

MOVING BOUNDARIES

REPORT OF KEY OBSERVATIONS ON GENDER INCLUSIVE MOBILITY IN INDIA



Principle
Partners:



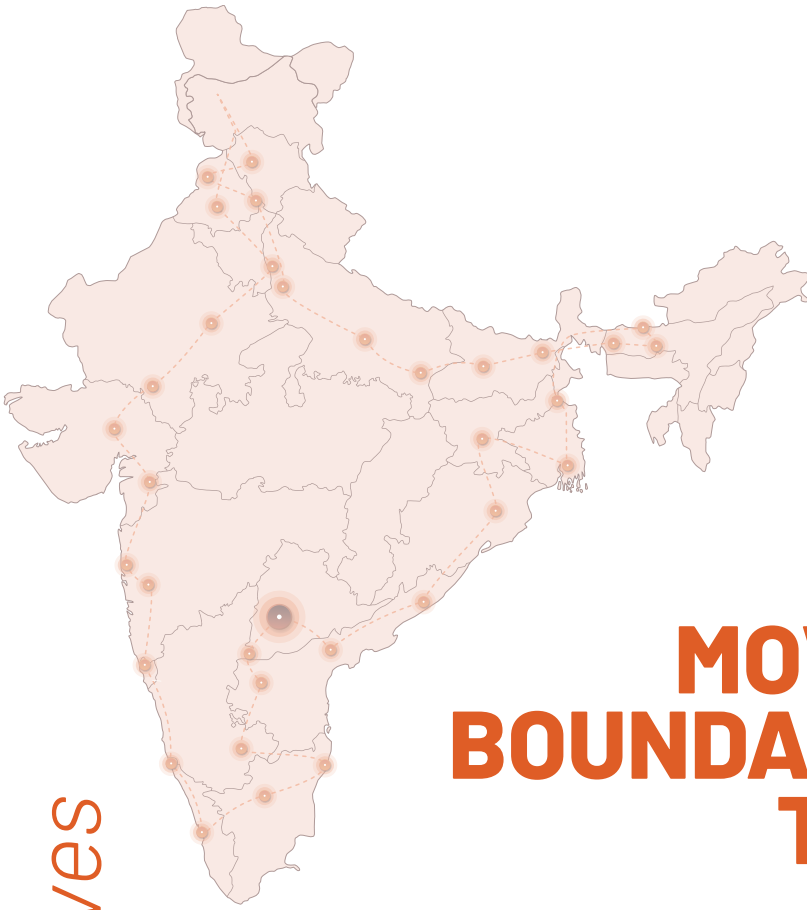
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#WhenSheMoves



THE MOVING BOUNDARIES TOUR

On 11th October 2021, Jai Bharathi (JB), Founder MOWO, embarked on a motorcycle ride across 11,111+ kms of India's boundary over 40 days.

Moving Boundaries was a one-of-a-kind tour that raised awareness about 'Gender Inclusion in Sustainable Mobility'. The tour hosted awareness events across 20+ cities encouraging women to consider sustainable mobility as a livelihood opportunity.

This campaign also brought in a dialogue with civil societies and organisations working towards training and employing women in mobility and with policymakers to create a conducive environment for more women to get trained and join the mobility workforce.

POWERING THE RIDE



| Shell Foundation |



The campaign was supported by the POWERED programme in collaboration with MOWO & Even Cargo in an effort to increase awareness about the role of women in sustainable mobility and institutionalise the concept of female drivers.

POWERED

A partnership between Shell Foundation and the UK Government, POWERED has been supporting the integration of women across the clean energy and mobility value chain.

MOWO

MOWO Social Initiatives Foundation is a not-for-profit social enterprise, which uses mobility as a skill for women empowerment and safety.

A revolutionary initiative, MOWO aims to empower women to be independent by offering them two and three-wheeler training and related livelihood opportunities. The organisation also liaises with organisations to create more employment opportunities for women in mobility and works on policy advocacy which will eventually lead to more women occupying our roads.

EVEN CARGO

India's first women only logistics delivery company trains women on mobility and logistics and employs them as delivery agents to enable them to reclaim public places. Even Livelihoods ensures sustainable and equal access to mobility and livelihoods with dignity through women-centric modules of training, social and financial support. They help women acquire electric bikes to work as delivery associates with major e-commerce partners and many more.

"You educate a man;
you educate a man.
You educate a woman;
you educate a generation."

- Brigham Young

BACKGROUND

South Asia, more specifically India, is called a subcontinent for a reason. The bewildering diversity of cultures in this country poses different issues for women of different states, languages, and cultures.

This 11,000 km expedition was a journey to explore the diverse issues that women of our sub-continental nation face. What a woman faces in the North of India is possibly of almost no concern for a woman in India's South or the East, or even the very next state to Delhi.

There is no single silver bullet to address and unshackle all of the myriad limitations the women in India face.

Women challenging the socio-cultural barriers and breaking the glass-ceiling through driving, is an innovative approach in building resilient livelihoods and empowering them in the process.

Moving Boundaries campaign firstly intends to explore and catalogue the limitations that underprivileged and working-class women face. With the catalogue of issues, the team then intends to create a dialogue with the respective local civil societies and government divisions in coming up with solutions that would work best for women of that specific locale.



the bitter truth

Just about 9% of Indian
drivers licences are
women.

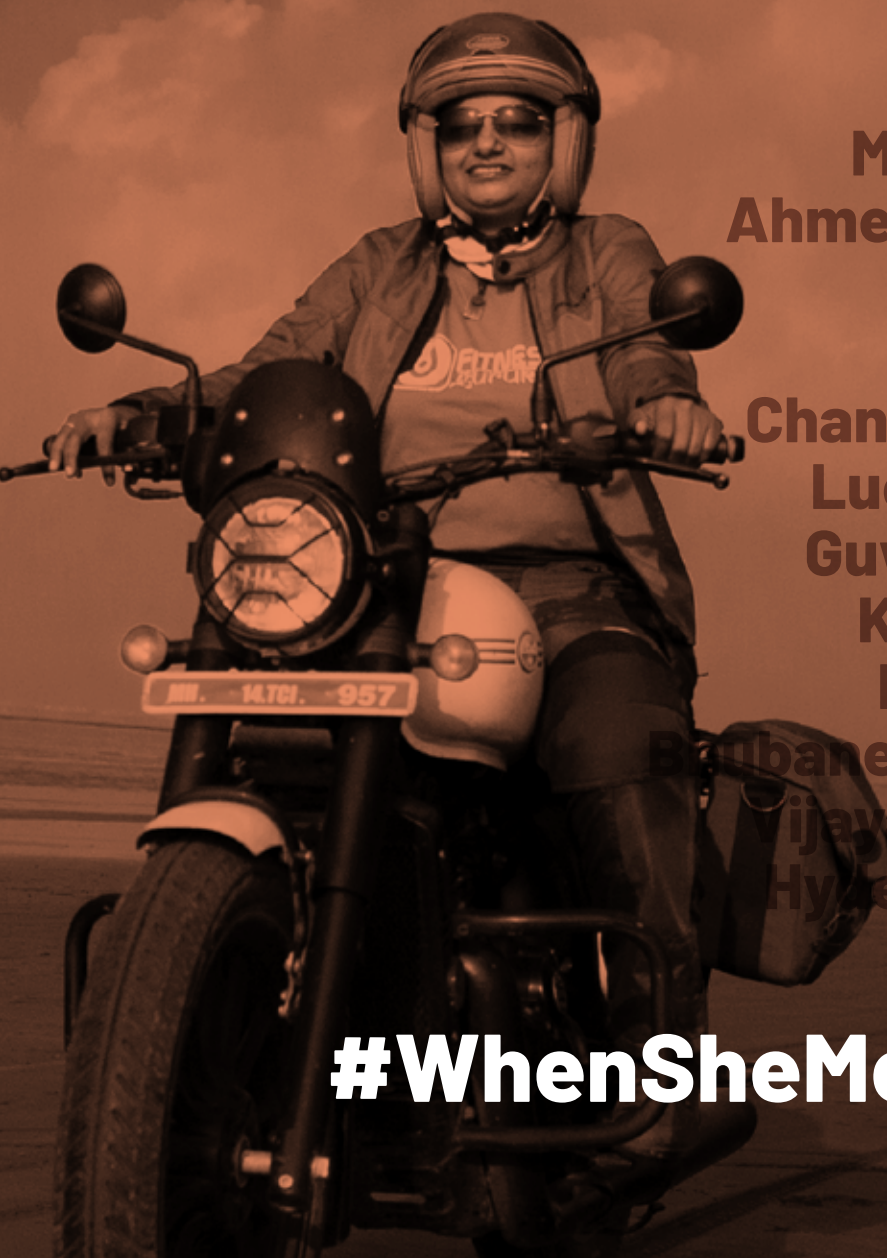
One underlying theme that cuts across all regions is recognising 'driving and riding mobility' in women to be added to the skills recognised by the National Skill Development Council.

Another key need nationwide is the need for rest areas, clean break-out rooms and electric vehicle charging facilities for commercial women drivers. Irrespective of the state, these three issues deter women in India from taking up driving as a profession and commercial activity.

Across states, there is a pressing need for women-specific motor training and testing centres. In urban areas, the state governments could come up with women-specific centres, or days that are women-exclusive for training, testing and driving certification. Women anganwadi workers should be trained exclusively in rural areas to provide mobile maternal and child health to the local populations. For this, just as health and education training happens in the government divisions, driving should be added as a job skill for health and social workers.

Creating brand new standalone women-specific infrastructure, or co-locating and integrating into existing infrastructure, and women-specific facilities encouraging women to take up commercial driving are central ideas that came out of this expedition. Each of these possibilities needs to be checked for local viability to make this infrastructure need a reality.

