



Baseline Survey of Minority Concentrated Districts

District Report

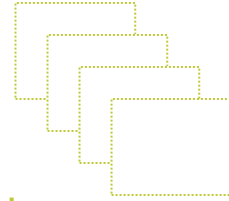
WEST GARO HILLS

Study Commissioned by
Ministry of Minority Affairs
Government of India

Study Conducted by



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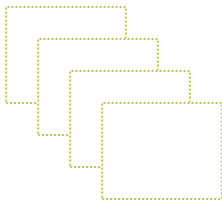


Commissioned by the Ministry of Minority Affairs, this Baseline Survey was planned for 90 minority concentrated districts (MCDs) identified by the Government of India across the country, and the Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR), New Delhi coordinated the entire survey.

Omeo Kumar Das Institute of Social Change and Development, Guwahati had 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 West Garo Hills district of Meghalaya.

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.





CONTENTS

BACKGROUND	8
METHODOLOGY	9
TOOLS USED	10
A BRIEF PROFILE OF WEST GARO HILLS.....	11
2.1 AREA AND LOCATION.....	11
2.2 ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISION.....	11
2.3 RESOURCE BASE.....	12
2.3.1 <i>Population.....</i>	<i>12</i>
2.3.2 <i>Sex ratio.....</i>	<i>13</i>
2.3.3 <i>Literacy Rate.....</i>	<i>13</i>
2.3.4 <i>Workforce.....</i>	<i>14</i>
2.3.5 <i>Education and Health.....</i>	<i>16</i>
2.3.7 <i>Natural Resource Base.....</i>	<i>16</i>
2.4 ECONOMY	18
2.4.1 <i>Agriculture.....</i>	<i>18</i>
2.4.2 <i>Industries and Mineral Resources</i>	<i>18</i>
2.4.3 <i>Livestock and veterinary facilities.....</i>	<i>19</i>
2.4.4 <i>Sericulture.....</i>	<i>19</i>
2.4.5 <i>Plantation and Horticulture.....</i>	<i>19</i>
2.6 INFRASTRUCTURE AND CONNECTIVITY	20
2.6.1 <i>Telecommunication.....</i>	<i>20</i>
2.6.2 <i>Power and energy.....</i>	<i>20</i>
2.6.3 <i>Health and Educational infrastructure</i>	<i>20</i>
2.6.4 <i>Banking.....</i>	<i>21</i>
2.7. BASIC AMENITIES	21
PROFILE OF THE SAMPLE VILLAGES	23
3.1 DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE	23
3.2 SEX RATIO.....	23
3.3. LITERACY RATE.....	23
3.4 FACILITIES.....	23
3.4.1 <i>Electricity.....</i>	<i>24</i>
3.4.2 <i>Drinking water.....</i>	<i>24</i>
3.4.3 <i>Toilet facility</i>	<i>25</i>
3.4.5 <i>Education.....</i>	<i>25</i>
3.4.6 <i>Health Facilities.....</i>	<i>26</i>
3.4.7 <i>Other facilities.....</i>	<i>26</i>
3.5 COMMON RESOURCES, VILLAGE ORGANIZATIONS , ARTISAN AND HANDICRAFT ACTIVITIES ..	27
3.6 CROP PRODUCTIVITY STATUS	28
3.7 INPUT STATUS FOR CULTIVATION.....	28
3.7.1 <i>Current inputs.....</i>	<i>28</i>
3.7.2 <i>Capital inputs.....</i>	<i>28</i>
3.8 CREDIT	28
3.9 MIGRATION AND EMPLOYMENT AND WAGE INCOME EARNING	29
3.10 RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES AND BENEFICIARIES ASSISTED	29
3.11 POVERTY AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM.....	31
3.12 SUMMARY	32
RESULT OF THE BASELINE SURVEY	33



4.1 RELIGION AND CASTE COMPOSITION.....	33
4.2 MOTHER TONGUE	33
4.3 AGE AND SEX.....	33
4.4 HOUSEHOLD SIZE	33
4.5 MARITAL STATUS.....	33
4.6 EDUCATIONAL STATUS.....	34
4.7 OCCUPATION AND EMPLOYMENT	34
4.7.1 <i>Occupation and Industry</i>	34
4.7.2 <i>Additional Employment and Preference</i>	35
4.7.3 <i>Migrant Workers</i>	35
4.8 LAND AND OTHER ASSETS.....	36
4.8.1 <i>Cultivated Land: Ownership and Operational Holding</i>	36
4.9 LIVESTOCK.....	36
4.10 OWNERSHIP OF PRODUCTIVE AND OTHER ASSETS	36
4.10.1 <i>Agricultural Implements</i>	36
4.10.2 <i>Transport</i>	36
4.10.4 <i>Modern Household Assets</i>	36
4.10.5 <i>Financial Assets</i>	37
4.11 HOUSING STATUS.....	37
4.11.1 <i>House Type and availability of living space</i>	37
4.11.2 <i>Domestic lighting and fuel use</i>	37
4.11.3 <i>Drinking water facilities</i>	38
4.11.4 <i>Sanitation and drainage facility</i>	38
4.12 INDEBTEDNESS OF RURAL HOUSEHOLDS	38
4.13 INCOME AND EXPENDITURE.....	39
4.14 CURRENT EDUCATIONAL STATUS, SKILL TRAINING	40
4.14.1 <i>Enrolment and drop out among sample population of 5-25 years.</i>	40
4.14.2 <i>Educational attainment among sample population 5-25 years</i>	40
4.14.3 <i>Aspirations and skill development</i>	40
4.14.4 <i>Aspiration of Parents on their Children</i>	41
4.15 PRESENT HEALTH SCENARIO.....	41
4.15.1 <i>Persons reporting ailment (PAP) and treatment</i>	41
4.15.2 <i>Immunization of Children</i>	42
4.17 POVERTY AND THE PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM (PDS)	42
4.18 AWARENESS ON GOVERNMENT PROGRAMMES AND BENEFITS DERIVED THEREOF	42
4.19. PARTICIPATION IN THE SOCIO-POLITICAL AFFAIRS.....	43
4.20 CONFLICT, INSECURITY AND ACCESS TO MEDIA AND COMMUNICATION	43
4.21 ASPIRATIONS OF THE COMMUNITIES AS REFLECTED FROM THE SURVEY	44
4.21.1 <i>Most important facilities lacking in the villages</i>	44
4.21.2 <i>Perceived priorities for the welfare of minority communities</i>	44
DEVELOPMENT DEFICITS	45
LIST OF SURVEYED VILLAGES.	47



LIST OF TABLES

Table 2.1	Revenue Circles and Blocks in West Garo Hills district
Table 2.2	Total Population of West Garo Hills District (2001)
Table 2.3	Religion wise sex ratio for rural and total population in West Garo Hills district (2001)
Table 2.4	Literacy Rate by Sex and Area in West Garo Hills
Table 2.5	Literacy rate by religious groups and place of residence in West Garo Hills
Table 2.6	Work participation rate by religious groups
Table 2.7	Percentage of workers by religious groups in total rural workers
Table 2.8	Percentage of male workers by religious groups in total rural workers
Table 2.9	Percentage of female workers by religious groups in total rural workers
Table 2.10	Block-wise Number of Literates and Literacy Rate (2001)
Table 2.11	Religion wise child sex ratio in West Garo Hills district (2001)
Table 2.12	Land Utilisation in West Garo Hills district and Meghalaya
Table 2.13	Forest Type classes in West Garo hills district and Meghalaya
Table 2.14	Dairy and poultry production in West Garo Hills district
Table 2.15	Production of cocoons in West Garo Hills district (2006)
Table 2.16	Health services and facilities available in West Garo Hills district (2006)
Table 2.17	Distribution of Amenities in inhabited villages in Kamrup district
Table: 3.1.	Total Population distribution in sample villages (2001 census)
Table: 3.2.	Literacy rate in sample villages of Bongaigaon district (2001 census)
Table: 3.3.	Number of households in sample villages with type of electricity connection
Table: 3.4.	Average hours of electricity available in sample villages
Table: 3.5.	Distribution of water sources by types in sample villages
Table: 3.6.	Distribution of toilet facilities by types in sample villages
Table: 3.7.	Total number of schools within sample villages
Table: 3.8.	Number of sample villages reporting some medical facilities
Table: 3.9.	Number of sample villages reporting other facilities within villages
Table: 3.10.	No. of sample villages reporting distance of other facilities outside village
Table: 3.11.	Average wage income from sample villages by kind of work
Table: 3.12.	Scheme based work generated and the wage rate per day
Table: 3.13.	Number of government job holders in sample villages
Table: 3.14.	Beneficiaries by religious groups under three major programmes in Sample villages
Table: 3.15.	Distribution of job card holders by religion and caste in sample villages
Table: 3.16.	Distribution of ration card holders by religion in sample villages
Table: 3.17.	Functioning of PDS shops in the sample villages
Table 4.1	Distribution of Sample Households by Religion and Caste
Table 4.2	Distribution of Sample Households by Mother Tongue
Table 4.3	Distribution of sample population by age groups, religion, and sex
Table 4.4	Distribution of sample households by size
Table 4.5	Percentage distribution of people by marital status in the sample households by age groups
Table 4.6	Percentage distribution of people by level of educational attainment in sample households
Table 4.7	Percentages of workers by main occupations in the sample households
Table 4.8	Percentages of workers with secondary occupation in the sample households
Table 4.9	Percentages of sample population reporting main occupation classified by Industry
Table 4.10	Employment days of people engaged in main occupation by religion and gender
Table 4.11	Employment days of sample population engaged in secondary occupation by religion and gender
Table 4.12	Work participation rate by religion and gender



