

**Study on Violence against Women  
in Public Spaces in Ranchi & Hazaribagh  
A Synopsis**



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At a consultation held in Ranchi on 17th February 2016, findings from this research were presented to groups that were engaged in the study and other partners working on safer cities. The feedback received during the consultation has been incorporated into this report.

Jagori

20 February 2016

## Section 1

# Introduction

### Jharkhand, the context

The site of this research is one of the newest States of India—Jharkhand. A developing State with a population of 3.3 crores<sup>1</sup> that is spread across its 24 districts, it comprises, among others, 28 per cent tribals and 12 per cent scheduled castes. Since its statehood, Jharkhand has made attempts to improve its infrastructural and social development indices although much remains to be done, especially with regard to the latter. To cite a few examples, its sex ratio is 948 females to every 1000 males (data as per the 2011 census). While its literacy rate has risen to 67.63 per cent, literacy among males (78.45 per cent) continues to be much higher than that of its female population (56.21 per cent). Jharkhand's Human Development Index in 2007-2008 stood at 0.376 (against the national mark of 0.467)<sup>2</sup> and its Gender Related Development Index in 2006 was 0.558 (against the national mark of 0.590).

With over one-tenth of its population designated as urban, Jharkhand remains one of the more rural states in India<sup>3</sup>. Ranchi and Jamshedpur are its two major cities while Dhanbad-Jharia-Sindri and Bokaro-Chas its main urban clusters. Jharkhand is known for its rich mineral deposits that have spawned a sizable industrial belt in the State. Over the years, this has led to a large influx of migrants who come to Jharkhand in search of better prospects. Their presence has not only helped fuel growth of towns and cities but also altered the demographic profile of the State. Among all the administrative concerns and socio-cultural dynamics that a rapidly changing place encounters, the one most germane to this study is the rise in crime against women and girls, especially sexual violence against women and girls in public spaces.

### Violence against women and girls: statistics

According to the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), there has been a sharp increase (211.71 per cent) in the rate of crime against women between 2001 and 2013. In fact, Ranchi as the State capital and one of its most populated districts reports the highest numbers for crime against women. According to data from Jharkhand police<sup>4</sup>, Ranchi's adjacent districts of Hazaribagh, Gumla and Khunti also report the prevalence of witch hunting, amongst other crimes like dowry death, domestic violence, rape and sexual harassment.

<sup>1</sup> Census 2011; URL: <http://www.census2011.co.in/census/state/jharkhand.html>.

<sup>2</sup>Sources: [http://www.undp.org/content/dam/india/docs/jharkhand\\_factsheet.pdf](http://www.undp.org/content/dam/india/docs/jharkhand_factsheet.pdf)

(India Human Development Report 2011, IAMR and Planning Commission); Gendering Human Development Indices: Recasting the Gender Development Index and Gender Empowerment Measure for India, (Ministry of Women and Child Development, GOI [http://undp.org.in/sites/default/files/GDI\\_and\\_GEM\\_Report.pdf](http://undp.org.in/sites/default/files/GDI_and_GEM_Report.pdf)).

<sup>3</sup>Encyclopaedia Britannica; URL: <http://www.britannica.com/place/Jharkhand>.

<sup>4</sup>Jharkhand Police; URL: <http://jhpolice.gov.in/>.

The following table offers a quick overview of the rise in violence against women in the State.

### Three-year trail of crime against women in Jharkhand (2012 to 2014)

Crime	2012	2013	2014
Rape	812	1204	1050
Kidnapping & Abduction	786	926	885
Dowry Deaths	302	307	350
Cruelty by Husband or his Relatives	1261	2084	1462
Assault on Women with Intent to Outrage her Modesty	284	524	440
Insult to the Modesty of Women	10	18	18
Importation of Girls from Foreign Countries	3	2	2
Immoral Traffic Act	12	11	11
Indecent Representation of Women Act	0	2	2
Dowry Prohibition Act	1066	1428	1538
<b>Total</b>	<b>4536</b>	<b>6506</b>	<b>*5758</b>

Source: NCRB

\*This figure increases to 5972 when other categories of crimes are included

Interestingly, the table indicates lower reporting in 2014 as compared to 2013. In this context, it should be noted that while assault against women shows a dip between 2013 and 2014, the figure for insult remains the same. This reveals women's lack of knowledge about the amendments made to the legislation with regard to sexual harassment/violence.

While these numbers reveal much about violence against women in Jharkhand, they do not show the whole picture: the untold and unknown crimes or the numerous cases that are never reported to the police or not even shared with loved ones and family members. This speaks to the culture of violence and silence, and about personal and social implications of crime on women's lives.

### Adjusting with violence, living in fear

Besides the violence itself, the threat of violence and how it operates in women's lives too deserves cognisance. This is true especially of sexual violence against women and girls in public spaces. The fear of being stalked, stared at or harassed in other ways limits women's movement, violates their autonomy and impinges their access to services and opportunities in urban and peri-urban spaces. Fear and the threat it evokes often leads to women's near exclusion from many parts of public spaces. Women feel forced to withdraw themselves from streets, parks, markets and so on in a manner that only allows them access to 'safe spaces' during certain periods of 'safe time'. That public places should be safe and accessible to everyone, including women, makes women's withdrawal a violation of their right to movement, safety and inclusion. This is especially true for migrants who move cities in search of better education and employment. Sexual harassment/violence is also tied to identity and its social vulnerabilities (class, location, age, disability, ethnicity, etc.) that further impact access to public spaces. Women's fear of backlash or retaliation is part of structural violence, a cyclical phenomenon that breeds more sexual harassment/violence.

## Addressing the situation

In response to this situation, State agencies in Jharkhand have made notable attempts to deter violence against women in the form of *mahila thanas*, *mahila koshang*, the Shakti Mobile Patrol service and installation of CCTVs in select areas, among others. These have been complemented by other initiatives by civil society groups to raise awareness on a host of issues such as access to essential services, human rights, and violence against women.

All these measures are rather essential and therefore welcome, yet, there are important elements that can get overlooked. For example, sites that directly or indirectly legitimize subjugation and harassment of women—patriarchal attitudes, socio-economic inequalities, communitarian ideologies and other intersecting forms of power. All these factors compel an urgent need to develop a deeper understanding of the complex spectrum of factors that compromise women's safety and freedom, especially in areas that have seen a rise in sexual offences against women. Any exercise towards prevention of violence against women and girls also needs to be framed within an understanding of women's rights to safety, to a political voice and autonomy of movement, and of course freedom from violence in private and public spaces.

To chart out a comprehensive response, one of the foremost tasks is to produce knowledge and/or plug gaps in data about the situation on the ground, including an array of first-person accounts of citizens' attitudes and perceptions about safety. Such data can be used to re-look at civic planning, urban design and infrastructure, fix accountability for services, examine policing and even public engagement. Strong research can become the building block for sound measures and policy on safety and mitigation of crime against women and girls.

## Research and its objectives

Based on the above-mentioned ideas and vision, this research study is a small attempt to generate evidence about different forms of harassment and violence faced by women and girls in Ranchi and Hazaribagh. Specifically, the study attempts to:

- understand movement patterns and constraints on mobility of women and girls;
- understand perceptions of safety in public places;
- determine factors that contribute to feelings of safety or a lack thereof;
- identify factors that contribute to a general lack of safety in public places, particularly as a consequence of gaps in urban design, planning and infrastructure;
- ascertain specific types of harassment and violence that women and girls experience in public spaces, its nature (i.e. perpetrator, location, time) and record the types of actions taken by women, girls and men in addressing incidents of sexual assault and harassment;
- understand variations in the levels and forms of violence experienced by individuals from marginalised communities; and
- verify knowledge of and access to support and resources on sexual violence against women and girls in public places.

## **Research methodology**

### **The household survey**

During 2015, Jagori conducted research in Ranchi and Hazaribagh along with New Concept Information Systems and SafetiPin, thanks to support from Oak Foundation and its partners.

The qualitative and quantitative study comprised four major elements: household surveys, focus group discussions, key informant interviews as well as safety audits. As the subsequent chapters reveal, each of these tools produce data with distinct techniques and work among a unique set of audiences who could be randomly and/or specifically chosen. Together, they provide a more comprehensive picture that supplements numerical data with perceptions, opinions and attitudes of the respondents. These tools also span and uncover a wider and diverse set of themes. Depending on the tool used, the data collection could use unstructured or semi-structured approaches.

### **Sampling methods**

In each city, the primary respondents were between 18-45 years of age; women comprised 80 per cent of respondents and men the remaining 20 per cent. The survey localities/wards in the two cities were selected in a way so as to enable inclusion of women from different backgrounds—home makers, women in various kinds of paid employment and students.

Covering urban and peri-urban localities of the two cities, the research included 1000 respondents (600 from Ranchi and 400 from Hazaribagh). This difference in representation is due to the volume of population; as per data from the latest national census conducted in 2011, Ranchi had a population of 2,914,253 and that of Hazaribagh stood at 1,734,495. Ranchi in particular is a fast growing city with greater livelihood opportunities and educational avenues; it attracts a large mobile population from neighbouring districts such as Hazaribagh, Gumla and Khunti.

For the purpose of sampling, the study considered a municipal ward as its primary sampling unit. The final selection of wards was based on census data, information collected at municipal level, and discussions with local NGOs. As per data from the 2011 census, Ranchi has 55 municipal wards and Hazaribagh has 32 municipal wards. To divide the sample (600 in Ranchi and 400 in Hazaribagh) equally in these wards, 12 wards were selected from Ranchi and 8 from Hazaribagh. The study adopted a two-stage sampling process: the first involved semi-purposive sampling of a ward and the second was for the selection of respondents in each selected ward. In addition, a series of trainings were conducted for research teams on the themes of gender and ending violence against women, with support from key agencies including Jagori and Mahila Samakhya in Jharkhand.

### **Research Advisory Committee and Ethics**

The study process was guided by a Research Advisory Committee and ensured research ethics that emphasised consent, sensitivity to contexts, confidentiality and anonymity. The household survey was undertaken by New Concept and the other findings were supplied by Jagori. The hope is that the findings of this research will serve as evidence and help forge a way to strengthen strategies, policies and services for safety of women and girls in public places in Jharkhand.



## WOMEN'S SAFETY: A DEFINITION

Women's safety involves strategies, practices and policies which aim to reduce gender-based violence (or violence against women), including women's fear of crime.

Women's safety involves safe spaces. Space is not neutral. Space which causes fear restricts movement and thus the community's use of the space. Lack of movement and comfort is a form of social exclusion. Conversely, space can also create a sensation of safety and comfort, and can serve to discourage violence. Therefore planning and policy around safety should always involve and consider women<sup>5</sup>.

Women's safety involves freedom from poverty. This includes safe access to water, the existence and security of communal toilet facilities in informal settlements, slum upgrades, gender-sensitive street and city design, safe car parks, shopping centers and public transportation<sup>6</sup>.

Women's safety involves financial security and autonomy. Family income plays a powerful role in the cessation of battering. Resource accumulation and mobilization is a core strategy for coping with abusive relationships. Similarly, women's economic empowerment reduces their vulnerability to situations of violence as they become less dependent on men and better able to make their own decisions.

Women's safety involves self-worth. In safe homes and communities, women have the right to value themselves, to be empowered, to be respected, to be independent, to have their rights valued, to be loved, to have solidarity with other family and community members, and to be recognized as equal members in society<sup>7</sup>.

Women's safety involves strategies and policies that take place before violence has occurred to prevent perpetration or victimization. This can happen by improving knowledge and attitudes that correspond to the origins of domestic or sexual violence, such as adherence to societal norms supportive of violence, male superiority and male sexual entitlement. Furthermore, women's and girls' full participation in community life must be promoted, partnerships between local community organizations and local governments must be pursued, and including a full diversity of women and girls in local decision-making processes. Prevention efforts involve strategic, long-term, comprehensive initiatives that address the risk and protective factors related to perpetration, victimization and bystander behavior<sup>8</sup>.

Women's safety means a safer, healthier community for everyone. This is a participatory process focused on changing community norms, patterns of social interaction, values, customs and institutions in ways that will significantly improve the quality of life in a community for all of its members<sup>9</sup>. This is a natural by-product of efforts that attempt to address issues such as family dynamics, relationships, poverty, racism and/or ending sexual violence. Building a healthy, safe community is everyone's job<sup>10</sup>.

(Source: UN-HABITAT, WICI et al. 2008: 10)

<sup>5</sup>Anna Bofill Levi, Rosa Maria Dumenjo Marti & Isabel Segura Soriano, "Women and the City," Manual of Recommendations for a Conception of Inhabited Environment from the Point of View of Gender. Fundacion Mari Aurelia Company.

<sup>6</sup>Alicia Yon "Safer Cities for Women are Safer for Everyone," Habitat Debate, UN-Habitat (Sept. 2007, Vol. 13, #3), 9.

<sup>7</sup>Mary Ellsberg & Lori Heise. "Researching Violence against Women: A Practical Guide for Researchers and Activists," World Health Organization & Program for Appropriate Technology in Health, 2005.

<sup>8</sup>Morgan J. Curtis. "Engaging Communities in Sexual Violence Prevention; A Guidebook for Individuals and Organizations Engaging in Collaborative Prevention Work," Texas Association Against Sexual Assault.

<sup>9</sup>David S. Lee, Lydia Guy, Brad Perry, Chad Keoni Sniffen & Stacy Alamo Mixson. "Sexual Violence Prevention," The Prevention Researcher, Vol 14 (2), April 2007.

<sup>10</sup>Morgan J. Curtis. "Engaging Communities in Sexual Violence Prevention; A Guidebook for Individuals and Organizations Engaging in Collaborative Prevention Work," Texas Association Against Sexual Assault.

## Section 2

### Key Findings: Household Survey

As a research tool, the household survey technique is especially well-suited for certain issues – such as public safety and sexual violence against women and girls – that demand comprehensive investigations within a wide social canvass. Responses from a large number of participants who are selected via systematic yet random techniques mark the bases of a household survey. The survey done as part of this research in April 2015 collected extensive quantitative data from households in Ranchi and Hazaribagh to produce new knowledge and strengthen existing data about safety and crime vis-à-vis, its contexts, variables, social footprints and experiences of citizens.

#### **Respondents: a brief bio**

The research design ensured the inclusion of people from diverse age groups, socio-economic backgrounds, vocations and religions. The respondents (female and male) of the household survey spanned three age categories: 18 to 24 years, 25 to 45 years and 45 years and above. They are represented in the sample in the ratio of 40:40:20 respectively.

The sample has tried to stay faithful to the actual social composition of the cities studied. For example, its caste composition is based on that of the two cities: Ranchi has more scheduled tribes (20.22 percent) whereas Hazaribagh has a higher population of scheduled castes (10.83 percent). Correspondingly, the sample from Ranchi comprises 47.50 per cent scheduled tribes and the one from Hazaribagh has 13.50 per cent of scheduled caste respondents. Most respondents from both the cities reported a sum of under Rupees 10,000 as their monthly household income. While a majority of female respondents in both cities were home-makers and students, younger women were better educated than older respondents.