11,111+ kms
40 days



Hyderabad
Bangalore
Chennai
Kochi
Goa
Pune
Mumbai
Ahmedabad
Jaipur
Delhi
Chandigarh
Lucknow
Guwahati
Kolkata
Ranchi
Bhubaneswar
Bijavawada
Hyderabad

#WhenSheMoves



Telangana is leading gender inclusion in mobility by launching India's first motor training center built for women and run by women.



TELANGANA

HYDERABAD

FIRST PIT STOP, NARAYANPET

story of change

Life became difficult for Amrita when her husband, an auto-driver, met with an accident. The sole breadwinner she had to juggle between her household duties and the tailoring business. Commuting on foot delivering consignments or procuring raw material, multiple times to multiple places, meant she couldn't reach the shop on time and missed out on several business opportunities.

Her need for a convenient mode of commuting to fulfil her duties as a mother, wife and an entrepreneur encouraged her to enrol with Mowo.

Amrita after having learnt the basics of two-wheeler driving, learnt to drive a motorbike on her own. Subsequently, she also learnt to drive an auto-rickshaw.

A gleeful Amrita says, "I now drive my husband's auto whenever I have to shuttle between my home and the shop. I no longer have to keep my customers waiting! My business is thriving. Learning driving skills has changed my life in so many ways!"

Telangana, MOWO's home state has been very receptive to the idea of empowering women in the mobility sector. Women and Child welfare department, Government of Telangana has partnered with MOWO in setting up Infrastructure for India's, first women-only Motor Training School.

The Women and Child Welfare Department is open to teaching Anganwadi workers to ride, to better serve the needy pregnant women and children at home.

In the worst case, what would take many hours to reach the women and children in need would now be a matter of minutes. This way, the Anganwadi workers themselves become more efficient in their ability to serve more women and children.

Not just in the case of Anganwadi workers but also in the case of teachers in rural areas, commute is an issue. Empowering these teachers in mobility would work wonders for education as well.

Narayanpet, a newly formed district in Telangana, has witnessed significant progress in women's mobility since MOWO's first rural training programme deployed in October 2020 with the support of the Narayanpet district collector.

barriers

There is a noticed vast social, cultural, mental barrier that mobility is man's forte, more so when this mobility becomes motor enabled. Families do not hesitate for men to take vehicle loans amounting to tens of thousands. Still, a mere few thousand rupees loan for even buying a bicycle for a woman is considered a waste of money and family resources. There needs to be a change in this attitude towards mobility. Women should be able to take up mobility as an enabler.

An impediment women face in learning to ride is the lack of driving schools that can teach them the life skill of mobility in their comfort zone.

Two-wheeler riding schools are few and far between in the urban landscape. Even the schools where they teach two-wheeler riding, the instructors are usually men; not many women are comfortable learning two-wheeler riding from men.

Enabling women in mobility needs women instructors and a place where women lead the effort to teach motor mobility as a skill.

Telangana is one of the most culturally diverse states in the country regarding ethnicities and indigenous groups. A huge advantage women experience as part of indigenous cultures is that they have a social status equal to men.

Many tribal hamlets hardly have good physical access to health and education. If women in these hamlets and interior areas could be encouraged to take up the skill of mobility, their access to health and education facilities would make sure that they cement this cultural advantage of equality for posterity.

Telangana is an ideal case for MOWO's mission. The state has built the country's first women-only and women-centric motor training school to encourage women.



MOTOR TRAINING CENTRE IN HYDERABAD

A giant step for women's mobility



SMT SATYAVATHI RATHOD

Hon'ble Minister for S.T. Welfare and Women & Child Welfare
Govt. of Telangana



"In our social structure, most of the women are never encouraged to commute independently, leave alone picking up employment opportunities. While commendable efforts for road & women safety are made, there are no motor training centres for women especially where women can learn from instructors of the same gender which emphasise on the road traffic safety & opportunities in the mobility sector. Upon completion, this centre would set a benchmark for many other states to build exclusive motor training centre for women."

SMT DIVYA DEVARANJAN, IAS

Spl. Secretary to Govt., Dept of Women & Child Welfare
Govt of Telangana



"The ability to be on their own to cater to basic necessity of commuting to places can boost the confidence in women & girls to a major extent. Learning motor riding skills will not only give an essence of empowerment but also mitigate the fear factor. Additionally, they can use this skill to be a part of the rapidly growing livelihood opportunities in the mobility sector."

SMT D HARI CHANDANA, IAS

District Collector, Narayanpet
Govt of Telangana



"Under 'Naaris of Narayanpet' initiative MOWO launched its first rural hub at Narayanpet to impart two and three wheeler training to the girls and women in Narayanpet District. We truly find this unique initiative innovative because equal participation of women in all sectors of employment is one of the most impactful ways to achieve gender equality."

Cutting edge mobility start-ups like TaxShe and MetroRide are enabling Bangalore's women through mobility.

BANGALORE



KARNATAKA

a simple solution

A thought-provoking moment in Bangalore was the incident of the women auto drivers that came to meet MOWO on their roadshow conducted in a commercial mall. For the first time, these women auto drivers who attended the event could remember that they were not charged to park their vehicles in the mall.

One of them thought out loud as to how nice it would be if they could do the same during the daily course of their business of being auto drivers and when they needed to access facilities.

Seldom do women auto drivers get a place to make a pit stop and freshen up in a clean and safe environment. They wondered if the malls and commercial establishments could help them by allowing them access to their infrastructure and they, in turn, could serve the mall going women exclusively.

As India's IT hub, Bangalore prides itself on being one of the safer cities for women in the country. Bangalore was one of the first cities where women were encouraged to take up jobs in the IT sector and companies established safe transport services with evolved security protocols for pick up and drops.

Today, the city of Bangalore has exploded in size and opportunities. Some of India's largest domestic online shopping and last-mile delivery services have setup their offices in Bangalore. But we seldom see women being a part of this last mile revolution.

The inclusion of women in desk jobs is undoubtedly a welcome change. Most women who can do desk jobs are usually middle class and above. The question still remains, what about the women of the socio-economically underprivileged classes; how will they be included in the workforce and emancipated from the confines of their homes?

There is a considerable gap in the last mile connectivity for Bangalore's metro rail system. A step forward for women, helping them take up mobility as a profession and aid the mobility of other women in general, would be to train women to become auto drivers.



Bangalore is a well laid-out city - every neighborhood has a corresponding public commercial complex or a civic center associated with it called BDA (Bangalore Development Authority) complexes. The BDAs, area associations or clubs could be made accessible to women drivers and provide for much needed break out rooms.

Bangalore already has a few innovative last-mile services like TaxShe (reliable transport fabric exclusively for women and children) and MetroRide (which connects people to their frequent destinations like Metro Stations, corporate parks and colleges / universities). TaxShe is exclusively run by women and for women. Though not women exclusive, MetroRide provides reliable electric last mile transport. Cutting edge mobility models like these are enabling women's mobility.



The Forum Mall of Bangalore, a high footfall commercial area, that hosted the Moving Boundaries roadshow, was willing to provide exclusive breakout and waiting zones for women auto drivers .



Opening up spaces in the civic centres for women auto drivers as rest areas when they need to access facilities and making these centres places to charge electric autos driven by women would encourage more women to join the last-mile mobility workforce.



Creating exclusive facilities in the Metro infrastructure for women where Metro already has exclusive women compartments would be an extension of metro's facilities to women in 'professional mobility' and this would be a way to further their services to the women in Bangalore.

Women in TN command more respect than in the rest of country.



TAMIL NADU

CHENNAI

the freedom to move

An exciting experience of Moving Boundaries in TN was witnessing the enthusiasm with which women from varied backgrounds participated in full strength.

There have been states in this Moving Boundaries expedition where there weren't any women in the roadshow audience. And in contrast to this, in Chennai, women waited without any inhibition of time to attend the roadshow.

For Moving Boundaries, this showed that the women were confident of their safety and surroundings.

Women auto drivers upskilled themselves to become COVID ambulance drivers and forklift operators when their auto business was impacted.

One state where women have advanced in almost every field in mainland India is Tamil Nadu. Unlike other states, women in TN are seldom apprehensive about coming out of the confines of home to work.

MOWO noticed the need of a formal organisation connecting all the women drivers in TN. Chennai already has 250 women driving autos; this number needs to increase. With the growth this community will experience a sense of camaraderie and sisterhood amongst the auto drivers; this fraternity will help women in mobility draw strength from each other on the road.

Women auto drivers share a strong bond and in our conversations revealed that their community of women drivers would be the first they would reach out to, in case of an emergency. During the roadshow they articulated a need for an association of female auto drivers, which would act as a consortium to gain access to better facilities and tackle grievances.

MOVING BOUNDARIES



Road readiness means not just knowing how to drive but also knowing maintenance and the skills to face challenges that drivers may face. A lack of a formal association hinders an individual women driver's road readiness which is a key to the long-term success of any woman in mobility.

For MOWO's roadshow in Chennai, JB happened to be wearing a khaki coloured jacket. Amongst the 250 women auto drivers that attended the roadshow, this unintended colour of the jacket sprung a strong camaraderie with JB. One of the drivers went on to tell JB that they feel that women formally leading them in khaki jackets would further their abilities. A strong need for TN is an association that could formalise and further propel women in mobility. Women here are bold by education. A further step for them would be to synergise their boldness and go on to create for themselves a more conducive ecology of breaking barriers and moving boundaries.

