

Ride to Rise

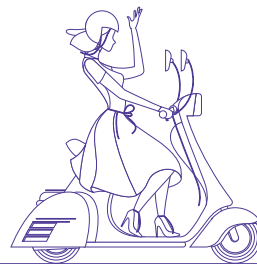
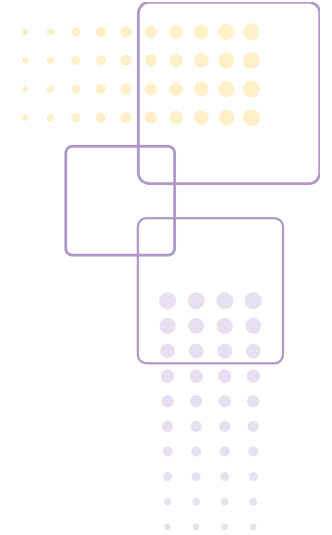
Mobility Report

January 2026



TABLE OF CONTENTS

03	Introduction
07	Project Udaan: Unlocking opportunity through mobility
08	Proving the mobility hypothesis
10	The mobility ecosystem
20	Impact & results: How mobility transforms productivity
25	Lessons from the road
26	Policy pathways for inclusive mobility



Introduction: Mobility as economic agency

Mobility is more than just a way to reach the workplace, it shapes women's ability to participate in the workforce, the hours they can work and the income they can earn.

For many women in India, travel choices are influenced by factors such as cost, comfort and personal safety, which in turn affect the opportunities they are able to take up.

Studies show:

Lack of safe, reliable transport reduces a woman's labour force participation probability by

16.5%¹



52%²

of women surveyed across 140 cities have declined job or educational opportunities because transportation felt unsafe.

Improving access to reliable transport can unlock higher earnings, broader opportunities and stronger participation of women in the workforce.

1. World Bank (2023). *She Drives Change: Breaking Barriers for Women in Transport*. World Bank Blog, 20th December, 2023.

2. Observer Research Foundation (2021). *Women on the Move: The Impact of Safety Concerns on Women's Mobility*. Published 10th May, 2021.



Why mobility is a priority for Urban Company

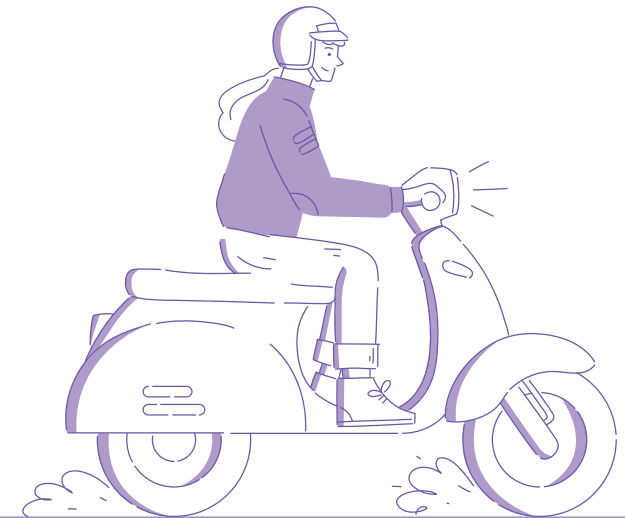
Urban Company has one of the largest women gig-work forces in India — with women accounting for nearly one-third of all active service professionals on the platform, as on 30th September 2025. This scale gives Urban Company both a responsibility and a unique opportunity to understand and improve women's economic participation.

Yet, a critical pattern emerged: A significant share of women service professionals did not have access to a personal vehicle. As a result, they spent an average of nearly ₹7,000 per month on app-based autos and cabs to commute between services. This made their workday less flexible, reduced peak-hour availability and compressed the total number of services they could complete in a day.

Because mobility directly shapes productivity, this wasn't a peripheral issue — it was a core barrier to women's economic advancement.

Recognising this, we at Urban Company began designing an end-to-end mobility ecosystem: from building riding skills, to enabling affordable vehicle access, to offering financing, licensing support and confidence-building interventions.

