Baseline Survey of Minority Concentrated Districts

District Report

HAILAKANDI

Study Commissioned by
Ministry of Minority Affairs
Government of India

Study Conducted by

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

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

This report contains the results of the survey for Hailakandi district of Assam.

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

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

CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

PART I

BACKGROUND

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

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

Against this backdrop the baseline survey in MCDs was conceived to

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

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

METHODOLOGY

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

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

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

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

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

In case of household selection, complete listing of all households (by door to door visit) has been done in case of sample villages with less than 1200 population. However, in case of those villages with population 1200 or more, three or more hamlet-groups (hg's) were formed in the village as per the practice followed by NSSO[1]. 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 was 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, total 30 villages of the district Hailakandi were identified and 30 households from each village were selected for the sample survey. The present report is based on the data gathered from the total 900 sample households of the district.

TOOLS USED

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

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

PART II

A BRIEF PROFILE OF HAILAKANDI

2.1 Area and Location

The Hailakandi district is situated in the southernmost part of Assam. The distance of the state capital Guwahati from the district Head Quarter is about 330 Km. With a geographical area of 1327 Sq. Km, the district is bounded by River Barak & Cachar district in the North & East, State of Mizoram in the South & East and Karimganj district in the west. The interstate border is stretched over 76 KM in the south east.

Hailakandi was the one of the oldest Sub-division of the state which was constituted as Civil Sub-division on 1st June 1869. On 1st October 1989 it emerged as Civil District with same territorial jurisdiction of the earlier Sub-division.

2.2 Administrative Division

The district Hailakandi consists of only one sub division namely Hailakandi with four (4) revenue circles- Hailakandi, Algapur, Katlicherra & Lala, and five (5) development blocks namely Hailakandi Dev Block, Lala Dev Block, Katlicherra Dev Block, Algapur Dev Block and South Hailakandi Dev Block. There are three towns viz. Hailakandi (M.B.) and Lala (T.C.) and H.P.C. Township (C.T.) in the district. The total number of villages in the district is 331 of which 327 are inhabited as per 2001 Census. There are 62 Gaon Panchayats and 5 Anchalik Panchayats in the district.

2.3 Resource Base

2.3.1 Population

As per 2001 Census, the demographic profile of the district shows that 59.0 percent of total population in the district belongs to the minority community. The Muslim population in the district was 52 percent as per the estimate of 1991 Census and that increases to 57.62 percent as per the estimate of 2001 Census data. About 8.1 percent population in the district lives in urban areas, which is lower than the state average of 12.9 percent. The population density in the district is 409 and the district ranks 11th in this respect among the districts of the State. The population density in the district is significantly higher than the state average at 340 persons as per the 2001 Census.

Table 2.1: Total population of Hailakandi District

Residence	Persons	Hindus	Muslims	Christians
Total	542872	223191	312849	5424
Rural	498787	188332	303882	5227
Urban	44085	34859	8967	197

Source: Census of India, 2001

The population distribution by religious minority groups in the rural areas of district is shown in the table below. Out of total minority population in the district, Muslims comprise 96.86 percent. The percentage of total Muslim population in the rural population of Hailakandi district is estimated to be 60.92 per cent.

Table 2.2: Religious distribution of rural population of Hailakandi District

Total Minority	Muslims	Christians	Sikhs	Buddhists	Jains	Others	Not stated
310446 (62.24%)	303882 (60.92%)	5227 (1.04%)	9 (0.001%)	569 (0.11%)	45 (0.009%)	576 (0.11%)	147 (0.02%)

Source: Census of India, 2001

The decadal variation of population in the district has shown that there has been a steady increase in the population growth of the district since 1931. The immediate post independence period witnesses high growth of population mainly due to influx of refugees from erstwhile East Pakistan. This high growth of population in the post independence period changed the demographic profile of the district.

Table 2.3: Decadal variation of population in Hailakandi

Year	1901-1911	1911-1921	1921-1931	1931-1941	1941-1951	1951-1961	1961-1971	1971-1991	1991-2001
Hailakandi	16.09	7.59	7.08	10.29	17.48	27.23	23.61	45.94	20.89
Assam	16.99	20.48	19.91	20.40	19.93	34.98	34.95	53.26	18.92

Source: Statistical Handbook, Assam, 2006.

2.3.2 Sex ratio

An important indicator of gender equality is the number of females per thousand males. As per the Census 2001, Hailakandi district has a sex ratio of 935 females per 1000 males, which is equal to the State average. On the other hand child sex ratio for (0-6 years) is 927 as per 2001 Census. The sex ratio for rural areas in the district is lower than the district average. The Buddhists have a sex ratio not only higher than that of district in rural areas but also a highest sex ratio across religious and social groups, followed by the Hindus. This indicates that gender discrepancy within the Buddhists and the Hindus is less prominent than other religious groups in the rural areas.

Table 2.4: Sex ratio by religion for rural and total population in Hailakandi district

Religion	Total	Rural
All religion	935	933
Hindus	944	939
Muslims	929	930
Christians	915	918
Buddhists	976	955

Source: Census India 2001.

2.3.3 Literacy Rate

As per 2001 Census, the literacy rate in the district (59.64 percent) is lower than the state average of 63.32 percent. Again the female literacy rate is significantly lower than male literacy rate in both rural and urban areas. However the gender differential in literacy rate is more prominent in rural areas of the district. The district occupies 11th place in the districts ranking of literacy rate.

Table 2.5: Literacy Rate by Sex and Area in Hailakandi

Place	Population Total			Rural			Urban		
	Total	*Men*	*Women*	*Total*	*Men*	*Women*	*Total*	*Men*	*Women*
Hailakandi	59.64	68.24	50.46	57.05	66.05	47.33	86.50	90.23	82.58
Assam	63.32	71.73	54.28	59.82	68.71	50.37	85.35	89.47	79.25

Source: Census of India, 2001.

Religious distribution of literacy rates in the district reveals that Hindus have a literacy rate of 59.43 per cent, Muslims 54.95 per cent and Christians have a literacy rate of 46.87 per cent, which shows that access to and attainment of education for Muslims and Christians has been much slower. The female literacy rate for Muslims and Christians is significantly lower than the male literacy rate and also the state average. This clearly indicates the poor educational attainment among Muslims and Christians female in the district.

Table 2.6: Literacy rate by religious groups and place of residence

Religion	Residence	Literacy rate		
		Person	*Male*	*Female*
Hindus	Rural	59.43	66.78	51.67
Muslims	Rural	54.95	65.94	43.41
Christians	Rural	46.87	53.76	39.75

Source: Census India 2001.

This low level of literacy and consequent educational attainment has its bearing on the employment and livelihood opportunities of the Muslims and the Christians. 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. 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 distribution of workforce in the district as per the Census 2001 data shows that out of the total rural population, 33.42 per cent are total workers while 66.58 per cent are

non-workers. Cultivators comprise 37.50 per cent, agricultural workers comprise 15.33 per cent, 3.32 per cent are household industry workers and 43.85 per cent are other workers.

Table 2.7: Distribution of workers by religious groups in total rural workers

Religious	Total workers	Cultivators	Agricultural labourers	Household industries workers	Other workers	Non-workers
All groups (Rural + Urban)	179881 (33.1%)	62747 (34.88%)	25690 (14.28%)	5728 (3.18%)	85716 (47.65%)	362991 (66.86%)
Rural workers	33.42	37.50	15.33	3.32	43.85	66.58
Rural Hindus	38.83	26.88	12.65	4.0	56.47	61.16
Rural Muslims	29.86	45.18	17.66	2.83	18.68	70.14
Rural Christians	42.16	66.01	10.39	1.63	21.96	57.83
Rural Buddhists	48.33	80.73	6.18	0.36	12.73	51.67

Source: Census of India, 2001.

The work participation rate in the rural district among the religious groups reveals that the Muslims (29.86%) work participation is not only lowest among the religious groups but also lower than the district average (33.42%). The high proportion of non-workers in the rural district indicates the distressed livelihood opportunities and it is particularly more severe for the Muslims (70.14%). The low literacy rate of the Muslims is a major deterrent for getting gainful livelihood opportunities. The classification of workers shows that cultivators are the major workers in the rural area.

2.3.5 Education and Health

The district has 1019 primary educational institutions, 253 middle schools, 48 high schools, 11 higher secondary schools and 2 degree colleges. The educational level of the population in the district is abysmally low. Of the total population with some educational attainment, 1.9 per cent is just literate without any attainment level, 33.6 per cent receive education below primary level, 26.7 per cent attain education up to primary level, and only 13.9 per cent complete Metric/H.S./Diploma courses. The corresponding figure for graduation and above is only 3.1 per cent. The poor educational attainment in the district also reflects the poor quality of employable human resource and low work status for the vast majority of the work force.