Table.4.13 (A)	Percentage distribution of households looking for more employment
Table.4.13 (b)	Percentage distribution of persons looking for more employment by their preference
Table 4.14	Percentage distribution of migrant workers by occupation
Table 4.15	Percentage distribution of migrant workers by place of migration
Table 4.16	Percentage distribution of migrant workers by duration of migration
Table 4.17	Percentage distribution sample households with own land by religion and caste
Table 4.18	Percentage distribution sample households with own cultivated land by religion and caste
Table 4.19	Number of sample households reporting leased in and leased out land
Table 4.20	Number of sample households reporting mortgaged in and mortgaged out land
Table 4.21	Percentage distribution sample households with cultivated land by size class
Table 4.22	Percentage distribution sample households with types of livestock by caste and religion
Table 4.23	Number of Households with Agriculture Implements
Table 4.24	Percentage distribution sample households by housing status
Table 4.25	Percentage distribution sample households by type of own house
Table 4.26	Percentage distribution sample households by number of rooms
Table 4.27	Percentage distribution sample households with availability of domestic electric connection
Table 4.28	Percentage distribution sample households by sources of light in non-electrified sample households
Table 4.29	Percentage distribution sample households by type of fuel used
Table 4.30	Percentage distribution sample households by source of drinking water
Table 4.31	Percentage distribution sample households by distance of the source of drinking water
Table 4.32	Percentage distribution sample households by type of toilet facilities
Table 4.33	Percentage distribution sample households with or without drainage facility
Table 4.34	Percentage distribution sample households reporting current indebtedness
Table 4.35	Percentage distribution of sample households reporting net annual income by income classes during last one year
Table 4.36	Percentage distribution of sample households reporting total annual expenditure by expenditure class during last one year
Table 4.37	Percentage distribution of sample households reporting annual expenditure on Cereals and Pulses
Table 4.38	Percentage distribution of sample households reporting annual expenditure on vegetables, meat, milk, spices, sugar etc.
Table 4.39	Percentage distribution of sample households reporting annual expenditure on Cloths, footwear and beddings
Table 4.40	Percentage distribution of sample households reporting annual expenditure on education
Table 4.41	Percentage distribution of sample households reporting annual expenditure on health
Table 4.42	Percentage distribution of sample households reporting annual expenditure on festivals and ceremonies
Table 4.43	Percentage distribution of sample households reporting annual expenditure on electricity, gas etc.
Table 4.44	Percentage distribution of sample households reporting annual on expenditure on telephone
Table 4.45	Percentage distribution of sample households reporting annual expenditure on repair of houses
Table 4.46	Percentage distribution of sample households reporting annual expenditure on beedi cigarettes etc.
Table 4.47	Percentage distribution of sample households reporting annual expenditure on recreation
Table 4.48	Percentage distribution of sample households reporting annual expenditure on social ceremonies
Table 4.49	Percentage distribution of Schooling Status of People (5-25 years) in the Sample Households
Table 4.50	Percentage distribution of dropout students by reasons in the Sample Households



Table 4.51	Percentage distribution of Education level of People (5-25 years) in the Sample Households
Table 4.52	Percentage distribution students in the sample households by type of School attended
Table 4.53	Percentage distribution sample households interested to take skill development training
Table 4.54	Percentage distribution persons in the sample households desiring different types of training
Table 4.55	Percentage distribution of parents in the sample households stating aspirations for the male child student
Table 5.56	Percentage distribution of parents in the sample households stating aspirations for the female child student
Table 4.57	Percentage distribution of persons in the sample households reporting different kinds of diseases
Table 4.58	Percentage distribution of persons in the sample households reporting hospitalization
Table 4.59	Percentage distribution of persons in the sample households reporting treatment by various service providers
Table 4.60	Percentage distribution of sample households reporting last child born in the family by place of birth
Table 4.61	Percentage distribution of sample households reporting assistance received by mother during the delivery of last child born
Table 4.62	Immunization details of children below 5 years in the sample households by religion and gender
Table 4.63	Percentage distribution of fully immunized children by age groups
Table 4.64	Percentage distribution of children fully immunized by government agency
Table 4.65	Percentage distribution of children not immunized by reasons thereof
Table 4.66	Percentage distribution of sample households who belong to BPL category
Table 4.67	Percentage distribution of sample households having BPL Card
Table 4.68	Percentage distribution of sample households belonging to BPL category and having BPL Card
Table 4.69	Percentage distribution of sample households availing PDS support
Table 4.70	Percentage distribution of sample households by their ability to buy ration from PDS shop
Table 4.71	Percentage distribution of sample households facing difficulties in accessing PDS rations by reasons thereof
Table 4.72	Percentage distribution of sample households reporting awareness on various government programmes
Table 4.73	Percentage distribution of sample households benefiting from various government programmes
Table 4.74	Percentage distribution of sample households who voted in the last election
Table 4.75	Percentage distribution of sample households by membership status in local and social and religion bodies
Table 4.76	Percentage distribution of sample households affected in Conflict Situations
Table 4.77	Percentage distribution of sample households with access to Newspaper, Radio and TV



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. Assam is among the four states with large Muslim population where according to the Committee the situation is grave. Therefore, there is a need to generate data to evaluate and address issues of Muslim backwardness in the state.

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 percent of tehsils, the second stratum constitutes middle 50 percent and the third/last stratum constitutes bottom 30 percent 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 NSSO¹. 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 of the village	no. of hamlet-group to be formed
1200 to 1799	3
1800 to 2399	4
2400 to 2999	5
3000 to 3599	6
..... and so on	

Following the above methodology, a total of 25 villages from West Garo Hills district in Meghalaya were identified and 30 households from each village was selected for the sample survey. The present report is based on the data gathered from about 750 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 WEST GARO HILLS

2.1 Area and Location

West Garo Hills, as the name suggests, is located in the western part of the State of Meghalaya. The Garo Hills district was divided into two districts, viz. the West Garo Hills district and the East Garo Hills district in October 1976. The erstwhile West Garo Hills district was further divided into two administrative districts of West and South Garo Hills on June 1992. The district headquarters of West Garo Hills is Tura, which is the second largest town in Meghalaya after Shillong.

The district is bounded by the East Garo Hills district on the east, the South Garo Hills on the south-east, the Goalpara district of Assam on the north and north-west and Bangladesh on the south. It is situated approximately between the latitudes of 90° 30' and 89° 40' E, and the longitudes of 26° and 25° 20' N.

The total area of the district is 3714 sq. km. As the name suggests the district is mostly hilly with plains fringing the northern, western and the south-western borders. West Garo Hills has three important mountain ranges viz. Tura Range, Arbella Range and Ranggira Range.

2.2 Administrative Division

Administratively the district is divided into three subdivisions viz. Tura, Phulbari and Dalu. There are seven revenue circles and eight community development blocks (CD) in the district.

Table 2.1 Revenue Circles and Blocks in West Garo Hills district

Name of Revenue Circles	Name of Bocks
Selsella	Selsella
Dadenggiri	Dadenggiri
Tikrililla	Tikrikilla
Rongram	Rongram
	Gambegre
Betasing	Betasing
Zikzak	Zikzak
Dalu	Dalu

The total number of villages in the districts is 1507 of which 1469 are inhabited. Under Article 244(2) of the Indian Constitution the provisions of Sixth Schedule is applicable to the district.



The Garo Hills District Council came into being in 1952 under the provisions of the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution of India and the Assam and Meghalaya framed there under. At present, the jurisdiction of the Council is over the entire geographical area of Garo Hills district. There are 17 constituencies under the Council. The administration is carried on by the Executive Committee constituted under the Autonomous District Rules, the Committee being headed by the Chief Executive Member. There are two Executive Members under him. These functionaries share among themselves the entire responsibility of administration, their separate functions being defined. In, short, in respect of the internal administration of the district they may be compared to the Ministers of the State Government in that they are elected to the Council and have particular subjects under their charge. The major subjects assigned to the Council are : Forests, Civil Works, Taxation, Revenue, Judicial, Transport and Education. The business of the house is conducted by the Chairman and Deputy Chairman, corresponding to the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker in the State Assembly.

In domestic matters, very wide powers are exercised by the Nokma of individual villages. He is the head or chief of the dominant clan within the territorial limits. There are Laskars and Sardars recognized by District Council who have a certain measure of magisterial powers and rather more police powers. Sardars are appointed to assist the Laskars in the discharge of their duties. The institution of Laskarship has come under some criticism in recent years.

2.3 Resource Base

2.3.1 Population

As per the Census data 2001, the demographic profile of the district shows that 79.54 percent of the total rural population in the district belongs to the minority community, of which Christians comprise 66 percent. The population density in the district which stands at 140 persons per sq.km is significantly higher than the state average of 103 persons as per the 2001 census. However, it needs to be noted that due to hilly contours of the district the urban population density stands at 3224 persons per sq. km while the rural density stands at 124 persons only. With a total of 95,524 households and an average household size of 5 members, the district comprises 85340 rural households and 10184 urban households. The populations of the district are all STs.

Table 2.2 Total Population of West Garo Hills District (2001)

Residence	Persons	Hindu	Muslims	Christians
Total	518390	111,528	78973	282865
Urban	58978	17547	730	40383
Rural	459412	93981	78243	242482

Source: Census of India, 2001.



2.3.2 Sex ratio

An important indicator of gender equality is the number of females per thousand males. As per the 2001 census data, the sex ratio of West Garo Hills stands at 968 females per thousand males while the child sex ratio for (0-6 years) is 960. Significantly, the sex ratio for rural areas in the district stands higher than the district total. The sex ratio data shows that gender parity among the Hindus is least among all the religious groups.

Table 2.3 Religion wise sex ratio by for rural and total population in West Garo Hills district (2001)

Residence	All Religion	Hindu	Muslim	Christian
District Total	968	922	953	985
District Rural	970	941	956	978

Source: Census of India, 2001.

2.3.3 Literacy Rate

The literacy rate in the district as per the Census, 2001 is lower than the state average. Although the female literacy rate in the urban areas of the district is more than 80 percent, however in rural areas of the State female literacy rate is very low. The rural literacy rate in the district is significantly lower than the State averages.

Table 2.4 Literacy Rate by Sex and Area in West Garo Hills

Place	Population Total			Rural			Urban		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
Meghalaya 2001	62.56	65.43	59.61	56.29	59.24	89.05	86.30	89.05	83.50
West Garo Hills 2001	50.67	57.03	44.12	45.82	52.52	38.93	86.05	89.47	82.44

Source: Census of India, 2001.

Religious wise literacy rates in the district reveal that Christians have highest number of literates among the religious groups. The literacy rate of the Muslims is much below the average rural literacy rate of the district especially the Muslim female literacy rate. This low level of literacy and consequent educational attainment has its bearing on the employment and livelihood opportunities of the Muslims. The main reason for educational backwardness of Muslims is poverty due to which children are forced to drop out after the first few classes. This is particularly true for Muslim girls.



Table 2.5 Literacy rate by religious groups and place of residence in West Garo Hills

Religion	Residence	Literacy Rate (2001)		
		Person	Male	Female
Hindus	Total	55.80	65.15	45.57
Hindus	Rural	50.59	60.23	40.30
Muslims	Total	35.34	41.27	29.07
Muslims	Rural	34.88	40.78	28.68
Christians	Total	58.03	63.32	52.71
Christians	Rural	52.75	58.66	46.75

Source: Census of India, 2001.