The goal was clear:
**Enable women to move independently, so
they could work independently.**



Understanding the gap: The hypothesis

Urban Company's FY25 Earnings Index revealed a clear paradox. Women service professionals earned significantly more per hour (₹444.7/hour) compared to men (₹322.4/hour), yet their **net monthly earnings were nearly the same** (male: ₹26,547, female: ₹26,117).

To understand this paradox, Urban Company partnered with researcher **Shreya Sarkar (University of California, Berkeley)** for a structured research pilot. One early insight that came through was absence of **independent mobility solution for women**.

Our research led to identification of three cohorts



Women who know how to ride
but don't own a vehicle

ACCESS
barrier



Women who own/have access to a
vehicle but don't know how to ride

SKILLS
barrier



Women who neither know
how to ride nor own a vehicle

ACCESS + SKILLS
barrier





Project Udaan emerged from a simple but powerful insight at Urban Company: mobility is not just a logistical input, but an opportunity multiplier. Two-wheeler ownership enhances earnings, improves safety and gives women service professionals the confidence and autonomy to take control of their workday. By investing in mobility, we are not only improving partner wellbeing, but demonstrating how foundational enablers can reshape women's participation in the workforce."

Abhiraj Singh Bhal

Chief Executive Officer, Urban Company





PROJECT UDAN

Unlocking Opportunity
Through Mobility

Pilot: Proving the mobility hypothesis

To test the mobility hypothesis and whether first-time scooter ownership drives productivity and earnings, we conducted a randomised controlled trial (RCT) over 6 months, with 3,000 women service professionals across Delhi, Bengaluru and Pune.

Key features of the RCT -

1. **Low-cost financing**
tailored for first-time borrowers
2. **₹10,000 down-payment subsidy**
3. **Manufacturer partnerships** (TVS, Hero, Honda) for discounted vehicles



The goal:

Measure whether first-time scooter ownership reduces everyday transport expenditure and waiting time, while increasing earnings and savings.

First-time two-wheeler owners saw the highest gains, confirming access, not skill, was the key constraint.

Early impact & insights



Waiting time reduced



Spend on travel reduced



Hassle-free travel



Average weekly earnings increased by up to ₹1,175; steady results over six months

These results validated the core thesis:



Ownership of mobility



Higher productivity



Higher earnings



Greater autonomy





Urban Company's mobility initiative demonstrates how targeted, evidence-based interventions can unlock women's economic participation and productivity at scale. Research showed that when liquidity constraints on early mobility investments are eased, women not only adopt reliable transport at much higher rates but also experience meaningful gains in productivity and access to higher-value work. The success of this experiment underscores a broader lesson: reducing upfront investment barriers in women's independent mobility is an extremely effective lever for improving their labor market outcomes."

Shreya Sarkar

Researcher, University of California, Berkeley



Project Udaan: The mobility ecosystem

Urban Company and Prosus NV have jointly invested approximately ₹3 crore in mobility initiatives apart from research funds.

Core intervention pillars



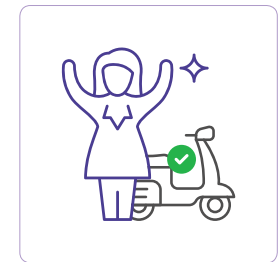
- a. **Financing access:**
partnerships with NBFCs
- b. **₹10,000 down-payment support**
- c. **Partnerships with OEMs**

✓ SOLVES FOR
ACCESS
barrier



- a. **Driving school enablement: free two-wheeler training** worth ~₹10,000 per trainee
- b. **Licensing support**

✓ SOLVES FOR
SKILLS
barrier



- a. **A combined pathway** to ensure women starting from zero, graduate to full independent mobility

✓ SOLVES FOR
ACCESS + SKILLS
barrier





For women to thrive economically, mobility must be treated as essential infrastructure—by businesses, investors, and policymakers alike. Our support for Urban Company’s mobility initiative reflects our commitment to enabling women to access skills, confidence and safer pathways to work. Seeing over 1,500 women train to become independent riders is a powerful example of how ecosystem partners and policy interventions can meaningfully uplift women’s mobility.”

