UNIT 7 RURAL WOMEN: EDUCATION AND TRAINING

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7.0 OBJECTIVES

After reading this unit, you will be able to:

- differentiate education and training;
- understand significance of education and training for women;
7.1 INTRODUCTION

While going through the preceding two units, each, on women’s social status and health and nutritional status, you learnt that education provides important indicators, among others, to measure women’s status and, also, influences their performance in all spheres of social life. Education associated closely by training has impact on the quality of life of women. Though education and training, both, are the processes of learning yet they differ in their orientation. Education makes people capable of better understanding of things happening around or to happen in future whereas training enhances their performance at a hands-on task through skilling. This means that education and training can play a great role in women’s empowerment. So, this unit shall discuss literacy levels among rural women, obstacles in women’s education and potential areas for training of girls and women, the governmental efforts for girls’ education, schemes in operation and agencies engaged in these activities. Before we proceed to discuss these, let us conceptualise ‘education’ and ‘training’ and clarify their interrelationship.

7.2 CONCEPTUALISING ‘EDUCATION’ AND ‘TRAINING’

Informally, ‘education’ is one’s life-long learning of social roles, values and norms that are to be practiced in his/her relations with other members in the society in future life. However, in formal sense it refers to the learning one undergoes in various formal institutions like school, college, university etc. to develop his/her reasoning, understanding, judgement and intellect that will help him/her face challenges in future. On the other hand, training is a specific education in terms of its nature, orientation, objectives, scope and methods. It is learning by doing/hands-on experience of a specific task/job aimed at developing skills and knowledge (performance, productivity and competency) of the manpower in an organisation; for example, internship or apprenticeship training.

Education and training are intertwined so much as the difference between them has increasingly blurred over the years. However, technically they differ from each other. Training has a practical application and present-orientation, narrow scope of learning, short term programming and covering of skills related to a specific task while education is oriented to theoretical knowledge and future life with wider/comprehensive scope of learning, long term programming and general area coverage of knowledge.

With the overall societal environment becoming more techno-centric, the approach to education and training is also changing; they have come closer to
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each other. However, normally one who is going to take training has got some formal education and also training is rarely conducted without education. In work organisations, education assumes more importance in case of the manpower engaged in higher level jobs/tasks as compared to their counterpart at lower levels. However, education is a common requirement for the manpower at all levels. Therefore, while planning a training programme for manpower organisations need to consider, both, education and training because in some situations, where workers need to take decisions with regard to their work, education is as much important as training.

Having this conceptual clarity, let us now proceed to understand what education and training signify for women.

7.3 SIGNIFICANCE OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING FOR WOMEN

Education improves functional and analytical ability and, thereby, opens up opportunities for individuals to achieve greater access to labour market and livelihood. Besides being an efficiency-enhancing instrument, it is also an effective tool for broadening democratic participation and advancing the overall quality of individual and societal life. The most important role it plays is of empowerment of women and reduction of gender discrimination. A report (2010) of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) states, “Educating girls has proven to be one of the most important ways of breaking poverty cycles and is likely to have significant impacts on access to formal jobs in the longer term”. Also, educating girls and young women increases a country’s productivity and contributes to economic growth.

In India, rural women make a major contribution to human survival, but are, still, among the most deprived, ignored and exploited people. Access to education and training can make major impact on their potential to avail and benefit from income-generating opportunities and improve their overall well-being. Addressing of challenges they face requires a variety of approaches including non-formal education, technical and vocational training, agricultural extension services, workplace training, training in new technologies and literacy and numeracy training. They need to be considered equal partners in the development process. So, education and training not only go a long way in achieving goals of development and equality but also help women in raising their status, developing their potential and living as self-dependent and equal partners. The purpose of providing education to women is to

- enable girls and women to think strategically, identify their own strength and make informed choices/decisions
- empower them to play a positive role in their families and the nation’s development.
- enhance their self-image and status in the society.

Let us now look into educational status of rural women.
7.4 EDUCATIONAL STATUS OF RURAL WOMEN

In India’s population of 121.06 crore in 2011 had 48.5% women, making up almost a half. Hence, it can’t even be thought of development of the society without women’s welfare and empowerment. India has made quite considerable progress with an overall increase in literacy rates from 64.8% in 2001 to 74.04% in 2011, considering the population of children of 7 years and above. In India the literacy rate of women is 64.46% as compared to 82.14% for males (Census of India, 2011).

