



Generating Female Employment through Public Employment

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Introduction

IWWAGE's report provides an insight into how public sector jobs can help improve female labour force participation (FLFP). FLFP of India stood at an alarming rate of 20.5 % in 2020 according to a World Bank report. Majority of work done by women within their households are unpaid and unaccounted. The study aims to understand the correlation between women's engagement in public services and their participation in labour force. Several government schemes especially in the field of health, childcare, social work attract women workers to such an extent that they are referred to as 'women's' programmes. Public expenditure in social sector, child care centres and public health facilities directly and indirectly supports female employment. It creates employment opportunities for women involved in care work and also reduces the unpaid care work burden of those willing to participate in alternate sectors of the economy. The jobs created this way benefit low-income households and also has positive multiplier effects on output.



Key Highlights

- With the principal status approach, there was an increase in females engaged in public sector from 16.8 % in 2011-12 to 20.2% in 2017-18. Data also shows that rural areas show better female participation in public employment than urban areas.
- Bihar followed by Haryana have the lowest proportion of females among government workers. Casual labour forms a significant proportion among rural government workers implying that most workers are not paid regular salaries and work as volunteer workers.
- Education, health, public administration, social work and civil engineering are the top industries recruiting female government workers. 92 % of workers in civil engineering are engaged in casual labour whereas those in other 4 industries are mostly regular salaried employees.
- Terms of employment has been analysed in terms of - type of job contract, paid leave, social security benefits and remuneration.
 - Even among regular salaried government workers, only 50 per cent (59 in 2011–12) had written contracts of more than three years, and 39 per cent (34 in 2011–12) had no written contracts in 2017–18.
 - Provision of paid leave better in urban areas compared to rural areas, casual labourers are not subject to any paid leave.
 - 52 per cent of female government workers have some sort of social security provision. Taking subsidiary status, in rural areas benefits are available only to 24 per cent of female government workers, while in urban areas it is more than 70 per cent.
 - A large number of women are regular salaried but a significant share of them are also paid based on incentives and work as casual labourers.
- Anganwadi Services Scheme, one of the largest child care and development programme benefitting children, pregnant women and lactating mothers employs women in large scale. Most workers under this scheme are honorary workers paid on a monthly basis decided by government. There is immense potential for creating employment by filling vacancies at All India level.

- Teaching profession is another mass employer which provides better flexibility and facilities and also has a higher pay than alternative jobs. However, a fact of concern is that very few high positions like principals and chancellors are held by women.
- All India female employment in the police force accounts for only 8.7 per cent of the total police force. Again, majority of women are constables or head constables. This is one such sector where vacancies in various posts are available and can benefit from female participation.
- ASHA workers under NHRM are local women engaged in immunisation and health care but are volunteer workers paid based on tasks performed. MGNREGA has been a successful programme for women as it prescribes that at least a third of all workers be women, and provides for equal wages for men and women. However, within MGNREGA women are concentrated on certain areas of work in different regions.
- A state level analysis of Bihar (lowest FLFP) and Telangana (FLFP greater than national average) has been discussed in the report. 87 per cent are in regular salaried work, and the rest work as casual labour. Thus, the presence of females with regular salaried employment in the government sector is greater in Bihar than Telangana.
- Despite the shortcomings in terms of employment, the sense of security in government jobs continue to aspire women. If steps are taken to regularise women workers and also work towards their other work benefits, the public sector has immense potential for female employment.

Read more : <https://iw wage.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Generating-Female-Employment-A-Scoping-Paper.pdf>

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