

Uber Women's Safety & Sustainability

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Executive summary

- Safety and privacy concerns are major barriers for ride sharing for women riders; **perceived safety impacts usage and loyalty of users**
 - Women often cite the **shortage of female drivers** and the **risk of sexual harassment** as reasons for avoiding ridesharing services entirely - this is resulting in **loss of trust** from women users towards Uber
- Women face multiple **pain points through the customer journey**
 - Booking a ride: lack of trust on overall platform and long wait times in unsafe places
 - Taking the ride: fear of harassment, sexual assault and feeling of discomfort during detours and darker routes
 - Post ride: limited assistance on complaints and unsurity of being heard
- Women safety related issues vary by geography with the scope of **problem being bigger in developing countries** vs. developed countries, though **reputational risk is higher in developed countries**; therefore, on **humanitarian grounds prioritize** developing countries, particularly **India** for the safety campaign
- Within developing countries, identified 4 consumer personas but prioritizing **younger professionals (25-35 years)** and **working moms (35-50 years)** driven by multiple factors - awareness, frequency of use, size of segment and perception of safety
- Competitive assessment suggests that Uber committed to women safety (industry 1st in multiple initiatives) but **can learn from Lyft** to improve brand perception (through more educational programs, NGO initiatives, branding, messaging that **Uber cares-closing the user feedback loop**)
- There is opportunity to close out **product, messaging** and **brand gaps** in the short and the long term.
- **Short term:** Uber has a clear objective of building empathy and trust with women riders, by taking ownership, **'promising'** further action and providing more robust **safety features/ driver enforcement** on the platform
- **Long term:**
 - Build **public programs/campaigns, publish numbers** on incidents transparently and **educate drivers** to prevent bad actors on platform to build brand value and be **held accountable in the long term**
 - What's been missing from the tech industry's approach to safety is a focus on **route-mapping** catered to women. Women feel safer when sharing a ride in **known localities** even with male co-riders. Recommend a public campaign on **'Uber Safe Routes'** where the app suggests safer routes for women especially at odd hours
 - Establish commitment to women's safety and the path to reach there through **partnerships** and by standing together for each other as a **community**. These monumental changes won't come easy or fast but we have a **plan to get there** and we are in it for the **long haul**

Direct correlation between perception of safety and usage

- [Nielsen et al., 2015](#) study highlighted that **safety and privacy concerns** are the **major barriers** to ridesharing, specifically for women riders
- Multiple studies highlight ([Wilkowska et al., 2014](#); [Yavuz and Welch 2010](#) and [Polk, 2004](#)) user preferences of female commuters that affect ridesharing are: **safety, comfort, convenience, flexibility of schedule and cost**; but **most important concerns** associated with these services are the **safety and security** needs of woman riders
- [Su et al., \(2019\)](#) model the influence of factors including service **quality** and **perceived safety** on passengers' use of and loyalty to ride-hailing services in Vietnam; findings show that perceived safety influences passengers' utilization of ride-hailing services and mediates influence on loyalty to these services
- Report from [IFC and Accenture](#) highlights women often cite the **shortage of female drivers and the risk of sexual harassment** as reasons for avoiding ridesharing services entirely.