There was also a sizeable chunk of unmarried men in both cities, though as far as migration goes, the highest was seen among men in the 25-44 years age group. Ranchi sees more female migrants (36 per cent) who moved for better employment opportunities. Among women, 67 per cent from Ranchi and 47 per cent from Hazaribagh had migrated from rural areas. In both the cities, most women had relocated because of their marriage while men mostly relocated due to employment. Inter-city mobility of residents shows that in both Ranchi and Hazaribagh, nearly one third of respondents travelled for reasons of occupation. Intra-city mobility reveals that 35 per cent women in Ranchi and 33 per cent women in Hazaribagh cited occupation as their reason for travel. In both cities, mobility was highest among male students in the 18-24 years age group.

While a detailed research report of the household survey has been completed by New Concept after exhaustive data analyses, the following are some select and key revelations from the survey. These offer many vital pointers about the gaps that need to be addressed in the safety apparatus of the two cities.

## 1. Patterns of local travel

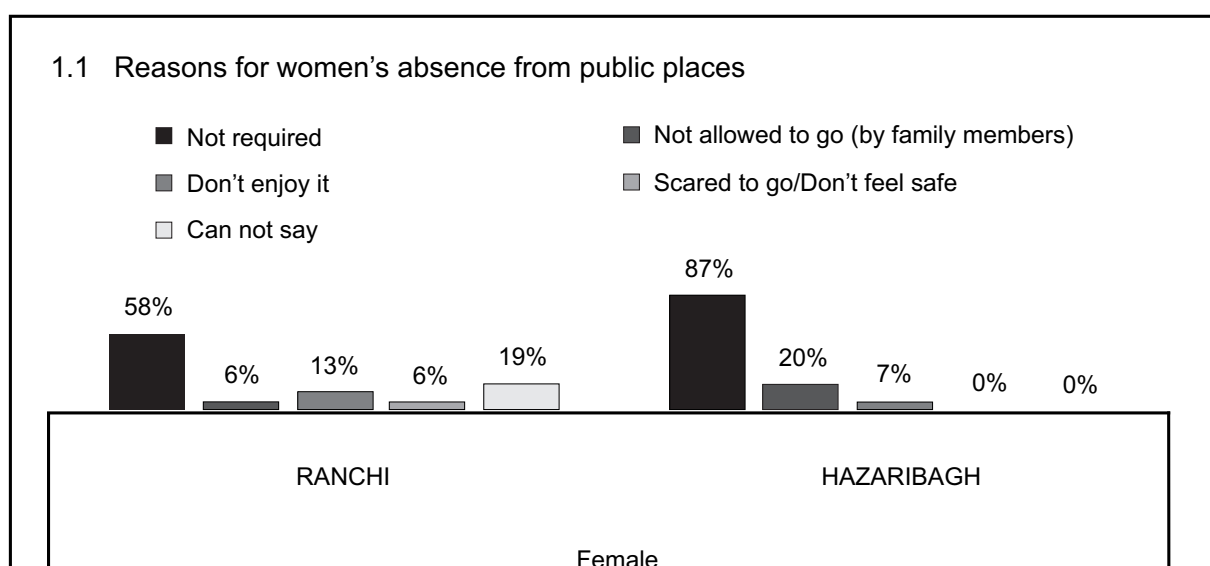
Most men and women in Ranchi and Hazaribagh – nearly three fourth – walk to their places of occupation. Among the female respondents, 75 per cent from Ranchi and 76 per cent from Hazaribagh walk to their educational institute or workplace. In both the cities:

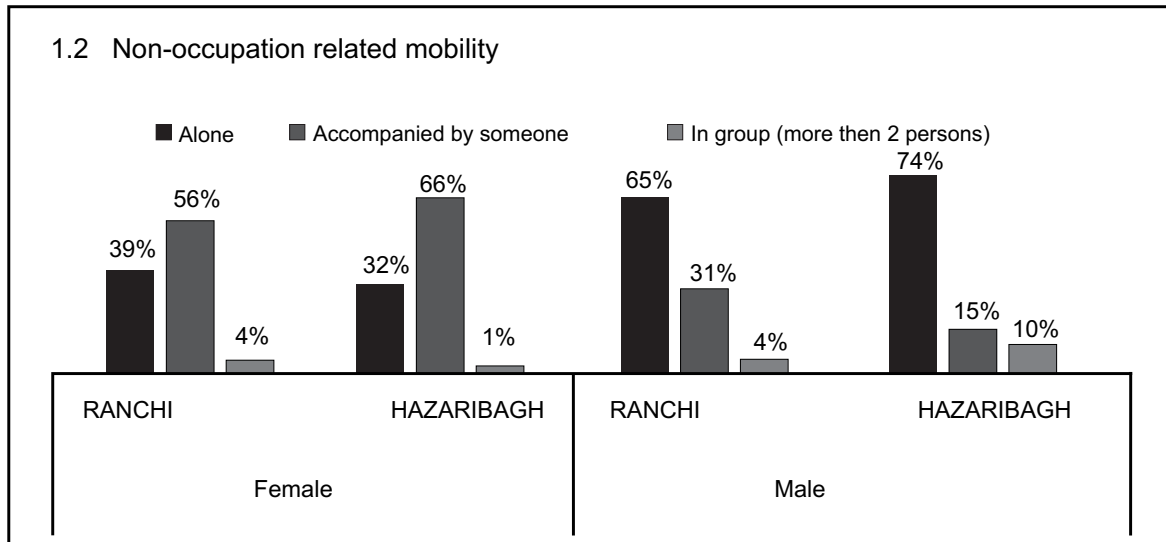
- walking is followed by autorickshaws as well shared autorickshaws (in this order) as the most used modes of transport; and
- a majority of women in paid employment take less than 30 minutes to travel.

## 2. Women's non/access to public places: some features

For women who did not go to or frequent public spaces in both the cities, the main reason reported was that they were not required to. However, what is noteworthy here is that in Hazaribagh, 20 per cent women who did not go out said that they were not allowed to do so by their family members (see Figure 1.1). In Ranchi, six per cent women said they were scared to go out and did not feel safe outdoors, and another six per cent women said that they were not allowed to go out.

This is a reflection not simply of the dangers that lurk on the streets of these cities but equally of controls exercised over women's mobility as well as poor infrastructure and services.





A related and telling dimension of the differential access to public spaces is the piece of data about traveling in the city for reasons other than occupation: in Ranchi, 65 per cent men travel alone compared to 39 per cent women (Figure 1.2). This wide gap is maintained in Hazaribagh too: 74 per cent men travel alone compared to 32 per cent women. In both the cities, women who have to be accompanied by someone when they step out of their homes is significantly higher than that for men. Yet, that 39 percent women in Ranchi and 32 per cent in Hazaribagh travel alone is a crucial piece of data that needs to be borne in mind by all stakeholders of public safety.

### 3. Safe/unsafe places and factors

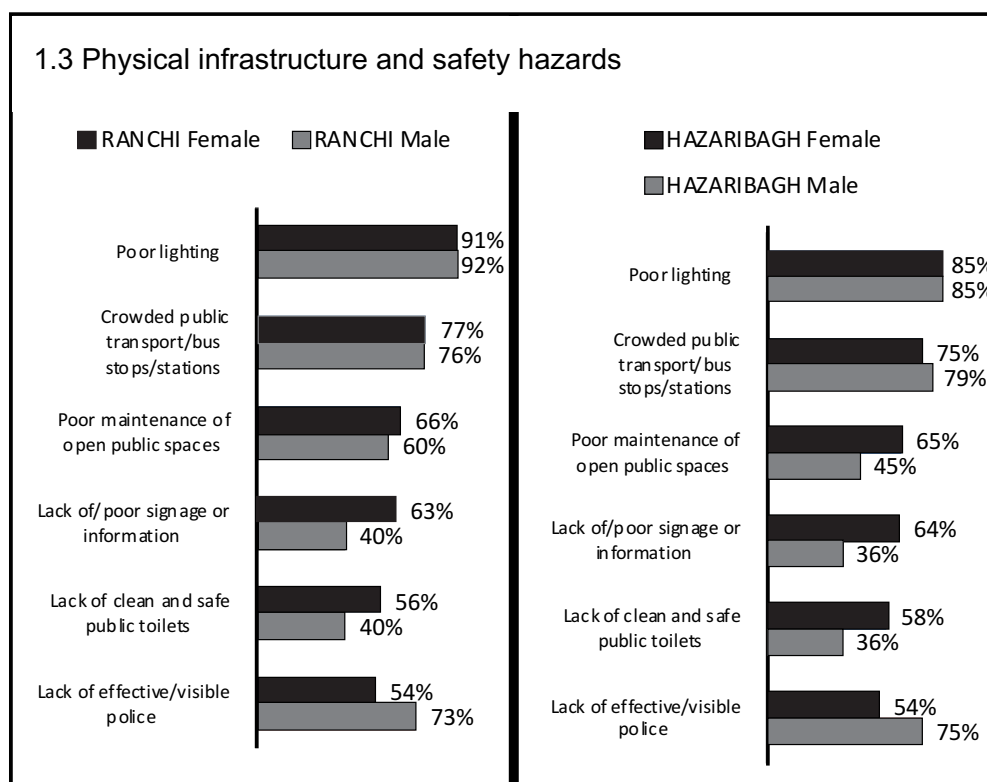
Since it is the perceptions of the inhabitants of a city that shape the way they access its public spaces, making a note of those is necessary for urban planners, the police and service providers, among others who engage with public safety vis-à-vis women and girls.

It turns out that women in both cities mostly avoid crowded places because they see those as possible sites of harassment. Also, places frequented by men are avoided by many women. Therefore, shops selling alcohol, paan and cigarettes, open and wooded areas, autorickshaw/bus stands, bazaars/malls and buses are sites that some women avoid even during daytime. This acts as a constraint for their daily mobility and impacts the quality of their life including enjoyment of public spaces without fear and threat of violence.

In both the cities, eight to nine per cent women also reported abstaining from the use of public toilets because of men's presence there. Ironically, women (again, in both the cities) even mentioned police stations among places they avoid: 17 per cent women in Ranchi also said that they avoided visiting the police station at all times, day and night. In response to a question about "places/locations avoided", of all those who said "school/college/coaching classes", nearly one third in Ranchi and Hazaribagh were female students. Their reason: the thick crowds and the presence of men around the building/s and campus.

Among social factors that make women feel unsafe is men's consumption of alcohol; respondents associated it with anti-social behaviour and harassment of women. More women (than men) perceived the following as elements contributing to lack of safety for women: a general disrespect for women, thinly populated areas and domination by men in public spaces.

Among infrastructural deficits that breed crime and violence, poorly lit and crowded places as well as badly-maintained public spots, including toilets, were perceived as dangerous for women (Figure 1.3). Over 70 per cent men thought that the lack of effective and/or visible policing adds to the lack of safety in public spaces.

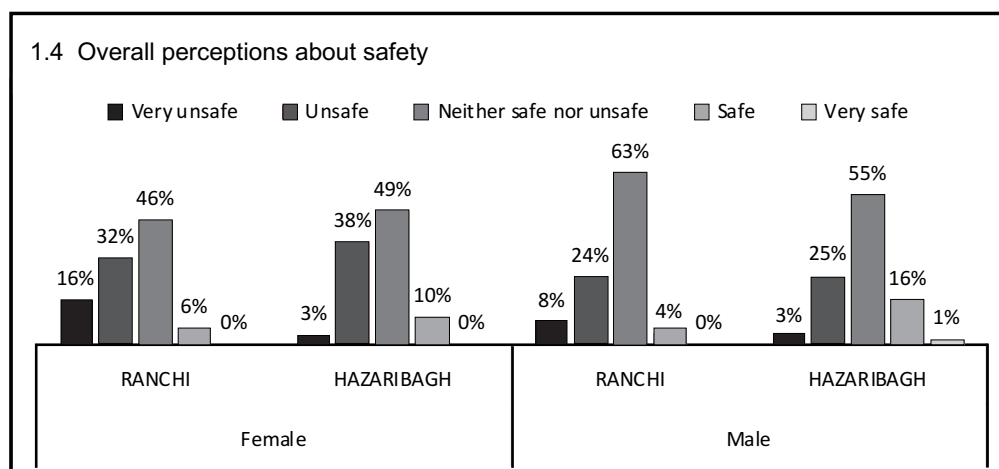


#### 4. Most vulnerable individuals and highest safety risks

In response to this question, men and women in the two cities listed the following as the three most vulnerable categories of individuals: women, the disabled and youth. More men in both the cities (81 per cent in Hazaribagh and 76 per cent in Ranchi) stated that younger women faced greater risk of sexual harassment. Some female respondents from both cities also named caste as a factor. This indicates that women from marginalized communities feel less secure and/or intimidated in the presence of men in the public spaces.

While identifying safety risks in their respective city, 99 to 100 per cent respondents (men and women) listed sexual harassment as the biggest. Unlike 93 per cent women, only 45 per cent men in Ranchi perceived sexual assault and aggravated sexual assault as a risk. Men and women in Hazaribagh too demonstrated a wide gap vis-à-vis their views on sexual assault. Women, especially those between 18 to 24 years, were seen as most susceptible. Men in both Ranchi (15 per cent) and Hazaribagh (33 per cent) stated that women's dress has a role to play in their safety.

Nearly half of all female respondents in Ranchi (46 per cent) and Hazaribagh (49 per cent) saw their city as “neither safe nor unsafe” (Figure 1.4). Almost one third of respondents in both cities felt that their respective city was “unsafe”, while only a quarter of male respondents called it unsafe. More women in Ranchi than in Hazaribagh saw their respective city as “very unsafe”.



## 5. Witnessing and responding to violence

To gauge how people respond to the sexual violence they witness and face, if and/or what they know about the perpetrator as well as the actions they take, specific questions were posed to male and female respondents in Ranchi and Hazaribagh.

Among the women, 46 per cent in Ranchi and 54 per cent in Hazaribagh had witnessed sexual violence in public places. Among these, more than a quarter had seen it within the last year. Of these witnesses, a majority of individuals were young people. Market places and/or malls were reported as locations where most incidents of sexual harassment/violence had been witnessed. A few respondents in both the cities had also seen sexual harassment near police stations, indicating that areas that lie in proximity to police stations too can be unsafe and insecure.

