cities as the human population increases.

For India specifically, the amount of people living in slum areas will be rising to 104 million people by next year.² Currently, Delhi has approximately 15 percent of the urban slum population in the country.² The increase could result in further decay of infrastructure and lack of opportunity and human rights for those forced to live in these areas. With this, women’s safety is especially compromised. Jagori’s 2010 research study, *Gender Inclusive Cities*, found that gender-based violence in urban areas can be attributed to factors such as poverty, discrimination, exclusion, and lack of gendered indicators in urban development and planning, leading to spaces and structures that exclude women and other vulnerable groups.

Additionally, within the impoverished housing in the city, women often have to resort to public spaces for using the restroom, which creates a distinct vulnerability to sexual harassment and assault.³ This is exacerbated by the sheer lack of women’s public restroom facilities throughout the National Capital Region. Out of all of the toilets in Delhi, only an estimated 4 percent of them are designated for women, many without maintenance or are locked during evening hours. The case in slum and poverty-stricken housing areas is significantly worse in the infrastructure and availability of these bathroom facilities.⁴—This severe lack of infrastructure poses a safety concern for women who must use public areas to relieve themselves as well as a health problem with dehydration and unsanitary bathroom conditions.⁵

¹ “Sustainable Development Goals: 17 Goals to Transform Our World.” UN News Center. UN, 21 Mar. 2016. Web.

² Dash, Dipak Kumar. “By 2017, India’s Slum Population Will Rise to 104 Million.” *Times of India*, 20 Aug. 2013.

³ Chatterjee, Patralekha. “The Right to Pee: An Integral Part of the Right to the City?” *CitiScope*. 26 Feb. 2016.

⁴ Ohrie, Piyush. “Lack of Toilets: Women’s Dignity Compromised.” *MillenniumPost*. N.p., 25 Dec. 2015.

⁵ Phadke, Shilpa, Shilpa Ranade, and Sameera Khan. “Invisible Women.” *Index on Censorship* 42.40 (2013)

Gender and Urban Safety

Delhi is one of the most dangerous cities in India for women to live in. Three out of five women experience violence in India⁶; Delhi accounts for approximately 21 percent of all crimes against women despite having less than 1.4 percent of the Indian population.⁷ In the 2013 NCRB report, Mumbai came in a distant second in gender-related violence. When examining rape and sexual assault, Delhi had a 27 percent increase in reporting from last year and has been coined the “rape capital” of India.⁸ The issue hit a recent peak in tension after 3 minors were raped in Delhi in less than 24 hours from March 24th to March 25th during Holi celebrations.⁹ These are not isolated cases either. While some of the statistics can be attributed to an increase in reporting, they do not explain the whole story.

Today, India is still ranked 130th in the world in gender equality according to the Gender Development Index by the United Nations. And as for gender safety, Delhi ranks fourth least safe city in the world in a study comparing international cities’ safety to women.¹⁰ Delhi ranked particularly low in this study in the sector of transportation, something that has been a large issue since the widely known Delhi gang rape case of 2012. In this case, a 23-year-old student entered what was disguised as a public bus with her male friend, only to be brutally assaulted by several men, dying from injuries soon after. Since then, Delhi transportation sectors have claimed to install CCTV cameras, guards on public buses, and a women’s-only section in the city metro. However, the last mile connectivity—traveling from the metro or bus station to your point of destination—is still problematic and unresolved.¹¹ This was emphasized in the Uber rape case in Delhi, when the company was put under fire for neglecting to require GPS trackers, background checks and panic buttons.¹² While Uber has said to improve, and is now allowed to operate in Delhi once again, the case created a critical, honest look at the issues that affect women once they leave the public transportation networks.

This lack of safety in transportation and throughout the city has serious consequences on the movement and freedom of women in the city. For India, this problem has translated to a lower workforce overall. The United Nations found that female labor participation went from 36.9 percent in 2005 to 27 percent in 2013; today is estimated to be around 20 percent. Delhi’s female employment rate lies 8.6 percentage points lower than the national average, including formal and informal employment.⁹ This creates an even-further divide between payment and job opportunities between Indian women and men. And these safe and employment concerns

⁶ “Capital ‘rises’ for Women’s Safety.” Mail Today. N.p., 15 Feb. 2015.

⁷ “Swaniti Initiative: Delhi’s Women, behind the Rest in Safety and Jobs.” The Indian Express, 30 Jan. 2016.

⁸ Mukherjee, Sharmistha. “Time to Make Delhi Safe for Women.” The New Indian Express, 20 Mar. 2016.

⁹ “City of Shame: Three Minors Raped in 48 Hours in Delhi.” Hindustan Times, 27 Mar. 2016.

