# MINUTES OF THE DOCUMENTATION CENTRES' MEETING held at Timbuktu Collective, Chennekothapalli, Anantpur Dist., Andhra Pradesh between 16 and 20 Feb, 1992

This note summarizes the meeting and lists out the main points which were discussed, main questions raised and solutions worked out and decisions and responsibilities taken.

The meeting started with a welcome address by Bablu Ganguly.

The meeting started at 4.00 o'clock in the evening with sharing of work done by different D.Cs. and problems faced by them.

After sharing and discussions the main points/questions/problems that emerged were  $\neg$ 

- -- Lack of time, personnel and space
- -- Problems of organising, indexing existing information
- -- How to systematize the information by action groups
- -- How to create a system to make this information accessible
- -- How to get information on a particular local issue
- -- Most DCs are behind an issue, not ahead of an issue
- -- Information collection and dissemination in regional languages/translations into regional languages
- -- Problems of publishing/printing information vis-a-vis the cost of printing
- -- People who do have information do not share
- -- Computerisation lack of people, skill and training
- -- In case of need of specific information whom to approach ?
- -- How can the activist who is an information centre himself/ herself brought to be involved in the documentation process ?
- -- How to feed information back into campaigns

Ideas that were thrown up as possible solutions -

- Can DCs link up with action groups and take up concrete contracts with them ?
- Training programmes for computerisation
- Can we create a pool of translators for documentation in regional languages ?
- Can a large institution be willing to act as an archive for newspaper clippings ?
- Similarly somebody else take responsibility for preserving audio-cassetes ?
- Can a joint classification be worked out, at least by the women's documentation centres?
- What are possibilities of networking among the DCs ?
- Bring out a directory of documentation centres, especially those organisations which are having information in regional languages?
- Can we include action groups who have extensive materials/info. of their local area in the DCMs ?
- How do we offer a programme where these kinds of groups can

also participate ?

- Can we create a link between women's studies centres and women's groups ?

First session on Field Documentation took place on 17/2/92 in the evening.

The session started out with finding out what different people meant by field documentation, why they felt it was necessary and suggestions of how to go about 'doing' field-documentation.

Ideas that came out of these discussions were :

- -- Documentation of processes set off by interventions in the field
- -- Documentation of different aspects of people one is working with socio-economic conditions, cultural factors, history of problems/issues in the area
- -- Documentation of training processes
- -- Documentation of impact of work/interventions in the area
- -- Documentation of the geographical characteristics of the area eg. maps or through RRA
- -- Creative writings, paintings etc. of the local people

Reasons for field documentation -

- Impact assessment
- Strategy building
- Evaluating methodologies and techniques of training, interventions
- So that local knowledge, local creativity is not lost

Questions that arose from these discussions -

- Who will do field documentation ?
- Can the D.C. based in a city really document what is happening
  in the field? If so lot of nuances of local happenings will be
  lost because of lack of understanding the local political
  situation, language problem etc.
- Then, can the action groups who are involved at the field level do documentation? How do we handle problems of lack of writing skills or lack of inclination to document?
- Can the D.C. take as a priority field-documentation work? Can they set aside time, personnel and funds for such concrete projects? It was felt that it depended on the D.C.s and their priorities and their objectives.

The discussions then veered towards types of field documentation. Mapping, documentation of institutional/traditional systems, impact assessment, rapid rural appraisal were the few things that were discussed.

Sravan, CRY, led the discussion with mapping. Some of the ideas that were thrown were that mapping was an important tool especially when groups are involved in physical development of the area. Toposheets are important, patwaris are too huge but give plotwise details, notional maps are important

for location of different identifiable things, and maps are very important as resource inventory. Finally it was decided that CRY will explore the possibilities of holding a workshop on mapping and inform everybody.

Documentation of institutional systems, traditional knowledge are important to revitalize local systems and knowledge. Once again it was felt that this was the job for the local activist or researchers, sociology students etc. but how can the DC play a role in it?

Rapid Rural Appraisal was then discussed. It was felt that DCs cannot do this on a large scale and that only a local organisation could do it meaninguily. What was felt that DCs could document the methods of such types of field-documentation and pass it on to other groups.

Impact assessment methodology was also discussed. How to document the impact of a certain intervention? Again it was felt that a DC cannot document that but can only evolve a methodology for documenting the impact. It would also be difficult to get local groups to follow a certain type of format.

