

## CHAPTER 4

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# PROFILE OF SAMPLE STUDY LOCATIONS

This chapter analyses administrative evolution and economy of the Barak Valley. Also the profile of the sample study area comprising of 6 (six) Agricultural Development Officer (ADO) circles taking one from each agricultural subdivisions spread over the three districts of Barak Valley has also been analyzed.

### 4.1 Administrative Evolution of Barak Valley

Barak Valley is located in Southern part of Assam. It consists of three districts: Cachar, Karimganj and Hailakandi. To cut short the long story of the administrative evolution of this Valley, one may note that both the present districts of Cachar and Hailakandi had been a part of Cachari kingdom which was annexed by the British on August 14, 1832. After the annexation of Cachar, it was made a district with headquarters at Silchar and placed in charge of a superintendent (Gait: 1981). The superintendent of Cachar was made subordinate to the Commissioner of Assam. However, in 1836, Cachar was put under the Dhaka division (Gait: 1981). In 1874, Cachar was included in the Chief Commissionership of Assam and the post of Superintendent was redesignated as the Deputy Commissioner and Mr. R. Stuart was the first DC of the District.

Since 15<sup>th</sup> century A.D Karimganj had been under the Sylhet *sarkar* of the Bangla *suba* of the Mughal, and then came under the eastern part of the British occupied Sylhet (Bhattacharjee: 1986; Choudhury: 1992). When the *dewani* of the *Bangla suba* was taken over by British East India Company from Shah Alom II, the district of Sylhet, of which Karimganj was a part, passed on to the British. From 1765 to 1782 Sylhet was a province under Dacca division. On 3<sup>rd</sup> January 1782 it came out as an independent administrative district (Bhattacharjee: 1977 and 2000; Mazumdar, *et al*: 1978; Mohanta: 2009). In 1868, Karimganj subdivision was created under the Sylhet

District having Karimganj town as headquarter. This arrangement continued till 1947. In August 15, 1947, Sylhet district was transferred to the newly created East Pakistan. Following the Radcliffe Boundary Commission Award, which made the Kushiara River as the natural boundary between Assam and East Pakistan, three and half *thanas* of Karimganj sub-division of the Sylhet district, viz, Ratabari, Patharkandi, Badarpur and half of Karimganj came back to Assam on 17<sup>th</sup> August, 1947 (Hunter: 1879; Choudhury:1992). This truncated Karimganj sub-division was ultimately incorporated into the Cachar District of Assam as a full-fledged sub-division. This sub-division was upgraded to a district on the 1st of July, 1983 (Barbhuiya: 2011). Hailakandi Sub-Division within Cachar was formed on June 1, 1869 and in 1989, Hailakandi Sub-Division was made a separate District. Thus the present Barak Valley consists of three districts viz., Cachar, Hailakandi and Karimganj.

## **4.2 Economy of Barak Valley**

The Barak Valley has an area of 691097 hectare. Its land area is 8.80 percent of the total land area of Assam. The population of Barak Valley consists of 11.59 percent of the population of the state. While about 87 percent of the population in Barak Valley lives in rural areas, the same for the state as a whole stands at about 86 percent. Thus, the rate of urbanization both in the Valley and the state is very slow. As a result, agriculture is still the mainstay of livelihood of the majority of the people in the Valley as well as in the state. Before we provide a sectoral analysis of the economy, let us have a look at the utilization of land, the prime asset of the rural people, of the Valley.

### **4.2.1 Land Use Pattern in Barak Valley**

From table 4.1 and Figure 4.1 it may be noted that about 37 percent of the total geographical area of Barak Valley is covered with forest which is above the state average (24 percent). The district of Hailakandi might be considered as the green belt of Barak Valley as about 47 percent of the total area of the district is under forest cover. Although Cachar has forest cover more than the minimum requirement of 33

percent as stipulated under the national forest policy, the same for Karimganj falls short of by 2 percent. About 21 percent of the land in Barak Valley is not available for cultivation. It is less than the state average (34 percent).

**Table 4.1: Land Use Pattern in Barak Valley 2010-11**

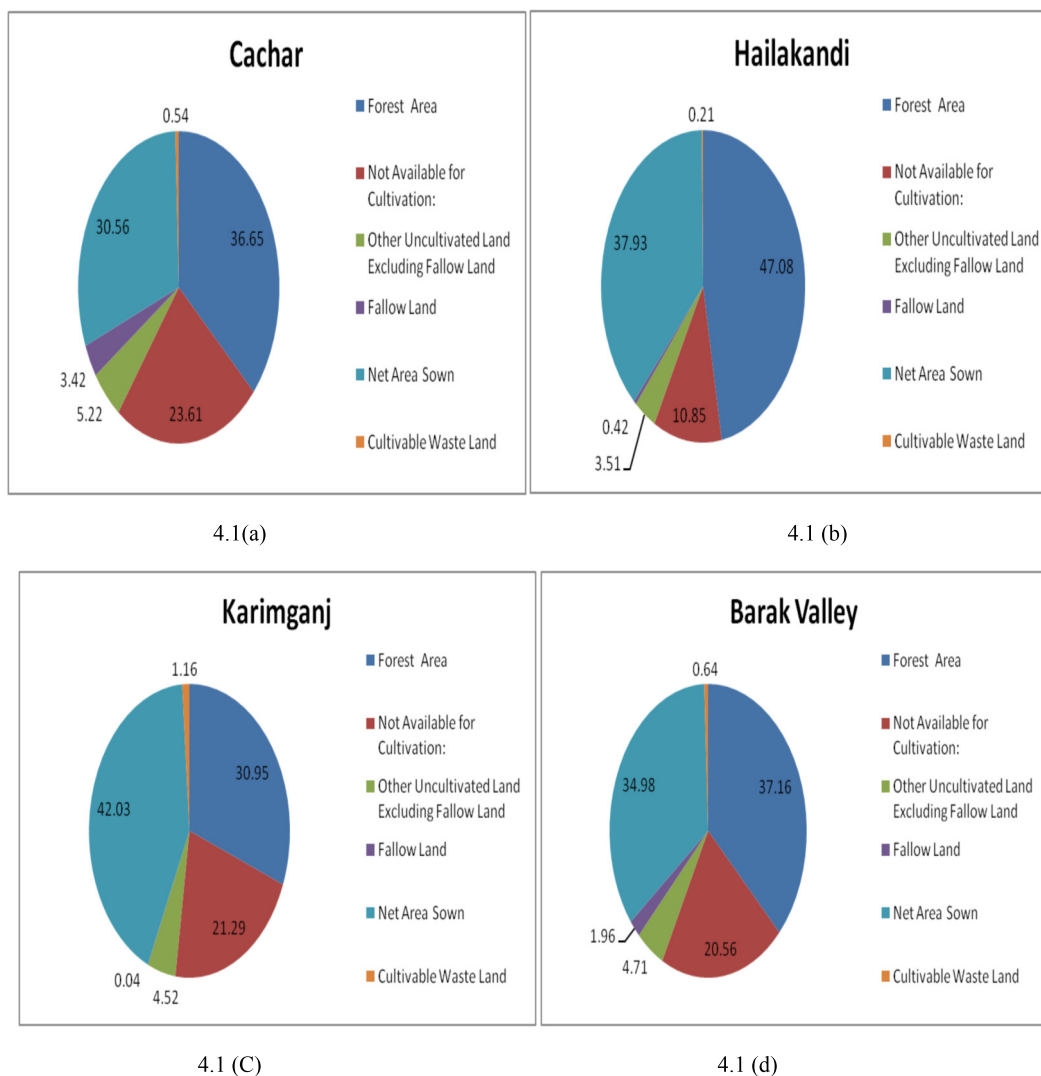
(Area in Hect.)									
Sl No	Classification of Area	Cachar	%	Hailakandi	%	Karimganj	%	Barak Valley	%
1	Total Geographical Area (Reported)	377610	100	132587	100	180900	100	691097	100
2	Forest Area	138409	36.65	62420	47.08	55995	30.95	256824	37.16
3	Not Available for Cultivation	89148	23.61	14392	10.85	38518	21.29	142058	20.56
4	Other Uncultivated Land Excluding Fallow Land	19708	5.22	4648	3.51	8180	4.52	32536	4.71
5	Fallow Land	12922	3.42	558	0.42	72	0.04	13552	1.96
6	Net Area Sown	115386	30.56	50294	37.93	76035	42.03	241715	34.98
7	Cultivable Waste Land	2037	0.54	275	0.21	2100	1.16	4412	0.64

Source: Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Department of Agriculture and Cooperation, Ministry of Agriculture, Government of India, <http://eands.dacnet.nic.in>

These lands are either used for non-agricultural purposes like roads, buildings, dams, urban centers, etc. or barren and uncultivable land which could not be put to agricultural uses at present. In case of Cachar and Karimganj, land under this category constitutes about 24 and 21 percent respectively, while in case of Hailakandi land not available for cultivation constitutes only about 11 percent. It might be noted that this difference might be due to the fact that pace of urbanization is more pronounced in the formers compared to the latter.

