

## Participatory Safety Walk Guide

<p><b>Purpose</b></p>	<p>To enable child and adolescent girls and boys to identify and articulate the safety concerns and problems they face in certain geographical areas and in accessing services. Where safe and appropriate to do so, this tool empowers them to communicate directly with service providers and other duty bearers regarding their safety needs and to engage in joint problem solving and decision-making regarding safety and protection.</p>
<p><b>Sources of information</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children and Adolescents who regularly use the area that is being assessed <i>(Note: Be aware of sex, age, and disability considerations, sex and age groups, and safety concerns for a group of girls seen walking together in the community taking notes and discussing issues in public with female staff.)</i></li> <li>• Service providers and decision-makers</li> <li>• If capacity and expertise allows, similar exercises can be done with caregivers and CBCPC committee members (disaggregated by gender) to better understand perceptions of safety between children, adolescent girls and boys, and their caregivers).</li> </ul>
<p><b>Additional information</b></p>	<p>The safety walk should take approximately three hours. If the area to be covered is too large to cover in this time, consider dividing it up into smaller areas and having more than one team work at the same time in different parts of the camp or community.</p> <p>A safety walk can also be conducted to assess one 1) route (e.g., to collect firewood, to go to a shop or to school), 2) facility/amenity, such as a market, school, distribution areas or WASH facility, and/or 3) environmental risk such as (construction sites, open water, Excavations / sand-mining, excavations or pits, traffic area).</p> <p>Where safe to do so, obtain visual records of unsafe areas/facilities to use when explaining the problem to others, for example in a community safety planning workshop.</p> <p>More time will need to be allocated when working with women with disabilities, elderly women or any group where the members speak a variety of languages.</p>
<p><b>Parts</b></p>	<p><b>Part A: Steps in Conducting a Safety Walk</b></p> <p><b>Part B: Tips for Conducting a Safety Walk</b></p>

## Part A: Steps in Conducting a Safety Walk<sup>1</sup>

### Step 1: Plan the safety walk

1.1 Identify the purpose of and route for the safety walk. The route should be decided with children, girls and boys from the community and should include areas they have identified through focus groups, key informant interviews or other means as unsafe (such as areas where incidents of injuries and death, sexual harassment or assault have taken place, areas that girls and/or boys avoid, and other areas that are considered risky or dangerous).

Consider a practice walk with a few staff and facilitators to refine questions and identify and mitigate Identify and mitigate any potential risks that conducting a safety audit and associated visibility might create for those participating in it

The size and number of areas chosen for assessment will determine how many teams will be needed to conduct the walk. For example:

- If the walk is focused on one location only, such as the school, only one team will be required.
- If the walk is assessing a whole camp or community, it will be necessary to recruit multiple teams based on the size of the area to be assessed.

1.2 Identify 6 – 8 girls and boys (separate group) per team who regularly use the route and/or facilities that are going to be assessed. **Ensure a capacitated and well-trained pair of female staff (who are skilled in psychosocial support, referral mechanisms, and know how to manage disclosures – if it occurs) accompany the children (girls and boys) and facilitate the exercise during the walk.** For example:

- If the purpose of the walk is to understand safety issues for children (girls and boys) travelling to and while at school, identify girls who attend that school.
- If the purpose of the walk is to understand safety issues associated with females' access to and use of WASH facilities, identify females of different ages to participate.
- If the purpose of the walk is to assess the environment risk for children, identify children of different ages to participate. For example: the possibility to explore the risks children face with when going to collect firewood.

1.3 If the purpose of the safety walk is to inform duty bearers about safety issues and advocate for solutions to them, make sure one or two representatives from relevant authorities or agencies are present. For example, a safety audit of WASH facilities should include a representative from the authority managing the site/community and a representative from the agency responsible for WASH services.

1.4 Make sure each team is briefed on the purpose of the activity, the route and/or locations they will be visiting. Make a rough map of the route to be covered and explain the issues and the route to the group.