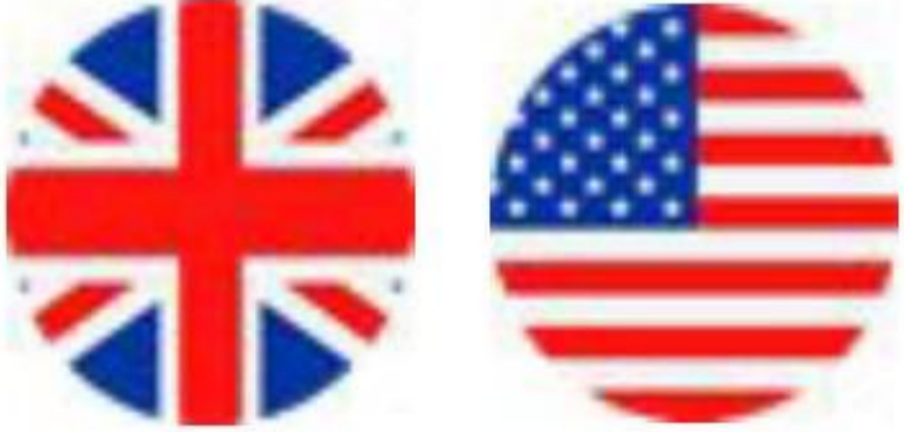

Multiple safety-related pain points across customer journey



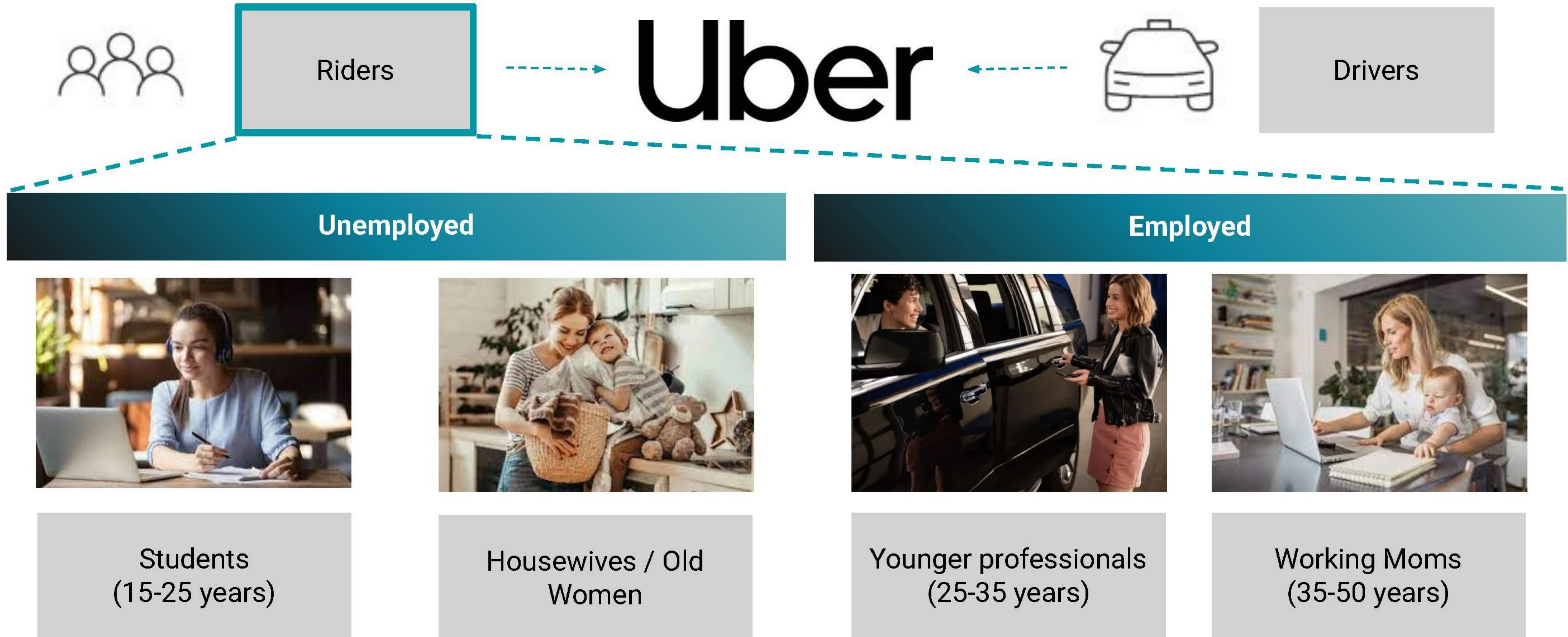
- Lack of trust on the platform overall (drivers/co-riders); unsure of **driver's behavior to women**
 - Nearly **45% prefer female drivers** and only 9% want male drivers ([US survey of 500 females, alarms.org](#))
 - Women felt **safer while sharing the ride with female friends**; also perception of safety was rated **unsafe/ very unsafe if driver was a male stranger** ([Indian survey of 289 females, Meshram et al 2020](#))
- **Long wait times** when in an **unsafe place** at an odd hour e.g., nighttime
 - **Waiting for a vehicle in dark places**, such as underpasses, underground stations and tunnels pose greater fears than the places which are open and unconfined spaces ([Loukaitou-Sideris and Fink, 2008](#))
 - Perceived safety for ride hailing at daytime was high compared to hailing a cab **during night time** ([Meshram et al 2020](#))
- Driver **behavior alludes to harassment** (e.g., unsolicited remarks, commentary)
 - **23% of women** uber riders surveyed said they've had to report an uncomfortable encounter and **13%** said they were made to feel uncomfortable; nearly **10% women** were hit on and **~5%** received a call/text back from the drivers ([alarms.org](#))
- Driver **starts to harass with an intent to sexually assault**
- Driver **rides through a dark unknown route** with no traffic or other businesses open
 - Perceived safety for ride hailing in **unknown environments** (i.e. unknown routes) was low ([Meshram et al 2020](#))
- Driver **takes detours** from recommended route
- In case of an incident **limited assistance** to pursue justice legally
 - [Law suits filed in San Francisco](#) Superior Court and other California state courts allege. "Uber has failed to implement basic safety measures necessary to prevent these serious sexual assaults, which continue to this day." (Jun, 2021)
- **Unsure if my feedback matters** and action has been taken on something specific

Source: Customer interviews n = 5





















Safety incidents are higher in developing countries

 <p>Developed countries</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● US, UK have less number of incidents (Uber US Safety report suggests 0.00002-5% sexual assault cases) but because of stringent law enforcement, probability of lawsuits is higher● More reputational risk in these countries, even one incident can affect brand and reputation negatively	<p>Prioritizing India for launch of marketing campaigns; factors for prioritization include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Greatest impact on humanitarian grounds would be in developing nations● Highly organised urban crime hotspots- Tier1 cities● Easy coordination with law enforcement authorities and Govt.● Clear analytics on safe/unsafe routes, well lit and well policed area info is available
 <p>Developing countries</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Scope of the problem is the greatest in developing countries<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Crime rates in India as reported by National Crime Records Bureau- 4.8% inc in “attempt to commit rape” and 3.4% inc in “kidnapping and abduction of women” cases in 2015 compared to 2014 (NCRB, 2015)○ According to a survey conducted by ActionAid, the actual crime rates are as high as 79% in Indian cities (Wilkinson, 2016)○ Report by NCRB also showed that every 51 minutes, a woman faces harassment and assault in India’s public spaces (Millennium Post. 2016)● Law enforcement is not as stringent as in developed countries like US & UK● Many cases go unreported; even when women report cases, they go unheard (Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative reported that only one in every 13 and one in 9 cases of sexual harassment were reported to the police in Delhi and Mumbai respectively)	

Target personas for brand messaging



Multiple factors considered to prioritize young professionals and working moms as key target segments

