



NON-FARM EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN RURAL AREAS IN ASIA

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Most of the people in Asia and the Pacific still live in rural areas today where agricultural activities are the main source of employment. However, the job-generating capacity of this sector has been hindered by factors such as small-sized landholdings, insufficient capital and investment incentives, inadequate infrastructure, limited markets, and stagnant prices of agricultural products. As a solution, many governments in the region have resorted to developing the rural non-farm sector to generate employment and to improve household incomes. Principal sources of demand for the products and services of rural non-farm employment activities are: 1) the demand generated by the income of rural consumers; 2) the backward and forward production linkages; and 3) the urban and foreign sector. The demand for rural non-farm employment increases as rural income increases, and its supply involves issues of labor intensity, labor productivity, and capital productivity. Since those employment activities are generally undertaken by small-scale, artisanal, and informal enterprises, their relationship to larger-scale firms is important.

To review present non-farm employment in rural areas and identify major issues and measures for its further promotion, the APO organized a seminar on “Non-farm Employment Opportunities in Rural Areas” in the Philippines, September 2001. This e-book is a report of the proceedings of the seminar. Edited by Prof. Dr. Tongroj Onchan, President, Mekong Environment and Resource Institute (MERI), Thailand, it provides highlights on the findings of the seminar; the 17 country reports which dealt with recent trends in non-farm employment in their respective countries, major issues in rural employment generation, and measures for promoting rural non-farm employment; and the following resource papers by experts deputed to conduct the seminar:

- “Policies and Measures for Promoting Rural Non-farm Employment” by Dr. Jung-Sup Choi, Director, Agricultural Commodities and Marketing Department, Korea Rural Economic Institute, Republic of Korea;
- “Enhancing Rural Non-farm Employment Opportunities through Agro-industries and Rural Urban Linkages” by Dr. Nerlita M. Manalili, Head, Agro-industrial Development Program, SEAMEO-SEARCA, the Philippines;
- “Rural Industrialization: The Philippine Experience” by Ms. Zenaida Cuison Maglaya, Assistant Secretary, Regional Operations, Department of Trade and Industry, the Philippines; and
- “Promoting Rural Non-farm Enterprises for Employment Generation and Rural Development” by Prof. Dr. Tongroj Onchan, President, MERI, Thailand.

The book should be useful to those interested in studying rural non-farm sector employment in Asia and the Pacific or with responsibility for employment generation.

The APO has uploaded a number of e-books to its Web site (www.apo-tokyo.org). Some are also available in hard copy, while others, including *Non-farm Employment Opportunities in Rural Areas in Asia*, are available only in the e-edition.

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