

# Boosting Female Employment and Tackling Informality in India

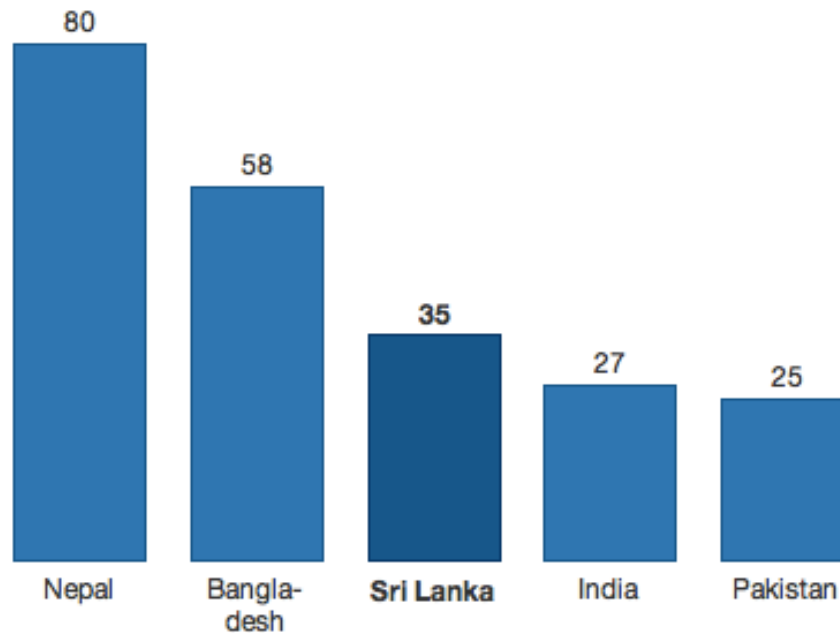
Shahana Chattaraj,  
Blavatnik School of Government

Presentation for UN Expert Group Meeting on

STRATEGIES FOR ERADICATING POVERTY  
TO ACHIEVE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FOR ALL  
1-3 June 2016

# Female workforce participation in India is low

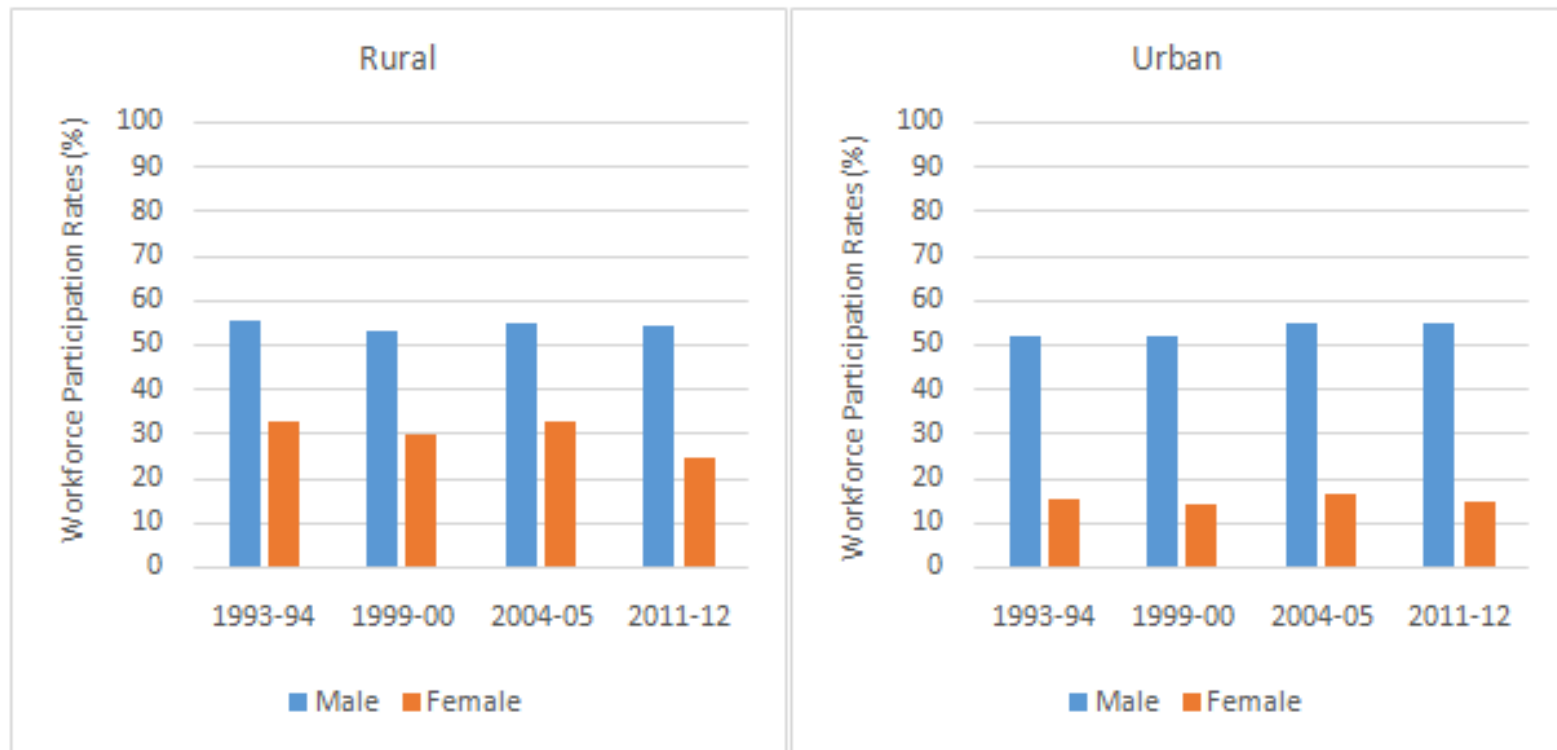
## Women In Workforce: India Lags Its Neighbours



