



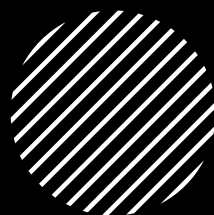
There is Nothing Like Data Collection to Teach us Humility

Every Empirical Data Collection is Imperfect

The Point is to Understand the Imperfection as we Interpret
our data



As you listen
to these four
presentations,
please keep in
mind



1. Data collection in the middle of the pandemic is difficult
2. Results are highly sensitive to the definition of employment
3. Often there is an enormous gap between what researchers are looking for and how respondents interpret our questions
4. Huge difference in the experience of pandemic by geographical location and socio-economic background
5. But each data point helps us assemble a picture of the employment picture during the pandemic that is sharper than the fuzzy pictures we all take from our own special lens



	PLFS	DMAS-T (Desai)	RCRC (Sarin)	India Working Survey, Lahoti	CPHS (Krishnan)
Goals	Employment estimates	Validation of data collection method	Pandemic vulnerability via grass roots NGOs	Employment and Income Estimates	Measuring wellbeing of India households
Geography	Nationwide	Delhi NCR (urban+rural)	15 states rural	Karnataka + Rajasthan	Nationwide
Sample Size	100048 households/418,297 individuals	1176 households/2282 individuals	11000-1700 households per round	1870 Households / 2987 Individuals	178,677 households/876,006 individuals
Interview period	July 2019-June 2020	February 2019-September 2021	May, July, Dec 2020	August-September 2020 (Pre-pandemic round in Feb-March 2020)	Thrice a year since 2014
Respondent age	15+	21-59	Household level data	18-60	15+
% Urban	45%(unweighted)	50%	0%	17%	64% (unweighted)
Illiterate	21% (persons)	12% (persons)		31% (persons)	1.8%
College educated	8.3% (persons)	20% (persons)		11%	6.13%

	PLFS	DMAS-T	RCRC	IWS	CPHS
How employment data are collected	Current weekly activity status in half day blocks for the week. Activities coded in various predefined activity status categories	Questions about activities undertaken by household (farm, business, wage work) followed by whether respondents participated in last month	What is the primary occupation of the household?	Current weekly activity by asking the respondent a series of binary activity based questions about their own work status (self responses). Worked at least one hour in the last week.	Nature of occupation of individual, followed by employed or unemployed. Pay or profit concept explained to interviewers for conversational interview
Prepandemic WPR Male	73% (ages 15+ for whole year 19-20)	85% (21-59)	62% agricultural households	71%	67% (age 15+)
Prepandemic WPR (Female)	29% (ages 15+)	36% (21-59)		58% (ages 18-60)	9.5% (age 15+)




