

FIFTH UN WOMEN SAFE CITIES AND SAFE PUBLIC SPACES GLOBAL LEADERS' FORUM: PROCEEDINGS REPORT

Rabat, Morocco
February 2020



SAFE CITIES
AND SAFE
PUBLIC SPACES

UN WOMEN GLOBAL FLAGSHIP PROGRAMME



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The event was a great success given the range of commitments and contributions made by many people and institutions.

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We appreciate the contribution of all delegates who attended the Forum for generously sharing their insights and expertise, including from: local, regional/state and national governments, grassroots women's groups/ organizations, UN Agencies, specialized NGOs on women's rights and ending violence against women and girls, research institutes and the private sector who contribute to safe city and safe public spaces programmes for women and girls.

We thank the City of Rabat for co-hosting the Global Forum and the Third Global Mayors' Meeting on Gender Equality, and for the support given by the Ministry of Interior, the General Directorate of Local Authorities, the General Directorate for National Security, the Minister of National Territory Development, Urban Planning, Housing and City Policy, the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation, the Government of Canada and the German National Committee for UN Women.



MESSAGE FROM



Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka

Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and Executive Director of UN Women

UN Women is pleased to welcome our diverse partners from more than 20 countries to the Fifth Safe Cities and Safe Public Spaces Global Leaders' Forum. This year, your engagement is particularly significant, as in 2020 we commemorate the 25th anniversary of the visionary Beijing Platform for Action that set out how to remove the systemic barriers that hold women back from equal participation in all areas of public and private life.

This year also marks the 10th anniversary of the creation of UN Women, leading up to the commemoration of the 10th anniversary of the Safe Cities and Safe Public Spaces integrated global initiative in January 2021. We have come a long way together in our efforts to end sexual harassment against women and girls in public spaces and to create safe, smart and sustainable cities for all. Together with local and national governments, grassroots women and women's organizations, researchers and young feminists, we have responded to the strong call from women around the world to work with cities on this neglected issue.

We have seen the Global Initiative grow from five founding city programmes – Cairo (Egypt), Delhi (India), Kigali (Rwanda), Port Moresby (Papua New Guinea) and Quito (Ecuador) – to now nearly 50 city initiatives including in the Global South and North.

We share a universal vision of safe and empowering spaces for all women and girls; cities in which everyone can travel, work, play and interact freely, with dignity and safety. We have a shared roadmap and accompanying tools that cities are using to take action tailored to the local context to achieve this vision. And we are seeing clear results through safe cities and safe public spaces initiatives that are helping to respond to the data, policy and legislation gaps. For example, recent evaluations show that in Quito, Ecuador, women's experience of sexual harassment in public transport has been reduced, and in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea, there have been significant improvements in the safety, hygiene and comfort of vendors and customers in Gerehu market (over 90 per cent of whom are women and girls).

Now, we need to further deepen and expand our partnerships across the world. There are devastating impacts related to both the fear and the experience of sexual harassment. Leaders in different sectors (police, national, state and local governments, the private sector, schools and media) must now act within their areas of influence to end this scourge.

The Global Forum's theme "Integrated Action and Building to Scale Safe and Empowering City and Public Space Initiatives with Women and Girls" is important to power up the localization and full achievement of the vision set forth in the Beijing Platform for Action. It is also critical to the achievement of multiple Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 4, 5, 11 and 16) and the New Urban Agenda, in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development's principles of human rights, universality and leaving no one behind.

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The experiences across sectors and 'outside the box' thinking that you will share here in Rabat, including contributions from youth agents of change, will be key to ensuring gender equality is a condition for safe and sustainable cities for all.



M. Mohamed Sadiki

President, City of Rabat, Morocco

On behalf of City Council and the people of Rabat, welcome to the city of light, the cultural capital of Morocco and to the Fifth Safe Cities and Safe Public Spaces Global Leaders' Forum with Women and Girls which takes place in Rabat from February 26 to 28, 2020.

The question of how to accelerate action to increase women's access and use of public spaces free from fear and experience of violence is critical to address in cities around the world for achieving all initiatives focused on sustainable development, including for the city of Rabat.

