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Baseline Survey of Minority Concentrated Districts

# District Report

## N C HILLS

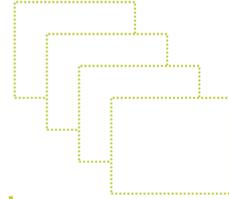
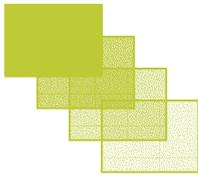
Study Commissioned by  
Ministry of Minority Affairs  
Government of India

Study Conducted by



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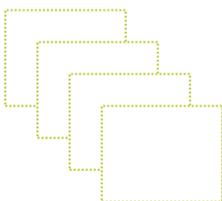


Commissioned by the Ministry of Minority Affairs, this Baseline Survey was planned for 90 minority concentrated districts (MCDs) identified by the Government of India across the country, and the Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR), New Delhi coordinates the entire survey.

Omeo Kumar Das Institute of Social Change and Development, Guwahati has been assigned to carry out the Survey for four states of the Northeast, namely Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya and Manipur.

This report contains the results of the survey for N C Hills district of Assam.

The help and support received at various stages from the villagers, government officials and all other individuals are most gratefully acknowledged. ■



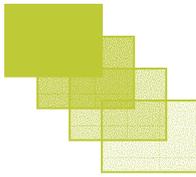
Omeo Kumar Das Institute of Social Change and Development is an autonomous research institute of the ICSSR, New Delhi and Government of Assam.





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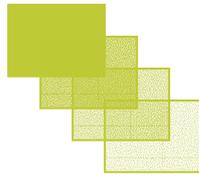


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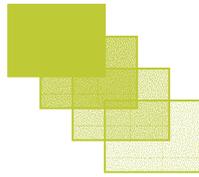
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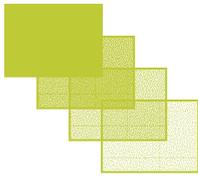
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## BACKGROUND

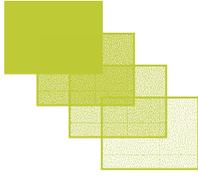
Issues relating to disparities across socio-religious communities have attracted much attention of the government of India of late. There is a growing realization about the relative backwardness of the religious minorities more particularly the Muslim as a religious community in India. The Sachar Committee, which was instituted specifically to look into the relative deprivations of Muslims vis-à-vis other socio religious categories in various dimensions of development, in its report on “Social Economic and Educational Status of the Muslim Community of India”, exhibited deficits and deprivations of Muslims in all dimensions of development.

In order to ensure that the benefits of schemes and programmes of government reach the relatively disadvantaged segments of society districts having a substantial minority population on the basis of backwardness parameters were identified. Based on 2001 Census, using two backwardness parameters, viz., (1) religion specific socio-economic indicators at the district level in terms of literacy rate; female literacy rate; work participation rate; and female work participation rate and (2) basic amenities indicators at the district level in terms of percentage of households with pucca walls, safe drinking water, electricity and w/c latrines, the Ministry of Minority Affairs identified 90 Minority Concentration Districts throughout the country which are falling behind the national average in these parameters. Of these 90 districts, 53 districts have both socio-economic and basic amenities below national average, 21 districts have socio-economic parameters below national average and 16 have basic amenities below national average. The basic idea is to formulate a multi-sectoral programme for the 90 MCDs which envisage for providing beneficiary oriented schemes to minorities and infrastructure development for the entire community in the districts.

Against this backdrop the baseline survey in MCDs was conceived to

- (a) identify how existing programmes are currently targeting these districts and on the basis of the assessment to develop special programmes to provide these facilities and ensure accessibility to them in the most backward areas in a faster way; and
- (b) create socio-economic profiles of the targeted districts, and receive inputs that would help improve literacy rate, especially female literacy rate, and overall work participation rate, especially female work participation rate that have a significant impact on economic development.

The survey would more specifically try to identify the gaps in (1) availability of infrastructure like schools, health centers, ICDE centers and drinking water supply (2) housing and sanitation (3) critical linkages like rural road, ITIs, banking facilities, markets etc. and also (4) identification of artisanal income generating activities in which villagers have comparative advantage.



## METHODOLOGY

The present survey has been confined to rural areas. Considering the availability of data Tehsil level information has been used for stratification purpose.

Villages are taken as the first stage units (FSU) for the survey. However, before selection of sample villages, each district under the coverage was stratified first. All tehsils in a district were grouped into three strata in terms of minority population after arranging them in descending order of minority population. The grouping/stratification has been done in such a way so that the first stratum constitutes top 20% of tehsils, the second stratum constitutes middle 50% and the third/last stratum constitutes bottom 30% of tehsils in the arranged frame. The ranges vary in accordance with degree of concentration of minority population in respective districts.

Depending upon the size of the district, 25 or 30 villages were selected from each district. 25 villages were chosen if the rural population of the district is below 5 lacs; otherwise 30 villages were chosen.

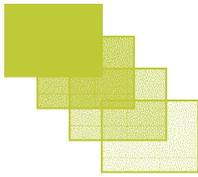
The number of villages surveyed in each stratum was directly proportional to the share of each stratum/group of tehsils (according to population) to the district population, subject to a minimum allocation of 6 villages to each stratum.

Required number of sample villages from each stratum have been selected as per the probability proportion to size (PPS) with replacement, size being total population of the village as per Census 2001.

In case of household selection, complete listing of all households (by door to door visit) has been done in case of sample villages with less than 1200 population. However, in case of those villages with population 1200 or more, three or more hamlet-groups (hg's) were formed in the village as per the practice followed by NSSO<sup>1</sup>. From among them, a sample of 2 hg's was selected for listing of households. The hg having maximum concentration of minority population was selected with probability 1. From among the remaining hg's, one more hg were selected at random. The listing and sampling of households were independent for each selected hg.

In each selected hg, the listed households were grouped into strata as per the minority status of the household. In other words, all Muslim households formed one second-stage stratum (SSS), all Christian households another SSS, and so on.

About 30 households were selected in all from each sample village for detailed enquiry. These 30 households were allocated over 2 selected hg's (if hg's formed) and among the respective SSS in proportion to total number of households listed in the respective frames. A minimum of 2 households were allocated to an ultimate SSS. The required number of sample households from each SSS were selected by systematic random sampling without replacement (SRSWOR). In case of village having less than 30 households all the households were surveyed.



The rule followed by NSSO for forming hamlet-groups is

---

| Approximate present population<br>of the village | no. of hamlet-<br>group to be formed |
|--------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1200 to 1799                                     | 3                                    |
| 1800 to 2399                                     | 4                                    |
| 2400 to 2999                                     | 5                                    |
| 3000 to 3599                                     | 6                                    |
| ..... and so on                                  |                                      |

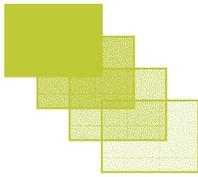
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Following the above methodology, total 30 villages of the district N C Hills were identified, and 30 households from each village was selected for the sample survey. The present report is based on the data gathered from the total 900 sample households of the district.

## TOOLS USED

Relevant data were collected with the help of (1) Rural Household Schedule and (2) Village Schedule. The rural household schedule tries to capture different dimensions of socio-economic and situational variables like employment, migration and occupation details, land and other assets, ownership of productive and other assets, livestock details, housing status, rural indebtedness, family income and expenditure, current educational status and skill training, aspiration of parents of current students, awareness and participation, local conflicts and loss of life and property, access to media and communication and general aspirations of the people.