According to Census 2011 (provisional), in India rural female literates were 57.93% as compared to 77.15% rural male literates. The percentage of increase in rural female literates in 2011 over 2001 is 24% as compared to that of rural male literates (8%). This increase in rate of females’ literacy in rural area is really encouraging.

In India the Gross Enrolment Ratio at various levels of school education has much improved. In 2019-20, it is 97.8% elementary school level, 89.7 per cent at upper primary school level, 77.9% at secondary school level and 51.4%, at higher or senior secondary school level. The Gender Parity Index (GPI) has also improved at the levels of secondary and higher secondary school education during the period from 2012-13 to 2019-20 (United Information System for Education Plus (UDISE+) Report, 2019-20). In higher education female enrolment has registered an overall increase of more than 18% in the period from 2015-16 to 2019-20 (All-India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE), 2019-20).

Though the gap is being filled over the decades of India’s Independence, yet the pace is slow. To address the persisting gender gap at different levels of education a leap forward of measures is required on the part of the Government and the society. Let us see the male-female literacy gap in India in the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Census</th>
<th>Females</th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Total Persons</th>
<th>Male-Female Gap in Literacy Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>29.76</td>
<td>56.38</td>
<td>43.57</td>
<td>26.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>39.29</td>
<td>64.13</td>
<td>52.21</td>
<td>24.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>54.16</td>
<td>75.85</td>
<td>65.38</td>
<td>21.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>65.46</td>
<td>82.14</td>
<td>74.04</td>
<td>16.68</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: (i) The literacy rates relate to the population aged seven years and above. (ii) The 1981 Census Literacy rates exclude Assam. The 1991 Census Literacy Rates exclude Jammu & Kashmir.


Multiple factors contribute to rural women’s trailing behind in education. Let us discuss them.
Gender gap in education, with a low female literacy rate, has continued all through the decades of India’s Independence. The following are major factors that have caused this gap:

1) Parents’ negative attitude towards girl’s education is responsible for low educational levels of women. When poor parents can ill-afford children’s educational expenses, girl’s education is axed, first of all. Besides, non-availability of educational institutions in vicinity and poor academic performance at school also exclude girls from education. In rural areas, girls’ mobility tends to be restricted after they attain puberty.

2) Lack of employment opportunities after completion of education discourages parents to invest in daughters’ education, specially. Early marriage is an important reason for girls’ drop-out from school and custom of dowry in marriage makes girls a great liability of parents as, costs marriage, parents don’t prefer investing in their education.

3) Some parents consider co-education schools and schools in some other towns/villages are unsafe for daughters. Non-availability of educational institutions within an approachable distance is a major cause of girls’ exclusion from education after primary and upper primary educational levels.

4) Instead of attending school, often, girls in rural areas have to assist their family in field or household or by looking after younger siblings. Then, school curriculum prepared with urban bias has little or no relevance to rural life and environment. Further, dull teaching methods and lack of educational support at home lead to girls’ low performance. Even if school being nearby girls do attend it, there may be absence of teachers or of female teacher, or lack of books, washrooms and other necessary facilities.

5) Lack of awareness and motivation for education among parents and low value placed on education in rural areas is a common reason for illiteracy, especially among women.

6) The male-dominated Indian society is the root cause of the lack of girls’ education. Though India is progressing, the belief that women belong to home is still widely held. Because daughters will eventually get married and live with their husbands, girls’ education is considered of not much use for the parental family. Hence, a son’s education is preferred.

Having taken account of impeding factors of rural women’s education, let’s see now what the Government has so far done for girls’ education.

In pre-Independence India, formal system of education was created essentially with the objective of utilizing the educated to serve the British
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administration. Initially, women had little or no access to formal education, especially in rural areas, partly because society of that time could not think of women being in the role of government servants. With its spread in subsequent decades, the formal education was recognized as a necessity and increasingly felt as a liberating force. There began advocacy for access of girls and women to the formal education system, which received little support.

