

**CALL4NEEDS**

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# Team members

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# Domain of Interest

The mental health of young women and their sense of safety when they are alone in public places

## WHY?

This topic was selected due to its critical role in helping women overcome fears and abuses, which can significantly impact their overall mental well-being. It aims to empower young women, prevent potential long-term psychological effects, and contribute to creating safer and more inclusive communities.

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# Methodology

## Participants

- ***Immediate Users:*** Three young women between 18 and 30.
  - ❑ Interviewee 1: 20 Years old student living in Turin born in Turkey
  - ❑ Interviewee 2: 22 Years old accountant living in Bra born in Italy
  - ❑ Interviewee 3: 30 Years old university employee living in Turin born in Italy

Why were they chosen/Why were they appropriate: In addition to being young women, they share a concern for raising awareness about the mental health and safety of their peers.

How they were recruited: By sending them a message containing the theme and the domain of interest chosen, asking them if they could have been interested in helping us.

# Methodology (2)

## Participants

- **Lead User:** Anonymous girl who suffered psychological and physical abuse while walking alone at night.
  - ❑ Survey 1: 19 Years old born in Italy

Why were they chosen/Why were they appropriate: She definitely wanted to anonymously take part in the project giving her point of view by answering a written survey. We think that giving voice those who suffered these violence on themselves it's really important.

How they were recruited: She heard, from one member of the group, we were conducting an interview and wanted to participate..

# Methodology (3)

## Participants

- ***Domain expert:*** 27 Years old psychologist living in Sommariva del Bosco born in Italy.

Why were they chosen/Why were they appropriate: These experts can offer a deep understanding of the psychological impact of feeling unsafe and strategies for coping and healing.

How they were recruited: Giacomo Perlo sister's.

# Methodology (4)

## Question asked - Immediate users

- During your solo walks, if you engage in any activities that you find enjoyable or comforting, how do these activities make you feel?
- List 3 things that you do in order to enhance your sense of safety during solo walks.
- Can you describe any solo walk concerns/fears and certainties you or your peers have regarding personal safety or wellbeing as young women in our community?
- Can you share any specific situations or environments where you feel particularly vulnerable or unsafe as a young woman ?
- Tell me some improvements or changes in infrastructure do you believe would enhance safety for young women walking alone?
- How do you perceive the role of your community, including friends, family, and neighbors, in ensuring your safety and wellbeing when walking alone?
- How do you currently navigate situations where you feel unsafe or face potential risks, even if they don't escalate to violence?
- Tell me two specific cultural practices or customs that influence how you navigate public spaces?
- Do you have a preference for walking alone during the daytime or nighttime? Could you share 2 feelings about each?
- Have you ever received advice or tips from friends or acquaintances on how to stay safe?

# Methodology (5)

## Question asked - Immediate users

- Have you ever encountered situations where existing solutions (if you know at least one) or resources were not effective or accessible in addressing safety concerns related to solo walks? If so, could you provide an example?
- Can you think of any educational or awareness programs that could be beneficial for young women to better understand and address issues related to solo walking violence?
- Tell me three places you prefer not to go through in your solo walk at night.
- Tell me about your last solo walk. The path, people who you met, ..
- From 1 to 5, how important is it to you to have lights in the city at night?
- From 1 to 5, how important is it to you to have your phone with you during your solo walks? Can you explain why?

# Methodology (6)

## Question asked - Lead users (in addition to some Immediate user's one)

- Have you noticed any coping mechanisms or strategies you developed from your past experience that help you feel more secure when you need to go out alone?
- Would you be comfortable sharing any specific concerns or needs you have when it comes to feeling safe while walking alone?
- Tell me three sensations that you feel when you are walking alone at night.
- What did you do in the past that you no longer do?
- Can you discuss any support or resources that have been helpful to you in dealing with the aftermath of harassment?