Personas	Awareness of app	Technical skills to navigate app	Frequency of use/requirement	Size of segment/growth of segment	Perception of safety
Students	 increased access to social media and higher curiosity	 higher willingness to learn and higher exposure to technology	 commuting to school/college but might use other cheaper transport	 249,000 females in state private universities in India	 students rated higher perception of safety (1.89X) when compared to unemployed participants
Housewives/ Old women	 Lower exposure to such apps driven by lack of utility	 typically use phones for whatsapp or calls only	 commuting only for household chores/ have help from others to travel	 79% of Indian women do not seek work	 higher levels of fear and victimization in the ridesharing arrangement because of lack of experience
Young professionals (25-35 years)	 increased access to social media and higher curiosity	 higher willingness to learn and higher exposure to technology	 higher use of public transport due to lack of car ownership but looking for more comfort	 smaller than working moms but growing segment	 fear of victimization in public places among young girls / middle-aged women compared to older women
Working moms (35-50 years)	 exposed to apps via younger children/ younger professionals	 willingness to learn new technology lower than younger professionals	 prefer using own cars to commute	 n/a	 young and middle age groups were significantly lower when compared to older women (age >55)


Source: Customer interviews (N = 5); [Assessing and Modelling Perceived Safety and Comfort of Women during Ridesharing, Transportation Research Procedia, January 2020](https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/why-india-is-no-country-for-working-women-explainspeaking-7249928/) ;
https://www.business-standard.com/article/specials/urban-india-and-its-female-demographic-dividend-115073000229_1.html;
<https://www.statista.com/statistics/777135/india-number-of-female-undergraduate-students-enrolled-in-state-private-university/>

Uber needs to improve on brand safety perception



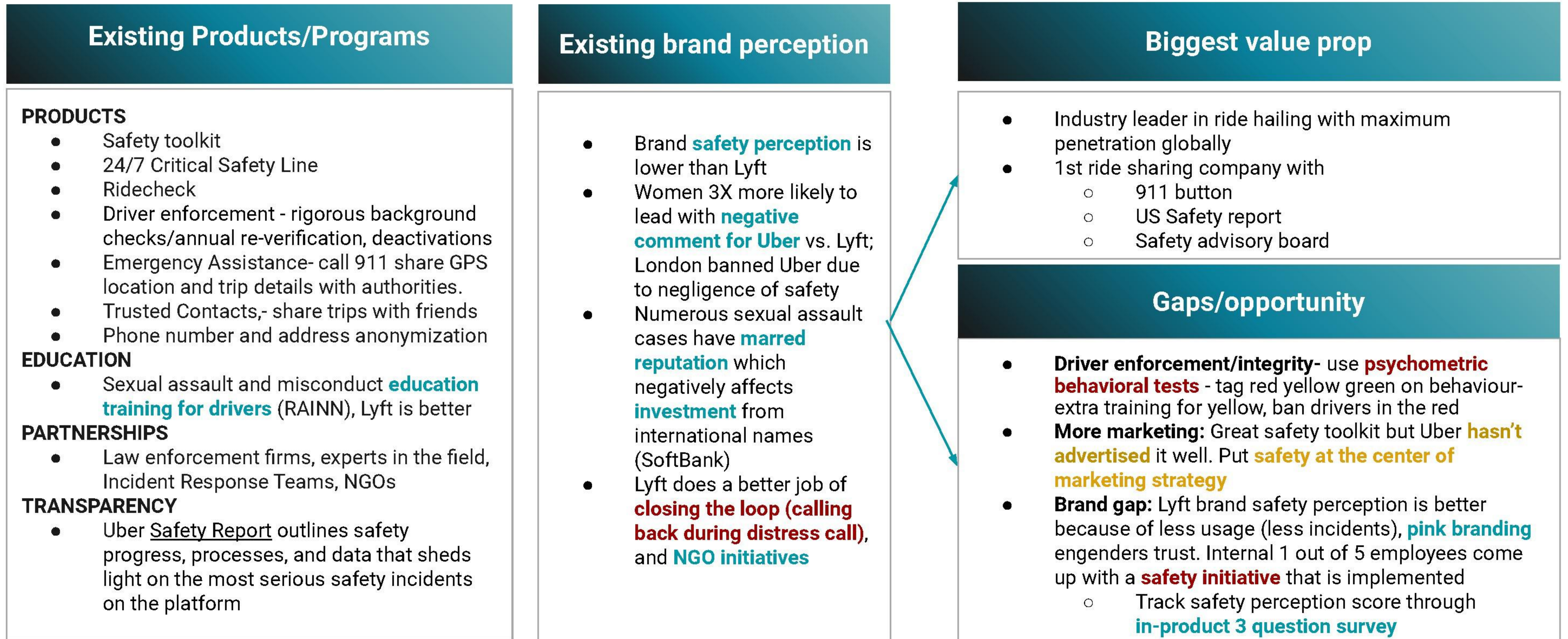
Uber

<p>Brand safety perception</p>	<p>✓+</p> <p><i>Lyft pink logo (incl. Pink moustaches) perceived as more playful, more female, and thus safer; though recent allegations have reduced brand perception</i></p>	<p>✓-</p> <p><i>Ola considered to be less safe than Uber</i></p>	<p>✓</p> <p><i>Females 3 times more likely to lead with negative comment for Uber vs. Lyft; London banned Uber due to negligence of safety initiatives though now operational</i></p>
<p>Safety Advisory Board</p>	<p>✓</p> <p><i>Group of experts from sexual assault & violence prevention organizations, local / national law enforcement officials (2020)</i></p>	<p>✓</p> <p><i>Experts from the fields of urban transport, climate change, women's safety, security, traffic management etc. (2018)</i></p>	<p>✓</p> <p><i>Global safety advisory board to review policies on an ongoing basis (2015)</i></p>
<p>Women drivers</p>	<p>X</p> <p><i>No initiative</i></p>	<p>X</p> <p><i>Ola Pink (only women drivers) beta tested in 2015 but never launched</i></p>	<p>X</p> <p><i>No initiative</i></p>
<p>Safety features /initiatives</p>	<p>✓+</p> <p><i>Real time tracking, just checking in, ban from platform, no matching for below 3 stars, call 911 from app, Lyft will back, community safety education and multiple NGO initiatives</i></p>	<p>✓</p> <p><i>Both Ola and Uber partnered with Google to alert detour, pin verification, riding only with females for ridesharing, workshops / trainings for driver partners</i></p>	<p>✓</p> <p><i>Uber has similar safety features as Lyft but Lyft does a better job of closing the loop (calling back during distress call), with better driver educational program and NGO initiatives</i></p>