After Independence, the Constitution of India implemented in 1950 provided for free education of all children up to the age of 14 years. So it was made a component of the development process carried out through five-year plans. The First Five-Year Plan (1951-56) advocated the need for adopting special measures for overcoming barriers to women’s education. It provided educational facilities for girls by way of elementary education, secondary education, university education, technical education and adult education.

The Second Plan (1956-61) continued emphasizing overall expansion of educational facilities for women. The Government set up a National Committee on Women’s Education in 1958, which, after reviewing women’s education in India from 1900 onwards, recommended to specially bring women into the fold of formal education. Acting on the recommendations the Government constituted National Council for Women’s Education in India in 1959. As a result, during the Third Plan (1961-66) there were launched Bal Sevika training programmes, condensed school courses and vocational training for adult women. Besides, girls were provided incentives of free textbooks and scholarships.

This process continued in the Fourth Plan (1969-74), as well. In 1971, a Committee constituted to study the status of women in India recommended for providing primary schools within walking distance and for a sustained propaganda by women officials, non-officials, social and political workers to bring all girls into school, particularly in rural and backward areas. Other important measures recommended include special incentives for low enrolment areas and a system of part-time education for those girls who could not attend schools on a full-time basis.

Even then, disparities continued in utilizing these facilities by boys and girls at various educational levels. Therefore, the Fifth Plan (1974-79 decided to step up enrolment and retention of girls and cut down wastage by providing free textbooks, mid-day meals, free uniforms and attendance-based scholarship. One of the reasons for low enrolment of girls was shortage of women teachers. Scholarships were, therefore, given to girls who enrolled in the teacher’s training course.

Based on recommendations (1975) of the Committee on the Status of Women in India, women’s education was included as a major programme under Women and Development component in the Sixth Plan (1980-85). Adult education centres for women were set up during this plan to provide education in health, nutrition and family welfare. To break away from the stereotype of domestic science courses for women, it was decided to increase women’s participation in science and technology by concentrating on science courses.
Steps were taken to eliminate gender bias in school curricula in the Seventh Plan (1985-90), also. Elementary education was made free for girls. There being caste disparity among rural females, more scholarships, as compared to boys, were provided for girls of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, studying beyond matriculation, to bridge the gap.

The Eighth Plan (1992-97), mainly focused on human development, played an important role in women’s development. It promised to ensure that women are not bypassed in benefiting from development in different sectors, to implement special programmes to complement the general development programmes and to monitor the flow of benefits to women from other development sectors, enabling them to function as equal partners and participants in the development process.

The Ninth Plan (1997-2002) made two significant changes in the strategy of planning for women. First, ‘Empowerment of Women’ became one of the nine primary objectives of the Plan. To this effect, its Approach was to create an enabling environment where women could freely exercise their rights both within and outside home, as equal partners along with men. Second, the Plan attempted ‘convergence of existing services available in both women-specific and women-related sectors.

The Approach of Tenth Plan (2002-2007) was to continue with the major strategy of ‘Empowering Women as Agents of Social Change and Development’. It advocated adoption of a three-fold strategy to empower women, based on prescriptions of the National Policy for Empowerment of Women. This included social empowerment, economic empowerment and gender justice for creating an enabling environment through various developmental policies and programmes for women.

In the Eleventh Plan (2007-2012), for the first time, women were recognized not just as equal citizens but as agents of economic and social growth. The approach to gender equity was based on the principle that interventions for women must be multi-pronged and they must provide women with basic entitlements, ensure an environment free from all forms of violence against them, ensure their participation and adequate representation at the highest policy levels, particularly in the Parliament and the State assemblies, and strengthen existing institutional mechanisms and create new ones for gender-mainstreaming and effective policy-implementation.

The Twelfth Plan (2012-2017) focused on certain key strategies for women such as (i) economic empowerment, (ii) social and physical infrastructure, (iii) enabling legislation, (iv) women’s participation in governance, (v) inclusiveness of all categories of vulnerable women and (vi) engendering national policies/programmes.

National Policy on Education (NPE), 1986, emphasised women’s literacy, keeping education of girls and women the centre. It called for providing measures to increase enrolment and retention of girls, their participation in vocational, technical and professional education and in non-traditional occupations. It suggested for organising centres for imparting vocational training and taking steps for retention of literacy skills and their application.
Courses for women would also include banking and credit, entrepreneurship, etc.