Little children are expected to provide for their families by working in karkhanas (small workshops), as domestic help or by looking after their siblings while their mothers go to work (Sachar Committee Report, 2006). The opportunity costs involved in sending children to school is also too high for poor and illiterate parents. The community-specific factor for low educational achievement is that Muslims do not see education as necessarily translating into formal employment (Sachar Committee Report, 2006).

2.3.4 Workforce

The workforce distribution of the total population in the district shows that 40.19 percent of the population is in the total workforce, the male work force participation rate is 47.8 percent while female work participation rate is 32.34 percent. The work participation rate in the rural areas of West Garo Hills district is 41 percent, with male and female participation rates at 49 percent and 35 percent respectively. The religion wise work participation rates in the district and the rural areas is shown in the table below.

Table 2.6 Work participation rate by religious groups

Religion	District			Rural		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
All Religion	40	48	32	42	49	35
Hindu	40	51	27	41	51	30
Muslim	27	45	9	27	45	9
Christian	42	46	37	44	48	41

Source: Census of India, 2001.

Cultivators comprise the major rural work force in West Garo Hills. Religion wise workers in the total rural workforce shows that while 20 percent are Hindus, Muslims are 11 percent and Christians comprise 31 percent. The remaining 37 percent of the workforces are comprised by people from other religious groups like Sikhs, Buddhists and people with other religious beliefs.



Table 2.7 Percentage of workers by religious groups in total rural workers

Religion	Cultivators	Agricultural worker	Household industry workers	Other workers	Row Total
Hindu	7.74	4.16	1.22	6.76	19.88
Muslim	3.87	3.47	0.38	3.46	11.17
Christians	37.01	8.57	1.41	9.12	31.05
Rural workers	58.88	17.70	3.30	20.12	100.00

Source: Census of India, 2001.

The classification of workforce within each religious groups show that among the Muslims, the proportion of agricultural workers is highest for both males and females. More than 30 percent of the total Muslim workforce is engaged as agricultural labour.

Table 2.8 Percentage of male workers by religious groups in total rural workers

Religion	Cultivators	Agricultural worker	Household industry workers	Other workers	Row Total
Hindu	8.23	3.36	0.76	9.33	21.68
Muslim	5.60	4.77	0.25	5.08	15.71
Christians	33.16	7.05	1.00	10.34	51.56
Total Rural	56.01	16.31	2.20	25.48	100.00

Source: Census of India, 2001.

Gender desegregated figures on workers shows that, proportion of Christian rural males in the total rural male workers is 52 percent while the same for females is 63 percent. In other words proportionately more Christian women are in the active work force than their counter parts. The bulk of the agricultural activities are carried by the Christian women both as cultivator as well as agricultural labour. In respect of male workers, the Census data shows that higher proportions of Hindu males are engaged as other workers in the rural areas.

Table 2.9 Percentage of female workers by religious groups in total rural workers

Religion	Cultivators	Agricultural worker	Household industry workers	Other workers	Row Total
Hindu	7.03	5.31	1.87	3.03	17.25
Muslim	1.35	1.57	0.56	1.09	4.57
Christians	42.62	10.79	1.99	7.35	62.75
Total Rural	63.06	19.72	4.91	12.31	100.00

Source: Census of India, 2001.



2.3.5 Education and Health

The literacy rate of the population in different blocks in the district reveals that Rongram block has the highest literacy rate while Dadenggiri block has the lowest literacy rate. The district has a total of 1118 primary school, 286 middle school and 97 secondary schools and two colleges.

Table 2.10 Block-wise Number of Literates and Literacy Rate (2001)

Block	Literates			Literacy Rate		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
Selsella	43,846	25,625	18221	41.6	47.9	35.1
Dadenggiri	7981	4932	3049	31.1	38.1	23.9
Tikrikilla	18763	10963	7800	46.6	54.2	38.9
Rongram	68075	37050	31025	72.0	76.7	67.1
Betasing	25282	14518	10764	49.0	55.7	42.2
Zikzak	24354	14314	10040	45.5	52.5	38.2
Dalu	23198	13435	9763	50.1	57.0	42.9

Source: Census of India, 2001.

An important indicator of health status is the child sex ratio in the age group of 0-6 years and the immunisation coverage of children up to five years. A comparative picture across religious groups shows that child sex ratio among the Muslims in the district is highest across all religious groups. The high child sex ratio of the Muslims is attributed to the high birth rates.

Table 2.11 Religion wise child sex ratio in West Garo Hills district (2001)

Religion	District Total	Rural
All Religion	960	958
Hindu	968	964
Muslim	972	972
Christian	955	952

Source: Census of India, 2001.

The full immunization coverage in the district for the year 2004-05 which was 62 percent has increased to 92 percent during the year 2005-06.

2.3.7 Natural Resource Base

Land and its quality: The West Garo hills in Meghalaya falls under Sub-tropical and tropical agro-climatic zones. The Subtropical zone in the Kailash area is suited for cultivation of vegetables while the southern parts of the district falling under tropical zone are suited for cultivation of tuber crops. Of the total land area in the district 155.45 sq.km (4.19 percent of total geographical area) is under jhum cultivation as per the Annual Report (2006) of the Department of Soil and Water conservation, Govt. of Meghalaya. The land utilization statistics in the district is as shown in the table below.



Table 2.12 Land Utilisation in West Garo Hills district and Meghalaya
2004-05 (Area in Hectares)

	Land Classification	West Garo Hills	State
A	Reporting Area	369600	2227100
1	Forest	164001	941786
2	Not Available for Cultivation		
a	Area under Non-Agricultural Uses	14296	90215
b	Barren & Un-cultivable Land	7432	137730
	Total (a+b)	21728	227945
3	Other Uncultivated Lands		
a.	Permanent Patures and barren land	0	0
b	Land under misc. tree crops& grooves etc.	24302	156619
c	Cultivable waste land	34681	451098
	Total(a+b+c)	58983	607717
4	Fallow Lands		
a	Fallow lands other than current fallows	43113	167313
b	Current fallows	12300	63447
	Total(a+b)	55413	230760
5	Net Area Sown	69475	218892
6	Area Sown more than once	20279	46680
7	Total Crop Area	89754	265572

Source: http://megagriculture.gov.in/agrscen_landuse.htm accessed on 17.04.08

Forestry: The total forest cover in West Garo Hills district is 2022 sq. km (54.42 percent) of the total land area which comprises of 1040 sq. km of open forest and 607 sq. km of dense forest. The district has a total of 19.21 sq. km of reserved forest comprising of Dibru Hills (15.02sq.km) and Tura Peak (4.19 sq. km). The table below shows the forest type classification for West Garo Hills district.

Table 2.13 Forest Type classes in West Garo hills district and Meghalaya
(area in sq. km)

Class	West Garo Hills	Meghalaya
Sub tropical pine forest	-	542.44
Tropical semi-evergreen	480.79	2459.55
Tropical moist/ Dry deciduous	1257.08	2459.55
Tropical dry deciduous and bamboo mix	316.99	6967.51
Degraded	656.3	1791.8
Grasslands	-	3383.78
Agriculture/ Non forest	914.04	621.7
Built up	-	16.46
Sandy area	33.17	129.61
Water bodies	55.63	170.25
Total	3714	22429

Source: <http://meghalaya.nic.in/naturalres/forest.htm> accessed on 17.04.08



Soil and Water: The West Garo Hills District with its undulating topography and high intensity of rainfall, suffers from erosion problem and ecosystem degradation. The problem is compounded by unscientific agricultural practices such as jhumming/shifting cultivation on steep slopes, rampant deforestation, burning etc., which has resulted in degradation of land and water resources. The per humid hyperthermic sub-eco region covers East and West Garo Hills. The agro climate of the hyperthermic sub-eco-region is characterised by hot and moist summers and cool winters belonging to sub-tropical climate. The mean annual rainfall ranges from 2000 to 3362mm and potential evapotranspiration (PE) ranges from 1000 to 1299mm. The sub-eco region experiences a short water deficit of 300-350mm due to seasonal dry spells during post-monsoon period. Soils of the hills are moderately deep to deep, loamy skeletal to fine and excessively drained subject to slight to very severe erosion hazards. Soils of hilltops and upper hill slopes are moderately deep-to-deep, fine loamy to fine, excessive drained, subject to very severe erosion hazards and strong stoniness.

2.4 Economy

2.4.1 Agriculture

The economy of West Garo Hills district is basically agrarian in nature with about 80 percent of the population dependent on agriculture. Paddy is the major crop. The agro climatic conditions of the district are conducive for various agricultural activities. Agriculture in the district is characterized by dependence on rainfall, predominance of seasonal crops and traditional methods of cultivation. The *jhumming* or shifting cultivation is prevalent in the district and as per 2001 census, 20 percent of the population in the district are dependent on *jhum* cultivation. With the passing of time, and the increasing pressure of population, the *jhum* cycle has been considerably reduced, averaging three years instead of the norm of seven. The practice has led to extensive denudation of forests and progressive destruction of the ecology. Wet rice cultivation is practiced in the plains areas

2.4.2 Industries and Mineral Resources

Most of the economic mineral resources of Garo Hills are associated with the Eocene Tertiary, Sedimentary formation. These minerals are Coal, Limestone, Lithomargic clay, Fireclay, Phosphorite, Gypsum and Glass sand. The total estimated reserves of coal in Garo Hills Districts is of the order of 359.00 million tones spread over three coalfields viz., West Daranggre, Siju and Pendengru-Balpakram coalfields. Of these, only the West Daranggre coalfield has been opened and worked to a small extent. Limestone reserves in Garo Hills are of the order of 510 million tones. Of this, more than 460 million tones is in a single deposit at Siju Arteka in South Garo Hills. So far, the limestone deposits of Garo Hills have not been worked for commercial purpose except a small quantity in the Siju area along the Nongalbibra-Baghmara road, which has been quarried for road metals. Lithomargic Clay and Fireclay are associated with the coal deposits of the West Daranggre coalfields. The estimated reserve of the lithomargic clay and fireclay is of the order of 80 million tones, out of which fireclay reserve is 70 million tones. Tests conducted on these clays show that they can be utilized for production of high-class refractory bricks and insulators. The district has 490 SSI units with employment



provided to 31876 persons till the year 2005-06. There are six units (projects) currently in operation in the district under the KVIC programme.

2.4.3 Livestock and veterinary facilities

Dairying is practiced by most of the small and marginal farmers and landless labourers in the district and to them this activity provides economic security by serving as a hedge against crop failure. The economy of the district is basically agrarian and as such the economic development of the district is mostly dependent on agriculture and allied activities. Traditionally, dairy farming is a subsidiary occupation of the farmers of the district. The district has the highest poultry production in the state. The milk production from indigenous cattle and buffaloes is also the highest in the state.

