

**Survey  
of  
Tea Garden Areas  
of  
Sonitpur and Udalguri Districts**

*(2012-2013)*

Conducted by



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## The Objective of the Base Line Survey

1. To collect the primary data from the operational area of Don Bosco Educational Society and Bosco Reach Out.
2. To assess the Condition of the people living in Tea Garden Areas of Sonitpur and Udalguri districts of Assam, India on the following basis:
  - a. Social Conditions: Types of house, Access to various public institutions, Transport and communication facilities, Drinking water facilities etc.
  - b. Economic Conditions: which include; occupation, landholdings, Income generating activities carried out other than occupation, Savings, Credit, etc
  - c. Educational Conditions: They include; literacy rate, educational level, dropouts, etc
3. To understand the current scenario of the condition of the 'Tea Garden areas of Sonitpur and Udalguri Districts' for future involvement.

## Methodology

The following method has been adopted to conduct the survey:

- ▶ **Field of Survey**: The survey was carried out in 48 villages in Sonitpur and Udalguri districts, especially those that are closely connected with the local tea gardens.
- ▶ **Survey Design**: The survey is design in semi structure questionnaire which consist mainly objective multiple choice and few descriptive type of questions. Convenience sampling method has been adopted to collect the data.
- ▶ **Data Source and Collection**: Questionnaire is the source of survey data obtain directly from the respondents. It consist of 199 questions related to demographic details, household details, agriculture, livestock rearing, fishery, skill details, IGA and Micro Enterprise, saving and credit, gender details, migration, disaster risk reduction and community health and education.
- ▶ **Pre-Testing**: Before the actual data collection, pre-testing of the questionnaire was conducted with ten respondents at two villages of Sonapur region. Few questions were modified and eliminated. No further modification was made after the pre-testing with respect to the respondents respond.
- ▶ **Actual Data Collection**: Orientation to all the field staffs was given before the collection of data.
- ▶ **Analysis**: The collected data are coded and entered in computer to get the required information at the end. The data are generated in tables which give the statistical information.

# Survey Result and Analysis:

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## Part 1: Social Conditions Survey

01. Total Household 1950 surveyed in 48 villages of Sonitpur and Udalguri districts mainly in the tea garden areas consist of 70% Adivasis, 21% Napalees, 5% Mishings and 5% Boro communities.
02. The 56% of the total 1950 respondents were members of Self Help Group. Another 23% of the respondents have family members migrating to other place for various reasons like job, student, marriage etc.
03. The 65% of the 1950 respondents have PDS (Public Distribution System) or Ration Cards while 35% of the respondents do not possessed.
04. In the Tea Garden Areas most of the houses consist of bamboo house with tin roof (49 % respondents), mud house with tin roof (24 % respondents), thatched house with mud wall (21 % respondent) and concrete house with tin roof (6 % respondents).
05. The tribal of the Tea Garden Areas are still backward and lack many social facilities. 83% of the respondents have no electricity facility and managed with kerosene oil. Only 10% of the respondents have electricity as their source of lighting and 7 % respondents used solar lamp.
06. The Tea Garden Areas still have less access to the various government schemes for health and hygiene. While 87% of the respondents used kuccha toilet, 6% of the respondents still use open field and only 6 % of the respondents have pucca toilet.
07. Source of drinking water among the tea garden areas is open well (100% respondents) and lies within their homestead (84% respondents) and 15% of the respondents need to travel less than one kilometer for getting the drinking water.
08. Around 30% of the respondents do not purify water before drinking which is the main source of all water born diseases; 49% of the respondents boil water and 21% of the respondents filter the water before drinking.
09. The highest respond to the nearest health facility is the CHC and PHC (88% respondents) which lie within 5 Kms from their village. The facilities and satisfaction to the services is very poor (74% of the respondents). Private pharmacies (68% respondents) provide good service to the people.