The district has one civil hospital, one CHC, 9 PHCs, 2 state dispensaries, 4 medical sub-centers and 103 FW sub-centers. An important indicator of health status is the sex ratio especially of children in the age group of 0-6 years. The child sex ratio in the district as

per the estimate of Census 2001 is 927 girls per thousand boys while the rural child sex ratio is 924. A comparative picture across religious groups shows that Buddhists have the highest child sex ratio in the district at 1068 followed by the Muslims (935).

Table 2.8: Child sex ratio in Hailakandi by religious groups

Religion	Total	Rural
All Religion	927	924
Hindus	912	907
Muslims	935	933
Christians	896	881
Buddhists	1068	1088

Source: Census of India, 2001.

In so far as the status of RCH is concerned 17.8 per cent of the girls get married below the age of 18 years. In respect of maternal health, 14.9 per cent of the pregnant women receive full antenatal case, 22.8 per cent had institutional delivery and 23.5 per cent safe delivery. , As reported by the RCH 2002-04, as many as 61.3 per cent of women had suffered from post delivery complication.

2.3.6 Human Development Index

Hailakandi is one of the worse performing districts in terms of development in basic human capabilities in three fundamental dimensions viz., a long and healthy life, knowledge and decent standard of living, as indicated by its HDI value of 0.363 (11th rank) which is lower than the state average of 0.407. The district occupies 9th place in terms of income while 14th place in terms of both education and health in district wise rankings. The human poverty index calculated in 1999 indicates that 27 per cent of total populations in the district are in poverty. In terms of Gender related Development Index (GDI), Hailakandi ranks 6th in district wise ranking, with GDI value of 0.609 which, is above the state average of 0.537. However, the HDI-GDI rank disparities indicate that women in this district suffers from deprivation of development potential leading to lower achievement than men (Assam Human Development Report, 2003).

2.3.7 Natural Resource Base

Hailakandi district shares the features of Assam in North-East with conductive agro-climatic regions, categorized on full basis of homogeneity in agro-characteristics and favourable for cultivation of various crops. The major proportion of the geographical area of the district is put into agricultural uses. Net area under different crops in the district works out 44,670 ha (33.6%) of which 36500 ha (82%) is used for paddy cultivation and 5920 ha (13.4%) for tea plantation.

Development of farm forestry by bringing wasteland into use is of great significance. It not only fulfils fuel and wood requirements of the people but also ensure supply of raw materials for the forest-based industries besides maintaining ecological balance. The forest resource base of Hailakandi district comprise of 2 reserve forests viz., Inner live reserve forest and Katakhal reserve forest. It has a total of 27 forests of which area in the

district total geographical area is 55.8 per cent (74115 ha). The Hindustan Paper Mill situated at Panchgram depends on bamboo of the forests as their raw materials.

Table2.9: Land Utilization pattern in Hailakandi district (2001-02)

(Area in hectare)

Total area	Not available for cultivation	Other uncultivated land excluding fallow land	Fallow land	Net area sown	Total cropped area	Area sown more than once
132700	12241	7663	2825	46027	64878	18851

Source: Statistical Handbook Assam, 2006.

2.4 Economy

Although the economy of Hailakandi district is agrarian in nature, the tertiary sector is dominant in terms of its income share and employment generation. This sector contributes about 45 per cent of total income in the Gross District Domestic Product (GDDP) while primary sector and secondary sector contribute 42 per cent and 13.55 per cent respectively. The per capita Net District Domestic product is about Rs. 1343.

The industrial base of the district is agro based. The district has a total number of 275 registered SSI units as permanent and 286 units as provisional. The total number of units registered since announcement of NE Policy was only 76. Moreover, it has also one medium and large industry.

In the organized sector, tea is the main industry of the district. It has 19 Tea gardens with an area of about 5920 ha. The tea industry is employing more than 1,30,642 persons as per 1991 census, production of tea was 87.62 tones. The Hindustan Paper Mill situated at Panchagram comes to the second place where large number of people gets employment opportunities in the district. The pre dominant income generating activity for the district is through agricultural sector and its allied enterprises.

The economic condition of Hailakandi is good. Tea, rice, timber, bamboo, cane, stone, sand, natural gas etc. are the major products (Sachar Committee).

2.4.1 Plantation and Horticulture

The Northeastern states of the country as a whole and Assam in particular are endowed with highly productive soil, suitable climate and enough water besides rich forest wealth. It is ideally suited to produce whole range of plantation crops, fruits and vegetables, flowers and hubs. Hailakandi district is situated at the tip of Assam bordering Mizoram also shares the features of Assam with conductive agro-climatic condition, favourable for growing wide varieties of horticulture crops. The area, production and productivity of horticulture crops in the district in the year 2005-06 are given in the following table.

Table 2.10: Area and Production of Horticulture

Crops	Area covered (hactre)	Production MT)	Productivity (kg/ha)
Areca nut	2700	4189	175
Coconut	190	8160	60
Pineapple	265	3763	14203
Orange	51	496	9555
Papaya	70	1344	19205
Banana	1200	14892	12410
Black pepper	5	8	1600
Rubber	450	467	104
Tea	5920	9854	1642

2.4.2 Livestock and veterinary facilities

In the essentially agrarian economy of Assam, livestock is an important contributor to the NSDP. Dairy and poultry farming can augment incomes and increase purchasing power. Traditionally, dairy farming is a subsidiary occupation of the farmers of the district. The total milk production in the district was 172, 56,409 litres during 2005-06. Total livestock and poultry population of the district as per Livestock Census 2003 is given below.

Table 2.11: Livestock and Poultry population in Hailakandi district

Livestock	Hailakandi	Assam
Cattle- Indigenous	137942	7979326
Cattle- Crossed Breed	14472	440321
Buffaloes- Indigenous	25303	617109
Buffaloes- Crossed Breed	1596	60560
Sheep	10780	154597
Goats	61714	2986913
Pigs	4554	1543489
Horses and Ponies	28	11642
Fowls	457160	14757979
Ducks	162234	6888679

Source: Statistical Handbook, Assam, 2006.

Though the district has climatic condition conducive for poultry farming, particularly commercial broilers, the activity has not made any significant progress.

The veterinary facilities in the district are not well developed. The district has only 5 veterinary dispensaries, 3 block veterinary dispensaries and 18 artificial immunization centers (Statistical Hand Book, Assam, 2006).

2.4.3 Sericulture

The agro-climatic condition of the district is suitable for sericulture. The sericulture activity is gaining popularity in the district as a source of additional income. There are 240 sericulture villages and about 291 families engaged in this activity. The present status of development is as follows.

Table 2.12: Status of sericulture in Hailakandi district

Activity	No. of Families Involved	Yield of Cocoons (MT)	Production of Yarn (MT)	Area under silk Worm food plants (ha)	No. of Reeling Units
Eri	236	5	3.76	134	N.A.
Muga	21	5*	Nil	122	Nil
Mulberry	34	Nil	Nil	5	Nil

Note: * in '000 nos.
Source: Statistical Handbook, Assam 2006.

2.5 Infrastructure and connectivity

Availability and access to infrastructure is one of the major factors responsible for economic and social development across space and communities. Of all the infrastructure facilities, transport and communication; power and energy; and banking are considered essential sectors.

2.5.1 Transport and communication

The transport connectivity of the district comprises of roads and railway. The district has a total of 70 km of national highways, 46 km of state highways, 331 km of rural roads besides 64 km of railway (mg). The district has two national highways (NH-53 & NH-154) passing through it. Katakhal, Hailakandi and Lala are the three railway stations in the district. Road length (P.W.D) per 100 Sq. km of geographical area is 29 km in the district, which is much lower than the State average of 48 km. Besides, the average share of road length per lakh population is also dismally low at 72 km, while the state average is 141 km. As shown in the table below, only about 22 per cent of the PWD roads are surfaced; having 78 per cent of un-surfaced roads in the district. This indicates mat access and availability of good road connectivity in the district is very low.

Table 2.13: P. W. D. Roads in Hailakandi District (In Km.)

District/ State	Total	Surfaced	Unsurfaced	State Highway	Major District Road	Rural Road	Urban Road
Hailakandi	391	86	305	46	8	331	6
Assam	34761	8424	26337	2820	3839	26907	1194

Source: Statistical Handbook, Assam 2006.

2.5.2. Power and energy

Next to transport and communication, power is another basic infrastructure that is essential for economic growth. Of the total villages in the district about 82% are reported to have power supply (Census of India, 2001). However, consumption of electricity for commercial and industrial purpose is not available while only a little more than 4% of the villages have electricity connection for agricultural use. The district has a total demand of 5.5 MW of power per day while supply is only 4.0 MW. The gap in demand and supply indicates that inadequacy of power supply is one of the reasons for slow pace of rural electrification as much as also slow pace of industrialization.