Table 2.14 Dairy and poultry production in West Garo Hills district

Cows milk		Buffaloes	Eggs- Fowls	Eggs-Ducks
Indigenous	Cross breed			
8.06	3.41	0.76	249.34	17.24

Source: Statistical Handbook, Meghalaya, 2007.

2.4.4. Sericulture

The agro-climatic condition of the district is suitable for sericulture. Mulberry and other plants suitable for rearing Eri and Muga Silkworms are grown in the Garo Hills though most of the plantations are in the interior hills and forests. The present status of production is shown below. The district is the highest producer of eri and muga cocoons in Meghalaya.

Table 2.15 Production of cocoons in West Garo Hills district (2006)

Cocoons	(in '000 kg)
Eri	86.42
Muga	124.48
Mulberry	8.56

Source: Statistical Handbook, Meghalaya, 2007.

The total area under production of mulberry, eri and muga is 22 hectares, 44.5 hectares and 48 hectares respectively.

2.4.5. Plantation and Horticulture

Due to widespread practice of shifting cultivation and deforestation, the Agriculture Department has taken up Horticulture in the district on a priority basis. West Garo Hills with a wide variety of Agro-climatic conditions, soil and rainfall provide opportunities for growing varied range of Horticultural and plantation crops. The important fruit crops of the district are oranges, pineapple, litchi, banana, jackfruit and other citrus fruits. Important plantation crops are arecanut, cashewnut, coconut, tea, black pepper,



bayleaf, betel leaf and rubber. Spices like ginger; turmeric, chilies, large cardamom and cinnamon are also grown. Both Kharif and Rabi vegetables are grown. The district has a Tea Nursery at Rongram, Damalgiri and Zikzak. The Rubber Board has a Regional office in Tura and has been promoting cultivation of rubber in the region.

2.6 Infrastructure and Connectivity

Tura, the headquarters of the district, is well connected by road with other places in the district as well as with the rest of the Meghalaya and Assam. Bus services by Meghalaya Transport Corporation and other private transport services connect Tura with all important places in the districts of Garo Hills and also to Shillong (323 kms), the capital of the State. The district headquarter is connected to Guwahati (220 kms), the capital of Assam, which is also the nearest railhead and also to Siliguri in North Bengal. The town is connected to Dhubri in Assam by road and river transport. Helicopter services are available from Tura to Shillong and Guwahati. The National Highway 51 connecting Paikan on National Highway 37 in Assam with Tura, the district headquarter which extends further to Dalu, near the Bangladesh border is the main road link for the district. However, rural road connectivity in the district is fairly low as only 29 percent of the rural areas are reported to have paved roads.

2.6.1. Telecommunication

The telecommunication connectivity in the district is mainly provided through the public sector BSNL. While the district headquarter has fairly good connectivity in terms of fixed DELs, cellular services, internet connectivity, rural areas, coverage of facilities are low. Only 7 percent of the villages in the district have P&T facilities. Although the villages have VPT facilities, often, access to VPTS is not available as most of the VPTs are found to be used as personal telephones by the village headman.

2.6.2. Power and energy

Next to transport and communication, power is the other basic infrastructure, which is essential for economic growth. Of the total villages in the district, 64 percent are reported to have power supply (Statistical handbook Meghalaya, 2007) domestic connection for lighting available in 91 percent of these electrified villages. Consumption of electricity for commercial and industrial purpose is not available while only 1 percent of the villages have electricity connection for agricultural use. The absence of electricity consumption for industrial purposes indicates the absence of industrial production base in the district.

2.6.3. Health and Educational infrastructure

The health infrastructure of the district includes 18 PHCs, 6 CHCs, 81 sub-centres, three dispensaries and one hospital. The availability of hospital beds is estimated to be 79 beds per one lakh population in the district. The population coverage of rural health centres in the district stands at 4375 persons per PHC/CHC/Sub-centre. The number of beds available in the government health institution is 90.



Table 2.16 Health services and facilities available in West Garo Hills district (2006)

Facilities	Numbers
Doctors	70
Nurses	115
Pharmacist	31
ANM Nurses	151
General Beds	410
Maternity Beds	20
Pediatrics Beds	5
TB Beds	25
Family Welfare Clininc	33

Source: Statistical Handbook, Meghalaya, 2007.

The educational infrastructure in the district comprises of schools for all levels. There are 7 degree colleges in the district. There is also a Law College and a College of Teacher's Education (B.Ed College) at Tura. There are eight higher secondary schools, around 110 secondary schools, and upper primary and primary schools in almost all the villages. There also exists a Public School and Kendriya Vidyalaya at Tura. Other than that there are vocational institutes at Tura like Regional Vocational Training Institute (RVTI) and ITI. Monfort Centre for Education provides education to the physically handicapped persons, besides running regular training courses for teachers for special education of the physically handicapped students. At Tura, there is a campus of North Eastern Hill University.

2.6.4. Banking

Access to credit and banking facilities is an important indicator for socio-economic development. The total number of reporting offices in the district stands at 28 which comprises of SBI, SCB and OSCBs. The population coverage of banking services is estimated to be 18,514 persons per bank office as per the number of offices in 2006. The credit deposit ratio in the district stands at 60.09 percent. Although the rural CD ratio is 75 percent, the share of rural deposit in the total deposits of the district stood at 42 percent which shows poor savings capacity of the rural population. In respect of credit deployment, 52 percent of the total credit of the district is deployed in rural areas, while 48 percent of total district credit is deployed in the semi-urban areas.

2.7. Basic amenities

The Census 2001 data on basic amenities for different districts gives a overview of the basic services and amenities available in the districts. The data in respect of housing indicates that that 10 percent of the households live in permanent houses, 26.6 percent live in semi permanent and 63.4 percent occupy temporary houses. In respect of amenities in rural areas, there are facility wise variations. The total number of Census villages in West Garo district is 1537 as per 2001 Census while the total number of inhabited villages in the district stands at 1469. The total population of the villages as per



Census 2001 is 459412 persons. The caste wise distribution of the population shows that 1.43 percent of the village population belongs to SC while 76 percent belong to ST.

Table 2.17 Distribution of Amenities in inhabited villages in Kamrup district

Amenities	Number of villages
Total inhabited villages	1469
Total Households	85340
Safe Drinking water facilities	1314 (89))
Electricity (Power Supply)	940 (64)
Electricity (domestic)	855 (91)
Electricity (Agriculture)	6
Primary school	1118 (76)
Middle schools	286 (20)
Secondary/Sr Secondary schools	97 (7)
College	2
Medical facility	148 (10)
Primary Health Centre	18 (1.2)
Primary Health Sub-Centre	81 (5.5)
Post, telegraph and telephone facility	96 (6.5)
Bus services	356 (24.2)
Paved approach road	425 (29)
Un-paved approach road	1217 (81)

Source: Statistical Handbook, Meghalaya, 2007, Census of India, 2001.

The infrastructural gaps in the villages have a bearing upon the overall economic status of the population and the employment scenario in the villages. A synoptic view of the district profile indicates three major deficits in the rural areas of the district. These include: connectivity- physical and telecommunication, education, health and power. The deficits need critical intervention for synergizing the growth process in the district. ■



PROFILE OF THE SAMPLE VILLAGES

3.1 Demographic profile

The total population of the 25 sample villages is 14783 persons with total households of 2777 as per 2001 census. The average household size of the sample villages (5.23) is marginally higher than the district average household size of 5 members. The percentage of ST population is 76.62 percent and SC population is one percent.

Table: 3.1. Total Population distribution in sample villages (2001 census)

HH	Popu- lation	Male	Female	S.C	S.C Male	S.C. Female	S.T.	S.T. Male	S.T. Female
2777	14783	7485	7298	125	71	54	12459	6267	6192

Source: Census, 2001.

3.2 Sex Ratio

The sex ratio of the sample villages is estimated to be 975 females per thousand males, which stands higher than the sex ratio of the district (968 females per thousand males). However, the sex ratio of the ST population in the sample villages is higher at 988 females per thousand males compared to the sex ratio of the total population in the sample villages.

3.3. Literacy Rate

An important indicator of human development is the literacy rate. The size and proportion of literate and educated population gender wise has significant bearing on the socio-economic development. While literacy and education in general has direct positive impact on social and economic development of communities, the female literacy rate is more intrinsically linked to health and social development of the child. The literacy rates in the sample villages as seen from the table are higher than the literacy rates in the rural areas of the district.

Table: 3.2. Literacy rate in sample villages of Bongaigaon district (2001 census)

Place	Male	Female
District total	57.03	44.12
Rural Area	41.88	31.15
Sample villages	53.89	40.94

Source: Census, 2001

3.4 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.

3.4.1 Electricity

Proportion of households using electricity for domestic lighting in rural areas is also indicative of economic status of the households. Of the total villages in the district, 36 percent are reported to have power supply (Census, 2001, Basic Data Sheet). However, of the total sample villages under survey 72 percent have power supply.

Table: 3.3. Number of households in sample villages with type of electricity connection

Type of connection	Hindu	Muslim	Christians	Total
Domestic	283 (26)	20 (2)	786 (72)	1089 (100)
Agriculture	0	0	0	0
Commercial	2	0	0	2
Others	0	0	0	0

Source: Sample Village survey, 2008.

Figures in parentheses indicate percentage to total

The village survey data show that of the total houses with domestic connection in these villages, majority are Christians. No households in the villages have power supply for agricultural use while only two households have commercial connections. The average hours of electricity available in the villages shows that there has been no improvement compared to last ten years.

Table: 3.4. Average hours of electricity available in sample villages

Average hours of electricity available	Last year	5 years ago	10 years ago
	14	15	16

Source: Sample Village survey, 2008.

3.4.2 Drinking water

Availability and access to safe drinking water is one of the important concerns for healthy living especially in rural areas. Private tube well (41 percent) is the major drinking water source in the sample villages. The common facilities for all communities account for 16 percent of the available sources of drinking water. The availability of drinking water facilities in the sample villages across religious groups show that 55 percent of the facilities belong to Christians while Hindus have access to 20 percent and Muslims share 9 percent of the facilities available in the villages. The public stand post accounts for 13 percent of the total available sources. Tap water connection in houses comprises 4 percent of the total drinking water facilities in the sample villages.