The village schedule tries to garner authentic data regarding the village. Information such as basic population data, facilities, village organizations, land use and land transfers, credit facilities, commuting and migration data, job and wage related information, information on individual beneficiary oriented programmes, data on education including physical facilities, health, different development programmes, common property resources, and the public distribution system prevailing in the rural areas. ■



## A BRIEF PROFILE OF N C HILLS

### 2.1 Area and Location

North Cachar Hills district with an area of 4888 square km is the second largest district in the state of Assam. Physically a part of the Meghalaya plateau, the North Cachar Hills district is situated at southern part of Assam and is bounded by Nagaland and Manipur state in the east, Cachar district of Assam in the south, Meghalaya state and the part of Karbi Anglong district in the west and another part of Karbi-Anglong & Nagaon district in the north. The altitude of the district ranges from 600 meters to 1800 meters.

### 2.2 Administrative Division

The district has four revenue circles and five development blocks. The development blocks of the district are Haranagajao, Jatinga, Diyung Valley, Diyungbra and New Sangbar. There are 605 inhabited villages and 4 towns in the district.

### 2.3 Resource Base

#### 2.3.1 Population

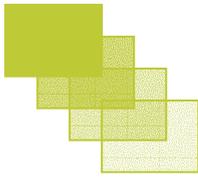
As per the census data of 2001, the district of NC Hills has a population of 188 thousands of which about 60 thousand (31.6 percent) live in urban areas. Religion wise distribution reveals that 69.9 percent population of the district are Hindu, 26.7 percent are Christian, 2.5 percent are Muslim and 0.9 percent belong to other religions. The density of population is very thin with just 38 percent per square km compared to the state average of 340 persons. Majority of the population (53.7 percent) in the district belongs to scheduled tribe communities.

**Table 2.1: Distribution of population by place of residence and religion in N C Hills**

| Residence | Persons | Hindus        | Christian    | Muslims    | Others     |
|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------|------------|------------|
| Total     | 188079  | 131492 (69.9) | 50183 (26.7) | 4662 (2.5) | 1742 (0.9) |
| rural     | 128644  | 91179 (70.9)  | 34889 (27.1) | 1844 (1.4) | 732 (0.6)  |
| urban     | 59435   | 40313         | 15294        | 2818       | 1010       |

Source: Census of India, 2001

The district during 1971-91 showed a very high growth rate of population of 98.3 percent (growth in the state overall was 33.3 percent). During the period 1991-2001 the growth rate of population in the district however slowed down to 24.7 percent (state 18.9 percent).



### 2.3.2 Sex- Ratio

As per the census data of 2001, the sex ratio in the district stands at 884. This was much lower than the state average of 935. The sex ratio for the population in the age group of 0-6 years was however 955. Religion wise the Christian community showed better sex ratio than the Hindu and Muslim communities. Poor sex ratio in the district, more particularly in the urban areas could be explained by male centric immigration.

**Table 2.2: Sex ratio by religion for rural and total population in NC Hills, 2001**

|                      |              |            |
|----------------------|--------------|------------|
| <b>All Religions</b> | <b>Total</b> | <b>884</b> |
| All religions        | Rural        | 919        |
| <b>Hindus</b>        | <b>Total</b> | <b>879</b> |
| Hindus               | Rural        | 912        |
| <b>Muslims</b>       | <b>Total</b> | <b>649</b> |
| Muslims              | Rural        | 704        |
| <b>Christians</b>    | <b>Total</b> | <b>949</b> |
| Christians           | Rural        | 948        |

Source: Census of India, 2001

### 2.3.3 Literacy Rate

The district has attained literacy rate (68.6 percent) which is higher than the state average (63.3 percent). However, one could see high male (76.6 percent) female (59.4 percent) disparity in literacy in the district. Religion wise literacy rate of Christian community is more than the other communities.

**Table 2.3: Literacy rate by sex and place of residence in NC Hills**

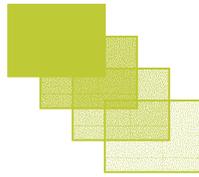
| <b>Total</b> |       |       | <b>Rural</b> |       |       | <b>Urban</b> |       |       |
|--------------|-------|-------|--------------|-------|-------|--------------|-------|-------|
| Total        | Man   | Woman | Total        | Man   | Woman | Total        | Man   | Woman |
| 67.62        | 75.66 | 58.38 | 57.57        | 66.82 | 47.41 | 88.08        | 92.43 | 82.55 |

Source: Census of India, 2001

**Table 2.4: Literacy Rate by religious groups in rural NC Hills**

| <b>Religion</b> | <b>Person</b> | <b>Male</b> | <b>Female</b> |
|-----------------|---------------|-------------|---------------|
| Hindus          | 53.63         | 63.77       | 42.46         |
| Muslims         | 52.75         | 62.23       | 38.73         |
| Christians      | 68.03         | 75.33       | 60.33         |

Source: Census of India, 2001



### 2.3.4 Distribution of work force

Work participation rate in N C Hills district is 37.3 percent. Among the workforce 21.6 percent are marginal workers. Women constitute a larger share (64 percent; state 57.8 percent) of marginal workers in the district.

Cultivation and agriculture labourers constitute about 73 percent of the total rural workforce in the district. This figure for Hindu community is 70 percent and for Christian community is about 82 percent.

**Table 2.5: Distribution of different groups of workers by religious groups in the total rural workers**

| Religion               | Total worker & work participation rates | Culti-vators    | Agricultura l workers | Household industrial workers | Other workers   | Non workers     |
|------------------------|-----------------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| All groups rural total | 50698<br>(39.4)                         | 33660<br>(66.4) | 3272<br>(6.5)         | 1393 (2.7)                   | 12373<br>(24.4) | 77946<br>(60.6) |
| Rural percentage       | 72.2                                    | 98.1            | 94.5                  | 81.7                         | 40.3            | 40.3            |
| Rural Hindus           | 34719<br>(38.1)                         | 22289<br>(64.2) | 2027<br>(5.8)         | 1002<br>(2.9)                | 9401<br>(27.1)  | 56460<br>(61.9) |
| Rural Muslims          | 690<br>(37.4)                           | 156<br>(22.6)   | 46<br>(6.7)           | 8<br>(1.2)                   | 480<br>(69.6)   | 1154<br>(62.6)  |
| Rural Christians       | 14937<br>(42.8)                         | 11027<br>(73.8) | 1182<br>(7.9)         | 354<br>(2.4)                 | 2374<br>(15.9)  | 19952<br>(57.2) |

Source: census India, 2001

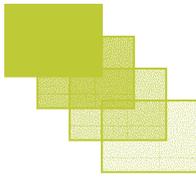
## 2.4 Human Development Index

The human development Index indicates the basic human capabilities attainment in three dimensions - a long and healthy life, a decent standard of living and education. The score of human development index in this district is low and figured at 0.363 (11<sup>th</sup> ranking) which is lower than the state average of 0.407. In terms of income, education and health the district occupies 10<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> positions respectively in the district wise rankings in the state of Assam (Assam Human Development Report, 2004). As indicated by the human poverty index estimated in 1999, 31.44 per cent of total population in this district lives in poverty. In gender related development index the district however ranks first in the state of Assam.

## 2.5 Natural Resource Base

### 2.5.1 Land, its quality and use

Barren and uncultivable land and unclassified forest areas all together constitute about 80 percent of the areas of the district. Classified forest areas constitute about 13 percent of the total geographical areas. About 6 percent of the total geographical areas of land is put to agricultural use.



About 27.5 percent of cultivated area of this district is sown more than once. About 23 percent of the total paddy sown area is under HYV. Per hectare consumption of fertiliser in this district is just 1.2 kg compared to 41 kg in the state. About 70 percent of cultivable area of the district is under shifting cultivation.

Winter paddy cultivation is done mostly in the flat lands in river valleys. Efforts have been made by the departments of Agriculture, Soil conservation and Irrigation to boost up the agricultural economy by using some modern methods. There is now also conversion of land for coffee and rubber plantations.

Reported paddy yield in this district (1710 kg per ha) is more than the state average of 1475 kg during 2004-05. A good proportion of area of the district is devoted to sugarcane production, fruits and spices. Data in table 2.7 however reveals that the yield of these products in the district is yet to reach the average standard of the state. However certain products banana and papaya show better yield than the state average. A good prospect in food and horticulture products is anticipated in this district.