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from ActionAid International, *Making Cities and Urban Spaces Safe for Women and Girls: Safety Audit Participatory Toolkit*, AAI, Johannesburg, 2013.

1.5 Ensure each team has a team leader or facilitator who will lead the process. Also designate someone to take notes and to work with the team leader to consolidate the information.

1.6 Consider how results will be disseminated to minimize risks to any individuals involved and the community at large

## Step 2: Conduct the safety walk – 2 hours

2.1 As a group, follow the route identified, and ask participants to identify locations where they have safety concerns and why. If appropriate, at each location identified by participants, stop and discuss why they feel unsafe in this area. If not appropriate to stop and discuss, save time in a safe space for women and girls to private discuss observations once the walk is finished. The following discussion questions may be helpful:

- *What is your first reaction to this place?*
- *What three words best describe this area?*
- *How well-lit is the area? Are there spaces which are poorly lit? (Mark on the map where there is lighting and where it is dark.)*
- *Does this make you feel safe/unsafe? Why? Are there times when you feel safe or times when it makes you feel unsafe?*
- *Are there a lot of people using this area?*
- *If so, what are they doing (e.g., walking, working, meeting)?*
- *Does this make you feel safe/unsafe? Why?*
- *Are there particular spaces where people/children could hide?*
- *Does this make you feel safe/unsafe? Why?*
- *Are there certain groups of people hanging around who make you feel unsafe? Who are they?*
- *What is their sex? (e.g., groups of young men)*
- *Why are they hanging around?*
- *Why do they make you feel unsafe? Why?*
- *Are community leaders/ authority figures present and visible in the area?*
- *Does this make you feel safe/unsafe? Why?*
- *Would you know where to go for help?*
- *Are there any other things about this space that makes you feel unsafe?*

2.2 If appropriate, take photos of the site/area. These may be helpful for explaining the problem and context to others and for monitoring changes.

2.3 If appropriate and possible, use simple mobile apps to record the GPS coordinates as well, such as this one:

<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.freemium.android.apps.gps.coordinates>

2.4 After the discussion, mark the area on the map. Consider using different colours or symbols to highlight areas where participants feel very unsafe, quite unsafe, or safe.

## Step 3: Debrief and identify next steps – 1 hour

3.1 Immediately after the exercise, hold a short meeting to debrief with the staff team. Facilitate a discussion on:

- What participants observed during the walk;
- Key safety concerns identified;
- Possible solutions to the problems; and
- Next steps. For example, if representatives from authorities and service providers are present, identify what actions and follow-up they will take and by when to implement solutions.
  - Ensure a mechanism for following up and monitoring potential solutions and timelines

3.2 Document the issues and next steps, and use the information to inform:

- Child protection programming;
- Immediate and longer-term actions that can be taken to increase safety and reduce safety risks;
- Future assessments and monitoring/evaluation tools and approaches;
- Advocacy and coordination within the Child Protection Sub-Sector and with other sectors.

## Part B: Tips for Safety Walks

### What to take

- Paper and pens/pencils
- Maps
- Red, orange and green stickers to mark safe/unsafe areas on map

### Tips for facilitators

- Provide refreshments and time for creating a friendly atmosphere that promotes dialogue and makes participants feel welcome and at ease with the facilitators and with one another.
- Ensure each participant has safe transportation to and from the meeting point.
- Take notes to document positive features as well as problem areas.
- Encourage participants to:
  - Stay together so that each person is listened to and heard; remember, note-takers cannot note what they have not heard.
  - Voice their personal opinion about an area.
  - Respect what others say; remember, each person's experience of an area is different, and the goal of the group is to note each person's opinion about an area.
  - Be mindful of the person taking notes; speak loudly, simply and slowly.
  - Avoid making negative comments such as "Nothing ever gets done."
- Remember that sometimes a place is so poorly designed that there may not be any satisfactory solutions – only measures that will make the area a little better. It is still important to note that there is a problem.
- Take notes on everything, including comments on the process of the walk itself.