Carrying forward this emphasis, NPE 1986 and Plan of Action (POA) 1992 have been, all through the years, inspiring the Government’s approach to and strategies for girls’ education.

**National Education Policy (NEP) 2020** advocates addressing the gender issues by providing special funds such as a Gender Inclusion Fund towards equitable education for girls as well as transgender students and a substantial increase in public investment to bring education-spending up to 6% of gross domestic product. Policy aims at ensuring 100% participation of girls in schooling system and the fund focuses on closing the gender gaps in educational attainment at all levels.

NEP advises to allocate the fund for giving girls an equal access to education by addressing societal obstacles; help in changing people’s mind-sets and halting harmful practices to foster gender equity and inclusion and impart girls the capacity for leadership to help in developing current and future role-models and improving dialogue with civil society to exchange best practices and lessons learned. This move will ensure that there is a positive multiplier effect on girls and their families and more girls are encouraged to pursue education and complete the cycle.

Having taken this stock, let us oversee governmental interventions taken for girls’ education.

### 7.7 SCHEMES FOR GIRLS’ EDUCATION

To encourage greater participation of girls in primary education and narrow the gender gap in primary education several interventions have been initiated at the national and State levels. The governments’ initiatives were either in the form of special projects or integrated with the routine activities of their education system.

Schemes such as Non-Formal Education (NFE), 1976, and Operation Blackboard (OBB), 1987, have preceded the advent of several projects with a clear thrust on improving the status of girls’ education. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, experimentation in primary education sector had reached its height through either the State sector or targeted projects. These initiatives included Uttar Pradesh Basic Education Project (UP BEP), Bihar Education Project (BEP), Andhra Pradesh Primary Education Project (APPEP), and Lok Jumbish and Shiksha Karmi Projects in Rajasthan, all specifically emphasizing girls’/women’s education.

#### 7.7.1 Non-Formal Education Scheme

Targeted at the out-of-school children in the age 6-14 years and introduced in 1979-80, this scheme operated till March 31, 2001. Recognising that a large number of girls and working children were left out of the ambit of education, these children were reached out through a decentralised management system. At the national level, 0.118 million NFE centres were set up, out of which 0.241 million were exclusively for girls.
7.7.2  Scheme of Operation Blackboard (OBB)

Proposing to upgrade primary schools in low female literacy blocks, this scheme provided additional women teachers and teaching-learning equipment during the Ninth Plan. In addition to improving the learning environment, its focus on recruitment of women teachers was of particular significance in the context of girls' education. In the revised scheme of 1993-94, it was made mandatory that at least 50 per cent teachers be women.

OBB and NFE have been merged with Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA).

7.7.3  National Programme of Nutritional Support to Primary Education

Introduced the Government of India on 15th August 1995, this programme, commonly known as mid-day meal scheme, has far-reaching consequences for girls ever since cooked meals started to be provided in the schools. Victimised by gender-based differential treatment in homes, girls often come to school underfed or unfed. So, this cooked meal in the school is a welcome treat for such girls and is likely to ensure their retention in school.

7.7.4  Lok Jumbish Programme (LJP), 1989

"The goal of equity in education— between boys and girls" was a key objective of the Lok Jumbish programme in Rajasthan. Besides ensuring that children complete primary education, it sought to bridge the gender gap in primary education by the year 2000, make education an instrument of women’s equality and ensure effective people’s involvement in educational management. It also focused on recruitment of women teachers and organising Adhyapika Manch (forum of women teachers) that served the purpose of addressing gender issues, particularly those faced by female teachers at the workplace and in the domestic sphere.

7.7.4  Shiksha Karmi Project (SKP)

Implemented, in 1987, in the remote and socio-economically backward villages of Rajasthan with the primary focus on girls, this project was basically aimed at overcoming two major problems: (i) teachers’ absenteeism in schools located in remote and difficult areas and (ii) poor enrolment and high drop-out rate of children, especially girls. The aim was to be achieved by actively involving the community through Village Education Committee (VEC) and employing local people, with motivation and commitment, as para teachers- also known as Shiksha Karmis. It operated in 146 Panchayat Samitis of the State, running 2600 day schools, 4829 Prahar Shalas and 97 Angan Shalas with 6213 teachers and 2,16,084 students.