## **Part 2: Economic Conditions Survey**

01. The majority 53% of the respondents are engaged in daily wage labour and 24% of the respondents are farmers. The 15% of the respondent are engaged in private service and only 3% of the respondents are in government service.
02. In the Tea Garden Areas most of the people do not have own land for cultivation (76% respondents) and very a few of them owned cultivable land (24% respondents).
03. The people mostly take up small IGA (Income Generating Activity) like rearing livestock (52% respondent), agriculture (18% respondents) and horticulture cum livestock rearing (12% respondents) to meet their need which is rarely sufficient. The 10% of the respondents do not take any IGA.
04. The practice of saving money among the people of tea garden areas is in very less amount. The survey provides 24% respondents (highest) which save annually at the range of ₹301 to ₹500, 12% respondents saves annually ₹101 to ₹300 and 11 respondents ₹501 to ₹800. Only 9% respondents save annually more than ₹6000.
05. The practice of borrowing money and food grains is very high among the tea garden areas. The people are mostly daily wage labour and very a few of them have cultivable land. The 88% of the respondents borrow money and 55% respondents borrow food grains.

## **Part 3: Educational Conditions Survey**

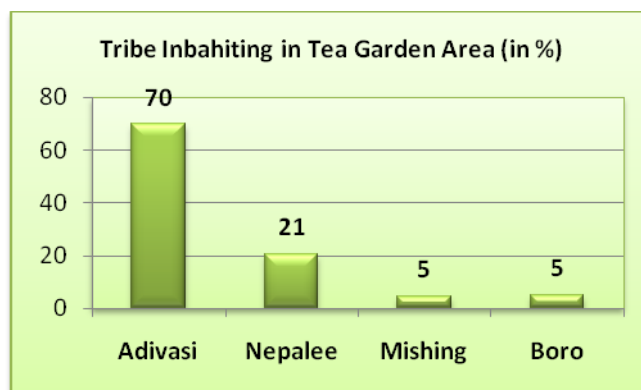
01. The poor economic living condition of the tea garden areas is enhanced due to high illiteracy and school drop outs. According to the survey 25% of adult (above 18 years) and 16% of children (5 to 17 years) are illiterate. Children drop out from school is highest in Middle Education (33%) and Primary (28%). The 16% of the children are completely out of school.
02. Only 30% of the population has passed HSLC and only 20% have passed H.S. with only 10% being graduated.

## **Limitation**

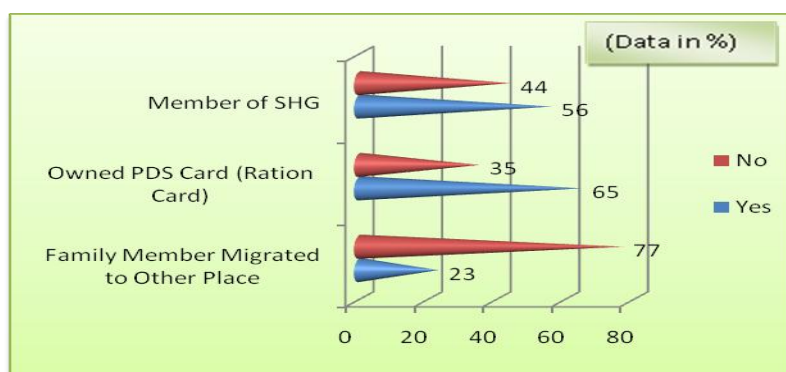
01. The survey only brings forward the most essential problems/difficulties faced by the people of this area.
02. The survey does not bring forth the available resources, skills and natural expertise of the people.
03. “The way to move forward” is presented after discussion with the field survey staff. Participatory methods need to be explore to find the available resources, natural expertise and skills of the people to truly move forward.

## Part 1: Social Conditions Survey

Name of Tribe	Percent (%)
Adivasi	70
Nepalee	21
Mishing	5
Boro	5
Total	100
Total Household	1950



Total household 1950 surveyed in 48 villages of Sonitpur and Udalguri districts mainly in the tea garden areas consist of 70% Adivasis, 21% Napalees, 5% Mising and 5% Boro communities.



