

## Invisible Work

The 'Invisible work' - unpaid domestic and care work has never been accurately measured or included in economic activity. While it is crucial to the economy, most of this work done usually by women is unseen and unaccounted for.

Being solely responsible for domestic and care work, women's autonomy over how to utilise their time is severely hampered, increasing their financial dependence on family members and reducing their chances to access education and employment.

Women spend nearly 5 hours each day engaged in unpaid care work, compared to 90 minutes spent by men. While 92% of women take part in unpaid domestic work, only 27% of men do.

Women labor force participation in India is at an all-time low with less than 22% women in the workforce.

The pandemic has led to a nearly 14% reduction in the number of women in the workforce since December 2019.

The World Economic Forum has ranked India 140/156 in the Global Gender Gap Index, estimating that women's earned income is only 20% of men's. So why aren't more women at work?

Some of the challenges that women face are as follows:

1. Automation - especially in agriculture may lead to many women losing their only sources of income.
2. Restrictions on women's mobility.
3. Concentration of women workers in a handful of industries.
4. The disproportionate burden of *unpaid care work* on women.

What next?

Equitable redistribution of care work and domestic labor among men and women could be a step forward. Investment into women's skill training and entrepreneurship could also help alleviate the low levels of women's workforce participation. Data collection on time-use and autonomy over time from a gender lens could also be a solution.

**References:**

[Unseen reasons for the fall in women's labour force participation in India](#)  
[Unfolding unpaid domestic work in India: women's constraints, choices, and career Data | 92% Indian women take part in unpaid domestic work; only 27% men do so](#)  
[Explained: How to measure unpaid care work and address its inequalities](#)  
[The increased burden of unpaid work on women during Covid-19](#)