Prajna Khanna

Chief Sustainability Officer, VP at Prosus NV

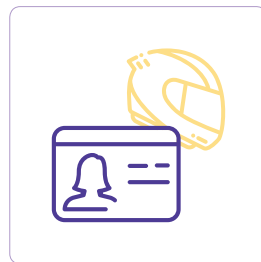


Completing the mobility cycle for first-time riders

Bringing the ecosystem together



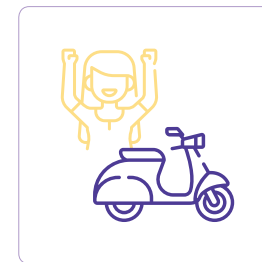
TRAINING



LICENSING



FINANCING



OWNERSHIP

- As of December 2025, we have enabled ~1,800 women service professionals:
- 1,100 women trained on how to ride a scooter
 - 700 women purchased a scooter



Enabling skills for independent riding



Partnered with NGOs to develop a scalable ecosystem of women instructors that aligns with the growing mobility needs of Urban Company's female service professionals nationwide.



Designed a 10-day hands-on riding curriculum.



Assisted with learner's license, documentation, test preparation and permanent license facilitation.



Ensured negligible training dropouts through flexible timing.



I am no longer dependent on anyone.
I am in control of my own life.”

Jaba

Bengaluru

After leaving an abusive marriage, Jaba joined Urban Company and rebuilt her life by working towards financial independence. She relied on public transport for years and always wanted to learn to ride a scooter but lacked the confidence to start. Through Urban Company's free two-wheeler training, she finally took that step. Today, she rides independently and saves around ₹15,000 a month on travel - gaining both mobility and control over her life.





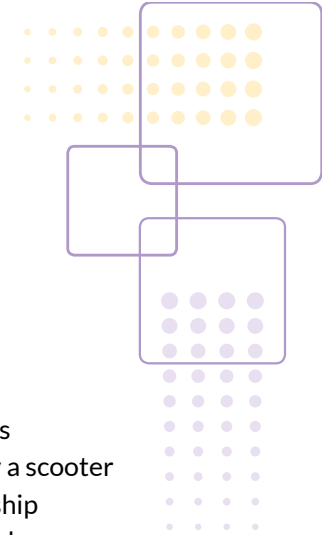
Women's mobility is not just about getting from point A to B, or even about freedom and agency. It is the backbone of inclusive growth. India cannot aspire to be an economic superpower while half its women remain dependent on someone else to move. When women move, they earn more, exercise more agency over their money and drive our nation's collective progress."

Pawani Khandelwal

Founder of Aatm Nirbhar Learning



Enabling access to ownership



TWO-WHEELER CAMP & Financing Support



Our field interactions with women service professionals revealed a striking pattern. Women who wanted to buy a scooter were discouraged not by price alone, but by the dealership environment itself. In showrooms dominated by male sales teams, sales conversations were directed toward accompanying male family members, not the actual woman buyer. To resolve this roadblock, we set up two-wheeler camps across Delhi NCR, Mumbai, Hyderabad and Bengaluru.

- **OEM Partnerships:** Discounted rates from TVS, Hero, Honda; on-ground assistance at two-wheeler camps.
- Enabled test rides across models.
- **Flexible, faster financing designed** for female service professionals via Oto Capital, HDFC Bank and L&T Finance.
- **₹10,000 down-payment support** lowering upfront friction for eligible borrowers.





Through Women's World Banking's partnership with Urban Company's Project Udaan, we saw clear evidence that when women gig workers gain independent mobility, their earnings rise and their work becomes more active and efficient. These sustained income gains and expanded opportunities reinforce a critical insight: mobility is an economic accelerator. When financial solutions are designed for women, accounting for their unique needs and challenges, and supported by financing, training, and enabling policy, women's pathways to income security and financial independence are significantly strengthened."

Kalpana Ajayan

Regional Head, South Asia, Women's World Banking



Strengthening financial health and credit inclusion

Project Udaan helped bring women into the formal financial system as confident, creditworthy borrowers. For many participants, this was their first interaction with structured credit—marking a significant shift in long-term financial inclusion.

