

BASELINE SURVEY OF MINORITY CONCENTRATION DISTRICT

Executive Summary of Paschim Champaran District (Bihar)

Background:

- The Ministry of Minority Affairs (GOI) has identified 90 minority concentrated backward districts using eight indicators of socio-economic development and amenities based on 2001 census data with a purpose to improve all these indicators and bring it to the all India level through a multi-sector development plan under the eleventh five year plan. Since, it is expected that there must be changes in these indicators after 2001, a baseline survey has been conducted to formulate the multi-sectoral development plan with the latest deficits and priorities.
- Paschim Champaran, one of the most backward districts of Bihar, stands at the bottom of the 90 minority concentration districts.

District Profile (2001 census based):

- In 2001, the population of Paschim Champaran district was 27.33 lakhs and 89 per cent of the population was living in rural areas.
- Scheduled castes population is 15 per cent in the district, which is slightly less than the State figure of 16.4 per cent.
- Villages of the district have proportionately more primary schools (76.8 per cent) than the State average (72.6 per cent). There are 58 secondary schools in the district. There is one industrial and training school in the district. This district has a literacy rate of 39.63 per cent. On the whole, the educational scenario of the district is grim.
- Less than one-third of the villages of Paschim Champaran district have PHCs with 5 km. The tap and tube wells' drinking water facility is available in very negligible proportion of the villages of the district. On the whole, the health and drinking water facilities are very inadequate in the villages.
- Work participation of the population of Paschim Champaran district was 39 per cent; whereas the average work participation rate for State of Bihar was just above one-third.

Survey findings: Socio-economic Conditions and other Amenities in 2008

- In 2008 (survey findings), Paschim Champaran district lagged behind the all India average in five out of eight indicators and also lagged behind the all India level in terms of two more health related indicators. Table 1 below shows the gap between all India and district figures vis-à-vis ten indicators and prioritises the development intervention vis-à-vis eight indicators. The district figure is based on the survey findings (2008) and all India figures are of 2004-05 and 2005-06. The distance from the all India figures may be higher, as all India data are a little old.

Table 1: Development Gaps and Priorities for the Multi-sector Plan

Development Gaps and Priorities for the Multi-sector Plan					
Sl. No.	Indicators	Paschim Champanan 2008	All India 2005	Development Gaps Between All India and District	Development Priority of the District
		(1)	(2)	(3=1-2)	(4)
1	Rate of literacy	59.7	67.3	-7.60	5
2	Rate of female literacy	48.2	57.1	-8.90	4
3	Work participation rate	41.23	38.0	3.23	6
4	Female work participation rate	32.41	21.5	10.64	8
5	Percentage of households with pucca walls	44.37	59.4	-15.03	3
6	Percentage of households with safe drinking water	91.74	87.9	3.84	7
7	Percentage of households with electricity	13.04	67.9	-54.86	1
8	Percentage of households with water closet latrines	6.58	39.2	-32.62	2
9	Percentage of fully vaccinated children	42.09	43.5	-1.41	-
10	Percentage of child delivery in a health facility	16.35	38.7	-22.35	-

Note: (1) Survey data of the district (Col. 1) pertains to the rural area only, but all India data (Col. 2) pertains to total.

(2) Data in Col 2 from Sl. No. 5 to 8 pertain to year 2005-06 from NFHS-3 and the rest of the data in Col. 2 pertain to the year 2004-05 from NSSO.

Development Priorities as per Eight Indicators:

1. Electricity:

Availability of electricity remains the most critical gap. Only a small proportion of the households (13 per cent) have electricity, of them 12.5 per cent and 13.65 percent are Hindu and Muslim households respectively. The district lags behind all India figure by a huge 54.86 point.

The Rajiv Gandhi Rural Electrification Mission (RGREM) targets universalisation of electricity connection to the rural households by the end of 2009 and there is a memorandum of understanding between Government of Bihar and Rural Electrification Corporation (REC), Government of India (GoI) for extending electric connection to all the villages of Kishanganj. It seems that the progress appears nowhere to the target.

2. In-house Toilet Facilities:

93.42 per cent of households are without any toilet facilities and defecating in open and of them 96.46 per cent and 88.92 per cent belongs to Hindu and Muslim community. The drainage system is also very poor. There is not much differential between Hindu and Muslim households regarding toilet and drainage facilities, which shows uniform lack of sanitation facilities in the rural household. The district lags behind all India figure by 15.03 point.

All this makes it clear that the scheme like Total Sanitation Campaign (TSC), a Centre sponsored scheme, aiming at universalisation of sanitation facilities is going on for quite some time with the target to achieve universalisation of sanitation facilities by the end of 2009, has not made even a modest dent on the rural sanitation and drainage in Paschim Champanan district, and the existing situation clearly indicates that the district would

completely miss the target, which calls for better implementation of the TSC and to extend its coverage to uncovered villages through the multi-sector development plan.