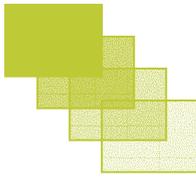
**Table 2.6: Major land use/ cover categories**

| Category                                             | Area(ha) | % to total district area |
|------------------------------------------------------|----------|--------------------------|
| Total geographical areas                             | 488800   |                          |
| Forest cover                                         | 67487    | 13.0                     |
| Barren and uncultivable or unclassified state forest | 392997   | 80.4                     |
| Net sown area                                        | 28316    | 5.8                      |
| Area sown more than once                             | 7779     | 27.4                     |

**Table 2.7: Area and production of certain agricultural products**

| Crop       | Area in ha | Production in tons | Yield in kg ha | Yield- state (2004-05) |
|------------|------------|--------------------|----------------|------------------------|
| Paddy      | 4838       | 5186               | 1710           | 1475                   |
| Sugar cane | 1793       | 60209              | 33580          | 36919                  |
| Orange     | 1575       | 12600              | 8000           | 11228                  |
| Pineapple  | 1785       | 18505              | 10360          | 15465                  |
| Banana     | 550        | 7975               | 14500          | 13799                  |
| Potato     | 275        | 1375               | 5000           | 8058                   |
| Litchi     | 68         | 204                | 3000           | 5005                   |
| Papaya     | 315        | 4700               | 14920          | 14671                  |
| Jack fruit | 288        | 2304               | 8000           | 9507                   |
| Ginger     | 2970       | 14850              | 5000           | na                     |
| Turmeric   | 272        | 158                | 580            | 689                    |
| Chilly     | 2915       | 1749               | 600            | 652                    |
| Kharif veg | 310        | 2325               | 7500           |                        |
| Guava      | 94         | 1233               | 13110          | 15616                  |
| Tapioka    | 64         | 320                | 5000           | 4793                   |

\* Source: Statistical Handbook, Assam 2006



### 2.5.2 Forestry

The major forest products consist of timber, cane, bamboo etc. Other minor forest products include Agar, Chalmugra etc. Boulders and gravels in the river beds along with stones are also available.

The areas covered by six forest reserves and unclassified forest in the district are as follows.

**Table: 2.8 Forest reserves of N C Hills district**

| Forest reserves                   | Areas in square km |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------|
| Langting Mupa Reserve Forest      | 497.6              |
| Krungming Reserve Forest          | 124.2              |
| Barail Reserve Forest             | 89.3               |
| Unclassed State Forest            | 3854.0             |
| Hatikhali Proposed Reserve Forest | 18.0               |
| Panimur Proposed Reserve Forest   | 28.7               |
| Barail Proposed Reserve Forest    | 17.6               |

### 2.5.3 Minerals

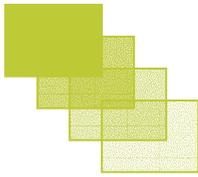
Limestone and coal in small quantity are found in the neighbourhood of Garampani in the district. Carbonaceous shale is available in Baga area. Good quality of limestone, low in magnesia and suitable for cement manufacturing is available in the district.

## 2.6 Economy

Geographical remoteness coupled with poor communication and infrastructural facilities has hindered the district in its development process. Based on its rich resources the district has the potential to develop its agriculture, horticulture and forestry sector. However, this will require better governance in the district with effective policies and execution.

The per capita SDP is however one of the highest among the districts in the state with Rs. 17296. This figure for the state as a whole is Rs. 11937. Agriculture contributes about 64 percent of the district's SDP (state's 42 percent) and about 16 percent comes from the secondary sector (state's 16 percent).

Cement factories, saw-mills etc. are the industries in the private organized sector in the district. There are four Cement Plants in this district. The Kopili Hydel Project at Umrangso produces sizable quantity of electricity. Apart from these, weaving is also considered to be a household industry in this district. Large areas have been covered by Eri & Mulbarry farm. Assam Hill Small Industrial Development Corporation has established a fruit preservation unit at Jatinga. There are altogether 539 small scale industrial units in the district which provides employment to about 750 persons. Employment in organized industrial sector is about 500 persons in the district.



### **2.6.1 Handloom and Handicraft**

There are four handloom training center and five weavers' extension service units in the district. This is estimated that about 14 thousand weavers on part time basis and about 250 weavers in full time basis are engaged in the district.

### **2.6.2 Livestock and Poultry**

It is estimated that the rural households of the district on an average have two to three milch cattle. The district has nine veterinary dispensaries, two mobile dispensaries and one AI center. There are also one pig farm and one livestock farm in the district.

## **2.7 Infrastructure**

### **2.7.1 Transport and Telecommunication**

During 2005-06 the total length of PWD roads in the district were 1491 km, of which 464 km were surfaced. This means that the road length per 100 square km was 30 km (the state average is 48 km).

### **2.7.2 Power and Energy**

Out of 605 villages in the district 261 (43 percent, state 72 percent) are electrified.

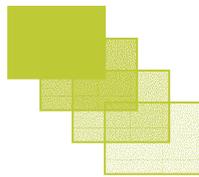
### **2.7.3 Banking**

There are 8 commercial banks and 9 grameen banks in the district.

### **2.7.4 Health and Educational Establishment**

There are one civil hospital, one TB hospital, two Community Health Centers, three block PHC, two mini PHC and two subsidiary health centers in the district. Apart from these there are four maternal and child health centers and 60 family welfare sub centers in the district. Hospital bed available per lakh population in the district is 115 (state average is 26). There are two doctors per 10000 populations in the district.

N C Hills district has three colleges, two junior colleges, six higher secondary, 80 high schools, 188 middle schools and 676 primary schools. There are about 35 thousand students enrolled in primary and 17200 students enrolled in secondary schools of the district. Teacher pupil ratio in the primary schools is 1: 6 and in middle and secondary schools is 1: 3 which is much better than the state average of 1: 42 in primary schools and 1: 12 in secondary schools. It is estimated that in each primary school in the district there are on an average 7 teachers and in secondary schools there are 22 teachers. However, the success rate in school leaving exam in this district during 2006 was just 38.4 percent (state 53 percent), which is one of the lowest in the state.



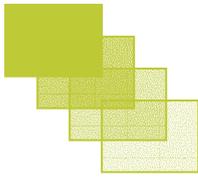
## 2.8 Overall Amenities in the district

Overall it is reflected that the district has poor provision of road and power infrastructure which has impact on overall development performance of the district. It is a challenging task to provide power supply to all the thinly populated remote villages of the district. Construction of motorable road is another challenge in this district. Overall, population wise one could see better provisions of health and educational infrastructure in the district. However, these have not led to better performance as reflected in the results of secondary school leaving examinations in the recent past.

**Table 2.9: Distribution of amenities in inhabited villages**

| Amenities                                                   | Numbers                                   |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| Total inhabited villages                                    | 605                                       |
| Total households                                            | 37294                                     |
| Safe drinking water facilities (fully covered habitations ) | 56.9 percent                              |
| Electricity(power supply)                                   | 261 (43 percent villages are electrified) |
| Primary school                                              | 676                                       |
| Middle school                                               | 180                                       |
| Secondary/Sr. secondary school                              | 86                                        |
| Colleges                                                    | 3                                         |
| Civil hospital                                              | 1                                         |
| Primary health centres                                      | 9                                         |
| Primary health sub- centres                                 | 73                                        |
| Paved approach roads                                        | 464 km (9.5 km per 100 square km)         |
| Mud approach roads                                          | 1027 km (21 km per 100 square km)         |

The baseline survey at both village and household levels could throw more light on the performance of social and economic sectors of the district.■



## PROFILE OF THE SAMPLE VILLAGES

### 3.1 Demographic profile

The average size of the sample villages in the N C Hills district is of about 100 households. In the sample however, there are seven villages with less than 30 households and 16 villages with less than 100 households (Table 3.1). There are also few villages in the sample with more than 300 households. Population in the sample villages varied from about 60 persons to about 1600 persons. Religion wise Hindu community (about 70 percent) dominates the population of the district followed by the Christian community (27.7 percent). About 54 percent population in the district belongs to scheduled tribe communities. In the sampled villages however, there are about 82 percent population belong to scheduled tribe communities.

