

EXECUTIVE BRIEF

Status of Public Toilets for Women and Trans/ Queer People in Kolkata

Key Findings and Recommendations



Introduction



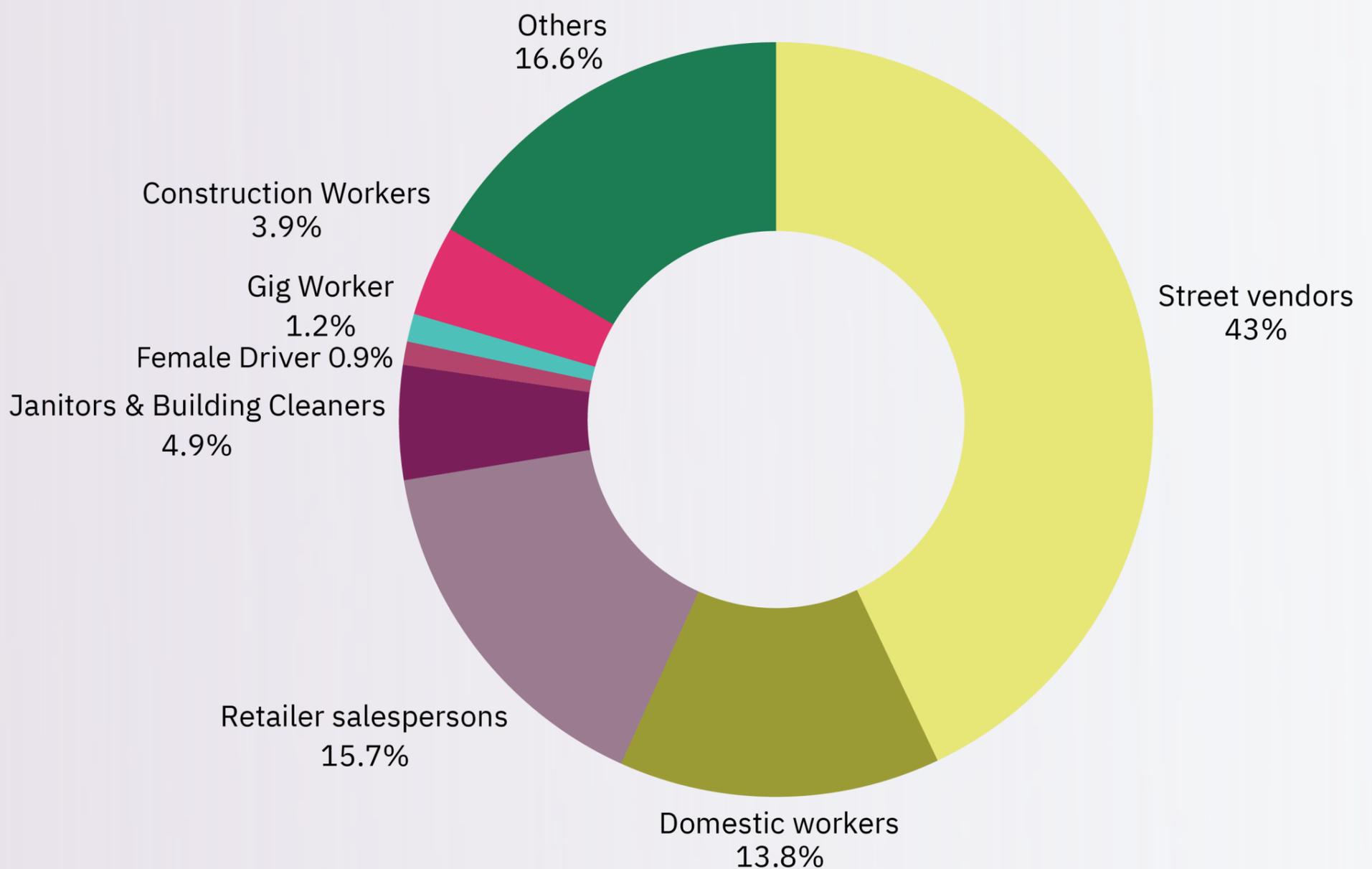
WHY IT MATTERS

Inclusive and safe sanitation is essential to improving women's mobility and workforce participation, particularly in the informal sector.

WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE STUDY?



Occupational Segregation



What do the Public Toilets in Kolkata Tell Us?



1

TOILETS ARE DISPROPORTIONATE TO FOOTFALL IN MAJOR STATIONS



Howrah

900,000+ transit/ day

- 33 toilets for men
- 19 for women
- 5 for people with disabilities



Sealdah

1.5M- 1.8 M transit/ day

- 23 toilets for men
- 24 for women
- 3 for people with disabilities



2

THE ECONOMIC BURDEN OF USING TOILETS



72% of women pay to access public toilets

This costs them 10% of the daily income

3

EXCLUSION BY DESIGN



62% respondents

find public toilets inaccessible to people with disabilities



Non-Availability of

lactation points and diaper changing stations



What do the Public Toilets in Kolkata Tell Us?



4

HYGIENE LEVELS AND IMPACT ON HEALTH



Non-availability of handwash

30% have rated the toilets as “dirty” or “very dirty”

Absence of facility to dispose sanitary napkins and no vending machines

Reduced water intake by women/ queer people to avoid using public toilets

5

SAFETY AND SECURITY CONCERNS



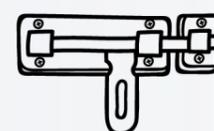
53% feel unsafe while using public toilets



52% trans/queer people are harassed in public toilets



38% reported absence of locks on doors of the toilets



Insecurity accentuated by men stationed outside the women toilets



6

OVERALL IMPACT



Restricts their mobility

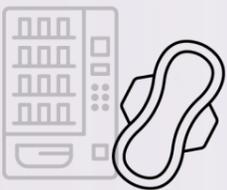
Dictates their daily schedule impacting their work hours

51% feel that inadequacy of inclusively designed, well-maintained public toilets impacts their ability to work outside home and their income

What can be done to Navigate this?



KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

-  Availability of Toilets based on footfall
-  Stationing of women staff outside public toilets for women
-  Have adequate toilets for cis women and trans/queer people in proportion to their population
-  An independent dedicated committee to supervise cleanliness, accessibility and grading of existing public toilets
-  Improving the hygiene standards of toilets with basic facilities like handwash and continuous water supply
-  Installation of sanitary napkin vending machine
-  Adequate lighting in the public toilets

With committed action, Kolkata can lead the way in showing how inclusive urban planning directly contributes to dignity, safety, and improved workforce participation.

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<https://sabarinstitute.org/>



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