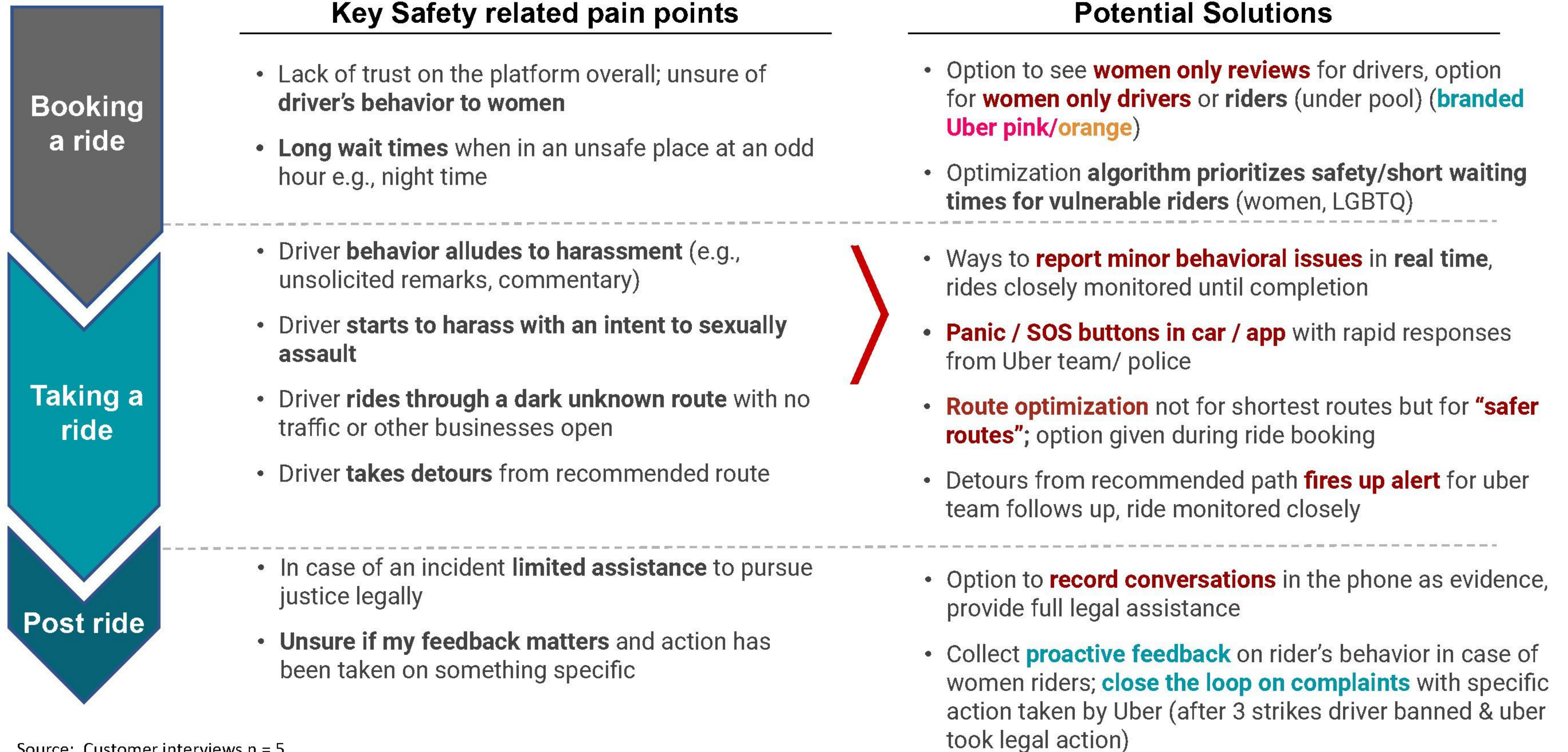
 **DiDi**

Option to ride with women drivers but failed (higher wait time due to lack of adequate women drivers)

Uber is industry first in many safety initiatives but there is opportunity to close out product, messaging and brand gaps



Provide more safety features to increase trust in the short term



Source: Customer interviews n = 5

Overall GTM strategy

Objectives

- Improve **perception of safety**
- Build **trust** on the platform for women
- Publicly commit to increasing **accountability** of the platform (2 way ratings, close feedback loop-make women aware of the actions uber has taken on complaints)
 - **Transparency on events** that occurred instead of hiding numbers and taking responsibility
- In the **short-term** launch product features (robust safety tools) and subtle marketing campaigns
- In the **long term**, build brand value and increase safety and trust perception after positive metrics and feedback from short term initiative

Principles

- **Commit to the work publicly:** Be honest about the hard issues
- **Do the work:** Effectively and consistently prevent harm on the platform. Pioneer new product **safety features** and **actor enforcement** (robust background checks)
- **Show the work:** Uber's programs, actions, and impact in women safety should be well documented, and publicly visible through **messaging & marketing.**
- **Seek feedback on the work:** Proactively engage women audiences for feedback to improve and welcome oversight through **Safety Advisory Board.**