It is important to note that there is less than 1 percent cultivable waste land in the Barak Valley which shows that extensive cultivation can hardly be practiced through land reclamation. While about 38 percent of the total areas of Hailakandi district come under net area sown, the same for Cachar and Karimganj stand at 31 and 42 percent respectively. This no doubt indicates the limitation of agro-based development model in these two districts.

**Figure 4.1: Land Use Pattern in Barak Valley 2010-11**



Source: Data presented in Table 4.1

#### 4.2.2 Sectoral Analysis of Gross District Domestic Product (GDDP)

A sectoral analysis of Gross District Domestic Product (GDDP) for the year 2007-08 reveals that the economic condition of Barak Valley is better than the state average. While the contribution of the primary sector of Barak Valley amounts to 26.90 percent during 2007-08, the same for Assam amounts to 35.26 percent (table 4.2 and Figure 4.2). This indicates that the state as a whole is more dependent on the primary sector than the Barak Valley.

**Table 4.2 Sectoral Contribution in Gross District Domestic Product 2007-08  
(at Current Prices)**

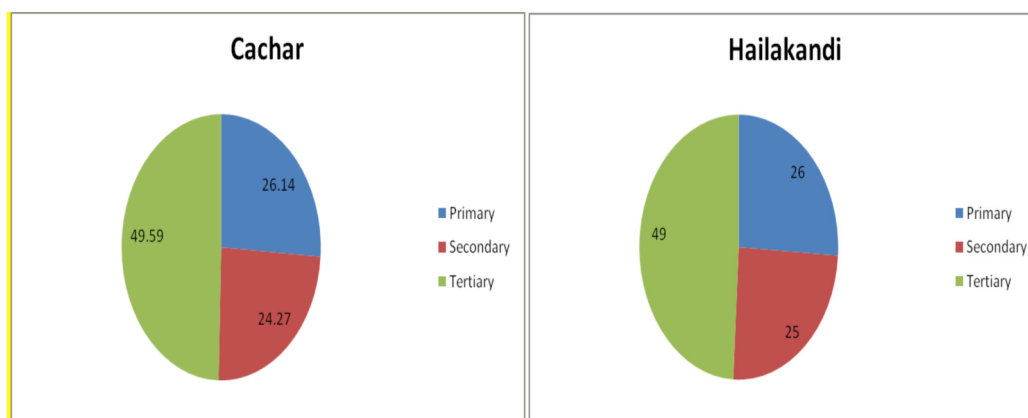
(Rs in Lakh)

Sl. No	Districts	Primary	Secondary	Tertiary	Total
1	Cachar	90045(26.14)	83634(24.27)	170839(49.59)	344518
2	Hailakandi	34043(26.02)	32535(24.87)	64261(49.11)	130839
3	Karimganj	70336(28.44)	54085(21.87)	122887(49.69)	247308
4	Barak Valley	194424(26.90)	170254(23.56)	357987(49.54)	722665
5	Assam	2483796(35.26)	1254181(17.81)	3306018(46.93)	7043995

Note: Figures in brackets are percentages

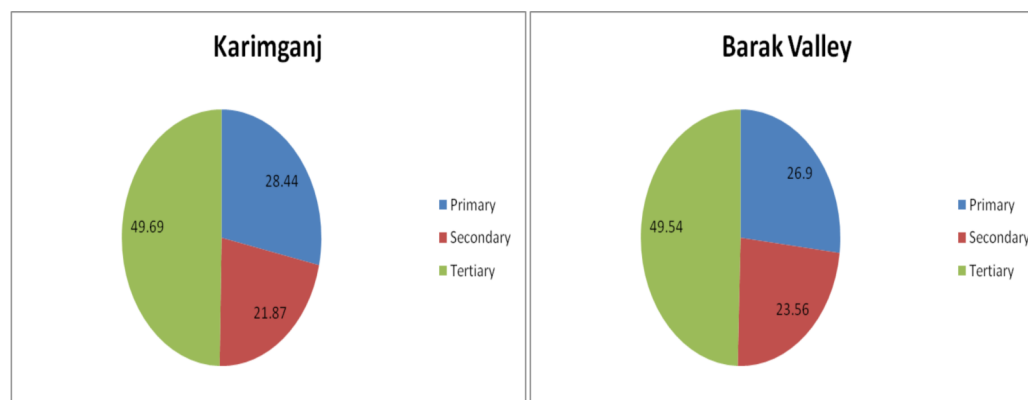
Source: <http://ecostatassam.nic.in>

**Figure 4.2: Sectoral Contribution in Gross District Domestic Product 2007-08**



4.2 (a)

4.2 (b)



4.2 (c)

4.2 (d)

Source: Data in Table 4.2

Similarly, while the contribution of the secondary sector in Barak Valley during this reference period accounts to 23.56 percent, the same for the Assam as a whole stands at 17.18 percent only (table 4.2). As far as the tertiary sector is concerned, the percentage contribution of this sector in Barak Valley also exceeds to that of the state as a whole. Thus, from sectoral distribution point of view, it appears that the economic condition of Barak Valley is better off compared to the state as a whole as the Clark-Fisher hypothesis infers progressive shifting of labour force from primary to secondary and then to tertiary sector as the pace of development gathers momentum (Clark: 1957, Fisher: 1935).

**Table 4.3: Details of Primary Sector Contribution in Gross District Domestic Product 2007-08 (at Current Prices)**

(Rs in Lakh)

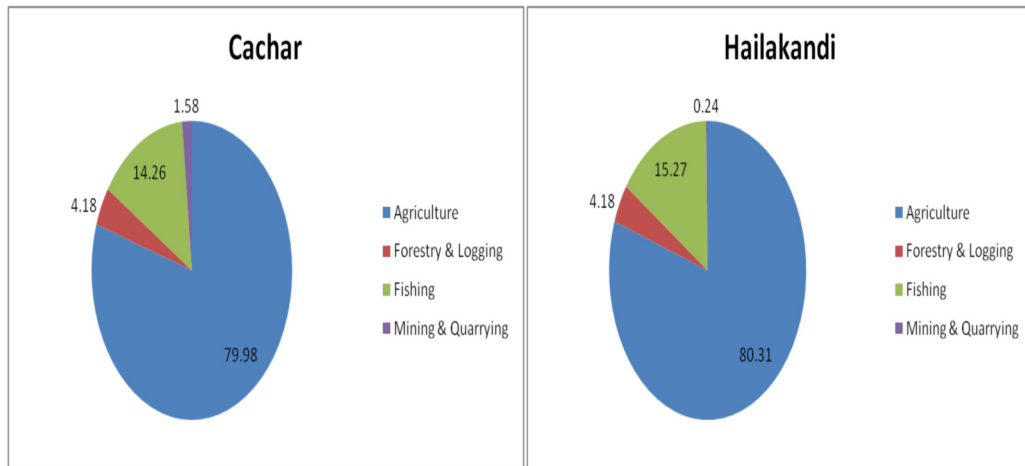
Sl	District	Agriculture	Forestry & Logging	Fishing	Mining & Quarrying	Total Primary
1	Cachar	72023(79.98)	3767(4.18)	12833(14.26)	1422(1.58)	90045
2	Hailakandi	27338(80.31)	1423(4.18)	5199(15.27)	83(0.24)	34043
3	Karimganj	59181(84.14)	2619(3.72)	7904(11.24)	632(0.90)	70336
	Barak Valley	158542(81.54)	7809(4.02)	25936(13.34)	2137(1.10)	194424
	A s s a m	1678851(67.59)	70926(2.86)	148810(5.99)	585209(23.56)	2483796

Note: Figures in brackets are percentages

Source: <http://ecostatassam.nic.in>

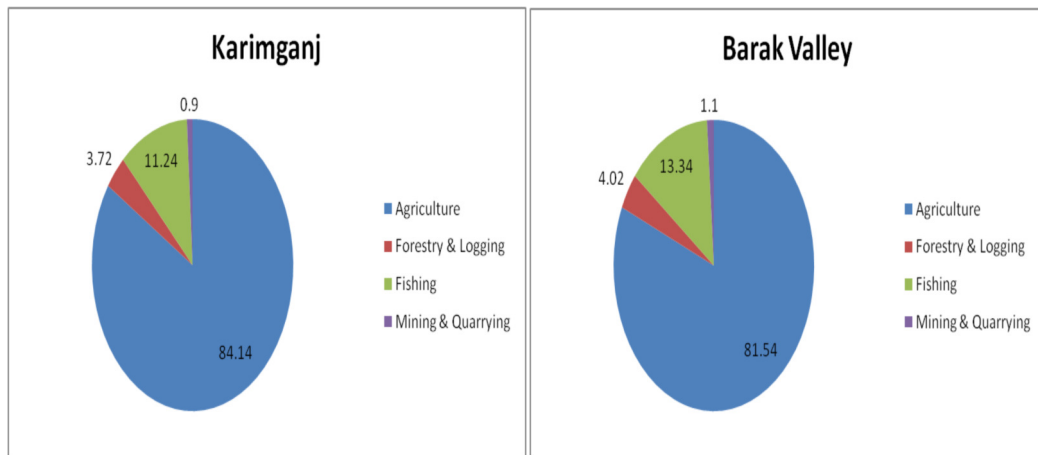
An intra-sectoral analysis reveals that agriculture and pisciculture are the two most important activities in the districts of Barak Valley (table 4.3 and Figure 4.3). It might be noted that *Muslim peasants* and *Hindu Kaibartas* are largely engaged in agriculture and fishing respectively. Both the groups are known for their expertise. While *Muslim peasants* are extremely hard working in agricultural fields, *Hindu Kaibartas* are also equally laborious in the marshy lands and beels of the Valley. Both the communities play an important role in providing food security at the local level. *Bengalees* usually prefer fish in their meals. While Muslim cultivators produce surplus rice, *Hindu Kaibartas* provide fish that together constitutes favourite Bengalee dish.

