

North Eastern Social Research Centre Guwahati

Annual Report April 2012 to March 2013

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INTRODUCTION

The mandate of North Eastern Social Research Centre is to be a centre that combines serious intellectual pursuits with involvement with persons and groups active in the field of social change in the region. In the context of ethnic and political conflict, NESRC would like to provide a platform for different groups in the Northeast to meet and search for solutions. In this search the effort of NESRC is to assist and encourage voluntary agencies and others in their intellectual and activist pursuits. Our main activities are around research, providing library resources and networking and publications. They have been planned within this perspective.

While research, the mainstay of NESRC received importance during 2012-13, workshops aimed at disseminating the findings of our studies too received attention. During the year, NESRC organized a national level seminar, three workshops, one consultation and an interface. It published two books while another two were published by one of our collaborators. We completed two studies and have reached the finishing point of another. The ongoing studies on *Development-Induced-Displacement* and *Gender Implications of Customary Law* are at various stages.

As I write this report, I am happy to inform you that the NESRC has moved to its own premises in Christian Basti, Guwahati. NESRC is housed on the second floor of Jagriti, Arunadai Path, GMCH Road, Guwahati, 781005. It was wonderful being at Kharghuli Road premises under the care and protection of Dr Sharma during the past ten years, but the time has come to move to another place with better infrastructural facilities.

Our library and the documentation centre continue to attract scholars and students. Several of them have said that they find our collection on the Northeast one of the best in the region. The computerisation of the catalogue and of making the library user-friendly to scholars is continuing. During this year we have added 746 titles, mainly the classics. With the shifting of premises to Jagriti, we hope our service through the library and the documentation centre will significantly improve.

We give here a summary of the seminars organized, books published, and papers presented, and conferences attended by the faculty of North Eastern Social Research Centre during 2012-13. While submitting this for your perusal, we would like to assure you that we remain committed to a vision of working for an inclusive society where everyone feels counted, included, and wanted, and provided with a voice in shaping their own destiny.

RESEARCH PROJECTS

A. STUDIES COMPLETED

1. **Alphonsus D'Souza, Melvil Pereira, Wellessly Lyngkhoi, Ripamchi Sangma and Rutherford Thabah:** *Welfare of Children in Coal Mining Areas of Meghalaya* (June 2012 to May 2013), sponsored by Childaid Network, Germany.
2. **Walter Fernandes, Tiken Das and Furzee Kashyap:** *Tribes Divided Between Northeast India and Myanmar: A Cross Border Study of Their Relations*, sponsored by Caritas, Denmark.

B. ONGOING STUDIES

1. **Melvil Pereira, R P Athparia, Sunumi Changmi, Upasana Bhuyan and Kankana Bora:** The Impact of the Customary Tribal Law and Its Modernisation on Women in North Eastern India: A Comparative Study of Fourteen Tribes in Seven States.
2. **Melvil Pereira and Prabal Bharali:** *The Share of Children in the Assam Budget*.
3. **Melvil Pereira and Chandana Kakati:** Assessment of Available Facilities for Primary & Upper Primary Education in Tribal Areas of Assam.
4. **Walter Fernandes and Bitopi Dutta:** Development-Induced Displacement in Manipur 1947-2010.
5. **Walter Fernandes and Bitopi Dutta:** Development-Induced Displacement in Arunachal Pradesh 1947-2010.
6. **Walter Fernandes, Veronica Pala and Bitopi Dutta:** Development-Induced Displacement in Meghalaya 1947-2010.
7. **Walter Fernandes, Lawrence Kennedy and Bitopi Dutta:** Development-Induced Displacement in Mizoram 1947-2010.
8. **Walter Fernandes et al:** Development-Induced Displacement in Tripura 1947-2010.
9. **Walter Fernandes et al:** Development-Induced Displacement in Nagaland 1947-2010.
10. **Walter Fernandes et al:** Development-Induced Displacement in Goa 1965-2010.
11. **Walter Fernandes et al:** Development-Induced Displacement in Sikkim 1975-2010.
12. **Walter Fernandes et al:** Development-Induced Displacement in Andhra Pradesh 1947-2010.

