

Title: Indigenous Indian Mission Agencies among vulnerable people groups and importance of documentation and archives for sustaining vernacular stories and languages

Study Group: DABOH

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Proposal Abstract:

India has 700 indigenous people groups with a population of 104 million population as per census data in 2011. Twenty percent of Christians in India are indigenous people groups.

Friends Missionary Prayer Band (1960), Indian Evangelical Mission (1965), Indian Evangelical Team (IET), National Missionary Society of India, Indian Missionary Society (1941), and others are some indigenous missions societies of India. This paper affirms the role of indigenous Indian mission organisations, in documenting stories of brokenness and serving the most vulnerable groups, especially Indian Evangelical Mission is engaged in tribal language translation and literacy empowerment. Documenting oral traditions of indigenous people groups and their stories of life changing experiences, belief, life, and culture help understand them better. These indigenous people groups, live in remote hilly areas, and do not have any records of their past history or stories of their past generations. The mission organisations record oral traditions, vernacular stories, vernacular languages which are vulnerable to disappear if they are not recorded and documented. Most stories of the past generations are orally transferred from one generation to other.

This paper studies current practices of select indigenous Indian mission agencies in documentation and records. It offers suggestions for development of archives and better documentation practices and generation of digital repository for research and study. This paper concludes with potential areas for development and invites collaborative network of theological libraries and mission archives to sustain and support these efforts by providing access digital repositories and sharing of expertise and etc.