# Methodology (7)

## Question asked - Domain Expert User

- Have you worked with individuals, particularly young women, who have experienced feelings of insecurity or unsafe in public spaces?
- How do you approach helping young women who express feelings of insecurity or unsafety in public spaces?
- Are there specific coping mechanisms or strategies that you find particularly effective for young women dealing with these feelings?
- For young women who have experienced trauma or ongoing feelings of unsafety, what therapeutic approaches can support their long-term healing and growth?
- Can you share experiences where psychological intervention made the difference in the life of a woman facing a risky situation while walking alone?
- When dealing with the mental health of women in risk situations, what psychological aspects do you think are often overlooked or underestimated?
- How can experiences of feeling unsafe in public spaces potentially lead to or exacerbate anxiety or trauma for young women? What are common psychological responses in these situations?

# Methodology (8)

## Question asked - Domain Expert User

- How can communities play a role in supporting the mental health and safety of young women walking alone? Are there community-based resources that you recommend?
- Can you describe an intervention or strategy you've found particularly effective in supporting survivors of violence against women? How did it contribute to their wellbeing?
- From your perspective, how can building a strong sense of community among young women contribute to their overall sense of safety and wellbeing? Are there any new community-building strategies you may suggest?

# Methodology (9)

## Where were the interviews conducted and Team member roles

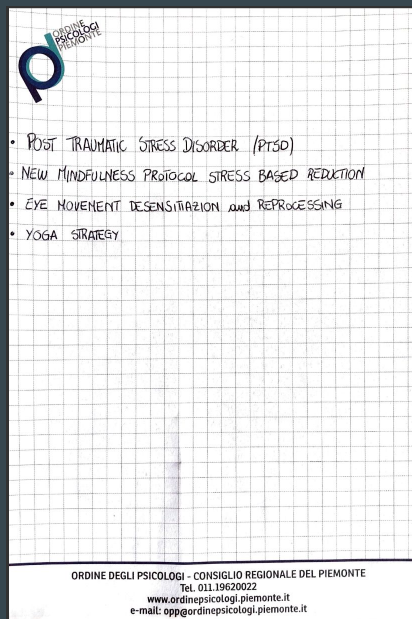
- Interview 1: at home. Gizem interviewing, Benyamin taking notes.
- Interview 2: at home. Benyamin interviewing, Gizem taking notes
- Interview 3: at home. Fabrizio interviewing, Giacomo taking notes
- Psychologist's interview: at home. Giacomo interviewing, Fabrizio taking notes.
- Anonymous Lead User: through the submission of a survey (Google Form)

## Material we used

Voice Recorder (phone app), Laptop to take notes, Phone to make the photos.

# Results

## Pictures and relevant artifacts



# Results (2)

## Key Quotes - Lead User

- I would certainly try to pass only and exclusively through streets in the city center, or in any case where many people pass through, and that are very well lit, avoiding darker and less frequented
- In the evening I often feel scared, anxious and agitated. I try to get home as soon as possible, almost running, so I can feel safe as soon as possible.
- When I notice that I am being watched, I call someone I know, a friend, my boyfriend or someone from my family, so as to keep myself busy and show the other person that someone is in direct contact with me and whatever happens will be heard.
- I received only one simple piece of advice, which is to always try to take the primary streets, in the center of the city, the most illuminated ones and with the most comings and goings.
- It's difficult to talk to people about what happened to me. Also because people often don't have the skills. In hindsight, it would have been much easier to get over that bad moment by talking to a psychologist, even just by text, but I didn't know how to do it.

# Results (3)

## Key Quotes - Domain Expert

- I encourage women to discuss more about their fear feelings without any kind of shame. I think that it could be useful to have this discussion normalized between both women and men.
- What we can do is find some skills to better navigate public spaces safely, for example starting from the educational approach in the schools for women and men as well.
- send new messages to the children in order to create a new emotional background which should be taught from the very first years, allowing us to behave in a polite and smart way to each other

# Results (4)

## Key Quotes - Immediate Users (Interview 1)

- It is important that your close ones check on you, ask you where you are, or give you instructions on keeping the call until you go back to the destination safely.
- If I feel unsafe about a person I try to stay more in the crowds.
- We often tell each other that this road is safer than the other. It is more lit-up and more people are walking in it so we can take that road.
- I think we should also be focusing on educating men as much as we do women so we don't get into situations like that.