### 3.2 Sex ratio

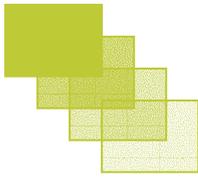
Sex ratio based on the reported population in the sample villages is 918. The census data of 2001 however reveals the figure sex ratio at 884, much lower than the state average of 935. The poor sex ratio overall in the district can be explained by male centric immigration in the urban centers of the district.

### 3.3 Facilities

A definitive way to find out the quality of life in a state, region or dwelling place, whether rural or urban, is to ascertain the presence, accessibility and utility of the social and physical infrastructure by the residents of these spaces. Lack of access can emerge either due to the absence of social and/or physical infrastructure, or through inaccessibility to such facilities even when they are present.

#### 3.3.1 Electricity

Proportion of households using electricity for domestic lighting in rural areas is indicative of economic status of the households. As per the information of State Electricity Board 43 percent of the villages in N C Hills district have power supply. The results of the sample village survey however reveal that all the villages in the sample are electrified. However, the village survey data reflects that just about 19 percent households in the sample villages have electricity connections. However, one could see variations in the proportion of households connected with electricity in the sample villages (Table 3.2). It is found that all the connections in the sampled villages are domestic connections. Most of the villages in the sample got electricity connections during the 1990s. The average hours of electricity available in a day in the villages has declined significantly in recent years. It is reported that presently electricity supply is available on an average for about 11 hours during the day. The supply of electricity was reportedly much better some ten years back with an average availability of 18 hours a day.



### ***3.3.2 Drinking water***

Availability and access to safe drinking water has been the most crucial factor involving serious health concerns in rural areas. It is found that 15 villages in the sample (10 Hindu and five Christian villages) have accesses to public sources of drinking water facility. Public wells and tube wells are the major sources of common drinking water in the sample villages (Table 3.3 and 3.4). Apart from these sources private well, private tube well as well as unprotected sources of tank and river are major sources of drinking water in the villages. One village also has presence of public stand posts of supplied water.

### ***3.3.3 Toilet facility***

The sanitation status of the sample villages reflects that very few households have access to sanitary latrine (Table 3.5). Many households are found using insanitary latrines of soakage pits.

### ***3.3.4 Education***

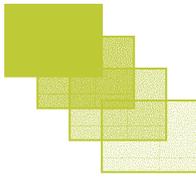
All the villages in the sample have primary schools within the villages. In one village, the primary school is of katcha structure, semi pucca structures in 23 villages and pucca structure in one village. Further, it is found that in six villages schools have mud flooring. The status of other physical amenities of the schools reveals that 24 schools have blackboards three schools have desk and benches for all, toilets in one school and drinking water supply in three schools. Mid day meal scheme is available in all the schools and quality is reportedly satisfactory. Textbooks and note books are found to be provided available for most of the students in two schools and for some in 21 schools. In most of the villages (23 villages) people perceive the quality of teachers as average to good and their attendance regular.

### ***3.3.5 Health facilities***

Although private sector has been playing a crucial role in curative health care in urban India, in rural areas government facilities are the prime sources for cheap curative care. The surveys of sample villages reveal that 10 villages in the sample have sub centers within the villages. However, ANM is available only in six villages and beds in two village sub centers (Table 3.6). Other health facilities including the doctors are not reported to be present in the sample villages.

### ***3.3.6 Other facilities***

The availability of certain other facilities in the sample villages indicate that block head quarters in case of 24 villages and the nearest town in case of 19 villages are located at an average distance of more than 5 km. The communication facilities in the sample villages as reflected during survey, is weak. The nearest bus stop in case of only 4 sample villages is within a distance of 5 km. Regular markets are locate within a distance of 5 km only in case of 12 sampled villages. Post office and banks are located at a distance of within 5 km in case of nine and three villages respectively (Table 3.7 and 3.8).



### **3.4 Village organizations**

The organizational activity within the village is an important determinant of overall socio-economic development. Information reveal that there exists some fairly active organizations - dairy cooperative in one villages, religious, political, cultural and youth organisations in all the villages, women organisation in 24 villages and voluntary organizations in 21 villages. The presence of fairly active village organizations therefore has the potential for capacity building of pressure groups within villages for ensuring proper governance at the grassroots level.

### **3.5 Crop productivity status**

The survey results of the sample villages indicate that paddy is the major crop produced in all the villages. As reflected from the village level information the villages have not gained efficiency in paddy production. The productivity of paddy in the sample villages are reported to be about 800 kg per hectare, which is much lower than the reported district average of about 1700 kg per hectare. The maximum market price fetched for paddy one year before the date of survey as reported is Rs. 750 per quintal while the minimum price was Rs. 500. The district though has high potential for horticulture products, figures on production of such products could not be extracted during the village survey.

### **3.6 Input status for cultivation**

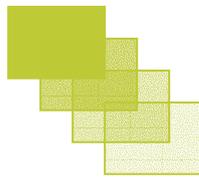
Use of inputs both current and capital in agriculture is not reported in the sample villages. Pesticides reportedly used only in one sample village.

### **3.7 Handloom and Handicraft activities**

In all the sample villages people are found to be engaged in handloom and handicraft activities. It is found that more than 18 percent households in the 25 sample villages are engaged in handloom and handicraft activities. Products of most of the villages are used for own consumptions or sold in the nearby markets. It is reported that there are difficulties in marketing their products. Moreover in most of the villages people face problems to procure the raw materials (Table 3.9).

### **3.8 Credit**

Village level data reveal that credits are required mostly to meet the sudden and unforeseen expenses. Institutions and private sources of professional money lenders are reported to be the main sources of credit for small and marginal farmers in the sample villages. It is also reported that in most cases institutional sources are the sources of loan for petty cultivators and artisans.



### 3.9 Migration and employment and wage income earning

In the sample villages no long duration migrations were reported. However, from 24 villages in the sample about 530 workers commute mostly to neighbouring villages and blocks for work. The information also reveals that migrating out help people to earn on an average an income of Rs. 1800 a month (Table 3.10). However, this is also revealed that migrating to block head quarters helps one to earn better.

The survey indicated that in 22 sample villages wage of casual labour has shown a rising trend. One village reported decline in wage of the casual workers. This is reported that under NREGA people receive a wage of Rs. 62 a day.

**Average wage income from sample villages by kind of work**

| Wage rate | Ploughing land, land preparation | Weeding/interculture | Trans-planting | Har-vesting | Thresh-ing | Unskilled labour | Skilled labour | Govt. prog-ramme |
|-----------|----------------------------------|----------------------|----------------|-------------|------------|------------------|----------------|------------------|
| Male      | 43                               | 44                   | 44             | 44          | 44         | 40               | 40             | 62               |
| Female    | 38                               | 44                   | 44             | 35          | 35         | 35               | 35             | 62               |

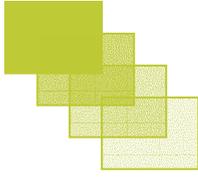
The data on access to government jobs reveal that people from Hindu communities have more access to government jobs than Muslim community (Table 3.14). This is reported that overall the villages at present are better off than what they were earlier (19 villages in the sample reported this). However in case of 5 villages it was reported that the villages have remained the same in terms of development and one village development has taken the backseats in recent past. The reasons cited for changing status of the villages due betterment of access to educational facilities, wage rates, social conditions etc (Table 3.15).