2.5.3. Banking

Access to credit and banking facilities is an important indicator for socio-economic development. The total number of reporting offices of Scheduled Commercial Banks in the district stands at 25, of which 17 rural branches and 8 semi-urban branches. The population coverage of banking services is estimated to be 21,715 persons per bank office. The credit - deposit ratio in the district, which stands at about 29% (as on December 2005), is lower than the stipulated norm of 60%.

2.5.4 Basic amenities

The table below provides a synoptic view of the basic amenities of the district.

Table 2.14: Distribution of Amenities in inhabited villages in Hailakandi district

Amenities	Numbers (Percentage)
Total inhabited villages	327
Total Households	97856
Safe Drinking water facilities	308 (94.2%)
Electricity (Power Supply)	268 (81.9%)
Electricity (domestic)	263 (80.4%)
Electricity (Agriculture)	14 (4.3%)
Primary school	308 (94.2%)
Middle schools	206 (63%)
Secondary/Sr. Secondary schools	60 (18.3%)
Medical facility	110 (33.6%)
Primary Health Centre	8 (2.4%)
Primary Health Sub-Centre	7 (2.1%)
Post, telegraph and telephone facility	135 (41.3%)
Bus services	141 (43.1%)
Paved approach road	115 (35.2%)
Un-paved approach road	288 (88.1%)

Source: Statistical Handbook, Assam, 2006, Census of India, 2001.

Besides housing standard of the rural people, the standard of living is also judged based on the availability of certain basic community institutions in the rural locality along with easy assess to these. Safe drinking water, facilities for basic education and health, and social security are some of the important elements of these basic requirements. In respect of amenities in rural areas, there are facility wise variations. With a total of 97856 households, Hailakandi has 327 inhabited villages.

PART III

PROFILE OF THE SAMPLE VILLAGES

3.1 Demographic profile

The total population of the sample villages is 57225 persons with total households of 10912 as per 2001 census. According to the Census, 2001, the total rural population of the district was 498787 (91.8%) with total rural household of 89196 (91.1%), giving a household size of 5.6 for the rural areas. The average household size of the sample villages (5.2) is marginally lower than the district average household size for the rural areas.

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

Households	Total Population	Male	Female
10912	57225	29498	27727

Source: Census, 2001.

3.2 Sex Ratio

The sex ratio for the sample villages as per 2001 Census is estimated to be 940 females per thousand males, which is higher than the Sex ratio of the district as well as the state (935) as reported in the Census Report, 2001.

3.3. Literacy Rate

The literacy rates in the sample villages as seen from the table is much lower than the average literacy in the district as well as the literacy rates in the rural areas of the district. The female literacy rate, which is only about 41%, speaks about the status of women's education in the sample villages. However, as we will find in the next section (part-III), the sample households' survey (2008) indicates a higher literacy rate than the 2001 Census figures for literacy.

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

Place	Total	Male	Female
District Total	59.64	68.24	50.46
Rural Area	57.05	66.05	47.33
Sample Villages	51.44	61.43	40.90

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 about 82% villages are reported to have power supply (Census of India, 2001), however, the survey shows that 76% of the sample villages presently have power supply.

Table 3.3: Percentage of households in sample villages with electricity connection

Type of Connection	Hindu	Muslim	Other	Total
Domestic	28.2	24.4	23.9	25.5
Agricultural	3.8	3.2	0	3.5
Commercial	3.2	2.1	1.4	2.2

Source: Sample Village Survey, 2008.

Out of the electrified villages, 35.2% Hindu, 29.7% Muslim and 25.3% other households use electricity for different purposes. The survey reveals that 28.2% Hindu, 24.4% Muslim and 23.9% other households have domestic electricity connection. It is found that only 3.8% of the Hindu and 3.2% of the Muslim households have electricity connections for agricultural uses. Further, 3.2% Hindu, 2.1% Muslim and 1.4% other households use electricity for commercial purposes. The village survey data shows that of the total households electrified in these villages, majority are Hindus.

The average hours of electricity available in the villages as seen from the table below shows that there has been significant improvement compared to last ten years, while a comparative picture with last five years also shows marginal improvement in electricity supply in the sample villages.

Table 3.4: Average hours of electricity available in sample villages

Average hours of Electricity available	Last year	5 years ago	10 years ago
	7.7	5.5	5.1

Source: Sample Village Survey, 2008.

3.4.2 Drinking water

Availability and access to safe drinking water has been the most crucial factor involving serious health concerns in rural areas. All the sample villages have drinking water facility. Of the available drinking water facilities in the sample villages (excluding pond/river/stream/tank), tube well constitutes 31.8%, well 28.1%, hand pump 11%, public stand post 8.7% and tap water in the dwelling 3.8%. The common facilities for all communities account for about 5% of the available sources of drinking water. The availability of drinking water facilities in the sample villages across religious groups show that 32.4% of the facilities belong to Hindus while minority religious groups of Muslim households possess 40.1% and Christians share 26.7% of the facilities available in the villages. Besides, more than 49% of the households in the sample villages use pond/river/stream as sources of drinking water.

3.4.3 Toilet facility

The sanitation status of the sample villages shows that of the total households in the villages about 80% are reported to have sanitation facilities. The most common type of sanitation facilities among the village households is the pit latrine (69%). A little more than 8% of the sample households have Septic tank sanitary facilities. The coverage of TSC in the sample villages is not very good as only about 5% of the total households of the sample villages are reported to have benefited under it. The use of open space for defecation by about 20% and non-sanitary toilets by about 69% of the households speaks about the poor hygiene consciousness among the households in the sample villages.

3.4.4 Education

The survey reveals that of the 25 sample villages, 24 villages have primary schools within village while middle schools are available within village in 14 villages and high/higher secondary schools are available within village for 3 villages. Besides, 5 of the sample villages have separate primary schools for girls and, 3 of these villages also have separate middle schools for girls. Three villages have religious schools within the villages imparting Islamic education, which indicates that Muslims also send their children to religious schools. It is found that children of the sample village, within which primary educational institutions are not available, go to nearest educational institutions, which are available either within the panchayat or within block at a distance of 0-5 Km. It is also found that the approach road to majority of the primary schools are kutchha roads.

Of the available primary schools for the sample villages, 12% have Kutcha structure, 28% have semi pucca structure and 60% have pucca structures. 16% schools have only two classrooms; 8% schools do not have usable black boards, while sufficient bench and desks for all students are not available in 20% of these schools. The sanitation and drinking water facilities in the primary schools as revealed from the sample survey shows that while drinking water is available in 72% schools, toilet facilities are available in 68% schools only. This clearly shows the poor coverage of the total sanitation campaign for primary schools by the PHE in the sample villages.

3.4.5 Health Facilities

Although private sector has been playing a crucial role in curative health care in urban India, in rural areas government facilities are the only available sources for cheap curative care. The surveys reveal that in 13 villages some kind of medical facilities are available within the villages. Sub centre is available within 4 villages in the sample, PHC is available in one village, hospital/dispensary is available in one village, three villages have private qualified doctor, and four villages have medicine shops. The villages where medical facilities, especially Sub centre and PHC do not exist, access the facilities either within the panchayat or block or within the district at a distance of 2 Km to more than 5 km.

Table 3.5: Number of sample villages reporting some medical facilities

Type	Within village	Within block	Within panchayat	Within district
Sub centre	4	5	5	1
Primary HC	1	11	1	1
Community HC		1		
Hospital/Dispensary	1	10	3	1
Pvt. qualified allopathic doctor	3	6	4	2
Maternity/child care centre		1		1
Family planning clinic		1		2
Chemist/medicine shop	4	5	4	1
Others		1		
Total	13	41	17	9

Source: Sample Village Survey, 2008.

3.4.6 Other facilities

The availability of other facilities in the sample villages reveal that for majority of the sample villages block head quarter and the nearest town from the villages are located at a distance of 5-10 Km and above. The nearest regular markets for most of the sample villages are located at a distance of 2-5 Km. The communication facilities in the sample villages as reported during survey, is seen to be rather weak. The nearest bus stop is available within an average distance of 2-5 Km for majority of the sample villages. The distance to railway stations, banking and veterinary services from most of the villages ranges from 2 km to 10 km. The rest of the facilities like general shops, post office, etc. are reported to be within a radius of 1-10 Km for majority of the sample villages.

Table 3.6: No. of sample villages reporting distance to other facilities

Type	Up to 2 KM	2 to 5 KM	5 to 10 KM	Above 10 KM	Total
Block HQ	3	2	10	10	25
Nearest Town	1	4	7	13	25
Nearest Bus Stop	1	12	4	3	20
Regular market	4	12	2	3	21
Rail station		13	6	6	25
Post office	5	10	4	1	20
Bank	2	8	6	5	21
Gram panchayat	5	9	1		15
FP Shop	1	3			4
General shop	1	1			2
Mandi	1	4		2	7
Veterinary	2	5	2	3	12

Source: Sample Village survey, 2008

3.5 Village organizations and Common Property Resources

The organizational activity within the village is an important determinant of overall socio-economic development. The number of villages with some kinds of organisations and their status are shown in the following table.