PUBLICATIONS: BOOKS

For effective advocacy in support of the marginalized, the findings of the studies and deliberations of the seminars/workshops must be circulated in the form of professional and popular publications. NESRC published following books during the year:

- 1. Alphonsus D'Souza, Yangkahao Vashum and Lalrindiki Ralte. 2013. *The Quest for Harmony: Christian and Tribal Perspectives*:** This book contains the fruits of a Seminar cum Workshop held on 17-19 April 2012. The papers contained in the book search for a Christian and Tribal understanding of the situation in Northeast India to deal with such problems as ecological crisis, growing inequalities and gender discrimination. Pp. 440. Price Rs. 300, \$ 25, Euro 20.
- 2. Tribeni Gogoi and Madhumita Purkayastha. 2012. *Budget for Children: A Brief Analysis on Provision for Children in the Assam Budget 2012-13*:** This booklet contains a brief analysis of the Assam budget 2012-13 from the point of view of allocation of financial resources for children. Pp. 15, Price Rs. 20.
- 3. Walter Fernandes (editor). 2012. *Human Rights in Northeast India: Human Rights Education for Class VI, published in July 2012*** (Published by NED Social Forum, Guwahati), Pp. 78. Price Rs. 45.
- 4. Walter Fernandes (editor). 2013. *Human Rights in Northeast India: Human Rights Education for Class VII, March 2013*** (Published by NED Social Forum, Guwahati), Pp. 76. Price Rs. 45.

WORKSHOPS AND SEMINARS

Seminars and workshops are occasions for us to share with others the findings of our studies and to benefit from their knowledge and experience. During the year NESRC organised following workshops and seminars by itself or in collaboration with others.

- 1. National Level Seminar titled *Reflections on Tribal Theology for North East India*:** The seminar was jointly organized by NESRC, Guwahati, and Eastern Theological College (ETC), Jorhat. It was held at INSPIRATION, Joypur, Guwahati, 17-19 April, 2012. It was an inter-denominational and inter-disciplinary effort. The seminar was attended by over 60 participants from all over India. The objective of the seminar was to delve deep into the indigenous cultural resources in order to build a harmonious society.
- 2. National Workshop titled *Challenge of Climate Justice: The North East Perspective*:** jointed organized by NESRC, Guwahati, and INECC, at INSPIRATION, Joypur, Guwahati, 21-12 April 2012. More than 40 environmental activists both from North East India and from other parts of the country (India) took part in this workshop. The focus of the workshop was on climate change, water, biodiversity and food security in the North East.

3. **Regional Workshop on Reflection on 2012 By-Elections in Burma:** North Eastern Diocesan Social Forum, Joypur, Guwahati, 17 May 2012. This workshop was organized in the context of the political dynamics that were taking place in Myanmar.

4. **Regional Workshop on Coal Mining in Meghalaya and its Social Impact:** The workshop was jointly organized by NESRC, Guwahati, and Childaid Network, Germany. The objective of the workshop was to bring together civil society leaders, social activists and church leaders to assess the impact of coal mining on society, especially on children in Meghalaya. Over 50 participants took part in the workshop.

5. **An Interface on Budget for the Future of Assam: Share of Children in the Budget:** It was jointly organized by NESRC, Guwahati and HAQ, New Delhi. The venue was Don Bosco Institute, Joypur, Guwahati, and the interface took place on 1 October 2012. The participants were mostly from the various departments of Government of Assam and from the NGO sector. The findings of quick budget analysis of 2012-13 were shared with the participants of the interface. The objective of the interface was to make efforts to increase the amount allotted for children in the Assam budget.

6. **Consultation on Welfare of Children in the Coal Mining Areas of Meghalaya:** It was jointly organized by NESRC, Guwahati, and Childaid Network, Germany, on 5 March 2013. It was attended by more than 50 participants, mostly from Meghalaya. The focus of the consultation was to assess the extent of child labour in the coal mining areas of Meghalaya and how best to respond in order to eradicate child labour.

PROFESSIONAL ARTICLES

Apart from our own publications, the staff of NESRC share their findings also through professional journals, books and newspapers. They published the following articles this year.

Walter Fernandes and Melvil Pereira

“Changing Land Relations in Northeastern India: A Comparative Study of Six Tribes and a Non-Tribal Group. in Sumi Krishna (ed). 2012. *Agriculture and a Changing Environment in Northeastern India*. New Delhi: Routledge, pp. 373-397.

Walter Fernandes

“Globalisation in India: The Historical Context,” *Third Millennium*, 15 (n. 2, April-June 2012), pp. 50-67.

“Tribal Sustenance Management and Identity in Northeast India,” in Partha J. Das, Kulen Chandra Das and Smarajit Ojha (eds). 2012. *Sustainable Resource Management in Northeast India: Policies and Practices*. Guwahati: EBH Publishers, pp. 42-54.