### 3.10 Rural Development programmes and beneficiaries assisted

People in some of the sample villages have got assistance under the rural development programmes. SGSY is in operation in one sample village, NREGA in all the sample villages and IAY in 23 sample villages. Altogether 1015 jobs are created (68 percent in Hindu and 32 percent in Christian families) in 25 sample villages (average 40 jobs in each village). Information on allocation of money is available in 24 sample villages. It is revealed that altogether 818 lakh Rupees has been allotted in these 24 villages and about 1015 jobs have been generated (Table 3.21). This is a huge amount which involves more than Rs. 80 thousand per beneficiaries. Overall there are mixed responses on the performances of NREGA. There are altogether 138 IAY beneficiaries 71 percent of which are Hindu beneficiaries (Table 3.16). There is presence of old age pension recipient in all villages in the sample. Moreover in 24 sample villages there are recipient of widow pensions (Table 3.17 and 3.18).

### 3.11 Common resource and facility uses

Health sub centers are reported in 10 sampled villages. This is reported that in none of these villages doctors make the visit. Lady health visitors visit all the villages once in two month. ANMs presence is felt in two villages and visit of malaria inspector is reported in



one village (Table 3.19). It is reported that in just one sampled village most of the village people go to government health facilities for treatment. In nine villages people generally go to private practitioners and in 15 villages people mostly visit untrained personnel for treatments (Table 3.20).

All the sample villages have ICDS centers. However, three of them do not have own buildings and operate from private buildings. The physical condition of building in two villages is reportedly deplorable. Utilisation of ICDS centers in the sample villages is found to be satisfactory. On an average 15 children are utilising the centers and level of satisfaction of the villagers is found to be average in case of 19 villages (Table 3.22).

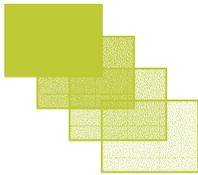
Altogether 17 sample villages have PDS shops within the villages. It is found that in seven villages people need to travel up to 5 km to reach a PDS shop. PDS utilization information is available for 16 sample villages. It is estimated that in these 16 sample villages about 22 percent households purchase food from PDS (Table 3.23). More than 44 percent households in the sampled villages have BPL and Antyodaya PDS cards. The performance of PDS on quality of supply, quota and regularity overall is considered average in most of the sample villages.

One village (Kherbari) reported that there are five projects - forestry, agriculture, irrigation, health and education operational at present. Another village reported about an ongoing project on forestry. Altogether 24 villages have reported having government supported employment programmes and schemes.

All the sample villages in the district have forests as common property resources. Encroachment of forest by influential people is reported in three villages. There are common village pond in 18 sample villages and common space in 17 schools. It is reported that common spaces in six schools are encroached. Altogether 141 SHG groups were reported in 25 sample villages.

### **3.12 Summary**

Overall it is revealed that provisions of certain basic services in this thinly populated district of Assam are grossly inadequate. Basic health and educational infrastructure in the remote villages are in poor state, although overall the district has better provisions of health services compared to the average state situation. It is indicative that health sector is more concentrated in urban areas of the district. On the other hand it is reflected that sanitation practices in the villages can not be considered hygienic. The village survey also reflected poor access to power by the villagers and deteriorating state of affairs of power supply in the sampled villages. ■



## RESULT OF THE BASELINE SURVEY

### 4.1 Religion and Caste Composition

Altogether 670 households were surveyed in the 25 sampled villages in N C Hills district of Assam. Among these 670 households 68.5 per cent (459 households) are Hindu households and 31.5 percent (211 households) are Christian households. The detailed break-ups are given in Table 4.1. Majority of the households in the sample (Hindu 76 percent and Christian 93 percent) are from scheduled tribe communities.

### 4.2 Mother Tongue

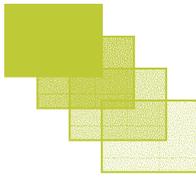
Non-scheduled languages - Dimasha, Hmar and Kuki are reported as the mother tongue of more than 92 percent households in the sample villages. Bengali is reported as mother tongue in altogether 6 percent households (about 8.5 percent in Hindu households) of the sample.

### 4.3 Age and Sex

The total population in the 670 sample households of the district is calculated at 3422; of them 48.9 percent (sex ratio 957) are female. The details of age group and sex wise distribution of the sample population are shown in Table 4.3. Religion wise one finds more members in the households of Christian community (5.6 persons) than the Hindu households (4.9 persons). Sex ratio in the Christian households is found to be better (1070) than the Hindu households (902). Another feature indicated by the demographic data is that children below 14 years constitute 14.8 percent of the total population in the sampled households. However one finds no variation of this in the households of the two communities. One finds more proportion of people in the age groups of 45 years and above in the Christian households (21.2 percent) than the Hindu households (16.3 percent). This is indicative of the fact that wellbeing in the Christian households is somewhat better than the Hindu households.

### 4.4 Household Size

Altogether 64 per cent of the sample households are found with up to five members in the family and 34.8 percent with six to ten members. Religion wise higher proportion of Christian households (46 percent) has family of more than 6 members. This proportion in the Hindu households is 29.6 percent (Table 4.4). The average household size in the sampled households is figured at 5.1 persons.



#### **4.5 Marital Status**

As indicated by table 4.5 there are some evidences that members of Hindu families marry at an early age. This is found that in the age group of 15 to 18 years 4.7 percent members in the Hindu families and 4.6 percent members in Christian families are married. Altogether 27.6 percent people in the age groups of 19 to 25 years found to be married in the sampled Hindu households. This figure for the Christian households is 24.2 percent in the district.

#### **4.6 Educational Status**

Information at the household level revealed that 13.1 percent people in the Hindu households and 14.5 percent in the Christian households are illiterate. The figures exclude the population in the 0-6 age group. The proportion of female illiterates compared to the male counterpart is, however, more in both Hindu (14.8 percent) and Christian households (16.6 percent). Here the sample household data reveal a better picture of literacy than the district average figure to the 2001 census data (more than 31 percent people are illiterate). However, educational attainment level of the people found to be poor in the sampled households. Just 9.3 percent people in Hindu Households and 11.2 percent in the Christian households have able to attain educational level beyond the high school. Overall this proportion is estimated at 9.9 percent. This proportion is further poor in the case of female as just 7.6 percent female in Hindu households and 9.9 percent in the Christian households have able to continue education beyond the high school level (Table 4.6).

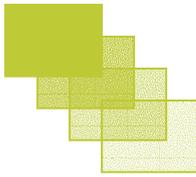
#### **4.7 Occupation and Employment**

##### ***4.7.1 Occupation and Industry***

This is reflected that farming is the main occupation for 67.4 percent workforce in Hindu households and 56.2 percent in the Christian households. Altogether 12.4 percent Hindu workforce and 16.6 percent Christian are found to be engaged in production related works. Business is the main occupation of 10 percent Hindu and 17 percent Christian workforce. It is found that more Christians (5.7 percent) are engaged in professional and related works than the Hindus (4.7 percent) (Table 4.7).

This is found that women constitute 33.8 percent of the main workforce in the sampled households. The figures across the two religions are found to be uniform. Farming (68 percent), production related work (24 percent) and business (5.6 percent) are the main activities where the Hindu women show their presence. In the case of Christian households women's concentration is observed in production related work (38.5 percent) and business (6.9 percent) along with the farming activities (49.4 percent).

Coming to the secondary occupations production related works constitute occupations of 38.5 percent Hindu workforce and 43.5 percent Christian workforce. Farming is the secondary occupations for about 25 percent Hindu workers and 39 percent Christian workers. In case of secondary works, activities of 17 percent Hindu and 9 percent



Christian secondary workers could not be defined. Coming to the context of women involved in secondary works, production related works (in case of 46 percent women workers), business (21 percent) and unspecified activities (24 percent) are the activities engaged by the women from Hindu households. On the other hand production related works found to be the main secondary work in the case of 74 percent Christian women workers (Table 4.8).

