

## **SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENTS**

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It is important to understand the social and economic profile of the respondents. Through the analysis of their socio-economic background, we can comprehend their way of life and standard of living. The respondents of the study are women members of some selected Self-help Groups. Generally they have been suffering from many problems in society. So keeping this view in mind, it is judged to analyse socio economic profile of the respondents of the selected Self-help Groups.

This chapter deals with socio-economic profile of the respondents including age of the respondents; age wise education and marital status; type of family and size of family; headship pattern of the family; caste category, community and religion; income source of family, family income, housing pattern, sanitation and sources of water etc.

### **4.1 AGE OF THE RESPONDENTS**

It is important to know that which ages of women are basically involved in group activities. Therefore, an analysis has been made by categorizing women into age group of 15-34, 35-54 and above 55.

The given table shows the age of the women of the selected Self-help Groups:

**Table 4.01 Age group**

<b>Age group</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
15-34	129	44.5
35-54	132	45.5
55 above	29	10
Total	290	100

Source: Field data in Sonari Development Block of Assam

Data in table 4.01 shows 44.5% women are in the age group of 15-34 followed by 45.5% who are in the age group of 35-54. Other 10% women are in the age of above 55.

So it shows that maximum numbers of respondents of the selected Self-help Groups belong to the age group of 35-54.

#### **4.2 EDUCATIONAL STATUS**

Education is considered as an effective tool to empower women. Because, it has the capability to increase mental strength and knowledge and it develops personality of human being. It also gives direction to the development of self dependent attitude, behavioural changes through personality development. Education creates consciousness in individual's mind about their rights and helps to promote human being to protest against any violation that is practiced within household and society.

Table 4.02 shows age wise educational status of the respondents. Out of 290 respondents, 25.17% women's education is up to primary level, 62.41% women's education level is up to high school level, 11.37% women's education level is up to higher secondary and only 1.03% women's level of education is up to graduate.

**Table 4.02 Age wise educational status of the respondents**  
(Percentage in parentheses)

Age group	Educational status				Total
	Primary	High School	Higher Secondary	Graduate	
15-34	15 (20.54%)	86 (47.51%)	25 (75.75%)	3 (100.0%)	129 (44.5%)
35-54	37 (50.68%)	87 (48.06%)	8 (24.24%)	0	132 (45.5%)
55 above	21 (28.76%)	8 (4.41%)	0	0	29 (10.0%)
Total	73 (25.17%)	181 (62.41%)	33 (11.37%)	3 (1.03%)	290 (100.0%)

Source: Field data in Sonari Development Block of Assam

Within the category of primary education, out of 73 numbers of respondents, 20.54% women belong to the age group of 15-34, 50.68% women belong to age group of 35-54 and other 26.76% are age of above 55.

Likewise, within the category of high school level, out of 181 numbers of respondents, 47.52% women belong to the age of 15-34, 48.06% women are age of 35-54 and other 4.41% women are age of above 55.

Within the category of HS level, out of 33 numbers of women 75.75% women belong to the age group of 15-34 and 24.24% women are in the age group of 35-54. Remaining 3 women's education level is up to graduate. Within HS level no one is found in the age group of above 55. In the category of graduate level, no one has been found within the age group of 34-55 and above the age of 55.

Thus, it is revealed that most of the respondents, which constitute 62.41%, educational status is up to high school standard.

#### **4.3 MARITAL STATUS**

Marriage is generally viewed as a major social obligation in Indian society. Accordingly married couples are always given graceful status. Traditionally, the male members had the power to perform economic activities. Female members were not allowed to go outside and involve in income generating activities. It is generally accepted that women's major activities should be within the family. But now, especially in a poor family, for smooth functioning of family and fulfilling economic demands, women have come out to participate in entrepreneurial activities. After involvement in income generating activities their status in family and society is gradually being changed. In the same way unmarried women and widows have also started take part in income generating activities to fulfill their own necessities as well as necessities of their families. Table 4.03 shows age wise marital status of the respondents.

**Table 4.03 Age wise marital status of the respondents**  
(Percentage in parentheses)

Marital status Of the respondents	Age groups			Total
	15-34	35-54	55 above	
Married	109 (44.67%)	116 (47.54%)	19 (7.78%)	244 (84.1%)
Unmarried	15 (46.87%)	9 (28.12%)	8 (25%)	32 (11.0%)
Widow	5 (35.71%)	7 (50%)	2 (14.28%)	14 (4.8%)
Divorced or Seperated	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Total	129 (44.48%)	132 (45.51%)	29 (10.0%)	290 (100%)

Source: Field data in Sonari Development Block

Table 4.03 shows out of total respondents 244 (84.1%) numbers of women are married, Out of 244 numbers of women respondents, 44.67% married women belong to the age group of 15-34, 47.54% belong to the age group of 35-54 and 7.78% married women are in the age of above 55.