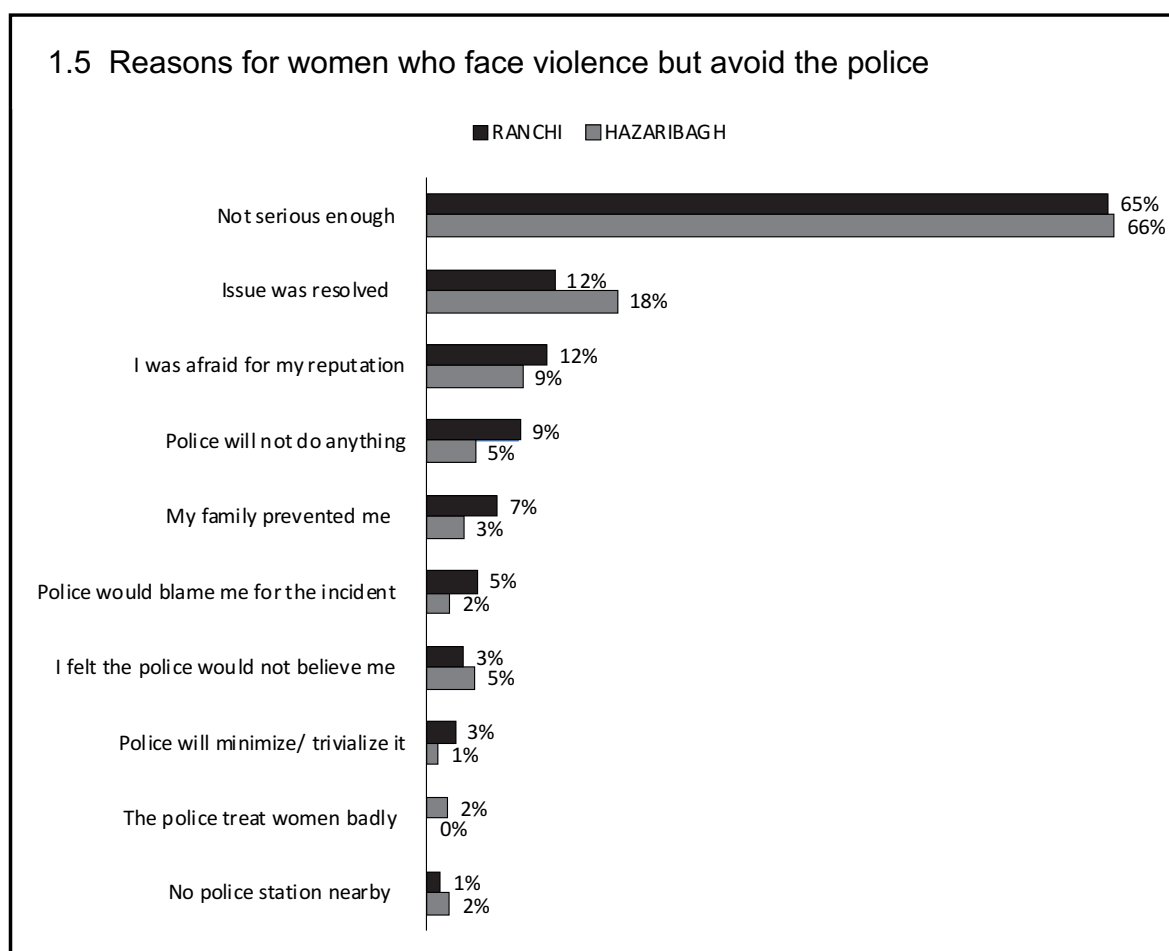
In the following order, verbal violence (whistling, passing comments etc.), visual violence (staring, winking or leering), physical violence (groping) and stalking seemed to be the most common forms of sexual violence in both the cities. Most number of female respondents (80 percent in Ranchi and 89 percent in Hazaribagh) had witnessed verbal violence on two or more occasions. As per their responses, verbal and visual violence occurs mostly during the day.

Table 1. Respondents who witnessed different forms of sexual violence (by frequency)								
Female Respondents	RANCHI				HAZARIBAGH			
	"N"	Once	2-5 Times	> 5 Times	"N"	Once	2-5 Times	> 5 Times
Verbal	194	21%	42%	38%	161	11%	46%	43%
Visual	169	19%	40%	41%	125	6%	41%	53%
Physical	122	39%	37%	24%	80	35%	40%	25%
Flashing	26	77%	19%	4%	6	67%	17%	17%
Stalking	72	53%	31%	17%	59	56%	24%	20%
Violent Physical Attack	17	59%	24%	18%	6	67%	17%	17%
Sexual Assault	7	71%	29%	--	2	100%	--	--

## 6. Action taken in response to violence seen

In both cities, there were more women than men who had “raised their voice and sought attention” when they saw acts of sexual violence against women: 70 per cent women in Ranchi and 71 per cent women in Hazaribagh as compared with 17 per cent men in Ranchi and none in Hazaribagh. On the other hand, 15 per cent of women in Ranchi and 12 per cent in Hazaribagh called the police for assistance but none of the men in both the cities did so. This calls for attention to the factors that lead to such behaviour among men.

The low record of police reporting by those who witnessed violence needs particular attention. The reasons offered by respondents for not contacting the police were: (a) that they did not see the matter as critical enough or (b) the issue was resolved without police intervention (Figure 1.5). These statements



reflect the views of the majority that do not consider sexual harassment as crime or a serious act that merits intervention by the police. Since it has been normalized in our cultural frames, people often tolerate it themselves and also advise others to do so.

In Ranchi, a section of men feared that the police would blame them for the incident, while some women stated that their family had instructed them to avoid interactions with the police. Two women, one each from Ranchi and Hazaribagh, shared their experiences wherein the police had not given attention to their concerns; another two women from Hazaribagh stated that they find reporting to the police to be a rather lengthy procedure.

## 7. The role of the family

It is striking that more than half of female respondents in both cities reported that their families “did not encourage” them to deal with situations of sexual violence.

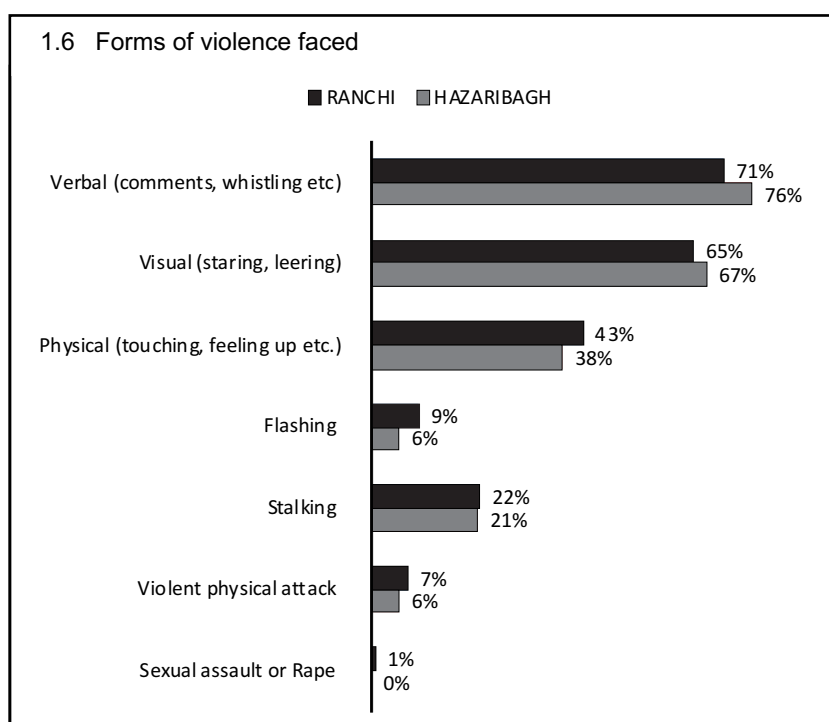
However, 59 per cent women in Ranchi and 67 per cent women in Hazaribagh received support from their families in the form of discussions on how to deal with the situation. Only five per cent women in Ranchi and four per cent in Hazaribagh encountered unhelpful responses from family members including restrictions on their own mobility. Nearly a quarter stated that they did not share such incidents with their family because of the fear that their own freedom would be curbed. A reasonably large percentage of female respondents (51 per cent women in Ranchi and 68 per cent in Hazaribagh) did not share what they witnessed with anyone because of the apprehension that they would be asked to ignore the issue.

## 8. Reports by witnesses

The accounts of witnesses also revealed that over 70 per cent cases of sexual violence were committed by men between 17 to 30 years of age. A smaller section of women from Ranchi and Hazaribagh had seen perpetrators who were older: between 35 to 40 years of age. Respondents in both Ranchi and Hazaribagh had observed that violence/harassment was committed more by men in groups than individual men.

## 9. Sexual violence: survivors, form and other features

Among the women who were part of this study, 31 per cent in Ranchi and 28 per cent in Hazaribagh stated that they had faced some kind of sexual violence. Within this category, those between 18-24 years of age reported as having faced the highest sexual harassment/violence in both the cities. Incidents of sexual violence against older women (45 years and older) were considerably less in both locations. The sexual harassment/violence statistics for Ranchi were higher. In both the cities, an almost equal percentage (25-26 per cent) of 25-44 year old female respondents had faced some kind of sexual harassment/violence.





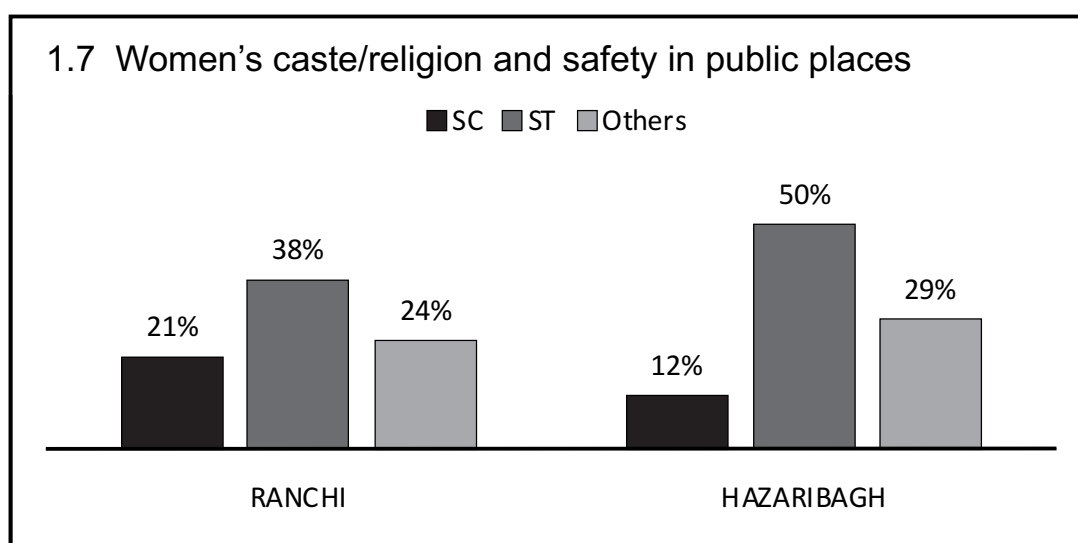
As Figure 1.6 displays, verbal violence seems to be the most common: 71 per cent women in Ranchi and 76 per cent in Hazaribagh reported having experienced it. This includes passing comments, whistling, saying obscenities etc. This is followed by visual and physical violence. Over 6 per cent women in both the cities had faced violent physical attacks, including a case of sexual assault or aggravated sexual assault in Ranchi.

The data about the frequency of such violence – especially in Ranchi – is worrisome. 82 per cent women reported being violently attacked at least once, while in Hazaribagh 49 per cent women had faced verbal violence two to five times in the past year. Stalking seems more common in Hazaribagh. Violence occurred at all times in both cities, although mostly during the day and evening.

Ranchi-based respondents listed, in the following order, the places where they had been harassed: markets/shopping mall, public transport, street corners, roads and schools/colleges/coaching classes.

For Hazaribagh, the descending order for sites of harassments was reported as: markets/ shopping malls, street corners, and schools/ colleges/coaching classes.

Police stations were again mentioned by (almost two per cent) women as places where they had faced violence. These women had earlier reported police stations as “places avoided”: wards 15, 50, 53 in Ranchi and wards 18 and 26 in Hazaribagh. There seems to be a connection between the earlier reference to police stations as an “unsafe place” and the one here as a site of violence. Although the statistics are small, this is an aspect that needs thought and discussion because it involves the police.



On the basis of the graph above (Figure 1.7), it seems that women from the scheduled tribes face higher levels of violence as compared to those from other communities. While that could be said for Ranchi, it should be noted that in Hazaribagh, the representation of ST women in the sample (and the overall population) was quite low. Yet, it does reveal the high vulnerability of scheduled tribe women in Hazaribagh.

As far as statistics go, both cities report more sexual violence against women from tribal communities: 38 per cent in Ranchi and 50 per cent in Hazaribagh. As far as verbal violence towards tribal women is concerned, 74 per cent women in Ranchi and 88 per cent Hazaribagh reported having experienced it.

## 10. Knowledge of sexual harassment/violence resources and services

A fairly high number of respondents named the police as their go-to point in case of sexual violence, followed by the *mahila thana* and the helpline. A few women in Ranchi and Hazaribagh were also able to name some non-governmental organisations/community-based organisations whom they thought could help. In Ranchi, they named Bandhan, Janlaxmi, Mahila Aayog, Mahila Samakhya, Mahila Samaj Kalyan Vibhag, Prajvalit Bihar Swayam Sahayta Samooch, Smriti Women Community, Woman's Power and World Vision. Men listed Ekjut, Prerana Bharti, Sarna Mahila Samiti, Save Women and Women Community.

Women in Hazaribagh mentioned Jan Jagriti Kendra, Nav Jagran, Maa Bhavani Khorgaon, Mahila Samakhya, and Navbharat Jagriti Kendra, while men named Baba Bhutnath Mandali, Jan Shikshan Sansthan and Saath.

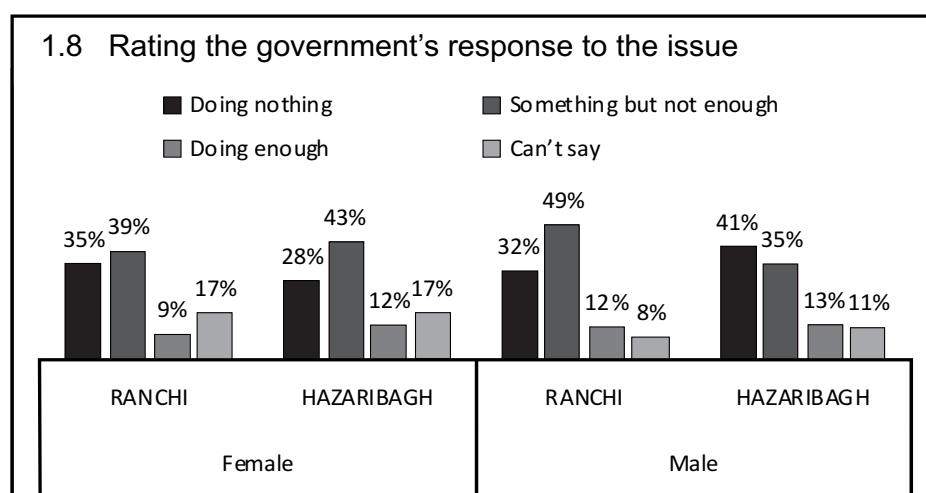
Interestingly, almost all male respondents in both Ranchi and Hazaribagh knew that sexual assault or aggravated sexual assault, violent physical attack and physical forms of sexual violence like groping etc. were a crime in the eyes of law. However, women displayed less knowledge than men about the criminality of sexual violence: for example, 66 per cent women in Ranchi and 79 per cent in Hazaribagh knew that verbal harassment was a criminal act.

