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## WASTE AND WOMEN: A GENDERED STUDY ON SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT IN TELANGANA, INDIA

This socioeconomic study explored the relationship between gender and waste collection and disposal in two representative villages of Telangana, India. Drawing upon surveys in each village of 40 households, focus group discussions with male, female, and middle school students, and key informant interviews with leaders, school teachers, and other stakeholders, it concludes that gender plays a defining role in waste management. Women are expected to collect and dispose of their household's waste, despite frequently holding other jobs and domestic and childcare duties. However, once waste management becomes a paying activity, village men are equally likely to perform the work. Though women take charge of household waste, they receive less compensation for formal waste management positions and are sidelined from local decisions about waste use and disposal. This study calls for an improved understanding of the gender dimensions of South Asian village life, which in turn could lead to better designed waste management systems.

### Biography

Francine Barchett has studied Development Sociology and International Agriculture and Rural Development at Cornell University's College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. Her research interests include gender, belonging, waste, and how social identity and existing power structures impact present society. She is completing her honors thesis research in the Telangana State of Southern India and hopes to pursue a PhD in Development Economics.

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