Delhi Metropolitan Area Study - Telephone Survey

Carried out by NCAER
National Data
Innovation Centre

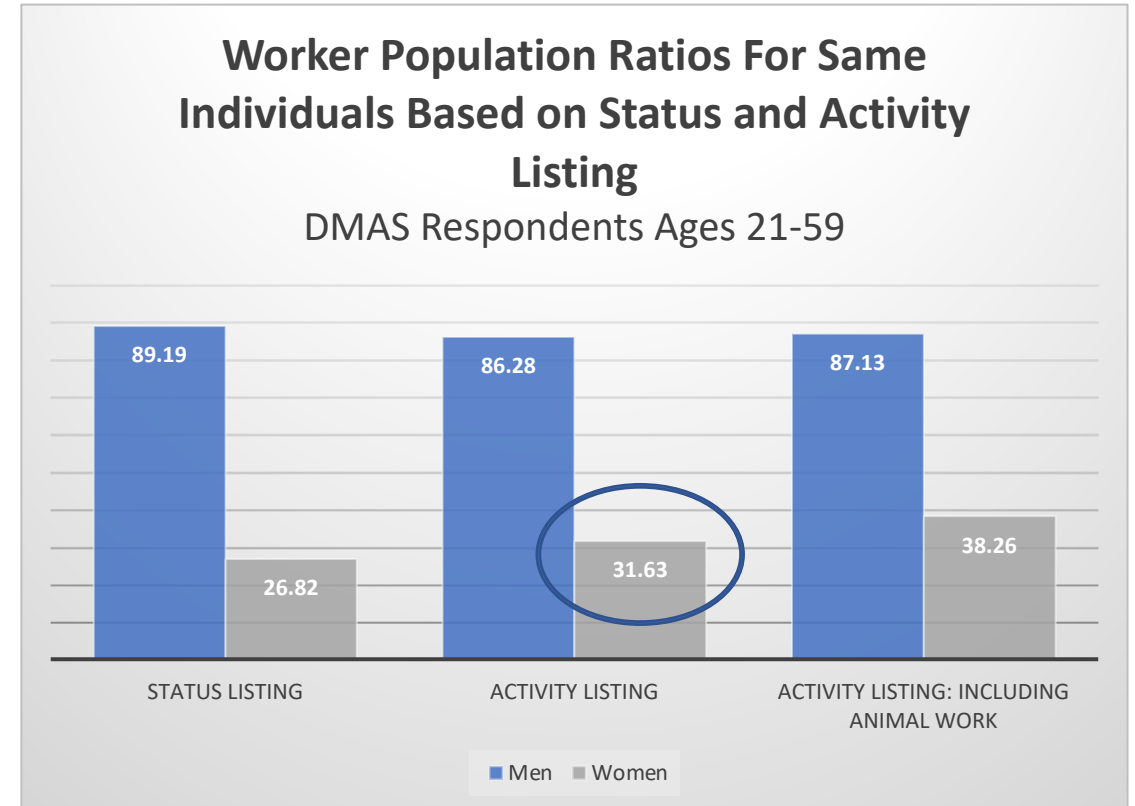


Delhi Metropolitan Area Study – Employment Module

- In January 2019, NCAER National Data Innovation Centre undertook an experiment to improve measurement of women's work
 - At the baseline, households were interviewed in face-to-face interview where basic data on work participation was collected using NSS style question
 - Then a more detailed module was administered in which households were asked if they had a family farm, if they answered yes, they were asked who worked on it. Similar questions were asked about small and large businesses
 - Respondents were asked if they did any work for wage or salary.
 - Our assumption was that the way questions are worded influences what is counted as work and who is seen as a worker
 - After validating activity specific question design these questions were incorporated into employment surveys of one male and one female per household
 - Sample size – 1211 men and 1128 women at the start of the data collection
 - Sample located in Delhi NCR region including Delhi, Haryana, UP and Rajasthan
- 


Women's work is often not seen as "real work" by women themselves and their families – Estimates depend on question phrasing

- Status based
 - What was your primary activity status over the past 12 months?
 - For people involved in domestic duties, was there any other activity that you engaged in for a period of at least 30 days?
- Activity based
 - Did you work on family farm?
 - Did you take care of livestock?
 - Did you participate in family business?
 - Did you engage in farm or non-farm wage work?
- DMAS Urban and Rural Sample





