



Community programs and women's participation : the Chinese experience /

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June 2001 Effectively implemented gender-focused interventions can have substantial social benefits when supported by the necessary legal and institutional framework, judging from this rural program in China. Using household data specifically collected for the purpose of evaluation, Coady, Dai, and Wang empirically evaluate the impact on household income of a rural program in China that focuses on increasing women's economic and social participation in the local community. They find that the program substantially increases women's participation and household income, and also generates positive social benefits. The authors' results also suggest that the income gains accrue only to participants, and partly at the expense of nonparticipants. They find that the magnitude of the program's impact depends sensitively on the program's ability to increase participation rates within villages. In the presence of the program, individual participation helps to prevent negative externalities and to buy into the positive gains accruing to participants. The authors' results support the view that effectively implemented gender-focused interventions can have substantial social benefits when supported by the necessary legal and institutional framework. This paper--a product of the Poverty Reduction and Economic Management Sector Unit, East Asia and Pacific Region--is part of a larger effort in the region to better understand the impact of gender-focused policies on development. David Coady may be contacted at d.coady@cgiar.org

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