Build public programs & campaigns to build trust in the long term



Special Ubers



Uber Safe Routes



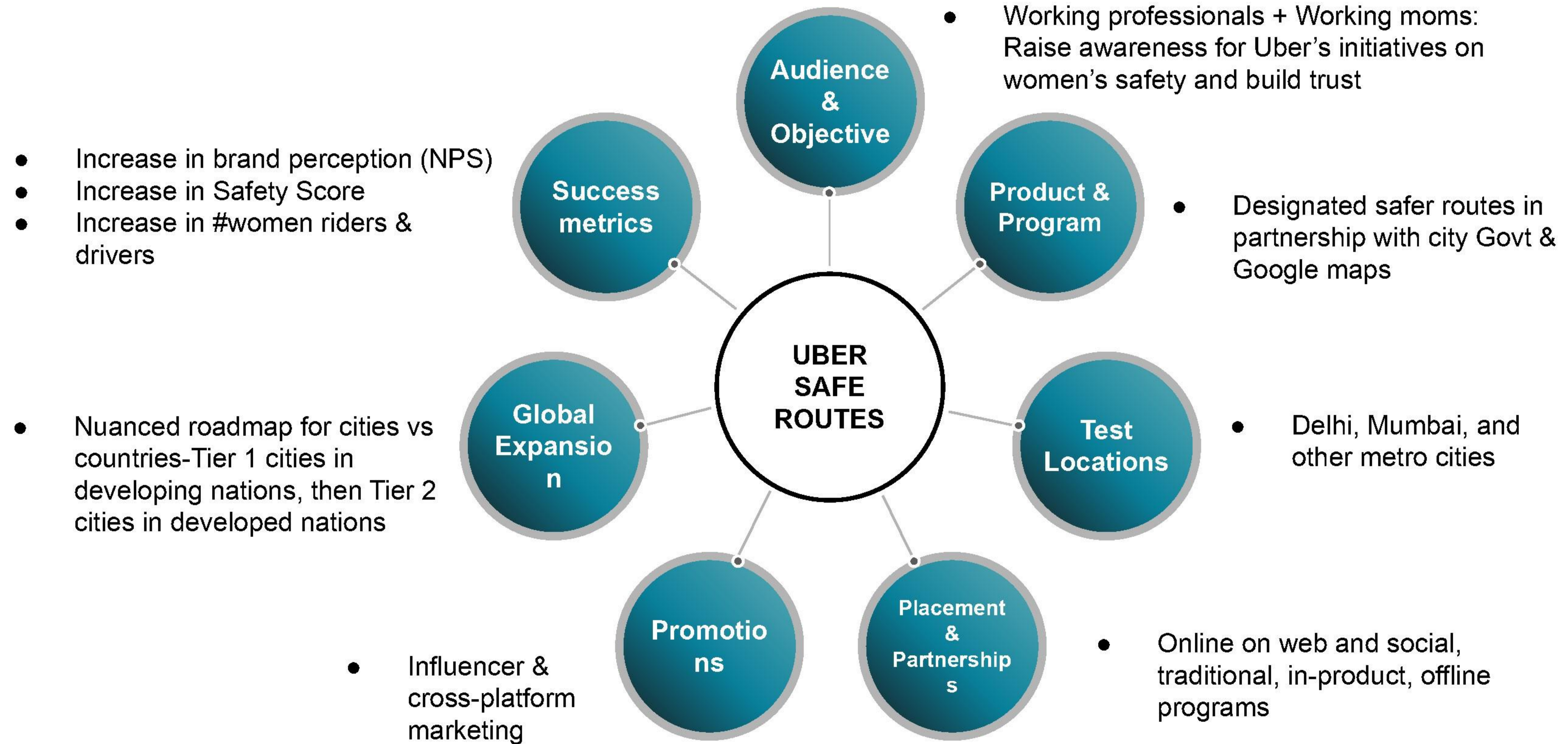
More Women Drivers

<p>Product & Program</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pink or orange cars to cater exclusively to women ● Mandatory installation of panic buttons and GPS systems in the vehicle 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● App shows safer routes for night safe mode ● Optimize on lower waiting time at night for women riders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Fleet of more women drivers [Didi]. Incentivize by 2X salaries, driver safety options and education to empower women at the grass roots level. Create employment. ● Option to ride with women drivers/co-passengers
<p>Why this is important</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To build trust in the community on women safety, it is important to start with proof points. ● Once people start noticing Uber's initiatives live on the streets, it will introduce a halo effect for the brand and safety perception. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What's been missing from the tech industry's approach to safety is a focus on route-mapping catered to women ● Women feel safer when sharing a ride in known localities even with male co-riders ● Female, elderly couple or family co-riders were deemed safer for travelling in unknown localities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● ~50% women riders want women drivers ● Girl only ride hailing services are popping up across the world e.g.Didi, Carriage for her in Malaysia, Sheba in Australia, Safr in Boston but this option has not been considered by either Uber or Lyft
<p>Partnerships</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● City Govts, Law Enforcement, Smart-Mumbaikar, SafeCity App 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Google Maps, SafeCity App, City Govts, National Crime Records Bureau 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● NGOs in women safety such as Breakthrough, Care, Manas

Uber Safe Routes Proposal: Build designated safe uber routes with street lighting and suggest safer routes in-app. Raise awareness for Uber's initiatives on women's safety and develop proof-points for building trust with women long term.