7.7.5  Mahila Samakhya Programme: Education for Women’s Equality

Launched, in 1988, to work towards women’s inclusion in the education system, this programme functions through Sanghas-village level women’s collectives. Over the years, these Sanghas have provided collective strength
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for women, usually from poor and marginalised groups, to overcome barriers to their participation in and access to education and development. Through 10,000 women’s collectives (sanghas) formed under the Mahila Samakhya, 1.8 million women have been benefited. Besides this, girls, particularly adolescent girls and children, have been benefited by the Mahila Shikshan Kendras (residential education centres), Kishori Sanghas (collectives of adolescent girls) and the non-formal and pre-school centres.

7.7.6 District Primary Education Programme (DPEP)

DPEP was initiated, in 1994, in 142 districts spread over seven states, to support the state governments in their efforts to improve access and retention, increase learning achievement and decrease dropout rates in a manner that social and gender inequities are reduced to the minimum level. Gender sensitisation has been a significant intervention in DPEP.

After having traversed through various schemes for girls’ education we should know about expansion of educational coverage of girls initiated by the Government. Before we proceed further, let me check your learning.

7.8 INITIATIVES TAKEN TO EXPAND SYSTEM COVERAGE OF EDUCATION

To realise the Constitutional commitment for providing free and compulsory education to children, the Constitution (Eighty Sixth) Amendment Act, 2002, was enacted. It binds upon the States to “provide free and compulsory education to all children of the age of six to fourteen years” (article 21-A of the Fundamental Rights). Further, it states, “the State shall endeavour to provide early childhood care and education for all children until they complete the age of six years” (Article 45 of the Directive Principles of State Policy).

7.8.1 Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), 2001

To achieve the goal of Universalisation of Elementary Education (UEE) in a time bound manner, this flagship programme of the Government is being implemented in partnership with State Governments to cover the entire country and address the needs of 192 million children in 1.1 million habitations. It seeks to open new schools in habitations with no schooling facilities and strengthen existing school infrastructure by providing additional classrooms with additional teachers, toilets, drinking water, maintenance grant, school improvement grants. SSA has a special focus on education of girls and children with special needs.

7.8.2 National Policy for Empowerment of Women 2001

It mainly aims to ensure equal access to education for women and girls, take special measures to eliminate discrimination, universalise education, eradicate illiteracy, create a gender-sensitive educational system, increase enrolment and retention rates of girls and improve the quality of education to facilitate life-long learning as well as development of women’s
occupation/vocation/technical skills. Its focus area to reduce the gender gap in secondary and higher education.

7.8.3 National Programme for Education of Girls at Elementary Level (NPEGEL)

This is a focussed intervention of Government of India to reach the “Hardest to Reach” girls, especially those not in school. Launched in July 2003, it was an important component of SSA. It provided additional support for enhancing girls’ education over and above the investments for girls’ education through SSA interventions. Gender sensitisation of teachers, development of gender-sensitive learning materials and provision of need-based incentives like escorts, stationery, workbooks and uniforms were some of the endeavours under the programme.

7.8.4 Right to Education Act, 2009

In 2005, the Government circulated a draft of the Right to Education Bill to introduce the 86th Constitutional Amendment. After high level deliberations Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Bill, 2008, was passed in both the houses of Parliament in 2009. It became law after the President's assent received in August 2009. With its gazette notification on 1st April 2010, the Article 21A and the Right to Education (RTE) Act came into force.

It provides that every child of the age of 6-14 years shall have a right to free and compulsory education in a neighbourhood school until completion of his/her elementary education. Where a child above six years of age has not been admitted in any school, or though admitted he/she could not complete his/her elementary education, then, he/she shall be admitted in a class appropriate to his/her age, no child shall be liable to pay any kind of fee or charges or expenses which may prevent him/her from pursuing and completing the elementary education.

7.8.5 Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao (Save Daughters, Educate Daughters) Programme

Conceived in 2015, this is a joint initiative of three central ministries: Ministry of Women and Child Development, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and Ministry of Human Resources. Its objectives are to:

- address the declining Child Sex Ratio (CSR)
- help remove gender-based discrimination and elimination
- protect the girl child
- provide the girl child with education

This national initiative is being implemented through a focussed action in 100 districts ranking low in CSR, selected according to the Census 2011 covering all the States and UTs. Of these, 87 districts/23 states are below national average, 8 districts/8 states are above average but have shown declining trend, 5 districts/5 states are above average and have shown increasing trend. To expand it beyond the 100 selected districts, 61 additional
districts have been selected from 11 states and UTs having child sex ratio below 918. On 8th March 2018, its pan-India expansion was launched to cover all the 640 districts in the Census 2011.