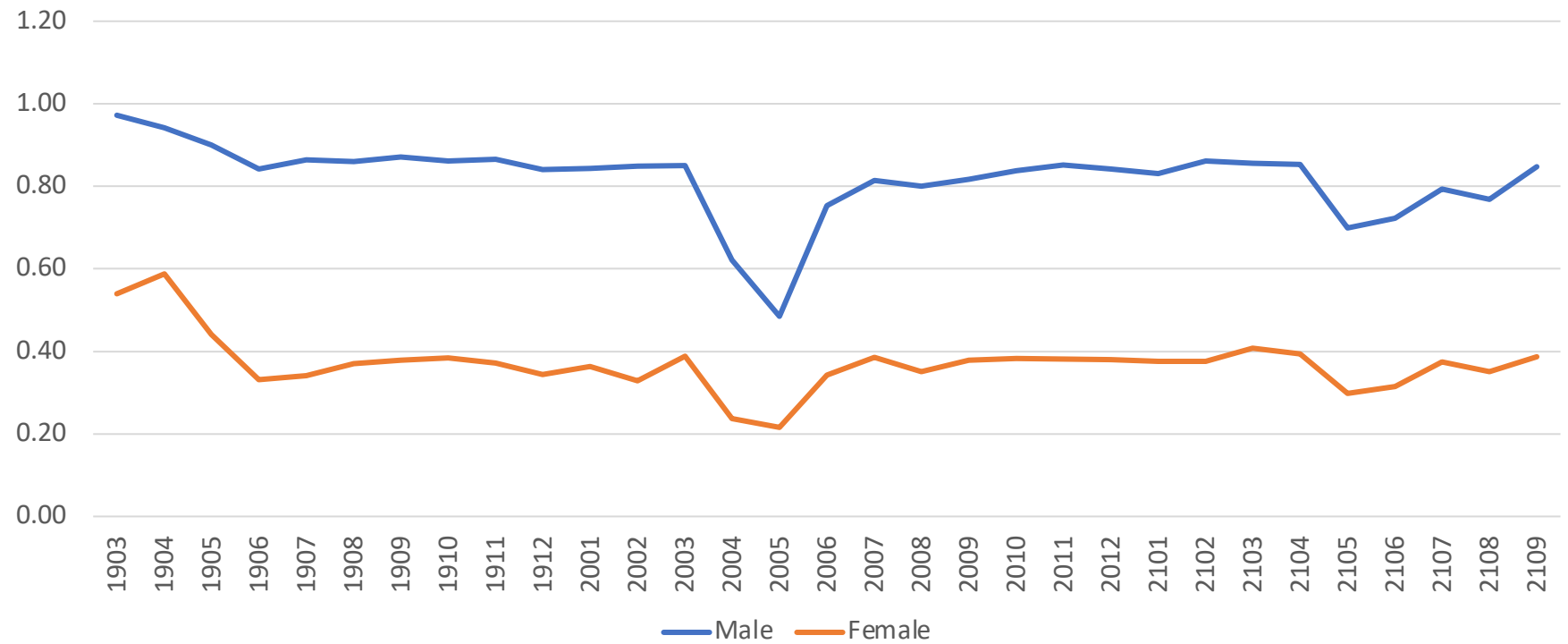
After initial face-to-face interview

- One randomly selected male and one randomly selected female ages 21-59 interviewed every month via telephone
 - Short < 5 min interview to ask about work done in the preceding 30 days.
 - Our goal was to track seasonality in men's and women's work
 - These phone surveys began in March 2019 and would have ended in March 2020.
 - After a short break, we extended this to understand what is going on during lockdown and immediately following the relaxation of lockdown
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Employment decline in second wave smaller than in the first

- Note early interviews began with rural areas and hence, have higher work participation rates

Trends in Work Participation Between March 2019 and September 2021



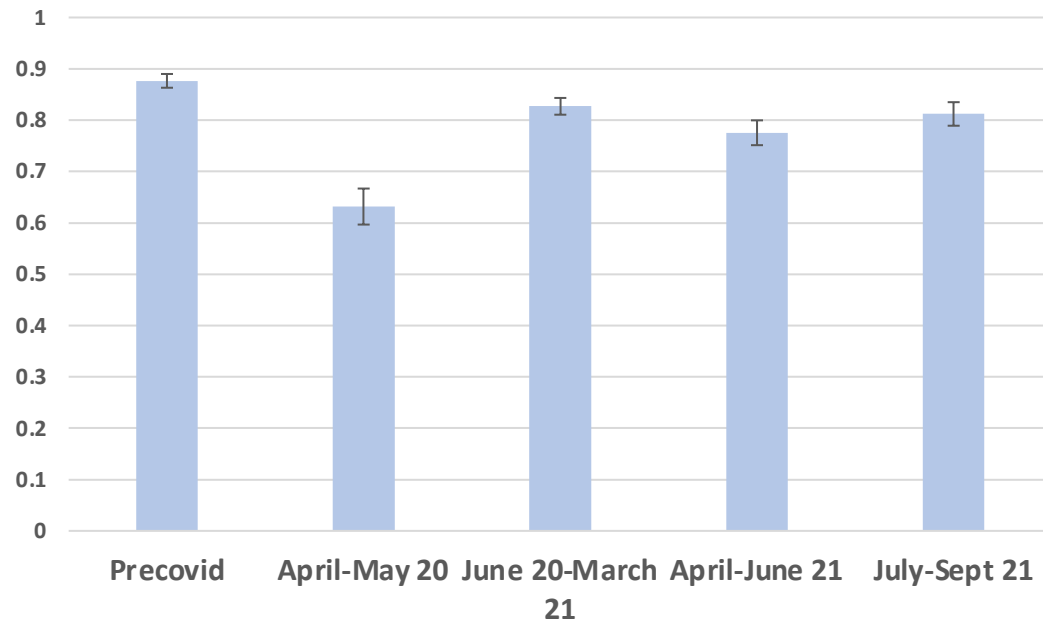
Month to month data not strictly comparable due to some participants not being available for some interviews