Table 3.7: Status of Village Organisations in Hailakandi District

Organisation	No. of Village	Level of Activity		
		Very Active	Fairly Active	Not Very Active
Credit Cooperative	3	0	2	1
Agricultural inputs Cooperative	4	0	4	0
Production of Khadi Cooperative	2	0	2	0
Marketing Cooperative	6	2	3	1
Dairy Cooperative	4	0	2	2
Workers Organisations/Unions	10	2	7	1
Farmers Organisation	12	1	10	1
Voluntary Organisations	11	0	10	1
Religious/Caste Organisations	15	6	8	1
Political Organisations	20	9	10	1
Cultural Organisations	9	3	5	1
Youth Mandal	14	1	10	3
Women Mandal	19	2	13	4
Flood Relief Village Security Force	11	4	7	0
Others	3	1	2	0

Source: Sample Village Survey, 2008

As shown in the above table, most of the village organisations are found to be fairly active in the sample villages. The presence of fairly active village organizations therefore has the potential for capacity building of pressure groups within villages for ensuring proper governance at the grassroots level. Besides, seven of the sample villages were reported to have non-formal panchayat playing an important and active role in village life.

The survey shows that most frequently used common property resource in the villages is school lawn, which is reported to be used in 13 villages, while other types of government building are found to be used in 4 villages. Other common property resources found to be used in the sample villages are- village ponds in 10 villages, pasture in 2 villages, Govt./Garmazrua land in 2 villages and reserve forest in only one village. In respect of availability of facilities, ICDS centres are available in all the 25 villages. However as reported 4 centres are found to be in very good and 4 in good condition, while 16 are in average workable condition. Only one ICDS centre is reported to be in bad shape.

3.6 Handicraft

Handicraft and artisan works provide sizeable amount of additional income source to the village economy. In a number of cases, such activities become mainstay of the households. In the surveyed villages also, a good number of households are found being engaged in handicraft and other artisan works. In 7 of the 25 villages under study, handicraft works are simultaneously done with agricultural works. Altogether, 260 households are found engaged in artisan works. As reported, most of the products in this segment are sold locally. However, marketing of products and insufficiency of raw materials are found to be serious problems for the artisans.

3.7 Crop productivity status

The economy of Hailakandi district is agrarian with paddy as the major crop. The survey results of the sample villages also indicate that paddy is the major crop produced in 19 out of 25 sample villages. The maximum market price fetched for paddy one year before the date of survey as reported is Rs. 900 per quintal while the minimum price was Rs.600. Yield of paddy found to be varied in the sample villages. Most of the villages showed higher yield of paddy than the state average of 5.8 quintal per acre.

3.8 Input status for cultivation

3.8.1. Current inputs

As reported, the sample villages have 1596 cultivators using various current inputs for cultivation. Only 118 cultivators in six villages have been using HYV paddy seeds while 273 cultivators from six villages use canal irrigation. Of the total cultivators reporting use of some current inputs, about 63% use pesticides and chemical fertilizer. Regarding the supply of these inputs, some shortage occurs in supply during peak season in most of the villages as reported during the survey.

3.8.2 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 only 109 households in 10 villages own private pump sets and 326 households are using pump sets for irrigation purposes. Tractors are owned by 25 households in 8 villages and are reported to be used by about 317 households. Power tillers are found to be available in 11 villages in 32 households and total number of households found to be using this input is 428, while pucca grain storage is found to be owned by 5 households in one village and is reported to be used by 85 households. Further, improved implements were reported to be owned by 30 households in one village and used by 85 households. All this shows that farm investment is very poor in Hailakandi district.

3.9 Credit

Purpose wise distribution of credit requirement among sample villages showed that meeting sudden expenses and current cultivation costs were the major factor availing credit. In majority of the sample villages rural households across all categories

(Labourers, small cultivators, medium and large cultivators and artisans) incurred debts for this purpose. The meager income earning has been the main reason for increasing rural indebtedness across the country as per the NSS 55th Round (1999-2000) data.

Access and availability of timely institutional credit has been a foregone conclusion for relieving the distressed farmers from their indebtedness. The survey findings indicate that almost all the four categories of borrowers avail credit mostly from village friends/relatives and moneylenders, mostly for meeting sudden expense and current cultivation cost. However, a few medium/large farmer households have also availed credit from institutional sources along with non-institutional credit as reported in about 40% of the sample villages during the survey. The often repeated findings of various credit surveys that the accessibility of institutional credit is concentrated in the large and medium farmers is also found in respect of the sample villages of the district.

Notwithstanding the fact that concessional credit and priority sector lending over the years has increased the financial accessibility of rural households, it however, remains a fact that marginal farmers, labourers and small village artisans have remained outside the ambit of this financial inclusion process.

3.10 Migration, employment and wage income earning

The survey showed that of the 25 sample villages, people from 24 villages moved out looking for work on daily basis. The survey results indicate that approximately 2384 people from these villages daily went outside looking for work. About 32% of these people go to block and district headquarters for work and the rest of these workers go to multiple places. A sizeable section of these people also go to neighbouring state of Mizoram which is much closer to the district. The monthly earning of the migrant workers reported to be in the range of Rs. 1800 – Rs. 18,100.

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 1419 workers from 24 sample villages migrated outside the villages for a period of 3 to 8 months in search of work. As reported, about 36% of these people migrated within the state, about 25% outside the state and the rest of the people have migrated both within and outside state in search of work. About 36% of the migrant workers were reported to be organised through friends and relatives, while the rest of these workers were organised through multiple channels. The monthly earning of the migrant workers reported to be in the range of Rs. 2000 – Rs. 19000.

There is evidence of high wage rate differentials prevalent for male and female workers in the rural areas of the district. The wage rate differentials in different types work are shown in the following table.

Table 3.8: Male and Female Wage rates in the Sample Villages

Type of work	Average Wage Rate in Rs.	
	Male	Female
Ploughing/land preparation	81	68
Wedding/iterculture	84	64
Transplanting	80	71
Harvesting	79	74
Threshing	79	72
Unskilled labour	85	72
Skilled labour	115	82
Govt. programme	83	74
All	**86**	**72**

Source: Sample Village Survey, 2008

It is found that on an average the male wage rate is about 20% higher than the female wage rate for different types of work. Further, 6 out of 25 sample villages have reported the presence of child labourers, mostly engaged in agricultural activities. The wages of child workers are found much below the wage rates of male and female workers.

3.11: Rural Development programmes and beneficiaries assisted

The survey of the sample villages showed that in 22 villages, government sponsored educational programmes are being implemented, while in 13 villages government programmes on health/nutrition are in progress and in 2 villages this programme is being sponsored by NGO. In 8 villages government programmes on providing drinking water facilities have been taken up. Agricultural development schemes are in progress in two villages, while irrigation project is being implemented in two villages. Programmes of MP/MLA fund are also in progress in 8 villages. In 2 villages government programmes on providing transport facilities are being implemented, while in 3 villages family planning programmes of the government are going on. The implementation of scheme based government programmes reveals that of the 25 sample villages, in 9 villages only SGRY have been implemented over the past 12 months, NREGA is being implemented in 5 villages and PMGSY in 3 villages.

So far government jobs are concerned; all the sample villages reported the presence of community wise government job holders in their villages. Religious groups wise government jobs across sample villages show that of the total job holders in the sample villages 41.8% are Hindus, 44.7% are Muslims and 0.5% others. The backward class (SC and ST) comprises 13% 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 shows that majority of the beneficiaries were assisted under NREGA. The religion wise breakup of beneficiary status across various programmes reveals that majority of the beneficiaries is Hindu. However, in respect of PMGSY, the Muslim households from the sample villages have a higher coverage. As reported by more than 85% of the sample villages, the flow of these schemes has increased over the last five years, while about 9% of the villages have

reported that the flow of these schemes has remain the same and the flow has decreased as reported in about 5% of the sample villages.

Table 3.9: Percentage of beneficiaries by religious groups under four major Programmes in sample villages

Religion	Programmes			
	SGSY	*NREGA*	*PMGSY*	*IAY*
Hindu	23.7%	43.8%	40.0%	46.9%
Muslim	75.7%	55.1%	50.0%	36.5%
SC	9.8%	0.8%	10.0%	10.8%
ST	0.9%	0.2%	-	5.8%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: Sample Village survey, 2008

Total number of persons assisted under old age pension scheme is 1170 while widow pension holders in the sample villages are 121 as reported during survey.

Table 3.10: Old age and widow pension holders in the sample villages

Schemes	Total	Assisted since 2002-03	Assisted last year
Old Age Pension	1170	631	539
Widow pension	121	67	54

Source: Sample Village survey, 2008

The survey results on the performance of NREGA scheme in the sample villages show that in 2 villages works taken up under the scheme have been completed and in 7 villages the works are yet to be completed, while in rest of the villages NREGA works are yet to be taken. The survey reveals that of the total job card holders among the Muslims about 60% are beneficiaries under NREGA while in respect of Hindus, the corresponding figure is about 29% and for Christians, it is 20%. Of the total job card holders among the SCs and STs, about 24% and 25% respectively are beneficiaries.