**Figure 4.3: Details of Primary Sector Contribution in Gross District Domestic Product 2007-08**



4.3 (a)

4.3 (b)



4.3 (c)

4.3 (d)

Source: Table 4.3

However, agriculture, mining and quarrying are the most important activities at the state level. While Barak Valley districts have a number of *beels* and marshy lands suitable for pisciculture, but hardly minerals like coal and oil occur in them. As a result, except stone quarrying, hardly there are any mining activities in this Valley.

**Table 4.4: Details of Secondary Sector Contribution in Gross District Domestic Product 2007-08 (at Current Prices)**

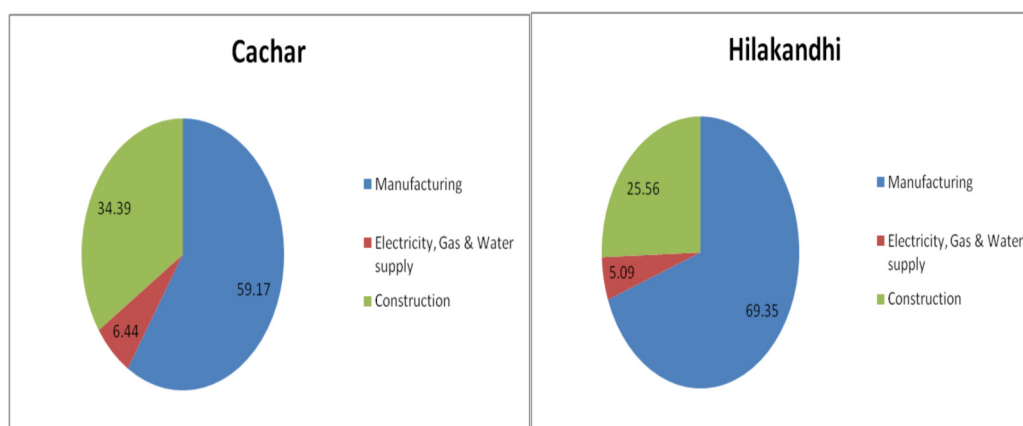
(Rs in Lakh)

Sl	District	Manufacturing	Electricity, Gas & Water supply	Construction	Total Secondary
1	Cachar	49487(59.17)	5382(6.44)	28765(34.39)	83634
2	Hilakandhi	22564(69.35)	1656(5.09)	8315(25.56)	32535
3	Karimgang	35652(65.92)	3025(5.59)	15408(28.49)	54085
	Barak Valley	107703(63.26)	10063(5.91)	52488(30.83)	170254
	Assam	758123(60.45)	115577(9.21)	380481(30.34)	1254181

Note: Figures in brackets are percentages

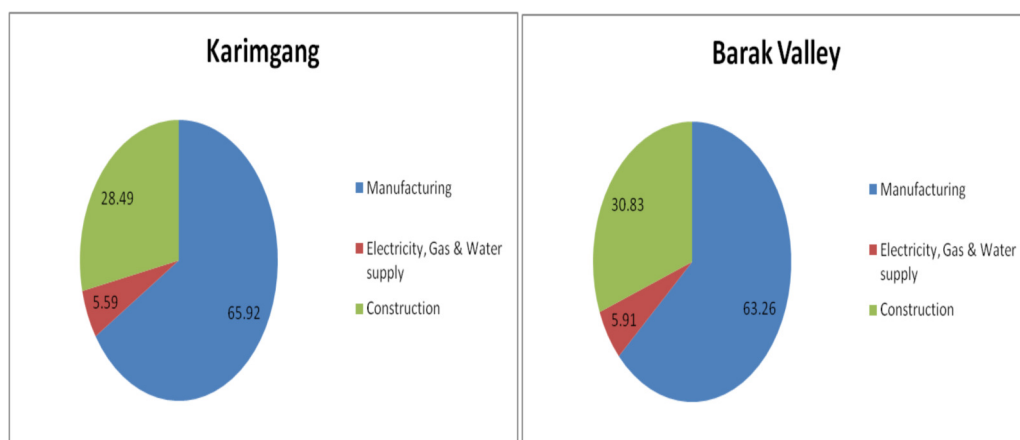
Source: <http://ecostatassam.nic.in>.

**Figure 4.4: Details of Secondary Sector Contribution in Gross District Domestic Product 2007-08**



4.4 (a)

4.4(b)



4.4 (c)

4.4(d)

Source: Table 4.4



As far as the secondary activities are concerned, manufacturing plays the predominant role both in the Barak Valley and the state as a whole (table 4.4 and Figure 4.4). Prominent manufacturing activities in Barak Valley include tea, paper, cement, brick, stone chips, bamboo and cane, and handicrafts. However, the manufacturing base of both the Valley and the state is extremely poor.

In case of tertiary activities, the contribution of trade, hotels and restaurants services is very vital (table 4.5 and Figure 4.5). The contribution of the services like railways, banking and insurance, real estates and public administration are also quite significant. As far as the Barak Valley is concerned, one might note that much of the contribution to GDDM comes from petty trade. Compared to the state, the percentage contribution of railways, transport by other means, storage, communication, and real estate are lower in Barak Valley which might be considered as an indication of low level of development of the service sector.

### **4.3 Agricultural Marketing Infrastructure under Assam State Agricultural Marketing Board (ASAMB)**

The Assam State Agricultural Marketing Board (ASAMB), Guwahati, was established in 1976, as per the Assam Agricultural Produce Market Act, 1972, in order to promote agricultural marketing in the state of Assam. It might be noted that district level regulated markets are governed by the ASAMB. Although, like other districts of Assam, there is 1 district level RMC each in Cachar, Karimganj and Hailakandi, except a few market sheds, no godown and cold storage facilities have been created in the Barak Valley (table 4.6). This shows that compared to the state average, the condition of agricultural marketing facilities in Barak Valley is extremely poor.

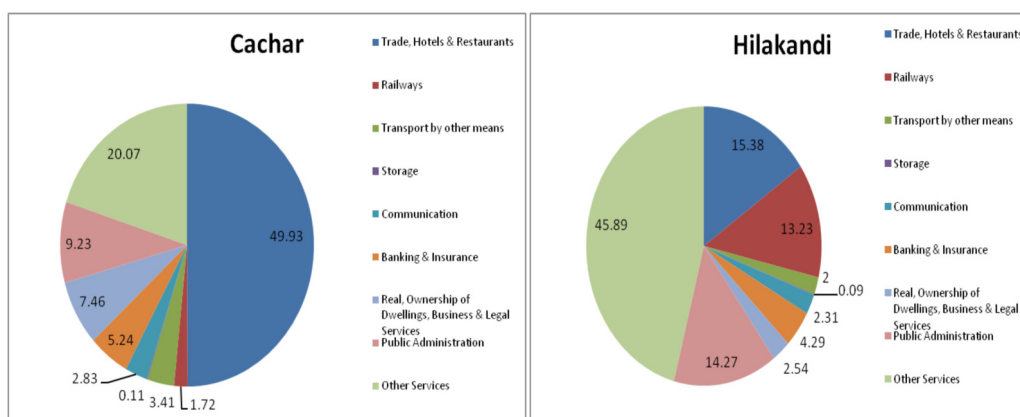
**Table 4.5: Details of Tertiary Sector Contribution in Gross District Domestic Product 2007-08 (Current Prices)**

(Rs in Lakh)

Sl No	District	Trade, Hotels & Restaurants	Railways	Transport by other means	Storage	Communication	Banking & Insurance	Real Estate, Ownership of Dwellings, Business & Legal Services	Public Administration	Other Services	Total Tertiary
1	Cachar	85294 (49.93)	2933 (01.72)	5819 (03.41)	186 (00.11)	4825 (02.83)	8959 (05.24)	12742 (07.46)	15789 (09.23)	34292 (20.07)	170839
2	Hilakandi	9881 (15.38)	8503 (13.23)	1291 (2.00)	58 (0.09)	1485 (2.31)	2757 (4.29)	1627 (2.54)	9172 (14.27)	29487 (45.89)	64261
3	Karimgang	40309 (32.80)	10385 (8.45)	1977 (1.61)	105 (0.08)	2712 (2.21)	5035 (4.10)	3563 (2.90)	15103 (12.29)	43698 (35.56)	122887
4	Barak Valley	135484 (37.85)	21821 (6.09)	9087 (2.54)	349 (0.09)	9022 (2.53)	16751 (4.68)	17932 (5.01)	40064 (11.19)	107477 (30.02)	357987
5	Assam	960893 (29.07)	142155 (4.30)	192803 (5.83)	4047 (0.12)	109539 (3.31)	203589 (6.15)	242042 (7.32)	400099 (12.11)	1050851 (31.79)	3306018