- Multivariate analyses controlling for individual specific random effects and controlling for
 - Age
 - Education
 - Household asset ownership quintile
 - State of residence (Haryana, Delhi, Rajasthan, UP)
 - Urban residence
 - Religion
 - Caste
 - Calendar month of interview (to address seasonality)

Results highlight both recovery and persistent vulnerability – overall employment recovering

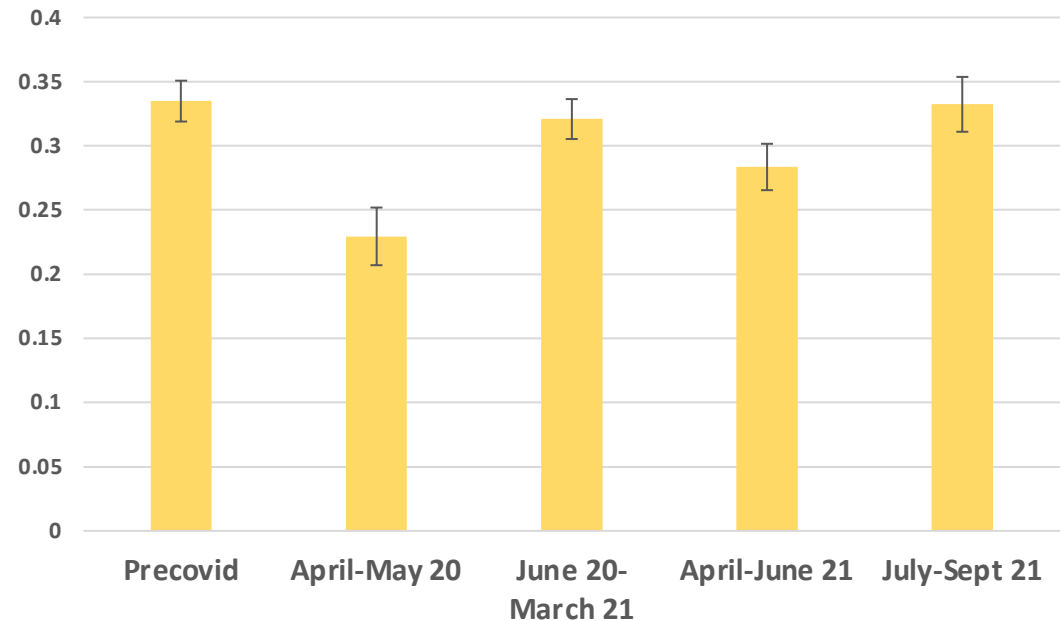
Men

Work Participation Rates for Men Ages 21-59,
Predicted Margins Controlling for Background



Women

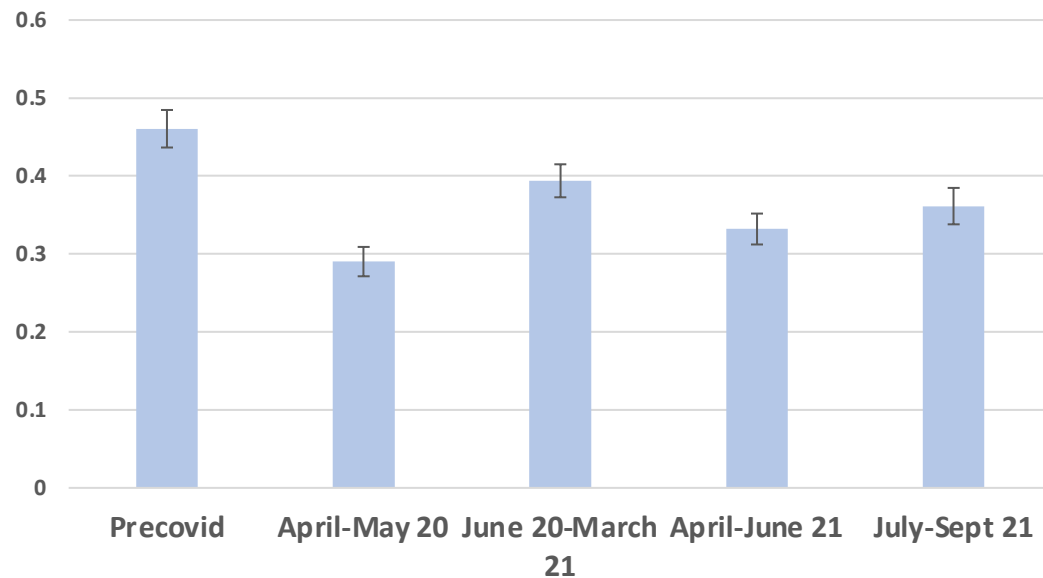
Work Participation Rates for Women Ages 21-59,
Predicted Margins Controlling for Background