Industry wise distribution of the people with main occupation (Table 4.9) shows that Cultivation is the main activity for 62.6 percent Hindu and 55.4 percent Christian workers. Community, social and personal services accommodates 9.5 percent Hindu workers and 10 percent Christian workers. Trade is the main industry for 9.9 percent Hindu and 17 percent Christian workers. Agriculture based manufacturing accommodates 10.9 percent Hindu and 12.5 percent Christian workers (Table 4.9).

It is evident from Table 4.10 that 15.3 percent Hindu main workers and 17.6 percent Christian main workers do work less than 180 days in a year. On the other hand 2.9 percent Hindu workers and 2.7 percent Christian workers work more than 260 days in a year. On the other hand more than 83 percent Hindu secondary workers and about 95 percent Christian secondary workers work less than 100 days in a year (Table 4.11). All these reflect that there is prevalence of underemployment among the communities. This is revealed that underemployment is more prevalent among women workers, particularly among the women from Christian community. This could be also explained by the fact that in this thinly populated resource rich district people are not required to work full extent to ensure livelihood.

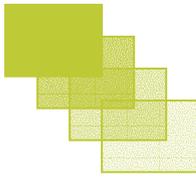
The household survey captures 173 households with self-employment initiatives. It is reported that in the entrepreneurial venture they face a host of problems ranging from credit, power, raw materials, technology, skilled personnel and market to harassment by government officials (Table 4.12).

#### ***4.7.2 Additional Employment and Preference***

The household survey reflects that majority of workforce in rural areas of N C Hills are engaged in on-farm activities. There is scope to believe that engagements in these activities are not remunerative at present. The survey captures that people in altogether 366 Hindu households (79.5 percent) and 169 Christian households (80 percent) are looking for additional employment. There altogether 848 persons in Hindu households and 383 persons in Christian households are looking for additional employment (Table 4.13). It is revealed that self-employment (46 percent) and salaried jobs (for about 43 percent) are the most preferred activities for the under employed and unemployed.

#### ***4.7.3 Migrant Workers***

This is found that very few members (altogether seven Hindus and one Christian) from the sampled households have migrated out for jobs. Among the out migrants half of them are long term migrants.



## **4.8 Land and other Assets**

### ***4.8.1 Cultivated Land: Ownership and Operational Holding***

It is found that landlessness is not the issue in this thinly populated district. Based on operational holdings it is reflected that about 68.5 percent Hindu households and more than 82 percent Christian households in the sample are small and semi-medium farmers (Table 4.15 and 4.16).

The phenomena of leasing in and leasing out and mortgage of land are found to be not very common in the district. The household survey reveals that very few households are engaged in these phenomena.

## **4.9 Livestock**

The practice of keeping milch animal is found to be not very common with the households in the district. It is found that 38 percent Hindu households and about 43 percent Christian households keep milch animals (Table 4.17). Poultry is found among about 79 percent Hindu and 74 percent Christian households and Pig rearing is there among about 69 percent Hindu and 88 percent Christian households. Pig rearing is found to be more common among the rural households in the district. There is also the practice of keeping goats and around 77 percent Hindu and 55 percent Christian households in the district are engaged in this practice. It is found that on an average household are keeping 1.4 milch animals, 10 poultry and 2.7 numbers of pigs.

## **4.10 Ownership of Productive and other Assets**

### ***4.10.1 Agricultural Implements***

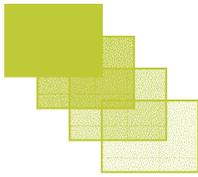
The important agricultural implement among the sample households is plough (32 percent Hindu and 58 percent Christian households reported to possess this). Other agriculture implements are not common in the sample households. Modern agriculture implements are virtually absent in the sampled households. However, it is reported that some households possess the pump sets (Table 4.18). On the other hand about 47 percent Hindu and 60 percent Christian households in the sample have spraying machines.

### ***4.10.2 Transport***

Bicycle is found to be the commonest mode of transport in the villages. Among the sample household bicycles are found in possession with 66.7 percent Hindu families and 80.6 percent Christian families (Table 4.20). It is also found that about 32 percent households in the sample possess two wheelers. Few households are also found with possession of cars.

### ***4.10.5 Financial Assets***

Altogether 43.1 percent Hindu households and 37.4 percent Christian households in the sample are found with possession of savings account in banks (Table 4.19). This is also



reported that 2.4 percent Hindu families and 13.3 percent Christian families have fixed deposits in the banks.

#### **4.11 Housing Status**

##### ***4.11.1 House Type and availability of living space***

An important indicator of the economic status of a household is the type of house and the facilities available. The distribution of housing status among the sample households (Table 4.21) reveals that 90.8 percent Hindu families and about 97 percent Christian families have their own house. This is reflected that more Hindu households (9.2 percent) have benefited under IAY. This is found that more than 3 percent Christian households in the sample have got housing benefits under IAY.

The data on type of house (Table 4.22) shows that 38 percent Hindu households live in kutcha houses. The figure is also the same for the Christian households. This is found that just about 9.1 percent Hindu households and 3 percent Christian households live in pucca houses.

The availability of living space for sample households (Table 4.23) indicates that about 99 percent households from both the communities have more than one room for accommodation.

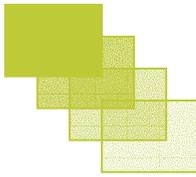
##### ***4.11.2 Domestic lighting and fuel use***

The village survey reveals that all the sample villages in the district have power supply. The findings from the household survey (Table 4.24) show that about 43 percent Hindu households and 55.5 percent Christian households have electricity in their home. In the non-electrified houses (Table 4.25), the survey reveals that oil lantern is the main source of lighting in most of the sampled households of all the communities.

Clean fuel for cooking is important for health. It is a serious consideration for women who, in most cases, are burdened with the task of cooking. As per Census 2001 data, just about 60 percent of all rural households in the country do not use any of the modern fuels such as LPG, electricity or even kerosene. The households survey reveal that 23.1 percent Hindu households and 13.7 percent Christian households use non-wood based fuel for cooking (Table 4.29). However, this is found that just 4.1 percent Hindu and 2.8 percent Christian households are using LPG for cooking purposes in the district.

##### ***4.11.3 Drinking water facilities***

Availability and access to safe drinking water has been one of the basic objectives under ARWSP. The results of the household survey reveal that most of the household sources of water are from unprotected sources. This is reported that among the Hindu households in the sample 46 percent drink water from pond, stream or river and from unprotected dug-well. In the Christian households in the sample about 39 percent drink water from unprotected sources (Table 4.26).



#### **4.11.4 Sanitation and drainage facility**

An important requirement for sanitation is the presence of toilet facilities. The sample survey results (Table 4.28) indicate that entire Hindu households in sample and 98 percent Christian households have no access to sanitary latrines. Most of the households in the sample are found using insanitary toilets for defecation.

An important determinant of hygienic living condition is availability, access and use of drainage facility. The absence of civic amenities like drainage is one of the major problems for maintaining a clean environment. The survey findings show that in 62 percent household drainage facility is available.

#### **4.12 Indebtedness of rural households**

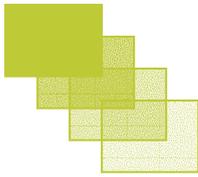
In the sample altogether three Hindu households are found to be indebted. The sources of loan are found to agriculture money lenders are traders. The loans are in the size of Rs. 2000 to 5000 availed for farm operation and other unspecified reasons.

#### **4.13 Income and Expenditure**

Income of 15 percent Hindu households and 11.8 percent Christian households during the last one year falls below Rs. 19,200. Another 7.6 percent Hindu and 9.5 percent Christian households live with income of in between Rs.192001 to Rs.22800. Both the categories constitute the size of population living below the poverty line and the figure is based on per capita poverty line expenditure estimate of Rs. 388/ per month. To this raw estimate overall the proportion of households living below the poverty line comes to about 22.2 percent which is higher than the state average of 19.7 percent as per the present Planning Commission estimates. It has been observed that 11.5 percent Hindu households and 9.5 percent Christian households are living comfortably with a monthly income of Rs. 6000 or more (Table 4.31).