# Results (5)

## Key Quotes - Immediate Users (Interview 2)

- I feel quite unsafe when I find myself on streets crowded with men, especially at night, and particularly so when there are no other women nearby.
- I experience a rapid heartbeat, sweating, and a sense of confusion in my legs. I'm often not fully aware of what's happening, overall it feels like a state of panic.
- However, when I walk at night, I often feel afraid and uneasy, if that accurately conveys the feeling.
- I want to be able to trust people and my community, so I choose not to resort to such measures.
- I believe it would be more beneficial to learn how not to be afraid in specific situations to become more self-aware of yourself and your surroundings. Therefore, I think a psychological approach or psychological courses focused on these aspects would be a valuable program.



# Results (6)

## Key Quotes - Immediate Users (Interview 3)

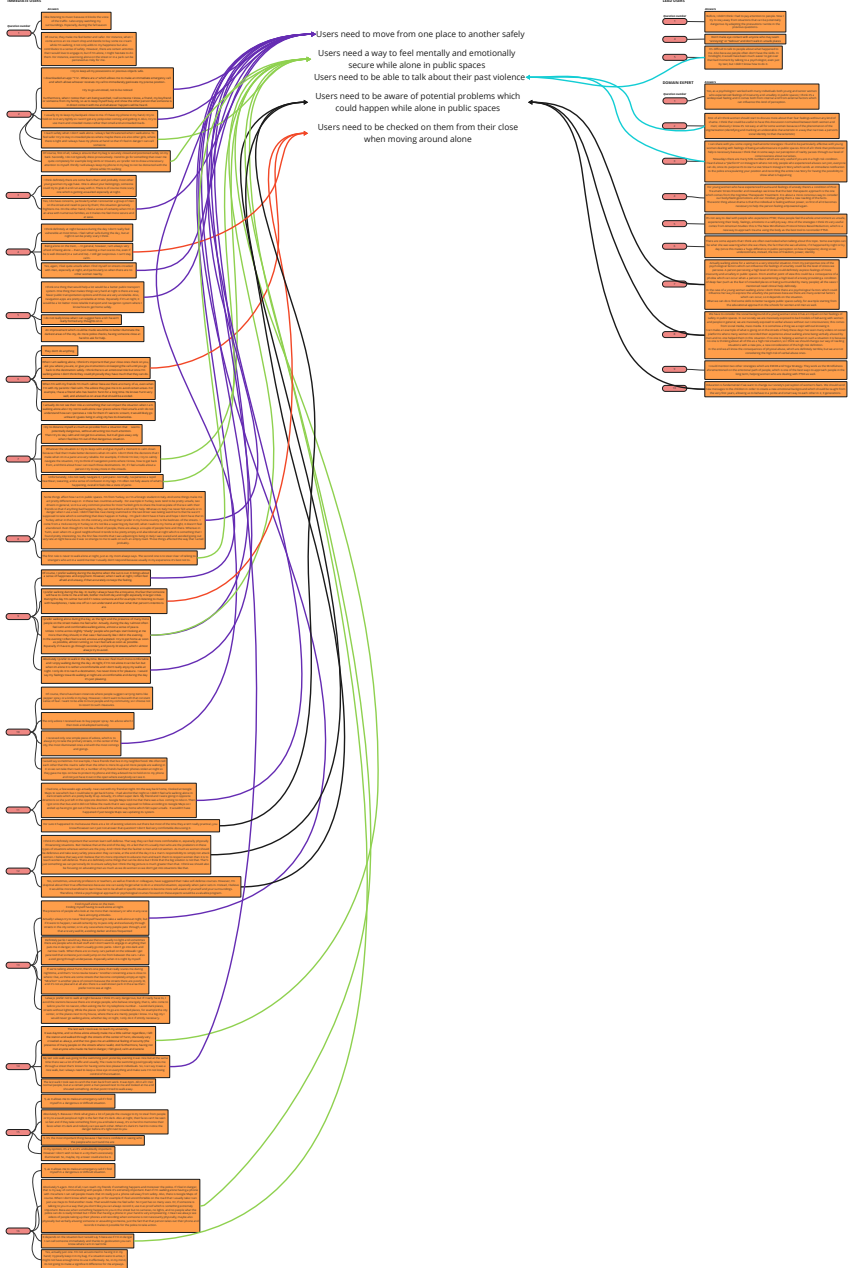
- To feel safer I try to stay in crowded places where maybe there are also other girls, where there is light and I always have my phone at hand so that if I feel in danger I can call someone
- An improvement which could be made would be to better illuminate the darkest areas of the city, do more police checks, and have someone close at hand to ask for help.
- I avoid dark places, streets without lighting. While the places I prefer to go are crowded places, for example the city center, or the places next to my house, where there are mainly people I know. In a big city I would never go walking alone, whether day or night, I only do it if strictly necessary.