*In percentage; As of 2014*

[Get the data](#)  
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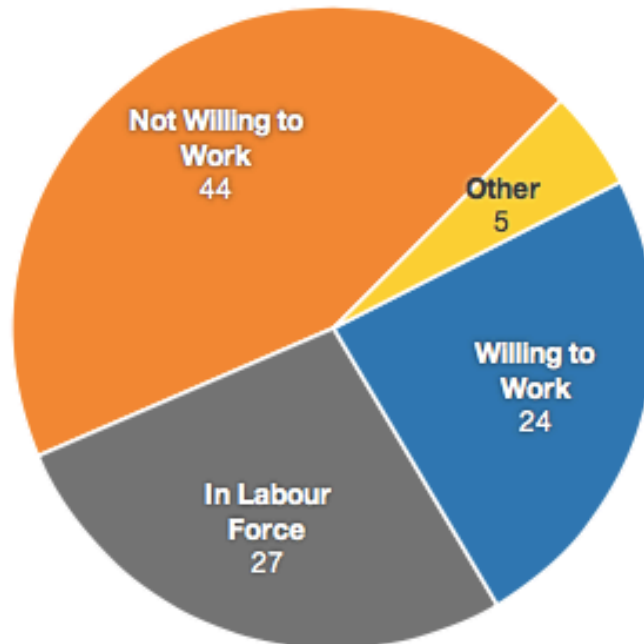
# Women in cities are working at lower levels than women in rural areas



Source: Employment and Unemployment Survey, NSSO (various rounds)