Table: 3.5. Distribution of water sources by types in sample villages

Type	Common	Hindu	Muslim	Christian	Total	P.C.
Public Well	54	0	0	36	90	11
Private Well	0	13	0	56	69	9
Public Hand pump	0	0	0	0	0	0
Private Hand pump	0	0	0	0	0	0
Public Tube well	26	3	0	7	36	5
Private Tube well	0	123	70	120	313	41
Public Stand post	36	5	0	60	101	13
Tap water in-house	0	7	0	22	29	4
Tank/River	7	0	0	85	92	12
Others	0	0	0	40	40	5
Total	123 (16)	151 (20)	70 (9)	426 (55)	770 (100)	100

Source: Sample Village survey, 2008.

Figures in brackets represent percentage to total.

3.4.3 Toilet facility

The sanitation status of the sample villages shows that of the total households in the villages 50 percent are reported to have sanitation facilities. The most common toilet facility among the village households is the pit latrine. Only 8 percent of the households have septic tank sanitary facility.

Table: 3.6. Distribution of toilet facilities by types in sample villages

Type	Hindu	Muslim	Christian	Others	Total	P.C
Septic Tank	33		83		116	8
Pit	165	50	714	80	1009	73
TSC	25		212		237	17
Others			30		30	2
Total	223	50	1039	80	1392	100

Source: Sample Village survey, 2008.

3.4.5 Education

Of the total 25 sample villages, primary schools for boys/co-ed are available in 24 villages. The survey of sample villages reveals that for boys all categories of schools are available. Of the total schools available in the villages, 33 have kutcha approach road and 15 have pucca approach roads.



Table: 3.7. Total number of schools within sample villages

Schools	Primary		Middle		High/ H.Sec.		Techni- cal	Religious school	Non formal
	Boys/ coed	Girls	Boys/ coed	Girls	Boys	Girls			
Nos.	24	0	13	0	6	0	0	2	3

3.4.6 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 only available sources for cheap curative care. The survey reveals that within the sample villages, the most common facility available is the Maternity and Child welfare Centre. Most of the medical and health facilities are available in the block head quarter. ICDS centers are present in 24 of the sample villages and the services of the centers have been fairly good.

Table: 3.8. Number of sample villages reporting some medical facilities

Type	Within village	Outside village but within block	Outside block but in the district
Sub centre	2	19	
PHC	2	18	5
CHC	1	7	4
Hospital/Dispensary	2	4	11
Maternity/child care centre	19	1	
Family planning clinic	2	9	
Chemist/medicine shop	1	15	3
Others	1	1	4
Total Facilities	30	74	27

Source: Sample Village survey, 2008

3.4.7 Other facilities

In respect of geographical spread of the location of the villages, the nearest town is located at an average distance of more than 10 km. from the sample villages. The average distance of the block headquarters from the sample villages is also more than 10 km.



Table: 3.9. Number of sample villages reporting other facilities within villages

Facilities within villages	No. of villages
Bus stop	3
Regular Market	1
Post office	6
Bank	1
Fair Price Shop	19
Mandi	2
Veterinary Hospital	4
General Shop	4

Source: Sample Village survey, 2008

The nearest bank office is located at a mean distance of more than 10 km. from the sample villages. In respect of communication- the bus services and postal services for the sample villages is located at an average distance of 2-5 km. The fair price and general shops are available within a radius of 2-5 km. The average connectivity and other infrastructural status of the sample villages reveal that in most of the sample villages the average road condition connecting them to various facilities is non-gravelled.

Table: 3.10. No. of sample villages reporting distance of other facilities outside village

Facilities	< 5 km	5-10 km	> 10 km
Block office	3	3	19
Nearest Town	3	1	21
Bus stop	14	3	5
Regular Market	14	4	6
General Shop	13	3	5
Post Office	12	3	4
Bank	10	3	11
Fair Price Shop	6	-	-
Mandi	12	6	5
Veterinary	12	1	8

Source: Sample Village survey, 2008

3.5 Common resources, Village organizations and artisan and handicraft activities

The organizational activity within the village is an important determinant of overall socio-economic development. The survey data show that apart from religious, political and voluntary organizations other village level organizations are not very active in the sample villages in West Garo Hills. The women organizations in the sample villages are fairly active. The presence of active voluntary and religious organizations in the district is obviously due to the presence of Christian missionary activities in the district. The villages reported presence of local village councils in all the villages and these are fairly



active. The survey also indicates that there are about 88 SHGs in the sample villages; however, they were concentrated in few villages only.

The artisan and handicraft activities which serve as a major livelihood is but concentrated in 5 villages and 21 families are reported to be dependent on these activities for their livelihood. However, the major constraint felt by the households is the problem of marketing their products.

3.6 Crop productivity status

The economy of West Garo Hills is agrarian with paddy as the major crop. The survey results of the sample villages indicate that paddy is the major crop produced in all the villages. The harvest share stands at 30 percent for majority of producers in the sample villages. The maximum market price fetched for paddy one year before the date of survey as reported is Rs.925 per quintal while the minimum price was Rs.700 among the sample villages. The maximum average price of paddy in the sample villages is estimated to be Rs.876 per quintal against the minimum average price of Rs.751. The average yield of paddy is 3 quintals per acre. Jute is produced in only one of the sample villages with an average yield of 3 quintals per acre. The maximum average sale price for jute during last year was reported to be Rs.1250 against the minimum average price of Rs.625.

3.7 Input status for cultivation

3.7.1. Current inputs

The village survey revealed that the sample villages have 367 cultivators using various current inputs for cultivation. The inputs used are canal irrigation and chemical fertilizers and pesticides. 93 percent of the cultivators use both chemical fertilizer and pesticides and 7 percent use canal irrigation.

3.7.2 Capital inputs

Investment and use of capital inputs along with other current inputs have positive impact in raising farm productivity. The village survey shows that use of capital inputs is comparatively higher than the current inputs. While 59 cultivators own private pump sets, 109 farmers use the services, the utility ratio being 1.84 times the machine. Although twelve farming households own power tiller, the user groups comprise of 383 farmers, and while one farmer has a thresher, the user groups comprise of 10 farmers.

3.8 Credit

Credit requirement among the sample villages, predominantly inhabited by the tribal population, is primarily for meeting sudden expenses. Of the four different types of households, a tiny section of rural labour households of the sample villages reportedly incurred debts for this purpose. The meagre income earning has been the main reason for increasing rural indebtedness across the country as per the NSS 55th Round (1999-2000) data. The credit requirement of labour households was met mostly from friends



and relatives. The artisans and other business entities constituting a negligible part of the society too met their credit requirements primarily from friends and relatives, supplemented to a small extent by the credit taken from money lenders and institutional sources. Notwithstanding the fact that concessional credit and priority sector lending in India has substantially increased over the years, the financial accessibility of rural households of West Garo Hills district is still very limited.

3.9 Migration and employment and wage income earning

The survey showed that of the 25 sample villages, people from 15 villages moved out looking for work on daily basis. The survey results indicate that approximately 493 people daily went outside their villages during last one year looking for work. These workers go to neighbouring villages and block headquarters.

The survey indicated that in all the sample villages casualisation of labour has increased. The distressful situation has forced for migration to other places in search of livelihood. The survey revealed that during last one year a total of 511 persons migrated outside the villages for a period of 3 to 8 months in search of work. Most of the workers have migrated to other places within the state and the movement was facilitated by friends and relatives. As many as 961 students from the sample villages are reported to be daily commuters to colleges and higher secondary institutions as the facilities are located outside the villages.

Table: 3.11. Average wage income from sample villages by kind of work

Wage rate (Rs)	Ploughing/land preparation	Weeding	Trans-planting	Harvesting	Threshing	Unskilled labour	Skilled labour	Govt. Programme
Male	69	62	68	63	118	121	132	70
Female	52	53	53	53	51	69	80	70
Child	38	37	40	40	50	50	-	-

Source: Sample Village survey, 2008

The survey revealed high wage rate differentials prevail for male, female and child workers in the rural areas of the district. Although no child labour is engaged as wage labour for government sponsored works, however for farm activities children are engaged. Except for govt. works where there is no wage differentials between males and females, in all other activities; female wage rate is much lower than the male wage rate. On an average the male wage rate is 1.32 times higher than the female wage rate for different types of work.

3.10 Rural Development programmes and beneficiaries assisted

The survey of the sample villages showed that in all the 25 sample villages, government sponsored programmes on education has been continuing while in 14 villages health and nutrition programmes are in progress. In 13 villages family planning programmes are being implemented while Rural Drinking water supply programme has been in progress in 4 villages.



Table: 3.12. Scheme based work generated and the wage rate per day

Schemes	No. workers		Average Wage rate per day	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
SGRY	15	10	70	70
NREGA	1273	925	70	70
PMGSY	70	20	70	70
Others	92	-	120	-

Source: Sample Village survey, 2008

Among the government programmes, NREGA is the major programme implemented in the district.

Table: 3.13. Number of government job holders in sample villages

Religion/caste	No. of government job holders
Hindu	31
Muslim	8
Christian*	287
SC	0
ST**	78
Others	23
Total	427

Note: * All Christians are STs and ** includes non Christian ST population

Source: Sample Village survey, 2008

The survey revealed that a total of 131 persons have been assisted under Old Age pension scheme in the sample villages.

Of the total sample villages 23 villages reported community wise government job holders in their villages. Religious groups wise government jobs across sample villages show that 67 percent are Christians, 7 percent are Hindus and only 3 percent are Muslims. The backward class comprises 18 percent of government job workers in the sample villages.

In respect of implementation of beneficiary oriented programmes in the course of last three years, the results of the villages survey show that majority of the beneficiaries were assisted under NREGA. The religion wise break up of beneficiary status across various programmes reveals that majority of the beneficiaries is Christians.

Table: 3.14. Beneficiaries by religious groups under three major programmes in sample villages

Religion	NREGA	PMGSY	IAY
Hindu	733	3	30
Muslim	208	0	1
Christian	1597	37	131
Others	76	0	18
Total	2614	40	180

Source: Sample Village survey, 2008



The survey results on the performance of NREGA scheme in the 25 sample villages show that in 19 villages works taken up under the scheme have been completed while in 6 villages, works are yet to be completed. The distribution of job card holders shows that of the total job card holders among the Hindus 81 percent have benefited under NREGA works while in respect of Muslims, the corresponding figure is 72 percent. The proportion of beneficiaries among Christian job card holders is 86 percent.

Table: 3.15. Distribution of job card holders by religion and caste in sample villages

Card/Beneficiary	Hindu	Muslim	Christian	Others	Total
Job Card	733	208	1597	76	2614
NREGA beneficiary	597	150	1375	76	2198

Source: Sample Village survey, 2008

3.11 Poverty and Public Distribution System

The distribution of households by BPL cards shows that proportion of Hindu households is 25 percent, Muslims 13 percent, Christians 48 percent and others is 13 percent. Of the total card holders, proportion of APL families in the sample villages is 16 percent.