# User Needs

## Brainstormed User Needs

- Users need to move from one place to another safely (12 links to answers)
- Users need a way to feel mentally and emotionally secure while alone in public spaces (9 links to answers)
- Users need to be able to talk about their past violence (3 links to answers)
- Users need to be aware of potential problems which could happen while alone in public spaces (6 links to answers)
- Users need to be checked on them from their close when moving around alone (3 links to answers)

## USER NEEDS



# User Needs

## Deep User Needs

- Users need to move from one place to another safely
- Users need a way to feel mentally and emotionally secure while alone in public spaces
- Users need to be aware of potential problems which could happen while alone in public spaces

# User Needs (3)

## Deep User Needs and why they were chosen

**Present the 3-4 deep user needs connecting them to one or more interviews and answers**

**Gizem:**

*User Needs chosen, and why*

- **Users need to move from one place to another safely**, this need was chosen because like the women we interviewed, I also have concerns about how to get back home safely after hanging out with my friends at night.
- **Users need a way to feel mentally and emotionally secure while alone in public spaces**, this need was chosen because the interviewees reported that when they don't feel safe in public spaces, they generally have anxiety and stress, which affect their feelings about going out and enjoying time at night.
- **Users need to be aware of potential problems which could happen while alone in public spaces**, this need was chosen because the interviewees think that it's important to educate people on both how to act toward women and how to help women when they are in danger.

**Benyamin:**

*User Needs chosen, and why*

- **Users need to move from one place to another safely**, this need was chosen because In the interview, she expresses concerns about feeling safe while moving from one place to another. she mentioned feeling unsafe when walking alone at night, especially in areas with a high concentration of men. This need is highlighted in responses 3, 4, 9, and 14. The fear of encountering potentially risky situations during solo walks emphasizes the importance of ensuring personal safety during these movements.
- **Users need a way to feel mentally and emotionally secure while alone in public spaces**, this need was chosen because her responses reflect a strong desire for personal safety. she takes precautions to minimize risks, such as keeping her bag securely closed, dressing modestly to avoid drawing attention, and avoiding interaction with strangers who act strangely (responses 2 and 8). The fear of passing by a group of men and the physical reactions she experiences in such situations (response 7) also emphasize the need to feel safe and secure during daily activities.
- **Users need to be aware of potential problems which could happen while alone in public spaces**, this need was chosen because While she does express her personal concerns, she does not mention any active efforts to disseminate awareness about the issue to a wider audience (response 11). However, her perspective on self-defense training versus a psychological approach to addressing the issue (response 12) could be seen as an indirect way of raising awareness about the importance of psychological preparedness and self-awareness.

**Fabrizio:**

*User Needs chosen, and why*

- **Users need to move from one place to another safely**, this need was chosen because every girls that was interviewed feels scared to navigate the city alone
- **Users need a way to feel mentally and emotionally secure while alone in public spaces**, this need was chosen because in the majority of the phrases

the interviewed girls tend to say that they have fear of staying alone, fear of walking...

