

Minority Concentration District Project

Murshidabad, West Bengal

Executive Summary

Sponsored by the Ministry of Minority Affairs

Government of India

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The MCD project aims to conduct a baseline survey on the state of minorities in the districts identified by the Ministry of Minority Affairs, Government of India. The minorities are defined on the basis of National Commission of Minorities Act, 1992 and includes Muslims, Sikhs, Christians, Buddhists and Zoroastrians (Parsis). Murshidabad is classified as 'A' category district of this project for which both the sets of religion specific socio-economic and basic amenities indicators are below the respective national averages with the values being 35.4 and 17.8. Muslims with a share of 63.72% (as per Census 2001) in total population constitute the minority population of the district.

The purpose of this sample survey is to help the district administration draw action plan for socio-economic and infrastructure development of the district for improving the quality of life of the people and reducing the imbalances during the 11 th. Five Year Plan. However, it may be noted that the benefits will accrue to all sections of people in the district where intervention is executed and not only the minorities.

The survey was conducted in 30 villages in Murshidabad district spread across 17 Blocks during December –January, 2008. Findings of the survey are categorized under the broad headings of **Basic Amenities; Education; Health; Infrastructure; Occupational conditions; Existence and Efficacy of Government Schemes and any other issue.** We have provided two sets of tables, one for the data across villages to capture the locational variation followed by the district averages computed over all the households surveyed in all the sample villages chosen in the district. For some of the indicators, e.g. total literacy the district performed quite well compared to the national average or for that matter even for the district average as per Census 2001. However, one should interpret these results with caution bearing in mind the fact that the results are based on a sample survey and that it may not tell all the truth. In this particular case of literacy literate does not mean that the people are educated. When one looks into drop out rate the survey results shows a very grim picture. It is worth noting that it is not necessarily the case that the Muslims fall behind the non-Muslim population in general. However, in the case of families with toilet inside house the Muslim population lags behind the non-Muslim population.

The findings for the district as a whole can be summarized in Table E1 below. The table also provides deviation of the major indicators from their national averages. This gives an idea of the area which needs intervention on a priority basis. In addition to the indicators on the basis of which the MCD districts were chosen, we have also listed some of the indicators, which in our opinion are extremely important for the development of the district. Detailed and disaggregated analysis can be found in the main report. Some of these are more disaggregated estimates for a particular indicator. For example, we have gone into a detailed account of status of education, at different levels as we thought that only literacy is inadequate. We also provided the status of training in vocational trades and the demand for such training. This is important, in our opinion, as we tried to relate the same with job market situation for the general populace.

**Table E1: Priority Ranking of Facilities Based on Deficits of District
Averages from National Averages**

Indicator	District Average	National Average	Deficit	Priority Rank
Literacy (%)	68.04	64.8	-3.24	8
Female Literacy (%)	64.72	53.7	-11.02	11
Work Participation (%)	39.09	39.1	0.01	5
Female Work Participation (%)	10.20	25.6	15.4	2
Pucca Houses (%)	18.97	21.21	2.24	4
IAY for BPL (%)	2.97	-	-	-
Safe Drinking Water (%)	98.54	78.0	-20.54	12
Electricity in Houses (%)	24.14	55.8	31.66	1
W/C Toilet (%)	23.82	18.0	-5.82	9
Toilet Inside House (%)	30.46	36.4	5.94	3
Average No. of Primary Schools per Village	1.62	1.32	-0.3	7
Average No. of Teachers in Primary Schools	3.02	2.84	-0.18	6
Average No. of Secondary Schools per Village	0.46	-	-	-
Villages with Hospital (%)	4.0	-	-	-
Villages with PHC & Sub-PHC (%)	36.96	-	-	-
Average Distance of Sub-PHC from Village	3.24 Km.	-	-	-
Average Distance of PHC from Village	3.93 Km.	-	-	-
Average Distance of Govt. Hospital from Village	19.16 Km.	-	-	-
Average Distance of Pvt. Hospital from Village	16.38 Km.	-	-	-
ICDS Housed in Govt. Bldg. (%)	25.0	-	-	-
Good Bldg. Quality of ICDS Centre (%)	21.43	-	-	-
Average No. of Visits of ICDS Workers (Last year)	7.07 days	-	-	-
Full Vaccination of Children (%)	79.25			13
Institutional Delivery (%)	55.60			10

Note: District averages are estimated on the basis of sample and national averages are based on Census, 2001.

It is clear from the above table that the district averages perform sometimes very poor compared to national average and sometimes above average. Overall literacy as well as female literacy are above the national average and hence receive lower priority. But one should be careful to use these results for drawing up plan. It may be noted that the literacy rate is higher than average does not mean one the state of education is very good in the district. Considering our analysis in the main report one should not be complacent about the education front given the fact that drop out rate is very high specially after class eight. While overall work participation is marginally lower than the national average, female work participation is very low compared to the national average and in fact receives rank 2 in priority list. Electricity in houses receives the highest priority in the district. W/C toilet performs quite well compared to national average, but if one looks at toilet inside house then the district average is below the national average and it receives third rank. Given its priority rank safe drinking water is not very important for allocating additional fund but one may also note here that though majority of people have access to safe drinking water, there is severe problem of arsenic contamination in the district. So the district administration may take up the matter

accordingly.

It may also be noted that the district averages and the deficits are not uniform across the district, there are large variations across the villages. A comparison may be made consulting the relevant tables for the village level averages. In this way one can find out the priority ranking for the villages separately. Given the representative nature of the sample one can treat those villages or the blocks where they are situated as the pockets of relative backwardness in terms of the above indicators. We draw the attention of the district administration to be cautious about inter village and accordingly inter regional variations when drawing plan for the district.

In addition to the above priority ranking of facilities we also like to point out that there are some findings that the study team of the CSSSC thinks very important from the standpoint of the development of the district. These are given below.

- Though *pucca* house receives a rank of 4, percentage of BPL families covered under IAY is extremely poor, 2.97 %. So we think it is an important area where the district administration should top up.
- Though almost all the sample villages have primary school and the district average of the number of teachers per primary school is above the national averages, but the fact remains that the national average itself is very poor. It means on an average all the four classes in a primary school cannot be held. So though the district average is not very bad and in fact above the national average in this case the district administration should pay attention to this.
- So far secondary schools are concerned, the performance of the district is very poor: 0.46 secondary and higher secondary schools per village. This also needs intervention.
- As we already discussed in an earlier section that the state of education in general and the vocational education is very poor and we have shown that there is a very high demand for vocational education, the district administration should pay adequate attention in this area. The specific areas where people are interested to receive training are computer, electronics and driving and automobile repair and maintenance. A large percentage of people are also willing to pay for the cost of training. New courses may be introduced in the ITIs and if necessary, these courses may be made fee based. These measures, we believe, will be useful for employment generation for the people of the district.
- Apparently the district performs reasonably good for health related indicators, on closer scrutiny one is not satisfied just by any absolute standard. For example, only 4% of villages have government hospitals in its vicinity, 36.96 % of villages have primary health centers or sub-centres situated within the village, average distance of primary health center and sub-centres are 3.24 and 3.93 Km., average distance of government hospital is 19.16 Km., average distance of private hospital or nursing home is 16.38 Km. For the ICDS centers

only 25 % are housed in government building while only 21.43% have good quality building and average number of visits of ICDS employees is only 7.07 days in a year. These are by no means can be considered good whether they exceed national average or not, though in most of the cases they are lower than national average.