¹⁰ Masoodi, Ashwaq. “Delhi Fourth Most Dangerous City in World for Woman to Take Public Transport: Poll.” Live Mint, 22 Mar. 2016.

¹¹ Roy, Sidhartha, and Jatin Anand. “Delhi’s Public Transport: Last-mile Connectivity Continues to Be a Problem.” The Hindu, 11 Feb. 2016.

¹² Velasco, Schuyler. “Can Uber Solve Its Women Problem?” Christian Science Monitor, 10 Mar. 2015.

In Delhi, women not only feel unsafe in public spaces but single women in the capital feel threatened in almost every context.

are elevated for single women living in Delhi who stated that commuting was the most dangerous daily concern behind occupying public spaces and even being at home alone.¹³ In analyzing the results of this 2015-16 study, we find that results of this 2015-2016 study, we find that, in Delhi, women not only feel unsafe in public spaces but single women in the capital feel threatened in almost every context.

WOMEN'S SAFETY IN THE CITY

Urban Planning

The 2016 Quality of Living Index ranked Delhi the least livable city in India and 161st in the international quality of life ranking. To explain this phenomenon, the global consulting firm that created the list, Mercer, stated that Delhi's "considerable population increases...in recent decades have increased existing problems, including access to clean water, air pollution, and traffic congestion."¹⁴ However this population increase does not fully explain the issues facing Delhi's urban planning problems. The 2015 World Migration Report points that lack of access to services as migrants' influx to the cities are "not inevitable. Rather, they are caused by poor planning...migrants from rural areas are disproportionately poor, and inadequate planning is often a result of a weak political will to support them."¹⁵

Yet, the Indian government's new Smart Cities Initiative was recently started to alleviate these problems, with Delhi being on the list for the government-funding project. The project is to enhance lighting and pathways for accessibility, create Internet hotspots for access, and result in more effective public, and private, transportation in the areas selected. However, the first area in the city to be sanctioned under the project is the Delhi Municipal City Council area – a place that is known for having better infrastructure, high-profile residents, and houses only 1.5 percent of Delhi's populace.¹⁶ This approach will not make a considerable effect on Delhi's pollution from lack of waste management and the presence of open-defecation in more-populated areas of the city¹⁸ that pollutes over ¾ of India's water sources.³ Furthermore, the "Safe Cities" plan has caused hundreds of vendors to be raided, relocated, and fined just in the beginning stages. While the officials claim they are only targeting vendors without proper licenses, the system does not support these informal sector workers as the Hindustan Times notes: "there are vendors who have submitted applications for licenses more than a decade ago and have still not gotten an approval."¹⁷

¹³ Nag, Diya. "For Women Living Alone in Delhi, Security Concerns Heightened." Asia Foundation, 2 Mar. 2016.

¹⁴ "Hyderabad Most Livable in India; 3 South Indian Cities Ranked Safest." The Deccan Chronicle, 24 Feb. 2016.

¹⁵ Collyer, Michael. "The World's Urban Population Is Growing – so How Can Cities Plan for Migrants?" The Conversation. University of Sussex, 2 Nov. 2015.

¹⁶ Gupta, Mousumi Das. "Delhi's VIP Zone on List of 20 for Smart City Project." Hindustan Times, 29 Jan. 2016.

¹⁷ Pillai, Soumya. "Delhi's Smart Streets Have No Place for Vendors." Hindustan Times, 4 Apr. 2016.

In Jagori's reports regarding their audits and focus group discussions, it was found that the presence of vendors, especially several vendors, was one of the most prominent factors in whether a woman deemed an area as safe.

Removing these workers is likely to make the area less safe for women and will not

resolve the issue of accessibility, infrastructure, housing crises, and safe transportation for anyone but a small, highly elite class in Delhi. These problems disproportionately affect the poorest classes, and the solutions cannot come from revamping a richer area of the city.

However, there have been other plans by the city government to alleviate these dilemmas. First, they have already lit up 42 "major dark spots" throughout the city.¹⁸ They are on track to install lighting in more areas of the city with the Delhi Public Works Department vowing to ensure the whole city has working lighting.¹⁹ To make this a reality, the recent 2016-17 City Budget has allocated 114 crore to lighting up 42,000 identified dark spots throughout Delhi.²⁰

Second, the Delhi Urban Shelter Improvement Board is set to upgrade the public restrooms in all slum areas around the city within the next year.²⁰ It was not clarified whether female bathrooms would be added, a critical issue as women's restrooms in Delhi are dismal in structure, often do not exist, and can be dangerous to women's safety.⁴

Third, last year, the Delhi government set aside money to build four much-needed women's working hostels to fulfill the gap in housing for women who migrate to the city for employment. The same source reported that nurseries were to be installed in slum areas to assist in childcare for working women as well.²¹ As we are seeing from the recent Breaking Free Movement, it is vital that these establishments set up by the Delhi government support women's movement in public, especially at night.²²

Fourth, in terms of infrastructure upgrades, Jagori performed several safety audits of the Malviya Nagar area, highlighting key areas of improvement to safety and accessibility. They are currently working with the local Malviya Nagar Police Department to increase attention to these needs of the area, showing that some government subsidiaries are taking local NGO's and stakeholders into account in city improvements.