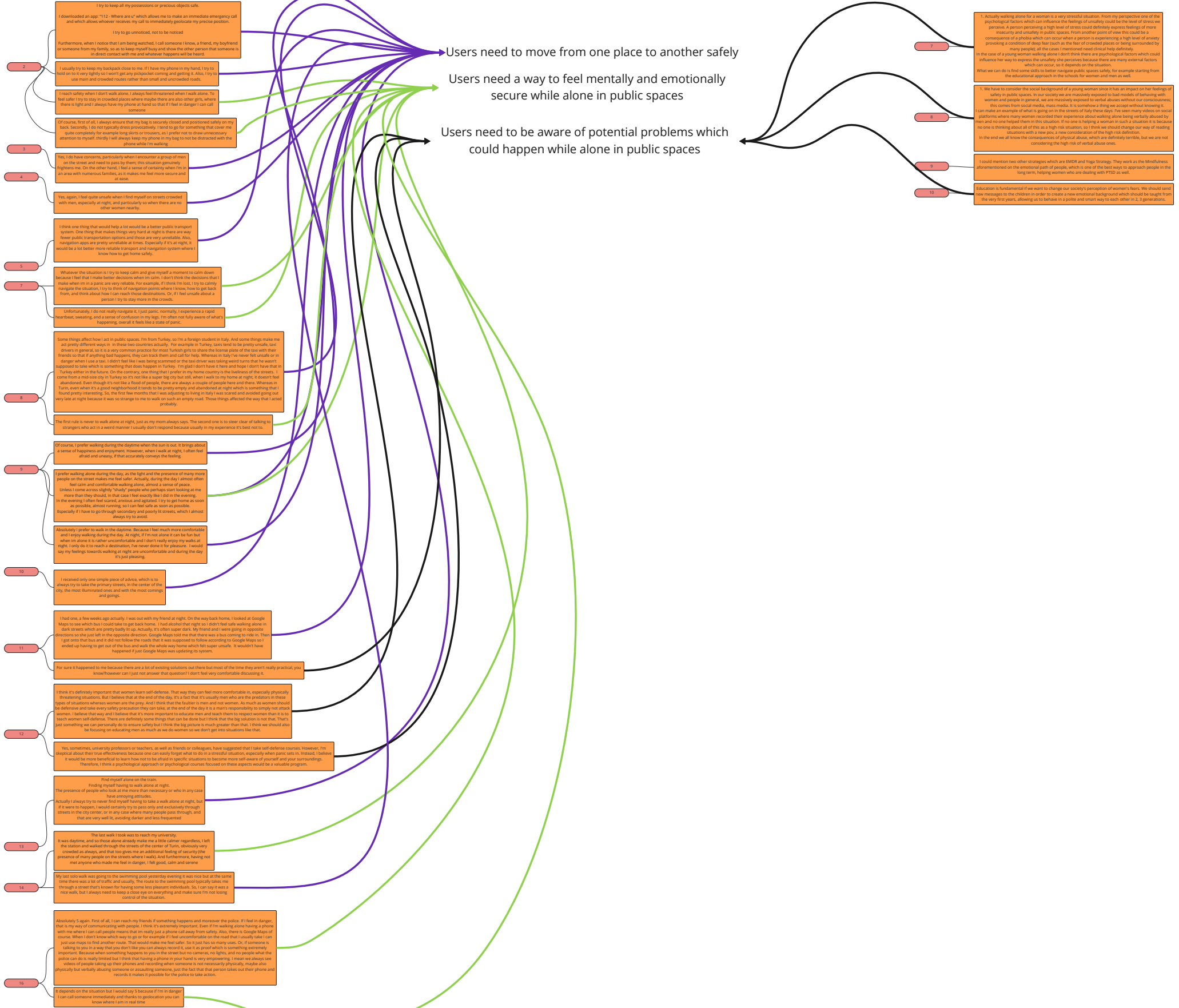
- **Users need to be aware of potential problems which could happen while alone in public spaces**, this need was chosen because form the lead user and the psychologist I've noticed that girls could manage past and future experiences well if they would talk about it

**Giacomo:**

*User Needs chosen, and why*

- **Users need to move from one place to another safely**, this need was chosen because all the interviewees reported a feeling of fear and anxiety while moving around alone. In my opinion, this need must be solved as soon as possible since it definitely restricts the sense of freedom of a young woman and I find it shameful.
- **Users need a way to feel mentally and emotionally secure while alone in public spaces**, this need was chosen because it turns out to be a shared feeling not to feel safe while alone in public spaces for young women. The interviewees reported that they, sometimes, get into a state of panic due to unsafe/risky situations, and this is definitely dangerous.
- **Users need to be aware of potential problems which could happen while alone in public spaces**, this need was chosen because in my opinion the greatest revolutions in the way of thinking often derive from the dissemination of information which creates ever greater awareness among people