Out of total respondents 32 numbers of women are unmarried. Out of 32 numbers of respondents 46.87% unmarried women belong to the age group of 15-34, 28.12% belong to the age group of 35-54 and 25% are age of above 55.

Among 14 widow respondents 35.71% belong to the age group of 15-34, 50% are within the age group of 35-54 and 14.28% widows are age of above 55.

## 4.4 COMPOSITION OF FAMILY

### 4.4.1 Types of family

Joint family system was predominant in Indian society. Joint family is two or three or more generation living together under one roof having one kitchen. But now this traditional joint family system although has been changed into nuclear family system due to the ongoing processes of change viz. modernisation, urbanisation and industrialization, joint family system still persists. Nuclear family is composed of husband and wife with their children or without children. This changing pattern of family system is also found in study area. This study is comprised of both types of family system. Moreover other two types of family system are prevalent in society viz. extended and broken family system. But in this study, no respondents have been found who belong to the broken and extended family.

**Table 4.04 Types of family**

Type of family	N=290	Percentage
Joint	133	45.9
Nuclear	157	54.1
Total	290	100.0

Source: Field data in Sonari Development Block

Table 4.04 shows majority of respondents belong to nuclear family. 45.9% of total respondents belong to joint family and 54.1% belong to nuclear type of family.

### 4.4.2 Size of the family

Women have to perform multiple roles within their family. In our society, it is considered that women's major role should be within her household. A woman can go

outside her family after completing all the works of a day within her family. Besides biological role of reproduction, women have to perform household management, food preparation, health care of other family members and children, supervision of children, cleaning etc. In rural set up, most of the families are large in size. Therefore women have less free time to perform entrepreneurial activities outside her family.

On the basis of size, conveniently the families are categorised into three types; small (1- 4), medium (5-8) and large (8+). Distribution of the families by their size is shown in the following table.

**Table 4.05 Size of the family**

<b>Size of Family</b>	<b>N=290</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Small (1-4)	106	36.55
Medium (5-8)	124	42.75
Large (8+)	60	20.68
Total	290	100

Source: Field data in Sonari Development Block

Data shows 36.55% families are of small in size, 42.75% families' size is medium and 20.68% families are large in size. Hence, majority of the families size is medium.

#### **4.5 HEADSHIP PATTERN OF FAMILY**

Headship pattern of a family shows status and position of a woman within her family. Basically the headship pattern of the families of rural areas of Assam is male headed. But in some cases both male and female equally take decisions on different grounds. Moreover it is also remarkable that after husband's death the aged woman of the family become the head of the family or otherwise her elder son become the head

of the family. In this study two types of headship pattern of families have been found among the respondents. The following table shows the headship pattern of the families of respondents.

**Table: 4.06 Headship Pattern of family**

<b>Headship pattern</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Male headed	279	96.20
Female headed	11	3.79
total	290	100

Source: Field data in Sonari Development Block

Above data shows out of total respondents 96.20% respondents belong to male headed family; only 3.79% belong to female headed family.

#### **4.6 CASTE CATEGORY**

Most of the respondents belong to the Other Backward castes (OBC) and Schedule tribe (ST) category. General and SC category respondents are nil.

**Table 4.07 Caste category of the respondents**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
OBC	276	95.17
GEN	Nil	Nil
ST	14	4.82
SC	Nil	Nil
Total	290	100

Source: Field data in Sonari Development Block



Table 4.07 shows 95.17% women belong to the OBC category and other 4.82% women belong to ST category.

#### 4.7 COMMUNITY

Most of the respondents in the study belong to Ahom community and others belong to Tea community, Shyam and Nepali community.

**Table 4.08 Community of the respondents**

<b>Community</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Ahom	238	82.06
Tea community	18	6.20
Shaym	08	2.75
Nepali	26	8.96
Total	290	100

Source: Field data in Sonari Development Block

Data in table 4.08 shows that 82.06% women belong to Ahom community. 8.96% women belong to Nepali community followed by 6.20% women belong to Tea community and 2.75% women are Shyam community.

#### 4.8 RELIGION

From the field study, three types of religious followers have been found among the respondents viz. Hinduism, Vaishnavism (a cult of Hinduism) and Buddhism. Most of the respondents are the followers of Vaishnavism. The women of Ahom community are the followers of Vaishnavism and the women of Shyam

community are the followers of Buddhism. Other community i.e. Nepali and tea community are the followers of Hinduism.

**Table 4.09 Religion followed by the respondents**

<b>Religion</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Hinduism	44	15.17
Vaishnavism	238	82.06
Buddhism	08	2.75
Total	290	100

Source: Field data in Sonari Development Block

Table 4.09 shows that out of total respondents 15.17% women are the followers of Hinduism followed by 2.75% women who are the followers of Buddhism. Most of the respondents, that is 82.06% women are the followers of Vaishnavism.

## **4.9 INCOME OF THE FAMILY**

### **4.9.1 Major Income Source of the Family**

Family income shows economic status or economic condition of a family. It is a major determinant of standard of living. The family income of the respondents is based on different occupation viz. cultivation, small types of business and farming. Cultivation is the major income source of most of the families of the respondents. The following table shows the different sources of occupation of the families of the respondents.

