

2/PD/FIR/2004

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A report on the Participatory Research Project in the Asian Region

The Participatory Research Project in Asia has picked up momentum during the later part of last year. As of now, the following is a brief account of the region for the period July, 1978 to June, 1979.

1. The Participatory Research network in Asia is now maintaining continuous contact with 65 individuals/groups out of which 35 are in India.
2. The network has developed 20 documents which have been circulated to all these members of the network. Out of these documents, 10 documents belong to other regional networks, primarily North America, and the rest have been generated within the region.
3. 5 documents recently obtained from the region are in the process of duplication and will be circulated to all the members by the end of June, 1979.
4. A meeting of those engaged in Participatory Research in India was held during February 7-9, 1979 at Public Enterprises Centre for Continuing Education, Guest House Building, C-6/5, Safdarjang Development Area, New Delhi-110 016. 40 persons participated in that meeting.
5. A limited regional meeting of Participatory Research in Asia was held in Bangkok during April 13-20, 1979. One participant each from Philippines, Korea, Australia, Bangladesh, India and 10 participants from Thailand joined this meeting.
6. A major outcome of this meeting was to decentralise all the coordination of the Asian Regional network. One person from each of these countries was identified to act as a national coordinator so that the network can be further strengthened and the access to materials and documentation increases.

7. In the Asian Region, the Participatory Research network is already linked with Asian-South Pacific Bureau for Adult Education, Asian and Pacific Centre for Women and Development, Centre for Continuing Education (The Australian National University), and a number of other informal networks.

Detailed exploration of meaningful linkages with Asian Programme for Educational Innovation in Development (UNESCO Regional Office) is under way and concrete results are expected by the later half of this year.

8. Asian and Pacific Centre for Women and Development has recently adopted the Participatory Research approach for its all research efforts in the area of ^women in industry. A number of projects have been identified for documentation and new research areas have been developed.

9. In this regional network, the individuals involved are primarily of two categories (almost equally distributed): one, those who are activists in the field, and two, those who are operating from the research/training/teaching institutions.

Most of these people are working ⁱⁿ the rural context in the fields of education, mobilisation, health, other developmental work, etc. There is a group which is also operating in the urban slums. A third area is the industry, both organised and unorganised sector.

10. A number of projects have been recently stimulated as an outcome of the Participatory Research meeting held in India:

- i) Building an effective organisation of migrant workers in the rural surroundings of Delhi.
- ii) Documentation of women's participation in the socio-cultural and economic transformation in Dhulia district.
- iii) Participatory forms of organisations evolved during the struggled of the poor.
- iv) A case study of collective action for ^{rural} ~~women~~ development in Poona district.

- v) Participatory Research in designing and implementing a rural health care programme.
- vi) Community theatre as a method of human development.

There are number of other efforts which are being concretized and a clearer inventory will be available by the end of this year.

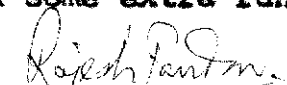
There are indications that the recent regional meeting in Bangkok will similarly lead to a increased in the documentation of existing Participatory Research efforts and initiation of new ones.

11. The next three months are going to be devoted to the following further activities:

- (a) Preparation of hand book for field workers in Participatory Research/training in rural development.
- (b) Planning for training in Participatory Research ~~and~~ ^{for} women activists.
- (c) Planning for the ^{inter-}national forum to be held in Yugoslavia in April 1980.

12. A number of forums are being used by the asian and national coordinators as well as other committed colleagues in further propogating the Participatory Research approach. These forums include seminars with professional researchers, workshops with training personnel, discussions with field activists, etc.

It is my assessment that the Participatory Research Project in the Asian Region is acquiring a momentum which will be reflected in concrete accomplishments by the end of this year. The network is already strengthened, and documentation activity quicked. A number of requests for support to undertake new projects are flowing daily and some extra funds can made a lot of positive differences.


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ASIAN REGIONAL PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH REPORT

The last year continued the trend towards increased membership of the regional network. Therefore, the regional coordinators main effort is going into communication and information dissemination.

There were two major publications from the region last year. One is a Bibliography on PR which has been cyclostyled and circulated to the members of the region. Another is an edited volume " Participatory Research in Asia ", edited by Dr. Rajesh Tandon and published by Centre for Continuing Education, Canberra. This volume contains several theoretical papers and case studies from the region along with reports of various meetings held in the region.

One important seminar on "Participatory Research and Participatory Evaluation" was held in Ranchi during March 9-12, 1981. The brief report from the seminar is ready.

In some ways, the preceding year has been also disappointing. While there has been a slowing of tempo after the Yugoslav Forum, not much progress has been made in contacting hitherto isolated countries like West Asian and Socialist ones. Moreover, not much headway has been made in planning for the Regional workshop. The main handicap has been for financial support though ICAE and ASPBAE have been approached for assistance. It is felt that a major theoretical and networkial boost will be obtained through such a workshop.

It has also become evident that enhanced support is needed to maintain the ever increasing demand for materials. Some efforts in this direction are critical for the coming year.

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31.3.81