DEEP USER NEEDS



1. Actually walking alone for a woman is a very stressful situation. From my perspective one of the psychological factors which can influence the feelings of unsafety could be the level of stress we perceive. A person perceiving a high level of stress could definitely express feelings of more insecurity and unsafety in public spaces. From another point of view this could be a consequence of a phobia which can occur when a person is experiencing a high level of anxiety provoking a condition of deep fear (such as the fear of crowded places or being surrounded by many people); all the cases I mentioned need clinical help definitely. In the case of a young woman walking alone I don't think there are psychological factors which could influence her way to express the unsafety she perceives because there are many external factors which can occur, so it depends on the situation. What we can do is find some skills to better manage public spaces safety, for example starting from the educational approach in the schools for women and men as well.

2. We have to consider the social background of a young woman since it has an impact on her feelings of safety in public spaces. In our society we are massively exposed to bad models of behaving with women and people in general, we are massively exposed to verbal abuses without our consciousness; this comes from social media, mass media. It is somehow a thing we accept without knowing it. I can make an example of what is going on in the streets of Italy these days. I've seen many videos on social platforms where many women recorded their experience about walking alone being verbally abused by men and no one helped them in this situation. If no one is helping a woman in such a situation it is because no one is thinking about all of this as a high risk situation, so I think we should change our way of reading situations with a new gaze, a new consideration of the high risk definition. In the end we all know the consequences of physical abuse, which are definitely terrible, but we are not considering the high risk of verbal abuse ones.

3. I could mention two other strategies which are EMOB and Hope Strategy. They work as the Mindfulness aforementioned on the emotional path of people, which is one of the best ways to approach people in the long term, helping women who are dealing with PTSD as well.

4. Education is fundamental if we want to change our society's perception of women's fears. We should send new messages to the children in order to create a new emotional background which should be taught from the very first years, allowing us to behave in a polite and smart way to each other in 2, 3 generations.

# Solutions

## Brainstormed Solutions

### **Gizem:**

#### Need 1

- **Enhanced Public Transportation Services:** Improve the frequency, availability, and accessibility of public transportation options, especially during nighttime hours.
- **Mobile Safety Apps Integration:** Promote the use of mobile safety apps that offer features like real-time tracking and emergency alerts, and encourage their integration with local transportation services.
- **Safe Routes and Infrastructure:** Well-lit and well-maintained pedestrian and cycling paths, ensuring they are safe for use at night.

#### Need 2

- **Accessible Help Points:** Install easily accessible emergency help points or call boxes in public areas to provide immediate assistance if needed.
- **Community Watch Programs:** Establish community watch programs where residents collaborate to monitor and report any suspicious activities.
- **Mental Health First Aid Training:** Offer mental health first aid training to community members, equipping them with the skills to provide initial support to those experiencing mental health crises.

#### Need 3

- **Social Media Activism:** Utilize social media platforms to share informative content, personal stories, and resources related to women's safety, encouraging a wider audience to get involved.
- **Online Forums and Discussion Groups:** Create virtual spaces for community members to engage in discussions, share resources, and support one another in advocating for women's safety.
- **Virtual Reality (VR) Experiences:** Create virtual reality experiences that simulate scenarios related to women's safety, providing a unique and immersive educational tool.

### **Benjamin:**

#### Need 1

1. **Community Safe Walk Programs** Establish organized community programs where volunteers or community members accompany individuals on their walks, especially during vulnerable times like nighttime.
2. **Enhanced Street Lighting:** Improve street lighting in areas with safety concerns, making it safer for people to move about at night.
3. **Safety Beacon Devices:** Develop small wearable safety devices that users can carry or wear discreetly. These devices can be activated in case of emergency, alerting nearby community members, authorities, or designated contacts to the user's location and situation

#### Need 2

1. **Self-Defense Workshops:** Offer self-defense classes to empower individuals with skills and confidence to protect themselves in potentially risky situations.
2. **Public Awareness Campaigns:** Launch public campaigns that educate people about personal safety measures, promoting awareness and action to reduce risks.
3. **Safe Zone Designation:** Designate certain public areas or zones as "safe or unsafe zones" so that individuals can expect a higher level of security in the unsafe ones through increased policing or surveillance.

