

Minority Concentration District Project

Malda, West Bengal

Executive Summary

**Sponsored by the Ministry of Minority Affairs
Government of India**

Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, Calcutta

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The MCD project aims to provide 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). Malda 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 38.2 and 16.2. Muslims with a share of 49.72% (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 29 (one village was repeated twice) villages in Malda spread across 11 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. In general the findings clearly show that the district performs quite poor in terms of the performance indicators. However, it is not necessarily the case that the Muslims fall behind the non-Muslim population. The findings for the district as a whole can be summarized in the table 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 (%)	50.12	64.8	14.68	5
Female Literacy (%)	44.29	53.7	9.41	6
Work Participation (%)	46.18	39.1	-7.08	12
Female Work Participation (%)	16.95	25.6	8.65	7
Pucca Houses (%)	3.75	21.21	17.46	4
Safe Drinking Water (%)	70.77	78.0	7.23	8
Electricity in Houses (%)	23.38	55.8	32.42	1
W/C Toilet (%)	16.71	18.0	1.29	9
Toilet Inside House (%)	18.17	36.4	18.23	2
Average No. of Primary Schools per Village	1.48	1.32	-0.16	11
Average No. of Teachers in Primary Schools	2.73	2.84	0.11	10
Full Vaccination of Children (%)	74.38	44.0	-30.38	13
Institutional Delivery (%)	31.02	48.7	17.68	3

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

Since the approach of the Multi-sector Development Plan funded by the Ministry of Minority Affairs is supplementary in nature and does not intend to change the very nature of plan process, it is suggested that the district administration may start working on priority basis with the additional fund in the areas where the deficit can very easily be identified at the district level or at the village or in the pockets of the district. Hence we provide the deficit of the district for the two types of indicators and the basic amenities indicators. In addition to these indicators we have also listed some of the indicators, which in our opinion are extremely important for the development of the district.

It is clear from the above table that the district averages perform very poorly compared to the corresponding national averages in every case except for (i) vaccination of children which is very high compared to national average, (ii) number of primary schools per village which is marginally higher than the national average and (iii) work

participation which is also higher from the national average. Accordingly the district administration is expected to draw up their development plan funded by the Ministry of Minority Affairs based on the priority ranking of the facilities. However, 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 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, 4.03 %. So we think it is an important area where the district administration should top up.
- The district average of the number of primary teachers per school is very close to the national average, 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 so poor 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 – 0.4 secondary and higher secondary schools per village. This also needs intervention.
- 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 12% of villages have government hospitals in its vicinity, 29.55 % of villages have primary health centers or sub-centres situated within the village, average distance of primary health center or sub-centres is 1.9 Km., average distance of government hospital is 19 Km., average distance of private hospital or nursing home is 15.5 Km. For the ICDS centers only 24.14 % are housed in

government building while only 10.34% have good quality building and average number of visits of ICDS employees is only 7.21 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.