Having discussed the schemes and initiatives, we shall proceed to learn about women’s training. Before that, let me check your progress.

### 7.9 TRAINING OF RURAL WOMEN

India has 140th position, among 156 countries, in the ranking based on female labour force participation rates, as per the World Economic forum’s Global Gender Gap report 2021. Rates of gender-based violence in India also remain unacceptably high. Inclusive and sustainable national development is impossible until this half of the population fully participates in the economy. Indian women’s economic contribution at 17% of GDP is less than half the global average and compares unfavourably to 40% in China, for instance. India could boost its growth by 1.5 percentage points to 9 per cent per year if around 50% of women could join the work force. Gender parity would add 18 per cent to India's business-as-usual GDP by 2025, according to a study of McKinsey & Co.

According to 2011 Census, 68.84% of the country’s population lives in rural areas and the workforce participation rate for females is 25.51% against 53.26% for males. This indicates a continued gender-lopsidedness in labour participation in the country. To address this, there is need to implement skill development and training programmes for a highly disposed yet enormously untended segment of the society, i.e., rural women.

Rural women's access to education and training can immensely impact their potential to access and benefit from income-generating opportunities and improve their overall well-being. To address their challenges the need is to use a variety of approaches: non-formal education, technical and vocational training, agricultural extension services, workplace training, training in new technologies and literacy and numeracy training. Apart from providing of facilities, it is important to train them to equip with economic power, decision-making, self-confidence, enhanced skills, ability to think critically, ability to participate in the development process and ability to unite and take collective action.

#### 7.9.1 Areas for Women’s Training

To ensure productiveness of vocational training programmes it is important to consider some elements such as skill preferences, cultural relevance of a particular skill, time and money affordable for participants to learn new skill, distance they are willing to travel, languages spoken etc. The following areas are useful to train women:

i) Instead of imposing a shift from conventional to contemporary occupation, more important is to focus on traditional art and skill; for example, the women engaged in *mekhala-chadar* weaving in Assam, in cane and bamboo crafts in Jharkhand, in jute production in West Bengal and Bihar, in leather craft production in Madhya Pradesh, in the rich
tradition of woodwork in north Indian States and in *phulkari* embroidery in Punjab and Haryana. These all need to productively intensify and harness women’s skills and, thereby, amplify their dignity and standard of living.

ii) Women need training for entrepreneurship. They can do work, when they have free time. Self-employed women get better status and are able to take decisions in their family affairs. Entrepreneurship training can help them start their own enterprise.

iv) Considering their important role in cottage industries of toy-making, weaving and basket-making, training them in rural crafts is essential for self-employment and improving economic status.

v) Training in health, nutrition and child care can update their knowledge and skills in the areas of child care and immunisation, nutrition, hygiene and housekeeping.

vi) Women need to break stereotyped roles. For instance, women can be encouraged to enroll for courses in TV and radio repairing, electronics, mobile, animal husbandry, operation of agricultural machinery, etc., instead of remaining confined to food preservation, tailoring and embroidery.

Skill development has emerged as a national priority. It can use gender perspective and broaden its scope, beyond the realm of technical and vocational education, and include soft skills. The following is the framework for gender and skill development designed by the United Nations Girls’ Education Initiative:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Framework for Gender and Skill Development</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Basic Skills</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic numeracy and literacy skills as well as language, time management, etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Why?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basic skills</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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are an important foundation for assimilating other skills

competencies needed by labour markets, increase opportunities for employment

skills are always requested for in the workplace and also useful for self-employment

applicable in almost all settings, including self-employment and for self-empowerment

and work situation requires interpersonal collaboration; social skills are among the most desired by employers

#### How?

Ending discrimination against girls through laws, policies and commitment to the MDGs. Today, concrete changes are limited by customs, culture and attitudes

Working with employers to determine labour market needs; increasing the number of women with technical and vocational skills

