

Women, Work and Education

Funding Agency: Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung, Berlin

Coordinators: Achin Chakraborty and Subhoranjan Dasgupta

The two-year long interdisciplinary project on *Women, work and education* supported by the Rosa Luxemburg Foundation, Berlin begun in 2007 and was completed in December 2008. Achin Chakraborty and Subhoranjan Dasgupta were the coordinators of the project in which Indrani Chakraborty and Barnita Bagchi were also actively involved.

Two intensive surveys in some villages of Murshidabad and South 24 Parganas were conducted and the findings were utilized to examine the basic proposition 'Access to education increases work opportunities for women'. With the help of workshops, seminars, surveys and evaluation of secondary literature, this project examined the nature of labour force participation by women in both rural and urban sectors in terms of both demand and supply side factors.

Two particular segments of women's activity were chosen for survey and econometric analysis, namely, women's engagement in the beedi industry and women's engagement in the IT sector. While the first showed that there was no uni-linear link between education and employment in its sphere, the second, in comparison, demonstrated the link between education and work.

Researchers also analysed the importance of contributory factors such as education, family attitudes, role of castes and communities and the impact of the local economy on women's labour and employment. In fact, the surveys and analysis examined in detail the possible link between education and employment and also tried to find out to what extent these two lead to the genuine empowerment of women. The sponsor Rosa Luxemburg Foundation highly appreciated the quality of the final report.