

Preparation of Birbhum District Human Development Report

Funding Agency: Department of Planning, Government of West Bengal

Coordinator: Achin Chakraborty

This was the third in the series of District Human Development Reports that the Department of Planning, Government of West Bengal, had instructed the District Magistrates (DM) of different districts to prepare their own reports with the help of experts from the academia. IDSK was requested by the Office of DM, Birbhum, for help.

At IDSK, along with Achin Chakraborty (lead coordinator), Subrata Mukherjee and Saswata Ghosh were involved in preparation of this report. The report was duly completed and was released by Shri Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee, Honourable Chief Minister of West Bengal on 4 February 2009.

The report is divided into nine chapters. It focuses on such basic dimensions of human development as education, health, and access to resources (as indicated by income and assets). In each of these areas, district-specific factors have been identified and analysed.

In terms of basic indicators of human development, Birbhum turns out to be one of the backward districts of West Bengal. The presence of a significant number of people belonging to the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and the Muslim community in the district, who are generally more disadvantaged than others, makes it important to focus on various forms of inter-group disparities.

A special emphasis has been put on different forms of vulnerability among different segments of population. A number of indicators have been constructed at different levels of disaggregation, depending on the availability of data, complemented by studies based on small surveys that researchers have done.