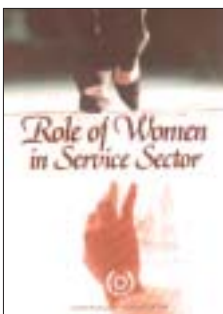


EDUCATION AND TRAINING OF RURAL WOMEN IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

APO 345 pp. April 2002

Poverty is closely associated with people's lack of opportunities for improving their knowledge and skills. This situation is particularly true of women in rural areas. Any program that endeavors to increase women's participation in economic activities and their control over economic and natural resources needs to address the basic problems of illiteracy among them and the traditional view of women's role in society. Enhancing rural women's access to education and training is therefore a fundamental concern for developing countries. Apart from literacy and numeracy proficiencies, rural women also need to acquire basic leadership, occupational, interpersonal, organizational, and communications skills if they are to participate in and contribute fully to society.

The APO organized a seminar on "Education and Training of Rural Women in Asia and the Pacific" in Tokyo in early 2000 to review the present situation of education and training opportunities for rural women in member countries and to find ways to expand and improve on these programs. This publication is a compilation of the resource papers and country reports presented at the seminar, including an executive summary of the deliberations.



ROLE OF WOMEN IN SERVICE SECTOR

APO 141 pp. April 2002

Women today make up 41% of the world's labor force. Their work is predominantly in the service sector. Businesses that have taken advantage of their manual skills as well as innovative and creative minds have scored high on productivity and growth. Despite this, most women are employed in low-status, low-skilled, and low-paid jobs. In other words, the rise in women's participation in the labor force has not been matched by an improvement in the range and the quality of their jobs. This is largely because of the lower status of women in society and their lack of protection against discrimination. The heartening news is that there is a growing recognition of the need to upgrade their social status and to provide and train them for greater work responsibilities.

Recognizing the significant role that women can play in the economic development of a country, especially in the service sector, the APO organized a symposium on "The Role of Women in the Service Sector" in Fiji, October 2000. The objective was to enhance the status and contributions of women workers. This publication contains 11 selected papers presented at the symposium and a report of the symposium proceedings. It is a useful reference text for those involved with gender issues at work.

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