3.12 Public Distribution System (PDS)

Table 3.11: Beneficiaries under PDS

Schemes	*Total*	*Hindu*	*Muslim*	*Christian*	*SC & ST*
Annapurna	252	94	118	-	40
Antyodaya	441	218	166	-	57
BPL	2997	1483	1379	10	125
APL	234	95	125	-	14
Total	3924	1890	1788	10	236

It is found that 17 out of the 25 sample villages under study possess the facilities of the public distribution system within the village, while 8 villages do not have PDS facilities within the villages. The households from these 8 villages avail PDS facilities from PDS shops located in neighbouring villages at a distance of 1-10 km. The total number of PDS outlets in the 17 villages as reported during the survey is 35. Scheme wise, the PDS includes schemes like Annapurna, Antyodaya, BPL and APL. A brief account of the scheme wise beneficiaries is given in the following Table:

Most of the households reported to be comfortable with the distance of the outlets as well as the behaviour of the dealers. However mixed responses are found regarding goods supplied, allotment of quota per family, regularity of supply, honesty in measurement and pricing, quality of grains etc. as shown in the table below. From this, it may be concluded that the operating mechanism of PDS might have some definite flaws that needs urgent attention.

Table 3.12: PDS functioning as reported in sample villages

Functioning in terms of	Good*	Satisfactory*	Average*	Bad*
Availability of goods	3	3	10	9
Get full quota	2	5	8	10
Regularity	6	6	6	7
Honesty in measurement	4	4	10	4
Honesty in price	7	4	7	5
Quality of grains	2	4	14	5
Behaviour of the dealer	3	5	8	7

Note: No. of villages reporting*
Source: Sample Village survey, 2008

3.13 Summary

The village survey findings reveal that the sample villages of the district suffer from serious deprivation relating to public health, drinking water, transport and communication and other social sectors. The low female literacy rate in the sample villages caused primarily by inadequate number of separate educational institutions for girls has adversely affected the female educational attainment especially among the Muslims. Electricity is though available in 76 percent of the sample villages insignificant households connections across all communities reveals poor purchasing power of the rural households to get the electricity connection. Poor provisioning of sanitary toilets is another poor facet of development in the sample villages.

On economic front as reported most of the sample villages shows higher yield of paddy than the state average. This could be linked with more consumption of fertiliser per hectare. However institutional constraints in the agriculture development process in the villages are reflected by poor mechanisation and lack of institutional farm credit. Casualisation of workforce in all sample villages is reported and shows the evidences to explain that out migration helps the people to earn a decent income. ■

PART IV

RESULT OF THE BASELINE SURVEY

4.1 Religious and Caste Composition

Out of the total 750 sample households of 25 surveyed villages, 51.7 per cent (388) are Hindu households and 48.3 per cent (362) are Muslim households. Among the Hindu households 19.3 percent (145) are SC, 4.7 percent (35) ST, 16.3 percent (122) are OBC, 10.5 percent (79) General and 0.9 percent (7) are from other caste communities. Of the Muslim households surveyed, 45.9 percent (344) are General caste and only 2.4 percent (18) belong to other backward communities (Table 4.1).

4.2 Mother Tongue

For majority of the sample households (66.1%), Bengali is reported as the mother tongue while for 32.9% of the households Hindi is reported as mother tongue (Table 4.2). 0.8% of the sample households reported ***Others*** (mainly local dialect) as their mother tongue. Of the total Bengali speaking households about 69% are Muslims and rest are Hindus, while of the total Hindi speaking households, about 92% are Hindus and rest are Muslims.

4.3 Age and Sex

The total population in the 750 sample households of the district is 4122, of them 55.2 per cent is male and 44.8 per cent is female, giving a sex ratio of 811 females per 1000 males which is lower than the 2001 Census data of about 927 for the sample villages. The details of age group and sex wise distribution of the sample population are shown in Table 4.3. As the table shows, 10.4 per cent and 22.5 per cent of the sample population is constituted by the children up to the age of 5 and 6-14 years of age groups respectively. About 5.6 per cent of the total population is of more than 60 years of age. For the Hindu households together, the children up to the age of 5 years constitute 9.7 per cent of the total Hindu population while the same ratio for the Muslim households is 11.1 percent. Similarly, the children in the age group of 6-14 years constitute 22.1 per cent of the Hindu sample population while the same ratio for the Muslims is 23 per cent. For the old aged group i.e. the people above 60 years, the ratio is 5.3 per cent for the Hindu households and 5.9 per cent for the Muslim households. Notwithstanding a small database, these differences probably indicate relatively a higher fertility and mortality rate among the religious groups (Table 4.3).

4.4 Household Size

The average household size for the sample households is estimated to be 5.5, almost equal to the 2001 Census figure of 5.2 for the sample villages. About 54.8 per cent of the sample households are found with up to five members, 42.5 percent with six to ten members and only 2.7 percent with more than ten members. Religion wise break up of families with size class shows that 62.4 percent of Hindus and 46.7 percent of Muslims

fall in the family size class of up to 5 members. 35.3 percent of Hindus and 50.3 percent of Muslim households have family sizes of 6-10 members. Moreover, 2.3 percent of Hindus and 3.0 percent of Muslims have household size of more than ten members (Table 4.4).

4.5 Marital Status

Indicating incidence of early marriage, especially of the females, as Table 4.5 indicates, 0.33 per cent Hindu and 0.4 percent Muslim in the sample population of the age group of 15-18 years are found married. The proportion of married households across religious groups shows that 56.3 percent of Hindu sample population is unmarried against 59.3 percent of the Muslims. Again in the total married households, 5.1 percent of the Hindu and 3.8 percent of the Muslim population are reported to be widow/widowers (Table 4.5).

4.6 Educational Status

In respect of educational attainment of sample population across religious groups, the survey revealed that 12.4% of Hindus and 14.3% of Muslims were illiterate. Percentages of female illiterates were high across all religious groups compared to the male members. Although the proportion of illiterate in the sample population is lower, however, the survey reveals that 21.4% of the Hindu and 17.1% of the Muslim population obtained education below primary level. This can be attributed to the impact of adult literacy. Further only about 35% of the Hindu and 39.6 percent of the Muslim population in the sample have obtained education beyond primary level (i.e. middle school and above). (Table 4.6).

4.7 Occupation and Employment

4.7.1 Occupation and Industry

The survey has reflected that farming and related work, is the main occupation for about 41 percent Hindu workforce and 51 percent Muslim workforce. Altogether 24.3 percent Hindu workforce and 25.2 percent Muslim workforce are found engaged in production and related works. It has also been noted that more Hindus (10.3 percent) are engaged in sales/business works than Muslims (7.3 percent) in the district. In clerical jobs the proportion has been found similar for both Hindus and Muslims (Table 4.7). It is also revealed that activities of 17.3 percent Hindu workforce and 8 percent Muslims are not defined adequately. This probably indicates that landlessness and livelihood crisis is more apparent among the rural households forcing them to get engaged in different kinds of jobs. Moreover, as revealed by the survey 98.6 percent of the sample Hindu workforce and 95.7 percent of the Muslim workforce have no secondary occupation (Table 4.8).

The work participation rate for the sample population is found to be lower (29.4 percent) than the Census 2001 estimate, which stands at 33.4 percent in the rural areas of the district. Although the male work participation rate among the sample population (48.3 percent) is almost equal to the Census 2001 estimate of 48.7 percent for the rural areas of

the district, but the female work participation rate (6 percent) is much below the Census estimate of 17 percent as revealed by the survey. This shows that economic independence of females in the sample population is significantly lower. The survey also reveals that the work participation rate of the Muslim women is lower than that of the Hindus. One of the reasons for lower work participation rate of Muslim women may be a higher dependency rate due to relatively higher share of younger population in the community, resulting in women staying at home.

Industry wise distribution of the people with main occupation (Table 4.9) shows that 16 percent Hindu and 48.9 percent Muslim are engaged in cultivation. However, taking into account of all primary farm sector activities, about 41 percent Hindu and 52 percent Muslim population are engaged in cultivation, livestock, horticulture, forestry, fishing and poultry related activities. Engagement of people from Hindu community in non-agriculture manufacturing (4.4 percent) is more than the Muslims (1.5 percent) and the Muslims (2.1 percent). The same is true in the industrial category of construction, wholesale and retail trade, transport, storage and communication where involvement of people from the Hindu community is found more, while involvement of the Muslims in community, social and personal services is found marginally higher than the Hindus (Table 4.9).

