

GSDM 38th Platform Seminar

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WOMEN, WATER, AND WORK: LABOR MARKET EFFECTS OF THE 'BAREFOOT MECHANICS' PROGRAM IN GUJARAT, INDIA

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Thursday, December 11, 2014 6:30pm-8:00pm
at Conference Room (610), 6th Floor
Administration Bureau Building 2

Access to clean water and women's labor force participation are among the key challenges that developing countries continue to face. Often the two are closely intertwined. If women have to spend longer time collecting water their likelihood of participating in the labor force is significantly reduced.

We present findings from a two part study that examines the 'barefoot mechanics' program implemented by the Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA) in Gujarat, which trains rural women to repair village water handpumps. Through this program SEWA aims to achieve the dual objectives of creating off-farm livelihood opportunities for its women members and reducing the burden of water collection on women by repairing the handpumps in a timely manner.

The first part examines the effect of the barefoot mechanics program on intra-household bargaining power of the trained women while the second part examines the effect of improved access to water on women's labor force participation in households serviced by the barefoot mechanics.

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