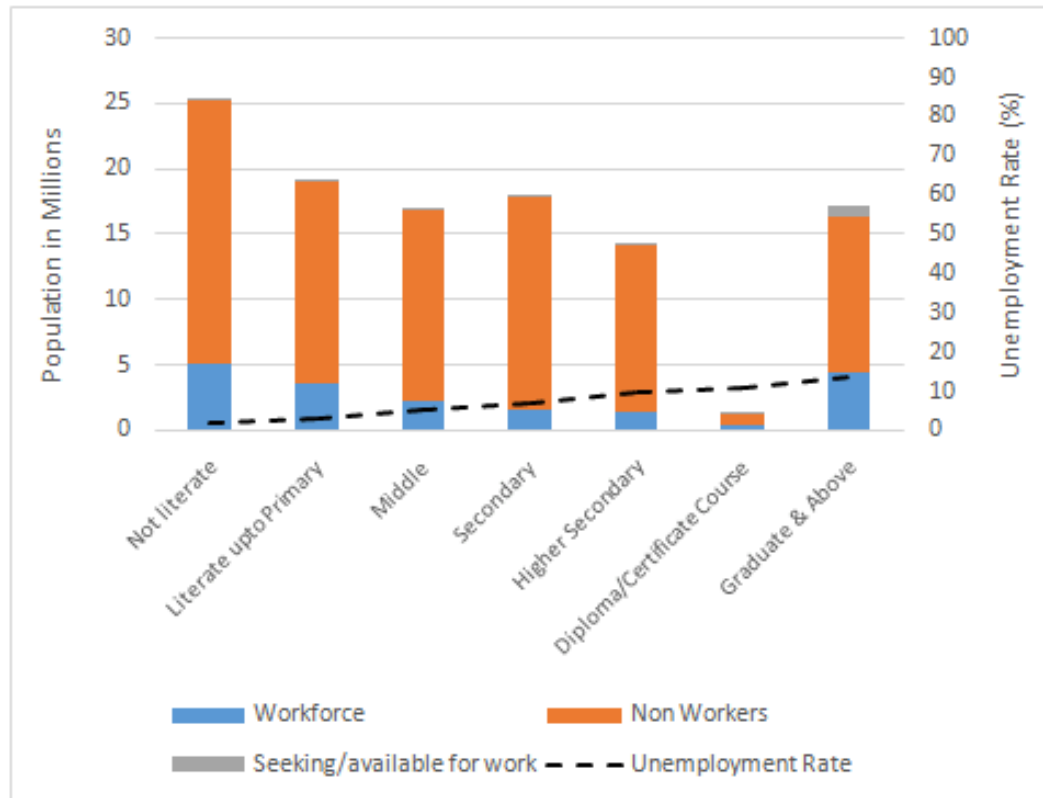
# Why are fewer women working?

## India: Women In The Workforce



Source: [National Sample Survey, Round 68](#) [Get the data](#)  
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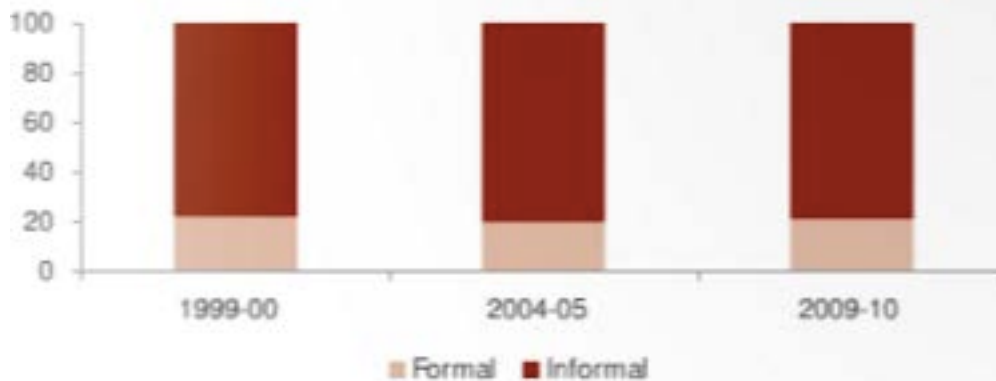
# Younger urban women are more likely to be seeking work



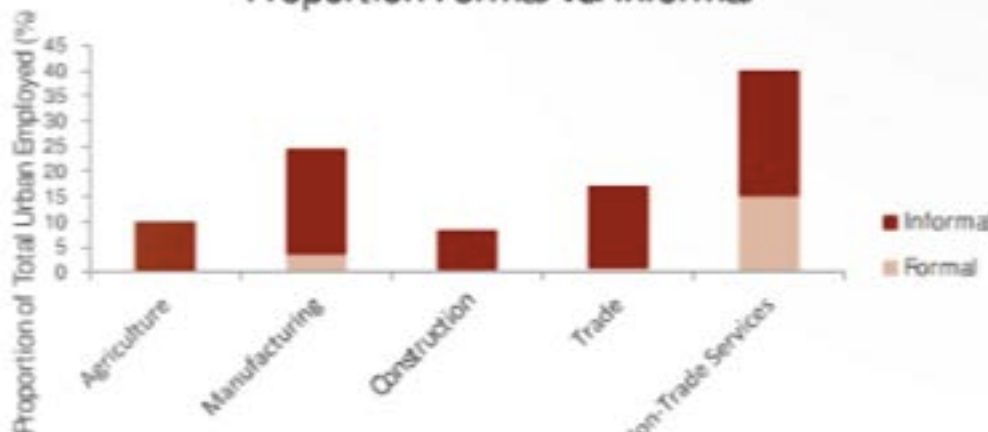
Source: Employment and Unemployment Survey, NSSO 2011-12