“Land, Environmental Degradation and Conflicts in Northeast India,” in Sumi Krishna (ed). 2012. *Agriculture and a Changing Environment in Northeastern India*. New Delh: Routledge, pp. 119-136.

“Violence in Assam: Land, Identity and Immigration,” *Infochange*, October 2012.

“Modernization, Customary Laws and Land Relations in the North East India” *Journal on Frontier Studies*, Vol. 1, 2013, pp.24-34

“The Delhi Rape and the Social Challenge,” *Women’s Link*, Jan-March 2013.

“Internally Displaced Persons and the Northeast,” in M. C. Behera (ed). *Northeast and Globalisation: Issues Betwixt and Between*. Guwahati: DVS Publishers, pp. 117-132.

Alphonsus D’Souza (with Kekhrieseno Christina)

“Education for Social Equality,” in Kedilezo Kikhi (ed). 2013. *The Dynamics of Development in North-East India*. Delhi: Bookwell Publishers, pp. 186-203.

Melvil Pereira

“Art 371A of the Indian Constitution and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples,” in Kedilezo Kikhi (ed). 2013. *The Dynamics of Development in North-East India*. Delhi: Bookwell Publishers, pp. 158-175.

“Globalization and Changing Land Relationship among the Angami,” *Journal on Frontier Studies*, Volume 1, 2013, pp. 78-94.

Bitopi Dutta and Furzee Kashyap

“Women's Right to Equality” in Walter Fernandes (ed). 2013. *Human Rights in Northeast India: Human Rights Education for Class VII*. Guwahati: NEDSSS, pp. 60-65.

Furzee Kashyap

“Ousted from One’s Land: Imposed Displacement in an Industrialized era,” *International Journal of Advanced Research and Technology*, <http://www.ijart.org/docs/WITH-REFERENCE-TO-PLIGHT-OF-DISPLACED-WOMEN-AND-CHILDREN-IN-ASSAM.pdf>

NEWSPAPER ARTICLES

Walter Fernandes

- "Climate Change or Climate Justice in the Northeast?" *Seven Sisters' Post*, 5 June 2012
- "Violence in Kokrajhar" *Himal*, September 2012.
- "Emergency? Have You Been to NE?" *Seven Sisters' Post*, 25 June 2012
- "Time to Integrate the Northeast" *Kannada Prabha* (Kannada daily), 31 August 2012.
- "Integrating the Northeast," *Seven Sisters' Post*, 4 October 2012.
- "The Delhi Rape and Middle Class Reaction," *Seven Sisters' Post*, 31 December 2012
- "The Justice Verma Committee and Women's Status," *Seven Sisters' Post*, 25 January 2013
- "Election and NE Development," *Seven Sisters' Post*, 6 February 2013
- "Rape and Indian Culture," *The Assam Tribune*, 9 February 2013
- "AFSPA: Who Rules India?" *The Hindu*, 12 February 2013.
- "The Historical Legacy of Benedict XVI," *Seven Sisters' Post*, 1 March 2013

Melvil Pereira

- "Hegemonic Patriarchy: Rethinking Masculinity", *Seven Sister's Post*, 17 January 2013

Bitopi Dutta and Furzee Kashyap

- "Rape: Manifestations of a Misogynistic Society," *Seven Sister's Post*, 9 January 2013.
- "*Guwahatit* One Billion Rising," *Khobor*, 9 February 2013

Upasana Bhuyan and Sunumi Changmi

- "Crime against Women: A Patriarchal Lineage", *Seven Sister Post*, 12 January 2013.

Prabal Pijush Bharali

- "Is India No Country for Children?" *Seven Sisters' Post*, 23 January 2013)

PRESENTED THE FOLLOWING PAPERS

Walter Fernandes

“Displacement in India: Are the Rehabilitation Policies A Response?” *International Seminar on Rehabilitation*. Bhubaneswar: Xavier Institute of Management, 11-13 April 2012.

“The Social Reality: Challenges to Theology in North East India,” *Seminar on a Search for a Tribal Theology*, Guwahati: North Eastern Social Research Centre, 17-18 April 2013.

“Bodo-Muslim Riots and Minorities in the North East,” *National Seminar on the Minorities*. Shimla: Indian Institute of Advanced Studies, 28-30 August 2012.

“The Socio-Political Realities of Northeast India,” *Public Lecture*, UTC, Bangalore, 17 September 2012.