Table: 3.16. Distribution of ration card holders by religion in sample villages

Religion	Antyodaya	BPL	APL	Total
Hindu	77	276	27	380
Muslim	10	140	-	150
Christian	176	520	174	870
Others	29	149	56	234
Total	292	1085	257	1634

Source: Sample Village survey, 2008

In so far as the PDS facility is concerned 19 villages are reported to have PDS shops and the total number of PDS shops available in the sample villages are 23. The total number of purchasers from the 23 PDS shops in the sample villages is 1904. The survey indicated that overall functioning of the PDS shops in the sample villages has been good.

Table: 3.17. Functioning of PDS shops in the sample villages

Functioning in terms of	Good	Satisfactory	Average
Availability of goods	16	3	4
Get full quota	14	4	5
Regularity	17	3	3
Honesty in measurement	19	2	2
Honesty in price	16	4	3
Quality of grains	17	3	1
Behaviour of the dealer	17	5	1

Source: Sample Village survey, 2008



3.12 Summary

Overall low level of development process in the sample villages is reflected by lower levels of female literacy rate. The village survey findings reveal that 39 percent of the households in the villages are BPL families. Further, the villages suffer from serious bottlenecks in respect of transport and communication and medical and health facilities. Agricultural activities in the district show poor productivity. Lack of institutional credit has reinforced money lenders presence in the villages. Lack of livelihood opportunities has also led to migration of workers outside the villages; however most of the migrants have been other areas of the state. The survey indicates that NREGA is the major government sponsored programmes implemented in the sample villages in the district. ■





RESULT OF THE BASELINE SURVEY

4.1 Religion and Caste Composition

The survey captured a total of 109 Hindu households (14.5 percent), 30 Muslim (4 percent) households, 545 Christian (72.7 percent) and 66 (8.8 percent) other households. STs comprised 94.5 percent of the households. All the Christian households belong to ST category. The details are given in Table 4.1.

4.2 Mother Tongue

For 81.5 percent of the sample households Garo is the mother tongue. Other languages reported as mother tongue by the sample households are Rabha (8 percent), Bengali (5.3 percent) and Hajong (4.9 percent), (Table 4.2). *Garo* is the mother tongue in more than 73 percent Christian households followed by *Rabha* in 8 percent in Hindu households and Bengali by 5 percent Hindu and Muslim households.

4.3 Age and Sex

The sex ratio of the sample population (946 females per '000 males) is found to be much lower than the district rural sex ratio (970) and the sex ratio in the sample villages (975). Religion wise sex ratio of the sample households is estimated to be 957 for Christians and 919 for Hindus. The age distribution of the sample population shows that 33 percent of Hindus, 44 percent of Muslims, 40 percent Christians and 41 percent of population from other category fall in the age group of 0-14 years. 1.5 percent of the sample population was over 60 years or out of active work force. The proportionately high share of Muslim child population may be attributed to the higher fertility rates among the Muslims. (Table 4.3).

4.4 Household Size

The average household size in the district is 5.54 persons per household, which is marginally higher than the Census 2001 figure. Decomposition of the data into size classes shows that 55.4 percent of the sample households have family size up to 5 members 43.1 percent have family sizes of 6-10 members. Religion wise break up of families with size class shows that 66.1 percent of Hindus and 51.9 percent of Christians fall in the family size class of 5 members. The average family size of Hindu households in the sample is 5 persons and Christians have an average family size of 5.46 persons in the sample households. (Table 4.4).

4.5 Marital Status

The proportion of married households across religious groups shows that 48 percent of Hindus, 53 percent Muslims and 44 percent Christians are married among the sample population. The survey reveals only one case of child marriage in the Hindu community. 8 percent of the population in the age group of 15-18 years was found to be married.



While majority of the married Hindu and Christian males and females were in the age group of 31-45 years, among the Muslims, majority of the married males were in the age group of 31-45 years and females were in the age group of 19-25 years. (Table 4.5).

4.6 Educational Status

In respect of educational status of sample population, the survey revealed that 31 percent of the sample population is illiterate and 25 percent have educational attainment below primary. The survey results show that 11 percent have just completed primary education and 15 percent have finished their middle school. Only 6 percent of the sample population completed their matriculation level. Among the religious groups, 39 percent of Hindus were illiterate while the same for Muslims and Christians was 37 percent and 26 percent respectively. Percentages of female illiterates were high across all religious groups compared to the male members, and the highest female illiteracy was recorded for females from other religious groups mainly animistic (54 percent). Among the religious groups the educational attainments of Christians were better. (Table:4.6)

4.7 Occupation and Employment

4.7.1 Occupation and Industry

The survey reveals that work participation rate among Hindu population (40 percent) in the sample is higher than the other religious groups. Religion wise break up of workers within religious groups show that 29 percent of Hindus are engaged as main workers and the corresponding proportions for Muslims and Christians is 22 percent and 24 percent respectively. Female work participation rate for main workers is highest among the Christians (20 percent) and the corresponding proportions for Hindus and Muslims is 15 percent and 14 percent respectively. However, in respect of secondary occupation female work participation rate is higher among the Hindus (24 percent) than the Christians (23 percent) and Muslims (13 percent).

Classification of main workers in the sample population shows that farming, fishing, hunting and related works is the main occupation for majority of Hindus (65 percent) and Christians (63 percent). In case of Muslims farming, fishing etc, engages 42 percent of the main workers while production, transport operators and labourers engage 40 percent of the main work force. In respect of secondary occupation, the survey indicates that 60 percent of Hindus are engaged in production, transport and related works including labourers and the corresponding shares of Christians and Muslims is 66 percent and 50 percent.

Employment details by main industry shows that agriculture employs majority of Hindus (44 percent) and Muslims (38 percent) while Horticulture is the main industry employing Christians (44.2 percent). Horticulture is the next important main industry for the Hindus which engage 14 percent workers. Trade, Hotels and Restaurants is the second important industry for Muslims employing 10.3 percent workers and among the Christians cultivation is the next most important industry employing 25.6 percent workers.



Employment by days of main occupation shows that 67.3 percent of Hindu workers, 85.3 percent of Muslim and 74.2 percent of Christian workers remain gainfully employed for more than six months or more in a year. Gender wise gainful days of employment among the religious groups show that, among the Hindu workers, 61.7 percent males and 5.7 percent females remain gainfully engaged for more than six months in a year, the corresponding proportions for Muslims is 73.5 percent in respect of males and 11 percent for females. Among the Christians 60.5 percent males and 13.7 percent females remain gainfully engaged for more than six months in a year. In respect of secondary occupation, majority workers remained gainfully employed for 100 days or less. Religion wise proportion of workers engaged in secondary occupation for 100 days or less is 87.5 percent Hindus, 80.0 percent Muslims and 91.5 percent Christians. The results indicate presence of underemployment in the rural areas of the district. (Tables 4.7-4.12)

4.7.2 Additional Employment and Preference

Significantly the sample survey indicated that more than fifty percent (approximately 55 percent) of the households were looking for more employment and more so in respect of self employment (94.2 percent). Religion wise distribution of households looking for more employment indicates 59 percent Hindus, 70 percent Muslims and 53 percent Christian households were seeking more employment. Significantly, only 3.1 percent were looking for salaried jobs which are mainly due to the gradual reduction in government salary jobs with no alternatives opportunity in such salary jobs in the private sector in the district. (Table: 4.13)

4.7.3 Migrant Workers

Although the survey indicates rural-urban migration of workers among the sample population, however, urban migration is mostly confined within the state. Christian workers usually do not migrate outside the state. However the Muslim workers are most mobile and 22.2 percent have migrated outside the state, the proportion Hindu migrants outside the state is 5 percent only. Among the Christians 55 percent migrate to urban areas, the corresponding proportion for Hindus is 19 percent and Muslims is 22.2 percent.

Occupational distributions of migrants indicate that production and related works engages majority of the migrant work force from the sample households for Hindus (43 percent) and Muslims (56 percent). Half of the Christian migrants are engaged in service work while 39 percent are engaged in various activities not adequately defined. Most of the migrants go out for short duration of 3-8 months and data indicates higher proportions of Muslims (89 percent) compared to Hindus (71 percent) and Christians (58 percent) migrate for short duration. (Table 4.14 - 4.16).



4.8 Land and other Assets

4.8.1 Cultivated Land: Ownership and Operational Holding

Of the total sample households 96 percent of the households are reported to have own cultivable land. However, of these households 89 percent households have actually reported cultivation. 68 percent of the households possess marginal landholdings and 20 percent are small land holding owners. There are no large landholdings possessed by any of the ample households. Majority of the households with cultivable land holdings are Christians (73 percent), followed by Hindus (14 percent) and Muslims (4 percent). It has been revealed from the survey that while leasing out was more common in practice than leasing in. However, mortgaging in land for cultivation is found to be higher than mortgaging out land among the sample households. (Table: 4.17- 4.21)

4.9 Livestock

In respect of livestock possession, the survey clearly indicates that majority (77 percent) of the sample households possessed poultry, milch animal is possessed by 61 percent and pigs are reared by 35 percent of the sample households. The Christian households possessed more livestock than any other religious groups. (Table 4.22).

4.10 Ownership of Productive and other Assets

4.10.1 Agricultural Implements

The data on the distribution of households by possession of agricultural implements shows that 46 percent of the sample households possessed plough. Power tiller was possessed by only two households, one each from Hindu and Christian religious groups. Pump set was possessed by 12 households and eight were Christians while two households, each were from Hindus and Muslims. (Table 4.23).

4.10.2 Transport

Along with bicycles, motorized two wheelers are emerging as major mode of communication in the villages. Bicycles are found in 35 percent of the sample households. Of the total households possessing bicycles, 67 percent are Christians, 20 percent are Hindus and 6 percent are Muslims. Of the total sample households 6.26 percent have two wheelers either scooter or motorbikes and one percent sample households have cars. All these sample households are Christians.

4.10.4 Modern Household Assets

Among the modern household assets, electric fan is found in 15 percent sample households and TV is found in 23 percent sample households. Among the religious groups 21 percent Hindu, 6 percent Muslim and 72 percent Christian households possess electric fan; television is found in 15 percent Hindu, 0.6 percent Muslim and 82 percent Christian households. 10 percent of the households are also reported to have CD players and 9 percent households reported possession of mobile telephones. However both these assets were reported by Christian households which show that the Christian households



have better access to modern gadgets compared to Hindus and Muslims thereby reflecting their wellbeing to an extent.

4.10.5 Financial Assets

None of the household has any financial assets, as reported.