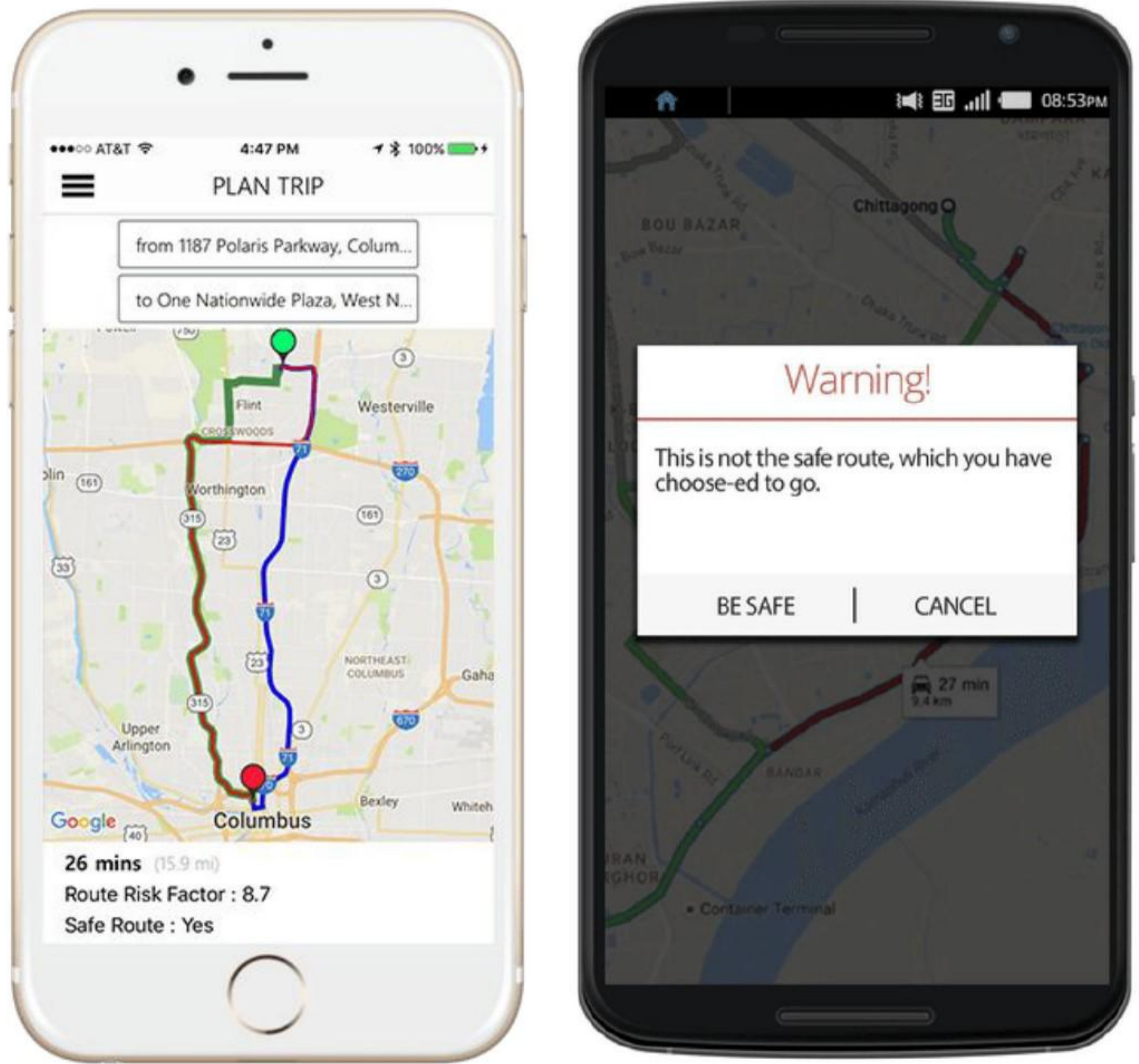
GTM on 'Uber Safe Routes'



GTM Execution: Product and Program

Product

Program



- App suggests safer routes
- Surveillance systems: Start in-car audio & video recording for an event mishap
- Flag detours both to driver & rider - combine with Ridecheck
- Rate routes safe based on:
 - Street safety and good lighting
 - Light traffic vs completely dark suburbs
 - If nearby businesses are open
 - If crimes have been reported in the area
 - Crowdsource info from users who have seen something “sketchy” in that area
- Safety perception in-product survey- 3 questions
- Close feedback loop with women on action taken through the survey/complaints

- Build and designate safe uber routes with street lighting (solar panels)
- Police check-points at regular intervals
- Uber branding at regular intervals on the route (road signs - you are on an Uber safe route)
- Dedicated Pink/Orange ubers for women

GTM Execution: Partnerships & Events

Technology



- Google Maps & City Mapper offer quickest, most convenient route to a destination but don't offer night-safe mode for women
- [Safe & The City](#) - Start-up app aimed at women rates routes based on safety
- [Safecity](#) in India & Washington DC empowers individuals, communities, police and city government to create safer public and private spaces. They collect & analyze crowdsourced, anonymous reports of sexual violence, identifying patterns on routes.

Govt + NGOs



- City Govts, Police administration, Municipal corporations (utilities, city infrastructure, smart cities) to build 'Uber safe routes'
- Law enforcement, civil rights, and road safety professionals who offer immediate assistance in active cases.
- Women safety & sustainability NGOs to build trust; credits in free rides to NGOs
- Event rally launching 'Uber Safe Routes' with women drivers/riders leading the charge on 'International Women Day' or during 'Sexual Assault Awareness' month

Corporate



- Launch the program in partnership with corporates where women use uber for office commute.
- Offer \$50 credit to women in the city where the pilot is launched to promote usage.

This is a stepping stone for the broader strategic Partnerships model for 'Uber Safe Routes' as Uber can't do it alone

GTM Execution: Messaging, Promotions and Education

Messaging

Key Messages:

- We want to shine a light on these issues and create **awareness, transparency** and **public accountability**.
- A project of this magnitude will take **time**. Together, we can make meaningful progress towards ending sexual violence. When we say we stand for safety, we mean it and we are in it for the **long haul**.
- Build on the campaign for '**Turn the lights on**'
- Empower women

Key Audience:

- Pilot in a Tier 1 city with larger demographic on **younger female professionals** and **working moms**

Ways of reaching this audience:

- Meet them where they are through **Corporate** partnerships

Approach: **Subtle marketing campaign** in local markets to build trust in the community. Get good response on numbers then scale up. Women safety proof points will introduce a halo effect. Making a loud splash doesn't seem authentic from a longer term brand and trust perspective.

