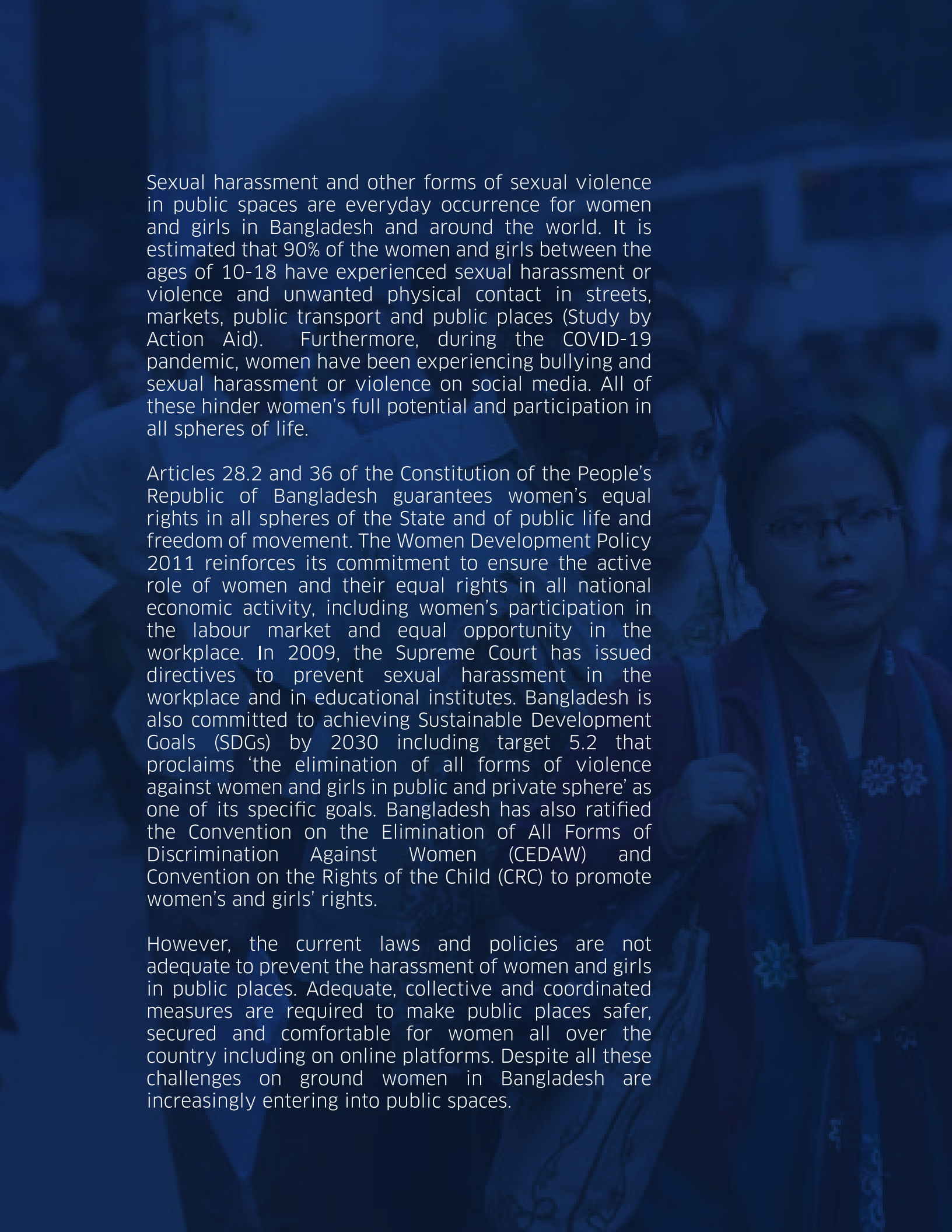


# WOMEN'S SAFETY IN PUBLIC PLACES





Sexual harassment and other forms of sexual violence in public spaces are everyday occurrence for women and girls in Bangladesh and around the world. It is estimated that 90% of the women and girls between the ages of 10-18 have experienced sexual harassment or violence and unwanted physical contact in streets, markets, public transport and public places (Study by Action Aid). Furthermore, during the COVID-19 pandemic, women have been experiencing bullying and sexual harassment or violence on social media. All of these hinder women's full potential and participation in all spheres of life.

