West Bengal has shown mixed progress on gender. On the one hand, maternal mortality in the state is low and declining. On the other hand, West Bengal’s child sex ratio, which is still above the national average, is declining. Moreover, only a fifth of West Bengal’s women have completed secondary school, which is lower than in most other states in the country. What’s more, female labor force participation in West Bengal is among the lowest in India. On a more positive note, more girls than boys attend primary and secondary school in the state today. Interestingly, there is more non-farm employment for women than men in rural areas. In urban areas, by contrast, both men and women have similar types of jobs.

**West Bengal’s child sex ratio is higher than the national average**

![Child sex ratio, 2011 (age 0-6) females per 1,000 males](chart)

Low Income States are highlighted in orange, AI is All India.

**Child sex ratio is declining, albeit at a slow rate, in West Bengal**

![Child sex ratio, (age 0-6) females per 1,000 males](chart)
Maternal mortality is decreasing in West Bengal

Maternal mortality ratio
maternal deaths per 100,000 live births

Maternal mortality in West Bengal is lower than in many other states

Maternal mortality ratio, 2013
maternal deaths per 100,000 live births

Data for 19 large states and All India.
Low income states are highlighted in orange and AI is All India.
The share of women with secondary schooling in West Bengal is lower than in many other states.

Less schooling for adult women than men in West Bengal, rural women lag behind urban.
More girls than boys in primary and secondary school in West Bengal after 2005

Enrolled in education institutes, (%)

![Bar chart showing the percentage of girls and boys enrolled in education institutes by age group in 2005 and 2012.](chart)

- **2005**
  - 21-23: Male 13%, Female 10%
  - 18-20: Male 31%, Female 18%
  - 15-17: Male 52%, Female 48%
  - 12-14: Male 78%, Female 78%
  - 9-11: Male 89%, Female 89%
  - 6-8: Male 84%, Female 82%

- **2012**
  - 21-23: Male 22%, Female 12%
  - 18-20: Male 42%, Female 28%
  - 15-17: Male 65%, Female 73%
  - 12-14: Male 86%, Female 85%
  - 9-11: Male 92%, Female 95%
  - 6-8: Male 90%, Female 91%
Female labor force participation in West Bengal is below that of many other states in India

Female labor force participation rate, 2012 (%)

Low Income States are highlighted in orange, AI is All India.

Low female labor force participation in both rural and urban areas of West Bengal
Majority of the rural men in West Bengal work in farming, more self employment among rural women

When women urban work in West Bengal, they have similar jobs as urban men