“Displacement and Corporate Social Responsibility” *National Workshop on Corporate Social Responsibility*, XIDAS, Jabalpur, 4-5 October 2012.

“Indigenous Peoples and the Tribes of Northeast India” *National Conference on Tribal People, Natural Resources, and Human Well-being: Emerging Tribal Development Paradigms in a Period of Rapid Changes in India*, Organised by IFAD, Puri, Orissa, 12-14 October 2012.

“Displacement and Rehabilitation: The Gender Perspective” Keynote Address, *National Seminar on Displacement and Gender Perspective*, Cuttack, Department of Economics, Ravenshaw University, 17 November 2012.

“Tribal Identity in the Scheduled Areas: Focus on the Northeast,” *National Seminar on Governance, Socio-Economic Disparity and Social Unrest in the Scheduled Areas of India*. Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Guwahati Campus, 22-24 November 2012.

“Social Protection and the Poor in India,” Inaugural Address at the *International Conference Social Protection: Perspectives and Policies*, School of Social Work, Marian College Kuttikkanam, 13-15 December 2012.

“Research and Activism for Social Justice,” Public Lecture, Bangalore: Indian Social Institute, 18 December 2012.

“Displacement and Conflicts,” *International Conference of the International Association of the Studies on Forced Migration*. Kolkata: Mahanirban Calcutta Research Group, 6-9 January 2013.

“Governance, The Development Paradigm and Inequalities’ *International Conference on State, Power and Ethics of Governance, The Indian Experiences* Department of History, North Bengal University, 18-20 February 2013.

“Industrialisation and Land Acquisition: Is Inclusive Development Possible?” *National Workshop on 'Industrialization and Land Acquisition: Challenges for Inclusive Development'* ISID, New Delhi, 22 February 2013.

Melvil Pereira

“Climate Change and Food Security: The Case of North East India,” *National Level Workshop on Climate Justice*, Guwahati: North Eastern Social Research Centre, 17-18 April 2012.

“Migration and Displacement: The South Asian Story,” *International Workshop on Migration*, organized by GIAN, Madrid, 24-28 September 2012.

“Tribal Customary Laws vis-à-vis Women’s Legislation,” *National Seminar on Pathways to Solutions – A Learning Event on Women, Tribes and their Empowerment*, organized by IFAD, Ranchi, 5-6 November 2012.

“Land as Foundation of Identity: The Case of the Bru in Mizoram,” *National Seminar on Interrogating Indignity, Citizenship and the State: Perspectives from India’s Northeast*. Tezpur: Department of Sociology. 8-9 March 2013.

Bitopi Dutta

“The suppressed and the silenced voices: Multiple subordination of women in conflict situation in the North East,” *National Seminar on The Impact of Violence on Women and Children in Conflict Areas in India with Particular Reference to Northeast*”, organized by St. Joseph's College, Jakhama, Nagaland, 21-22 September 2012.

Furzee Kashyap

“The Challenge of Peace Building and Women in the Northeast,” *National Seminar on The Impact of Violence on Women and Children in Conflict Areas in India with Particular Reference to Northeast*”, organized by St. Joseph's College, Jakhama, Nagaland, 21-22 September 2012.

Sunumi Changmi

“Tribal Customary Law and Women’s Participation in Politics: The Khampti and Nyishi of Arunachal Pradesh”, *National Seminar on Interrogating Indignity, Citizenship and the State: Perspectives from India’s Northeast*. Tezpur: Department of Sociology. 8-9 March 2013.

Upasana Bhuyan

“Tribal Identity and Customary Law” *National Seminar on Interrogating Indigeneity, Citizenship and the State: Perspective from India’s North-East*. Department of Sociology, Tezpur University and Supported by Ministry of Home Affairs & ICSSR, New Delhi, 8-9 March 2013.

SEMINARS AND CONFERENCES

Apart from engaging in social research, writing professional articles and organizing seminars, the staff of NESRC also took part in workshops and seminars organised by other institutions in order to share their own findings with the participants and to benefit from what other institutions and individuals have done in their fields of interest.

Walter Fernandes

GIAN Convention on Governance of Natural and Mineral Resources, London, 3-7 September 2012.

Preliminary Meeting of the National Council for Land Reforms, New Delhi: Ministry for Rural Development, 22 September 2012

Consultation of the National Advisory Council on the North East, New Delhi, 9 October 2012

Alphonsus D'Souza

International Conference on *Looking Beyond the State: Changing Forms of Inclusion and Exclusion in India*, Japfü Christian College, Kohima, Nagaland, 21-22 November 2012.