After this the group broke-up into sub-groups for mapping, institutional systems, computer etc. In the computer group it was felt that computer training to groups is very important. Lalita, CENDIT, discussed the CDS-ISIS software and the training involved therein. Finally the question that arose was can we have a training programme for only DCM? Leo to work out costs and inform everybody. This would be held sometime during September. Also it was noticed that there were many computer literate people and programmers in the DCM. It was felt that the DIPIN (a programmers' network that would help out groups in developing software or even in troubleshooting) should be revived.

The second half of 18/2/92 centred around discussions on Process Documentation. Once again we started with finding out what people meant by process documentation, how to do it, and who will do it?

Sangita, SPARC, shared her attempt to document the women's exchange programme taking place. The attempt was to understand the processes of interaction between these women, how the field insights get transferred when two groups of women meet.

The question that arose then was what kind of people will be interested in these documentations? Would it be useful to groups or also other people? Also that in each of these processes the circumstances are unique and cannot be duplicated yet it is important to know what happened in other areas of interventions, how a certain movement reaches a certain point?

The requirement of how to document were identified as -

- The person should be a part of the process
- ii. The person documenting should be sensitive to the undercurrents, politics of the process
- iii. The person documenting should certain basic skills of writing or expressing himself/herself.

Veena and Nasreen then shared their experiences of process documentation.

This type of documentation would mean that the documentalist should go to the field, be more active. He/she should acquire, organize and provide it to

others.

The questions that arose from these discussions were -

- Can the DCs take a project a year to collaborate with action groups and document the processes? Not change priorities but take it up as a part of their activity.
- How do DCs work out the problems of usage, resources in terms of time, personnel and funds?
- Can and how can we decentralise this type of function ?
- Make an inventory of those groups who have documented the processes of interventions in their areas. Sangita to take responsibilty for making an inventory of organisations with such information. People to send her the details of such material Title, author, publisher, date, abstract, material description, place of reference, geographical point etc. to her.

The discussion then veered towards creative expressions - folk stories, folk profiles, songs, writings, oral traditions and how to document them.

The question that arose was how to draw people who are documenting these kind of materials. We have to work towards making an inventory of materials that are available and evolve newer techniques of documenting these types of material. CRY is in the process of making an inventory of groups working on documenting these type of material.

JAGORI takes responsibility of making an inventory on women's creativity. People to send information to JAGORI.

John and Radha then shared their experience with video documentatin and the problems they faced in organising/indexing. YUVA has some experience and has prepared cuesheets of the recordings.

On 19/2/92 the topic under discussion was documentation of Women's issues. The need for alternate documentation centres was expressed considering that the traditional information centres have been rather disappointing.

The problems raised during these discussions were :

- -- There is no material to fall back on on history of women's documentation centres.
- -- Women's groups started collecting information over the years, but there is no time to sort it out and look at it, thus the need for alternate documentation centres
- -- Formal DCs managed to bring a feminist perspective. Lots of DCs set up women's library. In some cases the DC came up to support a certain research project. Thus priorities were set by the researcher.
- -- Most women's DCs set in metropolitan cities. Thus need for regional material i.e. in regional languages.
- -- Networking poor between documentation centres in women's groups
- -- Lot of material is there for printing but printing is very expensive

## The questions raised were :

- -- What do we do through such networks ?
- -- How do we exchange information ?
- -- Lot of material in English. Can we translate these? Not only for ourselves and how we exchange information developed?
- -- How do we encourage smaller, regional centres ?
- -- How do we involve action groups ?
- -- Can each region have one or two centres which would collect certain types of material (for eg. newspaper clippings) so that duplication can be avoided?
- -- Can we identify certain groups who can take responsibility for regional translations and duplication and distribution in that region? (Ramya offered to take responsibility for Tamil Nadu saying they also have resources for it)

### Decisions taken :

- An inventory of material available and with whom to be created
- Each DC to take responsibility of finding out groups who collect material and contribute towards making an inventory
- 3. Responsibilities taken:
  Anju for audio-visual material available in Delhi
  Ramya for Southern region
  Maya for Bombay
  Simrita for Maharashtra
  Lists to be sent to Anju. Database to be with CWDS (Anju)
  Nasreen to check out films created by communication
  students on women's issues
  Vibhavari Orissa

### Deadline - End of '92

## Other suggestions -

- -- Once such collections are done, a core group to sift through all material created
- -- Draft of an appeal for sending out such lists can be put in ISST newsletter
- -- Workshop be held on pricing publications or to create some sort of consortium of printers

### Other discussions/sharing:

Jagori informed that they are planning to set up a feminist bookshop and link it with Stree Lekha, Bangalore.