Government and civic society organisations are working to use the power of mobility. We met ANEW, an NGO that runs a special skills programme to train women to pick up livelihoods in non-traditional sectors. Rotary Temple City Club, believe driving to be a great livelihood opportunity for women, and under their women empowerment initiatives supported our roadshow to gain insights on how they could run programs to encourage more women in mobility. EA Hotel in collaboration with India Tourism Chennai supported us in hosting the second roadshow. They expressed a keen interest in seeing more women become mobile which could boost their participation in the hospitality industry.

The roadshow in Chennai was one of the best in this expedition. Women from diverse backgrounds attending the road show added to the understanding of the issues of mobility from diverse perspectives.

India's highest-rated state in human and development indices, Kerala also has a huge need for women in mobility.

KOCHI



KERALA

a big opportunity

If we look at Kerala's thriving tourism industry, women are only seen indoors providing hospitality services. One doesn't get to see women driving commercial vehicles or being involved in mobility services.

Kerala has always been at the forefront in the healthcare and education sector. Across the world, women from the state are renowned in health care and are known to be the best-trained teachers in school education. These women, however, are from the middle class or higher stratas of society.

One seldom hears about socio-economically disadvantaged women in Kerala.

Marketing campaigns run by both the state and central tourism departments have showcased Kerala as a safe destination for solo woman travellers.

The world of tourism opening up to women and solo women travellers highlights a great potential for women to take up mobility as a profession. Prospectively, in addition to taking up mobility, these women could be trained to be guides that can take tourists on sightseeing tours and expeditions.



It would be a fantastic way to bolster the financial prospects of these women that take up mobility by making them doubly capable in symbiotic roles of local transport and tour guides. It is an attractive option for one person to usher and transport a tourist from the time they travel to the state to the time they leave. This would be a big draw, especially for solo women travellers and also, groups of women tourists, increasing their comfort level with a feeling of safety.

The notion of Kerala and labour unions is ubiquitous. A plan to create careers in mobility and a union for these women that could oversee the whole effort would only add to the strength of this prospective initiative.

Even in progressive states like Kerala one seldom sees policewomen on two-wheelers. In a state with high tourist potential, the idea of encountering policewomen on the street would significantly add to the confidence of women tourists.

Kerala has a large coastline and a number of medium and small ports which could potentially lead to opportunities in the logistics sector. Preparing women in the last mile logistics will help them be more open to picking up livelihoods opportunities in the future.

There is a whole untapped ecosystem of careers in mobility in Kerala that could open up new avenues and make the state a role model for others to simulate.

Goa could become a benchmark for how citizen, civil society and government partnerships can implement public initiatives.

GOA



a big opportunity

A well connected public transport system doesn't exist in Goa. Taking this into consideration, in addition to serving the tourist market, Goa needs supplementary services to help its local last-mile transport needs.

The culture of unionised fixed rates for taxis would aid the ease of running a mobility business for women without the need to haggle and bargain.

Thriving tourist destinations like Thailand have numerous women taxi cum guides which makes it safe for women tourists; Goa could replicate this model with women who are fairly more confident and eager to participate.

In all likelihood, the first sight for a tourist arriving in Goa, by bus, train or flight in Goa is that of a taxi, with fixed rates and a taxi union.

Aeons before today's two-wheeler taxis like Rapido, Vogo, Ola and Uber, Goa has had this culture. What one doesn't see is women taxi drivers. Neither are there any significant female taxi drivers on two-wheelers or four-wheelers.

There is a huge potential for women that would skill up in mobility and take it as a career. Goan roads are well built, and traffic sensibilities are good. Goa is a relatively safe place already for women. Women that take up mobility in Goa have an added advantage of the culture of labour unions to support them.



At the state level, the Goa Department of Transport was very encouraging in helping out the Moving Boundaries expedition. This shows their keen interest in supporting initiatives advancing mobility of women in Goa.

Fidalgo Hotel and India Tourism Goa, hosted the Moving Boundaries roadshow in the city and expressed their keenness in seeing more women in the transport sector as they believe it could be a great value add in the hospitality industry.



Civil society organisations are another hallmark of Goan culture. Organisations like Rotary International have a large footprint in Goa. Civil society organisations working with Labour Unions and the Government would be of symbiotic benefit to all the three.

Creating infrastructure for women in mobility would be an excellent initiative for these organisations to take up.



There is a massive deficit of facilities for women to freshen up in today's road and highway infrastructure. In addition to the Government, if civil society organisations could partner with local unions to locate the needs, create infrastructure and maintain them, that would be a huge step forward in getting women out and taking a forward step into the world of mobility services.



Citizen, civil society and government partnerships are among the most resilient ways to implement public initiatives. Triangulated efforts like this would ensure enough investments and checks and balances in programmes in making sure they succeed.

If there is one place that embodies most of MOWO's vision, it is Maharashtra's Mumbai-Pune Corridor.

PUNE & MUMBAI



MAHARASHTRA

One of the country's foremost industrial corridors is one of the best-case scenarios for what MOWO wants to usher in.

Other than the rest areas and charging points for electric mobility, Mumbai by far has the most vibrant set of factors like good security of women, demand for mobility services, optimistic forecast for markets, the strong work ethic of people.

The Mumbai-Pune corridor is one of the most industrialised parts of the country. As much there is of highway connectivity in Mumbai and Pune, last-mile connectivity needs to be improved. There are a small number of female auto and taxi drivers, but the numbers in Mumbai & Pune need to grow. The present numbers are nowhere close to what these cities have potential for.

These cities have the basic infrastructure, working women, the need for services, growing demand, newcomers to the cities looking for employment, a safe environment for women - pretty much everything that meets the vision of MOWO.

women who inspire

Mumbai, Pune and Maharashtra have a history of strong women emancipators from medieval to modern times like Ahilyabai Holkar and Savitri Bhai Phule.

Pune is home to 'The Bikerni', India's First All-Female Motorcycle Association of India with a pan-India presence.

The participation of women in the industry in this corridor is evident. Women in Maharashtra have been a part of and at the forefront of the industrialisation of India. From producing India's first lady doctor Anandi Bai Joshi to today's women industry titans like Sudha Murthy, the industry in Maharashtra has always welcomed women.

MOVING BOUNDARIES

It would be wonderful to see industrial estates encourage women to take up mobility opportunities for their commute of their employees. This would aid more participation of women in gainful work and add to the families' income.

A strong belief is that when you 'teach a woman, you teach a family' - the impact of enabling women in mobility would create a positive domino effect for the families of industrial workers.

Akshara Centre, an NGO, hosted the Moving Boundaries roadshow in Maharashtra. It envisions the creation and participation in a society where all women can live a violent-free, dignified life with no discrimination. They have a three-dimensional vision for change, changing the hearts and minds of young women and men, impacting public attitudes and reforming systems that deny gender justice. They carry out this mission through a variety of programs. It was encouraging to see their leadership keen to include mobility as one of the essential skilling programs for women and girls enrolled with them.



Maharashtra is one of India's third-largest states in area and while cities like Mumbai and Pune enjoy amenities which come with being industrialised, there are districts in the state which struggle with connectivity in terms of logistics. If women are empowered with mobility and encouraged to join the last mile connectivity workforce it can greatly boost the economy of the region.

Only a concerted effort is needed to kick start a self-sustaining ecosystem enabling women in mobility.

Gujarat has experienced huge industrial growth and output. The key to this success story is a wonderful logistics network. The world-class Mumbai Western Expressway and the white top highways was a beautiful ride into the state of Gujarat.



GUJARAT

SURAT - KEVADIA-AHMEDABAD

logistics & women

Logistics is slated to be the highest growth industry in India in the next decade. For all practical reasons, women do not exist in the logistics industry. Seldom have we heard of women truck drivers mobilizing industrial goods. The idea of gender inclusion across industries has not happened in India, especially in the traditionally male dominated spaces of core, heavy and ancillary industries. Women exist in formidable numbers in agriculture, but they are missing when it comes to crop mobilisation. Women would thrive as operators of forklifts and internal shuttles, and delivery trucks.

No industrial policy seems to have focussed on gender inclusion in core and ancillary industries. It is high time that industrialised states lead the change and advocate for inclusion of women in the core workforce.

The first stop in Gujarat was Surat, an industrial and logistics hub. Surat's first impression of being an industrial hub unveiled on the ride from the railway station to the hotel. There were more platforms and railway lines dedicated to freight than for passengers. It was interesting to notice that almost no women were seen anywhere around the freight lines, nor in and around any of the industrial areas of Surat.

The next stop that Moving Boundaries took in Gujarat was in Kevadia, at the Statue of Unity. The beauty of Kevadia in the context of mobility was that there were electric vehicles transporting tourists. It was wonderful to see women of Kevadia transport tourists on electric auto-rickshaws and act as certified guides to the tourists.

Tourism training in conjunction with training in mobility as noticed and suggested for Kerala, was seen in action in Kewadia. Tourist centres like the Statue of Unity, should in the future be looking at including women on an equal footing as men in almost every role and activity. As the tourist attractions get built, intrinsic to those plans, local women should be involved and trained simultaneously. The tourist authorities could conduct workshops by providing pick up and drop facilities to these women from their homes, or the authorities themselves could visit villages and conduct training workshops.



These women should be taught core mobility skills of riding and driving, enabling them access to taking up careers in mobility. With these mobility skills, they could act as one person driving and guiding the tourist for the whole trip, adding both ease and a personal touch for tourists on their trips.

It was an inspiration to see a cohort of 50 tribal women being trained in Kevadia as both drivers and tour guides. Women from neighbouring villages were bussed back and forth to the centre for training. Upon completion of training, these women were readily employed in the dual duty of a tour guide and a driver. This is a wonderful example of public private partnership where the GMR foundation joined hands with the government with the objective of including women in the thriving mobility and tourism industry.

The women would transport and guide the tourists throughout their trip to the Statue of Unity. These women felt proud that they are able to take care of families in a more comfortable way than a male driver/guide would. They felt that families and children were more comfortable with women drivers. This is a win-win situation for both, the women and the tourists.