"Migrants from rural areas are disproportionately poor, and inadequate planning is often a result of weak political will to support them." 2015 World Migration Report

¹⁸ "Delhi Assembly Budget Session: Lighting Installed in 42 of 46 Major Dark Spots, Says L-G." The Indian Express. Express News Service, 23 Mar. 2016.

¹⁹ "CCTVs to Be Installed across Delhi for Women's Safety." DNA India, 15 Oct. 2015.

²⁰ India. Delhi Assembly. Budget Speech 2016-17. Delhi: 2016.

²¹ "Women's Safety, Welfare Schemes Get Priority in Delhi Budget." The Indian Express. Express News Service, 26 June 2016.

²² "Women Helpline under DCW Now." The Statesman, 11 Feb. 2016.

Fifth, and most recently, the Delhi government set aside 2466 crore for the Housing and Urban Development sector to make Delhi a “slum free” city.¹⁹ This includes creating roads and laying pipes for running water along with rehabilitation and housing for slum residents. However, the details of “rehabilitation” are unclear in the budget document. Furthermore, the money proposed is not enough to cover roads and housing for the entire area proposed. The protocol to be followed should be announced in the coming months.

The city of Delhi needs to critically evaluate its city planning and structure. Today, it is truly accessible only to able-bodied, heteronormative, male persons. The housing crisis cannot be ignored; the slum population is expanding rapidly with little success in eliminating these structural problems.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Work with local nongovernmental organizations to develop a database of unsafe and inaccessible areas of the city, with an emphasis on improving these areas alongside the coordination of local stakeholders.
- Emphasize housing rights for all by creating affordable and sustainable housing units to house current and new migrant populations in Delhi. Adequate shelter is critical to safety and health; the absence of this is a violation of a basic human right. It is of the utmost importance that any housing does not interfere with and affect the current dwellings before it is finished as it would exacerbate the problem.
- Create more gender-friendly bathrooms and public spaces. Maintain public toilets and ensure that women’s bathrooms are installed in all parts of the city and stay open in the evenings as well. Some should have around-the-clock services. Safety measures are critical with regard to people standing guard outside of entrances. Furthermore, duty charges and times of opening should be clearly displayed at all public toilets.
- Allow for and encourage mixed land usage, especially in more residential areas to ensure “eyes on the street” that can be critical in creating safe spaces in cities (SA - “Invisible Women”). With this, promote gender diversity in all areas of public spaces (i.e. vendors, rickshaw drivers, metro employees, bus marshals, police, etc.).
- Increase education for urban planners and contractors to emphasize accessibility and women’s safety in public spaces during the planning and implementation of city building.
- Regularly perform safety audits and collect data in regards to women’s safety and accessible spaces. These are critical in understanding where Delhi can improve and how to effectively implement safe spaces.
- Improve night shelters: Night shelters are an important public service provided by the state for the homeless. Safety of homeless women is an issue in Delhi, both within and outside the night shelters. Standards to improve night shelters from a safety standpoint.

Public Transportation

Each day, the amount of cars on the road in Delhi increases by approximately 1,200 even as city officials are trying to eliminate the traffic congestion, parking hazards, and immense pollution created by them.²³ This increase is not just related to convenience, but also directly connected to the unreliable and unsafe nature of public transportation in the city. One study found that women have turned to private vehicles to combat the issue of last mile connectivity (despite the Aam Aadmi Party's promise to resolve this¹³) and public transportation being a hazard. And the number of vehicles on the road will most likely increase in the future; enrollment in driving classes went up about 50 percent recently.²⁴

In 2009, the government set up a requirement of all auto rickshaws to have a GPS tracking systems and a panic button to increase the safety of transportation. Yet, after the Delhi transport department released 15,000 new autos with these safety features, it was revealed that they were not actually safer at all. The GPS tracking was not monitored, and the panic buttons did not actually work.²⁵

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In another effort to create safer public transportation, officials vowed to put up CCTV cameras in all buses and trains.²³ Yet, almost 18 months later, there are only 60 trains out of 200 that have cameras²⁶, and several personnel have admitted that they are unsure about whether or not they even work.²⁷ Another solution was to deploy the Home Guard to secure buses.²⁸ Now, that has turned to deploying about 4,000 marshals to supervise conduct on buses in groups of two or three.²⁹ Currently, this plan is just in the beginning phases, with Manas, taking the lead to train these marshals.