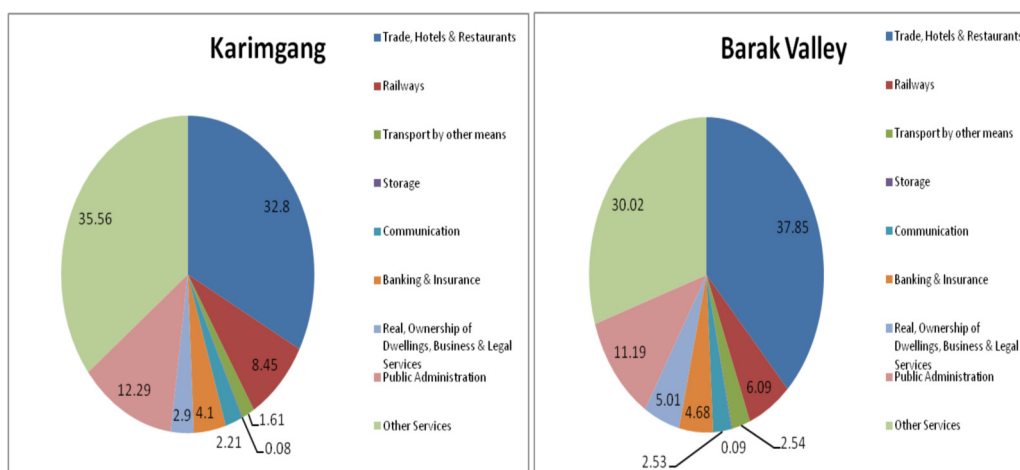
Note: Figures in brackets are percentages  
Source: <http://ecostatassam.nic.in>

**Figure 4.5 Details of Tertiary Sector Contribution in Gross District Domestic Product 2007-08**



4.5(a)

4.5 (b)



4.5 (c)

4.5 (d)

Source: Table 4.5

**Table 4.6: Agricultural Marketing Infrastructure under ASAMB (as on March, 2013)**

District	RMC	Retailer Shed/ Market Shed	Godown		Cold Storage	
			No	Capacity	No	Capacity (in MT)
Cachar	1	12	0	0	0	0
Hailakandi	1	10	0	0	0	0
Karimganj	1	2	0	0	0	0
Barak Valley	3	24	0	0	0	0
<b>Assam</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>592</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>40285</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>6500</b>

Source: <http://asamb.in/index.php>

### 4.3.1 Procurement Paddy

It might be noted that the present study deals with the problems of marketing of winter paddy which is popularly known as *sali dhan* in Assam. As this paddy is sown during the rainy season (June-July) and harvested during the winter (November-December), the cultivation of this crop mainly depends on rain and can easily be practiced in areas without any irrigation facilities. This is why in most of the areas without any irrigation facilities, farmers used to cultivate only *sali dhan*. Needless to mention that *Sali dhan* belongs to *kharif crops* (Winter Rice).

Paddy procurement at Minimum Support Price (MSP) is another indicator of conditions of agricultural marketing in a state or region. This winter rice is procured by both the Assam State Agricultural Marketing Board (ASAMB), the flagship organization created by the state government for the promotion of marketing of agricultural produce in the state, and Food Corporation of India (FCI), the flagship central sector organization for the procurement, storage and distribution of foodgrains in the country. Both the organizations procure winter rice at minimum support price (MSP) fixed by the Government of India every year. The MSP for 2012-13 for common paddy was Rs 1250 per quintal and Rs 1280 per quintal for grade A. It might be noted that although ASAMB had notified 18 Paddy Procurement Centers (PPC) all across the state during 2012-13, not a single district of Barak Valley has found a place in the list (table 4.7). Similar things have been noticed during 2013-14, out of 40 PPC declared across the state, not a single PPC was found from Barak Valley.

**Table 4.7: Paddy Procurement Centers and Targets for KMS under Assam State Agricultural Marketing Board**

District	Number of PPC		Target (MT)		Minimum Support Price (MSP) Rs/Quintal			
	2012-13	2013-14	2012-13	2013-14	2012-13		2013-14	
					Common	Grade A	Common	Grade A
Cachar	0	0	0	0	1250	1280	1310	1345
Hailakandi	0	0	0	0				
Karimganj	0	0	0	0				
Barak Valley	0	0	0	0				
Assam	18	40	14,600	40,000				

Note: KMS= Kharif Marketing Season, PPC=Paddy Procurement Centre

Source: <http://asamb.in/index.php>

However, FCI is supposed to procure from Barak Valley but its track record is extremely disappointing. As the moisture content of paddy produced in the region is generally higher than the specified 17 percent required by FCI, farmers in the region could hardly take the advantages from the market procurement drive of FCI. However, it might be pointed out that FCI procures the bulk amount from the big farmers of Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh. Small and marginal farmers of the north eastern region in general and Barak Valley in particular can hardly derive any benefit of MSP. As they are not well off, in absence of agencies who can procure their produce at MSP, majority of the small and marginal farmers prefer to sell their produce to private operators who offer much lower price compared to MSP.

#### 4.4 Profile of the Sample Agricultural Circles

There are a total of 27 districts in Assam. These are further sub-divided into 63 Agricultural sub-divisions. Each of the Agricultural sub-divisions is further segregated into Agricultural Development Officer (ADO) Circles for facilitating agricultural promotional activities. There are a total of 382 ADO circles in the state (table 4.8). Each ADO circle is further divided into a number of elakas. These elakas are roughly coterminous with Gram Panchayats. Each elaka is composed of a number of villages. For each elaka, one village level extension worker (VLEW) is engaged in order to provide extension services to the farmers. Agricultural development schemes of the government are implemented on the ground through these VLEWs.

**Table 4.8: Agricultural Sub-Division and ADO Circles in Barak Valley**

Sl. No.	District/Region/State	Agricultural Sub-division	Agricultural Development Officer (ADO) Circle
1	Cachar	3	19
2	Hailakandi	1	7
3	Karimgangj	2	14
4	Barak Valley	6	40
5	Assam	63	382

Source: Status Paper (2011-12) (District Level)

**Table 4.9: District, Sub-Division, and ADO Circles in Barak Valley**

District	Cachar				Hailakandi	Karimgang	
	Silchar	Sonai	Lakhipur	Hailakandi		Karimgang	Ramkrishna Nagar
<b>Agricultural Development Officer (ADO) Circle</b>	1. Silchar	1. Uttar krishnapur	1. Rajabajar	1. Boalipar	1. Sadarashi	1. Ramkrishna Nagar	
	2. Salchapra	2. Sonai	2. Banskandi	2. Panchagram	2. Fakirabazar	2. Bhairabnager	
	3. Tapang	3. Narsing pur	3. Lakhipur	3. Hailakandi	3. Kaliganj	3. Bazarghat	
	4. Udarbond	4. Bongram	4. Binna kandi (Motinagar)	4. Lala	4. Nilambazar	4. dullabcherra	
	5. Chandrapur	5. palongghat		5. Lalabazar	5. Badorpureghat		
	6. Arunachal	6. Chottojalenga		6. Monipur	6. Mohakal		
	7. Kalain			7. Katlicherra	7. Baraigram		
	8. Katigorah				8. Patharkandi		
	9. Bihara				9. Sonakhira		
						10. Bazaricherra	

Source: Status Paper of Cachar, Karimganj and Hailakandi (2011-12), Department of Agriculture, Office of the District Agricultural Officer

In Barak Valley, there are 6 (six) Agricultural sub-divisions--3 in Cachar (Silchar, Sonai and Lakhipur), 1 in Hailakandi (Hailakandi) and 2 in Karimganj (Ramkrishna Nagar and Karimganj). There are 40 ADO circles in Barak Valley—19 in Cachar, 7 in Hailakandi and 14 in Karimganj (tables 4.8 and 4.9).

Taking one ADO circle from each subdivision, we have taken 6 (six) ADO circles for our study—3 from Cachar (Udarbandh, Narsingpur, Rajabazar), 1 from Hailakandi (Boalipar) and 2 from Karimganj (Nilambazar, Bhairabnagar). We have selected two villages randomly from each ADO circle for the purpose of our study (table 4.10). A brief profile of the sample villages is in order in section 4.5.

**Table 4.10: Agricultural Sub-division, Sample ADO circles, and Villages in Barak Valley**

Name of the District	Name of the Agricultural Sub-Division	Name of the Sample ADO Circle	Name of the Sample Village
Cachar	Silchar	Udharbond	Pangram Part -2
			Tikalpar
	Sonai	Narsingpur	Cleaver House T E
			Barjalenga-7
	Lakhipur	Rajabazar	Joypur part-2
			Kanakpur part-1
Hailakandi	Hailakandi	Boalipar	Boalipar Part-1
			Boalipar Part-2
Karimganj	Ramkrishna Nagar	Bhairabnagar	Niznabin
			Gopikanagar
	Karimganj	Nilambajar	Umarpur part-1
			Duliakhal Karaibari

Source: Status Paper of Cachar, Karimganj and Hailakandi (2011-12), Department of Agriculture, Office of the District Agricultural Officer

While selecting the villages in an ADO circle, consultations have been made with the District Agricultural Development Officer (ADO). Two villages in each ADO circle have been selected based on the dimension of market accessibility. A set of 6 (six) villages in 6 (six) ADO circles have been chosen which are located relatively nearer

to market and another set of 6 (six) villages have been chosen which are relatively far from the market place.