In Ahmedabad, Moving Boundaries met with DriverBen, a women's service organisation that teaches women to drive and join the mobility sector. Once a DriverBen completes 2/3/4 wheeler training, the women are placed as regular taxi-drivers. Some women opt to join Even Cargo (India's first women-only logistics business) as delivery drivers. We saw, in Ahmedabad, a harmonised system between organisations, where women are taught at one and placed in a career in mobility at another. This is the kind of seamless model that Moving Boundaries hopes to see across the country.

Rajasthan is very deep-rooted in its conservative culture. For women, these socio-cultural barriers become an impediment to participation in non-traditional work.

UDAIPUR - JAIPUR



RAJASTHAN

logistics & women

In the cities of Rajasthan, some women have started to become delivery partners for logistic firms like Even Cargo. Organisations like Aatmnirbhar train women on two-wheeler riding with women trainers.

The urban-rural cultural divide is very stark in Rajasthan. Cities like Jodhpur and Jaipur do have women that work in the mobility sector. But it is almost impossible for women in the rural setting to come out and work outside the spheres of traditional roles.

It is important to make a woman training-to-drive aware that her skill can yield economic gains.

Today, there are some organisations like Even Cargo that employ these trained women. Other organisations like Vikalp help women find non-traditional work as well.

Rajasthan is a tourism state. It is also a large state, by both, area and population, that requires better last-mile connectivity. If women in the hinterlands could be trained on mobility, their access to healthcare, education, and even commercial activities would greatly aid the state's GDP and add to the quality of life of these women.



There is hardly any presence of electric mobility in the state. There are neither electric three-wheelers nor two-wheelers that Moving Boundaries came across.

Electric mobility would be ideal to drive in the hinterlands of Rajasthan where people have to travel long distances to refuel thus making local commute expensive.



There is a lot of work to be done in Rajasthan. The state has a long way to reach the critical mass for continued and consistent opportunities for careers in mobility for all of its women, not just its urban citizens.



Delhi probably has the most progressive legislation for women in mobility. The Delhi government gives women a free ride on its metro, easing their access to the city.



DELHI

DELHI

a big opportunity

Delhi has many mobility startups and businesses that need last-mile mobility services - flexible mobility jobs perfectly suited for women.

Autos that ride at less than 25 kmph do not need a licence. Another advantage of the high population density that Delhi has is that, even at this slow speed, congested areas could be served well by taking advantage of electric mobility at the lowest possible cost.

Delhi also has this unique electric mobility programme, where 33% of all future e-auto permits are reserved for women. Policies like these encourage women to take up careers in mobility.

Delhi was one of the first cities to have introduced the Pink Auto Rickshaws, in coordination with the Delhi Metro.

In addition to this, Delhi has a large number of civil society organisations working on women's safety. One such organisation Moving Boundaries got in touch with is Safetipin.

Safetipin is a social organisation that works with a wide range of urban stakeholders, including governments, to make public spaces safer and more inclusive for women. It is a data-based application, where using their three mobile phone applications (My Safetipin; Safetipin Nite and Safetipin Site) they present safety data to the relevant stakeholders with recommendations. They also generate safety scores based on the data they collect and provide it in the My Safetipin app for users to make safe and informed decisions about their mobility.



Another civil society organisation that empowers women is the Azad Foundation which trains women on driving skills for earning a livelihood. Azad Foundation's area of operation is spread not just in Delhi but across the NCR.

It was also heartening to meet organisations like Revfin - an organisation aspiring to build India's largest lending company. Through their award winning and innovative digital platform, they provide loans to people at the bottom of the pyramid. They provide loans through their own NBFC as well as through multiple lending partners. In the Moving Boundaries roadshow they expressed their vision for women who do not have any credit history to own electric vehicles and get hassle free and easy micro-financing options through their organisation.

Another organisation that Moving Boundaries met was EVeetz. EVeetz provides eBikes on subscription to businesses looking to reduce their carbon footprint. Traditionally it has been difficult for women to purchase vehicles, these lease models for electric vehicles help women get on to the driver's seat quickly and without a heavy capital investment.

Meeting with the NGO - Crime Control & Social Development Organisation (CCSDO) was the most exciting part of visiting Delhi. They work with 2500 destitute and impoverished women to empower them by teaching them skills needed to make themselves self-sustainable. They realise that riding and driving are empowering skills that let women take up employment, & also keeping them safe.

If organisations like CCSDO are equipped to train more women in driving, they can enable a large pool of women into independent mobility and livelihoods through mobility. MOWO plans to develop a readily available model toolkit for do-gooder organisations like CCSDO.

INITIATIVES TO ENCOURAGE PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN TRANSPORTATION

Transport Department, Delhi Government

Delhi Government has taken several steps towards gender inclusion in mobility in all spheres of passenger transportation. There is inclusion of women at policy level and that has sparked a visible change on the roads of Delhi over time. The commitment of the state to empower women and enhance their participation in the workforce is creating more employment opportunities under urban farming, Rozgar Bazaar and Electric Vehicle adoption.



In 2019, the Bus Marshal scheme was relaunched with over 13000+ Marshals in all buses, including nearly 1600 Women marshals. Women Marshals have intervened and exposed incidents of theft, manhandling etc. in Delhi buses.



Under the pink pass scheme women travel for free in all buses. Today women in Delhi travel for free whether for employment or leisure. The % of women commuters have increased from 30 - 40% according to the state.

Under Delhi Electric Vehicle Policy, state has reserved, 1/3rd of the total 4261 e-auto permits, i.e., 1406 permits for women. Transport Department has already issued 548 LOIs to women under this initiative. On 31st March 2022, state flagged off 20 such e-autos from IP Depot which also included Lilac colored e-autos driven by women.

Women HMV holders were unable to drive buses just because of the restrictive height criterion. State made landmark changes to DTC recruitment rules to enable more women drivers in the fleet - Height criteria was reduced for women drivers from 159 cm to 153 cm and these drivers will be deployed preferably on automatic (low floor) buses. Fee for HMV licence was also waived off for women and is borne by the state.

Any women drivers who received an HMV licence from state approved Driver Training Institutes, after the mandatory training of a month is eligible to apply to DTC. (The state waived off the requirement of prior experience for women).

38 women are already trained and are now Heavy Motor Vehicle (HMV) licence holders at state's Drivers training Institute in Burari under a joint initiative Mission Parivartan (Empowering women by creating Women HMV Drivers) between Transport Department and DIMTS. 180 women in 5 batches will be trained under "Mission Parivartan" who will develop competency for driving DTC and cluster buses.

Apart from creating employment opportunities, state has also made efforts to create a safer and women friendly atmosphere in Delhi, including within the public transportation system.

Delhi also might be the first city in India, wherein all buses have at least 3 CCTVs and 10 panic buttons in each bus for women's safety. The buses are equipped with live tracking and two-way communication with command-and-control center.

Apart from this, 2 years ago, under DTC, state had deployed 20 special Enforcement - Eco Vans for women safety. Today, ISBTs now have feeding centers and nursing stations for women.

Punjab has excellent highways, booming transport and logistics businesses.

CHANDIGARH-AMRITSAR-AMBALA



CHANDIGARH

logistics in farming

The traditional role of a man being responsible for mobility and transportation is still true in Punjab. Only men transport the farm inputs that need to come from the market as well as the produce to the mandis.

The wheat basket of the country, Punjab transports its produce from every nook and corner of its state to sell across the country and internationally. All of this transportation is aided by excellent 8-10 lane highways. The all-seasonal agricultural produce from Punjab creates a never ending opportunity in the mobility segment.

Though all of the above might sound very uplifting, looking through the gendered lens and moving boundaries for women, there is hardly any data or even anecdotes that one can find showing women in mobility.

For all the farm produce and women's involvement in farming, women are not involved when it comes to transporting and moving the produce.



Electric mobility also would be very feasible in Punjab, where distances between the farms and the mandis aren't too far. Electric vehicles serve the purpose of carrying heavy weights between short distances perfectly. This is something that the Government should consider and involve women in its initiatives and policies for electric mobility.

It is a different story only in Punjab's capital - Chandigarh. It is India's best-planned city and a world heritage site.

Chandigarh's traffic signage is probably the best in India due to the city's planned nature. The well-planned roads, avenues and promenades make it easier for women to access transportation and careers in mobility.

Moving Boundaries also visited Amritsar and in contrast to Chandigarh, they noticed the roads were chaotic and unsafe. Better infrastructure in rest of Punjab can change the participation of women in mobility.

India's fourth-largest state by area and the largest in terms of the population also has the most work to do in empowering mobility for women.

NOIDA - AGRA - VRINDAVAN - LUCKNOW - VARANASI



UTTAR PRADESH

women & safety

In terms of security for women, Lucknow has not just women's police stations, but it also has female police posted at almost every significant street. The idea is to set a precedent for women to feel safe in the densely populated areas. Companies like Even Cargo find women easily to work with them in urban centres.

The largest number of cities covered in one state by Moving Boundaries was in Uttar Pradesh. We visited NOIDA, Agra, Vrindavan, Lucknow, and Varanasi.

The major highways that pass through the state of UP are world-class. They are like travelling on the roads of any other developed country. The wide highways and service roads establish great arterial connectivity.

Industrial Hubs like NOIDA are also hyperlocal hubs with massive housing and real-estate.

The sights and sounds of Vrindavan through the gender lens makes it a strange city. The mantra "Radhe Radhe" that people keep chanting almost as many times as they breathe would make one feel that Vrindavan would be a highly woman-centric city.



However, MOWO didn't get a chance to see any women that took up mobility as a profession. In tourist places like Vrindavan, women could be trained in mobility and tourism like they are at Kevadia and introduced into the workforce.