Yet, these marshals are primarily male, and the individuals working for the Delhi Transport Corporation (DTC). While gender disparities are often too common in the workforce, the DTC is atrociously gender skewed. In response to a Right to Information Act filed by Jagori, the DTC hires only one bus driver as of January 2015. As expected, the proportion of female-to-male bus drivers and conductors is astonishingly contorted (see graph on the next page).

²³ Sharma, Mohit. "Cars May Get Costlier in Delhi as Gov Plans Parking Fee Hike." Hindustan Times, 3 Nov. 2015.

²⁴ "Standing Their Ground: What Women in Delhi Do to Stay Safe?" Rediff India, 22 June 2015.

²⁵ Mathur, Atul. "Auto-rickshaws with GPS, Panic Buttons No Safer than Others." Hindustan Times, 18 Jan. 2013.

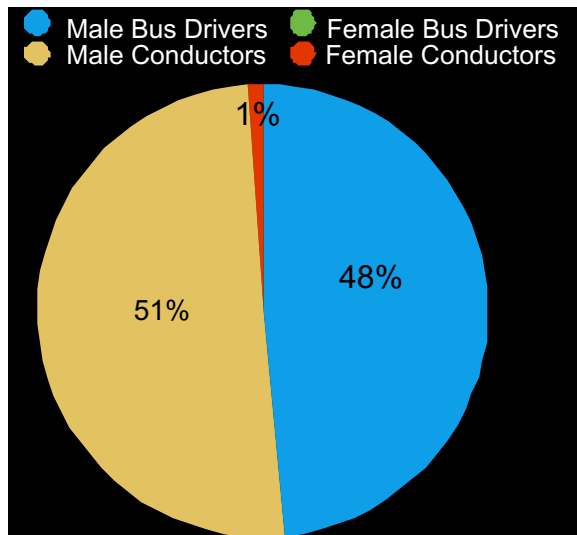
²⁶ "Delhi Metro Caught Napping on Women's Safety." Tehelka, 16 Mar. 2015.

²⁷ "Delhi HC Asks Centre to Give Timeline of Steps to Improve Policing in City." The Indian Express. Express News Service, 22 Mar. 2016.

²⁸ "Women Safety: Arvind Kejriwal Led Delhi Govt to Deploy Marshals in City Buses." The Financial Express, 24 May 2015.

²⁹ "Delhi Government to Deploy 4,000 Marshals in City Buses: Minister." DNA India, 10 June 2015.

Private companies have begun to fill the gap in this regard. One such company is the Meru Cab that is launching a “pink taxi fleet” – a pink and white taxi, driven by women for women,



Female Bus Drivers are such a small proportion that they do not even show up in the percentages or on the graph.

equipped with a panic button and even peppers sprays.³⁰ There are other companies such as 5 ForShe and “Women on Wheels” taxi services that follow similar models. While these help solve the problem of last mile connectivity, they are largely unavailable to lower class individuals who cannot afford private taxis and must rely on public transportation.

On March 30th, 2016, the Delhi Assembly passed the 2016-2017 budget which detailed several measures towards improving public transportation in the city. One was the subsidy of 15,000 to 30,000 rupees for each e-rickshaw that is registered, an attempt to assist in last-mile connectivity. Furthermore, 248 mini buses are being introduced to the bus lines along with electronic ticket machines and information systems that display real-time arrival times. The

odd/even car implementation—an effort to eliminate traffic through allowing car with even or odd license plate numbers to drive on opposing days—was declared to continue later in the year. Lastly, the government vowed to implement CCTV cameras, free WiFi, and GPS tracking in all public buses.²² To make this a reality, the government will need to be conducting stringent checks on the technology and construction of these initiatives.

Right now, public transportation is unreliable with little publication of aspects such as bus timings. Passengers leave the metro or bus stations without a guarantee that they can reach home safely. Improving the public transit sector is critical for gender safety, reducing pollution, assisting working and poor women, and ensuring the right to movement for everyone.

