



## Executive Summary

# Baseline Survey of Minority Concentrated Districts

## Bongaigaon District Assam



**OMEO KUMAR DAS INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL CHANGE AND DEVELOPMENT**

A Research Institute of Indian Council of Social Science Research, New Delhi and Government of Assam

VIP Road, Upper Hengrabari, Guwahati 781036  
www.okd.in, email: dkdsd@yahoo.co.in

## Bongaigaon District, Assam

The purpose of the Baseline Survey of the Minority Concentration Districts (MDCS) was to assess the development deficits in the district and identification of priority areas for policy interventions to be structured in the line of the Prime Minister's 15- Point Programme, which will be in the form of a Multi-sector Development Programme (MsDP) for the entire district. In order to do this, ten indicators - eight of which were identified and applied by the Ministry of Minority Affairs, Government of India for identifying the Minority Concentrated Districts across the country along with two additional indicators for assessing health status have been used. Since the basic purpose of the Baseline was specified as a pre-requisite for preparation of Multi-sector District Development Plan (MsDP) for the Minority Concentrated Districts (MCDs) characterised by relative backwardness and to bring those district at least to the national level, most recent national level official estimates were taken for finding the development deficits in terms of the ten selected indicators. Taking deficit so derived as weights, the indicators representing specific sectors are ranked on a ten point score-scale. The exercise results in following relative ranking for the Bongaigaon district, Assam. The national estimates of the selected indicators (1-8) are estimated on the basis of NSS 2004 -2005 rounds while (9-10) are from NFHS - 3 with due approval from the Ministry.

SI No	Indicators	Survey Results	India	Deficit	Priority assigned
<i>Socio-economic indicators</i>					
1	Rate of literacy	68.97	67.30	1.67	7
2	Rate of female literacy	63.40	57.10	6.30	8
3	Work participation rate	33.88	38.00	-4.12	6
4	Female work participation rate	6.94	21.50	-14.56	4
<i>Basic amenities indicators</i>					
5	Percentage of pucca houses	6.33	59.40	-53.07	2
6	Percentage of households with access to safe drinking water	77.11	87.90	-10.79	5
7	Percentage of households with sanitation facilities	53.67	39.20	14.47	10
8	Percentage of electrified households	13.44	67.90	-54.46	1
<i>Health indicators</i>					
9	Percentage of fully vaccinated children	52.10	43.50	8.60	9
10	Percentage of institutional delivery	12.50	38.70	-26.20	3

The Assam Human Development Report (AHDR), 2003 states that in respect of Human Development Index (HDI), Bongaigaon is one of the lowest ranked districts of Assam. The district ranks 21 in respect of HDI with an index value of 0.263 which is much lower than the state index at 0.407. The Human Poverty Index (24.03) shows that almost a quarter of the population in the district is in poverty. The Gender related Development Index (GDI) for Bongaigaon in 2001 is estimated to be 0.376, which is far less than the state average of 0.537.

- The survey of villages and the households revealed that the major development deficits in Bongaigaon district includes its poor housing status, low infrastructure-roads, communication and power, social infrastructure-education and health, low farm investment and productivity, increasing landlessness and casualisation of labour and poor access to institutional credit.

- The survey indicated that 85% of the sample households lived in kutcha houses and in sanitary practice of using open field in the sample population of the district is fairly high 40%. The poor awareness and beneficiaries among the households on the TSC campaign is a major concern which needs to be addressed for improving the hygienic living condition of the people. Also the poor coverage of households (only 11% of sample households) under IAY is a major deficit in the implementation of developmental programmes for the poor in the district.

- The official records of the State Electricity Board of Assam indicates that 95% of the villages in the district have domestic power connection, however, the survey indicated that only 50% of sample villages have power supply and 13.4% of the sample households have domestic connection. Poor electrification of rural households continues to be major problem in the district.

- The poor road connectivity status indicated by the fact that 48% of the villages in the district do not have access to bus connectivity and only 25% of the total district roads being graveled shows that roads infrastructure in the district is still very weak. Further as revealed from the survey of villages the average road condition connecting them to various facilities is non- graveled.

- Education continues to be an area of major concern in the developmental efforts of the district. Although 87% of the sample villages have a primary school, however, 69% of them are one room schools and black boards and desks are available for only 65% of the schools. The survey indicated poor literacy status among the Muslims particularly females. The absence of ME and higher schools for girls in the villages has its adverse impact on female education among the Muslim. While female literacy is one area of concern, the other deficit is the high drop out rate of male students particularly the Muslims. Poverty is the major reason for male drop outs as the boys are forced to earn for their family.

- The health infrastructure of the sample villages and health status of the sample population in the district shows that the district has major deficits in delivery of health care services. The number of hospital beds in the district per one lakh population is 11 and only 12% of the inhabited villages in the district have medical facility. The incidence of institutional delivery among the Muslims was low and consequently, health problems among the Muslim children are also higher. The immunization status of the surveyed



population shows that only 50% of the children in the age group of 0-5 years have been fully immunized which needs to be addressed with serious concern.

- As per the DRDA statistics 64% of the rural families in the district are below poverty line. The survey indicates that 65% of the families are reported to be BPL but only 33% have BPL ration card. Although the PDS has good coverage in the district, however 20% of the rural population who usually purchase from PDS cannot regularly avail PDS ration due to shortage of cash money.
- Further, with 50% households without cultivable land, casualisation of labour has been increasing. The incidence of landlessness was higher among the Hindus compared to Muslims and Christians. Approximately 31% of the households with cultivable land are marginal farmers. HYV seeds were used by only 15% of the cultivators in the sample villages. Mechanized farm practices in the sample villages are low which shows that agricultural practices in the district are still traditional with low farm productivity.
- The population coverage of banking services is estimated to be 26,613 persons per bank office as per the number of offices in 2006. The coverage of banking services indicated by number of savings account against total households is only 19%. This clearly shows a higher rate of financial exclusion and the percentage is higher among the Muslim households. The share of agriculture credit is 10% and the total investment credit in agriculture was 8% of total agriculture credit. The poor institutional credit flow is again a major reason for poor farm investment. While institutional credit (cooperative credit) is more readily available for Hindus, the Muslims are primarily dependent on Professional money lenders. ■