##### *Family Expenditure*

The estimated family expenditure in the sample households reflects that 67.3 percent Hindu and 53 percent Christian households (overall 62.3 percent) spend less than Indian average family spending of Rs. 7200/ per year on cereal and pulses (Table 4.32). In vegetables, milk and meat too about 97 percent households (almost in equal proportion from both the community) spend less than what the country on average spends (Table 4.33). This is found that about 45.8 percent Hindu households and 46 percent Christian households spend more than Rs. 850 a year on education, the average amount spend by the rural households in the country (Table 4.34). On health 7.4 percent Hindu and 6.6 percent Christian households spend more than the country average of Rs. 2100 a year (Table 4.35). This is found that majority of sample households did not spend on telephone (65.8 percent Hindu and 63.5 percent Christian) (Table 4.38). In electricity, gas and water 69.3 percent Hindu and 65.4 percent Christian households spend in between Rs. 1000 to 5000 a year (Table 4.37). This range falls in the average spending of Rs. 3000 incurred on electricity and gas by rural households in India. This is also found that most



of the households need to keep aside a significant proportion of their budget for festival and ceremonies (Table 4.36).

Overall this is observed that religion wise one finds no differences in purchasing power in the households. However, overall expenditure on lower side in food items in the sample households does not reflect poor purchasing power of the communities, as the households are incurring significant expenditure in other categories of non-food items.

#### **4.14 Current Educational Status and Skill Training**

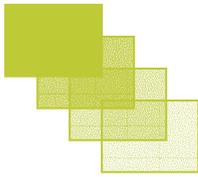
##### *Educational attainment by religion and gender*

Earlier we had seen that illiteracy among the Christian community to an extent is more than the Hindu community. On the other hand illiteracy is more in the case of women in all the communities. The data of current educational status of people in the age group of 5 to 25 years reflect that not many are left behind in the enrollment process. However, what concerns more is the dropout of the students. This is found that in the sample households altogether 21.3 percent students from Hindu households and 13.6 percent from Christian households have left schools after enrolment (Table 4.39). An interesting feature revealed here that the dropout rates are found to be more in case of male students (14.9 percent) than the female students (12.6), particularly among the Christian community. The reasons such as the necessity to earn for their household (25.1 percent), non-affordability of fees (28.7 percent) indicate that economic factors lead to dropout of a major section of students in Hindu households. Economic factors also explain dropouts in 57.4 percent Christian households having to dropout for the same reasons as in the Hindu households (Table 4.41). However, another major cause of dropout in Christian families is found to be lack of interest in reading (23 percent), which is 12.3 percent among the Hindu households (Table 4.41). Marriage is one of the reasons for dropping out particularly among the girls. This incidence is found to be more in Hindu families than Christian families.

##### *Access and facilities in education*

It is found that about 89 percent Hindu students and 57 percent Christian students attend government schools (Table 4.40) and 43 percent Christian students attend private schools. It is revealed that about 71 percent students (in the same proportion in both the communities) of the sample villages are required to travel more than 2 km to attend schools. In case of 83 percent Hindu and 38 percent Christian students the medium of instruction is regional languages. On the other hand 14 percent Hindu and 61 percent Christian undergo education in English medium schools.

It is revealed that 42 percent Hindu students and 17 percent Christian students in the sample households have received free text books from government. This is also reported that about 4 Hindu students and 1.7 percent Christian students have received scholarships.



### *Aspiration of Parents on their Children*

Altogether 76.7 percent parents in Hindu households aspire that their boys should attain education at least to graduation level. This figure in Christian households is 77.1 percent. In the case of girl students the figures are 22.8 percent and 39.3 percent respectively in Hindu and Christian households. All reveal that attitude towards education among the Christian households is more liberal (Table 4.42 and 4.43).

### *Attitude and Approaches in Skill development training*

Interactions in the sample households reveal that in some households (Hindu 26.1 percent and Christian 18.5 percent) family members are interested to take up skill development training (Table 4.44). Driving (23.6 percent), weaving 17.6 percent), tailoring (23 percent) and computer operation (15.5) are the most preferred trade in Hindu households. In Christian households weaving (21.7 percent), tailoring (28.3 percent), driving (17.4 percent) and computer operation (13 percent) are the preferred trades for skill development training (Table 4.45).

### **4.15 Present Health Scenario**

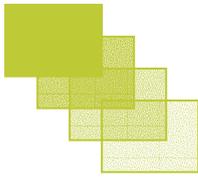
The survey reveals that about 11.3 percent members in the sample Hindu households and 9.2 percent in Christian households have suffered from some kind of diseases during last one year (Table 4.46). Malaria (reported in more than 28 percent cases), common cold, fever and dysentery are found to be the most commonly reported diseases by the members in the sample households and one finds no variations across the religions. However, pregnancy related cases are reported more in the Hindu households in the sample.

It is found that about 49 percent patients in Hindu households and 60 percent in Christian households exclusively approach government hospital for treatments. The percentage of patient exclusively visiting private hospital for treatment is 45 percent in Hindu households and 32 percent in Christian households. Along with government hospital and private medical practitioners, traditional treatments and home treatments find place to an extent in the sampled households (Table 4.47).

### **4.16 Maternal and Child Health**

It is found that about 66 percent of the children in the sample households are fully immunized. One does see variation in the rate of immunization across the religious communities (Hindu 61.8 percent and Christian 74.4 percent) and by gender (Male 60.6 and female 70.5 percent) (Table 4.48). A child is considered fully immunized if the child receives the BCG vaccine, all three doses of DPT and the vaccine for measles along with the OPV doses.

The survey reflects that Hindu women have less access to government and institutional facilities for delivery of child. It is found that 19 percent Hindu women have used government or private facilities for delivery as against 26 percent by the women from



Christian community (Table 4.49). This is also found that in most of the cases (81 percent) Hindu women are attended by untrained dais in case of delivery of the baby. This figure for Christian women is found to be 74 percent (Table 4.50).

#### **4.17 Poor and the PDS Support**

More than 94 percent Hindu households and 95 percent Christian households reported that they belonged to BPL category (Table 4.51). All the BPL families reported that they possess BPL ration card (Tables 4.52). It is found that 94 percent Hindu households and 97 percent Christian households avail ration from PDS shops (Table 4.53). However, those households avail ration from PDS shops, only 12 percent Hindu and 6 percent Christian households reported that they were able to buy all the rations from PDS (Table 4.54). Among those not availing the full quota of ration from PDS cited lack of money as the main reason (66 Hindu and 88 percent Christian households). About 32 percent Hindu households and 12 percent Christian households however cited the reason of inadequate supply (Table 4.55).

#### **4.18 Awareness and Participation**

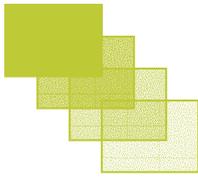
It has been argued for long that level of awareness and participation are two important aspects of development approach. The Government of India has been initiating several specific programmes targeting the poor. The benefits of these programmes to a large extent depend on the level of awareness of the people about the programme. At the same time, any leakages in the process are to be properly identified for designing effective implementation.

So far the level of awareness at the community level is concerned, one could not see much variations among communities (Table 4.56). However, it is revealed that people are more aware about certain programmes like, NREGA, IAY, Sarvashiksha, ICDS and old age pension. It could be seen that in terms of benefits, in certain programmes Hindu households got more benefits (e.g. IAY) and in certain other programmes Christian households availed more benefits (NREGA, Old age and widow pensions) (Table 4.57).

##### ***4.18.2 Participation in the socio-political affairs***

Recent development debates envisage a pro-active role from the people at the grassroots for successful democratic decentralisation, which in turn accelerates the process of growth and development. The 73<sup>rd</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> amendments of the Constitution further the scope of democratic decentralisation in the country by putting local governance Institutions at the centre-stage. The process of democratic decentralisation can be most potent source of ushering development, particularly in rural areas, when people participate in the process.