#### 4.5 Profile of the Sample Villages

It might be noted that the mean size of household of the sample villages stands at 340. Clever House TE has registered to be the largest village in terms of number of households while the village Umarpur Part-1 has registered to be the smallest village in our sample. The average size of the village populations stands at 1943. The Male female ratio of the total population of the sample villages amounts to 51:49 (table 4.11).

**Table: 4.11: Population of the Sample Villages by Sex**

Sl No	Name of Village	Total no of Households	Total Population (2011)	Male	Female
1	Boalipar Part-1	255	1329	678	651
2	Boalipar Part-2	290	1723	865	858
3	Pangram Part -2	292	1618	817	801
4	Tikalpar	280	1682	853	829
5	Joypur Part-2	420	2498	1241	1257
6	Kanakpur Part-1	339	1987	972	1015
7	Cleaver House TE	843	4962	2580	2382
8	Barjalenga-7	452	2338	1214	1124
9	Niznabin	469	2539	1299	1240
10	Gopikanagar	124	711	364	347
11	Umarpur Part-1	120	637	326	311
12	Duliakhal Karaibari	197	1289	654	635

Source: Office of the District Agricultural Officer, Cachar, Karimganj and Hailakandi

As far as the area of the village is concerned, the mean size of the sample villages stands at 358 hectare. The largest village in terms of area is Joypur Part 2 and the smallest village is Umarpur Part 1 (table 4.12). Average distance of a village from the district headquarters is 30 km. Among all the villages, Boalipar Part-2 is located nearest to the district headquarters (3 km) and Gopikanagar is located at the farthest (75 km).



As far as the village roads are concerned, most of the villages near the market have pucca approach roads that connect them with the main road. However, only kacha roads are found inside the village. Although most of the village roads are motorable during the winter, the same does not hold good during the rainy season. As the rainy season is spanned over more than 4 months in this region, most of the villages are not motorable during this period. However, most of the villages which are away from market are found to have only kacha roads--both the approach road and inside-the-village road.

**Table: 4.12: Area of the Sample Villages and their Distance from District Headquarters**

Sl No	Name of Village	Area of Village (Hec)	Distance from District Headquarters (in km)	Name of District Headquarter
1	Boalipar Part-1	152	5	Hailakandi
2	Boalipar Part-2	178	3	Hailakandi
3	Pangram Part -2	201	14	Silchar
4	Tikalpar	380	28	Silchar
5	Joypur Part-2	857	47	Silchar
6	Kanakpur Part-1	201	48	Silchar
7	Cleaver House TE	810	19	Silchar
8	Barjalenga-7	277	26	Silchar
9	Nizabin	750	65	Karimganj
10	Gopikanagar	257	75	Karimganj
11	Umarpur part-1	90	7	Karimganj
12	Duliakhal Karaibari	148	18	Karimganj

Source: Office of the District Agricultural Officer, Cachar, Karimganj and Hailakandi.

#### 4.5.1 Physical Infrastructure

It might be noted that most of the villages are electrified. However, electricity is hardly used in agriculture. All most all the hand tillers and power tillers which are used for agriculture are operated by diesel. Moreover, pump sets which are used for lift irrigation are also run by diesel. As a result, electricity is only used for domestic requirements. Of course, no institutional and structural set up is available in the villages for the use of electricity for agricultural purposes. In other words, even if the

farmers intend to make use of electricity for irrigation and other agricultural activities, they cannot do it due to the lack of structural and institutional arrangements.

Although, agriculture is the mainstay of the villagers, it has been noted that none of the villages is having any public irrigation facilities. This exhibits the extremely poor condition of agricultural infrastructure in the sample villages (table 4.13).

**Table 4.13: Physical Infrastructure Availability in the Sample Villages**

Sl No	Name of Village	Physical Infrastructure		
		Nature of Road in the Village	Electricity	Public Irrigation Facility
1	Boalipar Part-1	Partly pucca and partly kacha	A	NA
2	Boalipar Part-2	Partly pucca and partly kacha	A	NA
3	Pangram Part -2	Partly pucca and partly kacha	A	NA
4	Tikalpar	Kacha	A	NA
5	Joypur Part-2	Partly pucca and partly kacha	A	NA
6	Kanakpur Part-1	Kacha	A	NA
7	Cleaver House TE	Partly pucca and partly kacha	A	NA
8	Barjalenga-7	Kacha	A	NA
9	Niznabin	Partly pucca and partly kacha	A	NA
10	Gopikanagar	Partly Kacha and partly water ways	A	NA
11	Umarpur part-1	Partly pucca and partly kacha	A	NA
12	Duliakhal Karaibari	Kacha	A	NA

Note: NA=Not Available, A=Available  
Source: Field Survey, 2013

#### 4.5.2 Social Infrastructure

As far as the educational infrastructure is concerned, each of the sample villages is found to have at least one primary school. However, the attendance of the students is not strictly enforced. The quality of primary education may not go unquestioned. Out of 12 sample villages, 4 villages are found to have one high school each and there is only 1 village having a higher secondary school. Compared to educational facilities, health care facilities are found to have been lacking. Out of 12 sample villages, only 5 villages are found to have primary health centers (PHC). Moreover, out these 5, it has

been noted that 3 PHCs are defunct. This shows the abysmal condition of public health facilities in the sample villages (table 4.14).

### 4.5.3 Agricultural Marketing Infrastructure

The data as presented in table 4.15 exhibits the availability or otherwise of marketing infrastructure in the sample villages. It might be noted that in most of the cases, villagers transport their agricultural produce to local markets using whatever means available to them like bicycle, handcart and boat besides carrying on head loads. This shows that the quantum of agro-produce which is taken to market is not substantial. However, it does not mean that the size of marketable surplus of paddy, the principal crop under study, is necessarily small. It has been reported in some villages that the middlemen visit the villages in order to buy paddy and take them truckloads. The villagers prefer to sell large part of their marketable surplus to these middlemen, popularly known as *paikars* in local jargon, in spite of the fact that they receive comparatively lesser price, mainly because by doing so they can avoid the hassles of transportation as well as avoid the uncertainty of finding a prospective buyer.

**Table 4.14: Social Infrastructure Availability in the Sample Villages**

Sl No	Name of Village	Social Infrastructure			
		Educational Facilities			Health Centre
		Primary School	High School	Higher Secondary School	
1	Boalipar Part-1	A	NA	NA	NA
2	Boalipar Part-2	A	A	NA	NA
3	Pangram Part -2	A	NA	NA	NA
4	Tikalpar	A	NA	NA	A
5	Joypur Part-2	A	A	NA	A
6	Kanakpur Part-1	A	NA	NA	NA
7	Cleaver House TE	A	NA	NA	A
8	Barjalenga-7	A	A	A	NA
9	Niznabin	A	A	NA	A
10	Gopikanagar	A	NA	NA	NA
11	Umarpur Part-1	A	NA	NA	A
12	Duliakhal Karaibari	A	NA	NA	NA

Note: NA=Not Available, A=Available  
Source: Field Survey, 2013

There are 20 regulated markets operating in the three districts of Barak Valley. Except two villages in Karimganj, rest of the ten villages have easy access to the regulated markets. It might be noted that all the regulated markets in a district operate under the district level regulated market committee which in turn operates under the state agricultural marketing board of Assam. The Regulated Market Committees only look after the infrastructural development and daily management of the market places, collect cess from the sellers, monitor the operation of the commercial agents like *paikars*, who buy for commercial purposes, and settle disputes between the buyers and sellers. In no way, the Regulated Market Committees control the prices of agricultural produce.

None of the sample village is having any agricultural marketing cooperatives. Cooperative movement seems to have remained extremely weak in Barak Valley as none of the sample villages is having any Primary Agricultural Cooperatives (PACs). It might be noted that there are only 470 firming cooperatives constituting only about 6 percent of the total number of cooperatives in Assam in 2009-10 (SHBA: 2011). This shows that the institution of cooperation has not been used as a tool for the rural development in Assam in general and Barak Valley in particular.

As far as the access to market is concerned, most of the villages have access to local markets situated at a reasonable distance. The mean distance to market for the sample villages being a little more than 4 km. Duliakhal Karaibari is located at the farthest from local market (10 km) and Pangram Part II is located at the nearest (1.5 km). It may be pointed out that all the local markets deal with only retail trade where the most of the buyers and sellers hail from surrounding villages. Only in case of a few exceptional cases, it is gathered that commercial buyers of agricultural produce visit these markets that too immediately after harvesting particularly of sali paddy (winter rice).