**Table 4.10 Income source of family**

<b>Income source</b>	<b>N=290</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Cultivation	219	75.51
Business	18	6.20
Farming	29	10
Service	---	----
Other	24	8.27
Total	290	100

Source: Field data in Sonari Development Block

Table 4.10 shows sources of family income of the respondents. Out of total respondents 75.51% respondents' source of family income is cultivation. 6.20% respondents' source of family income is business, 10% respondents' family income depend on farming and 8.27% have other income source like daily labour etc. No respondents have been found whose source of family income is service.

#### **4.9.2 Family income**

Except the government services it is very crucial to determine the level of income of the villagers whose income is based on agriculture, farming or business. Moreover very few of them maintain the record of their monthly income. The following table shows the level of family income of the respondents after involvement in income generating activities.

**Table 4.11 Family income of the respondents  
after joining Self-help Groupss**

<b>Income group (in rupees)</b>	<b>N=290</b>	<b>percentage</b>
40,000-60,000	28	9.65
60,001-80,000	63	21.72
80,001-1,00,000	164	56.55
1,00,001-1,20,000	35	12.06
Total	290	100

Source: Field data in Sonari Development Block

Data shows that 9.65% of respondents family income is rupees 40,000-60,000 and only 21.72% of respondents family income is Rs 60,001-80,000 per annum. 56.55% respondents family income is Rs 80,001-1,00,000 per annum and other (12.06%) respondents' family income is Rs 1,00,001-1,20,000 per annum. It is seen that majority of the respondents' family income is Rs 80,001-1,00,000 per annum.

#### **4.10 HOUSING PATTERN**

Housing pattern or structure of house is one of the indicators to know the economic condition of a family. The following table shows the housing pattern of the respondents.

**Table 4.12 Types of house pattern**

<b>Housing pattern</b>	<b>N=290</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<i>Kachcha</i> house	253	87.24
<i>Pucca</i>	12	4.13
semi <i>Pucca</i>	25	8.62
Total	290	100.0

Source: Field data in Sonari Development Block

Table 4.12 shows pattern of house of the respondents. 87.24% respondents have *Kachcha* house made of bamboo, clay, cow dung and hay; only 4.13% respondents have *Pucca* house made of bricks, cement, timber; and 8.62% respondents have semi *Pucca* house.

#### 4.10.1 Sanitation facility

Sanitation facility of a household shows standard of living conditions. There are two types of sanitation pattern used by the respondents of Sonari Development Block. The following table shows the sanitation facilities of the household of the respondents.

**Table 4.13 Sanitation facility**

<b>Sanitation facility</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<i>Pucca</i> latrine	41	14.13
<i>Kachcha</i> Latrine	249	85.86
Total	290	100

Source: Field data in Sonari Development Block

Table 4.13 shows 85.86% respondents have *Kachcha* latrine followed by 14.13% respondents who have *Pucca* latrine.

#### 4.12 SOURCES OF WATER

In Assam most of the villagers use water from pond and tube well. The types of sources of water viz. pond, tube well and supply water have been found in the study area. The following table shows different types of sources of water used by the respondents.

**Table 4.14 Sources of water**

<b>Source of water</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Pond	183	63.10
Tube well	63	21.72
Supply water	44	15.17
Total	290	100

Source: Field data in Sonari Development Block

Above data shows 63.10% of total respondents use water from pond; 21.72% respondents use water form tube well and only 15.17% respondents use supply water.

#### **4.13 CONCLUSION**

Social and economic profile of the respondents have been analysed to understand standard of living of the respondents. From the analysis of tables of this chapter, it is found that maximum number of women of the selected Self-help Groups is in the age group of 35-54. It is also revealed that most of the respondents (62.41%) educational status is up to high school. No illiterate women have been found in the study. In case of headship pattern of family, only 3.79% women belong to female headed family and 96.20% belong to male headed family.

Most of the women belong to Ahom community and others belong to Tea community, Shyam and Nepali community. The women of Ahom community are the followers of Vaishnavism and the women of Shyam community are the followers of Buddhism.

The families of the respondents engage in different occupations viz. cultivation, small types of business, farming etc. Cultivation is the major income source of most of the families. Except from the government services it is very crucial to determine the income of the villagers whose income is based on agriculture, farming or business. Moreover very few of them maintain the record of their monthly income. Income of majority respondents ranges from 80,001- 1, 00,000 (after joining Self-help Group).

Housing pattern and sanitation facility of a household show the standard of living conditions. Three types of housing pattern have been found viz. *Kachcha* house, *Pucca* house and Semi *Pucca* house. Majority of respondents have *Kachcha* house made of bamboo, clay, cow dung and hay. 85.86% women have *Kachcha* latrine. The respondents use water from pond, tube well and supply water. Majority of women use water from pond.