Member of SHG	Percent (%)
Yes	56
No	44
Total	100
Total Household	1950

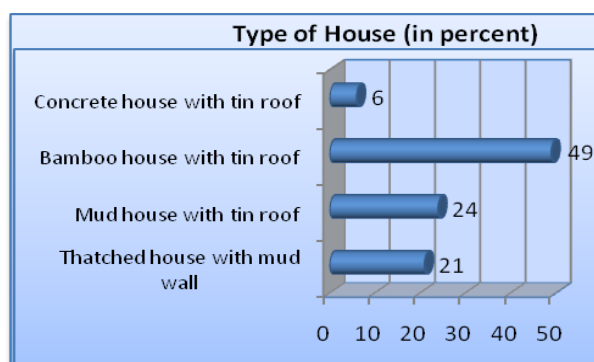
Family Member Migrated to Other Place	Percent (%)
Yes	23
No	77
Total	100
Total Household	1950

The 56% of the total 1950 respondents were members of Self Help Group. Another 23% of the respondents have family members migrating to other place for various reasons like job, student, marriage etc.

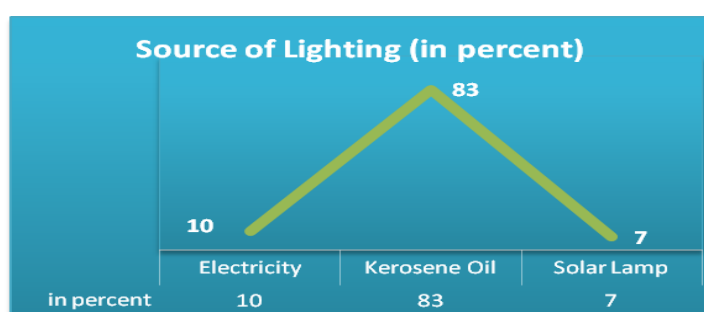
Owned PDS Card (Ration Card)	Percent (%)
Yes	65
No	35
Total	100
Total Household	1950

The 65% of the 1950 respondents have PDS (Public Distribution System) or Ration Cards while 35% of the respondents do not possessed.

Type of House	Percent (%)
Thatched house with mud wall	21
Mud house with tin roof	24
Bamboo house with tin roof	49
Concrete house with tin roof	6
Total	100
Total Household	1950



In the Tea Garden Areas most of the houses consist of bamboo house with tin roof (49 % respondents), mud house with tin roof (24 % respondents), thatched house with mud wall (21 % respondent) and concrete house with tin roof (6 % respondents).



Source of Lighting	Percent (%)
Electricity	10
Kerosene Oil	83
Solar Lamp	7
Total	100
Total Household	1950

The tribal of the Tea Garden Areas are still backward and lack many social facilities. 83% of the respondents have no electricity facility and managed with kerosene oil. Only 10% of the respondents have electricity as their source of lighting and 7 % respondents used solar lamp.

Defecate	Percent (%)
In Open Fields	6
Near the House	1
Kuccha Toilet	87
Pucca Toilet	6
Total	100
Total Household	1950

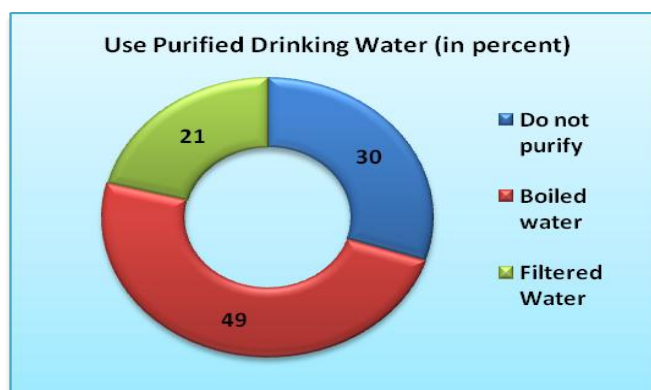
The Tea Garden Areas still have less access to the various government schemes for health and hygiene. While 87% of the respondents used kuccha toilet, 6% of the respondents still use open field and only 6 % of the respondents have pucca toilet.

Source of Drinking Water being Fetched	Percent (%)
Open Well	100
Total	100
Total Household	1950

Distance from Source of Drinking Water	Percent (%)
Within Homestead	84
Less than 1 Km	15
1.1 – 2 Km away	1
Total	100
Total Household	1950

Source of drinking water among the tea garden areas is open well (100% respondents) and lies within their homestead (84% respondents) and 15% of the respondents need to travel less than one kilometer for getting the drinking water.