Access to resources in times of sexual crime seemed to be much higher amongst women and men in Ranchi as compared to Hazaribagh. Of all the female respondents, only 1.5 per cent (7/481 in Ranchi and 5/320 in Hazaribagh) claimed to know a helpline number. Of these 12 (7+5) women, 29.6 per cent (2/7) in Ranchi and 80 per cent (4/5) in Hazaribagh gave the number for the police (100), and 14.3 per cent (1/7) women in Ranchi could list the number for the Child Helpline (1098).

Most men and women in both cities agreed that reporting to the authorities was worthwhile. However, nearly two third of respondents (men and women) in Ranchi were of the opinion that the response of the government towards addressing issues of sexual harassment/assault against women in public spaces was limited/missing. In Hazaribagh, over one fourth women and 41 per cent men had the same opinion.

In Ranchi, 41 per cent women and 62 per cent men reported seeing or hearing messages related to violence against women in public spaces, and in Hazaribagh the figures were 48 per cent for women and 43 per cent for men.

Almost two thirds of the respondents in Ranchi thought that the government was doing little to address issues of sexual harassment/assault on women in public spaces. In Hazaribagh, over one fourth women (28 per cent) and 41 per cent men had a similar opinion (Figure 1.8).



## Section 3

### Key Findings: Focus Group Discussions

Unlike the household survey that measures the subject of research and produces statistical data, the Focus Group Discussion (FGD) tool offers different but equally sound insights via perceptions and attitudes of respondents. As the name suggests, it involves a focussed discussion with a select group of people whose opinions and experiences are crucial for the research and therefore deserve adequate emphasis. The FGD gathers observations of this group with the help of a moderator who conducts a loosely structured conversation on certain pre-determined themes that are germane to the subject of the research.

In the context of this research and its focus on public safety and sexual harassment/violence of/against women and girls, it becomes indispensable to include perceptions of the socially marginalized, those who have limited, difficult or no access to public spaces and of course the subject experts. These individuals/groups' encounters with public spaces merits notable attention. Therefore a total of 12 FGDs were organised in Ranchi and Hazaribagh with the following groups of people: adolescent girls, adolescent boys, single women, domestic workers, construction workers, migrant workers, female sex workers and representatives from *Nari Adalat* (through *Mahila Samakhya*) see Annexure 1. The discussions revolved around the participants' knowledge and personal experience of public safety at different sites and mobility via different modes of transport, among many other parameters.

Even though individuals in each of these groups shared some broad demographic features with each other, an FGD actually pulls out the diversity of opinions within each group. This range of responses helps produce a more sophisticated, closer-to-the-ground view of the actual situation.

The following sections present the essence of what emerged from the FGDs.

#### 1. Sexual harassment in public spaces: when, where, whom?

Girls and women stated that they experience different forms of sexual harassment in public places of Ranchi and Hazaribagh such as passing of comments, flashing, among others. However, some of them emphasised that violence against women should not only be seen through its public expression but also noted in the private domain within homes and families.

Construction workers from Hazaribagh had noticed that sexual harassment often happened when young boys/men were together in a group. A girl from Ranchi University also said that she cannot completely trust her own teachers while another mentioned that there were no sexual harassment committees at their educational institutes.

Some participants stated that age is an important determinant of sexual harassment: adolescent girls (aged between 12-16 years) and young women (15-30 years) are more vulnerable to sexual harassment. Other participants observed that girls and women from all age groups are vulnerable since girls as young as five years as well as sixty year old women had been harassed on the streets.

<sup>11</sup>Each discussion was conducted by a facilitator on the basis of a guideline designed to absorb the perceptions and experiences of the participants regarding safety in the city. Each discussion usually ran for around 90 minutes.

FGDs on the theme of public spaces revealed interesting dimensions about ‘feelings’ of safety in particular. While it may be assumed that a place crowded with men would be a hub of sexual harassment, most girls reported feeling safer there. They stated that even though harassment takes place both in crowded and secluded places, they found raising an alarm and receiving help easier within a crowd. However, some female participants also mentioned the indifference of bystanders or those who simply watch a woman being harassed but do not intervene in the situation. Single women from Hazaribagh who have no access to toilets and defecate in the open reported that none of them go to the fields unaccompanied but have to go in a group each time.

Women and girls named many neighbourhoods/roads in Ranchi and Hazaribagh that they thought were “unsafe”. For Ranchi, a group of female domestic workers and single women (daily wage labourers, fruit sellers and farmers) listed the following localities: Peach Road, Distillery Road, Kokar, Circular Road, BML Gali, Hari Om Tower, Dobhighat, Holy Cross Chowk, Kantatoli, RIMS, Lalpur Chowk, Krishnapuri, Jhanda Chowk, Refugee Market, Mani Tola and Kutchery.

For Hazaribagh, female college students and a group of single women flagged the following areas as unsafe: Nirmal Mahto Park (especially the back side of the park), Suresh Colony, Jheel Road, Canary Hill Road, Government Bus Stand, Pelawal, Romi, Jhanjhariya Pula, Devgan Chowk, St. Columba’s road, Matwari, Annada Chowk, areas around women’s colleges, Gwal Toli Chowk, Cafeteria Road, Kaura, Amman Colony, high school areas, Subzi Mandi, BM Market, Calcutta Market, Matwari, Gandhi Chowk and Sadar.

During the FGDs, perceptions of girls and women were in contrast to those of boys on the issue of the link between time of day/night and sexual harassment. For example, adolescent boys were of the opinion that public spaces are not very unsafe during the day. On the other hand, female construction and migrant workers reported feeling unsafe during the day when they are out looking for work. Young women studying at Ranchi University perceived evenings as unsafe.

Female domestic workers from Ranchi prefer to accompany their daughters to public places such as schools, tuition centres, markets etc. as and when possible. One of them shared that she married her daughter at the young age of 15 years out of concern for her safety and the reputation of the family.

However, female sex workers have a distinct experience: they regard the city as unsafe at all times of the day and night. Unlike women and girls for whom the presence of police can be a safe and assuring sight, for female sex workers it is not always the case because the police extort money and harass them for sexual favours. Another point of departure for female sex workers was public-versus-private spaces: public parks are raided by the police and therefore are not preferred



by them whereas private spaces with clients could be threatening and exploitative. They do not feel

<sup>12</sup>Unsafe areas of Ranchi and Hazaribagh were also identified during the safety audit exercise. These are listed in the section on safety audits on page number 29 & 32.

respected even while walking with their family members and this makes them feel highly uncomfortable in public spaces.

*I don't feel safe even while driving my own scooty.*

Young girl, Ranchi

*There is always risk. I am anxious till the time all the women I send out come back safely.*

Sex worker, Ranchi

A few domestic workers from Ranchi also shared their disturbing experiences with the police in the city. A woman recalled that when she went to the police station to file a complaint against her sister-in-law (who had hit her and caused a head injury), the senior policeman asked her to buy him a pen and paper to write the complaint. When the other policemen at the police station asked him to cooperate with the injured woman, he asked her for ten rupees as a bribe. She had to give him that amount after which he registered her complaint and then took her to the hospital. A few other women said that they had found the men at police stations very hostile; a woman stated that they seemed drunk on the festival of Holi and had refused to file any report.



Besides public spaces, public transport was pointed out to as a core site of sexual harassment. In Ranchi, the most-used mode of public transport – the shared autorickshaw – was seen as most unsafe. Men were reported to take undue advantage of the physical proximity with women to grope, fondle, pull women's dupatta etc. Travelling in autorickshaws after seven in the evening was considered particularly unsafe.

## **2. Reasons/rationalisation for sexual harassment**

Clothes. Most boys stated that it is the clothes worn by girls/women that offer a major explanation for the occurrence of sexual harassment. Surprisingly, even some women (from *Nari Adalat*) and a few domestic workers from Ranchi shared the position that women's clothes lead to sexual harassment.

*I was buying clothes with my sister and a man standing close by touched my sister...when she told me, I lost my cool and beat him with my footwear...when we returned home, I asked my sister why she wore a high-neck...why not something more appropriate...everyone at home also criticised the sweater so she just stopped wearing that sweater...in a high-neck, the body is fully visible...if you wear something that clings to the body, won't it show....*

Domestic worker, Ranchi

However, this position was countered by single women in Hazaribagh and sex workers in Ranchi during the FGD they argued their case by offering examples of girls and women who were dressed in a variety of Indian and western garments (sarees, salwar kurta or jeans) yet had all experienced harassment on the streets. A girl from Ranchi mentioned that many educational institutions have responded to women's sexual harassment by prohibiting them from wearing jeans.



A single woman from Hazaribagh narrated an incident that highlights how the 'clothes-cause-sexual harassment' argument finds social sanction. Every day, a group of men would burn fire crackers at the doorstep of a family in her neighbourhood. When the woman of that family went to the village chief (*mukhiya*), a woman herself, to complain about the boys, she said that neither she nor others will get involved in the matter because the girls of the family wore inappropriate/provocative clothes and hence they had been targeted by those boys.

*Attractive girls are more vulnerable to sexual harassment.*

Representative, Nari Adalat

*What also determines sexual harassment is how a girl walks and speaks. A bold girl walks out decked up with makeup....*

Adolescent boy, Ranchi University

*One can make out from the very first glance itself...there is a way to carry a salwar-suit, and they wear lipsticks, pencil heels, jhumkas.*

Young boy, Hazaribagh

Women's body language and demeanour was another factor that was underscored by some participants. In their view, women with better education, exposure to big cities and those seen as 'modern' invited men's attention. During the FGD with young boys in Hazaribagh, migration of and unemployment among men were also quoted as reasons for increase in sexual harassment.

Domestic workers and construction workers in Ranchi saw alcoholism as one of the top factors. They reported that most liquor shops are allowed to stay open till late at night and function without strict regulation. The location of liquor shops around hospitals and colleges leads men to collect, drink and linger at and around those spots.

For the sex worker community from Ranchi, their identity as sex workers is seen to justify their harassment:

*We face sexual harassment on day-to-day basis, we are stalked and abused.*

The respondents also shared the following assortment of reasons as factors responsible for the sustenance of sexual harassment: influence of movies and their portrayal of women and men, lack of support from bystanders, inadequate patrolling by police and the gendered socialization of boys and girls.

Single women in Hazaribagh added that their identity as single women made them more vulnerable to harassment. They unanimously stated that they feel stigmatized as people talk behind their backs. One of them said that as widows they are taunted if they wear make-up or dress up, and there is gossip if they come home after dark. Neighbours and relatives are suspicious about their source of income.

*After I lost my husband...I had to step out for every task...so my elder brother-in-law would follow me everywhere...he would stand on the road to see where I was off to...and when I would step into a vehicle and drive away, he would ask men or boys around for information about my whereabouts... "now that she does not have a guardian, she will go where she pleases...she has become free now..."*

Single woman, Hazaribagh

Lack of streetlights in many neighbourhoods and absence of female police in public spaces was also flagged. Some domestic workers stated that going alone to the police station did not help as sometimes officers did not lodge FIRs. In their experience, the police behave more responsibly in the presence of a group of women especially those from women's NGOs.

### 3. Responses and involvement of family/community members

Due to the spike in instances of sexual harassment of girls and women in Jharkhand, their family members are often anxious about their safety. Some middle-aged and elderly women (such as domestic workers) said they married their daughters early just to avoid any incidents of sexual harassment/violence which can pose a threat to their imminent marriage.

Young girls reported two dominant aspects of their family's response to the issues of their safety.

#### Increased surveillance

Female students and employed young women stated that the fear of sexual harassment in public spaces



and transport kept their family members rather concerned during the time they were out of the house/hostel. Hence, family members kept a constant track of their movements through the day and evening. Parents and siblings would often call girls/women to know their whereabouts or send messages to ensure they were safe.

- *Mothers call their daughters but sons are never questioned in our society. We have curfews for girls but boys have all the freedom.*
- *Girls are taught to behave in a certain way.*
- *My mother repeatedly tells me: don't laugh, don't talk loudly, go straight to college and come back home.*

Female students from Ranchi University

Single women from Hazaribagh too commented about the higher level of scrutiny and therefore vulnerability they experience not just from family members but also neighbours or colleagues. One of them shared this comment made by her neighbour:

*When your husband was alive, you would not step out of the house but now you are always out.*

A construction worker from Hazaribagh justified the restrictions she placed on her daughters' mobility on account of sexual harassment. She shared a personal incident about how she was harassed by a group of young teenagers on motorbikes.

*I was walking with a big load...the boys saw me from the back. I was wearing a suit so they thought I am a young woman...I heard a boy say to his friend "hey, stop the bike, this looks like good stuff ". When I turned around, they left.....our faces are covered so they cannot recognise us...yet when we older women can face this, why would I let our young daughters travel alone.....what will happen? These are terrible times, terrible times...this is why I do not let my daughters step out...*

Another construction worker from Hazaribagh said that she would never allow her daughter to work and would rather eat only boiled rice than let her step out alone. Some of these women said their

daughters are never unaccompanied by family members.

### **Concealing sexual harassment from family**

Most girls and women said that they did not share incidents of sexual harassment with their family members. Instead, their friends were their confidantes. Some said that they had been advised by their friends to ignore such incidents and to not take any action against the harassers. A few girls were aware of helpline numbers that were shared by radio stations and had heard of women's groups they could reach out to.

It needs to be noted that some post-graduate girls from Hazaribagh said they find it more difficult to raise their voice in the presence of male family members. They are afraid of confrontation between them and the perpetrators, the possibilities of physical harm to their relatives as well as the subsequent blame that will be placed on them.

Some adolescent girls fear that raising their voice against boys/men who harass them could lead to more violence against them. This fear of retaliation by perpetrators of crime against women ensures that girls stay silent. They narrated an incident about a girl who was sexually assaulted by a gang of 12 boys after she complained against their harassment.

Another comment from these girls was striking: guardians/parents of girls mostly stay quiet when incidents of sexual harassment happen because of the belief that people from 'good families' do not engage with perpetrators and prefer to ignore such incidents. Besides, they also worry that this could lead to more complication and violence towards the girl.