Melvil Pereira

Stakeholders Consultation on Governance and Functioning of District Councils under the Sixth Schedule of the Indian Constitution, organized by Development and Justice Initiative, Guwahati, 9-10 May 2012.

Evaluation of INECC, Manesar, Haryana, 1-2 November 2012.

Seminar on *Indigenous Resource Management among Tribal Cultures of North East India*, organized by Sanskirti, Guwahati, 16-18 November 2012

Bitopi Dutta

Regional Consultation on Reducing Gender Inequalities: A Possible Framework for Post-2015, Hotel Priya Palace, Guwahati, Ulubari, 9 February 2013.

Seminar on *Indigenous Resource Management among Tribal Cultures of North East India*, organized by Sanskirti, Guwahati, 16-18 November 2012

Furzee Kashyap

“Millenium Development Goal”, National Seminar organized by RGVN Guwahati, March 2013

Workshop on *Making Women Count for Peace- Gender, Empowerment and Conflict in South Asia*, organized by PRIO, Shillong, 3-4 July 2012.

Upasana Bhuyan and Sunumi Changmi

Public Lecture on *Women, Peace and Security* by Dr. Paula Banerjee of Mahanirban Culcutta Research Group followed by Screening of Film on Witch Hunting “The Macabre Dance” Mr. Merajur Rahman Baruah. Guwahati TISS, December 8, 2012.

Research colloquium on *Gender Law and Sexual Assault*, by Sawmya Ray, Guwahati: Indian Institute of Technology, February 8th, 2013.

Prabal Bharali and Chandana Kakati

Capacity Building Workshop on *Budget Advocacy and Analysis and Regional Conventions on Union Budget*, hosted by North East Network on behalf of People's Budget Initiative (PBI), 19-21 November 2012.

Consultation on *RTE: Promoting Equity with Social Inclusion in the Education of Children in the North-East Region*, organized by Centre for Environment Social and Policy Research, Guwahati, 4 December 2012.

Regional Conference on *Dealing with HIV/AIDS: Business Response to Prevention, Care, Support and Treatment Services for HIV in India*, (Under the Aegis of Project - Scaling up Care, Support & Treatment Services for HIV in India), at Guwahati, 15 March 2013.

Prabal Bharali

North East Regional Consultation on *Early Childhood Care and Development*, organized by World Vision India, at North East Diocesan Social Service Society, Guwahati, 18-19 October 2012.

Chandana Kakati

Seminar on *Indigenous Resource Management among Tribal Cultures of North East India*, organized by Sanskirti, Guwahati, 16-18 November 2012

State level Seminar on *Globalization vis-a-vis Economic empowerment of Women in North East India*, organised by South Asia Bamboo Foundation and supported by National Commission for Women, Guwahati, 23 March 2013.

RESOURCE PERSON

Walter Fernandes

Was a resource person for the Refresher Course of Lecturers, Administrative Staff College, Gauhati University, 13 March 2013.

Alphonsus D'Souza and Melvil Pereira

Two Days Orientation Programme on *Culture and Identity in North East India* for the Provincial Team of Bethany Sisters at Jesuit House, Guwahati, 23-24 July 2012.

Melvil Pereira

National Level Workshop on *Pathways to Solutions – A Learning Event on Women, Tribes and their Empowerment*, organized by IFAD, Ranchi, 5-6 November 2012.

Half a day Evaluation Meeting called by Mensen met een Missie (MM) at NEDSF, Joypur, Guwahati, 28 November 2012.

Bitopi Dutta

A Session on *Guwahati on Violence Against Women*, SOS Children's Village, Satyapara village.

EVENT

Bitopi Dutta and Furzee Kashyap

Part of the organizing team of *One Billion Rising* in Guwahati, 14 February 2013.

CONCLUSION

NESRC has made some contribution to the people of the Northeast thanks to the commitment of the members of its staff. However, it has been possible because of the generosity of others who have provided financial and other assistance for our work. Among those who have supported us financially and with solidarity are Prokur - Switzerland, DKA-KFO, Austria, Misereor, Missio, Referrat, Childaid Network and Prokur -Germany, CordAid -Holland, IWGIA and Caritas - Denmark, HAQ and NUEPA - New Delhi, NED Social Forum - Guwahati, Laya - Vishakapatnam, Jirsong Asong - Diphu, Peace Channel – Dimapur, JUST - Agartala, and many others. We place on record our immense gratitude to all of them.