Use Purified Drinking Water	Percent (%)
Do not purify	30
Boiled water	49
Filtered Water	21
Total	100
Total Household	1950



Around 30% of the respondents do not purify water before drinking which is the main source of all water born diseases; 49% of the respondents boil water and 21% of the respondents filter the water before drinking.

Distance	Nearest CHC or PHC (in %)	Nearest Dispensary (in %)	Nearest Hospital (in %)	Nearest Ambulance Service (in %)
Less than 5 Kms	88	88	45	87
5.1 - 10 Kms	12	12	50	13
10.1 - 15 Kms			2	
20.1 - 25 Kms			1	
30.1 - 40 Kms			2	
Total	100	100	100	100

Distance	Nearest Bus Service (in %)
Less than 5 Kms	91
5.1 - 10 Kms	9
Total	100

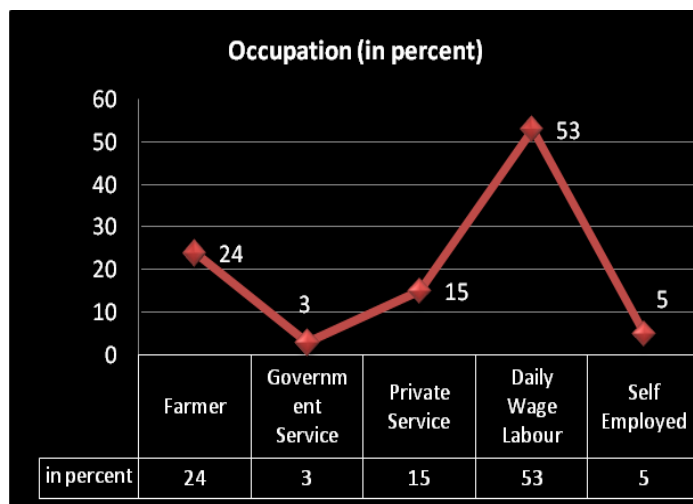
(Data in Percent)

Health Service	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory / Moderate	Poor	Very Poor	Total
Local Kobiraj	0	3	34	16	47	100
ASHA Workers	0	23	58	17	2	100
CHC / Rural Hospital	0	42	43	12	3	100
PHC	0	7	8	11	74	100
Sub-Centre	0	13	34	22	31	100
Govt. Hospital	1	53	42	3	1	100
Private Hospital	0	59	29	5	7	100
Private Doctors	0	65	23	7	5	100
Dispensaries	0	58	37	3	2	100
Pharmacies	0	68	30	1	1	100

The highest respond to the nearest health facility is the CHC and PHC (88% respondents) which lie within 5 Kms from their village. The facilities and satisfaction to the services is very poor (74% respondents). Private pharmacies (68% respondents) provide good service to the people.

## Part 2: Economic Conditions Survey

Occupation	Percent (%)
Farmer	24
Government Service	3
Private Service	15
Daily Wage Labour	53
Self Employed	5
Total	100
Total Household	1950

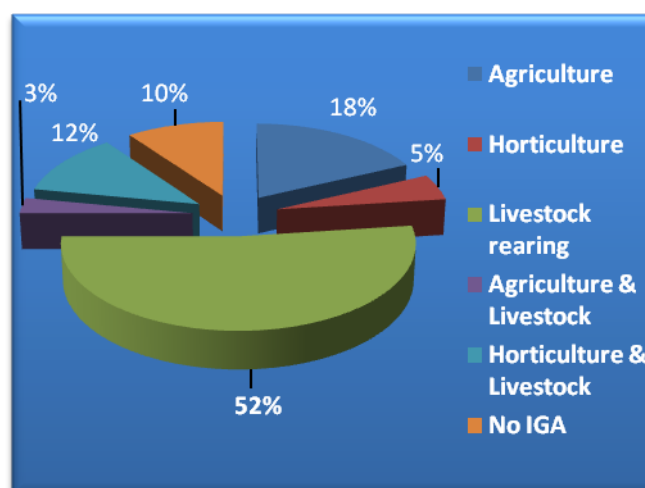


The majority 53% of the respondents are engaged in daily wage labour and 24% of the respondents are farmers. The 15% of the respondent are engaged in private service and only 3% of the respondents are in government service.

