

# IMPORTANCE OF DOCUMENTATION IN THE ARAB WORLD

IWSAW's Documentation Center, mentioned in the second issue of Al-Raida (page 12), is an essential project because it is intended to be a stepping stone for all IWSAW future projects. Its aim is to provide adequate knowledge and research material for everyone interested in the study of women, more particularly, women of the Arab East. The IWSAW center will serve not only the needs of researchers and students at the Institute and BUC but the center will also provide services for the Arab region and other parts of the world. It is a unique research center, perhaps the only one in this area, which concentrates on works by and for women in the Middle East.

The collection in the Documentation Center includes pertinent books, periodicals, studies, research papers (printed or mimeographed, published or unpublished). These works, written in English, French or Arabic, include biographies, history, essays, surveys, fiction — all reflecting woman's status in the past, as well as the present in respective Arab countries.

"In classification and cataloguing", says Mrs. Samira Rafidi Megh-dessian, librarian at BUC, "we have adopted the international method used by the Library of Congress in America. We have been using a list of subject headings based on the same source."

So far, the Center contains over 300 English and French books, besides periodicals, along with a large number of research papers and a unique collection of reports about women's conferences in different parts of the world.

Classification and cataloguing of this material presents a large research undertaking. Yet, it is expected to be accomplished soon. By 1978, the IWSAW Center will have ready for publication and sale a complete bibliography of English works about women. Other works from round-the-world are added to the collection constantly. The Arabic Bibliography will be ready some time later in 1978.

Besides the list of books, the bibliography will include: 1) A survey of books dealing with Middle East sociology and containing sections or articles on women. 2) Asterisk notations indicating the works which are catalogued and available at the IWSAW Documentation Center.

**Rose Ghurayyib**