But wage employment is lagging behind;
moreover drop during second wave much more
conspicuous for women

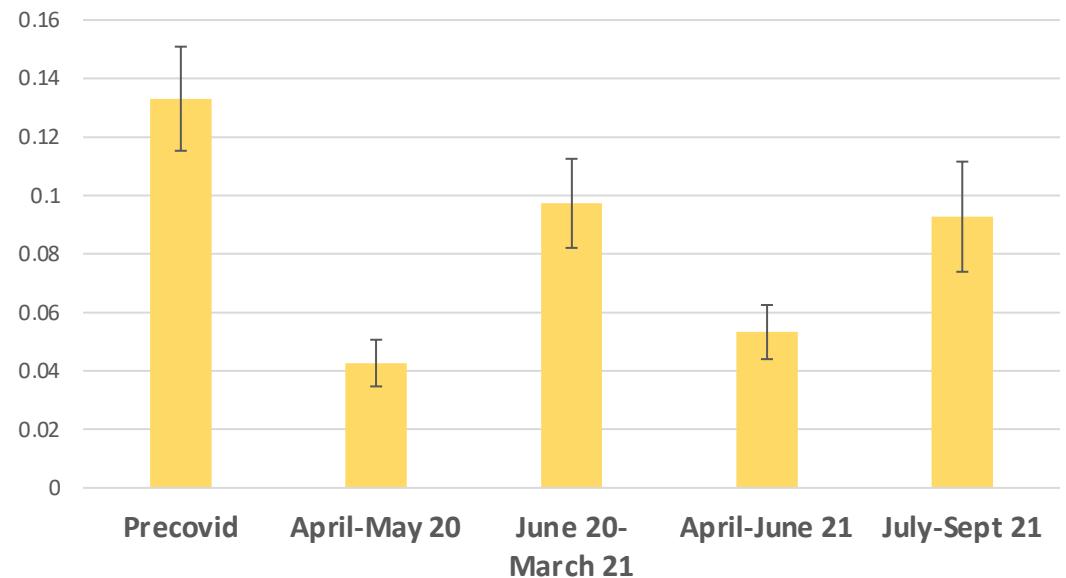
Men

Participation in Casual Wage and Salaried Work for
Men Ages 21-59,
Predicted Margins Controlling for Background



Women

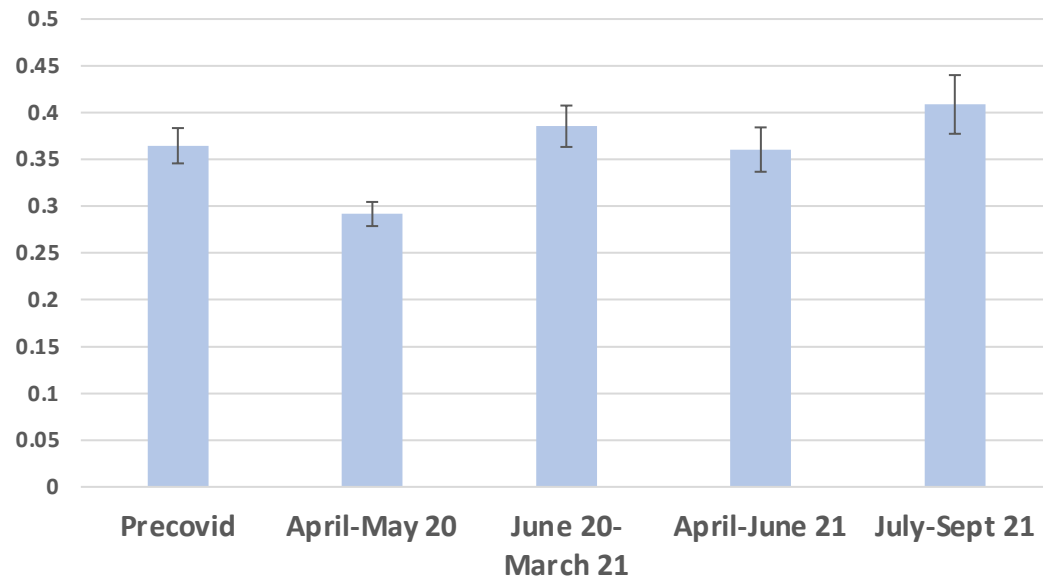
Participation in Casual Wage and Salaried Work for
Women Ages 21-59,
Predicted Margins Controlling for Background