#### Need 3

1. **Social Media:** Encourage individuals to share their experiences and safety tips on social media platforms, leveraging personal stories to raise awareness about safety concerns.
2. **Community Safety Workshops:** Organize community workshops and seminars to educate and engage the public in discussions about safety, sharing knowledge and strategies.
3. **Safety Hotlines:** Establish dedicated safety hotlines or apps that allow users to report safety concerns, share information, and receive support, thereby contributing to awareness and real-time response efforts.



# Solutions (2)

## Brainstormed Solutions

**Giacomo:**

### Need 1

1. **Safe Routes and Infrastructure:** Develop and maintain well-lit, clearly marked, and secure pathways for girls to travel safely.
2. **Technology for Safety:** Introduce or enhance technologies like mobile apps, emergency call services, and real-time tracking for safer travel experiences.
3. **Public Engagement and Feedback Channels:** Create avenues for the public to provide feedback and report safety concerns, facilitating continuous improvement.

### Need 2

1. **Community Support Networks:** Foster communities where individuals can connect, support one another, and collectively contribute to a sense of safety.
2. **Mental Health and Well-being Resources:** Provide resources like counseling, therapy, and workshops to address the psychological aspects of feeling safe.
3. **Access to Information and Communication:** Offer reliable channels for individuals to receive timely information about their surroundings and communicate with authorities or trusted contacts.

### Need 3

1. **Collaboration with Influencers and Experts:** Partner with influencers, thought leaders, and subject matter experts who can help amplify the message and reach new audiences.
2. **Storytelling and Testimonial Campaigns:** Encourage users to share personal stories, testimonials, or experiences related to the issue, providing a powerful and relatable way to raise awareness.
3. **Peer-to-Peer Networks:** Foster online communities or forums where users can exchange ideas, resources, and success stories in their efforts to raise awareness.

**Fabrizio:**

### Need 1

1. **Safe Maps:** Girls can find places on a map where it's safe to walk (like the brighter, more crowded ones,...)
2. **Continuous monitoring:** Girls can be monitored in real time by a police station
3. **Enhanced Public transportation:** Improve public transportation at night

### Need 2

1. **Fast call:** A way to immediately call someone (like police, ...)
2. **Walking groups:** Girls shouldn't walk alone. They have to found another girl(s) to walk with
3. **Enhanced video surveillance:** Improve the video surveillance system of cities

### Need 3

1. **Online chat:** Real time chat with other people who are interested in those arguments
2. **Talk's group:** Dedicated channel (online groups, instagram pages) in which people can exchange information and opinions.



# Solutions (3)

## Chosen solution

**Safety Communities:** Establish dedicated safety communities that allow users to report safety concerns, share information, and receive support, thereby contributing to awareness and real-time response efforts.

This solution it's connected to all the three deep user needs found.

## WHY?

It aligns with the core objectives of our project addressing the mental health and safety concerns of young women in public spaces.

This solution not only provides a direct and accessible means for individuals to report safety concerns and seek support but also contributes to raising awareness about these issues within the community. By establishing dedicated safety hotlines or apps, we aim to create a vital lifeline that empowers young women to share their experiences, access real-time assistance, and contribute to a broader awareness campaign, ultimately fostering a safer and more supportive environment for all.

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# Project name and value proposition

***SheShield: Her Safety, Her Strength!***

## WHY?

"SheShield" was chosen because it combines the strength of women with protection, creating a powerful and direct message. "She" refers to women, while "Shield" symbolizes protection and security. The name conveys the idea of providing a protective barrier for women, helping them feel safe and supported. The value proposition "Her Safety, Her Strength" emphasizes that through this project, women not only find safety but also discover an inner strength that enables them to navigate the world with confidence. This message encapsulates the core mission of the "SheShield" project.

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