A construction worker from Ranchi believed that sharing and talking about one's sexual harassment especially with other women/peers will not only reduce women's fear but also spread awareness and help address crime:

*Does it not happen that when one goes through some kind of sexual harassment we do not inform the other, but this should not happen...today it is happening with me, tomorrow it could happen to you too...one should inform...from one to two, two to four, four to eight...when we keep sharing with others, we can rid ourselves of our fear.*

Construction worker, Ranchi

Unlike the above-mentioned excerpt that talks of women's communication and solidarity with regard to sexual harassment, her co-worker's comment revealed one of the reasons why women stay silent and advise their daughters to do the same:

*When a woman gets harassed, her reputation suffers, not the man who harassed her...so I explain all this to her (daughter)...*

Sex workers brought in a different perspective vis-à-vis their families' role. Most of them revealed that their family members are not aware of their actual work. While they prefer to hide their sex worker identities from their families, this has an unwanted effect: without their family's knowledge of their occupation and support, sex work becomes more risky and makes working in the city more punishing.

*I am not scared when I am alone, but when travelling with family there is always a risk. What if they get to know about the work we do?*

Sex worker, Ranchi



The situation is worse for disabled sex workers who are even more marginalized. One of them shared that she has to be extremely cautious while working: “I have had experiences where the customer hid my crutches. It is better to earn less and stay safe”.

#### 4. Profile of perpetrators

When the discussion centered on the perpetrators, there were again a range of answers. Some girls said it was boys from certain marginalized communities, alcoholics and drug addicts, teenagers or migrant college students who mostly harassed women. Others named autorickshaw drivers, hawkers, tailors or villagers. Some saw groups of young boys as responsible for sexual harassment in public places. Others clarified that it was ‘unemployed’ young boys, those from low-income backgrounds or bus conductors who mostly harassed women.

A few women and girls thought that men from all age groups indulge in harassment, especially those in the 40-50 years’ age group. Domestic workers from Ranchi saw the perpetrator representing a wider age group: from young men to middle-aged ones.

*Boys from the same age group as us maintain distance while sitting with us. They usually pass comments, whistle, wink, etc. but older men try to make physical contact.*

Young women, Ranchi

A young college student from Ranchi also named policemen on duty as perpetrators. This is how she described it:

*Police deployed near some areas or the homeguards near women’s colleges stare and smile at girls while patrolling on their bikes. They wink at girls. One of them once tried putting his hand inside a girl’s skirt.*



Participants also named ex-partners as potential harassers. Examples were cited of violence that had followed when relationships turned sour or when a woman resisted a man’s advances. Some adolescent boys seemed to justify these acts. They knew of cases when rejection or refusal by girls/women had triggered violence. One of them recalled an incident from the year 2011 where a girl’s throat was slit when she refused a boy’s proposal.

*If a boy does not know the girl, how can he pick her up without any reason?*

Adolescent boy, Ranchi University

In the case of sex workers, sexual harassment can happen within their workplaces and from potential clients. Although their workplaces may not always be public spaces, yet their accounts raise some important questions that need deliberation. Two Ranchi-based sex workers described how despite working as a group, they once got trapped into a trafficking net and were sent to Delhi. They were tied up and kept in a room for two days. While the deal to sell them off was being finalized, they managed to escape.

*We escaped around 3 in the morning and fortunately found an auto. Our clothes were torn. The auto driver asked us if we were running away from home. He helped us and took us to the Anand Vihar railway station. There were no trains to Ranchi that time so we left for the New Delhi Railway station and approached the CRPF. They helped us find the right train and we managed to come back safely.*

Similar incidents were narrated by a few other sex workers. One of them shared how she visited a house where she was to meet her client but the man trapped her for four days and planned to sell her off.

## 5. Precautions

Different groups of girls and women reported a similar set of safety measures that they relied upon while being out in public spaces. Some examples: being alert and bold, training in self-defence such as karate, keeping handy the phone numbers of women's helplines and the police, keeping mobile phones charged, avoiding western or stylish clothes and choosing simple salwar kurta with dupattas, and even addressing men as "*bhaiya*" (brother). Carrying sharp objects such as safety pins and knives, chilli powder and perfume sprays were mentioned by many. However, most of them said they had not used these or seen any of these precautions being used regularly.

The precautions used by sex workers were: staying in touch with each other, sharing the number of the client's vehicle and also clicking the client's picture and sharing it within their group. Girls and women from Ranchi mentioned the following, among others:

*Using a dupatta in slums really helps.*

*We avoid certain places especially after it gets dark.  
We prefer to reach home before 5:30 or 6 in the evening.*

*We have to take the same route every day. Acid attacks etc. are common these days. So we just don't say a thing.*

The above-mentioned precautionary measures are rather revealing. They point to the many undercurrents of sexual harassment: a general distrust of poor or working class men, the self-imposed curtailment of women's lives and



the fear of more violence which makes them endure harassment in silence. A Ranchi-based single woman too voiced a similar feeling of helpless surrender to the worsening safety status when she suggested that women and girls should remain within their homes and do some home-based work to avoid public places.

## Section 4

### Key Informant Interviews

Even though the household survey and FGD are tools that cover a vast ambit of diverse voices for a research study, there are some key stakeholders whose opinions and experiences deserve special consideration. The technique of “Key Informant Interviews” does precisely that: amplify those select voices. In other words, first-hand information is collected through detailed interviews from those who are most knowledgeable about the issue’s various angles.

The field researchers engaged with this study spoke to individuals who are deeply involved in different dimensions of public safety in Jharkhand see Annexure 2. They represent the following organisations/institutions and services: Ekal Nari Sashakti Sangathan, Ranchi city bus service (Ranchi Municipal Corporation), Maitri, State Women’s Commission, *Mahila Thana*, the pink autorickshaw service, *Mahila Samakhya* and Xavier’s Institute of Social Studies (Department of Rural Management).



The range of suggestions that emerged from these interviews can be found towards the end of the report in the section titled ‘Recommendations’. The following points encapsulate the major propositions by key informants.

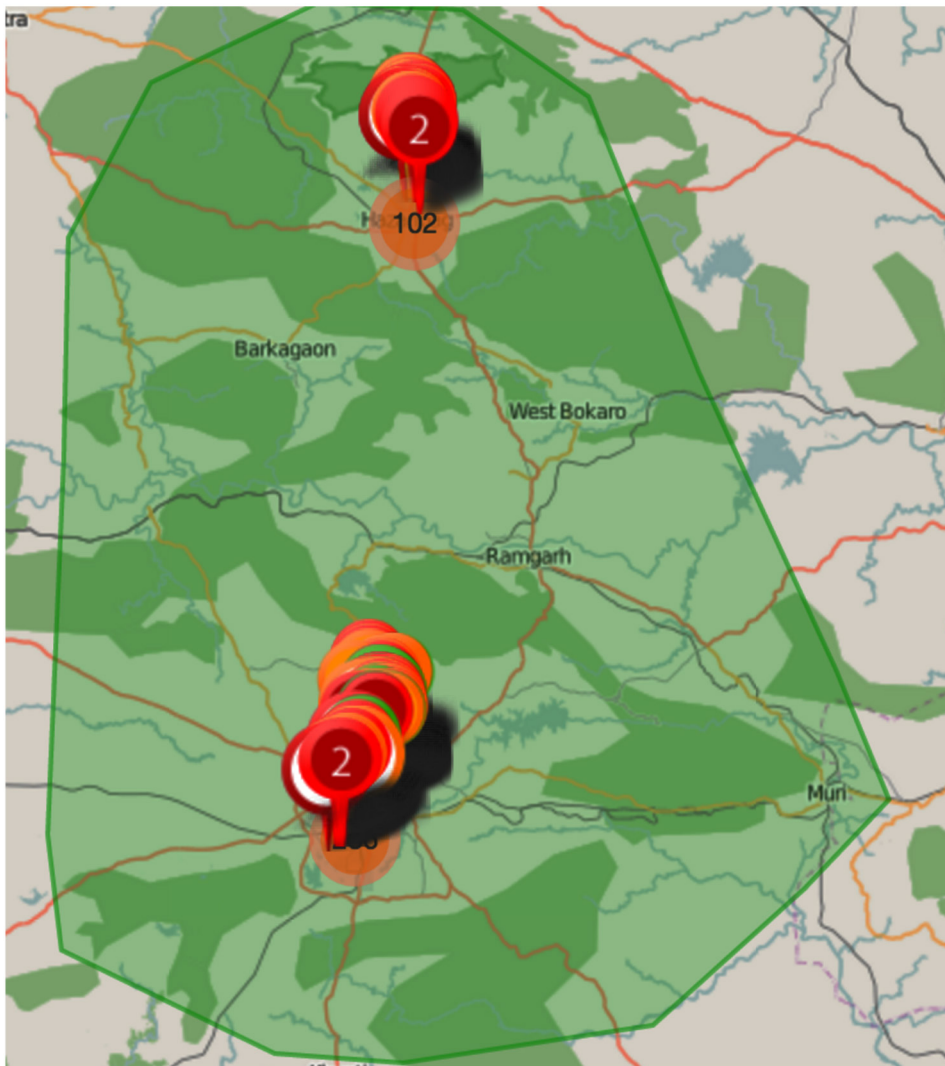
- Greater attention towards certain constituencies that are more vulnerable to sexual harassment and violence, such as single women
- Regular maintenance of civic infrastructure such as roads, street lights and toilets
- Periodic gender sensitisation programmes for the public and those employed by services such as the police, traffic police and public transport
- Revamp of public transport via greater reach in and around the city
- Inclusion of female staff in public buses and increase in female-driven auto rickshaws
- Creation of sexual harassment committees across sectors of employment

## Section 5

### Key Findings: Safety Audit

To study the infrastructure of a place and identify gaps and concerns, the safety audit acts as an ideal tool to collect and examine information on various safety parameters. It requires a team of trained auditors (including local inhabitants) to walk through spaces such as streets, parks, roads, open areas etc. These areas are assessed both via observation as well as conversations with residents about safety issues. While all physical and social elements that impact a place's safety are identified, care is taken to include spots and areas that are frequented by women and children—bus stops, market places and parks. The safety audit method has been put to use in cities around the world since 1989 when it was first developed in Canada. The Safetipin app was used to conduct safety audits in Ranchi and Hazaribagh.

In both the cities, safety audits were conducted during September 2015 by a team of 15 people: 12 volunteers from Srijan Foundation and three members from Jagori and Safetipin. The audits were conducted between 5 and 10 in the evening.

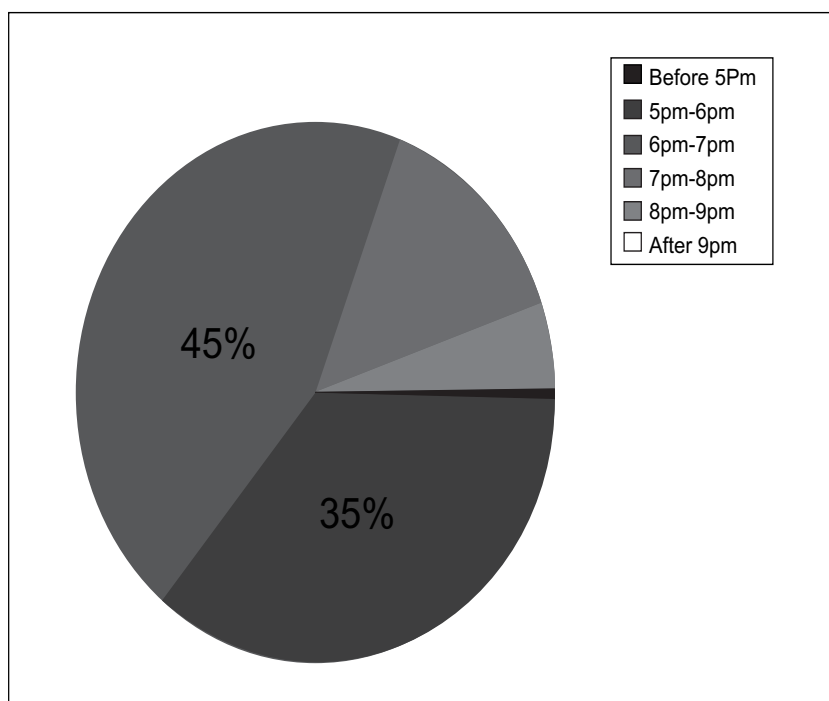


Map 1: Safety audit pins in Jharkhand

The map above shows pins from Ranchi and Hazaribagh that were created as a result of the safety audits there.

Of the 325 safety audit pins recorded in the two cities, 230 were from Ranchi and 95 from Hazaribagh. Several routes were strategically identified in both the cities; these include residential areas, popular markets, the university, cantonment, major routes and transportation hubs. This was done to look at all possible public spaces that offer insights into the city’s infrastructure and safety. In Ranchi, the eight routes that were selected for safety audits were Hatia, Station Road–Ashok Nagar, Church Road, Main Road, MG Road, Bairatu, Kanke and Circular Road. The five routes identified in Hazaribagh were Ranchi-Jamshedpur Road, Canary Hills, Nawabganj, Ranchi-Patna Road and CTS Colony.

The auditors collected data on the city’s infrastructure as well as asked people on the street about their feelings regarding safety.

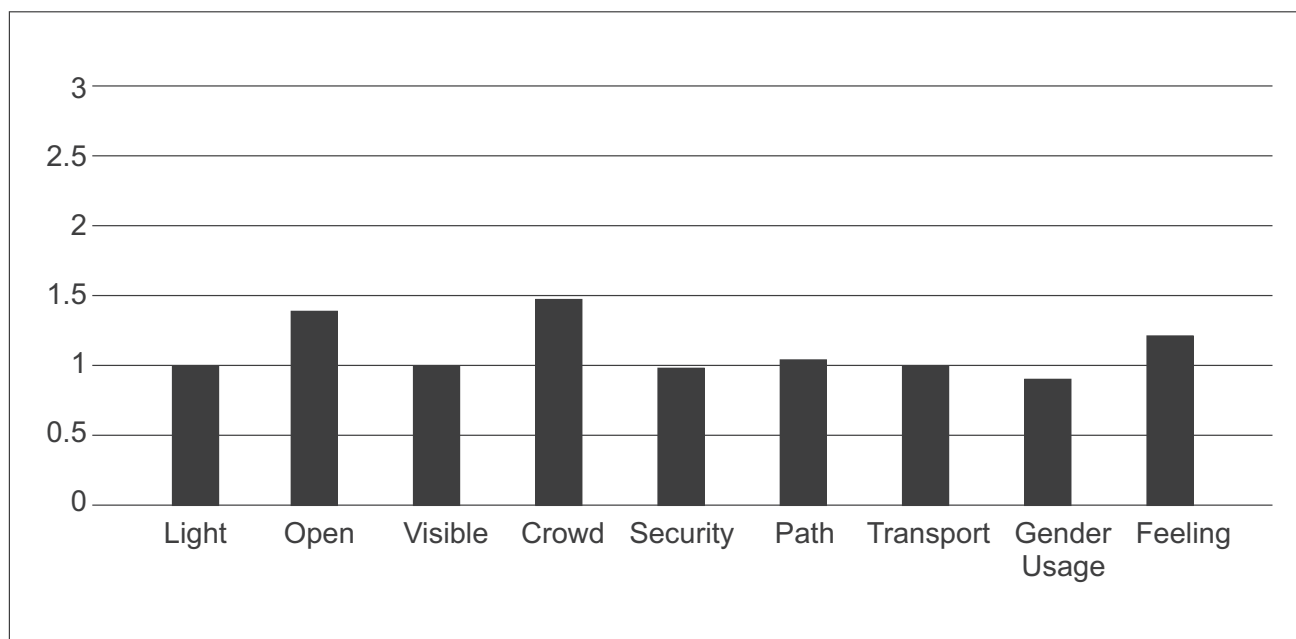


Graph 1: Day/night schedule of safety audits

Safety audits from Jharkhand convey that many public places that are safe and accessible during the day become unsafe and inaccessible after dusk. Therefore, as Graph 1 indicates, a majority of safety audits (94 per cent) were conducted between five and eight in the evening and five per cent audits were done after 8 p.m.

