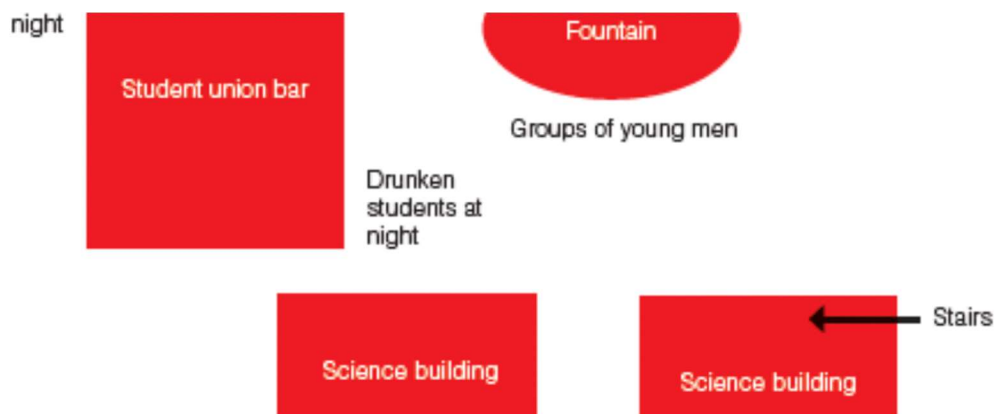# Safety walk

To identify areas in the community that are safe and unsafe for women.

NB: This exercise should be facilitated by a trained trainer/community volunteer. The safety of all participants is of the utmost importance and must take precedence over all other concerns. If it is not safe to carry out the safety walk, then don't do it!

Steps

1. Organise a group of women from a select location, who are familiar with their location and its issues. This should be organised in a safe space (ensure women who have young children have child care support).
2. Brief the group about the exercise they are about to embark upon.
3. Ask the following questions:
4. What is safety? Write down the group's definitions (add to Report Card).
5. Do you feel safe in your neighbourhood. Why not?
6. What public services impact safety?
7. Together with the group identify a route or 'road map' through the community and mark this on a map.
8. Walk down the route at a minimum of afternoon and at night.
9. During each walk, and at various points during the walk, the group should consider the questions below.

Questions for analysis

- What is your initial reaction to this area – do you feel safe or unsafe?

- Why do you feel safe or unsafe?
- Is the area well maintained?
- Is there rubbish lying around? (Mark this on the road map)
- Are there people in this area? What are they doing? Does this make you feel safe or unsafe? (Mark areas with many people on a regular basis such as markets, government offices etc. on the road map)
- How is cell phone connectivity in this area? (Mark areas with no connectivity on the map)
- Are there areas that are lonely/with few or no people? (Mark these areas on the road map).
- Are there areas where people could hide (behind garbage bins) that make you feel unsafe?
- Are there any signs on the street?
- Is it clear where buildings and bus stops are?
- Are there signs that will help you locate help or get to safe space in case you need help (e.g. bus stop, university campus, government office, police station)
- Does this make you feel safe or unsafe?
- Are there any groups of people hanging around on the street who make you feel unsafe? What is their sex? (Mark the area on the road map)
- Why are these people hanging around in this area (drug users, etc)? Do they make you feel safe or unsafe?
- Can you see police officers patrolling the area? Are they male or female?
- How do you feel when you see a police officer - safe or unsafe?
- Where is the nearest police station? (Mark police check posts or stations on the road map)
- Are there any community leaders/ in this area? (Mark government buildings on the road map).
- Does this make you feel safe or unsafe?
- Do you know where you would go if you needed help? (Mark this on the road map)
- Are there any hospitals, schools, university buildings around (Mark on the map).
- Do these areas make you feel safe or unsafe?
- Is there anything else about this area that makes you feel safe or unsafe?

Suggestions for use

- On a smaller scale, a **school safety walk** could be carried out with girls, boys and teachers walking round a school and identifying the areas where they feel safe or unsafe.

Resources

- [Making Cities and Urban Spaces Safe for Women and Girls: Safety Audit Participatory Toolkit](). Developed for ActionAid International by Social Development Direct (SDD), January 2013