Owned Agricultural Land	Percent (%)
Yes	24
No	76
Total	100
Total Household	1950

In the Tea Garden Areas most of the people do not have own land for cultivation (76% respondents) and very a few of them owned cultivable land (24% respondents).

Practice IGA	Nature of IGA	Percent (%)
Yes	Agriculture	18
	Horticulture	5
	Livestock rearing	52
	Agriculture & Livestock	3
	Horticulture & Livestock	12
No		10
Total		100
Total Household		1950



The people mostly take up small IGA (Income Generating Activity) like rearing livestock (52% respondent), agriculture (18% respondents) and horticulture cum livestock rearing (12% respondents) to meet their need which is rarely sufficient. The 10% of the respondents do not take any IGA.

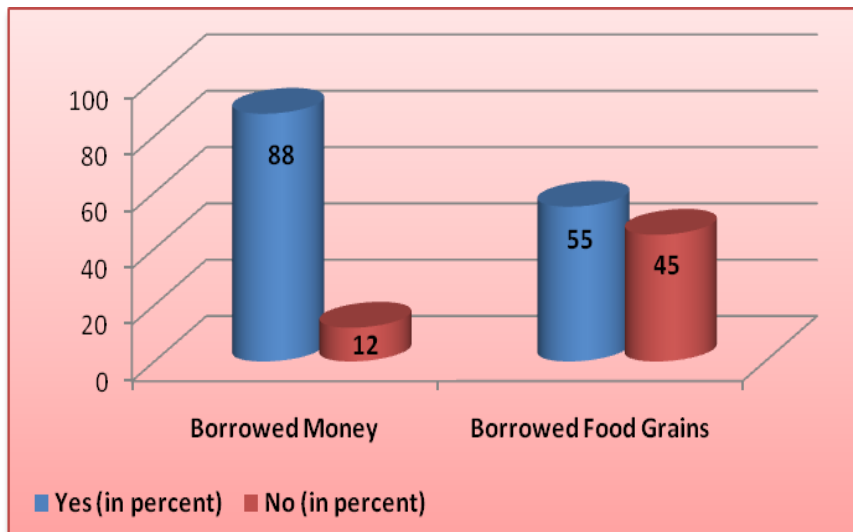


Practice saving money	Nature of Saving (annually)	Percent (%)
Yes	Less than ₹100	3
	₹101 - ₹300	12
	₹301 - ₹500	24
	₹501 - ₹800	11
	₹801 - ₹1200	5
	₹1201 - ₹2000	10
	₹2001 - ₹4000	10
	₹4001 - ₹6000	6
	More than ₹6000	9
No		10
Total		100
Total Household		1950

The practice of saving money among the people of tea garden areas is in very less amount. The survey provides 24% respondents (highest) which save annually at the range of ₹301 to ₹500, 12% respondents saves annually ₹101 to ₹300 and 11 respondents ₹501 to ₹800. Only 9% respondents save annually more than ₹6000.