It is evident from Table 4.10 that 29.2 percent Hindu and 31.2 percent Muslim main workers do work less than or equal to 180 days in a year. This reflects high prevalence of underemployment among all the religious communities. In addition to this, about 61 percent workers each from both the communities work in between 181 to 260 days in a year (Table 4.10). These figures are also reflective of underemployment among the communities of people in the district.

4.7.2 Additional Employment and Preference

Although a sizeable section of the main labour force is engaged in agriculture and allied activities, which has neither been adequately remunerative nor can generate substantial employment days through out the year for various reasons. The overall employment scenario supplemented by the figures given in Table 4.12 indicates the phenomenon of unemployment and underemployment. The sample survey indicated that about 96% of the households were looking for additional employment. Religion wise distribution of households looking for more employment indicates that about 95% of the Hindus and 96% of the Muslim households are seeking additional employment.

The preferred option for self-employment (52%) is found to be more among the underemployed and unemployeds. This is followed by salaried jobs (21.9%), services (15.2%) and manual labour (10.9%). The preferences across the religion show that 55.6% Hindu and 48.3% Muslim prefer self-employment (Table 4.13).

4.7.3 Migrant Workers

Migration in search of livelihood is found to be less in the sample households. The survey reveals that altogether 21 members from the sample households in the villages have migrated out for different works. Of these 21members, number of Hindus is 13 and

that of Muslims is 8 (Table 4.14). Among the religious communities migration to urban areas is particularly high among the Muslims (12.5% within district, 25% within the state, 62.5% outside the state) as indicated by the survey results. Proportion of the Hindus migrating to urban areas within district is 15.4%, within the state is 7.7% and to urban areas outside the state is 30.8% (Table 4.15).

Occupational distribution (Table 4.14) of migrants across religions indicates that service works engages majority of the Hindu migrant work force (38.5%), while majority of the Muslim migrant workers (50%) are engaged in production and related works. Most of the migrants go out for long duration (above 8 months) and data indicates (Table 4.16) higher proportions of Muslims (87.5%) compared to Hindus (61.5%) migrate for long duration. Alternatively more Hindus (38.5%) migrate for short term than the Muslims (12.5%).

4.8 Land and other Assets

4.8.1 Cultivated Land: Ownership and Operational Holding

The survey shows that marginal landowners are more prominent among all religious groups (Hindu- 97.4%, Muslim- 93.6%) in the sample population (Table 4.17). As shown in Table 4.17, landlessness is found only among 1.3 percent Hindu and 0.3 percent Muslim households. Regarding own cultivable land, 50.5 percent Hindu and 32.3 percent Muslim households of the sample have no cultivable land. The figure of rural households without cultivable land in Assam is about 36 percent. The sample survey shows that 48.7 percent Hindu households and 66.6 percent Muslim households in the sample are marginal farmers, while only 0.8 percent Hindu and 1.1 percent Muslim households are small farmers (Table 4.18).

As Table 4.19 reveals, in terms of total cultivated land, about 49 per cent of the households of Hindu community and 67 percent from Muslim community belong to the category of Marginal farmer, and only 0.8 percent Hindu families and 1.1 percent Muslim families belong to the category of small farmers. The table also shows that more than 50 percent Hindu and 32 percent Muslim households have no cultivable land. Needless to say that the little difference that is found in terms of own and total cultivated land is mainly due the complex processes of leasing in and leasing out and also mortgage of cultivated land.

4.9 Livestock

In respect of livestock possession, the survey indicates that comparatively a higher proportion of the Muslim households possess some types of livestock than the Hindus. Milch animal, draught animal, young cattle, goats and poultry are the major livestock possessed by the sample households (Table 4.20).

4.10 Ownership of Productive and other Assets

4.10.1 Agricultural Implements

The important agricultural implement among the sample households is plough (26 percent households own it). 14.4 percent Hindu households and 38.4 percent Muslim households have the plough. Only one Muslim household owns a tractor and 3 Muslim households have sprayer in the entire sample. Altogether pump set was found in one Hindu and 5 Muslim households in the sample (Table 4.21). The figures however clearly indicate lack of modernization of the agricultural sector in the district.

4.10.2 Transport

Along with bicycles, motorized two wheelers are emerging as major mode of communication in the villages in present days. Bicycles are found in more than 70 percent Hindu households and in 79 percent Muslim households. Two wheelers are found in 2.8 percent Hindu and 3.8 percent Muslim households (Table 4.22).

4.10.3 Modern Household Assets

Among the modern households assets, electric fan is found in 14.2 percent Hindu and 11 percent Muslim households; television is found in 19.6 percent Hindu and 13.5 percent Muslim households; LPG stove is found in 4.8 percent Hindu and 3.8 percent Muslim households; mobile phone is found in 24.5 percent Hindu and 37 percent Muslim households. This is seen that mobile phones are being more preferred in the rural households than the landline phones. Overall the Hindu households have better access to modern household gadgets than the Muslims reflecting wellbeing to an extent (Table 4.23).

4.10.4 Financial Assets

Altogether 175 (23.3 percent) of the sample households have reported to have different kind of financial assets including gold ornament. About 10.8 per cent of the sample households have reported to have savings in bank and only 3.3 percent of the sample households have fixed deposits. 8.9 percent of the sample households reported to have gold ornaments. Table 4.24 shows distribution of financial assets is more among the Hindu households than the Muslim households.

4.11 Housing Status

4.11.1 House type and availability of living space

An important indicator of the economic status of a household is the type of house and the facilities available therein. The distribution of housing status among the sample households (Table 4.25) reveals that more than 85 percent Hindu households and 97 percent Muslim households have their own houses. This is reflected that more Hindu households (more than 14 percent) than the Muslims have benefited under IAY.

The data on type of house (Table 4.26) shows that 67.3 percent Hindu households live in kutchha houses. The figure is, however, much higher for the Muslims (73.3 percent). The high incidence of living in kutchha houses also has its impact on the health status of the Muslim households.

The availability of living space for sample households (Table 4.27) indicates that only 2.6 percent Hindu and 2.2 percent Muslim families live in one room accommodation. However, majorities of families in our sample (Hindu 82.2 percent and Muslim 75.7 percent) live in 2-3 room accommodation.

4.11.2 Domestic lighting and fuel use

The village survey revealed that about 76 percent of the sample villages in the district have power supply and further household survey showed that only about 25.5 percent of the sample households from the sample villages have domestic electricity connection. The findings from the household survey (Table 4.28) show that about 27.6 percent Hindu households and 23.5 percent Muslim households have electricity in their house. Thus although the secondary data on rural electrification reveals that 88 percent of villages in the district have domestic power connection however, in terms of household coverage the achievement is very low.

In the non-electrified houses (Table 4.29), the survey reveals that about 79.4 percent Hindu households 84.5 percent Muslim households use oil lamp and lantern for lighting of their homes. The use of oil lamp and petromax as the source of lighting is reported by 9.3 percent Hindu and 6.9 percent Muslim households.

Clean fuel for cooking is important for health. It is a serious consideration for women who, in most cases, are burdened with the task of cooking. As per Census 2001 data, just about 60 percent of all rural households in the country do not use any of the modern fuels such as LPG, electricity or even kerosene. The household survey reveals that only 5.2 percent Hindu household and 3.6 percent Muslim households are using LPG along with k.oil and wood for cooking (Table 4.30). For more than 95 percent of the sample households, wood along with hay/leaves, cowdung cake, agricultural waste etc. are the main fuels used in cooking.

4.11.3 Drinking water facilities

Availability and access to safe drinking water has been one of the basic objectives under ARWSP. The results of the household survey reveal that 47 percent Hindu households and 42 percent Muslim have access to safe source of drinking water (Table 4.31) from tube wells own and public and protected dug wells both private and public, with 15.7 percent Hindu and 18.2 percent Muslim households having access to public tap and only 1.5 percent Hindu and 1.7 percent Muslim households having tap in dwelling. Among the unsafe sources, pond/river/stream are the most commonly used source (Table 4.31).

The survey showed that 20.6 percent of the Hindu and 8.3 percent of Muslim households fetch drinking water from a distance of less than 10 meters, while 67.3 percent Hindu

and 84.5 percent Muslim households have access to drinking water at a distance of 51-100 meters from their home (Table 4.32).

4.11.4 Sanitation and drainage facility

An important requirement for sanitation is the presence of toilet facilities. Almost half of the Muslim households in India lack access to toilets; this proportion is higher in rural areas. The sample results (Table 4.33) indicate that only 8.5 percent Hindu and 8.3 percent Muslim families have access to sanitary latrine. It was found that 3.6 percent Hindu and 3.9 percent Muslim families have covered dry latrine. The sanitary practices among the households reveal that more than 13 percent Hindu and 24.3 percent Muslim families use open field for defecation. The rest have access to unsanitary latrines in the form of pit latrines. All reveal poor sanitation practices in the villages across all the communities.