³⁰ McLain, Sean. “India’s New Pink Taxi Fleet for Women, With Pepper Spray and Panic Buttons.” Wall Street Journal, 23 Jan. 2015.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Maintain information at bus stops. It should be mandatory for all bus stops to clearly display the name, bus routes number, route stops, and emergency helpline numbers. These should also be displayed inside the bus as well.
- Require all autos, trains, buses, and other public transit options to have clearly mark, operational panic buttons with GPS tracking that is monitored and recorded. Install CCTV cameras in all trains and buses, including the stations and stops. Establish connections between the police departments and the government transit department to create a comprehensive safety plan and protocol for addressing instances of violence reported through these helplines and panic buttons.
- Institute random checks and evaluation of safety measures to ensure all technology is working.
- Increase education of public transportation personnel on the issues of women's safety, gender-sensitivity, and creating safe and accessible spaces for all. Increase and create new campaigns for public awareness and education of women's safety and accessibility in all forms of public transportation.
- Allow for rickshaws, trains, buses, and other public transit options to be more accommodating to persons that are not able-bodied, including clearly marking and installing elevators at metro stations, installing wheel-chair access ramps on buses, and making sure autos are able to accommodate for special needs.
- Enforce women-only cars on the metro, and create women-only sections on the buses as well.
- Incorporate women in all levels of the process, planning, and protocol. Ensure that women drivers are hired more, are significantly included in the new bus marshals plan, assist in creating the safety protocols, and more. The same should be done with people with special needs. These are just a few critical steps required to create a safe space in public transportation.
- Enforce zero tolerance policy: Zero tolerance policy towards sexual harassment of women by drivers and conductors of all public service vehicles, including buses, autos, taxis and other private hire vehicles registered in Delhi.
- Collect data about gender-safety and special needs regarding public transportation by transit users, both within the metro as well as the bus systems. This is vital in understanding the gender- and able-specific needs of individuals that use the public transportation systems every day.

Policing

In response to violence against women, political parties in Delhi began to run on a women's safety and securitization platform. In February 2015, the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) won the Delhi Assembly election in a landslide with the promise of women's safety throughout the city. To do this, they have formed a women's safety committee, focused on security in the form of police presence, marshals on buses, and CCTV cameras.

One of the most prominent activities set in motion by the AAP has been the installation of CCTV cameras across the city. In March of last year, it was reported that approximately 5,000 CCTV cameras had been installed around the city already.²⁸ Yet, one year later, the Delhi High Court determined the police's response to women's violence a "complete eyewash" and said the force did not even know whether the cameras it has installed so far were working.²⁹ This was a similar case in the efforts to securitize public transportation in the city. This ruling came as the New Delhi Chief Minister named women's safety a "top concern" and emphasized the future installments of more CCTV cameras and an emphasis in convictions of gender-based crimes. The official also stated that the department would soon be launching campaigns against the practices of feticide and dowry.³¹ Furthermore, the police department has begun to expand in an effort to take the police-to-population ratio from 244 to 227 by the year 2017.²⁹ With this, they are also focused on increasing the number of female police to approximately 1/3 of the entire force.³² The increase in female police officers comes at a critical time when the 189th Standing Committee on Home Ministry came out saying it "strongly recommends that Delhi Police instead of shrugging off its responsibilities towards preventing crimes against women must chalk out effective and resilient strategy to combat crimes against women."³³

REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN IN DELHI POLICE, BY TITLE

Commissioner of Police	0
Special and Joint Commissioners of Police	4
Additional Commissioner of Police	0
Inspector	100
Sub Inspector	568
Constable	4855
CLV, CLV-IV	
Overall Total (other titles added)	6768
As a proportion of total police force:	8.9%

These downfalls are also reflected in the public opinion of the Delhi Police force. The Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative published a 2015 study citing that, despite efforts, very few Delhi citizens trusted the police. And only one-third of the respondents were satisfied with the police's response when they reported a crime.³⁴

³¹ "Government to Launch Campaign against Dowry, Feticide: Arvind Kejriwal." IndiaWest, 8 Mar. 2016.

³² "Women Cops Increased in Delhi to Ensure Women's Safety, Says Jung." The Indian Express. Express News Service, 18 Dec. 2015.

³³ "Delhi Police Steps on Women's Safety 'disheartening': Panel." Hindustan Times, 7 Dec. 2015.

³⁴ India. Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative. Crime Victimisation and Safety Perception. 2015.

One year later, the Delhi High Court determined the police's response to women's violence a "complete eyewash."

Now the Delhi Police force has taken on a new project: the "Say No to Fear" Campaign. The campaign, launched in May of 2015, is aimed to teach female children first-aid skills and self-defense classes as a means of empower. These classes, led by a special unit of the Delhi Police Department, are advertised to have reached thousands of women in the city, and hope to create a school curriculum centered around it.^{35, 36}

Yet, there has been no news about if the goals of the campaign were met. According to the Delhi Police's website, the special unit teaching classes is still in tact, but there has not been a graduation of students since early last year.

Alongside this effort, the police started a phone app called "Himmat." Himmat lets you send your GPS signal to family and friends, send out panic alerts that go to your contacts and the police department, and gives hotline and emergency numbers. The Delhi Police Department also has a WhatsApp group where you can text them information about you and the rickshaw or car you are about to take.³⁷ However, it was not clear exactly who was monitoring the WhatsApp messages and there seems to be little protocol on sorting this information.

