



# SAFE CITIES FOR WOMEN IN BANGLADESH

Women's group in Bangladesh.

## Empowering grassroots women's organisations to engage with local and national platforms and advocate for safe cities

### Project overview:

Around the world, women face sexual violence and harassment when accessing public spaces. Bangladesh is no different, with an estimated 90% of women and girls between the ages of 10-18 having experienced sexual violence and unwanted physical contact in streets, markets and public transport. Government policy in Bangladesh does not adequately tackle this issue, with no specific laws to combat sexual harassment in public spaces.

Bangladesh's urban landscapes have also been constructed without women, or women's needs, included in the design process. As a result, vital safety measures like adequate lighting, sanitation and hygiene facilities, safe recreational areas and transport facilities, and 'women friendly' police have been undervalued, or ignored. With an estimated 70 out of every 100 people in Bangladesh expected to live in a city in 2050, the lack of safe urban areas for women will become an even more critical issue.

### Some of the key project activities and outputs:

In strengthening and supporting women's organisations and coalitions, this project supports local and national-level campaigning and advocacy for laws and policies that prevent and address violence against women and girls in the workplace, educational institutions and public spaces. This includes:

- Strengthening and supporting women's organisations and coalitions to mobilise and campaign;
- Supporting women to engage in dialogue with duty bearers to demand for legislative changes and comprehensive protection to VAWG;
- Building consensus on implementing anti-sexual harassment laws across government agencies, private sector, educational institutions, women's groups, and other NGOs.

### Project duration:

February 2018 - December 2018

### Supported by:

The Intrepid Foundation

### In partnership with:

ActionAid Bangladesh

### Location:

Dhaka, Bangladesh

### Project objectives:

- Strengthen women's coalitions and organisations
- Increase awareness on women's rights
- Promote women-led campaigning and advocacy for safer urban spaces and improved prevention and responses to violence

### Impact:

These women-led campaigns in Bangladesh are lobbying for policies that protect the rights of women and girls, building women's movements that are demanding more gender-responsive public services, and strengthening women's engagement with local, national platforms to advocate for safer urban spaces.



**actionaid**