Varanasi has a best case scenario for e-mobility. With the new development of the Kashi Visweswara Dham, new broad roads are being built. But to protect the town from pollution, certain areas are prohibited from running fossil fuel-powered vehicles. Only E-vehicles are allowed in such areas. If the Government can create facilities for women in mobility, Varanasi could also replicate the story of Kevadia.

The encouragement and the ecosystem needed for women to embrace mobility as a profession is at a very nascent stage in Bihar.

PATNA



BIHAR

women & safety

In Bihar, safety of women remains a concern that deters them from stepping into the mobility sector. The deeply rooted patriarchal structure often discourages women in picking up non-traditional livelihood opportunities. Bihar was the only state where we did not see any women reporters from the media at our roadshow.

A lot of cogs are missing in the ecosystem required to encourage women in mobility in the state of Bihar. Basic infrastructure needs to be upgraded in the state. There aren't many urban areas in Bihar other than Patna. There aren't many tourist destinations either other than small places like Gaya.

On her earlier trip to Bihar in 2012 JB did not notice any women drivers taking on commercial vehicles. The situation hasn't changed much. The Moving Boundaries campaign did not notice any women commercial drivers in the state. There seems to be a massive vacuum of information on how catalysing mobility can be in empowering women. It was disappointing to see that hardly any women attended the Moving Boundaries roadshows in Bihar.

It was heartening to see that the few women who did attend the roadshows in Patna, expressed a keen interest in a career in mobility.



Women empowerment in Bihar needs to start with better education and infrastructure facilities for women to bring in fundamental gender inclusion. Vocational training would be a way to bring women out of the confines of home and into the workforce.

Far from seeing any women riders or drivers travelling through Bihar, there were hardly any women that Moving Boundaries noticed on the roads of Bihar. It was encouraging to see that many individuals came forward to further support the initiative and through collaborations were willing to impart mobility as a skill for women in Bihar.

The day states like Bihar embrace mobility for women is when one can, in jubilation, assume that the last bastions of patriarchy have fallen and that women can genuinely consider themselves equal.

The NE is a blue-eyed state for campaigns like Moving Boundaries. All that the state needs is awareness campaigns to establish the economic benefit for women in adopting mobility.

GUWAHATI

a big opportunity

Over the last decade, because of the improved roads and rail infrastructure, there has been growth in the economy of the NE.

Policy initiatives wise, there is a lack of a concerted effort to bring mobility as a skill that could increase one's income and improve their career potential.



ASSAM

Assam is the gateway to the North East (NE). All of the trade and commercial activity in the NE has to pass through Assam.

A distinct advantage of the North East states is their social structure of matriarchy. Women lead families here. The only thing that needs to be done in Assam and the rest of NE is to create awareness of careers in mobility.

Being far from the mainland, NE has the disadvantage of not having access to resources that the mainland people do. Initiatives that happen regularly on the mainland are seldom implemented in the NE.

The Manipur Women's Market is a great example of women's empowerment - five hundred women run this market with their wares - doing everything themselves, right from sourcing to selling.



NE is one of the safest places for women to live in India. There is virtually no crime against women in the NE.

Through embracing careers in mobility, women need not migrate to the mainland for work. Travelling away from home, to cities located far away pose many difficulties for migrating young adults.

Geographic, socio-cultural and business conditions in the NE are almost perfect for women to take up mobility as a profession. The lack of good rural connectivity is an excellent opportunity for women to start their mobility services in logistics and passenger transport. In doing so, women could get the first-mover advantage.

Because of the lack of opportunities in the NE, people migrate to mainland India for work. Once careers in mobility pickup in the NE, there would be no looking back for its people to earn their livelihood and further their incomes in their home states.

Compared to its neighbours, West Bengal is relatively well developed and even the last vestiges of patriarchy have weakened over time.



WEST BENGAL

DHUPGURI-FARAKKA-KOLKATA

a big opportunity

Tier-one cities have opportunities galore. Bold, educated women in a city like Kolkata have taken up employment along with men since Independence. But what one doesn't see much is women in mobility. Kolkata with its size and population, has a vast potential for women in mobility.

Taxis, auto-rickshaws, last mile deliveries are all wonderful opportunities for a city that is underserved.

West Bengal is oriented mainly towards labour and livelihoods in traditional opportunities. The heavy and critical industry migrated out of Bengal in the latter part of the 20th century.

Culturally, the women of Bengal have an identity of being equal to men. With a history of education WB is in the top ten in the country in literacy rates,

The Department of Rural Development, Govt. of West Bengal, organised the Moving Boundaries roadshow inviting women from the Sunderbans. These women were mostly engaged in traditional livelihoods and running their micro-enterprises. Our workshop focussed on highlighting the benefit of mobility to further skill them in fulfilling the logistics for their operations.

Moving Boundaries also interacted with the tea pluckers of Bengal. According to the ladies employed in the tea estates, the harvested quantity and their income has steadily increased with the use of cycles and cycle rickshaws .



Prior to the use of bicycles and cycle rickshaws, tea needed to be carried on women's backs to the estates. This was heavy work. But now, women can transport more tea to the estates from the tea gardens. This has increased their wages, as wages are paid by the kilo harvested.

These women feel that motor or e-mobility will only further increase their income and help them use their time more efficiently, travelling to the estates by themselves rather than waiting for the shuttles to the gardens for work.

Compared to its neighbours, West Bengal is relatively well developed. Labour from neighbouring states comes to Bengal for field and agricultural work.

This influx of migrants usually has to deal with last mile connectivity issues. Women taking up mobility could be a perfect answer to bridging this gap.

Ranchi is a tier two city and still has seen the country's first fleet of Pink Autos, run for women, by women.

RANCHI



JHARKHAND

a big opportunity

There is a significant migration of people from the underdeveloped parts of Jharkhand to its industrial parts and beyond the state itself in search of employment. The urban and industrial regions of the state demand mobility services.

If women from rural backgrounds trained to join the mobility sector, migration out of the state could be reduced, and families could find work closer to home.

There are certain advantages to forming new states. There is a creation of new infrastructure and a renewed vision for the new states' economies. State leaders put special focus on the future to aid the development of the newly formed states.

Jharkhand today seems to have a remarkable confluence of influences from the first IIT of India, IIT Kharagpur in West Bengal and from India's first ultra mega steel factories of the Tatas from Jamshedpur.

The development of mining and the steel industries have created a well-oiled logistics infrastructure in Jharkhand. However, when one looks at the non-mining areas of Jharkhand, there is hardly any infrastructure.

The Jharkhand police launched the Pink Autos in Ranchi for transportation of women passengers. Women learnt the skill of driving from fellow auto driver men, with the help of local civil society organisations, and created a new livelihood opportunity.



Unfortunately due to the lack of information, women are only now transitioning from diesel and petrol to CNG. Again, due to the information gap, these women are yet to transition to electric mobility, which would suit their needs better and help them earn better.

Despite being in operation since 2013, there are only about 50 Pink Autos in Ranchi and men auto drivers continue to mock the female pink auto drivers. Most of these women auto drivers are single parents, widowed women, or primary breadwinners for their families.

The Government could provide auto lounges and facilitate a Pink Auto Rickshaw Union through which women could voice their concerns and have them addressed. Bihar and Jharkhand have a lot of civil society organisations; these organisations could play a crucial role by addressing the needs of these women in mobility and improving their conditions.

In the industrial areas, companies could encourage women in mobility to partner with them to pickup and drop their employees. A buy-in from the local industry would lead to the transformation of women in mobility.

Odisha is the only state to implement reservations for women & transgender in state-run transport infrastructure.

BHUBANESWAR



ODISHA

Odisha is a predominantly non-urban state and the majority of Odisha's population is indigenous. Agriculture is the mainstay in the tribal regions of Odisha.

wheels of change

The Odisha government is keen on enabling women and transgenders in mobility. It has reserved about a third of all the bus-conductor positions in initiatives like CRUT - Central Region Urban Transport for women and transgenders. This is a wonderful example of how women could lead in mobility with the right public policy push.

Bhubaneshwar is home to the Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences that aids the education of indigenous children in their boarding school setup. It is the world's largest boarding school with more than 27,000 children. KISS empowers children through world-class education and boarding facilities, making them ready for modern life. Making these children aware of the benefits of mobility could be a game-changer.

In the urban capital region of Odisha, a fabulous initiative the Government has taken up to further urban transport is called the Capital Region Urban Transport - CRUT. Formerly known as BPTS - Bhubaneswar-Puri Transport Services, CRUT is the sole public bus transport provider for Bhubaneswar city.



Currently, all the bus operations are being undertaken through a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model with the private partner Dream Team Sahara - DTS.



CRUT has taken an exemplary step of making sure their staffing is gender inclusive. It is commendable how officers like Ms. Dipti Mahapatra, Managing Director - CRUT have taken it upon their shoulders to usher in true gender equality in mobility. CRUT has approached people personally and created awareness about mobility.



Today there is a bus depot, with A-class training rooms. The team at CRUT have gone the extra mile, encouraging distressed and trans women to take up theory and practical training in transport services.



CRUT has also made sure that 50% of their bus conductors are women and introduced E-rickshaws in 2019 as an integrated approach. Moving Boundaries was inspired by the forward-thinking approach of CRUT.

Excellent initiatives, at policy level, favouring women have always existed in AP.



ANDHRA PRADESH

VIJAYAWADA - VIZAG

a big opportunity

People of Andhra Pradesh choose traditional conservative livelihoods. There is more focus and social prestige in working for Small Scale Industries like pickle-making and tailoring rather than in new-age jobs like the mobility sector.

Awareness needs to be created for women to learn mobility as a skill and increase their earning capacity.