As has already been mentioned in chapter 3, whatever warehousing capacity under State Warehousing Corporation and under private sector are there in Barak Valley districts, these are mainly used by corporate and businesses, farmers hardly have any access to them. None of the respondents of the sample villages has reported to have ever used the warehousing facilities.

**Table 4.15: Agricultural Marketing Infrastructure Availability in the Sample Villages**

Sl. No.	Name of Village	Mode of Transportation of Agricultural Produce from Village to Market	Access to Regulated Market	Marketing Cooperative	Distance of Nearest Local Market (in km)	Access to Warehouse	Cold Storage	Agmark Node	Access to Sale at Govt. Support Price
1	Boalipar Part-1	Handcart, bycycle and headload	A	NA	4	NA	NA	NA	NA
2	Boalipar Part-2	Handcart, bycycle, haedload	A	NA	2	NA	NA	NA	NA
3	Pangram Part-2	Handcart, bycycle, headload	A	NA	1.5	NA	NA	NA	NA
4	Tikalpar	Handcart, bycycle and headload	A	NA	5	NA	NA	NA	NA
5	Joypur Part-2	Handcart, bycycle and headload	A	NA	2	NA	NA	NA	NA
6	Kanakpur Part-1	Handcart, bycycle and headload	A	NA	4.5	NA	NA	NA	NA
7	Cleaver House TE	Handcart, bycycle and headload	A	NA	2	NA	NA	NA	NA
8	Barjalenga-7	bycycle and headload	A	NA	7	NA	NA	NA	NA
9	Niznabin	Handcart, bycycle and headload	NA	NA	2.5	NA	NA	NA	NA
10	Gopikanagar	Handcart, bycycle, headload, boat	NA	NA	6	NA	NA	NA	NA
11	Umarpur Part-1	Handcart, bycycle, headload	A	NA	2.5	NA	NA	NA	NA
12	Duliakhhal Karaibari	Handcart, bycycle, headload	A	NA	10	NA	NA	NA	NA

Source: Field Survey, 2013

Like warehousing services, the cold storage facilities in the districts of Barak Valley mainly developed under the private sector are being used by the corporate and businesses. Farmers have little access to them. As has already been mentioned, out of 6 cold storages in the Valley, 5 are under private sector and 1 in Hailakandi is under the cooperative sector. As Hailakandi is rich in agriculture compared to other two valley districts, vegetable and growers of other horticultural products can access the facilities of cold storage by becoming a member of the cooperative society that manages the cold storage there.

There are 23 Agmark Nodes in Assam. All most all the districts are having at least one such Node which disseminates information relating to agricultural marketing among the stake holders including the farmers. Although each of the three districts of Barak Valley is having one Agmarknet Node, it has been noted that farmers in the sample villages do not aware of the existence of such facilities. This shows that district level nodes are under the control of the bureaucrats and officials and the farmers have hardly any access to them.

**Table 4.16: Sample Size**

Sl No	Name of Village	Total no of Households	Number of Sample household	Sample Population			
				Total	Male	Female	Average Family Size
1	Boalipar Part-1	255	26	142	73	69	5.46
2	Boalipar Part-2	290	29	163	83	80	5.62
3	Pangram Part -2	292	30	168	86	82	5.6
4	Tikalpar	280	28	161	78	83	5.75
5	Joypur Part-2	420	42	239	118	121	5.69
6	Kanakpur Part-1	339	34	196	94	102	5.76
7	Cleaver House TE	843	84	482	256	226	5.74
8	Barjalenga-7	452	45	233	118	115	5.18
9	Niznabin	469	47	291	152	139	6.19
10	Gopikanagar	124	12	67	35	32	5.58
11	Umarpur Part-1	120	12	61	32	29	5.08
12	Duliakhal Karaibari	197	20	103	54	49	5.15

Source: VLEWS of Sample Villages and Field Survey, 2013

## **4.6 The Sample**

From the 12 villages that have been identified in consultation with the Office of the District Agriculture, 10 percent of the households from each village based on the 2011 Census have been randomly chosen to form the sample for this study.

### **4.6.1 Village-wise Distribution of Sample Households**

The village-wise distribution of the sample households is shown in table 4.16. Out of a total of 4081 households in 12 sample villages, 409 households, which forms 10 percent of the total, have been randomly selected for the field survey. These 409 households are constituted of a total of 2306 people consisting of 1179 male and 1127 female. The male-female ration for the sample stands at 51:49 which exactly reflects the sex ratio of the sample villages. The average family size of the sample population is 5.56.

### **4.6.2 Sample Households by Occupational Status**

It may be noted from table 4.17 that the share of the adult is 66 percent of the total sample population which constitutes the workforce. Out of 780 sample adult male, 82 percent are farm workers, 12 percent are non-farm workers and 6 percent are not workers. Similarly out of 746 sample adult female, 80 percent are farm workers, 4 percent are non-farm workers and 16 percent are not workers.

### **4.6.3 Sample Households by Holding Size**

Table 4.18 and figure 4.6 show the distribution of the sample households by holding size in the sample villages. Out of 409 sample households, 195 households, i.e., about 48 percent belong to the category of marginal farmers as they possess less than 1 hectare of cultivable land. Another 167 households, i.e., 41 percent, belong to the category of small farmers as they possess 1-2 hectare of cultivable land. So the marginal and small farmers together constitute the rural base as they are the overwhelming majority (89 percent) in rural areas of Barak Valley.

**Table 4.17: Population of the Sample Villages by Work Category**

Sl No	Name of Village	No of Household Members				Occupation of Adult Males			Occupation of Adult Females		
		Adult Male	Adult Female	Male Child	Female Child	Farm Work	Non-Farm Work	Not Working	Farm Work	Non-Farm Work	Not Working
1	Boalipar Part-1	54	56	19	13	44	9	1	43	1	12
2	Boalipar Part-2	60	53	23	27	41	15	4	39	4	10
3	Pangram Part -2	61	58	25	24	47	11	3	38	6	14
4	Tikalpar	57	60	21	23	49	4	4	47	2	11
5	Joypur Part-2	72	79	46	42	64	5	3	63	2	14
6	Kanakpur Part-1	59	71	35	31	47	4	8	59	3	10
7	Cleaver House TE	158	133	98	93	139	11	8	122	3	8
8	Barjalenga-7	73	69	45	46	56	14	3	58	2	9
9	Niznabin	107	90	45	49	92	7	8	77	4	9
10	Gopikanagar	25	23	10	9	17	6	2	16	1	8
11	Umarpur Part-1	21	24	11	5	16	3	2	16	2	6
12	Duliakhal Karaibari	33	30	21	19	26	4	3	20	1	9

Source: Field Survey, 2013

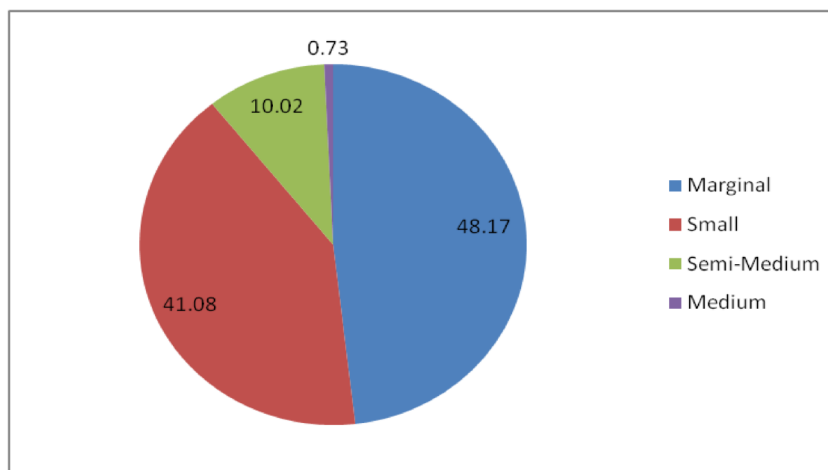


**Table 4.18: Distribution of Sample Households according to Holding Size**

Sl No	Village Name	No of Sample Households	Land less	Marginal (Below 1 hec)	Small (1-2 hec)	Semi-Medium (2-4 hec)	Medium (4-10 Hec)	Large (10 hec & above)
1	Boalipar Part-1	26	-	13 (50.00)	13 (50.00)	-	-	-
2	Boalipar Part-2	29	-	17 (58.62)	12 (41.38)	-	-	-
3	Pangram Part -2	30	-	16 (53.33)	13 (43.33)	1 (3.33)	-	-
4	Tikalpar	28	-	8 (28.57)	15 (53.57)	5 (17.86)	-	-
5	Joypur Part-2	42	-	16 (42.86)	19 (45.24)	5 (11.90)	-	-
6	Kanakpur Part-1	34	-	21 (61.76)	11 (32.35)	2 (5.88)	-	-
7	Cleaver House TE	84	-	34 (40.48)	39 (46.43)	11 (13.10)	-	-
8	Barjalenga-7	45	-	30 (66.67)	11 (24.44)	4 (8.89)	-	-
9	Niznabin	47	-	22 (46.81)	18 (38.30)	4 (8.51)	3 (6.38)	-
10	Gopikanagar	12	-	7 (58.33)	3 (25.00)	2 (16.67)	-	-
11	Umarpur Part-1	12	-	8 (66.67)	3 (25.00)	1 (8.33)	-	-
12	Duliakhal Karaibari	20	-	3 (15.00)	11 (55.00)	6 (30.00)	-	-
Sample Total		409		197 (48.17)	168 (41.08)	41 (10.02)	3 (0.73)	

Note: Figures in brackets are percentages  
Source: Field Survey, 2013

**Figure 4.6: Distribution of Sample Households according to Holding Size**



Source: Table 4.18

Similarly 41 households, i.e., 10 percent, belong to the category of semi-medium farmers as they possess 2-4 hectare of cultivable land and 3 households, i.e., 1 percent, belong to the category of medium farmers as they possess 4-10 hectares of cultivable land. There was no farmer in the sample found to have large holding.