# India's Informal Economy

Informal Employment as a Proportion of Total Urban Employment



Urban Employed Classified by Industry, Proportion Formal vs. Informal



- India's economic and growth and urbanization has not led to an increase in formal employment
- India's informal economy is complex, heterogeneous and segmented
- It is unlikely to disappear or be absorbed into "modern" factory and office jobs

# Women in the informal economy



- Women are more likely to work in the bottom rungs, as home-based workers, casual workers and unpaid helpers
- Female workers in cities are heavily concentrated in home-based work, domestic service, street vending unskilled construction work and waste-picking

# Women workers in cities

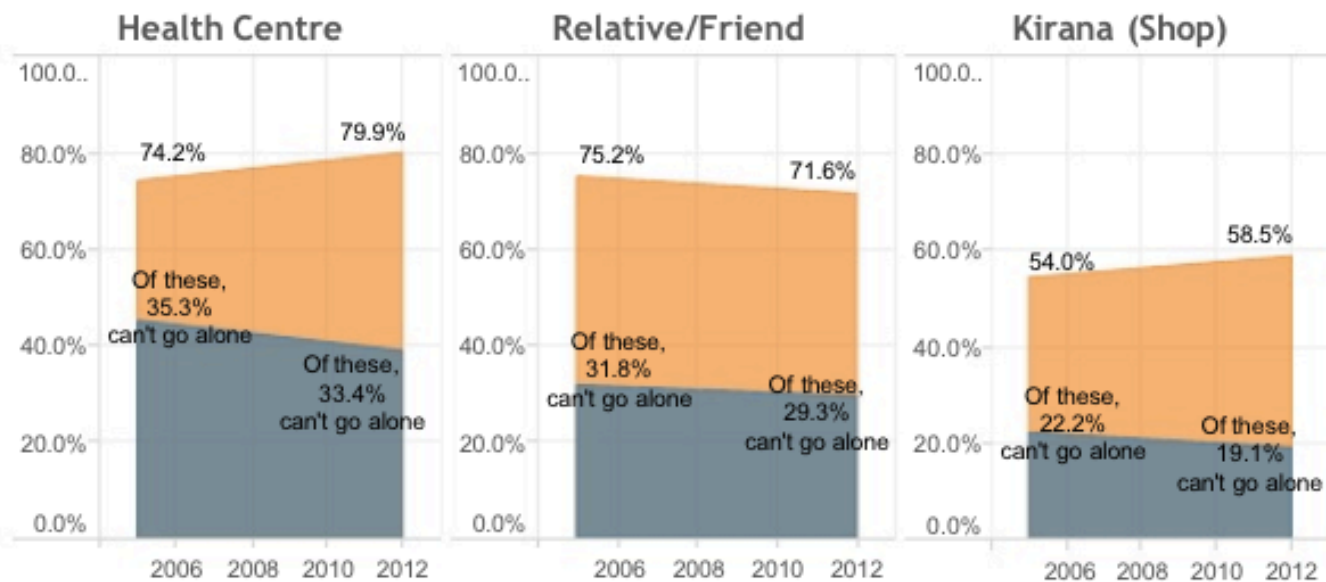
Groups	% of Urban Employment			% of Urban Informal Employment		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
<b>2011–2012</b>						
Domestic Worker	5	2	13	6	3	17
Home-Based Worker	14	10	32	17	12	40
Street Vendor	4	4	3	5	5	3
Waste Picker	1	0.5	2	1	1	3
All	23	17	49	29	21	62
<b>2004–2005</b>						
Domestic Worker	3	1	11	4	2	13
Home-Based Worker	12	8	26	15	10	30
Street Vendor	6	6	6	8	8	7
Waste Picker	.1	0	.1	.1	.1	.2
All	21	15	42	26	19	50



# Women in India face mobility constraints

## Women In India Continue To Face Mobility Constraints

Percentage of women who need permission to visit.....