After bifurcation, Andhra Pradesh has chosen a decentralised model to set up its new capital. In August 2020, the AP Legislative Assembly passed Andhra Pradesh Decentralisation and Inclusive Development of All Regions Act, 2020. According to its provisions, Visakhapatnam is the executive capital while Amaravati and Kurnool serve as legislative and judicial capitals, respectively. This opens up an immense opportunity for gender inclusivity in mobility in all the 3 capitals.

Andhra Pradesh plans to develop multiple tier-two and tier-three cities as a part of its capital building plans.

When power and structure are decentralised amongst three tier-two or tier-three cities, AP will experience a fast-paced growth. The opportunity for mobility services would be spread-out and, including women today in the blueprint would benefit all stakeholders.



In AP, schemes exist for widowed women, single women (very rare in the country), and single mothers, especially for those from lower socio-economic backgrounds. Loan schemes are provided to women for setting up small and micro-enterprises.

With these schemes, women in AP have the potential to build motor driving schools and run it as a business. This will have a significant impact in bringing more women into mobility.

With AP keen on giving incentives to women, it would be path-breaking to recognise motor-driving as an essential skill to be taught to women. This would provide them livelihood opportunities, beyond traditional roles, and increase their potential to earn.



Summary of learnings from the Moving Boundaries tour

INDIA WIDE

Lack of concerted formal structures and organisations that work around mobility

Missing safe break-out and electric charging infrastructure for women to mobility

Urban-rural divide:

- No permanent women-centric training centres in rural areas
- Non-availability of temporary/seasonal training centres
- No rural exclusive women driving schools and centres serving women.

Predominantly trainers are men; there is a dire need for women trainers

Culturally, mobility is considered a man's forte / domain

Just about 9% of licences in the country are women, a whole 91% of Indian women are missing motor mobility skills

Lack of information on avenues for livelihoods in mobility

Lack of women police on two-wheelers


Lack of gender equity in both central and state industrial policies

Lack of a coordinated triangulated effort between Government, NGO, and the ultimate riders.

Road readiness: Not just having the ability to drive, but also knowing maintenance of the vehicle, and readiness to face adversity arising out of motoring is also important

Lack of recognition of mobility as a skill

Missing emphasis on commercial e-mobility by both the central and state governments



Summary of learnings from the Moving Boundaries tour

STATE-WISE

TELANGANA

Country's first women managed motor training site and womens' mobility centric ecosystem being aided by the Government

KARNATAKA

Making women auto drivers a part of the last mile connectivity programme for the Bangalore Metro, and giving these women-in-mobility access to the Metro's infrastructure facilities like toilets and charging stations would be a fantastic way to empower women.

TAMIL NADU

There seems to be a pronounced need for a sense of community in the women of TN in taking up careers in mobility. Chennai's women auto drivers see a need to be unionised to find a sense of security and strength.

Road readiness training without a union or an association is an issue

KERALA

India's highest-rated state in Human Development Index, Kerala has potential to lead the revolution for women in mobility.

GOA

Triad of Government enabling, Civil Society implementing and Labour Unions participating.

MAHARASHTRA

Industrial estates enable the women kin of their workers to provide transportation services for their employees, thereby empowering women and at the same time increasing the efficiency of their workforce.

BIHAR

The encouragement and the ecosystem needed for women to embrace mobility as a profession is at a very nascent stage in Bihar.



Summary of learnings from the Moving Boundaries tour

STATE-WISE

GUJARAT

The Kevadia model of engagement and empowerment of socio-economically underprivileged women could be replicated across mega greenfield tourist projects.

RAJASTHAN

Government in rural Rajasthan could focus on mobility for Asha, Anganwadi workers and women teachers so that they inspire change. E-mobility in remote areas, an option would be cost-effective, as it is easier to recharge with electricity than travel distances to fuel up.

PUNJAB

The state's policies need to include women in all aspects of agriculture; especially in aspects of agriculture and farming that would need transport of fertiliser, pesticides, seeds and feed to the farms and the delivery of the produce to the market.

DELHI

In metropolitan and urban areas, safety initiatives through digital infrastructure can be a game-changer. Delhi has begun paving the way to increasing women commercial drivers by giving them reservations.

UTTAR PRADESH

The tourism potential of UP could be further unlocked if women are encouraged to take up careers in mobility. Places like Vrindavan, Mathura, and Varanasi could vastly benefit from e-mobility in these heritage towns with narrow, congested streets. E-mobility that is practiced in and around the historic areas of Agra should be replicated across all towns of historical and cultural importance in UP with emphasis on women being the e-operators.



Summary of learnings from the Moving Boundaries tour

STATE-WISE

WEST BENGAL

Mobility would increase efficiency for workers in the tea gardens where heavy manual loads have to be carried to the estates from the gardens.

Urban women could pick up mobility as a career, bridging the last-mile connectivity and in last-mile logistic services.

JHARKHAND

A buy-in of the local industry will lead to the transformation of women in mobility.

In rural areas, the state, in coordination with civil society could disseminate information of the transformative nature of e-mobility.

ASSAM

In remote areas, civil society organisations should look to empower women in mobility by filling the information vacuum.

Gig and platform economy businesses could greatly expand in the NE market.

ODISHA

Odisha is the only state to implement reservations for women & transgender in state-run transport infrastructure. This is enabling women to find long-term careers in mobility.

ANDHRA PRADESH

With financial schemes provided for women in AP, there is a potential for women to build motor driving schools, running it as a business and also enabling more women in mobility.

THE WONDER THAT THE WHATSAPP BOT IS

Networking, more so, social networking, is the hallmark of human society in the 21st century. Scholars have called the society of the 21st century a 'Network Society'. The creation of data and information has exploded.

Women in mobility as a workforce in India is relatively new. Since women are a minority group in mobility, there is limited or in some cases no data available or commissioned to study women's participation in mobility as a sector. There are practically no exclusive lead generation tools to map this skill and its impact on women. Furthermore, there is no data on already skilled women who can pick up livelihoods associated with the mobility industry. Women absentia from the mobility economy is also the result of the digital divide in the country.

During our on-ground interactions with partner organisations and women, we realized a need to connect with all women directly and mine data on their interest to learn and earn through driving as a new age skill.

Today, the access and availability of smartphones is ubiquitous and we decided to harness the power of Whatsapp.

We launched a simple and easy to navigate, Whatsapp chatbot in six regional languages which directly registers interest of women who wish to enroll in motor training and seeking livelihoods in the mobility sector.

With smartphones in the hands of women and access to Internet, this turned out to be a great tool for women to connect with us. Kicking up presence with the help of Digital Media, Social Media, media and events, all the leads were directed to Whatsapp secure chat resulting into daily registrations from women signing up to learn and earn through mobility.

No matter through which channel, once women were brought to the Whatsapp Bot, their interest was noted and human follow-up calls resulted in women signing up for training.

Worth a mention here is when women could leverage their own personal networks and forward the MoWo-Bot-Contact to the women they knew. This helped MOWO leverage women's inner circles and automatically let women screen contacts in their personal networks to identify those who could benefit from picking up mobility as a skill and profession. The WhatsApp bot has become a trusted network created and curated for women, by women, to empower women.

DIGITAL MEDIA OUTREACH

#WhenSheMoves

A hashtag promoted during the campaign has a potential to further develop conversations about women's mobility and the possible opportunities that can open up across rural & urban areas specific to employment in the last mile commute & delivery sector.

TOTAL	10M+	1.6M+
	reach	video views
www	52K+	45K+
	website views	unique users
whatsapp	1065	197K+
	sign-ups	clicks
instagram	3M+	6K+
	reach	engagements
twitter	10M+	1.6M+
	reach	video views
facebook	7.3M+	2.2K+
	page reach	engagements
linkedin	36K+	1.5K+
	impressions	engagements



NOTES
FROM
THE
**MOVING
BOUNDARIES
SUMMIT**
ON GENDER
INCLUSIVE
MOBILITY

India International Centre,
New Delhi, 5th April, 2022

Premier think tanks, government and industry stakeholders participated in a one day summit to raise a dialogue and discuss long term sustainable solutions to establish an ecosystem for women in mobility.

**MOVING
BOUNDARIES**





SHRI KAILASH GAHLOT

Hon'ble Minister of Transport, Govt of Delhi

Mr Gahlot, Delhi's transport minister, heading the mobility portfolio for the last five years, said that there is no dearth of confidence in women of Delhi when it comes to taking up mobility as a profession. He added that it is the lack of opportunity that is holding back women in choosing mobility as a skill and profession.

He presented the case of electric auto-rickshaw permits and how he and his government have rooted for women as electric auto rickshaw drivers. In the last public call for issuing 5000 commercial electric auto rickshaw permits in Delhi, his government reserved 33% of the permits for women. For the remaining 3350 permits they had received above 18,000 applications, but only 700 for the 1650 reserved for women. With greater effort, they were able to identify another 100 applicants. Six hundred permits reserved for women are still open and not issued .

During Delhi's trials of employing women as electric bus drivers, they noticed that minimum requirements of physical stature need to be tweaked to match the average women's physical stature - where the regulations presently are based on men's height. With this intervention, more women were eligible to receive permits after reducing the regulations requirement by 2 to 3 centimetres lower than the current requirements.

They also observed that technological advancements in vehicle design have given them more liberties in designing policies. He went on to explain that, unlike earlier, mechanical steering which needed much physical strength to manoeuvre, the electric steering makes driving almost finger operable. Gender-lensing of policy and regulations, he said, needs to be implemented.