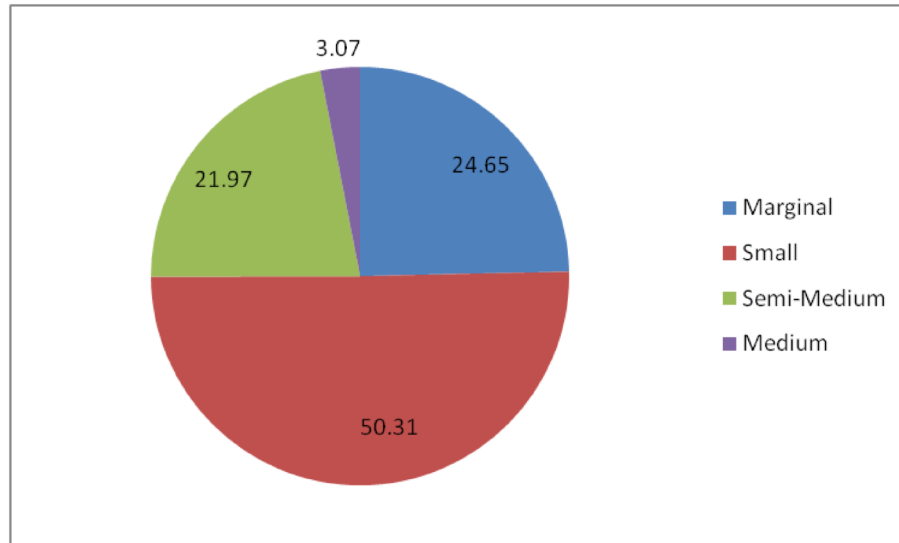
**Table 4.19: Cultivable Area under Sample Households by Holding Size**

Sl No	Village Name	No of Sample Households	Marginal (Below 1 hec)	Small (1-2 Hec)	Semi-Medium (2-4 Hec)	Medium (4-10 Hec)	Total (Hec)
1	Boalipar Part-1	26	8.13 (30.19)	18.80 (69.81)	-	-	26.93
2	Boalipar Part-2	29	10.53 (37.97)	17.20 (62.03)	-	-	27.73
3	Pangram Part -2	30	9.47 (31.55)	17.60 (58.67)	2.93 (9.78)	-	30
4	Tikalpar	28	5.74 (14.24)	21.73 (53.97)	12.8 (31.79)	-	40.27
5	Joypur Part-2	42	11.47 (22.40)	27.2 (53.13)	12.53 (24.47)	-	51.20
6	Kanakpur Part-1	34	11.60 (36.71)	14.80 (46.83)	5.20 (16.46)	-	31.60
7	Cleaver House TE	84	18.14 (17.26)	56.13 (53.43)	30.80 (29.31)	-	105.07
8	Barjalenga-7	45	18.94 (42.01)	15.73 (34.91)	10.4 (23.08)	-	45.07
9	Niznabin	47	11.46 (18.70)	24.40 (39.78)	10.80 (17.61)	14.67 (23.91)	61.33
10	Gopikanagar	12	4.93 (37.76)	3.74 (28.57)	4.40 (33.67)	-	13.07
11	Umarpur Part-1	12	5.33 (45.95)	3.87 (33.36)	2.4 (20.69)	-	11.6
12	Duliakhal Karaibari	20	2.13 (6.23)	19.34 (56.42)	12.80 (37.35)	-	34.27
Sample Total		409	117.87 (24.65)	240.54 (50.31)	105.06 (21.97)	14.67 (3.07)	478.14

Note: Figures in brackets are percentages

Source: Field Survey, 2013

**Figure 4.7: Cultivable Area under Sample Households by Holding Size**



Source: Table 4.19

Table 4.19 and figure 4.7 show the distribution of cultivable area by holding size in the sample villages. It might be noted that 48 percent of the marginal holders (table 4.16) have 25 percent of total cultivable area under their possession (table 4.19). Similarly, 41 percent of the small holders are having 49 percent of the total cultivable land in the sample villages. Another 10 percent semi-medium holders possess about 23 percent of the cultivable land. Only about 1 percent medium holders are having 3 percent of the total land in the sample villages.

Out of the 12 sample villages, Umarpur Part-1 and Barjalenga-7 are having higher concentration of the marginalized holders among the sample households indicating greater degree of inequality in the distribution of cultivable land and Duliakhhal Karaibari is having the least concentration. As far as the distribution of cultivable area is concerned, Umarpur Part-1 has the maximum area (46 percent) and Duliakhhal Karaibari has the least area (6 percent) under the marginal holders.

Duliakhhal Karaibari is having higher concentration of the small holders (55 percent) and Barjalenga-7 is having the least concentration of small holders (24 percent) among the sample households. Boalipar Part-1 has the maximum area (70 percent) and Gopikanagar has the least area (29 percent) under the small holders.

Duliakhal Karaibari is having the highest concentration of the Semi-Medium holders (30 percent) and Pangram Part-2 is having the least concentration under this category (3 percent) among the sample households. In case of cultivable area, Duliakhal Karaibari has the maximum area (51 percent) and Pangram Part has the least area (10 percent) under the Semi-Medium holders.

Out of 12 villages, only one village, i.e, Niznabin, is having medium holding where 6 percent of the holding come under this category covering 24 percent of the cultivable area of the village.

As far as the availability of the irrigational facilities in the sample villages is concerned, no organized and planned arrangement has been reported. In spite being extremely rich in water resources due to the Barak River system that passes through the Valley, there has not been any public investment for the development of irrigational facilities. As a result, most of the farmers practice only one major crop, i.e., winter rice, which is completely depended on the rainfall. During the winter, farmers who reside and have land by the side of the natural water bodies like river, stream, ponds, bills, etc use low lift irrigation technique in order to produce vegetables. It might be pointed out that unlike rice cultivation, farmers grow vegetables only in relatively high land areas preferably in lands attached to their homesteads so that they can ensure the protection of the crop. As a result, vegetables are grown only in small patches of land adjacent to their dwelling places. Irrigation facilities are needed for the cultivation of horticultural crops mainly grown during the winter season. It might also be noted that production of horticultural crops has been the major source of crop diversification in Barak Valley where farmers hardly grow other cash crops like tobacco, jute, cotton, etc. In view of the recent trend in food inflation in the country, vegetable prices have been sky rocketed and the farmers find the horticultural crops as good as cash crops and produce them both for household consumption and sale in the market. This trend has encouraged many farmers to have private source of irrigation where public irrigation facilities are absent. In our sample villages, farmers use two types of irrigational techniques, viz., tube-well (shallow or deep) and low lift irrigation. Tube-wells are dug nearer to the cultivating plots and motor is used for lifting the underground water which is then channelized to the different parts of the field. Low lift irrigation uses the surface water from the natural water bodies instead of ground water. Farmers use motor to lift the surface water from

river, stream, pond, bill or any other natural water bodies and channelize it to the agricultural fields. While deep tube-wells can be used throughout the year for irrigational purposes, low lift irrigation is possible only in case of availability of natural water bodies.

#### 4.6.4 Sample Households by Status and Types of Irrigation Facilities

It might be noted from table 4.20 that 37 percent of the sample households have irrigational facilities while the majority constituting 63 percent do not have irrigational facilities of their own. Out of 151 households having irrigation facilities of their own, 28 percent use tube-well (shallow or deep) in order to access the ground water for irrigation. Another 50 percent use low lift pumps in order to access the water from the surface water bodies for irrigation and about 23 percent of the households use both the techniques for irrigation.