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 4.34) show that availability of drainage facility in the sample households is very low with only 12.6 percent Hindu and 27.9 percent Muslim households have drainage facility in their house.

4.12 Indebtedness of rural households

The survey findings on the incidence of indebtedness among sample households show that 99.6% of the households are currently not indebted (Table 4.35). Only 0.4% (3 households of which 2 Hindu and one Muslim) households in the sample are found indebted with only one loan.

As shown in table 4.36, all the indebted households have loan sizes above Rs.20,000. Agency wise indebtedness among the households shows that 2 households (Hindu) have taken loan from friends/relatives while, one Muslim household borrowed from commercial bank. Further, purpose wise borrowing of the households shows that of the 3 indebted households, 2 households contracted a debt for marriage and other social ceremonies while, the other household incurred a debt for capital expenditure in non-farm business (Table 4.36).

4.13 Income and Expenditure

4.13.1 Family Income

The family income data for sample households shows that income of 35.6 percent Hindu and 22.9 percent Muslim households during the last one year falls below Rs.19,200. Another 11.1 percent Hindu and 13.3 percent Muslim live with household income in between Rs.19,2001 to Rs.22,800. Both the categories constitute the size of population living below the poverty line and the figure is based on per capita poverty line expenditure estimate of Rs. 388/ per month. Overall proportion of sample households living below the poverty line comes to about 41.5 percent, which is much higher than the state average of 19.7 percent to the present Planning Commission estimate. It has been

observed that the Hindu households are found to be more poverty stricken than the Muslims (Table 4.37).

4.13.2 Family Expenditure

As per the NSS 62nd Round (2005-06), the average consumer expenditure per capita on cereals and pulses for Assam is estimated to be Rs.135 while the national average is Rs.106. The estimated family expenditure in the sample households reflects that 48.2 percent Hindu and 36.7 percent Muslim households spend less than national average family spending of Rs. 106 on cereal and pulses (Table 4.39). In the case of vegetables and protein foods, it was found that about 99 percent of the sample families spend up to Rs. 750 monthly. Religion wise, the scene is not much different (Table 4.40). The survey shows that 54.6 percent Hindu and 42.3 percent Muslim households spent up to Rs. 1800, while 26.5 percent Hindu and 29.3 percent Muslim households spent Rs. 1801- Rs. 2690 and 18.8 percent Hindu and 28.5 percent Muslim households spent more than Rs. 2691 on cloths, footwear and bedding during the last year (Table 4.41). Spending on Education is also lower in the district than the state average of Rs. 850 as shown in Table 4.42. However it was found that 29.1 percent Hindu and 41.2 percent Muslim households spend more than the state average on education in the district (Table 4.42). On health 11.9 percent Hindu and 11 percent Muslim households in the sample did not incur any cost during last year (Table 4.43). This was found that majorities of sample households did not spent on telephone (81.4 percent Hindu and 71.3 percent Muslim), recreation (98.7 percent Hindu and 92.5 percent Muslim) and, marriage and other social ceremonies (83.8 percent Hindu and 86.7 percent Muslim). This is also found that most of the households need to keep aside a significant proportion of the budget for house repairing, festival and ceremonies, electricity, gas and fuel wood and, beedi, cigarette etc. (Tables 4.44 – 4.50).

4.14 Current Educational Status, Skill Training

4.14.1 Current educational status of children

The data of current educational status of the sample population in the age group of 5 to 25 years reflect that in this age group, altogether 0.6 percent Hindus and 2.3 percent Muslims were never enrolled in school. The survey reveals that 28.3 percent Hindus and 33.1 percent Muslims left education after enrolment. Further, 2.5 percent Hindus and 1.6 percent Muslims though enrolled their names in schools but are not attending classes. Overall it is seen that in this age group 64.5 percent Hindus and 61.4 percent Muslims are attending formal educational institutions (Table 4.51). Gender wise we see that proportion of boys attending educational institutions is more than that of the girls in all the communities under study.

4.14.2 Educational attainment by religion and gender

Looking at educational level of the population in the sample households in the age group of 5 to 25 years, it is reflected that among the literates 32.7 percent Hindu and 28.3 percent Muslim students are in below primary level. The survey reveals that altogether 28 percent Hindu and 26.1 percent Muslim children have completed primary school

education, while 24.3 percent Hindu and 26.2 percent Muslim children have completed middle school level education. It is seen that altogether 12.4 percent Hindu and 15.5 percent Muslim children have completed the metric/high school level of education (Table 4.52). Gender wise we see significant variation among the communities. All are, however, reflective of poor human capital formation among the young population in the district. The data reflects that more than 98 percent children from each of the communities under study presently attending government school (Table 4.53). Moreover, as reported, only 19.7 percent of the presently school going students are learning minority languages (Table 4.54).

4.14.3 Drop out among sample population of 5-25 years by reasons

As mentioned above (Table 4.51), the drop out rate in the age group of 5-25 years by religious groups show that Muslims have comparatively high drop out rate (33.1%) than the Hindus (28.3%). Gender segregated data shows that male drop out rate is higher than the females across all religious groups. The primary reasons for drop out among the Hindus as reported are lack of interest in reading (41.6%) followed by necessity of earning (25.7%), failed in examination (18.1%) and fees/expenditure can not afford (9.3%). Drop out among the Muslims are mainly due to necessity of earning (33.2%) followed by lack of interest in reading (28.1%), failed in examination (20.2%) and fees/expenditure can not afford (9.9%). The drop out rate due to necessity of earning is more pronounced among the male children than the females (Table 4.55). Moreover, the drop out rate is much higher in the district.

4.14.4 Aspiration of Parents on their Children

Altogether 38.8 percent parents in Hindu households aspire that their boys should attain education at least up to high school level. This figure in Muslim households is 36 percent. It is found that 25 percent parents in Hindu households and 20.8 percent Muslim parents aspire their boys should attain education up to intermediate level. Further 18.1 percent Hindu and 23.6 percent Muslim parents desire that their children should attain education up to graduation level, while 16.5 percent and 19.1 percent Hindu and Muslim parents respectively aspire their children to attain post graduation level (Table 4.56).

In the case of girl students, altogether 35.7 percent Hindu and 39 percent Muslim parents aspire that their girls should attain education at least to high school level. Again, 30.6 percent Hindu and 20.9 percent Muslim parents aspire that their girls should read at least up to intermediate level. Further, about 30 percent Hindu and 32 percent Muslim parents aspire that their girls should attain education up to graduation level (Table 4.57).

4.14.5 Attitude and Approaches in Skill development training

Interactions in the sample households reveal that in most of the households (Hindu 78.4 percent and Muslim 85.4 percent) family members are interested to take up skill development training (Table 4.58). Tailoring is the most preferred skill training for 26.2 percent Hindus and 30.8 percent Muslim population. Again, among the interested members, 22.1 percent Muslims are interested in computer operation training while this

figure for Hindus is 14 percent. Further, 20.8 percent Hindus and 17.4 percent Muslims are interested in weaving training, while 11.4 percent Hindus and 12 percent Muslims are interested to take driving training. It is found that 17.1 percent Hindus and 11.5 percent Muslims are interested in on the job training (Table 4.59). Overall these options reveal peoples' outlook to the changing job markets at present economic environment.

4.15 Present Health Scenario

The survey reveals that only about 18 percent members in the sample households across the religion suffered from some kind of diseases in the past one year (Table 4.60). Incidence of diseases found to be marginally more in the case of Hindu population (18.7 percent) than the Muslims (17.1%). Malaria, jaundice, stomach pain, dysentery, typhoid, cough & cold and fever found to be the most commonly reported diseases by the sample households. The incidence of cough & cold and fever was found more in the Hindu than the Muslim households, while that of malaria, typhoid, pain in stomach and jaundice was more among the sample Muslims than the Hindus (Table 4.61).

Hospitalisation was the case for about 37 percent Hindu and 53 percent Muslim population in the sample (Table 4.62). This could indicate that the capacity and alertness of Muslim households where we see relatively low prevalence of diseases is more than Hindus. However, the seriousness of the diseases requiring hospitalization was not captured in the study.

This is found that about 50 percent Hindu and 43 percent Muslim households solely approach government hospital for treatments. 14.7 percent Hindu and 15.2 percent Muslim households reported that they approached private medical practitioners for treatments, while 15.2 percent Hindus and 9.6 percent Muslims reported home treatment. There are a considerable section of households in the sample using multiple sources for medical treatment (Table 4.63).

4.16 Maternal and Child Health

A child is considered to be fully immunized if she/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 65.9% of the children in the sample population were fully immunized, 8.8% received no immunisation at all and 25.1% received partial immunization. Religion wise desegregated data (Table 4.64) shows that higher proportions of Hindu children (70.1%) have been fully immunized compared to Muslims (62.5%). Gender wise immunization status of the sample children shows that higher proportion of female children has been fully immunised across religions (Table 4.65). The coverage by the government agency is found to be 98.7% of the total immunized children and only 1.3% children were immunised in private agency (Table 4.66). The survey indicates that parents not being aware of the successive doses and/or need to immunize their children have been the major reason for children either not immunized at all or receiving any dose of immunization but not completing the schedule. Besides, far distance of immunisation centers is also reported as an important reason for either non or partial immunisation (Table 4.67).