Farming and petty businesses emerging as a refuge

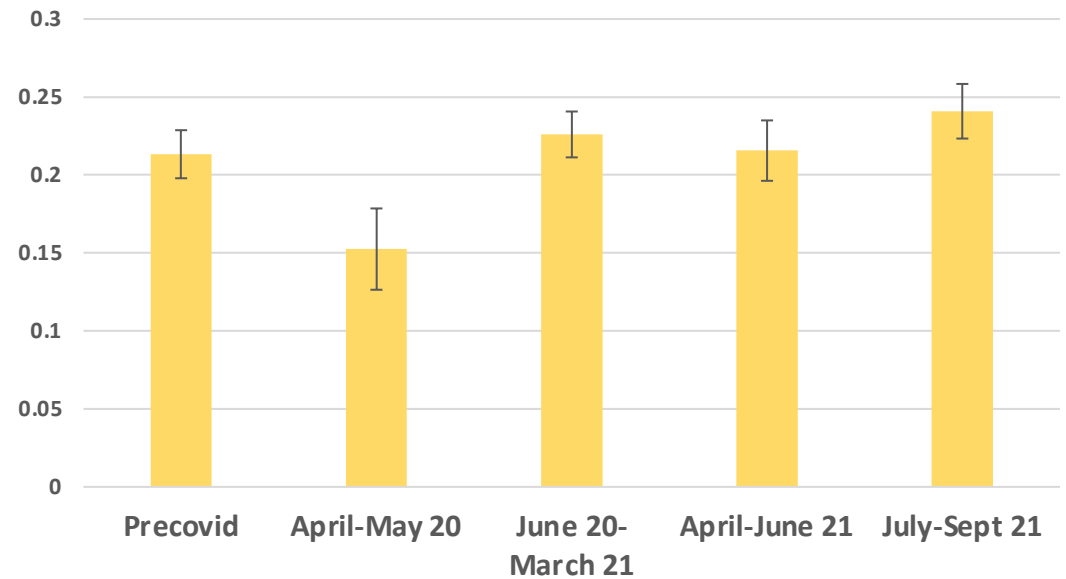
Men

Participation in Cultivation and Petty Business for Men
Ages 21-59,
Predicted Margins Controlling for Background



Women

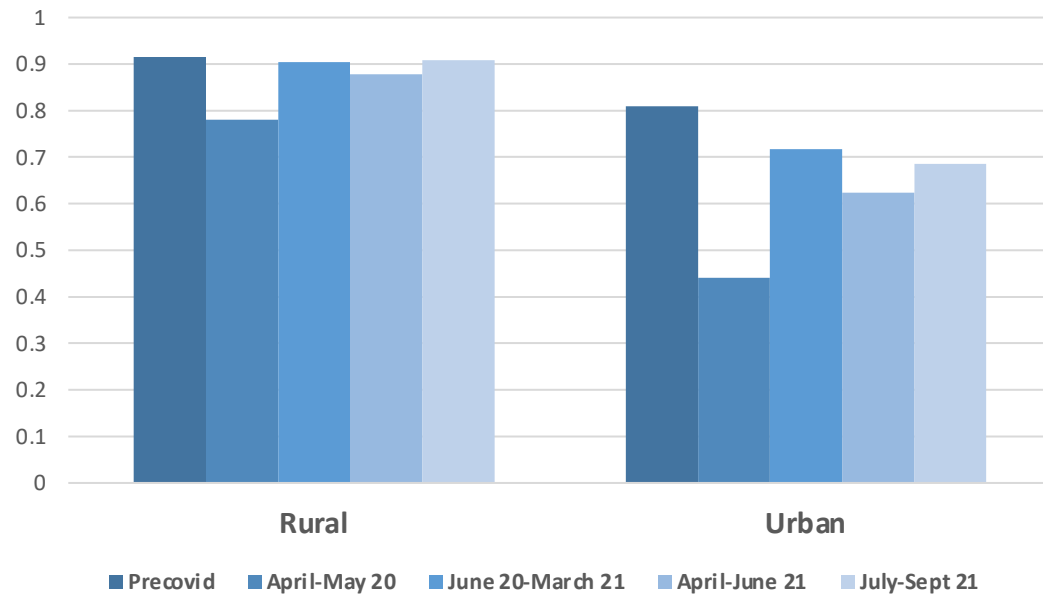
Participation in Cultivation and Petty Business for Women
Ages 21-59,
Predicted Margins Controlling for Background