4.11 Housing Status

4.11.1 House Type and availability of living space

The survey on housing and amenities shows that among the sample households across religious groups 99.1 percent of the Hindus and 98.5 percent of Christians lived in their own houses. The sample households with houses under IAY are 0.9 percent among Hindus and 1.5 percent among Christians. The housing condition among the various religious groups revealed that 77.8 percent of Hindu households with own houses live in kutchha houses and the corresponding figure for Christians is 91.2 percent. The proportion of households with pucca and semi pucca houses among the Hindus are 5.2 percent and 15.7 percent respectively and the same for Christians is 3.5 percent and 6.5 percent respectively. In terms of availability of living spaces, the survey showed that 52 percent of the sample households lived in two room houses. Religion wise distribution of households by living space shows that 51.4 percent of Hindus and 49.5 percent of Christians lived in two room houses. (Table 4.24 - 4.26).

4.11.2 Domestic lighting and fuel use

The census indicates that of the total inhabited villages in West Garo Hills district, 37 percent villages have power supply and domestic connection is available in 91 percent of these electrified villages.

However, survey of sample households shows that 30 percent of the sample households have domestic connection for power. Among the Hindus, 48 percent of the households have domestic connection while 30 percent Christian households reported domestic power connection. Among sample households without domestic power without connection, 54 percent of the households used oil lamp and lantern for lighting.

Clean fuel for cooking is a serious consideration for women who, in most cases, are burdened with the task of cooking. An examination of Census 2001 data suggests that just about 60 percent of all rural households do not use any of the modern fuels such as LPG, electricity or even kerosene. For 70 percent of the sample households' wood is the only fuel used for cooking and among the religious groups higher proportion of Christian households use wood for cooking. Among the Hindu households, 45 percent use wood and 30 percent use wood and hay/leaves as their cooking fuel. The survey indicates that 73 percent of Christians use wood as fuel for cooking and 15.4 percent use wood and hay. The use of modern fuel like petroleum and kerosene is reported by only 10 (1.33 percent) of the sample households which clearly indicates two possible reasons- first, the remoteness of the villages from the nearest LPG dealer and second, ignorance



on the relative health benefits from using non smoke cooking medium. (Table: 4.27-4.29)

4.11.3 Drinking water facilities

Access to safe drinking water among sample households reflects significant variation across religious groups. While 87 percent Hindu households reported safe drinking water sources however; the corresponding access for Christians is only 58 percent. Source and religion wise distribution of households shows that 56 percent of Hindu households use drinking water from safe public sources while 45 percent of Christians avail drinking water from safe public water sources. The survey indicates that Christian households are less conscious of the use of hygienic drinking water sources compared to Hindus. While 32 percent of the Hindus use drinking water from private protected sources the corresponding figure for Christians is only 13 percent. Among the unsafe sources, water from ponds, rivers is the most commonly used source. The survey indicates that while 37 percent of the Hindu and 30 percent of Christian households fetch drinking water from a distance of less than 10 meters, 60 percent of Christian households fetch their drinking water from sources at a distance of 100-500 meters. The corresponding figure for Hindus is 36.7 percent. (Table: 4.30-4.31)

4.11.4 Sanitation and drainage facility

An important requirement for sanitation is the presence of toilet facilities. The sanitation and drainage facilities among the sample households reflect unhygienic living conditions. No Hindu households have drainage facility while only 0.4 percent of Christian households reported presence of drainage facilities in their houses. The sanitation habits reveal that 39 percent of Hindu households and 20 percent of Christian households use open fields for defecation. Pit latrine is the major type of latrine used by majority of the households. Thus in-sanitary practices among sample households are fairly high among the Hindus.

The comparative picture across religious groups in respect of water sources and sanitation facilities show that while Hindus are more conscious in respect of using safe drinking water, however, in-sanitary practices is more pronounced among the Hindus. Muslims are better than Hindus.

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 (Table 4.32-4.33) show that availability of drainage facility in the sample villages is marginal.

4.12 Indebtedness of rural households

The survey findings on the incidence of indebtedness among sample households show that 98.5 percent of the households are currently not indebted. The incidence of indebtedness among Hindu and Christian households as seen from the survey is 0.9 percent and 1.1 percent respectively. Five Hindu and six Christian households are currently indebted. Among the indebted households, four Hindu households and five



Christian households are reported to be currently indebted with one loan outstanding while one household each from Hindus and Christians have two loans outstanding. Further, source wise borrowings shows that while the Christians have availed loans from Govt. and Commercial banks, the Hindu households have borrowed from various sources like, Commercial banks, friends, money lenders etc but no households have availed loans from Govt. The households have borrowed only up to an amount of Rs.5000.00. The source and purpose-wise distribution of indebtedness among the sample households shows that Hindus have availed bank loans for educational purpose while for social ceremonies they rely on friends and relatives; for medical treatment and other household consumption expenditure the households borrow from other sources. In respect of Christians the survey revealed that capital expenditure in farm business and expenditure on repairs of houses were met out of Govt. loan while loan from commercial bank was availed to purchase land and houses. (Table 4.34)

4.13 Income and Expenditure

The family income data for sample household shows that 19 percent of the sample households have a monthly net income of less than or equal to Rs.1600 while 20 percent of the sample households are reported to have a monthly net income of Rs.1900-Rs.2400. Religion wise data shows that 34.9 percent of Hindu households have monthly net income of <Rs.1600 while 31.2 percent have net income of Rs.1900-Rs.3000. Among the Christians and Muslims 38 percent and 57 percent of the households respectively have income between Rs.1600-Rs.3000. Among Christians and Muslims, the proportion of households with monthly net income of less than or equal to Rs. 1600.00 is 17 percent. This shows that more Hindus are income poor in Garo Hills. (Table: 4.35).

The monthly expenditure of the sample households as indicated by the survey results shows that 98 percent of the households spend more than Rs.750 per month. Expenditure on cereals and pulses shows that among all the religious groups, a higher proportion of Muslim households (57 percent) spend more than Rs.750 per month compared to Hindus (40 percent) and Christians (42 percent). In respect of consumption expenditure on vegetables and protein rich food like eggs, milk, fish etc. the results show that 84 percent Hindus, 90 percent Muslims and 86 percent Christians spend Rs.750 or less per month. The expenditure for clothes, footwear etc. ranged from Rs.150-224 while the proportion of expenditure on education indicates that comparatively a higher proportion of Christian households (65 percent) spend more than Rs.71 per month on education of their children compared to Hindus (57 percent) and Muslims (53 percent). The survey showed that 52 percent of the households spent nothing on medical treatment which indicates that half of the sample households demonstrate absence of health seeking behaviour. Expenditure on fuel and electricity shows that 61 percent of the sample households have no expenditure on fuel and electricity. Religion wise break up shows that 54 percent Hindu, 40 percent Muslim and 61 percent Christian households reported no expenditure on fuel and electricity during last year. This is partly due to the fact that only 30 percent of the sample households have electricity connections and 70 percent use wood for cooking. (Table: 4.36-4.48)



4.14 Current Educational Status, Skill Training

4.14.1 Enrolment and drop out among sample population of 5-25 years.

The enrolment data for sample population in the age group 5-25 years shows that except for Hindus, no other religious groups reported never enrolled population in the age group 5-25 years. 91 percent of the sample population in the age group 5-25 years were reported to be enrolled in government schools and are regular. One percent left after enrolment while 0.41 percent is enrolled but do not go to school. The drop out rate by religious groups shows that proportionately more Hindus drop out than the Christians or any other religious groups. The primary reason for drop out among the Hindu males is the need to earn for family (33 percent) while for females failing in the examination (33 percent) and necessity to work at home (33 percent) are the main reasons for drop out. The single reason for drop out among the Muslim males and females as reported is the need to earn for family while among the Christians both males and females, high school fee/expenditure is the primary reason for 40 percent of the drop outs. Among the Christians the drop out rate is higher for males while for Hindus, the drop out rate is higher for females. (Table: 4.49-4.50)

4.14.2 Educational attainment among sample population 5-25 years

The survey data on educational attainment of the population 5-25 years shows that only 1.7 percent of the population is illiterate- incidentally illiteracy among Christian and Hindu males was reported to be higher than their female counterparts. Majority of the children among the literates were below primary level (45 percent). 18 percent of the sample population completed their primary level; religion wise achievement shows that 19 percent of the Hindus completed primary while the corresponding shares for Muslims and Christians is 18.3 percent and 18.4 percent respectively. The survey clearly indicates that majority of the students among the Hindus and Christians drop out after completing middle level schooling while among Muslims, the drop out rate is higher after the primary level. Although Muslims had higher drop out rates but the proportion of Muslim students among those completing matriculation is reported to be higher (11 percent) than the Christians (9 percent) and Hindus (4 percent). However, proportion of Hindus completing their graduation is reported to be highest (2.3 percent) among all he religious groups in the sample. (Table: 4.51-4.52)

4.14.3 Aspirations and skill development

The survey indicates that 24 percent of the sample households were interested in taking various types of training for enhancing their skills. Religion wise break up shows that 37.1 percent and 34.3 percent of Hindus are interested in training in weaving and as compute operators; while majority of Muslims (57 percent) aspire for training in tailoring and among Christians the demand is highest for Computer Operators (64 percent). The low aspiration among households for training requirement may be attributed to two reasons-one non availability of any skill based livelihood in the villages and second lack of information on the market demand for types of skill requirement and livelihood opportunities. This has been revealed by the sample households during survey.