The baseline indicates that the level of political participation is quite high among the sample households at state and parliamentary election levels (Table 4.58). Religion wise too there is not much variations.



#### ***4.18.3 Conflict, insecurity and access to media and communication***

Problems and losses related to conflicts, communal or otherwise and the sense of insecurity is found to be high in this district (Table 4.60). Those who confront with conflicts are found to be mostly communal and caste related. There is reported loss of family members and property in the conflicts and violence. More than 79 percent Hindu households and 88 percent Christian expressed their insecurity feeling in this conflict prone district.

As far as the access to media and communication is concerned, the baseline indicates an overall low level of access to print media across the communities. This is found that just about 14 percent Hindu and 12 percent Christian households read newspapers. On the other hand a relatively higher proportion of households watches televisions (33 percent in both the communities) and listen to radio (altogether 71 percent Hindu and 75 percent Christian households (Table 4.61).

#### **4.19 Aspirations of the Communities as reflected from the Survey**

##### *Most important facilities lacking in the villages*

Majority of the Hindu respondents feel that road communication, education and health are the most important facilities lacking in their villages. The Christian communities placed priorities on education, road communication and electricity (Table 4.62). Employment and water also emerge as important priorities perceived by the communities.

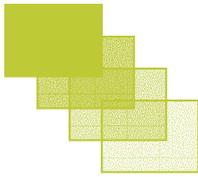
##### *Most important deprivation in the families*

Most of the Hindu families perceive that health followed by education and skills are the most important deprivations in their families. The Christian families place education, health and employment as their important deprivations (Table 4.63). Social recognition is also cited as priority by some Christian households in the sample.

##### *Perceived priorities for the welfare of minority communities*

The Hindu respondents feel that education, health and road communication should be the first priorities for the welfare of the minority communities. The Christian households also perceive in the same way (Table 4.64).

Overall, it reflects that road communication, education and skill development, health, electricity are the major concerns of the people in the villages of N C Hills district. ■

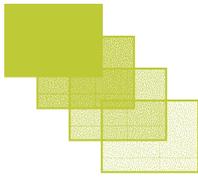


## DEVELOPMENT DEFICITS

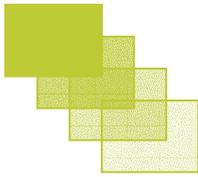
Based on analysis of various facets of development it can not be said that the thinly populated district of North Cachar Hills is a performer in development process of the state. One could however see better immunization coverage of children and attainment of literacy, but in other development sectors the district has performed badly. The success of immunization coverage of children and literacy could be explained by the programme based approaches on immunization drives and total literacy campaigns. Access to work in this thinly populated district is not constrained, but working in the primary sector, where two third of its working population are engaged is not remunerative. Agriculture in this district is yet to see the faces of modernization and productivity remains at lower level. The baseline survey also indicates underemployment of a significant section of main workers, where sustainability of the job sector is affected by conflict and state of insecurity. On the other hand a relatively high level income revealed from household survey fails to explain the poor provisioning of other basic services in the district. The baseline survey points out some areas of development deficits requiring effective attention. There is however, no religion wise difference in terms of development parameters indicating better situation for a particular religion.

### Development Deficits and Plan Priorities in NC Hills

| Sl No                             | Indicators                                                  | Survey Results | India | Deficit | Priority assigned |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|-------|---------|-------------------|
| <i>Socio-economic indicators</i>  |                                                             |                |       |         |                   |
| 1                                 | Rate of literacy                                            | 86.4           | 67.30 | 19.1    | 8                 |
| 2                                 | Rate of female literacy                                     | 84.6           | 57.10 | 27.5    | 10                |
| 3                                 | Work participation rate                                     | 47.9           | 38.00 | 9.9     | 6                 |
| 4                                 | Female work participation rate                              | 32.7           | 21.50 | 11.2    | 7                 |
| <i>Basic amenities indicators</i> |                                                             |                |       |         |                   |
| 5                                 | Percentage of pucca houses                                  | 6.6            | 59.40 | -52.8   | 1                 |
| 6                                 | Percentage of households with access to safe drinking water | 56.3           | 87.90 | -31.6   | 3                 |
| 7                                 | Percentage of households with sanitary toilets              | 0.6            | 39.20 | -38.6   | 2                 |
| 8                                 | Percentage of electrified households                        | 46.9           | 67.90 | -21.0   | 4                 |
| <i>Health indicators</i>          |                                                             |                |       |         |                   |
| 9                                 | Percentage of fully vaccinated children                     | 66.0           | 43.50 | 22.5    | 9                 |
| 10                                | Percentage of institutional delivery                        | 21.3           | 38.70 | -17.4   | 5                 |



- There is need for institutional reforms in certain sectors of the district to usher in the development process. The district is plagued by poor infrastructure facilities-particularly of power and road communication, which comes in the way of any sustainable self employment initiatives. There is need to stress more on self-employment initiatives in households as well as on non-households industries. The baseline survey indicates involvement of people in traditional skill based handloom and handicrafts and the rich resource based horticulture sector of the district. There is enormous possibility of development of this sector with local entrepreneurial initiatives and basic provisions of real services of the state leading to a synergy of government and the workers. However the baseline survey reveals numerous constraints in the self-employment initiatives.
- Agriculture in this district is still in rudimentary state like many areas of north eastern region and requires effective land use plan. Initiatives needed are in the areas of high value crops and modernization. There is also scope for effectively raising the district's livestock resources considering its unutilized pastures.
- Drinking water and sanitation facilities are in bad state in the villages of the district. There is need of making more provisioning of basic infrastructure, water and sanitation services through state interventions in the villages.
- Decent housing for the poor is another important aspect needing attention. Pucca houses are in very few proportions in the sample villages. Moreover, poor percentage of households having electricity connections reveals poor purchasing power even when the electricity supply is available in the villages.
- The survey reveals missing access to government health facilities in a large section of the sample households. Poor presence and infrequent visits of health personnel in the villages costs the villagers dearly.
- Reproductive health requires serious attention in the villages of the district. In most of the cases child delivery takes place at home attended by untrained personnel.
- Literacy though shows a reasonably good rate in the district, the cause of concern is the very low level of educational attainment in both the religious communities. Information also reveals that the basic infrastructure and provisioning in the schools-teachers, other physical and sanitary facilities are limited and constrained. Economic reason is the major cause of school dropout of students in the district.
- Insecurity feeling among the communities in this conflict ridden district is widely prevalent. This could have an effect on accessing livelihood and ensuring overall decent living of the people.
- In terms of relative deprivation, common perceptions of people capture road communications, educational and skill attainment, health care provisioning and power supply as important facilities lacking in the villages of the district. ■



## LIST OF SURVEYED VILLAGES

| Sl. No. | VILLAGE                  |
|---------|--------------------------|
| 1       | Disagisim                |
| 2       | Kimthao                  |
| 3       | Hange (Naga)             |
| 4       | Kharthongship            |
| 5       | Warilonglabra            |
| 6       | Garampani                |
| 7       | During (During)          |
| 8       | Assam Coal Quarry        |
| 9       | Hajadisa                 |
| 10      | Kapurchera               |
| 11      | Laisang                  |
| 12      | Tongikro                 |
| 13      | Bulmoul                  |
| 14      | Pangmoul                 |
| 15      | Choto Laisong            |
| 16      | Kunapara                 |
| 17      | Langtin Hasin            |
| 18      | Hati Khali Garden Pt. II |
| 19      | Kherbari                 |
| 20      | Chillei (Chidei)         |
| 21      | Natunhaja                |
| 22      | Choto Washiling III      |
| 23      | Dao Dung                 |
| 24      | Rarangajao Rly. Stn.     |
| 25      | Choto Longfer            |