He also talked about how women, unlike men, found it challenging to pay about Rs.15,000 that is required as a fee to obtain permits and licences for driving electric auto-rickshaws. In the highly gender-biased mobility sector, he felt that women are socio-culturally and financially not encouraged by their family to overcome their impediments. Noticing this need for women to overcome financial difficulties, they have taken up initiatives to waive off the approximately Rs. 15000 required to obtain the permit. His government has also encouraged, trained and certified women to take up mobility as a skill.

Despite all these efforts, the minister said that 600 permits are still not granted. Even though a year has passed, and despite all these efforts these 600 permits haven't been granted yet and the Delhi government has decided to retain the vacant permits only for women. They have decided that women in Delhi need to be encouraged to take up mobility to make it safer for more women to come out and feel safer on the roads of Delhi.

When it came to electric mobility, the minister said the transition to electric vehicles from ICE (Internal Combustion Engine) is a work in progress. He remarked that the pain point of scarcely available public charging points needed to be solved quickly.

The minister acknowledged the sanitation needs of women in mobility and said that there needs to be more comprehensive attention and coordination between government departments in addressing this issue.

The minister ended with an affirmation that "the moment a lady is independent, that changes everything". Independent women, he believed, positively change the social, cultural and economic conditions for themselves and their families.



SHRI SUDHENDU SINHA

Adviser NITI Aayog

(Infrastructure Connectivity – Transport and Electric Mobility)

Mr Sinha said that any infrastructure policy should have a gender lens across the board. He took the examples of Norway and Spain, where a special emphasis is given to mobility for women. In Spain, women's travel patterns were studied and it revealed that women are often accompanied by the children and the elderly, and they are most often shopping for their households or for healthcare. Public transport in Spain has been designed to cater to these specific purposes. They were also cognizant of the fact that public transport should cater to women's particular needs in the labour market.

He further elaborated that the dexterity, temperament, and the generally more diligent nature of women makes them safer drivers than men. Global research proves this point. Studies show that women are involved in significantly fewer accidents across geographies, age, and income groups when compared to men.

With such compelling data, Mr Sinha said that there is a more impending need for women – the naturally gifted safe drivers, to take up mobility as a profession – making way for safer roads and transit systems. He wondered if campaigns need to be done to dispel the general belief that women are bad drivers.

Adding to the need for public policy to have a gendered lens, Mr Sinha commended private organisations that are taking effort to create more employment opportunities for women, like the OLA E-scooter factory employing 10000 women exclusively in the production of their e-scooters. He also spoke about how women have been positioned as 'watchers' on the factory floor production of automotive manufacturing. These watchers observed the welding and did quality assurance on the production floor and influenced production quality concerns to drop nearly to zero.

The difference that these women on the shop floor made was through watching out for every quality issue on the assembly line, to nip any quality issue in the bud, so that later recalls due to vehicle quality could be avoided.

He believes that every organisation needs to specifically emphasise its policy with a gender lens, thereby increasing women in the workforce, empowering them in mobility, and improving their lives and families.

In helping women take up e-mobility and reducing range-anxiety for women in commercial mobility, he spoke about the role of the Battery Swapping policy. This upcoming policy would cut down the recharge time of commercial electric vehicles from a few hours to less than ten minutes.

Mr Sinha also believes that policymakers should hear women periodically, both as partners in framing policies and as feedback on policies being implemented. For this he believes that there is no better way than women led organisations like MOWO being lead organisations to get across the voices of women in mobility from across the country.



MR. AKHILESH SRIVASTAVA

Road Safety Expert at the World Economic Forum

Mr Srivastava says that data shows that women are safer drivers than men world over. He quoted that 76% of road accidents happen because of human error. Hence naturally, Mr Srivastava infers that more women in mobility would mean safer drivers at the wheel, on the Indian roads. In agreement with Mr Sinha and Mr Gahlot, he emphasised that more needs to be done to popularise the fact that women are safer drivers.

Women in mobility bring more value not just to themselves but also add value to the entire social ecosystem, believes Mr Srivastava. When women set out to be mobile from the confines of their home, Srivastava believes that they add value to the children's education and to the family's access to resources and amenities.

In a discussion with the panellists, he expressed that implementing fleet safety targets would encourage more businesses to recruit more women in commercial fleet operations – as they can contribute to improving the fleet safety records. Apart from policy and government initiatives, he felt that emphasis on commercial operators of medium and large fleets is needed, to catalyse women into mobility.

Leveraging technology to create safety features such as SOS alerts and voice alerts in their families voices to keep them alert during driving can further impart confidence for women's families to know that they are safe, working in whichever location they are.

In every budding industry, Mr Srivastava said that there exists a “Technology readiness level Vs Readiness for technology level.” Looking through the gender lens for both ‘getting women into mobility’ and in relation to ‘women being at the forefront of e-mobility’, he feels that we are in a transition phase. He feels more women are getting ready to get into mobility. And that these women, when onboarded with the right inputs and technology (like decreasing range anxiety), could be at the forefront of commercial e-mobility operations.

In traversing the points discussed, there was a sense of confidence Mr Srivastava exhibited that an ecosystem accommodative of women in mobility and for women to lead e-mobility is building up. He felt that it is only a matter of how we match the demand of safer inclusive mobility with the right supply of well trained, qualified women drivers.

Another aspect of road safety discussed by Mr Srivastava is the process of skilling women in mobility and removing the impediments in the process. He took the example of the breaking down driving training into proposed 29 one-hour modules which is in deliberations by the Delhi Government. He lauds that if implemented, it will be a step in the right direction where more avenues will be available for women to get trained in mobility as a skill. These kinds of enablers and removal of impediments make Mr Srivastava feel that there will be a domino effect in attracting more women into mobility.

PANELLISTS

“Women are here and now in mobility, and men are their strongest allies.”

“The hidden job market, network-based entry, women do not have networks.”

“It is not charity. There is a strong business case for women to be in mobility.”



ANJALLI RAVI KUMAR

Zomato

Ms Kumar of Zomato said that Zomato had come up with a challenge of adding 25,000 delivery women to its fleet last year. While this was an ambitious target, their learning from onboarding women were very positive. They were able to onboard 1300 women as delivery persons.

They also launched an in-app feature where a zomato driver could send out an alert to the network of drivers in the vicinity when in need or in an emergency. In the last year, 80 such emergency calls were raised by women, all of which were attended to by male delivery partners - and in each case it was noticed that Zomato's male drivers went over and above to make women delivery partners feel safe. This stoic support that men gave their female delivery colleagues makes Zomato believe that men are there to support women in mobility.

Of the 1300 women partners at Zomato, Ms. Kumar noted that most women are not the immediate family members of any male partner associates. As supportive as men seem to be of women in mobility, socio-cultural barriers play a crucial role in the popular sentiment 'not the women of my immediate family'.

With a lack of network outside the home, women are at a marked disadvantage of being unaware of the existing opportunities in the last-mile delivery sector. It is a different issue when or if there is a lack of opportunity, but even when opportunities exist the information does not reach women, hence, women become doubly disadvantaged. There is a need to overcome this double-blinded disadvantage.

Zomato also gives an extra two days a month off as a period leave to their women delivery partners. This incentive is widely popular and creates a more inclusive work environment and makes women more safer and diligent delivery partners.



“Women partners appreciate the company’s investment in them better than men”.

GIRISH NAGPAL

MetroRide

Girish Nagpal of ‘MetroRide’ (providing last-mile connectivity from Metro stations) said that India’s share of women in the formal workforce is much lesser than our neighbours Pakistan and Bangladesh. According to World Bank’s statistics, it is just about 20% in India, where the world average is about 47%. He also said that the training and retention of women as MetroRide employees is higher and worth the extra effort to enroll them. He said that there has been close to no attrition of women driver partners in the last year and that women took their training more seriously than men driver partners. MetroRide’s women driver partners appreciate the company’s investment in training.

Mr Nagpal feels that women experience the guilt of not being able to invest time in their children if they work outside the home. So he says hyperlocal business models like MetroRide which have predetermined routes serve women better because of the flexibility of job in the neighbourhood of 4-5 kilometres.



“Awareness of opportunity” is a key impediment that women face in taking up mobility.”

VIBHUTI SAPARIA

ESG Manager, BluSmart

Overcoming onboarding challenges for women in mobility - Ms Saparia mentioned that when her organisation BluSmart tried to recruit more women as their mobility partners, her existing team of women partners mentioned that women in their neighbourhoods and personal contacts were not even aware that mobility is an employable skill. Awareness drives and campaigns are needed to usher women into the mobility sector. What businesses should realise is that “Women appreciate the company’s investment in them”, attrition of women mobility partners is significantly lesser than men.



“The design of the physical vehicle should be gender-neutral”

ASHPREET SETHI

Head of Public Affairs, EVage Ventures Pvt Ltd

Though not explicitly stated, today’s vehicles, especially commercial use vehicles, are created with men in mind. Vehicles need to be designed with low floor design making it more accessible for women when they choose to operate them. Design of vehicle should factor driver fatigue. As an example, she mentioned that the size of the steering wheel and accessibility of foot pedals (clutch, brake and accelerator) should factor in the average physical stature of women. She remarked that there is hardly any designated space in commercial vehicles for women to put their necessities, like hand-bags.

Not having these modifications would make mobility more tougher and inaccessible for women. Another excellent example of how this sector could be more inclusive, is the Delhi government’s policy reform of decreasing the height requirement for female drivers. Without these modifications, commercial motor permits would have been inaccessible for women. The next step for policy would be making women inclusive in vehicle design.

Policies should be gender-sensitive: Today’s policies are gender agnostic. If we want women in mobility their involvement needs to be prioritised right from the design of the policy to its successful implementation. The central government’s policies need to be gender agnostic. In contrast, states like Delhi and Andhra Pradesh have started to look into gender-sensitive policies like the reservation for women in e-mobility permit licensing (Delhi) and 20% allocation for women in parking for last-mile mobility.