# Worker Organizations



- Trade Unions in India are increasingly organizing the “unorganized”
- Union membership is associated with an increase in earnings and improved access to state programs and welfare benefits
- Women and socially-disadvantaged groups are less likely to belong to unions; poorer women are more likely to belong to unions
- Worker organizations in the informal sector bargain and negotiate with the state rather than employers for social assistance and welfare policies

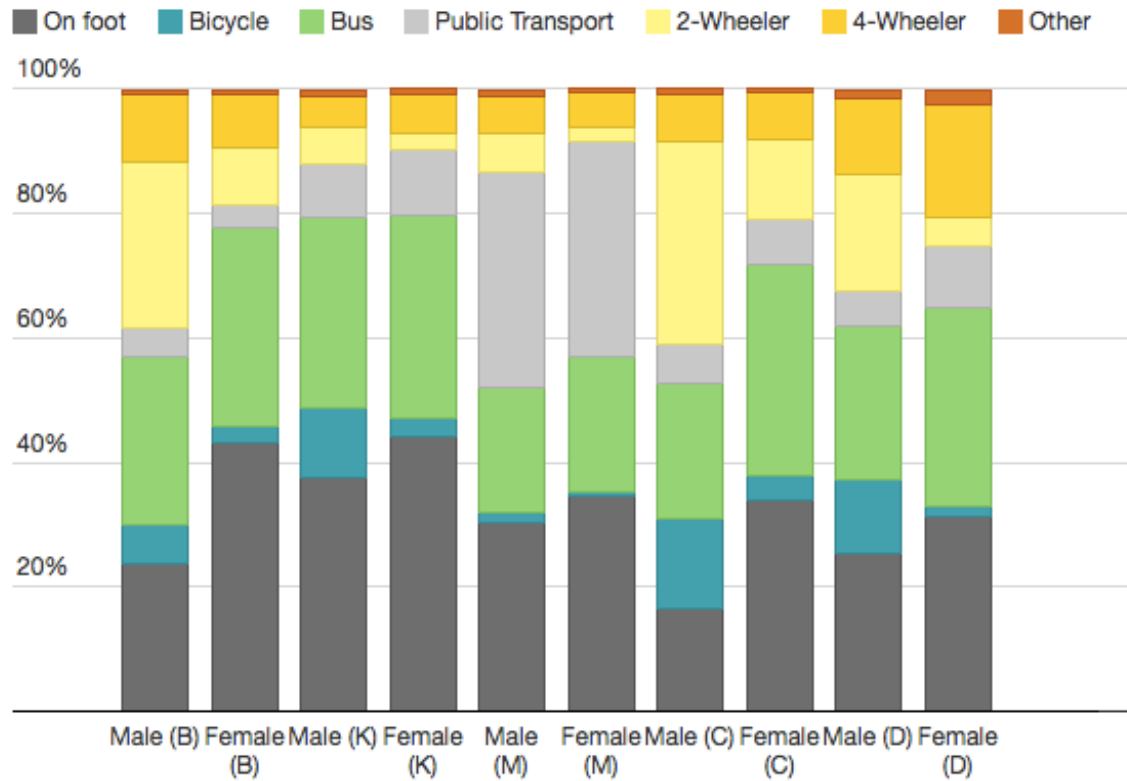
# Social Protection Policies



- With the continuing informalization of work, social protection policies will be critical to reducing poverty and vulnerability
- Women's organizations like SEWA and WWF have played a pioneering role in organizing home-based workers in India
- Models like Brazil's Bolsa Familia and neighbourhood-based Social Assistance programmes

# Mobility constraints in the city

## Transport Mode By Gender In Major Indian Cities



B - Bangalore; K - Kolkata; M - Mumbai; C - Chennai; D - Delhi