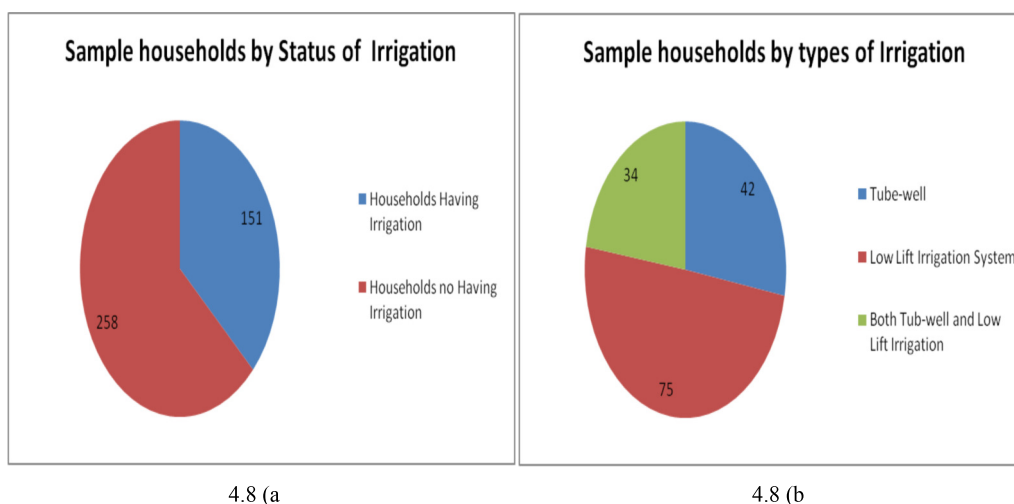
**Table 4.20: Types of Irrigation in the Sample Villages**

Sl. No	Name of Village	Types of irrigation used by the Sample Households					Total
		Tube-well	Low Lift Irrigation System	Both Tub-well and Low Lift Irrigation	Households having Irrigation	Households having no Irrigation	
1	Boalipar Part-1	1	3	1	5	21	26
2	Boalipar Part-2	5	9	3	17	12	29
3	Pangram Part -2	3	8	5	16	14	30
4	Tikalpar	2	5	3	10	18	28
5	Joypur Part-2	5	7	4	16	26	42
6	Kanakpur Part-1	4	6	1	11	23	34
7	Cleaver House TE	8	11	6	25	59	84
8	Barjalenga-7	2	5	3	10	35	45
9	Niznabin	5	8	4	17	30	47
10	Gopikanagar	3	2	0	5	7	12
11	Umarpur Part-1	2	4	1	7	5	12
12	Duliakhhal Karaibari	2	7	3	12	8	20
	Sample Total	42	75	34	151	258	409

Source: Field Survey, 2013

While villages like Duliakhal Karaibari, Umarpur Part-1 and Boalipar Part-2 are in a better position where more than 50 percent of the sample households have reported to have private irrigation facilities, villages like Boalipar Part-1 and Barjalenga-7 are in most disadvantageous position where less than 25 percent of the households are having this facility (table 4.20 and fig 4.8 ).

**Figure 4.8: Status and Types of Irrigation Facilities in the Sample Villages**



Source: Table 4.20

#### 4.6.5 Cultivable Area under Sample Households by Types of Cropping

Table 4.21 and figure 4.9 show areas under cropping in the sample villages. Out of the total cultivable land of 478.14 hectares in the sample villages, about 65 percent is under monocropping, 34 percent is under double cropping and about 1 percent is under triple cropping. This shows under utilization of the available cultivable land in the sample villages which, as has been reported, is due to the lack of irrigation facilities in the Barak Valley.

Out of the 12 sample villages, Boalipar Part-1, Kanakpur Part-1, Niznabin, Umarpur Part-1 and Duliakhal Karaibari have more than 70 percent areas under monocropping. This is mainly because most of the sample households do not have any access to natural water bodies like rivulets, streams, bills, etc. However, villages like Boalipar Part-2, Pangram Part-2, Tikalpar and Cleaver House TE are having about 40 percent cultivable land under double cropping. As these villages are located near the natural

water bodies, farmers living nearer to them usually employ lift irrigation during the winter season.

**Table 4.21: Cultivable Land by types of cropping among the Sample Households**

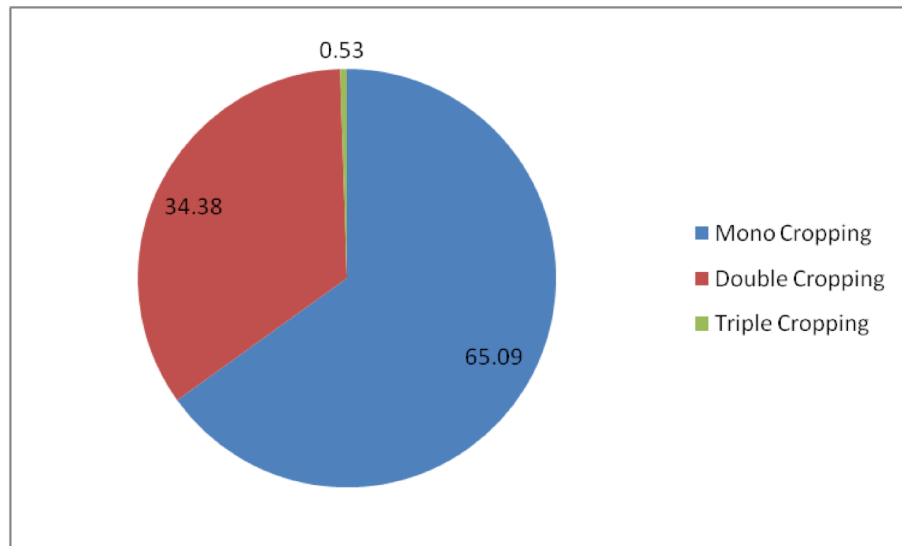
( in Hec)

Sl. No	Name of Village	Cultivable Land under Sample Households	Mono Cropping	Double Cropping	Triple Cropping
1	Boalipar Part-1	26.93	20.13 (74.75)	6.80 (25.25)	0
2	Boalipar Part-2	27.73	16.00 (57.70)	11.73 (42.30)	0
3	Pangram Part -2	30.00	17.33 (57.77)	12.67 (42.23)	0
4	Tikalpar	40.27	25.34 (62.90)	14.93 (37.07)	0
5	Joypur Part-2	51.20	34.40 (67.19)	16.40 (32.03)	0.40 (0.78)
6	Kanakpur Part-1	31.60	22.53 (71.30)	9.07 (28.70)	0
7	Cleaver House TE	105.07	65.07 (61.93)	40.00 (38.07)	0
8	Barjalenga-7	45.07	26.54 (58.89)	18.53 (41.11)	0
9	Niznabin	61.33	42.93 (70.00)	18.40 (30.00)	0
10	Gopikanagar	13.07	7.07 (54.09)	3.87 (29.61)	2.13 (16.30)
11	Umarpur Part-1	11.60	8.40 (72.41)	3.20 (27.59)	0
12	Duliakhhal Karaibari	34.27	25.47 (74.32)	8.80 (25.68)	0
Sample Total		478.14	311.21 (65.09)	164.4 (34.38)	2.54 (0.53)

Source: Field Survey, 2013

Out of 12 sample villages, some respondents of only two villages have reported to practice triple cropping. They belong to Gopikanagar, which is situated beside the Son Bill, one of the largest bills in Asia, and Joypur Part-2, located near a rivulet. Access to natural water bodies seems to have enabled some farmers to practice triple cropping in these two villages.

**Figure 4.9 Cultivable Land by types of cropping among the Sample Households**



Source: Table 4.21

#### **4.7 Conclusion**

Agriculture is the mainstay of the people of Assam as well as Barak Valley where the majority of the workforce is engaged. As the manufacturing base of the state as well as Barak Valley has remained extremely weak, any strategy of development in such circumstances must put agriculture sector into the focus. But the success of any strategy of agriculture led growth rests on the extent of the scope of agricultural marketing. Although, there are 20 regulated markets operating in the three districts of Barak Valley, they hardly play any role in ensuring the fair price to the farmers for their produce. Cooperative movement seems to have remained extremely weak in Barak Valley as none of the sample villages is having any Primary Agricultural Cooperatives (PACs).

Agricultural marketing infrastructure has remained as the greatest weak point in Barak Valley. Farmers of the Valley hardly have any access to warehousing and cold storage facilities.

Whatever warehousing capacity under State Warehousing Corporation and under private sector is there in Barak Valley districts, this is mainly used by corporates and businesses and the farmers hardly have any access to it. Like warehousing services,



the cold storage facilities in the districts of Barak Valley mainly developed under the private sector are being used by the corporates and businesses. Farmers have little access to them.

Although each of the three districts of Barak Valley is having one Agmarknet Node, farmers are hardly aware of the existence of such facilities. Although Assam State Agricultural Marketing Board (ASAMB) and Food Corporation of India (FCI) procure rice at minimum support price (MSP) fixed by the Government of India every year, there is not a single procurement centre in the Barak Valley. The farmers in the Valley are left to the mercy of the private operators who offer much less price compared to the MSP. As most of the farmers in the Valley belong to the category of small and marginal holders, their economic condition does not permit them to hold their produce for long and hence they often becomes the victims of depressed selling.

As the farmers do not get fair price for their produce due to the inadequate marketing infrastructure and absence of agricultural marketing agencies, capital formation in agriculture is extremely poor. As there is no public provisioning of irrigation facilities, farmers have to depend on the private sources of irrigation by way of installation of shallow/deep tube well or use of low lift pumps. As the farmers are not well off, marginal and small farmers, who form the majority in the Valley, could hardly afford to access irrigation. As a result most of the farmers depend on the rain fall for their agricultural operations and hence practice only winter rice cultivation. Lack of irrigational facilities compelled the majority of the farmers to practice monocropping which is inhibiting the agricultural growth in Barak Valley.

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