Not included in police measures are services to victims and survivors of crimes. Gender-specific crimes are often violent, physically and verbally. They are traumatic, and the effects are long-lasting. Yet, the government gives little help to victims outside of the court room — even judicially mandated help has a low ceiling dictating how much (or little) a survivor can receive in aid. This means survivors need to seek out their own recuperative services. Last year, Jagori held a dozen support group meetings with women survivors, and the agency was integral in providing legal support, counseling, and advocacy to seven female sexual assault survivors from the Muzzafarnagar communal riots.

Additionally, the Delhi Commission for Women has had to take up the cause for victims of crime. The DCW has established Crisis Interventions Centres throughout 11 districts of Delhi, providing counseling, legal assistance, medical help, and financial options for rehabilitation for survivors and family members. These are large steps towards improvements, but as we can see, outside organizations often have to fill the gaps of service failures that are widening for survivors. The Delhi Police Department and Delhi Government need to start focusing on ensuring that every victim has an advocate and access to victim services.

The safety measures put in place by the Delhi Police Department need to be monitored closely, with a special regard for audits and checks regarding technology, protocol, and enforcement. Several of the plans set out by the Delhi government for the year 2016-17 repeat these same goals as the last year: CCTV cameras being at the forefront of both the future measures and past mistakes.

³⁵ "Police to Give Self Defence Training to One Lakh Delhi Girls." Times of India, 14 May 2015.

³⁶ "Delhi Police Conducts Self-Defense Classes for Girls." NBC News, 31 Jan. 2015.

³⁷ "WhatsApp Group on Women's Safety Launched." Mail Today, 26 Feb. 2015.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Increase the number of women on the force to 50 percent. One-third should be a small step towards this. Furthermore, ensure that women personnel are given equal opportunities at top positions within the police force.
- Increase the number of gender-sensitive trainings regarding gender violence and women's safety. Reference local NGO's and stakeholders in holding these trainings. These should also be sensitive to hijras, trans* identified people, and gender nonconforming individuals.
- Ensure more public police presence. Audits performed by Jagori found that police presence significantly increased feelings of safety. Efforts to increase the presence of police officers in public spaces must be maintained despite winter weather.
- Work with local NGO's and resources to determine the high-risk areas of the city, especially for women. Utilize this information to deploy officers on the beat and ensure violence is reduced in those spaces.
- Create more awareness campaigns that are inclusive and discussing women's safety as well as allow for the publicity of helplines.
- Focus on prosecuting crimes against women, including resolving the hundreds of neglected cases of severe gender-violence in Delhi.
- Set up specific protocol for monitoring CCTV cameras and the Himmat safety app along with the Delhi Police WhatsApp group. Have a comprehensive plan for handling information data and responding to alerts.
- Streamline the crisis response mechanisms to allow for a single, unified response. This would ensure that services are more effective, not repeated, and are meeting the needs of victims and survivors.
- Expand the scope and coverage of One Stop Crisis Centres. One Stop Centres, in addition to being placed in hospitals, must also be made available in other crisis intervention systems like police stations and the public prosecutor's office. Moreover, the current provisioning of one Centre per state is grossly inadequate and should be increased to one centre per district.
- Ensure that there are constant and consistent checks on the technology utilized for operations as well as the enforcement capacity of the Delhi Police. This would be preferably managed by a third-party.
- Provide more funding to having victim-service programs and more victim-service advocates in police stations and One Stop Crisis Centres.

Legislation, Justice and Support to Victims

The aftermath of the 2012 gang-rape in Delhi was enormous. As protestors streamed the streets, the Verma Committee set out a number of sweeping, reformative recommendations. While not all were put into place, others were followed through on in the form of the Criminal Law (Amendment) Act and the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prohibition, Prevention and Redressal) Act. Both pieces of legislation provide a starting point, but the enforcement behind them is sometimes weak.

There is often a lack of reporting these crimes due to the stigma set on victims as well as the abysmally low prosecution rate. In a 2015-16 study, the Delhi Commission on Women found that for serious crimes against women, such as human trafficking and acid attacks, there are about 300 to 400 cases pending in Delhi alone.³⁸

At times, it is to the best interest of the local police department to avoid registering these crimes. This lack of enforcement can be for two reasons: first, lack of registration create an illusion that the area is safer, and second, the crimes of sexual harassment and “eve teasing” is often seen as minor offenses, especially to men who make up the majority of the police force. A 2016 study published in the International Criminal Justice Review journal found that 40 percent of women surveyed in Delhi had experienced sexual harassment within the last year. And when the survey had the male and female participants rank the seriousness of different acts of eve teasing, the men ranked them significantly less harmful and serious than the women.³⁹ Due to lack of awareness, there is an obvious gap in enforcement for these pieces of legislation.

