

## **BASELINE SURVEY OF MINORITY CONCENTRATION DISTRICT**

### **Executive Summary of Waynad District (Kerala)**

#### **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 those indicators after 2001, a baseline survey has been conducted to inform the multi-sectoral development plan with the latest deficits and priorities.
- Wayanad, one of the most backward districts of Kerala, is one among the 90 backward districts with minority concentration.

#### **District profile (2001 census based)**

- Wayanad is primarily a rural district; 96.2% of the total population live in villages. None of the talukas have sizable urban population. However it is to be noted that in the context of Kerala, there is no perceptible difference between rural and urban areas in terms of demography or facilities as there has always been historical rural-urban continuum with respect to demography, economy and development.
- Kalpetta (district head quarters), Sulthan Bathery and Mananthawady are the three major business towns of the district. Due to proximity to Mysore and Kozhikode and the fact that the highway passes through the district people from Wayanad are found moving to these two cities for business and commerce and also for other employment opportunities.
- There is a substantial concentration of minority (mainly Muslims and Christians) population. Hindus constitute 50 percent of the total population, Muslims 26.5 percent and Christians 23 percent. The concentration of these two religious minorities is higher in the district when compared to the state average.

- Another important demographic feature of the district is the presence of about 17.4 per cent of tribal population. This is highest in Kerala. While they are categorized within the Hindu community, they are the most backward group of population devoid of most of the basic amenities. In fact, due to the categorization of the tribal population within Hindu, the socio-economic indications of Hindus are below the other religious minorities, especially Muslims.
- Tribal population in the district are found in remote and inaccessible areas. They depend on casual labour in agriculture, plantation work and forestry for survival. They have little amount of land. Lack of land, education and health facilities are acute among tribal community.
- The literacy rate in the district (85.82) is low compared to the state average. However, it is high compared to national average. Male population has literacy rate of 90.28 while that of females it is 80.8 per cent. Thus, there is a perceptible gender difference in the literacy rate.
- The overall work participation rate is 32.2 %, which is much less in case of female (16.3%) compared to male population (48.6%). Agriculture labourers dominate the labour force (31% of the total) which is far higher compared to the state average (19.6%).
- Primary infrastructure appears to be satisfactory in terms of availability of schools and hospitals. However, the mean distance of middle and secondary schools and tertiary health facilities is relatively high. Though transport infrastructure is good in the normal season. However, during the monsoon, due to heavy rainfall situation becomes difficult. Electricity and road facility in villages are good, so is drinking water. But coverage of sanitation is low and 50 percent of the villages are still without all weather road connectivity.
- Coverage of cooperative banks is low compared to other districts of the state, though public sector banks have reasonable presence. Given the importance of cooperative sector for agriculture improvement and poverty focused lending, there is a need to increase the number of cooperative society.

The district lags behind all India figures in terms of 3 out of 8 indicators. In terms of additional two health related indicators, the district is above the national average. The development priority of the district is based on the gap i.e., distance from the all India figure. As shown in the table 1, the following are the development priorities in the district.

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

Sl. No.	Indicators	Wyanard 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	92.6	67.3	25.26	5
2	Rate of female literacy	91.1	57.1	33.99	8
3	Work participation rate	32.3	38.0	-5.73	2
4	Female work participation rate	16.4	21.5	-5.11	3
5	Percentage of households with pucca walls	86.7	59.4	27.25	6
6	Percentage of households with safe drinking water	56.3	87.9	-31.57	1
7	Percentage of households with electricity	79.9	67.9	11.97	4
8	Percentage of households with water closeset latrines	73.1	39.2	33.93	7
9	Percentage of fully vaccinated children	62.8	43.5	19.25	-
10	Percentage of child delivery in a health facility	97.6	38.7	58.87	-

1. **Safe Drinking Water:** Against all India figure of 87.9 percent households having access to safe-drinking water, only 56.3 percent of the households have access to the same in Wayanad. Definitely, it needs special attention and household based availability of drinking water facility would be more useful.
2. **Work Participation Rate:** There are several development priorities that emerge from the survey. Wayanad is predominantly an agrarian district with agriculture labour constituting a major occupational group. However,

given the of work participation rate in general and that of female population in particular, which are below the national average, there is a need to look at avenues of enhancing employment and work opportunities. Self employment and non-farm sector has not developed fully in the district and there appears to be potential for dairy, poultry and other allied activities. This would enhance the work participation rate of women as well as provide livelihood security for the tribal households.

3. **Female Work Participation:** Post secondary education and skill development training, especially for girls is another development priority. This need is identified through an analysis of educational situation as well as work participation of women. In a educationally forward state, Wayanad shows somewhat low education and work participation rate among women and more so among Muslim community. There is a need to address this through establishing appropriate and accessible post secondary education facilities and skill development institutions. Private sector participation in this regard can be encouraged.
4. **Electricity and Pucca Houses:** Electricity and housing are other important areas that require development intervention especially in the high rainfall region. Given the terrain and access factors, electricity can be seen as an important physical infrastructure that will have affect on household well being. The presence of about 7 per cent households with thatched roof and about 40 per cent with semi pucca households reflect the need to improve housing conditions. Rural electrification programmes are in progress under the Rajiv Gandhi Gramin Vidyutika Yojana and there is a need to expedite the implementation of the scheme on priority basis. Housing can also be met through government schemes, extending credit to the households through banking sector and other sources. Low cost and environmentally sustainable housing could be one of the options in a ecologically sensitive area like Wayanad. Special schemes for housing of scheduled tribes may be taken up.

**5. Literacy Rate:** Though literacy rate is high, there appears to be a development gap in terms of use of safe drinking water as well as sanitation facilities in the rural areas. While universal sanitation campaign and drinking water mission have been able to meet this development challenge, to some extent the data shows that much needs to be done.

### **Other development priorities**

Given high proportion of tribal population in the district, a special planning and development focus on tribal communities is needed. Improved housing, land, non-farm and off-farm activities, education and health become priorities for this community. The access to sanitation and drinking water facilities is relatively low among the tribal population.

- Promotion of natural resource based micro enterprises would be one of the options that the government could adopt in order to diversify employment and to use the resources efficiently. Agencies like NABARD may be brought into picture to facilitate such promotional activities.
- Given the predominance of plantation and spice based economy, there is a need to engage in promotion of marketing and other support mechanisms like processing for enhancing value addition with respect to plantation crops like pepper, coffee, tea, cardamom and other spices and fruits.
- Formal credit systems have their presence in the district; however penetration of cooperative sector is not adequate. Given the role of cooperatives in extending credit to agriculture, there is a need to address this issue as well. It would also help in diversification into non-farm and off-farm sector like dairy, poultry and allied activities.