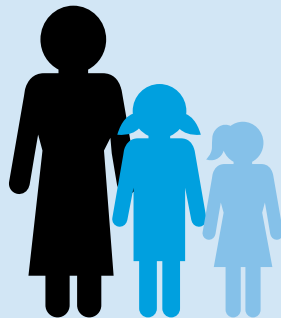


# COVID-19 AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN PUBLIC SPACES

## WOMEN AND GIRLS EXPERIENCE AND FEAR VARIOUS TYPES OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN DIFFERENT PUBLIC SPACES

- In Canada, **ONE IN THREE WOMEN** are subjected to unwanted sexual behaviour in public spaces<sup>i</sup>
- In India, more than **TWO THIRDS** of young women, adolescent girls and men feel that rural village public spaces are unsafe for women after dark<sup>ii</sup>



- In Cuenca, Ecuador **90 %** of women living in urban areas have experienced some form of sexual harassment in the last 12 months<sup>iii</sup>
- In the European Union, **ONE IN TEN** women have experienced cyber-harassment since the age of 15<sup>iv</sup>

### During COVID-19, sexual harassment and other forms of violence against women continue to occur on streets, in parks, on transport, and online



- In Chile, Canada, Nigeria, the Philippines, Kenya, India, and the US cases of sexual violence against women in public spaces continue being reported during the crisis
- Different forms of online violence are on the rise including bullying, sexual harassment, and sex trolling

### Increased calls to domestic violence helplines, police and shelters have been reported by some cities



- In Vancouver, reports of domestic violence to helplines have increased by 300 % since the lockdown
- In New York, the number of visits to the city's domestic violence resource website, has nearly tripled - from about 45 visits per day to 115 between March 18 to April 5, 2020

## Fear and experience of sexual violence impacts women's right to the city



Freedom of Movement



Livelihoods



Access to Services



### LOCAL LEADERS RESPONDING TO COVID-19 CAN:



#### SECURE RESOURCES

for personal protective equipment (PPE) and advocate for local resources in stimulus plans to mitigate the social and economic impacts of the crisis including on violence against women, youth and children.

#### GET THE MESSAGE OUT

on COVID-19 and women's safety measures in place online and offline, in coordination with public health, police, schools, economic development, public transportation and other authorities and partners.

#### ENSURE SAFE SPACES FOR WOMEN

and reassure victims/survivors including strengthening and expansion of shelters, helplines and counselling adapted to the crisis context.

<sup>i</sup> Gender based violence and unwanted sexual behavior in Canada, 2018. Available at: <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/191205/dq191205b-eng.htm>

<sup>ii</sup> Know Fear Project Report (2018). Available at <https://www.idrc.ca/en/stories/know-fear-making-rural-public-spaces-safer-women-and-girls>

<sup>iii</sup> UN Women (2018). Baseline Study: Cuenca Safe City and Safe Public Spaces with Women and Girls., p.8.

<sup>iv</sup> European Union (2018). Cyber violence and hate speech online against women. Available at [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2018/604979/IPOL\\_STU\(2018\)604979\\_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2018/604979/IPOL_STU(2018)604979_EN.pdf)



COVID-19  
RESPONSE



SAFE CITIES  
AND SAFE  
PUBLIC SPACES

UN WOMEN GLOBAL FLAGSHIP PROGRAMME