Stigma set on victims
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women

One solution suggested is to allow women a more vocal presence in the process. We saw version of this with the Delhi Police Department providing the 1/3 women officers quota. The same 1/3 quote is already true for local political offices as enforced under the 73rd Constitutional Amendment Acts passed in 1972. However, the Delhi Assembly has a record number of six women. A bill to put a quota of 1/3 women in the Indian Parliament was brought up during protests and pressure in 2010, and has been pending for the past six years.⁴¹

There has been progress in other areas, though. Recently, the Delhi government set up an independent commission of enquiry tasked to investigation the number of complaints, reports, and crimes against women in the city since February of 2013. They are to give a report every three months along with recommendations for the AAP government to improve women's safety.⁴⁰

³⁸ Panda, Ananya. “DCW Unveils Steps to Curb Trafficking, Acid Attacks.” The Tribune - India, 9 Mar. 2016.

³⁹ “Widespread Sexual Harassment Still Persists in Delhi: Study.” Times of India, 29 Mar. 2016.

⁴⁰ Singh, Neha. “Delhi: AAP Govt Constitutes Committee to Suggest Measures on Women's Safety.” International Business Times, 27 Jan. 2016.

⁴¹ “Government's Duty to Provide Free Treatment to Acid Attack Victims: Delhi HC.” ZNews, 18 Mar. 2016.

Furthermore, the Delhi High Court had a landmark case declaring that all acid victims must be given free medical care, determining that the assistance money ceiling of 7 lakh is an arbitrary number and should be eliminated.⁴¹

The legislative and judicial processes have made significant progress since our last Strategic Framework Report. Yet, there are some glaring structural issues still in place. The legal amendments and policies are not well-enforced. The lack of female representation at all levels of government often contributes to the inability to create proper protocol to call for this enforcement as well as the delegitimization of crimes against women.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Ensure more oversight in gender violence crimes. One strategy proposed was sending decoys to determine if cases get registered. Others could be mandating more oversight and transparency in Delhi police stations.
- Pass the quota of 1/3 of women in India's National Parliament. Also put pressure on political parties that often do not have female leadership and are less likely to fund female candidates.
- Create awareness on the effects of non-inclusive leadership at all levels.
- Publish any and all reports created by the Independent Commission of Enquiry led by chairman Dinesh Dayal.
- Eliminate the compensation ceiling for all gender violence crimes and set applicable and fair minimums.
- Amend the current legislation to make sexual harassment a non-bailable offense with stricter punishments, as has been done in states such as Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, and Orissa.

Safety and Employment

On April 1st, 2016, a 33-year-old business woman went to a work meeting in Connaught Place around lunchtime. While there, she was drugged, dragged to a hotel room in the building, and raped.⁴² The instance was a horrifying example of the risks that women at work face every day. These problems go beyond the lighting of the city or the CCTV cameras at bus stops, but they are prevalent in Delhi. It was found that in 2014, 70 percent of all crimes reported in the capital last year were gender-based offenses.²⁶

In 2014, 70 percent of all crimes reported in the capital last year were gender-based offenses.

⁴² "Businesswoman Raped in Delhi's Connaught Place." Times of India, 2 Apr. 2016.

⁴³ India. PHD Commerce. PHD Research Bureau. Women's Safety in Delhi: Issues and Challenges to Employment.

⁴⁴ Kivilanz, Parija. "Five Men with One Mission: Keep Women in India Safe." CNN News, 2 Mar. 2016.

These crimes affect every woman in the capital city; they create a sense of fear that impacts each day and every activity. A 2014 study done by the government's PHD Research Bureau revealed that 64 percent of working women in Delhi said that incidents of violence against women affect their work hours. Women feel that they cannot work long hours or late shifts; 44 percent say they are unable to be as efficient in their workplace due to these fears. Almost half responded that they are looking for employment outside of Delhi and are willing to take on a salary reduction due to safety concerns.⁴³

This affect can be seen throughout the entire country as India begins to lose a large portion of its work force. According to the United Nation's labor participation statistics the percentage of female employment in India went from 36.9 percent in 2005 to a startling drop to 27 percent in 2013. The majority of the respondents in the PHD Research Bureau survey were in the category of highly educated, often in formal sector employment where safety measures are put in place. These numbers are predictably much worse for the informal sector of India.

To reverse this trend, some agencies have taken it upon themselves to create new technology to promote safety measures. One of the most popular has been the establishment of SafetiPin, with the most amount of downloads. A new version of this app has also been released with features such as mapping out your route through the city based on safety measures and reports of violence. While inventive, these phone apps can only be run on smartphones, creating an issue of class for residents that do not have the financial resources for these devices.