She noted another area where gender inclusion could make a significant impact is to encourage more women in OEM companies’ workforce. Presently women are offered janitorial or administrative jobs in OEMs. Imagine women in the design drawing boards or floor shops, the kind of inclusion that this would bring would be more wholesome in welcoming women into mobility as a profession.



“Electric mobility is not a sprint; it is a marathon”

MOUSHUMI MOHANTY

Head of Electric Mobility, Centre for Science & Environment

Ms Mohanty has been researching e-mobility since 2008, and it is only since 2020 that she says, she has been seeing traction and critical numbers in electric mobility. Plans that were made 2008 onwards have taken upwards of a decade to come to fruition. Taking this into light, the plans and policies we make should look at least a decade or two into the future.

Mandates on fleet efficiency should be brought in, increasing fuel efficiency requirements for vehicles will catalyse and speed up the addition of e-vehicles to fleets. She expressed that if India can do inclusiveness in e-Mobility, it would be the world's first country to do that (A few examples discussed in the summit were the e-vehicle permit reservations for women and vehicle design with a gender lens).



“Commercial platforms need to include women using technology”

AAYUSHI JAIN

VP - External Relations, MoEVing

Commercial mobility platforms like Amazon, Flipkart or logistics companies should be able to leverage technology to have women work 8 hours shifts in breaks (with the flexibility to tend to needs at home), unlike one stretch 10-12 hour shifts for men. This technology-enabled working hour flexibility would empower women to balance home and work effectively. Optimised by technology and algorithms, delivery packages of lesser weights could be offered to women delivery partners.



PRAMODA GODE

Senior Advisor, Electric Mobility & Sustainable Transportation

Mobility as a basic skill needs to be imparted to all young adults: Driving should be taught as a part of the standard school curriculum in all high schools. "Driving literacy" is as important as "Digital literacy" in this day and age for improving self-confidence, to reduce reliance on others for personal mobility and as a tool for self-empowerment. By mainstreaming this topic at an early stage, bias against young women entering this profession can be dealt with early on. Flexible and affordable financial options should be made available to unbanked and underbanked women who are interested in owning and operating a vehicle commercially. Government should encourage public sector and private sector financial institutions to leverage FinTech, IoT and AI technologies to make such offerings.

ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION POINTS

Presently, 'National Skill Development Centres' are set up for motor vehicle operator training, focused on four wheelers and heavy vehicles, why not have two/three wheeler specific policies too?

Road Readiness technology awareness as an enabler should be included; along with driving skills, minimum skills for minor vehicle repairs and dealing with flat-tyres should be given to women as a part of their training and certification.

The mnemonics of street signs and pedestrian signal lights should be rethought / redesigned to include symbols that are inclusive - incorporating women and the LGBTQIA+ community.



A LETTER FROM PARMINDER

Auto driver from Delhi

To the fraternity of women drivers, the ecosystem partners, and enablers that empower us.

I, Parminder Kaur, would like to share my experiences driving an auto on the roads of India's capital city, Delhi.


Talking about me, I am from Delhi; an arts graduate and a single parent of an eighth-grade boy. We were devastated by my marital breakdown and hit by the Covid-19 pandemic around the same time. With no means of income, I took up mobility as a profession by driving a CNG Auto.

My father was a truck driver. As a child, I was a quick learner. My father taught me how to drive a four-wheeler and a two-wheeler too. I married a person of my choice against my family's wishes, but that marriage broke down, and I was left with no income and the duty to fend for my school-going child.

With a lack of avenues to help me earn a living, I decided to earn a livelihood through my skill of driving and to begin, I started renting auto rickshaws and driving them. For a while, I would rent auto rickshaws from owners by the day, week or the month, based on the availability of the autos. Over a period of time, I noticed a lack of consistency in being able to rent auto rickshaws. Inability to drive for a day meant that I would have no income for that day. A day without income was not something I could afford. I needed consistent income. In trying to buy my own auto, I approached institutions to finance me in buying an auto for myself. After trying for many months, I realised that I could not get financing for an auto institutionally at the actual price of the auto and the permit which was around rupees two lakhs.

I approached my father's ex-colleague, who was also a truck driver, soliciting his help. He helped me get private financing for the market rate of the auto, which is rupees four lakhs, double the actual price.

As a grown-up, when my father taught me to drive, people around me looked at me oddly. As a woman, I wanted to learn to drive a truck and a car. But when I learnt how to ride a motorcycle, all hell broke loose in my family. My brothers protested to my father that they would be ridiculed if their sister was riding a motorbike in the neighbourhood. My father supported me and ultimately taught me to ride a motorbike.



Today, my nieces are all taught how to ride without any friction. I feel delighted that girls in my family have a skill that could help them be independently mobile and also could be used to earn a livelihood. I also feel lucky for my nieces that the very same men who protested my learning to ride are teaching their daughters to take the driver's seat.

Coming to the aspects of my daily work, I feel that it is up to the women to take up mobility as a profession. There will always be pressures, culturally and socially dissuading them from taking up mobility as a profession, but if they feel ready to stand up to the pressure they will succeed. One can learn driving skills, but whether a woman is mobility-ready is something that only she would and should be able to decide. Sure, there would be NGOs and people encouraging them to beat the odds and take up a career in mobility, but ultimately, it is a battle which only that woman has to choose and put-up with and win.

I chose my battle. I chose a life of dignity where I work for myself and live off my hard work. I get gawked at while on the road, but as long as it doesn't stop me from continuing to ride my auto, it does not bother me. I realise that I am among the minority of women who have chosen to take up mobility as a profession, which makes me stand out in the crowd on the road, and this makes people gawk. But at the same time, I also know that choosing a life of dignity and self-reliance is getting me intimidating looks, and each look I get only strengthens my resolve and validates my choice in this field.

For a woman that wanted to become an auto driver, I could find no institutional support to help me in this journey. This does not mean that there is no institutional support. What I did not find was access to the right information at the right time. It was the lack of personal networks that could lead me to my destination. Today, after I have gotten to know the avenues, I feel that more women need to know more about options they might have in becoming employable in mobility and the ability to take it up if they choose to.

I feel that if I had been told about Government schemes at the RTO when I went for my commercial licence, my life would have been a little easier. I would not have had to take double the debt I did to own an auto. I do realise that life isn't easy, but if one doesn't fight for it as I did, it won't become easier either.

My advice for women who want to take up mobility as a profession is first to find their inner strength and calling. Once you have that resolve, nothing can stop you.



MY FIRST DRIVE!

NAME	COLOUR	RIDE BUDDY
LOCATION	HELMET	FEELINGS



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WOMEN
RIDERS

...preneur who has covered over 1 lakh
multiple continents. Her efforts in the
en appreciated by our Prime Minister
ble Chief Minister of Telangana

Jam... passion for motorcycling knows no bounds.
With the... boundaries Tour, JB will cover 11,111+ kms around
the br... to encourage more women to pick up driving to
impr... hood.

#When...ves, India moves forward.

The campaign is brought to you by the POWERED programme in collaboration with POWO as an effort to increase awareness about the role of women in sustainable mobility and institutionalise the concept of female drivers. POWERED is a partnership between Shell Foundation and the UK Government which has been supporting the integration of women across the clean energy and mobility value chain.

A MILLION WOMEN CAN DRIVE ON THE ROADS BY 2030

To make this dream a reality, MOWO has a three-pronged approach - Advocacy, Motor Trainings & Livelihoods

MOWO is working to create a safe and reliable commute option 'For, and By Women' and in doing so, empower women to become self-reliant and confident. So far, MOWO has reached out to 15000+ women and trained 2000+ in riding two-wheelers, with required driving licences and placed a few of them in the mobility industry.



JAI BHARATHI

Founder and CEO, MOWO

A trained architect and an avid motorcyclist, Jai Bharathi is an adventurer who found freedom and immense joy on the road. JB has led several national and cross-country motorcycling expeditions covering more than 1,00,000 kms across South East Asia and the United States to promote women's safety and mobility.

Her efforts and achievements in the field of motorcycling have been recognised by the Honourable Prime Minister of India, Mr. Narendra Modi & the Chief Minister of Telangana, Mr. K. Chandrasekhar Rao.

SRISHTI BAKSHI

Chief Inspiration Officer, MOWO

A women's rights activist who embarked on a 3800 kms long on-foot journey across India, from Kanyakumari to Kashmir, determined to sow the seeds of gender equality, and conducted over 100+ workshops on women's safety in villages, towns and cities along the way.

The President of India extended his support to her campaign. She has been named the UN Women Champion for Change 2016-2017, and been awarded Commonwealth Points of Light award, the highest accolade from the British Commonwealth which she received from Her Majesty, the Queen.

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POWERED is a partnership between Shell Foundation and the UK Government which has been supporting the integration of women across the clean energy and mobility value chain.

To all the people who were part of our journey - your support was invaluable and our gratitude is immense. Thank you for supporting us and helping move boundaries.

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| Shell Foundation |



The Moving Boundaries expedition is an exploratory delve into India's status quo of mobility for women. What was noticed in respective states that were travelled to varied broadly and were similar too. Some things were realised that needed to be changed at a national level, and there have been very specific notes local to certain areas. This report was a qualitative understanding of the experience of the expedition. That said, there are many places where a need for more specific data has been noticed. Collating and harmonising these two sets of data would draw out a broad stratospheric level of understanding of the challenges and solutions for the Indian mobility sector.



MOVING
BOUNDARIES

The woods are lovely, dark and deep,

But I have promises to keep,

And miles to go before I sleep,

And miles to go before I sleep.

- Robert Frost

Let's pledge to do our best to enable more #WomenInMobility.

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Read more about the journey on <https://movingboundaries.mowo.in/>

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