Urban vulnerability continues, not surprising given decline in wage employment. Recovery for urban men particularly sluggish, for women difference not significant

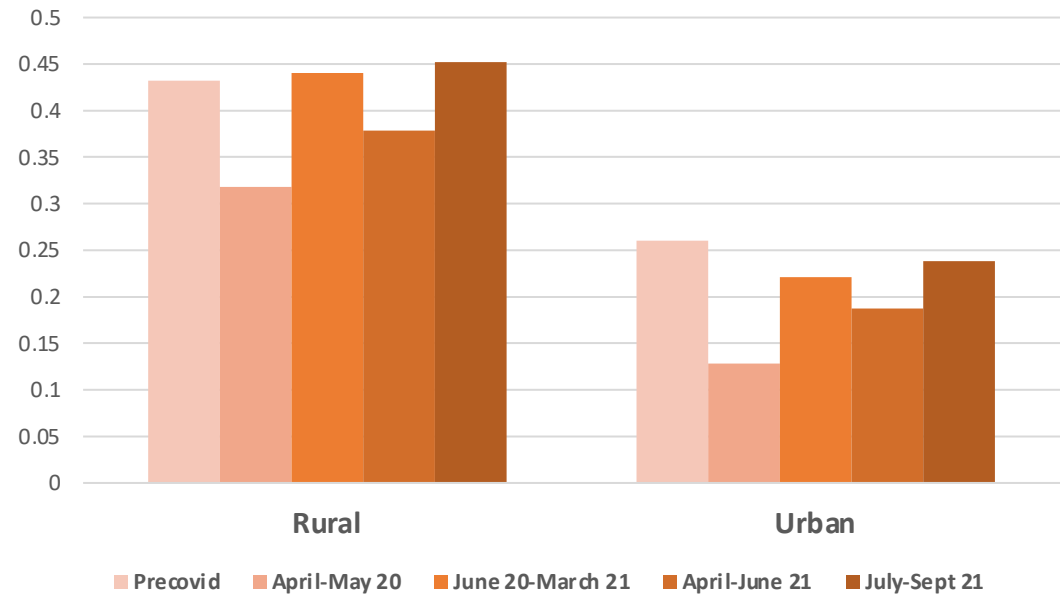
Men

Work Participation Rates for Men,
Predicted Margins by Urban Res.