CED is also planning to have a similar book outlet in Bombay.

Sridevi talked about the ready-made material they have on family courts.

CED, YUVA and EQUATIONS shared their classification systems.

Leo talked about India-Link, its background and present status etc.

In the afternoon session 'repackaging' came under discussion.

Leo started the session defining repackaging as converting the format of existing format into another more understandable format.

- The format of dissemination will largely depend on the target population
- If repackaging becomes the responsibility of DCs then what are the resources required in terms of money, time and personnel
- Repackaging is most effective when it is conceived, done by the users
- The question also arises What needs to be repackaged ?
- Can we promote an alternate documentation ?
- People ask for training in repackaging who can do it, who are the people experienced in such matters

## The problems that DCs face were :

- Action groups do not define their request clearly. A vague request on say 'all material on tribals' creates a lot of problem
- DCs find it difficult to respond to an immediate, specific need
- If DCs do the repacking, the information will be coloured by the DC's perspective, but DCs can respond if the request is for statistical information which is scattered. They can put them together and repackage it into a more readable format.

## The questions/suggestions that came up were :

- In response to the need of G.O's, and other such material available with the government, which action groups find very difficult to access, can DCM take responsibility? Say one centre takes responsibility for one topic?

### The discussions summarised is -

- Repackaging, a dynamic process
- Needs to have in mind the needs of organisations/users
- Deciding priorities ~ for whom ? Trainers, Project directors Activists ?
- Changing the format for exchange between DCs
- Active role of DCs in dissemination

On the last day there were discussions on DCM business - thesaurus, India-Link, Regional meetings, Fixing up of the next DCM, its agenda etc.

The decision for holding a training program for CDS/ISIS with CENDIT was made. CENDIT holds the training after getting 8-10 participants. An exclusive training for DCM members has been decided to be held in October '92. Costs will be worked out by Leo and circulated.

Regional meetings: AICUF(?), Jagori and Aalochana committed to hold regional meetings.

Leo shared the happenings of the sub-group meeting on thesaurus. Leo has met CED and worked with the thesaurus building. CENDIT too showed interest in working out the thesaurus. VHAI also probably will be interested.

About Indexing Journals: John once again shared the history/background of indexing journals. DCs who are indexing journals to please send a circular to other DCs.

ISI is looking for a person who will help with field documentation and indexing.

Leo and John shared about the India-Link Network. This is a network of groups who have modems and who are interested in inter-city, inter-state, interregional linking for information. People who are interested can join the INET. Forms to be obtained for CED, Bombay and Bangalore, CYSd, ISST, CENDIT, CPSW, SPARC, NARC, CRY, Action Aid, Bangalore.

The next DCM to be held once again at Timbuktu, Chennakottapalli, Anantpur District, in January 1993.

Tentative agenda for that meeting -

- Sharing of work DCs are doing
- Follow-up of various decisions taken
- In context of the new world order what will happen to classification ?
- Follow-up on regional meetings
- Documentation on Women and women's issues
- Economics of documentation centres' services
  - pricing
  - valuing your work
- Joint publications
- Releasing a book which will be open-ended about all different services different DCs offer, materials available with them etc.

List of organisations involved in regional language documentation:

CPSW, Bhubaneshwar - Oriya
Jagori - Hindi
LAYA - Telugu
Aalochana - Marathi
Aastha - Marwari and Hindi
ISI - Hindi
SNDT, Bombay - Marathi, Gujarati
Anveshi, Hyderabad - Telugu
Asmita, Secunderabad - Telugu
Yuva - Marathi, Urdu
Sootra, Jagiit Nagar, Himachal Pradesh - Hindi
SD Women's college, Muzzafarnagar, U.P. - Hindi
Chhatisgarh Mahila Jagriti Sangathana, Raipur - Hindi