Borrowed Money	Percent (%)
Yes	88
No	12
Total	100
Total Household	1950

Borrowed Food Grains	Percent (%)
Yes	55
No	45
Total	100
Total Household	1950

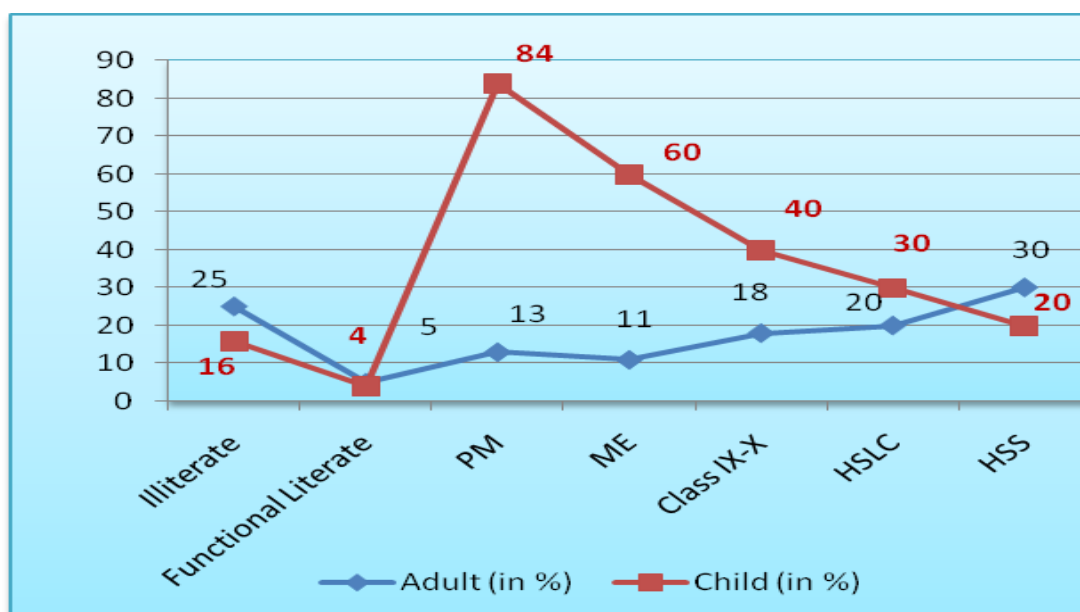


The practice of borrowing money and food grains is very high among the tea garden areas. The people are mostly daily wage labour and very a few of them have cultivable land. The 88% of the respondents borrow money and 55% respondents borrow food grains.

### Part 3: Educational Conditions Survey

Adult (18 years above):Literacy	Percent (%)
Adult Illiterate	25
Adult Functional Literate	5
Adult PM	13
Adult ME	11
Adult Class IX-X	18
Adult HSLC	20
Adult HSS	30
Adult Graduate	10

Child (5-17 years):Literacy	Percent (%)
Child Illiterate	16
Child Functional Literate	4
Child PM	84
Child ME	60
Child Class IX-X	40
Child HSLC	30
Child HSS	20



Children Drop out from School	Percent (%)
Children Drop out from PM	28
Children Drop out from ME	33
Children Drop out from Class X	25

Children Drop out from School	Percent (%)
Children completely out of School	16

The poor economic living condition of the tea garden areas is enhanced due to high illiteracy and school drop outs. According to the survey 25% of adult (above 18 years) and 16% of children (5 to 17 years) are illiterate. Children drop out from school is highest in Middle Education (33%) and Primary (28%). The 16% of the children are completely out of school.

Only 30% of the population has passed HSLC and only 20% have passed H.S. with only 10% being graduated.

## **Conclusion:**

From the study we find that the people in the tea garden areas are grossly marginalized. The study shows that the people live in poor living conditions as only 6% of the people live in proper concrete houses, have access to proper toilets and only 10% of the people have access to functioning electricity. It is even sadder that even though 88% of the people have PHC/CHC within 5 km, they don't get proper service (74%) and have to depend on private clinics/pharmacies (68%).

The daily wage of a tea garden labor is ₹60 to ₹80 per day. With lack of land resources to cultivate (76%), the poor people take to rearing livestock (52%) to supplement their income. The low level of income, minimal savings, and acute poverty leads them to debt traps (88%) and further worsens the situation as a vicious circle.

The poor economic conditions lead to a high rate of child labor of 16% and are out of school in these areas against 5.6% of Assam and 5.7% of India (source: Assam Human Development Report: 2013). Similarly the high rate of dropouts from various levels of education leads them to go back to work in the tea gardens. It is very sad figure when only 10% are graduate, 20% are HS pass and 30% are HSLC pass.

## **Way to move forward:**

The survey team suggests measures for direct interventions in all the three aspects to improve the Social, Economic and Education situation of the people.

Social conditions may be improved by strengthening people's movement through participatory methods, helping the people solve their problems themselves by awareness and strengthening the local governance institutions. Direct intervention needs to be made to improve their economic conditions of the people. Such interventions should be focused at making use of the natural skills and expertise of the people in various income generating activities. Bank/Micro Finance Organizations linkages to SHGs needs to be created for easy availability of productive loans at least amount of interest. Linkages also need to be made from cultivator/producer to the market directly, bypassing the traders, for maximum benefit of the people. Interventions need to be made in the field of education by introducing quality improvement measures. Evening coaching/schools needs to be introduced as supplementary educational opportunities. Special monitoring/coaching of student appearing for HSLC/HS needs to be introduced to minimize dropouts. Distance Education Community Colleges are also an intervention that needs to be explored.