Women

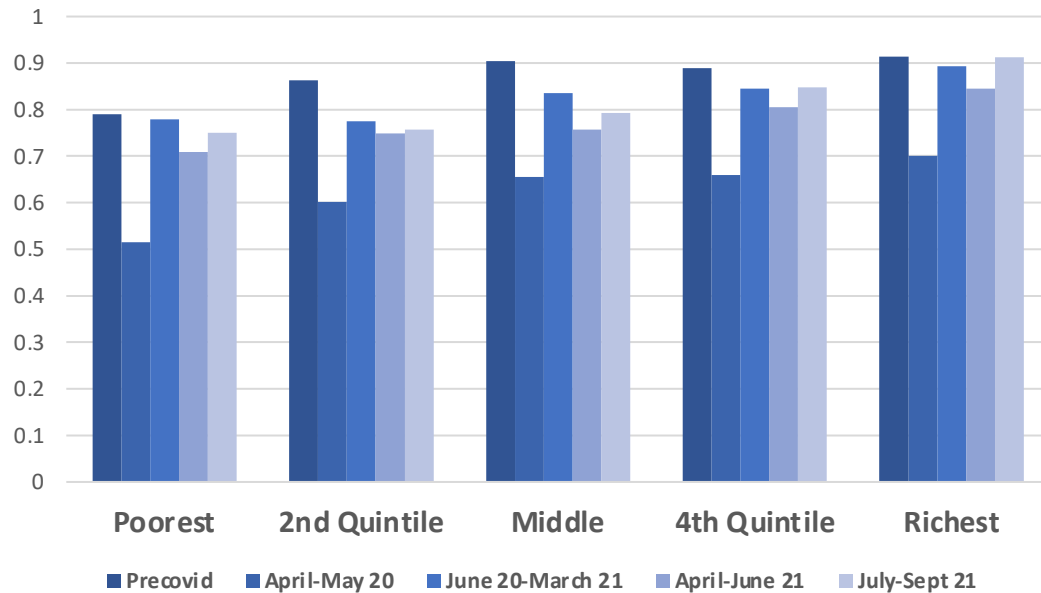
Work Participation Rates for Women,
Predicted Margins by Urban Res.



Everyone affected, but people in top asset quintile see fastest recovery

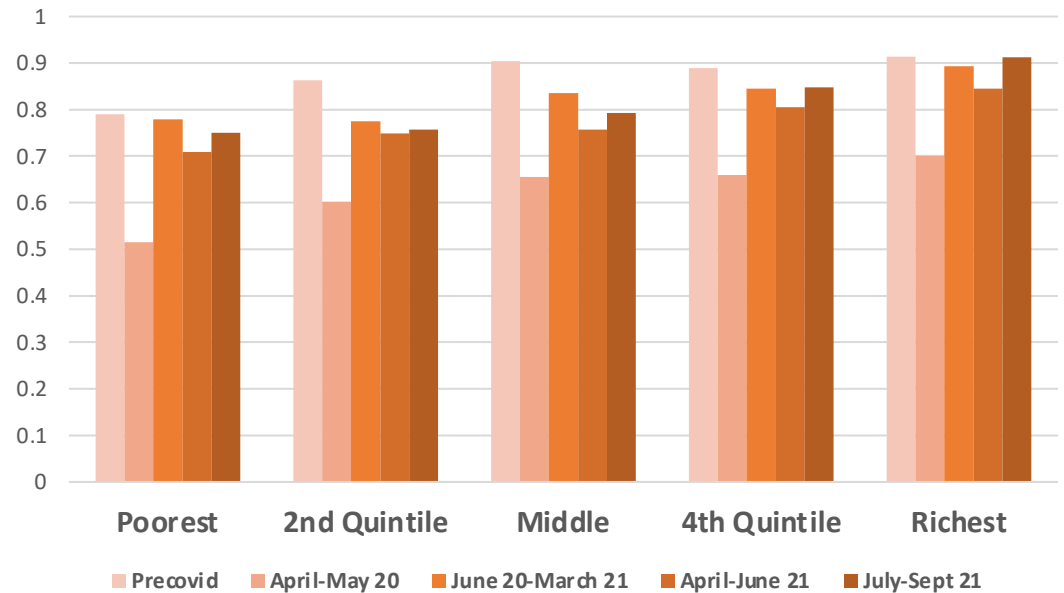
Men

Work Participation Rates for Men,
Predicted Margins by Asset Quintile



Women

Work Participation Rates for Women,
Predicted Margins by Asset Quintile



Lessons for policy and future data collection

In an informal economy, people find whatever work they can. Often it is return to family farm or starting a petty business

Thus, judging recovery by number of people employed may not be the correct yardstick

Data collection on employment needs to do a better job of capturing various types of employment including self-employment

On to Ankur Sarin

- I am glad Ankur is going after me because I am keenly aware of what my presentation missed
- Our respondents were interviewed monthly for a year before the pandemic
- This makes them stable residents and we perhaps miss the most vulnerable, the temporary migrants into cities and the families they left behind
- Ankur will be able to help us link the urban and the rural through the umbilical cord that ties migrants to their native places