Training through individual/group tasks and practical applications such as learning by watching and by doing

Teach theoretical and practical competencies and provide inspiration from male and female role models; develop business plans; facilitate credit for women

Empowerment and skills’ development individually and in groups; interaction among women and communication with men is encouraged

#### Where?

National and local governments through formal schools and second chance institutions; training through formal training structures and NGOs

On-the-job training in companies; apprenticeship; vocational training centres; informal training through NGOs

In all settings: school and private, public, formal and non-formal training

In secondary schools, vocational training institutes, local learning centres and through NGOs

Begin to introduce in pre-primary school and consider inclusion in all types of training, formal and non-formal, the sooner the better

#### Gender?

Facilitate Promote and Skills should Use both female The
| girls’ access to scholarships and transport and to a secure environment where they can develop basic skills. | market skills without stereotyping them as male’s or female’s. Empower girls with information about the ILO’s Decent Work Agenda and train employers. | be promoted for both boys and girls – in some cases it could be beneficial to break into separate groups; encourage positive feedback to break down stereotypical roles. | and male role models and teachers; encourage commercial banks to explore financing options for female entrepreneurs. | importance of interaction and communicatio n between boys and girls and their equal participation; promote networking among girls since many existing societal networks are male-dominated |


vii) There are various training programmes to train the field level workers and functionaries like Mukhya Sevikas, Mid-wives, Gram Sevikas, Bal Sevikas, Anganwadi workers, health functionaries and craft instructors to operate welfare programmes and projects for women’s education and training.

viii) Rural women participate extensively in agricultural activities but mechanisation of agriculture needs a different set of skills. So, women need training in those areas which ensure employment opportunities. It is necessary that extension services should not ignore women engaged in agriculture sector. First, agricultural officials’ awareness is needed about gender differences in agricultural production systems. Second, extension services must take account of these differences by training and employing more women agricultural extension agents and increasing interaction between male extension staff and women farmers.

### 7.9.2 Role of NGOs in Skill Development and Entrepreneurship

NGOs help in raw material procurement, skill training, marketing, coordination and inter-institutional linkages. They render advice to government on policy matters concerning the small-scale sector. The following are major NGOs engaged in entrepreneurship development:

- i) National Alliance of Young Entrepreneurs,
- ii) World Assembly of Small and Medium Entrepreneurs,
- iii) Xavier Institute for Social Studies,
- iv) SEWA of Ahmedabad,
v) ‘Y’ Self-Employment of Calcutta,
vi) AWAKE (Association of Women Entrepreneurs of Karnataka) &

7.9.3 Training for Rural Economic Empowerment (TREE)

This ILO’s community-based training programme implemented in Asia and Africa promotes income generation and employment opportunities for disadvantaged women and men by providing them with skills and knowledge for use in their communities. Its strategy involves planning with local partner institutions, careful identification of economic opportunities and assessment of training needs in the community, designing and delivering relevant skills’ training and post-training support to facilitate trainees’ access to wage or self-employment.

7.9.4 Agencies Involved in Training

Some important agencies imparting training to rural women are as follows:

i) Central Board of Social Welfare, ii) State Boards of Social Welfare,
iii) Literacy House, iv) Krishi Vigyan Kendras,

Before we conclude the unit, let me check your progress.

7.10 LET US SUM UP

Girl’s education is critically linked to self-determination, improved health, socio-economic status as well as positive health outcomes for the mother and child. Maternal mortality is the most important cause of deaths of adolescent girls (15-19 years) in many countries. Empowerment of women, including access to health information and control of resources, is important for achieving gender equality and health equity. Given equal access to land, new technologies and capital women can increase crop yield, as much as 30 per cent. Resources in women’s control boost household spending in areas that benefit children. Governments and voluntary agencies are actively involved in imparting education and training to rural women. Indian women’s situation, seemingly daunting, is steadily improving.

7.11 KEY WORDS

Education: The learning at formal institutions to develop reasoning, understanding, judgement and intellect for use in future.

Literacy rate: The proportion of the population aged seven years and above who can read and write with understanding in any language.

Training: The hands-on experience of a specific task aimed at developing skills and knowledge.
**Skill development:** Promoting performance, productivity and competency of an organisation’s manpower.

### 7.12 SUGGESTED READINGS