# LIST OF PARTICIPANTS IN DCM - 6

•	Name of Person	Address of Centre	Activities (in brief)
1.	Juhi & Veena	B-5. Housing Corp. Society South Ext I New Delhi - 49 Ph. 619510	Women's issues - doc centre, Training, Pro- ducing material even films.
2.	Ramya Subrahmanian	Initiatives: Women in Development (IWID) AG 100/2 River View Colony Anna Nagar. Madras 600 040	Training/sensitisation on women's issues and gender approach to women's development for GOs+NGOs; also on organisational growth from gender perspective; soon documentation and research to support of the above.
3.	Radha Kunke	LAYA C2-RAMS, MIG-180 Lawson's Bay Colony Visakhapatnam - 530017	Work with tribals focussing on the land issue, networking & training. Land laws; forests - Godavari dist.
4.	Bibhabari Mishra	CPSW (Council of Professional Social Workers) 2130/4158,Vivekananda Marg BBSR, dIST. PURI Orissa	Mainly work with tribal women, Research & Documentation, Gender in Development, Women Development Council etc.
5.	Simrita Gopal Singh	Aalochana 'Kedav' 86/11-B Kanchangalli Erandavana Pune 411 004 Ph. 343563 (Off) 334170 (Res).	÷.
6.	Pushpa & Indu	Equations 96 II Main 'M' Colony Indiranagar Stage 1 Bangalore 560035	
7.	Lalitha V. Kumar	Centre for Development of Instructional Technology (CENDIT) D-1, Soani Nagar New Delhi 110017 Ph. 6439692 6439692	Since 1972 video films on developmental issues, computerised documentation, Training (in both areas).
8.	Ms. S. Sreedevi Semi-Prof-Assistant (Librarian)	'omen's Studies Development Centre Delbi Umiversity	Established in 1987. Research Unit - Girl

Delhi University

Delhi - 7

child which is going to

be over in March/April.

Rehabilitation of

(Librarian)

children of prostitutes in Delhi will also be finished in March. Documentation unit is a part of it. Collection includes Book, unpublished material and other things including newspaper clipping under 40 different headings.

9. Anju Vyas Librarian Centre for Women's Development Studies B-43, Panchsheel Enclave New Delhi 1100016

 Sangeetha Purushothaman Vounteer, SPARC, bOMBAY

Society for Promotion of Area Resource Centres

ii. Joy Abraham Shriniwas Macha National Addiction Research Centre (NARC) 5, Bharadwadi Hospital Andheri (W) Bombay 58 Ph. 621 2661

12. Nasreen Contractor Shubhangi R. Puradkar Youth for Unity & Voluntary Action, (YUVA) 8. Ground floor 33L, Mugbat Cross Lane Tharudwar Bombay 400 004 Ph. 388 9811/4143498

13. Jayakumar

AICUF 125, Sterling Road Madras 600 034 Ph. 472283

14. Mohd. Asif

ASTHA
Plot No.4, Bedla Road
Udaipur 313001
Rajasthan
Ph. 29173/28348

15. Leo Fernandes

Indian Social Institute 10 Institutional Area Lodi Road New Delhi 110 003 Ph. 4622379/4625015 Tribals, environment, women, youth.

Established in 1986.
Working in the field
of tribal development
in Southern Rajasthan,
Women issues, Social
causes and occasional
issues cropping up
from time to time
(like Tendu leaf, Dams
etc.)

- 1) Documentation focus on Tribals, Caste, Women, Human Rights Economy, State & Poliotics.
- 2) Specialised in

computer applications for Documentation. Analysis, Database development for fieldbased organisations.

3) Training in documentation and Computers and Consultancy.

Avinash Jha John D'Souza Sarita Punka Roy Jesse Maya

Centre for Education & Documentation 3. Suleman Chambers

4, Battery Street (Behind Regal Cinema)

Bombay 400 039

Documentation Publication Video doc. Postal services Networking Training.

Mrs. S.V. Ramani Rao Institute of Social

Studies Trust 5, Deen Dayal Upadhyay Marg New Delkhi 110002

Reni 18.