3. Houses with Pucca Walls:

18.47 per cent and 3.32 per cent of Hindu and Muslim households respectively have IAY/government provided houses and a negligible proportion of them live in rented accommodation. 16.05 per cent and 24.19 per cent of the households live in thatched and katcha houses respectively and 15.27 per cent of them live in semi pucca houses. 44.37 per cent of the sample households live in pucca houses, which indicate somewhat better economic conditions of the sample households. The district lags behind all India figure by a huge 28.07 point.

Thus, the number of houses constructed under IAY, which is not a universal programme, is quite insufficient to fill the gap in the district. Overall, the qualitative and quantitative availability of the housing in the rural areas is not satisfactory and calls for vigorous implementation of IAY so as to include more and more beneficiaries under its ambit and to extend the area of its coverage too to include more and more poverty stricken households under the scheme. IAY can be topped up with the multi-sectoral plan.

4. Overall Literacy Rate particularly Female Literacy Rate:

There is a modest improvement in overall and female literacy rates of the rural population in the district since 2001, due to the Sarva Shiksh Abhiyan and the Mid-day meal scheme. The female literacy has also improved over the 2001 level and stood at 48.2 per cent in 2008. Nevertheless, the district lags behind all India average by 8.90 points and, hence, needs serious attention. Some important reasons are: non-availability of primary schools, poor enrolment ratio and high drop-out rates.

Non-enrollment, drop-outs, and higher distance are the potent deterrent factors in improving female literacy. Gender disparity in educational attainments is very glaring and will likely to adversely affect their socio-economic amelioration and empowerment.

Overall, the educational attainment is not satisfactory, which have its strong repercussions on future advancement in life. There are a number of villages, which are still without primary school and further the number of girl's school is quite low. Hence, expansion of primary and elementary schools, both for boys and girls, should be taken on a priority basis along with effective measures to minimise drop-outs. It seems that the SSA scheme has not made a significant dent on the provisioning of basic educational services in the rural areas of the district, which needs to be penetrated with fresh rigour.

5. Availability of safe -drinking water:

The availability of safe-drinking water is another development priority. 91.74 percent of the rural households in Paschim Champaran have the access to safe drinking water. Another problem in Paschim Champaran is the quality of water supplied through tap. It has been observed that in a large number of cases, people were bringing water from far away, even though they had access to tap water in the premises of the house itself.

6. Employment Opportunities more so for Women:

The work participation is reportedly low (41.23 per cent), which was highest for males (50.05 per cent) than females (32.41 per cent). Gender differentials in employment are quite sharp. Self-employment in non-agricultural activities is very low, which needs to be propagated on a larger scale. The lower female work participation is a serious issue, which calls for appropriate policy interventions to raise their contribution in economic activities so that they should be empowered and play their role within and outside the family in an effective way.

The opportunities for self-employment in non-agricultural economic pursuits are very small. Given the low level of literacy and availability of salaried jobs, the self-employment opportunities outside the agriculture sector needs to be propagated on a larger scale. There is need to implement local skill based micro credit income generating programmes specifically SGSY in the district to ameliorate their livelihood conditions.

Additional Areas of Intervention

1. Access to health facilities is another area of concern, as majority of the villages are without any medical facilities. Inaccessibility to health facilities is a major deterrent in its utilization. More than one tenth of the Hindu and less than one fifth of the Muslim households depend on home treatment. The proportion of the children fully immunized is low, 44.92 per cent and 39.03 per cent of the Hindu and Muslim households respectively have fully immunized their children below the age of 5 years. Almost all the children have been immunized by government agency and dependence on private agency is negligible, which is in contrast to their dependence on medical treatment against various health ailments.

Institutional delivery of child is only 17 percent (government hospital - 10 per cent and private hospitals - 7 per cent). In 5.80 per cent of the households the delivery of children is performed by trained midwife/ASHA. More than one third of the children born have received pre and post natal care, whereas proportion of such children in Hindu and Muslim households respectively stood at 41.80 per cent and 29.52 per cent. Thus, there is urgent need to activate the health para-professionals to increase the coverage of National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) in rural areas of the district, besides mobile health clinics are also to be provided to them under NRHM.

2. All weather road connectivity is another glaring infrastructural deficit. As per 2001 Census, most of the villages are without all weather road connectivity. Though rural connectivity has improved since then, yet significant numbers of villages are still without all weather roads.

3. There are wider gaps in awareness of the government schemes and benefits derived there from across Hindu, Muslim and others, which needs to be bridged, so that the benefits of these schemes must be reaped by larger chunk of the rural society of the district.

4. 81.89 percent of households are below poverty line (BPL), however, only 24.44 percent had BPL ration cards and almost all of them are availing PDS facility. Around 68.33 percent of households have complained about inadequate supply followed by dishonesty in measurement (56.11 per cent), non-availability of time, bad quality and irregular supply (about one half). Thus, there is also need to rejuvenate the PDS to improve its working and performance as well as coverage and make it corruption free.