Beyond phone applications, jewelry has become the novel invention. Two companies have started marketing watches and jewelry that sends out distress signals to authorities when you press them.^{44,45} Yet, these products are upwards of \$52 USD to over \$100 USD. Something that is not necessarily affordable for the average Indian consumer.

Beyond this, safety items have almost become a market of their own. For example, in 2012, there were three major brands of pepper spray available. Today, there are over 30 major brands with a six-fold increase in the sales of pepper spray in India in the past 3 years. Another instance of this phenomenon comes from SafetyKart, which started in 2013 selling items such as pepper spray and other self-defense tools. Since then, they have received approximately 20 percent quarter-on-quarter growth.²⁶

Other initiatives focus on community safety. Last fall, Jagori set up safety chaupals, or safety groups, throughout Delhi where approximately 18,000 community members engaged in campaigns and interactive sessions with the agency. They also set up an awareness drive regarding women's safety issues and gender rights, reaching over 1500 households. Soon after, in March 2016, the Delhi Assembly passed a budget that set aside 200 crore to set up these safety groups, named Mahalla Rakshak Dal, throughout the National Capital Region.²²

⁴⁵ Modha, Roopa. "Unique Product to Change How Women Live in India." UrbanAsia, 10 Jan. 2015.

These efforts assist in education and supplement Jagori's direct client work. The agency has set up several feminist counseling centers - providing empowerment through legal support, education, training, counseling, and advocacy to approximately 1,490 women accessing services, with 238 registered cases of gendered violence.

Jagori also contributed to the Delhi Charter of Women's Rights Bill, 2015, which is currently pending. The bill calls for right to employment, housing, and equality, "irrespective of her sexual orientation." Highlighting the injustice of Section 377, banning consenting adult relationships between same-sex couples, is a defying and profound step towards equality and safety in Delhi.

When it comes to gender-related violence, the onus of safety in Delhi is largely held by the individual woman. She is responsible to buy pepper spray, take self-defense courses, navigated public transportation risks, reduce or eliminate work hours that can be dangerous, and wear the proper jewelry or download the correct phone app to keep her safe. This places the problem – and solution – of safety on the survivor or potential victim. Several of the devices put a financial burden on women, something that is especially problematic for impoverished individuals that are most vulnerable to violence.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Education is a critical component in the fight against gender violence. The Delhi Government should allocate money not just for training and education of officials and police officers, but creating gender-sensitive environments in the schools throughout the city. The violence comes from a deep-rooted system of dehumanizing and delegitimizing women in a general context. There needs to be proactive, sustained, and intense efforts to reverse this cultural concept. This is key to prevention of this gendered violence.
- The city of Delhi needs to address workplace concerns in order to keep their labor force intact. This includes putting a special emphasis on garnering rights to female employees to insist on enforcement in sexual harassment laws as well as security and protection at work that does not interfere with their work. Efforts can be made to encourage employers to have security (especially during night hours), stringent policies against unwanted persons in the building or work area of affected employees (i.e. in stalking and abuse cases), and arranging safe transport to and from work or allowing remote work from home (especially if the work space is far from public transportation and/or lighted and police-patrolled areas).
- Rights should be mandated and enforced for informal sector employees included but not limited to: right to compensation for abuse, mistreatment, and harassment; right to benefits and fair salary; right to security and assistance with transportation (especially if the work space is far from public transportation and/or lighted and police-patrolled areas); the right to for all grievances to be handled in a dutiful and swift manner by the employer or police department, if needed.

- The Delhi Government should utilize the crowd-sourcing mechanisms utilized by SafetiPin, Jagori, and other agencies to record this information and correct the areas of concerns, including allowing for more patrolling in those areas.
- It is important to enact the Delhi Charter of Women's Bill, 2015. Furthermore, there should be an advisory panel set up with government officials as well as NGO's and other local stakeholders to create recommendations regarding how the demands laid out in the bill can be met.

Concluding Remarks

February 14th, 2016 marked another One Billion Rising Campaign, held in Connaught Place with the cooperation of several agencies, led by SANGAT. Hundreds joined in acting, singing, showing artwork, and creating music. The aim of the campaign is to end violence against women in all form.

The technology, strategies, and solutions cannot be directed at the victims alone. We must develop a perpetrator-oriented strategy and a survivor-oriented response. This means understanding that women do not position themselves to be harassed or assaulted, and they should be the individual with the most power and resources after an incident. Similarly, perpetrators are not entirely of nature, but rather are often a product of cultural influence and lax enforcement structures.

Statistics show us that the occurrence of gender violence in the national capital is becoming worse in the recent years, elevating to unacceptable levels and comprising over two-thirds of the crimes in Delhi. Almost half of all women in the city will be sexually harassed by the end of this year.⁴⁰ This is not an issue that can be on the sidelines much longer without potentially devastating consequences for thousands that live in Delhi.



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