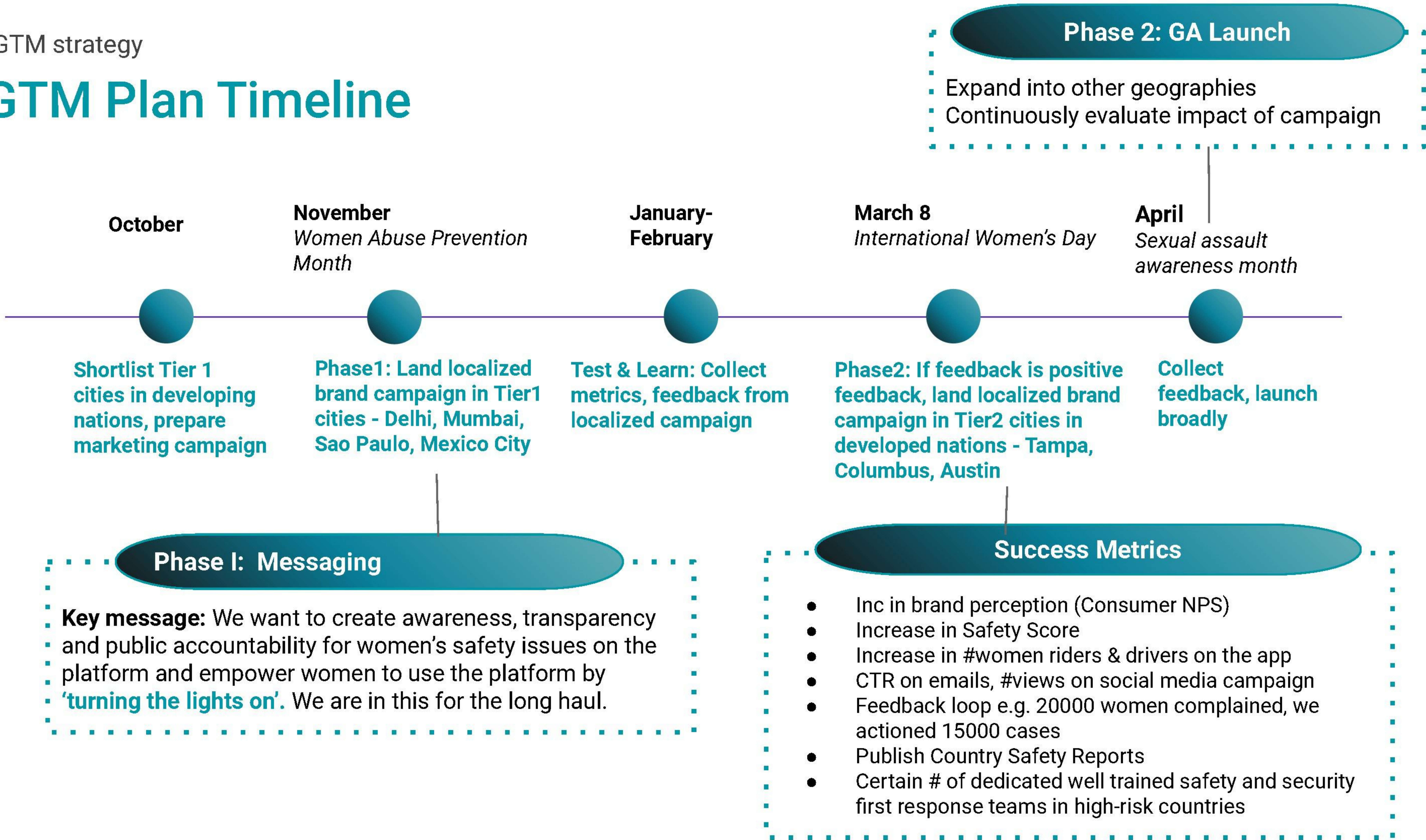
Promotions

- **Cross-platform campaign** on **IG + Tiktok + Youtube**
- **Women NGO leaders/influencers** promote campaign
 - Elsa Marie D'Silva (Founder of SafeCity), Karuna Nundy– Anti rape law of 2013 panelist, Mahima Kaul - Head of Public Policy & Govt at Twitter India
- **Crowdsourced campaign:** Encourage women to be fierce and fearless, break down gender norms and encourage self-expression.
 - **Young professionals post stories:** I just took a ride with uber at 10PM, you can do it too on 'Uber Safe Routes' - #turnthelightson **#ubersaferoutes** #makingridessaferandcitiesstronger #gethomesafe #uberempowerswomen #fearnomore #wecanstopthistogether #westandforeachother #yeswecan
 - **Hashtag Challenge** featuring 3 uber colors/styles corresponding to 3 personality types: **Ambitious, Carefree, Bossy**. Invite them to engage with the brand by showcasing their personality through unique content online. Personalize the 3 personalities through 3 songs and enlist top 5 influencers to lead the challenge and inspire women to get started. Users then choose a song and share their own content to show their fierce personality to the world. Uber is enabling these young professionals to achieve their ambitions at all kinds of odd hours through 'Uber Safe Routes'

Driver Education

Mandatory regular training (not one time) through video modules on expected driver behavior throughout their tenure on sexual misconduct and privacy. Test with quizzes and **psychometric tests** on efficacy. Differentiated educational program such as this example on awareness against gender violence – [Slap Her campaign](#)

GTM Plan Timeline



GTM Risks and Mitigations

Risk	Mitigation
<p>[Product: Racial Discrimination/profiling] In countries like US, people may tag areas inhabited by african americans as unsafe, can cause a controversy. Critics have argued that the term “sketchy” is a dog whistle for “minorities”, and what users interpret as “sketchy” would encourage racial profiling.</p>	Confirm and double check data collection for such areas
<p>[PR: Faulty Campaign tone/channel] Campaign tone needs to be subtle, serious, empowering, and can backfire if women don't react well considering events that have happened on the platform already</p>	Pilot test campaign with a focus group of women in American, European, Asian and LATAM countries

What's next for the ride-hailing industry?