Computer Operator's training is most sought after training requirement by the sample households. Among the religious communities while Christians preferred computer training, Hindus preferred weaving and Muslims opted for tailoring. (Table: 4.53-4.54)

4.14.4 Aspiration of Parents on their Children

The parental aspiration for children's education showed that proportion of Hindu and Christian parents aspiring for education up to post graduation for their girl children was higher than the same for their male children. While parents of 29 percent Hindu girls and 38 percent Christian girls aspired for post graduate level study, the corresponding figures for male children was only 13 percent and 23 percent for Hindus and Christians respectively. It was found that 61 percent of the Hindu parents and 47 percent of Christian parents of male children aspired for education up to graduation only for their sons. However, for Muslim parents, aspiration was higher for male children vis-a-vis their female children. (Table: 4.55-4.56)

4.15 Present Health Scenario

4.15.1 Persons reporting ailment (PAP) and treatment

The data on number of persons reporting sickness during last one year before survey indicates that proportion of sample population (10 percent) in the district suffering from different diseases is higher than the NSSO estimates (60th Round) which stands at 5.1 percent for the rural areas of Meghalaya. One of the reasons for this comparatively higher proportion may be the fact that the region is prone to epidemiological incidence of malaria. The survey reveals that 54 percent of the sample population reporting some sickness or major ailments suffered from malarial infections. Fever, cough and cold are other diseases reported by the households. (Table: 4.57)

In respect of treatment of ailments, the NSSO 60th Round data for Meghalaya indicates that 1.1 percent of the rural persons reporting ailments were hospitalized. However the survey of households in sample villages of the district show that 13 percent of the sample population required hospitalization. The proportionately higher percentage of sample population requiring hospitalization may perhaps be due to malarial infections. The incidence of hospitalized treatment is higher among the Hindu households (21 percent) compared to Muslims (8 percent) and Christians (13 percent). (Table:4.58)

The survey indicates that only 19 percent of the populations reporting ailments were treated in government hospitals and 68 percent were treated in private hospitals or medical practitioners. The poor service delivery of the government agencies is further corroborated by the survey results on institutional delivery which shows that in 91 percent of the last child in the surveyed households were born at home. 67 percent of the delivery was assisted by untrained dais and others. The major reason for poor service delivery of government health department is the hilly terrain and physical remoteness of the villages and service centers. (Table: 4.59-4.61)



4.15.2 Immunization of Children

A child is considered to be fully immunized if s/he has received one dose each of BCG and measles and three doses each of DPT and Polio (excluding the polio dose 0 given at birth). The survey looked into the immunization coverage of children between 0-5 years which revealed that 54.2 percent of the children in the sample population were fully immunized, 8 percent had received no immunization and 38 percent received partial immunization. Religion wise desegregated data shows that proportions of fully immunized male children among Hindus are almost half the proportions (15 percent) for Muslims (30 percent) and Christians (31 percent). The survey results indicate that while male children have higher immunization coverage in Christian and Muslim households, in Hindu households' female children have higher coverage. However, proportion of fully immunized female children is less than 30 percent. The immunization coverage by agency shows that all the fully immunized children have received vaccination from government agency. (Table: 4.62-4.65).

The survey indicates that parents not being aware of the need to immunize their children are one of the major reasons for children either not immunized at all or receiving any dose of immunization but not completing the schedule. The percentage was higher for Christians while for Hindus, other factors are responsible for poor immunization coverage.

4.17 Poverty and the Public Distribution System (PDS)

An estimate of the poverty situation among the sample households can be inferred from the data on number of families with BPL ration card. The survey indicates that even though 53 percent of the sample households felt that they belonged to BPL category, however, only 42 percent of the sample households have BPL ration cards on the date of survey. Among the Hindus, 70 percent believed that they belonged to BPL but only 57 percent of these families have BPL cards, among the Muslims 80 percent responded that they belonged to BPL category, but only 67 percent of the families have BPL cards and among the Christians 50 percent of the families believed that they belonged to BPL category, however only 39 percent have BPL cards. Of the total sample households 54 percent avail PDS ration. Within the religious groups, percentage of households using PDS facilities, the proportion was highest for the Christians (67 percent), followed by Hindus (22 percent) and Muslims (5 percent). It was observed that of the total households who availed PDS supply, 13 percent of the households could not buy the required ration from the PDS shop and 92 percent of these households cited lack of adequate supply in the PDS shops as the main reason. Of the total households who could not buy ration from PDS sources, Hindus were 20 percent, Muslims 14 percent and Christians were 49 percent. (Table: 4.66-4.71).

4.18 Awareness on government programmes and benefits derived thereof

The awareness level of the sample households on various government programmes as indicated by the survey results is found to be fairly high particularly in respect of programmes which bring direct benefits in cash or kind like the NREGA and



Sarvasiksha (SSA), ICDS more than 97 percent of the sample households are aware of these programmes. The IAY and Old Age Pension scheme also have fairly high awareness among sample households. However, rural people's awareness on good sanitation practices and use of safe drinking water continues to be low in the district. This has been captured by the survey estimate which shows that 50 percent of the households are aware of ARWSP and only 28 percent of the households are aware of TSC Sajal dhara.

Notwithstanding the fact that awareness level of the sample households on various schemes of the government is fairly high, it however remains a fact that except for the NREGA, SSA and the ICDS, the sample households have not benefited much from the other programmes. The survey shows that 91 percent of the sample households have benefited under NREGA and religion wise break up shows that among the beneficiaries, the proportion of Christian households is higher (72 percent) than the Hindus (14 percent) and the Muslims (4 percent). As indicated by the survey results 42 percent of the households benefited from the SSA and 71 percent benefited from ICDS. Among the religious groups in the sample households the proportion of Christian beneficiaries is more than 70 percent in all the government programmes. (Table: 4.72-4.73).

4.19. 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 73rd and 74th 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 participation of the sample households in political and social affairs has been indicated by their voting behaviour and membership in local Panchayat, SHG and religious and social organizations. The survey indicates that all the religious groups are equally active in exercising their voting rights in any election- Panchayat or State Legislative Assembly or Parliament elections. The survey revealed that Christians are less active in respect of participating in social organizational activities. It has been observed that 22 percent of the Hindu households have membership of Panchayat office bearer and 37 percent are associated with various social organizations. However, only 19 percent Christian households have membership of Panchayat office bearer and 28 percent have memberships in social organizations. (Table: 4.74-4.75).

4.20. Conflict, insecurity and access to media and communication

The survey findings do not show that sample households have suffered from any conflicts nor is there any feeling of insecurity among the sample households. However, access to media and newspapers is found to be very limited among the sample households; more than 90 percent of the households do not read any news paper, and only 31 percent listen to radio 29 percent watch TV. The survey findings indicate that the



three most important facilities lacking in villages as stated by the sample households are roads and communication, hospitals and safe drinking water. (Table: 4.76-4.77).

The perceived levels of deprivation as stated by the households are housing, health and social organizations in the villages. There is an urgent need to bridge the physical communication gap and reduce the distance barrier, provide safe drinking water and good health and medical care facilities as stated by the sample households.

4.21 Aspirations of the Communities as reflected from the Survey

4.21.1 Most important facilities lacking in the villages

Majority of the Hindu respondents feel that electricity, communication and drinking water supply are the most important facilities lacking in their villages. The Muslim communities also placed priorities on these three facilities but placed road communication ahead of electricity and drinking water. However, in the perception of Christian community agriculture and related services also assume priority in their villages after electricity and road communication.

Most important deprivation in the families

Most of the Hindu families perceive that land followed by housing and employments are the most important deprivations in their families. The Muslim and Christian families also think in the same way like the Hindu families.

4.21.2 Perceived priorities for the welfare of minority communities

The Hindu respondents feel that education, road communication and employment opportunities should be the first priorities for the welfare of the minority communities. The Muslim and Christian households perceive the same way but also places agriculture and related services as some of the major priorities.

It has, however, been observed that road communication, electricity, water supply, agriculture related services and livelihood security are the major concerns of the people in the villages of West Garo Hills district. ■



DEVELOPMENT DEFICITS

The survey of villages and the households revealed that the major development deficits in West Garo Hills district includes its poor housing status, low infrastructure-roads, communication and power, social infrastructure-education and health, low farm investment and productivity, increasing casualisation of labour and poor access to institutional credit.

Development Deficits and MsDP Plan Priorities

Sl. No	Indicators	Survey Result	Estimate for India	Deficit	Priority Ranking attached
<i>Socio-economic indicators</i>					
1	Rate of literacy	65.07	67.30	-2.23	7
2	Rate of female literacy	61.36	57.10	4.26	8
3	Work participation rate	30.29	38.00	-7.71	6
4	Female work participation rate	11.93	21.50	-9.57	5
<i>Basic amenities indicators</i>					
5	Percentage of pucca houses	3.60	59.40	-55.80	1
6	Percentage of households with access to safe drinking water	61.33	87.90	-26.57	4
7	Percentage of households with sanitation facilities	75.47	39.20	36.27	10
8	Percentage of electrified households	29.73	67.90	-38.17	2
<i>Health indicators</i>					
9	Percentage of fully vaccinated children	54.20	43.50	10.70	9
10	Percentage of institutional delivery	9.00	38.70	-29.70	3

■ The survey revealed that large proportion of the sample households were BPL families. Consequently this had its adverse impact on the housing facilities. Although IAY has contributed to certain extent, the larger section of the people living below the poverty line has not yet been covered by any housing programme.

■ The state need to address the issue of access to electricity more effectively. Electricity although available in most of the villages, domestic connection is still low.



- The present baseline survey indicates that institutional delivery in the district is very low. The main reason for low incidence of institutional delivery is the remoteness of the hospitals. The issue needs to be addressed under the NRHM.
- Access to safe drinking water is one of the major deficits in the rural areas of the district. Although tube well water is mostly used for drinking purpose, the water sources like river and ponds, uncovered well and dug well are also used by 38.67 percent of the sample households.
- The survey results indicate that work participation rate in the rural areas of the district is fairly low especially for the females. There is fairly high incidence of underemployment among the sample households besides gender disparity in the wage rates. However, there is high Preference for self-employment among the sample households. This requires government efforts at creating more facilities for trainings in skill development for self-employment.
- The survey indicates that enrolment and attendance ratio for Christian children is higher than other religious groups. This is primarily because majority of the Muslims are marginal workers whose children are also engaged in family earning. However, the male drop out rate for Christians is higher compared to females. The survey also indicates poor aspiration level of the households which may be attributed to the absence of diversified livelihood opportunities and lack of information about outside opportunities.
- Since the agro climatic conditions of the district is suited for horticulture, efforts need to be taken for setting up processing industries to create the synergies within the farm sector by linking farm output to processing units and the adequate institutional support for marketing. Adequate emphasis on promotion of horticulture with modern inputs will definitely be an alternative before the large section of people engaged in jhum or shifting cultivation.

The geographical distance due to hilly terrains is one of the reasons for most of the services being located at a distance of more than 10 km from the village. Perhaps mobile services in health, savings bank collection can be started to bring in better coverage of facilities among the rural households in the district. ■



LIST OF SURVEYED VILLAGES

Sl. No.	VILLAGE
1	Bolsalgre
2	Monabari
3	Upper Rimbigiri
4	Chibra A'Gal
5	Dirikgre
6	Baghmara
7	Adugre
8	Chokchokia
9	Dipogre
10	Jangrapara
11	Debragiri
12	Rabonggiri
13	Madarigre
14	Tebonggre Songma
15	Paham
16	ChiraKhawa
17	Soleartek
18	Chongpotgre
19	Lower Dopgre
20	Tingmangre
21	Barengapara (Koinabhoi)
22	Kherapara Nokat
23	Marahalipara
24	Chapahati No. 1
25	Pedaldoba