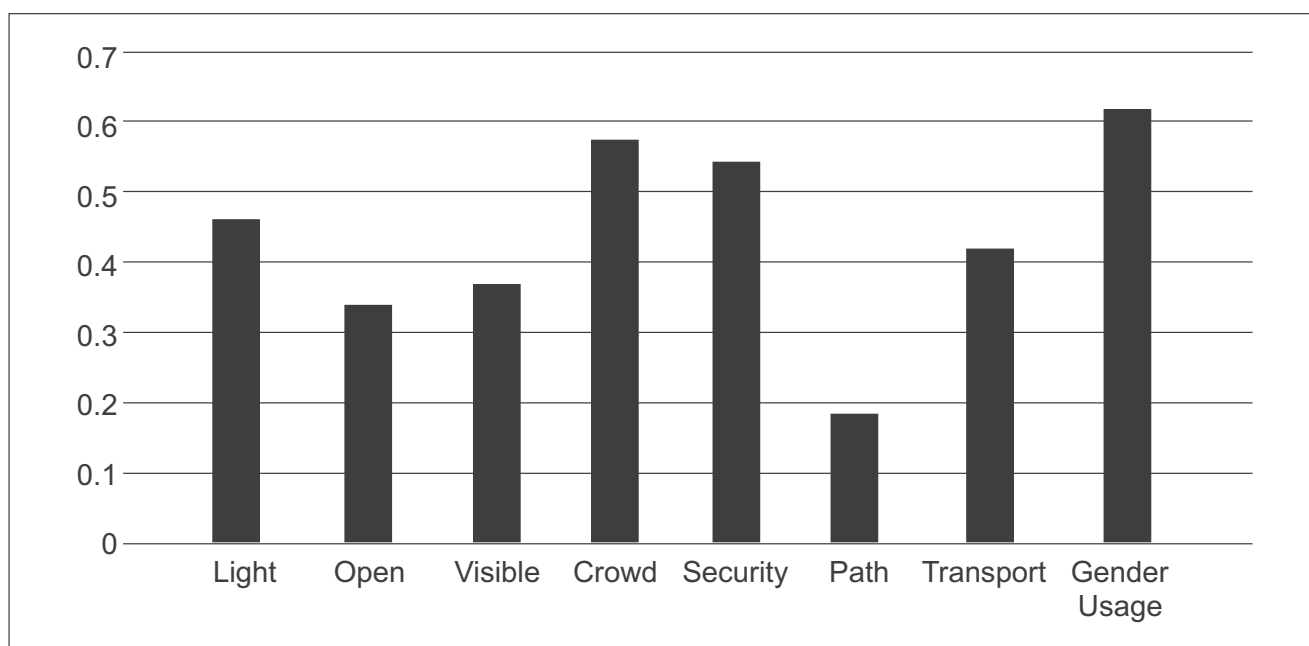
An overall analysis of Jharkhand places the State as unsafe for citizens, especially women and children. On a scale of 0-3, its average score on all safety audit parameters is poor.

Graph 2 indicates that except for the crowd factor (which has an average score), all other audit parameters are rated below average and poor. Gender-balanced crowd, visible public and private security, availability of public transport, visibility or eyes on the street and street lighting are especially low in Jharkhand.



Graph 2: Average score of safety audit parameters (Jharkhand)

Graph 3 (below) indicates that the feeling of safety is most impacted by gender-balanced crowd, presence of visible security, crowd and well-lit streets. This is followed by availability of public transport, eyes on the street and openness of the area. A good walk path however does not have a high bearing on the feeling of safety.



Graph 3: Correlation of safety audit parameters with the feeling of safety

When Graphs 2 and 3 are compared, it becomes clear that there is a need to improve streetlighting, security, availability of public transport as well as ensure a more gender-balanced crowd in public spaces.



## Safety audit findings from Ranchi

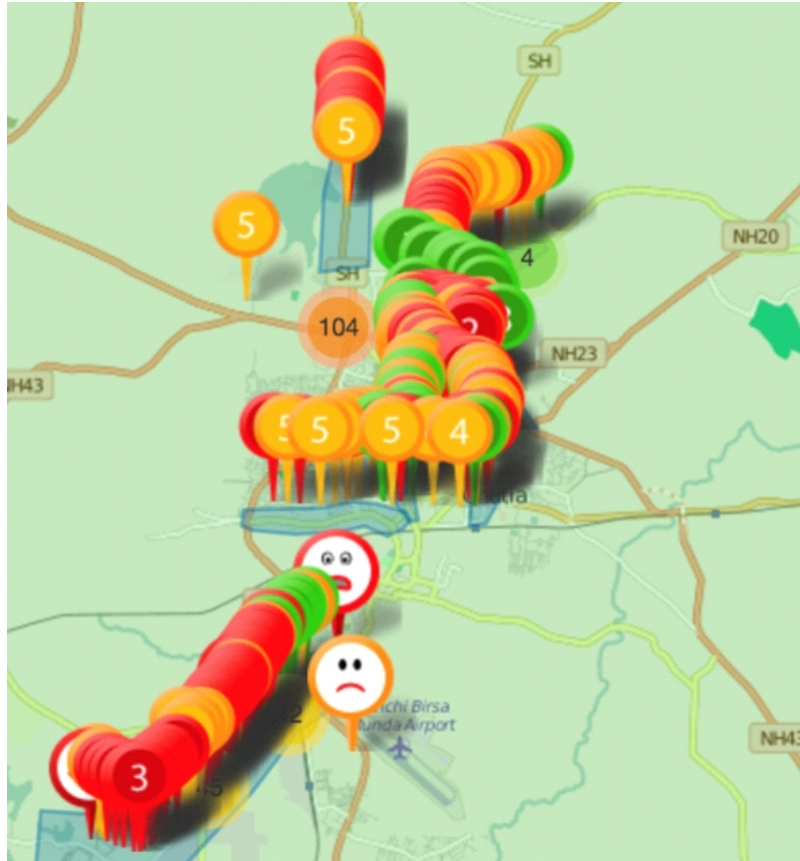
Ranchi attracted a wave of migrants especially after it was declared the capital of the new State of Jharkhand in the year 2000. Among the Tier III cities in India, Ranchi is one of those that generates the highest employment. It is also the third largest city in the State and its second most populous district (after Dhanbad). Besides employment, education is another reason that causes an influx of migrants from neighbouring cities into Ranchi. For a dynamic city such as Ranchi, its public safety credentials need much more attention.



Map 2: Safety audit parameters for Ranchi

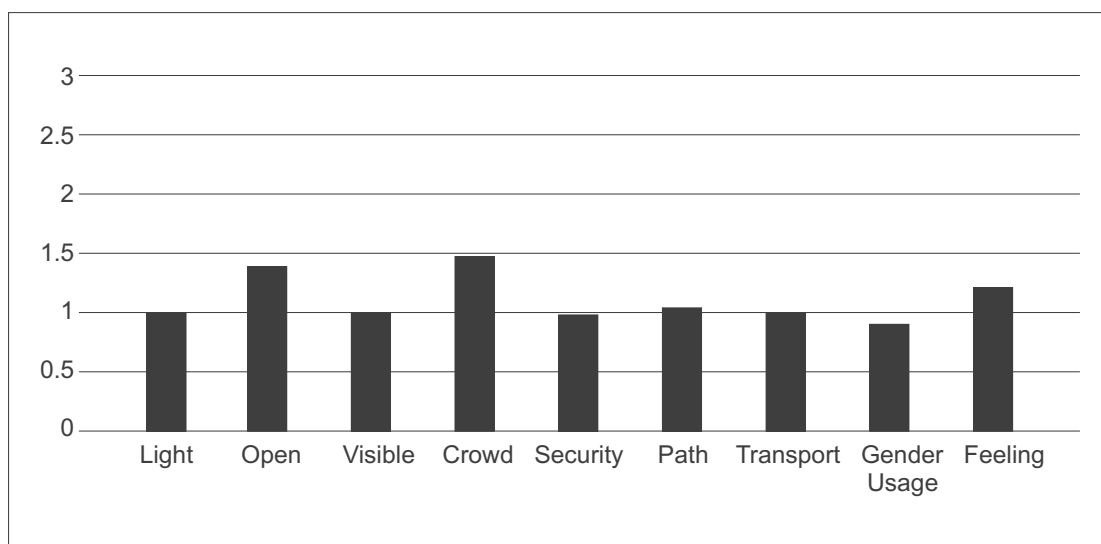
The set of four maps (Map 2) above visualize audit findings vis-à-vis four parameters: gender diversity, (public and private) security, lighting and public transportation.

The dark grey, light grey and white spots in the maps above indicate a rating of poor, average and good, respectively, with regard to the four parameters mentioned above. To analyse factors that have a higher impact on the feeling of safety, scores of each safety audit parameter were correlated with the auditors' 'feeling' of safety.



Map 3: Safety audit pins for Ranchi

As is evident from Map 3, Ranchi has few green pins (or, safe areas); a majority of pins on the safety audit are red (or, unsafe) and amber (or average safety).



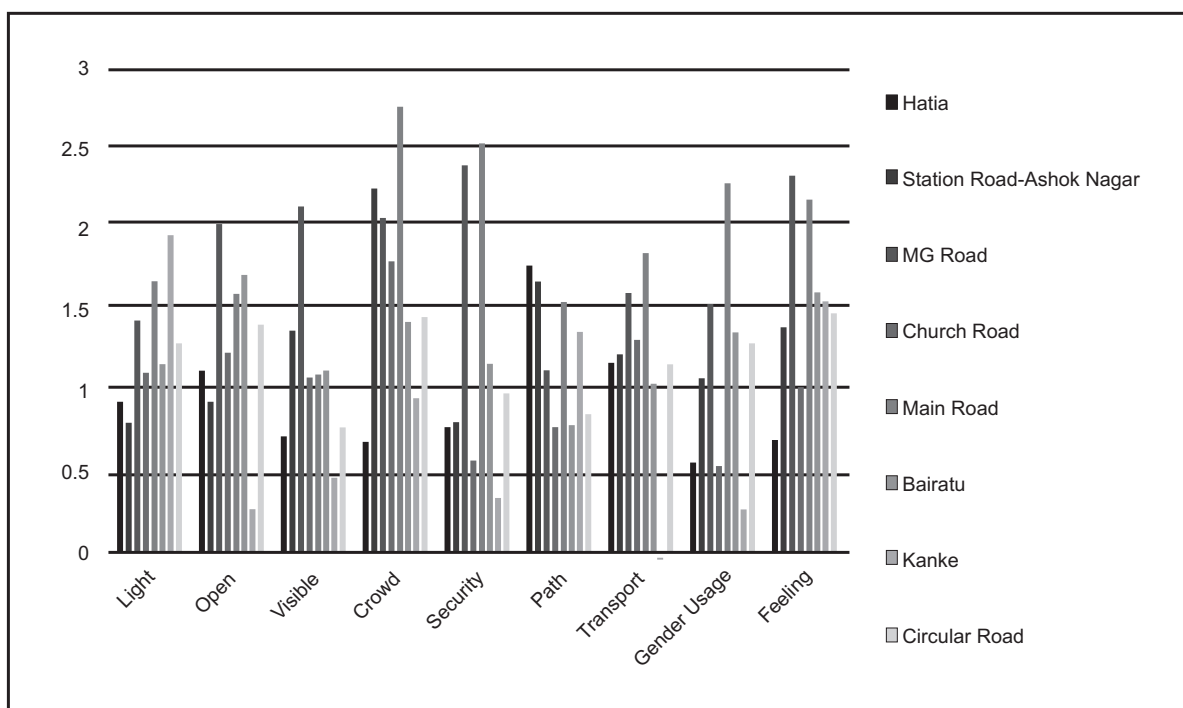
Graph 4: Average of parameters for Ranchi's safety

Graph 4 shows that all the parameters score below average in Ranchi: less than 1.5 on a graph where 3 is the highest score.

The findings of this analysis (Graph 4) are validated by the next result in Graph 5 that shows details of all the eight locations that were audited. Except for Main Road and MG Road, the rest of the areas

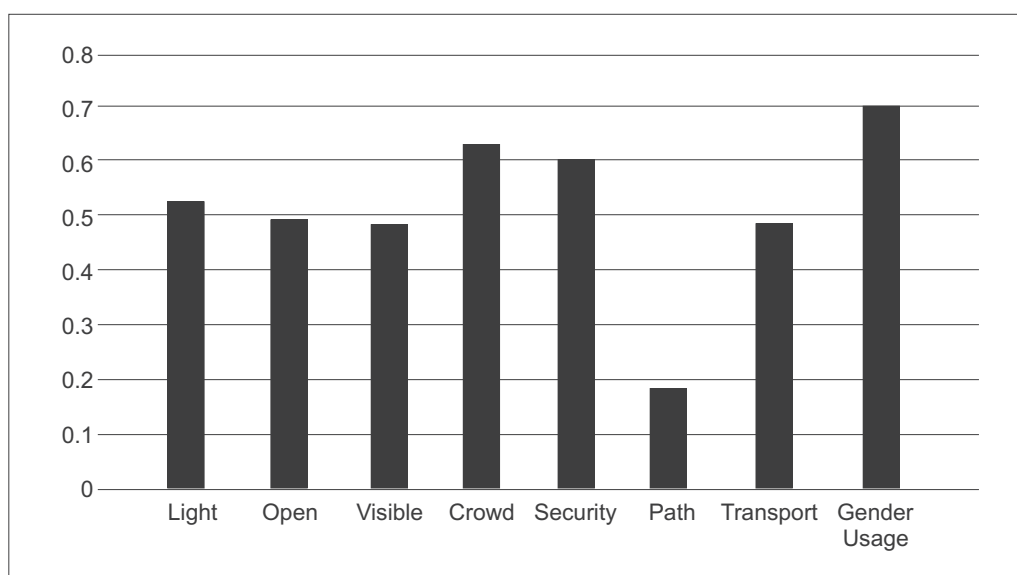


have average scores for visibility, security, gender usage and lighting. Even as Main Road and MG Road seem to be the safest areas of the city, Kanke is disturbingly unsafe with rather poor scores on all audit parameters. It is important to note that availability of public transport in Kanke is completely absent.