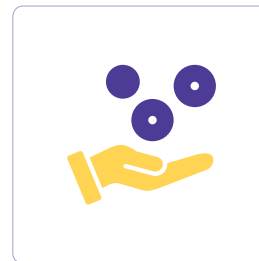
Financial inclusion



women service professionals who bought scooters:
~700



Lending partners:
OTO Capital, HDFC Bank & L&T Finance



Total downpayment subsidy support:
₹50 Lacs

Strong signals of credit discipline



Average loan tenure: 2 years



Zero defaults



Average EMI: ₹4,000

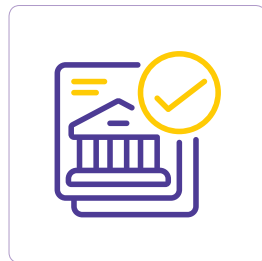


A proof point for gender-responsive lending

Project Udaan challenges long-standing assumptions around women gig workers as “high-risk” borrowers. Instead, it offers a powerful counter point:

When women are enabled with mobility and predictable income, they emerge as disciplined, dependable participants in the formal credit economy.

The project highlights opportunity for lenders, policymakers and platforms alike to scale women-first credit products backed by alternative data, psychometric scoring and ecosystem support. By helping women build repayment history and credit profiles, Project Udaan sets the foundation for:



Access to lower-cost credit in the future



Eligibility for higher-value assets



Greater financial resilience and independence

Mobility not only unlocks income but also **financial identity and long-term economic agency.**





Access to credit is a critical enabler of women's mobility and workforce participation. Women service professionals are often excluded from formal credit not because they lack intent or capability, but because financial systems are not designed around their realities. Our partnership with Urban Company showed that when financing products are structured with flexibility, transparency, and trust, women emerge as highly responsible borrowers with strong repayment behaviour. This collaboration highlights how platforms and lenders can work together to unlock a large, underserved segment—building inclusive credit models that are not only impactful, but also sustainable and scalable for the future of work.

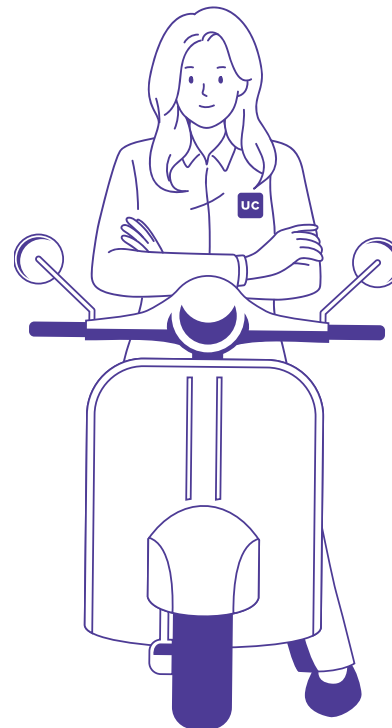
Sumit Chhazed

Co-Founder and CEO, OTO Capital



Impact & results: How mobility transforms productivity, earnings and autonomy

Project Udaan's defining insight is backed by strong city-level evidence: **independent mobility is a direct economic accelerator for women**. We analysed data of women service professional who purchased scooters over April to October 2025 and noticed significant improvements in their efficiency, earnings, service access and daily stability within weeks of ownership.



Mobility expands women's economic potential



Mobility helps reclaim time and boosts efficiency



Mobility strengthens autonomy and workforce participation





Mobility
changed my
whole routine.”

Parul
New Delhi

Parul used to rely on app based autos due to which a lot of her earnings were being spent in just the daily travel with her only being able to deliver about two service orders in a day. Today, with her scooter, she manages more bookings and returns home earlier to her daughters. Her earning has increased by 15–20%, but she says the real gain is “the time with my daughters and the confidence I have now - I feel I can do anything a man can.”

Increase in monthly net earnings:
The most powerful outcome



These gains stem from a flywheel effect:



**Faster
travel**



**More
bookings**



**More high-
value slots**



**Higher
earning
stability**

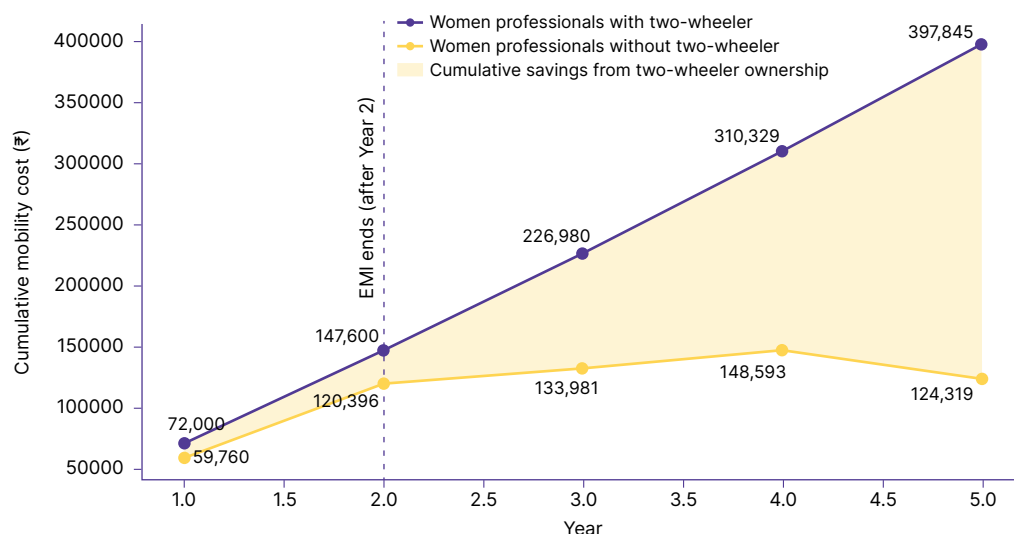
Average utilisation rose, signalling faster mobility, reduced idle time and more predictable scheduling.



How two-wheeler ownership leads to savings

Over five years, women who own a two-wheeler incur significantly lower cumulative mobility costs compared to those dependent on public or hired transport. Even after accounting for EMI, fuel, inflation and maintenance, two-wheeler ownership delivers sustained savings and creates a tangible asset.

How two-wheeler ownership drives long-term mobility savings



Note: the following assumptions have been considered while keeping number of services delivered constant and same for both the groups:

- For service professionals with two-wheeler: down payment amount, EMI of ₹4,000 for 2 years; Petrol costs, annual vehicle maintenance costs, with asset value (₹40,000) deducted in Year 5.
- For service professionals without two-wheeler: Monthly travel costs growing at 5% annually due to inflation.

Key insights

-  Mobility costs diverge sharply over time
-  By Year 5, partners without a two-wheeler spend more than 2× on mobility
-  Two-wheeler ownership converts a recurring expense into predictable monthly costs
-  Ownership enables long-term savings and asset creation





“

I now choose
the day I
want to have.”

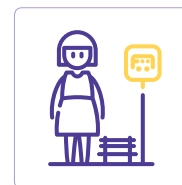
Sapna
New Delhi

Sapna's entire day depended on whether autos were available. Missed bookings were common. After receiving her scooter, her cancellation rate dropped sharply, earnings improved and she began covering micro-markets she previously couldn't access. "With my scooty – I am in control of my time, my work and my life," she says.

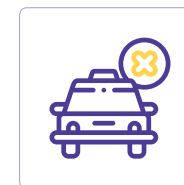
Predictable schedules and sustainable productivity - a higher output model built on efficiency, not longer hours

What mobility enables: more time, better control

Rather than extending working hours, personal mobility
increases available time by:



Reducing waiting time
for public or shared
transport



Reducing delays caused
by cancellations or
unreliable connectivity

Mobility = Time reclaimed



 ~**1,100** women service professionals trained

₹ **3 Cr** invested



 **4 Cities**



~**700** women service professionals bought two-wheelers



₹ **50 Lacs** - Total downpayment subsidy support

Strong repayment discipline amongst first time borrowers



 **Prosus** - Training investment partner

Shreya Sarkar (University of California, Berkeley) and Women's World Banking - Research partners



