

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS ON DEVELOPMENT PRIORITY

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 the eight 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 may be changes in those indicators after 2001, a baseline survey has been conducted to inform the multi-sectoral development plan with the latest deficits and priorities.
- Sirsa, a backward district in Haryana, is doing fairly well in some development indicators and some others is one of the backward district in the 90 minority concentration districts in India.

District profile (2001 census based)

- Sirsa is primarily a rural district with 74% of the total population live in the rural areas.
- In Sirsa near 31.6% of the total population represent **minority communities**. Among this, Sikhs constitute more than 98% of the total minority community in Sirsa. The minority distribution in Sirsa Tehshils is as follows: Dabwali 42.6%, Rania 31.7%, Sirsa 28.3% and Ellenabad 23.5%. Around 40% of the minority community households are SCs in Sirsa, where SC is a major social group. SC population constitutes significant number of population in Hindu (44%), Muslim (33%), Christian (50%) and Sikhs (36%).
- The literacy level of Sirsa (67%) is below the state level (68%) (Census 2001). Similarly the female literacy ratio is 56% in Sirsa which is also state average. Even sex ratio, i.e., 817 is less than state and all India level.
- The overall work participation rate is 43 percent (census 2001), which is much lower and in case of the female population, it is 30%. About 675 of the labour force is engaged in agriculture.

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

In 2008, Sirsa lagged behind all India average in only three out of eight indicators. But it also lagged behind all India average in terms of other two health indicators such as percentage of fully vaccinated children and institutional delivery. However, the gap between district and all India average is not that much high, as in the case of some other minority concentrated districts. The data in the following Table 1 shows the gap between all India and district figures vis-a-vis eight indicators. The district figure is based on the survey findings (2008) and all India figures are of 2005-2006. The distance from the all India figures may be higher, as all India data are a little old.

Table 1: Development Deficit in Sirsa District

Sl No	Indicators	Survey Result		India 2001		Sirsa 2005		India 2005		Development Gaps	
		Rural	Total	Rural	Total	Rural	Total	Rural	Total	Rural India	Total India
		1	3	2	4	5	6	7	8(col. 1-col. 6)	9(col.1-col.7)	
Socio-economic indicator											
1	Rate of literacy	61.1	64.8	58.7	65.7	70.1	61.9	67.3	-0.8	-6.2	
2	Rate of female literacy	52.4	53.7	46.7	53.1	58.6	50.5	57.1	1.9	-4.7	
3	Work participation rate	38.2	39.1	41.7	32.2	31.9	39.9	38.0	-1.7	0.2	
4	Female work participation rate	19.1	25.6	30.8	11.4	10.4	24.2	21.5	-5.1	-2.4	
Basic Amenities indicators											
5	Percentage of households with pucca walls	86.9	56.1	46.3	92.7	94.9	47.9	59.4	39.0	27.5	
6	Percentage of households with safe drinking water	92.1	78.0	73.2	94.2	95.6	84.5	87.9	7.6	4.2	
7	Percentage of households with electricity	78.8	55.8	43.5	88.7	91.5	55.7	67.9	23.1	10.9	
8	Percentage of households with water closet latrines	46.9	18.0	7.1	31.0	48.8	20.0	39.2	26.9	7.7	
Health Indicators											
9	Percentage of fully vaccinated children	42.2	-	-	-	-	38.6	43.5	3.6	-1.3	
10	Percentage delivered in a health facility	33.8	-	-	-	-	28.9	38.7	4.9	-4.9	

Note: (1) Survey data of the district (Col. 1) pertains to rural area only, but other data (Col. 2 to 7) pertains to total and rural

(2) Data in Col. 4, 5, 6 and 7 for Sl. No. 5 and 8 pertains to year 2005-06 from NFHS-3. The rest of the data in Col. 4, 5, 6 and 7 pertains to the year 2004-05 from NSSO

(3) Data in Col. 2 and 3 is from Census 2001

Development Priorities as per Eight Indicators

- 1. Education:** The overall literacy rate continues to be less than all India average. Between 2001 and 2008, the district achieved only a 2% increase in the literacy rate, which is very low. More significantly, literacy rate of minority community is less than

the district average. The education level of female is, further, lower and only 45% of them attend schools above primary level. This is more skewed in case of Muslim community, as even 10% of them could not go beyond primary classes. Children from Muslim and ST households reported highest dropout i.e., around 17% and 13% respectively (2008).

Unlike some other district, the low level of literacy is not because of non-availability of schools, as almost all the villages in district has atleast one primary school. The basic problem is low enrolment ratio and relatively high drop out rate. The development plan of Sirsa should focus on increasing enrolment ratio and arresting the drop out rates particularly of minorities and females.

2. **Increasing employment opportunities for females:** The low work participation of female population is another critical gap which remains less than the all India average. Sirsa is known as 'cotton belt of Haryana'. Cotton based handicrafts and small household industries can be promoted through self help groups of women.
3. **Health infra:** Access to modern health facilities is another critical gap in the district. Only 42% of the children are fully vaccinated and only 34% of the deliveries are institutional. The number of villages with PHCs is also very low in the district. Therefore, the households do have little access to institutional delivery system and vaccination facilities. The MSDP has to focus on improving the hospital and paramedical support in the villages.
4. **Safe drinking water:** Though percentage of households having access to safe drinking water is higher than the all India average, yet in the absolute figure, it is low. Moreover, the key issue with respect to safe drinking water is the quality of the drinking water that needs to improve through water purification process.
5. **Housing and related amenities:** Most of the population has pucca or semi pucca houses; electricity connection and water closet latrines. Access to these facilities is less in case of SCs and Muslim minority population in the district. All the three facilities can be saturated through multi-sector development plan.

Other areas of priorities:

1. **Access to institutional credit:** Access to formal/ institutional credit is very low among Muslim and Christian households in Sirsa. The presence of SHGs who is intervening to provide credit in other parts of the country, in Sirsa is very low.
2. **Saturating the infra-structural development in the villages:** Out of 325 villages, electricity is available in 318 villages, primary schools in 312, health facility in only 197 villages.