



Making non-traditional livelihoods work for the marginalised through education

16-18 January 2019, New Delhi, India

Women's participation in the labour force is a driver of a country's growth and indicates the potential of a country to grow rapidly. However, the participation is mostly underutilised and hampered by gender-based discrimination and inequality. To address this challenge, along with stagnant job market and rising unemployment, it is critical to move beyond traditional approaches to skilling and livelihood.

Azad Foundation, in collaboration with ASPBAE and other like-minded organisations, organised India's first international conference on 'Making Non-Traditional Livelihoods Work for the Marginalised'. The conference addressed various issues related to women's workforce participation and non-traditional livelihoods for resource-poor women.



The International Conference on 'Making Non-Traditional Livelihoods Work for the Marginalised' addressed various issues related to women's workforce participation and non-traditional livelihoods for resource-poor women.

Non-traditional livelihoods, such as driving, masonry, painting, and mechanics is a way of "breaking the glass ceiling" that does not allow poor women to choose livelihoods with dignity and which are remunerative. The conference brought together experts who influence policy and experts who make the change happen.



Feminist activist, Kamla Bhasin addressing the NTL Conference in New Delhi.

The conference also aimed to create a platform to deliberate ways to overcome existing gender disparities in learning opportunities and skills ensuring equitable technical and transferable skills in accessing employment and decent jobs. It provided a platform to share and learn about the non-traditional livelihoods for women that challenge gender norms in work and skill development, create mobility, remunerative incomes, and a sense of identity and dignity.

The conference was divided into several plenary and workshop sessions around three areas: (1) context of women's workforce participation and challenges; non-traditional livelihoods breaking gendered divisions of labour at home and outside; (2) building an ecosystem of support for sustaining women at their workplace; creating gender sensitive markets; (3) exploring interconnections between the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for decent work for marginalised women; articulating key elements for decent work for marginalised women.

Sharing the global and regional context on women's labour force participation, Jayati Ghosh, Development Economist and Professor of Economics at Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU, New Delhi), mentioned the increase of women in unpaid care work. Highlighting the need to increase public employment opportunities that improve quality of life, she stressed the importance of the political choice

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ASPBAE organised a parallel session named 'Skill development and education for Marginalised women', aimed at validating, enriching, and disseminating the results of the ASPBAE research study on financing options for livelihoods for marginalised women in India and Indonesia.

other SDGs such as SDG 8 on decent work and SDG 10 on reducing inequalities. The parallel session, named 'Skill development and education for Marginalised women', aimed at validating, enriching, and disseminating the results of the ASPBAE research study on financing options for livelihoods for marginalised women in India and Indonesia.

Maria Khan, ASPBAE Secretary-General, initiated the discussion by stressing the issue of working with marginalised women and advocating with governments for quality public services. Nani Zulminarni, Executive Director, PEKKA Indonesia and ASPBAE President, shared the Indonesia country case study emphasizing the need for a gendered notion in skill development and financing a gender just framework for skill development and decent work. She shared the civil society model of skill development which underlines comprehensive capacity enhancement that includes skills training with leadership and business management.

Elaine Butler of WAVE Australia shared a synthesis of the two country cases from India and Indonesia specifying that the future of work and learning are interdependent. Sharing the challenges faced by Afghan women related to the legal legitimacy of women's work, Roshan Mashal of the Afghan Women's Network, an ASPBAE member, reiterated the need for a transparent and responsive monitoring mechanism system for the implementation of laws and policies at the national level that provide educational, economic, and business opportunities for women. ASPBAE's Cecilia Soriano concluded the session with underscoring the ways to translate the research findings into advocacy efforts, networking with different stakeholders and lobbying with states at various levels.

of countries in policy formations and implementation that acknowledges care work and non-traditional livelihood.

Nani Zulminarni, ASPBAE President, was one of the panellists in the opening plenary on women's workforce participation and its challenges, where she elaborated on the systemic challenges to women's workforce participation, specifically in Southeast Asia. ASPBAE's Cecilia (Thea) Soriano spoke in the plenary on the interconnections between the SDGs, emphasising the links between SDG 4 and SDG 8 for decent work for marginalised women.

ASPBAE contributed to the discourses by organising a parallel session focussing on the intersection between advocacy for women's education and skills development in SDG 4 and



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The conference ended with a charter of demands that highlighted the formation of an enabling environment for marginalised women and gender minorities to enter and sustain their participation in the workforce. At the 63rd Commission of Status of Women (CSW), Azad foundation shared the key demands in a parallel session on '*Realising Women's Economic Empowerment through Non-Traditional Livelihoods*'. ASPBAE included the recommendations from the charter in the statement during the Asia Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (APFSD) and round table discussion on SDG 4 (Quality Education). Azad has used the charter recommendations in their contribution to review reports on SDG 8 (decent work and economic growth) and will advance the recommendations from the charter at the upcoming High-level Political Forum (HLPF).

The charter of demands has been forwarded within various national and state level institutions to speak about transformative skill training and enabling environments for sustained work participation; liaise with TVET institutions for holistic and transformative skilling using a Gender Just Skill Education (GJSE) framework; and share the charter with local civil society and practitioners of NTL.

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