 **Aatm Nirbhar** - Training mobilisation partner

OTO Capital, L&T Finance, HDFC Bank - Lending partners



14% increase in net monthly earnings

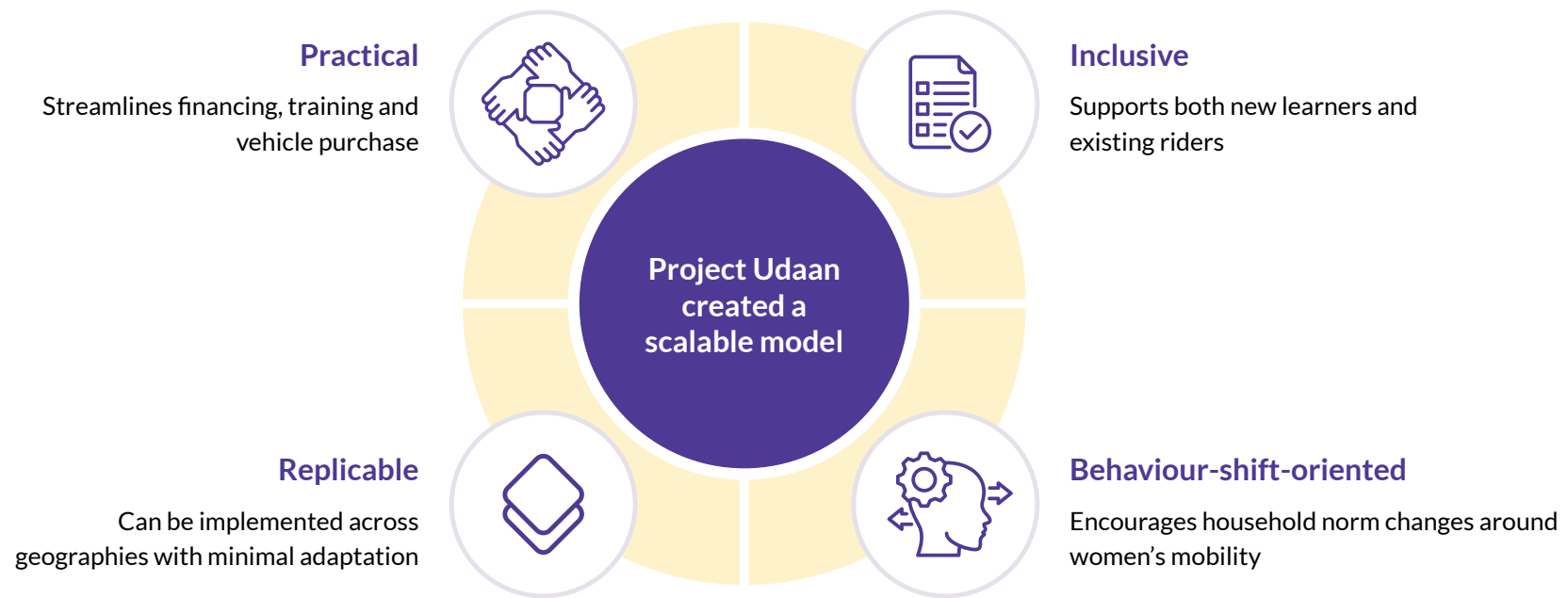


Reduced waiting time for public or shared transport

Reduced delays caused by cancellations or unreliable connectivity



Lessons from the road: A replicable, inclusive system



The project proved that when platforms, lenders, NGOs and OEMs collaborate, the result is **systemic improvement for women.**



Policy pathways for inclusive mobility

Urban Company's experience suggests a national blueprint for enabling women's mobility.



1. Build public-private mobility training hubs

- Enable NGOs + private platforms to run certified training
- Create women-only training environments



2. Simplify licensing

- Digital-first, single-window licensing
- Integrate learner and permanent licence for certified trainees
- Allow accredited training partners to conduct assessments
- Co-locate licensing facilities where possible



3. Create women-friendly dealership environments

- Increase the presence of women salespersons in two-wheeler dealerships
- Sensitise and train male staff on how to engage with female customers



4. Gender-responsive vehicle design

- Build scooters suited to average height of Indian women
- Lower centre of gravity, lighter frames and seat adjustments



5. Financial innovation for female borrowers

- Psychometric credit scoring for gig workers
- Simplified KYC for women without formal documentation
- Develop hybrid loan-plus-savings products



6. National mobility mission for women

A coordinated mission can:

- Fund large-scale training
- Expand subsidy access
- Link digital public infrastructure to mobility services
- Mobilise OEMs and lenders to support women-first design



When **1,000 women** move independently, **a city changes.**

When **10,000** do, **an industry shifts.**

When **1,000,000** do, **a nation transforms.**





This is not only
a gender equity
agenda — it is
a workforce
productivity
agenda for India