CISEC (Centre for Industrial Safety & Environmental Concern) Kottamukku Kollam - 13 Ph. 0474-2765

19. Mary/Babloo Timbaktu Collective Chennekothapally - 515 101 Anantapur Dist. A.P. Ph. 35 or 37 via Dharmavaram.

TIna/Shravan

Child Relief and You (CRY)

		Information you would like to circulate	What you would like to receive
	CRY		All information is welcome. Friorities: - Children - Women - Education - Environment (Laws) - Technology/Institutions
	NARC	Drugs) All information AIDS ) available	Drugs AIDS Information on North East
	AICUF	Youth/Students	Dalits, Tribals, Women, Education, Environment, Youth, Students.
٠	CPSW	Women/Environment. If any more is available, I will sent.	
	CISEC	Health, Nuclear Plants, Energy	Hazards of radiation, energiconsumption, etc.
1	ASTHA	Our work on tribals in S. Rajasthan.	All information are welcome but prioritie areas: - Environment - Training Reports on Women - Education - Case studies of some selected issues etc.
	CENDIT	1) Our catalogue on Audio- visual material available.	Material (articles, reports etc.) on Ecology.
		2) Bibliography of Developmental literature on Human Resources, Women & children, income generation, empowerment etc.	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·
	YUVA	<b>-</b>	Information on family court. To be on Jagori's mailinglist. List of publications of all the Org/Annual Reports.
	ISST	·	Information on women's economic issues/participation in various unorganised sectors. Colliection consists of mostly unpublished material.
	Jagori	We can give material on these issues in form of articles, posters, boks, audio video cassettes, post cards, diaries etc.	All forms of Violence on Women, Health, Law, Creativity, Society & Religion, Politics, Protests: Copy of classification system, Newsletters.

Docpost on any subject in classification index.

CED

List of publication ABC catalogue & membership form All forms of selective & spot Docpost

Women's Studies Devp.Centre Delhi University List of dofcuments published, unpublished available in the the Centre and other Centres (on request on specific topics related to women)

List of publications, reports case studies & other document related to women and annual report and newsletter of the organisation.

EQUATIONS 16B, 8th Main, Indiranagar Bangalore 560 038 1) Child Labour/Rights

2) Child abuse/prostitution (in relation to tourism) Materials specific to tourism issues (local & global)

Aalochana Kedar 86/II-B Kanchangalli Pune 411004

1. Our unpublished material, research papers etc.

Newsletters, Research papers, Annual Report. Dur areas of specialisation women's work, family, movement feminist theory

IWID
AG 100/2
Riverview
Colony
Anna Nagar,
Madras
600040

Training materials, evaluation reports, information on networks in TN, conceptual (simple/notes on gender issues and related terms, translation of materials in Tamil.

Training manuals on women conducted by other organisations, information on networks etc. etc.

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- 1. Juhi & Veena
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- 21. Aleyamma Vijayan, Programme for Community Orgn., Spencer Junction, Trievendrum, Kerala - 39.
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1.

26. W.Stanley,
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Orissa - 764 036.

25.

- 27. Nandita Gandhi,
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   19, Fulchand Niwas,
   Chowpathy,
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- 28. Pratibha Pandhya, SEWA, Opp. Lokmanya Tilak Baug, Bhadra, Ahmedabad - 380 001.
- 29. PRIA, 42, Tughlakabad, Institutional Area, NEW DELHI - 110 062.
- 30. Reggie Gomes,
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- 31. Research Unit on Women's Studies, SNDT University, Vallabhai Road, Vile Parle West, BOMBAY - 400 056.
- 32. Rubin D'Cruz,

  Kerala Shastra Sahithya Parishad,

  (KSSP),

  Documentation Centre,

  Parishat Bhavan, Anayara (PO),

  Trivendrum,

  Kerala- 695 029.
- Council for Social Development, 53, Lodi Road, NEW DELHI 110 003.
- 34. Development Alternatives, 22 Palam Marg, Vasant Mihar New Delhi - 110 057.
- 35. ICRA, 902 Indiranagar, I Stage, Bangalore - 560 038.
- 36. Jagadananda,
   CYSD,
   65, Satya Nagar,
   P.O. Box 105,
   Bhubaneshwar 751 007.
- 37. P.J. Joseph,
  Documentation Centre,
  The Librarian,
  Malaparamba,
  Calicut,
  Kerala 673 009.
- 38. Joyce Almedia,
  Ishvani Kendra Documentation
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  - P.O. Box No.3, Pune 411 014.
- 39. M. Venkataramaiah, Andhra Mahila Samaj, Mahila Sabha Bullding, University Road, HYDERABAD - 500 044.
- 40. Tribal Documentation Centre, Gulusai PO., Chaibasa 833 201,
- 41. V.T.Padmanabhan, CISEC, Ananda Viles, Kottamuku, Quilon, Kerala - 691 013.