

GM4WOMEN2028

SAFETY GROUP

The *Safety Group* aims to draw on and extend the power of women's voices to shape action and improvements in responses to women who face and survive violence and harm.

The two '*Safety*' measures on the GM4Women2028 scorecard (<https://www.gm4women2028.org/>, @GM4Women2028) are:

- 56% of female survivors of gender sexual-based violence in GM did not access support in relation to what happened to them.
- 47% of women survivors with no recourse to public funds have been refused access to a refuge because of their immigration status.

Building the evidence to call for action...

We were able to draw from two local one-off research projects: the VOSGM 'Voices of Survivors project'¹ and the Safety4Sisters 'Migrant Women's Rights to Safety Pilot Project'². The two scorecard measures derive directly from the reports that centre the experiences of survivors of sexual and gender-based violence.

Note that these 'Safety' indicators remain the same from 2019 to 2020, reflecting the lack of available GM wide data on any issue of women's experiences of violence. This lack of annual GM wide data itself is telling, and the below call to action for consultation will include the urgent need for better data.

Key Action: We want to make better use of the data and evidence we do have. Ahead of the GM4Women event in February 2020 we are inviting local women and organisations to highlight a



¹ VOSGM (2018) Voices of Survivors. Report available here: <http://vosgm.org.uk/>

² Safety for Sisters (2016) Migrant Women's Rights to Safety Pilot Project. Report available here: <https://www.safety4sisters.org/about>

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‘statistic of concern’. Those who attend will take part in the *Safety* Group workshop activity to gather these pieces of data or information, with any brought along on the day, and use them to identify our shared priorities in highlighting collective safety concerns experienced by women across Greater Manchester.

Moving to action...

Key Action 2020: The Safety group calls on GM leaders to consult with its members ahead of the publication of their delayed Greater Manchester Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy. We want to ensure there is a distinct strand addressing women’s experiences of sexual violence, and that the expertise of local women and groups underpins the strategy.

We are actively seeking local women and specialist groups and organisations to join us in promoting these ‘Safety’ concerns. We are inviting individual women and representatives from local groups and organisations to join this GM Scorecard ‘*Safety*’ group, so that together we can collectively engage in campaigning, and shape local policy, practice, and influencing the commissioning of services for survivors of gender based violence.

We are hoping to hear from a wide range of groups, including grassroots and community groups, advocacy and delivery organisations in the women’s sector and statutory partners. In order for the group to effectively represent the diverse experiences of survivors of gender based violence we need expertise and knowledge representing a wide range of issues and communities. For example those working with women experiencing sexual violence, domestic violence, immigration appeals, poor mental health, criminalisation and imprisonment, sex work. And from a range of positions which require an active understanding and specific response, whether in relation to racialisation, sexuality and/ or disability.

The group will offer a space of solidarity where together we can understand the priorities in local issues of women’s safety. We can collectively demand investment and overcome the current barriers to improving the support available to women who experience gender-based violence.

Our focus will be to ensure action that creates positive impact in the lives of women who experience sexual and gender-based violence. Join us to ensure women’s voices are heard, and change happens in Greater Manchester.



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