Graph 5: Average safety score for the eight identified locations of Ranchi

To further identify the factors that influence safety in public spaces, the feeling of safety was correlated with the rest of safety audit parameters.



Graph 6: Correlation of safety audit parameters with the feeling of safety

Graph 6 shows that the feeling of safety is higher when public spaces are populated, gender-balanced, well-lit and have security personnel. Public transport, the presence of ‘eyes on the street’ and openness follow next in the list of factors that add to the feeling of safety. The learning from these audits is that both public infrastructure as well as people’s presence in public areas impacts the feeling of safety.

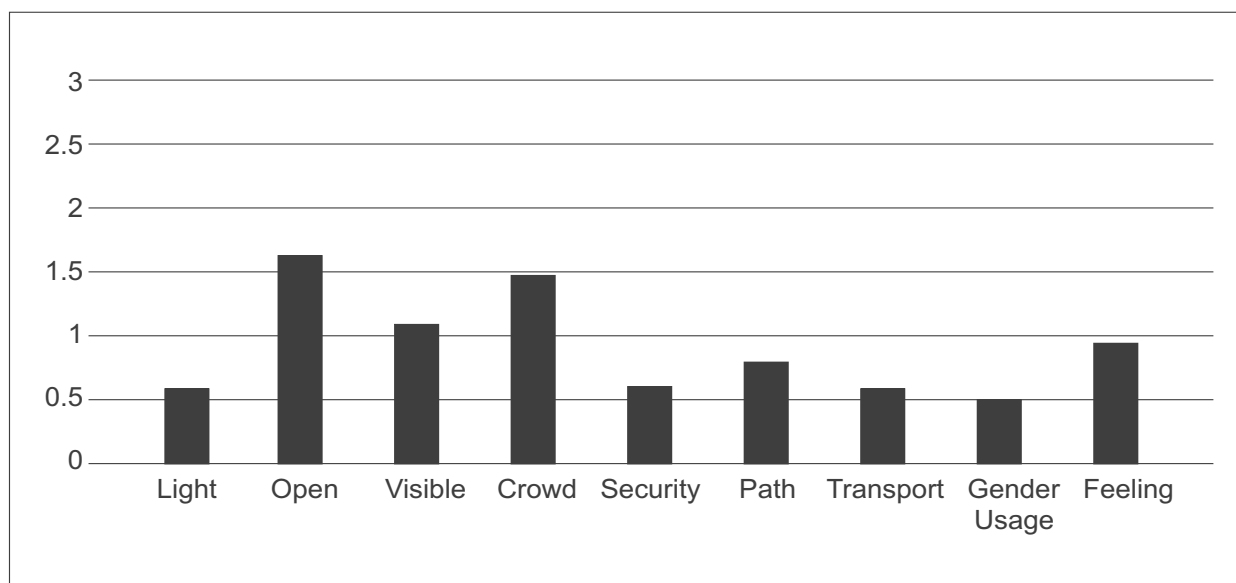
## Safety audit findings from Hazaribagh

Since Hazaribagh has the second highest coal reserve in Jharkhand, the city has come to be an industrial hub. It has drawn a sizeable population of migrants who settled in Hazaribagh for better employment opportunities.



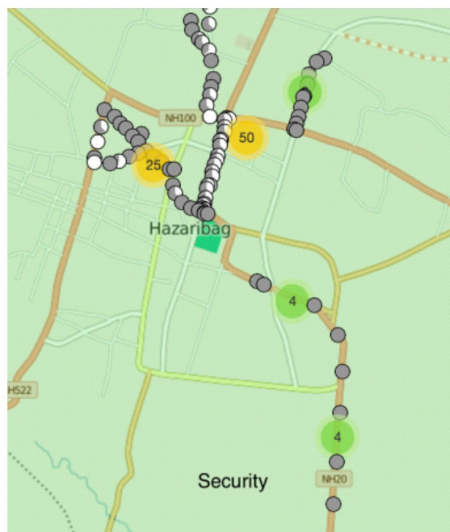
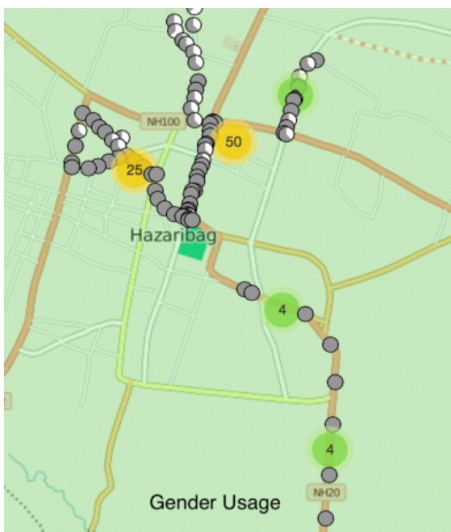
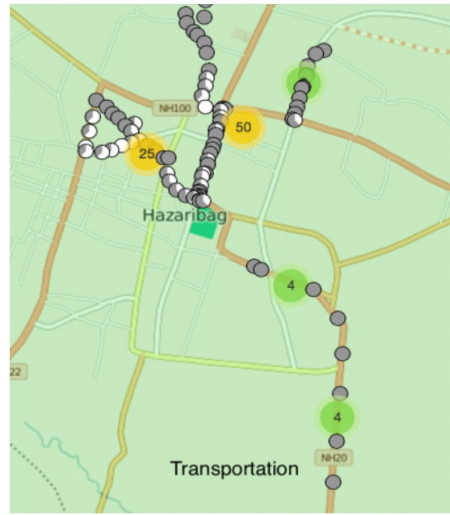
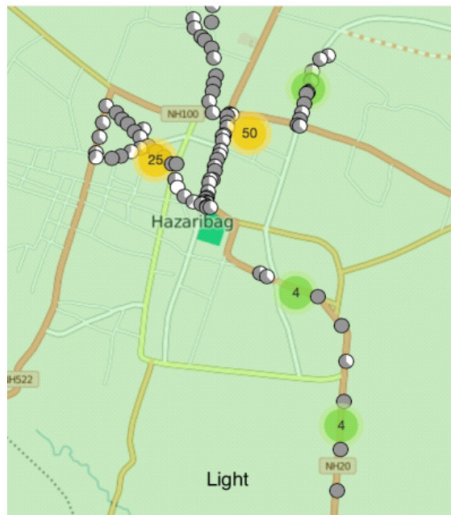
Map 4: Safety audit pins for Hazaribagh

The safety audit in Hazaribagh (Map 4) shows mostly red-coloured pins (a sign of unsafe areas) and few amber pins that suggest public spaces that are moderate in their safety and planning.



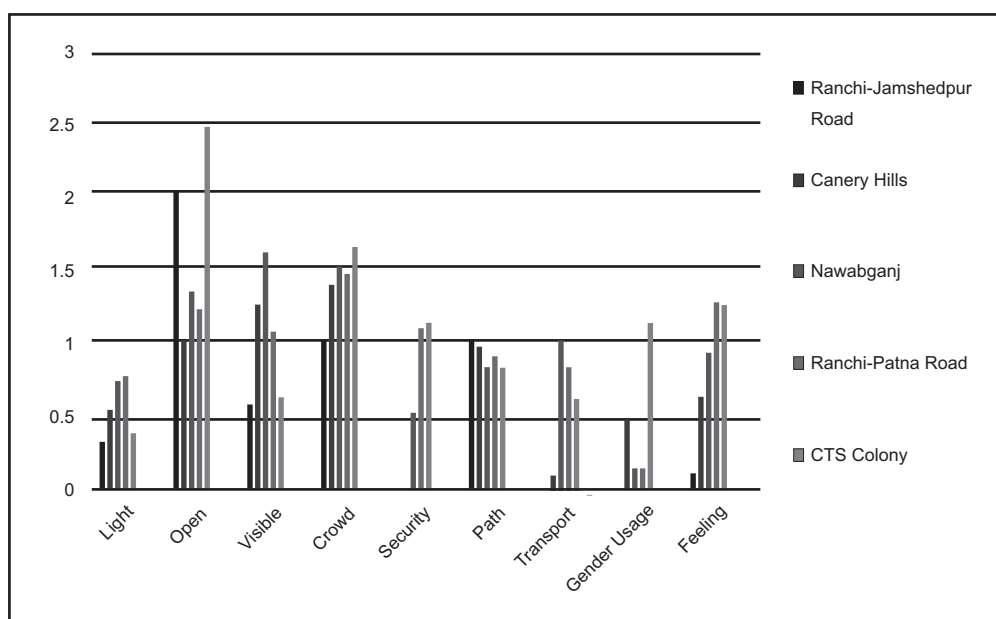
Graph 7: Average score of safety parameters for Hazaribagh

Graph 7 (above) shows that Hazaribagh scores largely below average on most safety parameters except openness. Gender usage, public transport, street lighting, security and walk paths are particularly unsatisfactory. It is no surprise then that the feeling of safety is poor.



Map 5: Visual presentation of safety audit parameters for Hazaribagh

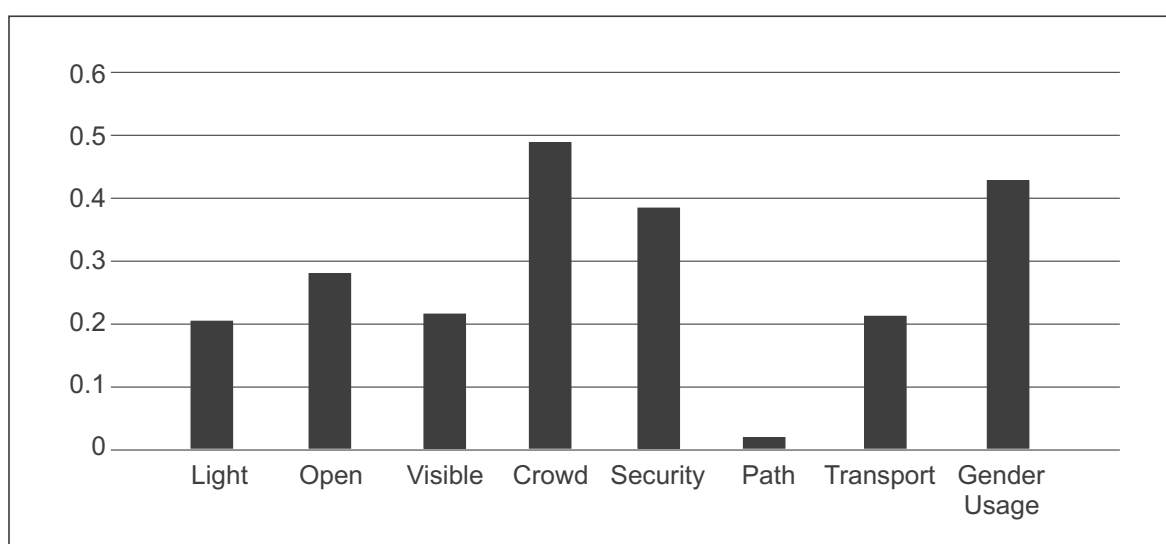
On the parameters of gender diversity, visible (public and private) security, lighting and availability of public transport (Map 5) for five neighbourhoods in Hazaribagh, the graph below (graph 8) offers some insights.



Graph 8: Average score of safety parameters in five locations of Hazaribagh

Graph 8 supports the findings of the safety audit. Factors such as walk path, security, gender usage, public transportation and lighting in all five areas are rather mediocre. It should be noted that there is no security or public transport, and not even many women seen on the Ranchi-Jamshedpur Road. Security is also missing from Canary Hills.

Of all the five areas, the Ranchi-Jamshedpur road emerges as the most unsafe, followed by Canary Hills and Nawabganj. Among all the areas audited in Hazaribagh, CTS Colony is the safest.



Graph 9: Correlation of safety audit parameters with the feeling of safety

As Graph 9 indicates, the presence of people (especially women) in public spaces and visible security has the most influence on the feeling of safety. This is followed by openness and availability of public transport, among others. Like in Ranchi, walk paths have the least influence over the feeling of safety.

## Section 6

### Overall Key Findings

#### Demography and migration

- Over 70 per cent respondents earn less than Rupees 10,000 per month
- There are more unmarried men (across age groups) than unmarried women, an indication that girls are married off early
- Younger women are better educated than their older counterparts; a majority of female respondents are home-makers and students
- Ranchi attracts more women for employment opportunities as compared to Hazaribagh
- Most migrants are males and belong to the 25-44 years age group

#### Mobility

- The 18-24 years age group is most mobile; a majority of them are students
- Nearly one-third respondents commute because of work
- Almost three-fourth respondents walk to their workplace; non-shared auto-rickshaws are the most used form of transport
- Most women spend less than 30 minutes on their commute to work; more than two-thirds travel during daylight

#### Factors and perceptions regarding safety and harassment of women

- Among female respondents, nearly 48 per cent in Ranchi and 41 per cent in Hazaribagh see their city as unsafe or very unsafe
- Among other forms of safety risks, sexual harassment is perceived as most rampant
- Poor lighting, crowded public spaces and poorly maintained open public spaces are perceived as safety risks
- Men dealing with or consuming alcohol and anti-social elements are seen as prominent threats
- Women, especially the 18-24 year olds, are seen as most vulnerable
- 15 per cent men in Ranchi and 33 per cent in Hazaribagh pointed to women's clothes as a factor

#### Witnesses' (male and female) accounts of sexual harassment of women in public places

- More than a quarter of respondents have witnessed violence in the past one year
- Over 50 per cent of respondents witnessed incidents of verbal and visual violence during day time and nearly 25 per cent during evening/dusk
- Verbal, visual, physical violence and stalking (in this order) are most common in both cities



- Sites where sexual violence was witnessed:
  - \* market places/malls, auto/bus stops and public transport (Ranchi)
  - \* market places/malls and schools/colleges (Hazaribagh)
- In Hazaribagh, 79 per cent named streets as the most common sites of sexual violence whereas 82 per cent respondents in Hazaribagh pointed to roads
- For over 70 per cent cases of sexual violence that were witnessed, 17-30 year old men were seen as perpetrators; over two-third acts of sexual violence were perpetrated by men in groups
- Nearly a quarter of female witnesses had intervened or responded, whereas over half of female respondents were asked by their family to not deal with situations of sexual violence
- Very low levels of police reporting. In the past one year, among the 211 women and 57 men who witnessed violence against women in a public place in Ranchi, eight women and one man approached the police. In Hazaribagh, of the 167 women and 23 men who witnessed violence against women in a public place, five women and one man reported it to the police
- More than half female respondents in Ranchi and nearly two-thirds in Hazaribagh informed their parents about incidents of sexual violence they witnessed. Of these, over 60 per cent received support/guidance. Nearly a quarter did not share the incidents with their families for fear of restrictions on their mobility

## **Survivors' account of sexual harassment in public places**

- Verbal and visual forms of harassment most prevalent and occur mostly during the day
- Market places, public transport, schools/colleges and street corners seen as most unsafe
- Most sexual harassment committed by 17-30 year old men; men in the age group 30-45 years also seen as perpetrators
- Nearly half the survivor-respondents in Ranchi and 70 per cent in Hazaribagh "ignored the incident and did nothing"
- Only one survivor each in Ranchi and Hazaribagh approached the police
- Reasons why survivors of sexual violence did not approach the police:
  - \* the incident was not serious (reported by nearly two-third survivors)
  - \* the issue got resolved (reported by 12 per cent in Ranchi and 18 per cent in Hazaribagh)
  - \* negative perception of the police (reported by 22 per cent in Ranchi and 18 per cent in Hazaribagh)
- 60 per cent survivors shared it with their family members; of these, nearly 60 per cent received support/guidance
- 27 per cent respondents in Ranchi and 33 per cent in Hazaribagh did not share incidents of sexual violence with their parents for fear of restrictions on their mobility; 13 per cent parents in Ranchi and 5 per cent parents in Hazaribagh responded with restrictions on their daughters' mobility.