The survey reflects that both Hindu and Muslim women have less access to government and institutional facilities for delivery of child. Just about 18.7% Hindu women used government or private facilities for delivery and this figure for Muslim women is 14.5%. Of the women who delivered their babies at home, more than 56% Hindus and 72% Muslims of them were assisted by untrained dais or other family members (Tables 4.68 & 4.69). Further, relatively more Muslim women (21.7%) took pre and post natal care than the Hindus (7.3%) during their last child (Table 4.70).

4.17 Poverty and the Public Distribution System (PDS)

About 46.9 percent Hindu and 43.6 percent Muslim households reported that they belong to BPL category while. Of the households who reported to belong to BPL category, it was found that about 96.2 percent Hindu and 96.8 percent Muslim families posses BPL ration card (Tables 4.71 and 4.72). The survey reveals that of the total sample households about 48 percent avail PDS ration. Within the religious groups, percentage of households using PDS facilities, the proportion was almost equal for Hindus and Muslims (Table 4.73). This is found that 61 percent of the families availing rations from PDS face difficulties for the reasons of discrimination by PDS dealer (48.9 percent), lack of money (about 23 percent), lack of adequate PDS supply (22.2 percent) and for some other unspecified reasons (about 6 percent) (Tables 4.74 and 4.75).

4.18 Awareness and Participation

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

So far the level of awareness at the community level is concerned, Muslim households on the whole found to be ahead of the Hindus except in IAY and old age/widow pension scheme where the awareness level is marginally higher among the Hindus than the Muslim households (Table 4.76). In terms of benefits, however, the Hindus on the whole got more benefits than the Muslims under IAY, TSC Swajaldhara, ARWSP, SSA, and Old age/widow pension. The Muslims got more benefits than Hindus only in case of SGSY, NREGA, ICDS and maternity benefits (Table 4.77). This is true that the nature of these programmes is different, one require to work to get the benefits in some of the programmes. Thus the religious minority- Muslims are lagging behind in terms of benefits from various government programmes in the district.

4.18.1 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 shows that the level of political participation is quite high among the sample households at all levels. Religion wise we does not see any difference in voting (Table 4.78). It has been observed that only a few of the sample households have membership of either Panchayat office bearer or religious/social organization (Table 4.79), while only 6 percent of the sample households are reported to have membership of SHG.

4.18.2 Conflict, insecurity and access to media and communication

The survey finding shows that only 10 out of 750 sample households have suffered from conflicts- caste, communal or otherwise and majority of the households is Hindu. The households suffered from conflicts, 6 of them have reported minor property loss, while no household have lost life in the conflicts (Table 4.80).

As far as the access to media and communication is concerned, the baseline indicates an overall low level of access to media across the communities. This is found that just about 12 percent sample households read newspapers, 10.4 percent watch T.V. and about 32 percent households listen to radio. Religion wise Muslims were found to be ahead in case of newspaper and radio while, Hindus were found ahead of Muslims in case of television (Table 4.81).

4.19 Aspirations of the Communities as reflected from the Survey

Most important facilities lacking in the villages

Majority of the respondents feel that drinking water supply facilities, transport & communication and health facilities are the most important facilities lacking in their villages. However, the households across all religious groups placed road communication and drinking water supply ahead of health facilities (Tables 4.82 – 4.84).

Most important deprivation in the families

Majority of the Hindu households identified land, house and employment opportunities as their major deprivations, while majority of the Muslims reported land, education and skill as their major deprivations (Tables 4.85 – 4.87).

Perceived priorities for the welfare of minority communities

The major priorities for their welfare as stated by the minority community are education, health and generation of employment opportunities. It has, however, been observed that health and education facilities and livelihood security are the major concerns of the people in the villages of Hailakandi district (Tables 4.88 – 4.90).

PART V

DEVELOPMENT DEFICITS

Hailakandi is one of the worse performing districts in the state of Assam as indicated by its HDI value of 0.363 (11th rank), which is lower than the state average of 0.407. The district occupies 9th place in terms of income while 14th place in terms of both education and health in district wise rankings. The human poverty index calculated in 1999 indicates that 27 per cent of total populations in the district are in poverty. In terms of Gender related Development Index (GDI), Hailakandi ranks 6th in district wise ranking, with GDI value of 0.609 which is above the state average of 0.537. However, the HDI-GDI rank disparities indicate that women in this district suffers from deprivation of development potential leading to lower achievement than men (Assam Human Development Report, 2003). The development deficits and their prioritization for Multi-sector Development Plan are summarized below.

Developmental deficits in Hailakandi district and their priority ranking

Sl. No	Indicators	Survey Result	Estimate for India	Deficit	Priority Ranking attached
Socio-economic indicators					
1	Rate of literacy	87.00	67.30	19.70	8
2	Rate of female literacy	83.00	57.10	25.90	10
3	Work participation rate	48.00	38.00	2.00	7
4	Female work participation rate	10.52	21.50	-10.98	6
Basic amenities indicators					
5	Percentage of pucca houses	1.47	59.40	-57.93	1
6	Percentage of households with access to safe drinking water	44.00	87.90	-43.90	2
7	Percentage of households with sanitation facilities	9.07	39.20	-30.13	4
8	Percentage of electrified households	25.60	67.90	-42.30	3
Health indicators					
9	Percentage of fully vaccinated children	66.00	43.50	22.50	9
10	Percentage of institutional delivery	14.56	38.70	-24.14	5

It is clear from the above table that the level of achievement of the district in terms of rural pucca house is poor compared to that of the national average. The overall condition of the housing in this district found to be quite unsatisfactory. Besides having a large

number of kutchha houses, the living space for a sizeable section of the households has also been found to be insufficient. Although IAY has contributed to certain extent, the larger section of the people especially of the Muslim community living below the poverty line has not yet been covered by housing programme. Therefore, the first priority of the MsDP for the district should be on housing.

- Alongside housing, the second priority for the MsDP for the district should be on making adequate provision for safe drinking water, which may substantially contribute to improve the existing health scenario of the district.

- The official records of the State Electricity Board of Assam indicates that about 82% of the villages in the district have domestic power connection, however, the baseline survey indicated that only about 76% of sample villages have power supply and only 25.5% of the sample households have domestic connection. Poor electrification of rural households continues to be major problem in the district.

- While addressing the issues of housing including other basic amenities such as safe drinking water and electrification, the MsDP for the district should adequately emphasize on rural sanitation. The provision of sanitary latrine with each house provided under the programme must be compulsory.

- Reproductive health requires serious attention in the villages of the district. In most of the cases child delivery takes place at home. Similarly, very few women are found receiving pre and post natal care. Adequate provision should be made to ensure delivery of child in hospital.

- Although the general scenario of work participation in the district is a little better than the national average, the female work participation rate in the district is visibly poor. The issue is, therefore, to generate more employment opportunities, especially for the female. Modernization of the existing traditional practices may be a possible solution. However, this must be accompanied by adequate efforts to promote self-employment opportunities. Promotion of skill should be linked with a well designed support mechanism including institutional credit. Incentives, may be in the form of some amount of subsidy, in the initial phase may accelerate the process.

- The survey indicated poor literacy rates in the sample villages including female literacy. While female literacy is one area of concern, the other deficit is quite a high drop out rate. The survey has revealed multiple reasons of dropout and poverty is found one of the major reasons. Further, this is true that there are reasonable numbers of schools in the sample villages. However, what concern more are, poor infrastructure and the quality of services available in the educational institutions.

- In terms of lack of facilities in the sample villages and relative deprivation of the households, common perception of the people across the religion is that that road communication, drinking water and health facilities now require more attention in the district. Along with these, land, housing, Skill development and livelihood assurance are also major concerns.

LIST OF SURVEYED VILLAGES

Sl. No.	VILLAGE
1	Sudorshonpur Pt II
2	Bisnughar
3	Bakri Howar Pt III
4	Rongpur Pt III
5	Chepti Brojapur
6	Dholai Molai Pt VII T.E.
7	Boldaboldi Pt II
8	Katanala N.C.
9	Lalachera Grant
10	Mohanpur Pt VI
11	Aynakhal
12	Nunaikhal Grant
13	Monachura Grant
14	Bakri Howar Pt X
15	Ramchandi Pt II
16	Telecherra N.C.
17	Rampur
18	Burni Brease Grant
19	Kuchila Grant
20	Kanchanpur Pt III
21	Rupacherra Tea Garden
22	Uttarbadarpur
23	Boalipar Pt II
24	Bahadurpur Pt II
25	Bashdahar Pt II