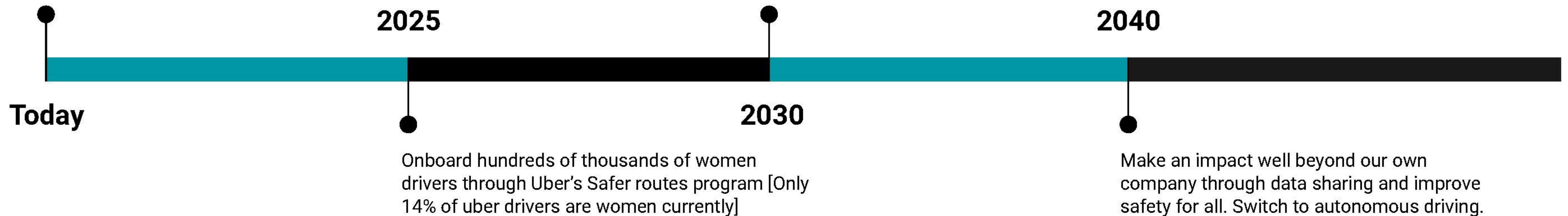
“Millions of rides a day. Turn the lights on and get home safe!” --> Uber's stake in the ground

That's our commitment to every single woman on the planet. The path there will be by standing together and for each other as a community. It will be with more women drivers, safer routes and robust safety features. These monumental changes won't come easy. Or fast. But we have a plan to get there, and we need you to come along for the ride.

Announce global commitment to prioritizing women safety on the platform.

- Offer more robust ways for women to ride safe
- Partner to fight for women safety
- Make transparency & accountability a priority

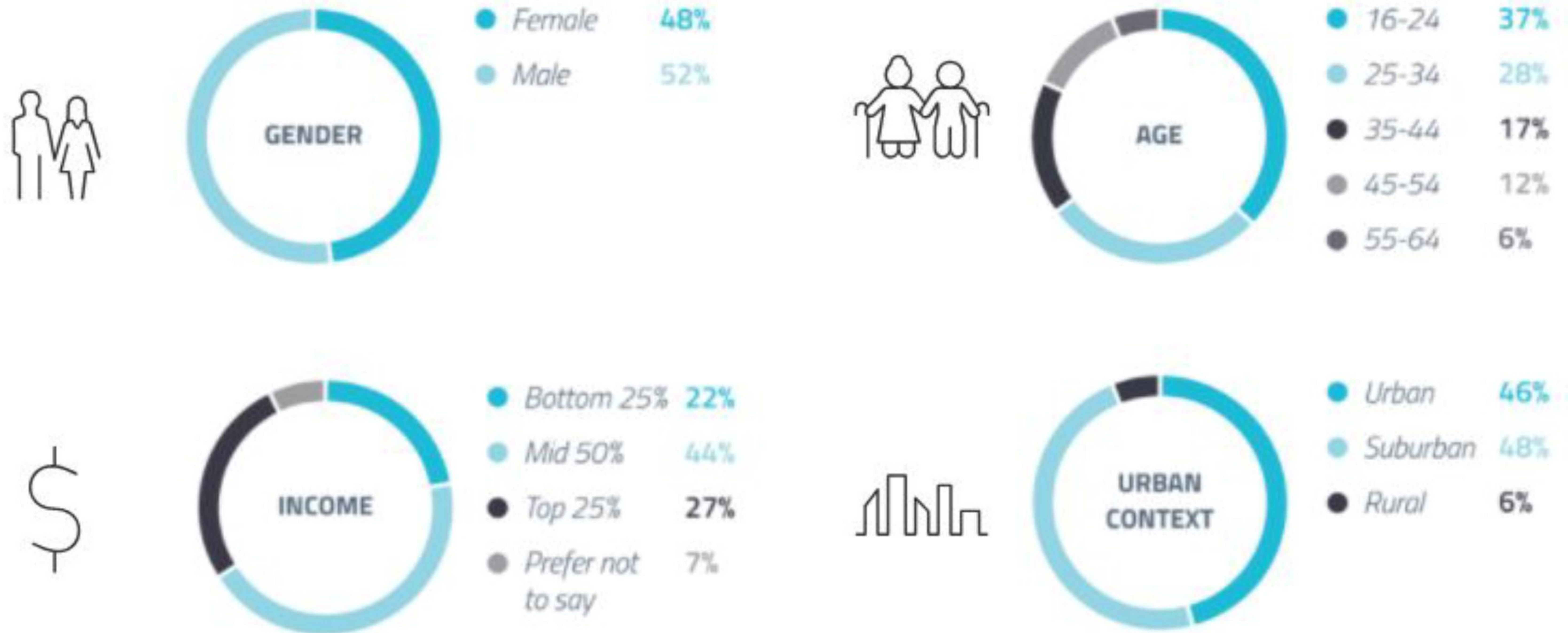
Be the industry leader in expert-driven, action-oriented and transparent approach to reducing sexual assault and misconduct on the platform especially in countries with highest percentage of women safety issues



Increase brand value, work for community causes and stretch the impact globally (600+ mkts) while being nimble and agile

Appendix

Uber US user data suggests usage lower in females



Source: <https://blog.gwi.com/chart-of-the-day/uber-demographics/>