## Knowledge of resources, laws and policies

- Almost all men (95-100 percent) in both the cities knew that sexual assault or rape, violent physical attack and physical forms of sexual violence like touching, groping etc. were a crime under the law. Awareness among female respondents on the subject was lower: 66 per cent women in Ranchi and 79 per cent in Hazaribagh knew that verbal harassment was a crime.
- 86 per cent women in Ranchi and 97 per cent in Hazaribagh reported knowledge about police as a resource for sexual harassment/assault, followed by *mahila thana* and helpline.
- More respondents in Ranchi (than in Hazaribagh) had access to these resources
- 268 women in Ranchi and 135 in Hazaribagh claimed to know about the helpline, but only seven women in Ranchi and five in Hazaribagh knew the helpline number
- Few women in both the cities could name NGOs/CBOs as resources in cases of sexual violence
- Most women and men in Ranchi and Hazaribagh agreed that sexual violence incidents should be reported to the police
- A majority of men held the community and government responsible for ending sexual harassment/assault; 35 per cent of women in Ranchi and 29 per cent in Hazaribagh stated that women were responsible for it
- In Ranchi nearly two-third respondents felt that government was doing little to address sexual harassment/assault. In Hazaribagh, 28 percent women and 41 percent men thought so too.

## Section 7

### Key Recommendations

Since the research study used four data collection tools to reach out to a large and diverse section of citizens in Jharkhand, it gathered a range of rich insights in its sweep vis-à-vis sexual harassment and violence against women and girls in public places. These largely reflect citizens' perceptions about public safety and risk as well as gaps and deficits in services and infrastructure. The study's overview of Jharkhand reveals safety issues especially with regard to public transport, visible (public and private) security, street lighting and policing. The usage of many public spaces in the State is gender-skewed, making them unsafe for women and children as also generating the feeling of unease and/or fear among women and girls.

Another key dimension of the findings of the study is the normalization of such violence: the belief that sexual harassment/violence against women is a given, inevitable reality and therefore should be endured. Unfortunately, this sort of normalization is also practiced by some women and girls who accept public violence against themselves as part of culture. In fact, as the study reveals, their decisions to not raise their voice against harassment or violence, to not share it with their family members or the police are all pointers to an attitude of acceptance.

The study has helped collect concrete ideas to address issues that have been raised. The following recommendations are drawn from findings of all four research tools.

- **Urban planning and design of public spaces**

A rather fundamental step towards public safety is taken at the urban planning and design stages. At this phase, public spaces need to be aligned with the needs of varied constituencies of the public such as women, children, the elderly or the differently abled.

With regard to Ranchi, some specific recommendations have been made. The safety audits show that there are many parts of the city that female auditors found difficult to access or move around in. Accessibility of all public spaces needs to be looked into. In the case of the innovative pink autorickshaws, women drivers struggle to find parking spaces as well as toilets. Designing demarcated parking bays for pink autos with toilets will help both female drivers as well as their passengers. Allocating space for Sulabh toilets at short distances has also been suggested by some respondents. Moreover, designing broad roads and/or broadening roads will not only help manage traffic better but also carve space for hawkers who aid in keeping a vigil. Allotting spaces for police check posts at a number of junctions is another recommendation.

- **Provision and management of urban infrastructure**

If the establishment of a public facility is the first step, its maintenance is the next. Safety audits reveal how gaps in a city's public infrastructure actually influence the feeling of safety experienced by respondents.

The recommendations are based on deficits in city infrastructure. For example, some neighbourhoods of Ranchi and Hazaribagh had street light poles but these were found to be non-functional. Many respondents mentioned dark streets, corners and roads as determinants in both crime against women and their perception of safety. Dark areas tend to be dominated by men, thereby keeping women and



girls at bay. Improvement of street lighting has featured as high priority in the suggestions made. Sex workers, students and other women in paid employment raised the issue of poorly maintained public toilets.

- **Public transport and related services**

Substantive evidence has emerged from this study that public transport in Jharkhand is a cesspool of sexual harassment. Since a large number of girls and women use public buses and autorickshaws (including shared autos), this service needs much improvement.

The reach of some modes of public transport needs to be expanded because not all areas in and around the cities are connected. Pockets where working class women or female students are concentrated should be linked through buses etc. It has been suggested that the transport needs of rural women who travel to the city daily in packed open trolleys be considered. These women are often picked up by employment agents at Kantatoli Chowk, Lalpur Chowk or Piska. Hazaribagh's Ranch-Jamshedpur road sees little public transport. There are areas in Ranchi too, such as Kanke, where public transport is not available. In fact, Kanke has scored rather poorly on all parameters of the safety audit. Besides provision of many forms of public transport, these also have to be systematized and regularized.

Gender sensitization and training of bus drivers, conductors and auto drivers as well as close monitoring of their behavior is an urgent requirement. Conducting pre-employment background checks of drivers and conductors, creating a written code of conduct for accountability of drivers and conductors, employing one female conductor for every public bus, displaying helpline numbers on buses and offering technical training for female auto drivers are some other recommendations.

- **Policing**

Even though the police are thought of as the first point of assistance in times of a crisis, girls and women in Jharkhand are wary of contacting the police. The police force of Jharkhand, including policewomen, need to win the trust and confidence of the female citizenry. Without awareness of and sensitization towards patriarchy, its explicit and subtle mechanisms and attention to groups such as single women, the police may not be able to deal effectively with sexual harassment and violence towards women. As the traffic police are often the first to reach survivors of violence, they need to be included in gender sensitization programmes too. All trainings should also include the latest amendments in criminal law.

Suggestions about better policing, increase in the number of police personnel especially beat constables and police - women, installation of CCTV cameras at strategic points such as bus stops and auto stands, and patrolling by female police officers have been made. The police force should revisit its attitudes towards sex workers, one of the most marginalised groups of girls and women. During the FGDs, sex workers suggested more engagement with the police via women-only police stations and regular patrolling by PCR vans.

Data shows that even in well-used and populated areas, security is low. The presence of visible security could offer women some confidence, especially the large number of women who walk back home from work such as migrant workers and domestic workers, among others.

Locating the *mahila thanas* at the village and block levels and not just at the district headquarters can certainly help expedite support. For example, a *mahila thana* in Ormanjhi can cater to women from its surrounding areas too. Other recommendations for *mahila thana* include enrolment of more policewomen, posting of a male police officer for visits (to places such as Bundu or Tamar) and provision of more vehicles, including a civil vehicle for certain situations.

- **Women's accommodation**

As indicated by the household survey and FGDs, a large percentage of young girls who come to the two cities for work or education require safe accommodation such as women's hostels. Public and prominent display of 24X7 helpline numbers around women's lodges as well as check posts at short distances from their lodges have been suggested.

- **Legislation, justice and support to victims**

Survivors of sexual violence require a whole compass of support systems that should be readily accessible to them: starting from emotional counselling to social, legal and financial aid. The State of Jharkhand has some infrastructure for the provision of certain support services; these are offered via the *Mahila Koshang* at the DSP's office, the State Women's Commission, the State and district legal aid societies, and women's helpline numbers. However, based on feedback collected during this study, legal and para-legal services need improvement and personnel require greater knowledge of legal amendments and periodic training in issues of gender, legal measures and rules so as to strengthen organisational deliverables. It has been suggested that if sexual harassment committees be created in government departments and private organisations, *Mahila Samakhya* could offer support by acting as the third party.

- **Education**

Since many norms and attitudes around gender and its rights and wrongs get formed early in our lives, it is important for their unlearning and transformative action to also begin early. Imparting lessons against sexual harassment and violence is a good first step but an insufficient one; these lessons need to be accompanied by parallel sessions on understanding the construction of gender and recognising patriarchy. Students would then be able to spot the presence and performance of gender in their own lives. Trainings on women's safety for students in schools and colleges as well as teachers need to be held at regular frequency.

As is evident from this research, many young female students reported greater surveillance, controls and restrictions on their mobility and freedoms as a result of heightened sexual violence. Narratives of women's 'honour' and shame/stigma need to be dissected in wide-ranging deliberations. The teaching community and parents/guardians too need to be educated about this unfair trade-off between women's freedoms and crime. Setting up of school-based anti-sexual harassment committees that comprise students, parents and teachers is a recommendation drawn from the study.

- **Information technology**

In an age of technological breakthroughs that have made some aspects of our lives simpler and quicker, public safety too has benefited tremendously. Specifically, gauging public safety has become easier and faster, its process more accurate, sophisticated, transparent as well as democratic. From mobile

phone-based emergency apps that help women send out alerts for help to smart phones that enable comprehensive safety audits of cities, these should be incorporated by State authorities in their day-to-day work on public safety for information gathering, for example, about non-functional streets lights or feedback vis-à-vis public services. The city-wide audits for Ranchi and Hazaribagh have been done using Safetipin, a mobile-based safety audit app that is being used extensively by citizens' groups, local governments, private companies and the police. Since Hazaribagh scores largely below average on most safety parameters, the app can be used to carry out a detailed study of all its neighbourhoods to identify concerns.

- **Public awareness and sensitisation**

One of the most effective ways of creating and maintaining safe public spaces is through consciousness-raising among the public. From commonplace objectification and sexualisation of women and girls as well as the disrespect they face, only a paradigm shift in attitudes will guarantee any real and long-term change. For example, some women and many men rationalised sexual harassment and violence against women via women's clothes, make-up, gait and/or bodily demeanour. Many shared that they preferred to silently endure harassment for fear of men's retaliation. Pink autorickshaw drivers face the anger and ridicule of their male counterparts. These examples point to the need for a socio-cultural overhaul of our understanding of women's identities and autonomy via regular public campaigns that target not just boys and men, but also girls and women, the young and old, the public and those in positions of authority. These should not only be limited to women's safety concerns but touch upon human rights and legislation. A wide approach to sensitisation can address bystanders and initiate reflection on community intervention or the lack of it, the role of the family and other support structures, awareness of masculinity and femininity among others.

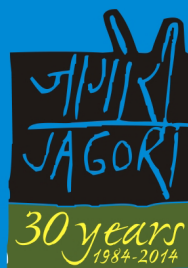
Respondents of the study recommend regular sensitization/awareness drives for the public, creation and dissemination of pictorial messages against violence against women, and placement of messages against sexual harassment on the covers of children's notebooks.

## Annexure 1

Jagori				
Focus Group Discussions conducted in Jharkhand, July-August 2015				
S.No.	FGD Constituency	Dates	Facilitator	Participating organisations
<b>RANCHI</b>				
1	College Going girls_ RANCHI	27 <sup>th</sup> July	Pooja	Srijan Foundation/students from Ranchi University
2	Young Boys_ RANCHI	30th July	Rajiv	Srijan Foundation/ students from XISS, Ranchi University
3	Single Women_ Ranchi	5th August	Kalyani Meena	ENSS
4	Construction workers and daily wage eamers	29th July	Kalyani Meena	Mahila Housing Sewa Trust
5	Domestic Workers_ RANCHI	1st August	Kalyani Meena	Prerana Bharati
6	Female Sex Workers_ RANCHI	29th July	Pooja	Srijan Foundation
7	Naari Adalat	1 <sup>st</sup> August	Pooja	Srijan Foundation, Mahila Samakhya
<b>HAZARIBAGH</b>				
1	Construction Workers_ HAZARIBAGH	2 <sup>nd</sup> August	Kalyani Meena	Mahila Mukti Sansthan
2	Single Women Hazaribagh	4th August	Kalyani Meena	ENSS
3	Adolescent Boys_Hazarigabh	3 rd August	Rajiv	Srijan Foundation
4	Adolescent Girls_Hazarigabh	3rd August	Pooja	Srijan Foundation

## Annexure 2

JAGORI			
Key Informant Interviews			
Sl. No.	Name	Designation	Date of Interview
1	Dr.Binny Azad	State Coordinator, Ekal Nari Sashakti Sanghatan	21.09.2015
2	Gudia	Pink Autorikshaw driver	21.09.2015
3	Sanjay Srivastava	State Coordinator, Childline and Women's Helpline and Lecturer, Xavier Institute of Social Sciences (XISS) Ranchi	21.09.2015
4	Vidyawati	City Coordinator, Women's Helpline, Ranchi	21.09.2015
5	Mahua Maji	Chairperson, Jharkhand Women's Commission	22.09.2015
6	Raj Shree Verma	Lecturer, XISS and Placement Coordinator	22.09.2015
7	Rosalia	Mahila Koshang member	22.09.2015
8	Aarti Behra	Coordinator, Green Women Autos	23.09.2015
9	Aprajita Mishra	State Head, Maitri NGO	23.09.2015
10	Belamdena Purti	Federation Leader, PRADAN, Khunti	24.09.2015
11	Deepika Prasad	Mahila Thana SHO	23.09.2015
12	Dinesh Soni	State Head, Diesel Auto Union	23.09.2015
13	Kishor K Mantri	Coordinator, City Bus Service	23.09.2015
14	Smita Gupta	State Programme Director, Mahila Samakhya	24.09.2015



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**Helpline: 91-11-26692700, 8800996640**