The Global Safe Cities and Safe Public Spaces with Women and Girls Initiative is a catalytic programme that began implementation in January 2011. It aims to provide cities with support, knowledge and tools to adapt to their own context to ensure all women can access, feel comfortable in, and appropriate public spaces - a fundamental right to safety.

In 2015, following the city of Marrakech, Rabat was the second city in Morocco and the 21st city worldwide to participate in the Global Initiative. The Rabat Safe City programme shares its principles and vision that: all women and girls are socially, politically and economically empowered in public spaces free from sexual harassment and all forms of violence.

Rabat is therefore committed through its multisectoral partnerships to mobilize efforts, expertise, and capacity to ensure the programme's success, and to sustain its results.

We have led an initiative that can generate short and long-term results. We have developed an action plan to ensure safe public transportation with a focus on women's safety, including training with staff and bus drivers.

We have implemented awareness raising and community mobilization activities as part of our focus on the prevention of sexual harassment, and in partnership have provided support to women's rights and civil society associations. We have increased

communication on safety in public spaces throughout the city, and in parallel, monitoring traffic flows to increase the well-being of drivers, and reduce verbal and physical violence. The city is also committed to perspectives to develop cultural spaces dedicated exclusively to women and girls.

Far from being exhaustive, these examples call attention to the importance we have placed in fostering and implementing a locally owned approach in the city of Rabat and working to ensure equality and the well being of women and men. This is very dear to us. We reaffirm our efforts to prevent and respond to violence against women and girls as a priority, including in public policies.

We are delighted with some of the results we have been able to achieve thus far. But, at the same time, like other cities, we recognize that there is still more action needed to ensure women and girls' rights to the city.

I thank the Global Forum organizers, expert attendees, and sponsors for your commitment to ending sexual violence against women and girls around the world. By bringing together 230 leaders and experts from 21 countries to share and discuss good practices and innovative strategies, we can learn within and across cities. We can also contribute local on the ground know-how through the Safe Cities free of Violence against Women and Girls' initiatives as part of the Generation Equality Campaign.

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INTRODUCTION

UN Women's Global Flagship Initiative¹, "Safe Cities and Safe Public Spaces", builds on its "Safe Cities Free of Violence against Women and Girls" Global Programme, which began implementation in January 2011, with leading women's organizations, UN agencies, and global and local partners. It is the first-ever global programme that develops, implements, and evaluates tools, policies and comprehensive approaches on the prevention of and response to sexual harassment and other forms of sexual violence against women and girls in public spaces, across different settings (eg. urban, peri urban, rural, etc.).

UN Women's Safe Cities and Safe Public Spaces Global Initiative

The UN Women Safe Cities and Safe Public Spaces Global Initiative began with five locally owned city programmes: Quito, Ecuador; Cairo, Egypt; New Delhi, India; Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea; and Kigali, Rwanda. The Global Initiative currently spans 50 cities in over 25 countries, and continues to generate a number of innovative results through partnerships with mayors' offices, governments, women's groups, the police, and other community partners.

Some examples include:

- In Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea, for example, the initiative has contributed to increased safety, hygiene, and comfort among women and girls working in markets and while travelling on public transport.
- In Quito, Ecuador, a local regulation was adopted to include a specific provision against sexual harassment in public spaces, resulting in reduced sexual harass-

- In Maputo, Mozambique, youth advocates equipped with data and advocacy skills mobilized the Ministry of Education to improve women's and girls' safety, including holding awareness raising sessions on the prevention of sexual harassment.

About the Global Leaders' Forum

UN Women's Fifth Safe Cities and Safe Public Spaces Global Leaders' Forum was held in Rabat, Morocco on the theme "Integrated Action and Building to Scale Safe and Empowering City and Public Space Initiatives with Women and Girls". Leaders and experts including those participating in comprehensive human rights and evidence-based programmes in the Safe Cities and Safe Public Spaces Global Initiative were in attendance. This included grassroots women and girls/ women's and community-based organizations, and representatives from national and local governments, police, research institutions, the private sector, police, media and global women's safety networks.

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