Articles 28.2 and 36 of the Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh guarantees women's equal rights in all spheres of the State and of public life and freedom of movement. The Women Development Policy 2011 reinforces its commitment to ensure the active role of women and their equal rights in all national economic activity, including women's participation in the labour market and equal opportunity in the workplace. In 2009, the Supreme Court has issued directives to prevent sexual harassment in the workplace and in educational institutes. Bangladesh is also committed to achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030 including target 5.2 that proclaims 'the elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls in public and private sphere' as one of its specific goals. Bangladesh has also ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) to promote women's and girls' rights.

However, the current laws and policies are not adequate to prevent the harassment of women and girls in public places. Adequate, collective and coordinated measures are required to make public places safer, secured and comfortable for women all over the country including on online platforms. Despite all these challenges on ground women in Bangladesh are increasingly entering into public spaces.



## STATISTICS ON WOMEN'S SAFETY IN PUBLIC PLACES IN BANGLADESH

84%

- of the women and girls from seven cities in Bangladesh face 'derogatory comments and sexually colored abusive language' (2015's Study by Action Aid).

76%

- of female students of tertiary education institutes faced sexual harassment at least once (UN Women, 2013 situational analysis in Bangladesh).

54.7%

- women living in urban areas face violence, including physical, psychological, financial, social violence as well as unwanted physical contact by strangers (2017's Study by Action Aid).

- A survey showed that **94 percent of women were being harassed** in different ways, resulting in uncomfortable situations that led **20.5 percent of them to avoid using public transportation.** (2018's study report by Brac)

Young Bangla, the youth platform of the Centre for Research and Information (CRI), along with the Human Rights Programme (HRP) of United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and National Human Rights Commission have initiated a nationwide action-focused awareness raising campaign to bring positive transformation on perceptions, attitudes and behaviors of youth, community members and relevant stakeholders regarding 'Women's Safety in Public Places (WSPP)'. Another aim of this intervention is to identify policy gaps that require immediate attention to address this issue at policy level.

## OBJECTIVES

---

- WSPP campaign aims to sensitize the mass people and to create awareness among young men and boys on women's safety with particular focus on sexual harassment against women & girls in public places.
- It also aims to bring institutional and policy changes to prevent perpetration and to create legal mechanisms to address sexual harassment.



# EXPECTED OUTCOMES OF THIS CAMPAIGN

- To break the silence of the harassment and violence women and girls faces during using public spaces;
- To influence decision-makers to attain particular changes and to enact a specific law on prevention and protection of sexual harassment;
- To bring a shift in behavior and social norms over time; and more importantly
- To help youth organizations play the role of campaign bearer; prompting survivors, victims to raise their voice to gain the violence; share strong and specific message to the perpetrators; align to the rules of stakeholders/ duty bearers.



# MAJOR ACTIVITIES

ON GROUND CAMPAIGN (COMMUNITY BASED CAMPAIGN AT GRASSROOTS)

Capacity building workshop involving youth organizations

Workshops at divisional headquarters/level

Participatory situation analysis by the youth organizations

Multi-stakeholder meeting targeting/engaging youth organizations, media people at local gatherings, transport sectors and educational institutions

Formation of campaign volunteers at the localities

Mass Campaign Showdown

## Online Campaign

• Women's Safety in Public Places Website

• Engagement through Social Media

• A Survey

## Policy Advocacy

• Policy literacy circle

• Media roundtable

• Policy roundtable

• Policy Café



# The Geographical Locations

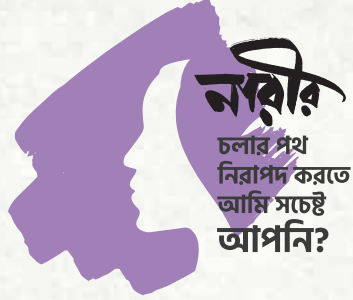
## 5 Divisional Cities

- Dhaka
- Rajshahi
- Khulna
- Chottogram
- Barisal

## 5 Districts

- Bogura
- Patuakhali
- Narail
- Rangamati
- Narayanganj





**To prevent violence against  
women and children:**



**Call the Ministry of Women and Child  
Affairs helpline or SMS at 109**



**Call the National Human Rights  
Commission's emergency service or  
helpline at 16106**



**Call the emergency helpline at 999**