

Introduction

-Manijyoti Baruah

'Kazirangan Landscaping through Community Participation' is our attempt to make an analysis based on impacts and consequences of some actions initiated to transform the approach to nature conservation practices of the people we targeted. Having said that it is to be clarified that the process of change will continue and our experiments do not have a time frame as of now because the study is still in progress. Catalyst of change is inherent in modus operandi and depends largely on social acceptance of the parameter we introduce.

Background:

Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) organised an Area Focused Training Course in Enhancement of Local Government Administration and Public Service (Participatory Local Development) at Ryukoku University Kyoto from January 13, 2010 to March 5, 2010 under the international cooperation Program of Government of Japan.

I had the opportunity to attend the Program from India as the sole representative alongwith 11 other participants from Srilanka, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan and Afghanistan. JICA followed a very systematic process of selection for the Program as all the participants had to submit a country report alongwith a project proposal for the Program.

During my stay in Japan we were taught on various techniques of project planning evolved in Japan and some western modules adapted to oriental societal conditions keeping in mind the economic development stages of the countries concerned. For the first time I have got myself acquainted with Japanese model of PDM (Project Design Matrix) in contrast to LOGFRAM process followed in western developed countries. I have already undergone three separate trainings on 'Project Identification, Monitoring & Evaluation' -all short duration programmes at Administrative Staff College of India (ASCI) Hyderabad, and at IIPA, New Delhi, but my Japan experiences proved to be more beneficial and some practical exposure made me channelize my thinking in a different perspective altogether. The project I had chosen was 'Women Empowerment' through some traditional economic activities prevalent in areas of implementation. I am grateful to SIRD in general and senior officials of my Department Transformation & Development (erstwhile Planning & Development) in particular for reposing faith in me to carry out the Project Study in association with GRASSHOPPER NGO, SIRD and other stakeholders of the state government.

As it is said '*ars longa, vita brevis*', we are always on a learning curve, and our team consisting of young professionals, students and researchers tried our best to inculcate in our thought process the values of life and standards of living as barometers in assessing the change in social structure.

My learnings in Japan as to how they are leveraging their expertise and technology in bringing about the changes in the fields of agriculture with special thrust on organic farming practices would make a separate report in relation to our agricultural environment.

In initiating a dialogue on ecosystem in the light of different conservation angles we should keep in mind the following important points which form the basis of any conservation efforts. Administrators or governments, social activists, researchers or conservation workers all should make it a point to work out a systematic approach to ensure a plausible action plan that adheres to broad norms as may be required and may be at times need to be adapted depending on situations and circumstances.

Poverty Alleviation and Environment Protection:

In our attempts to attack poverty and to ensure livelihood options for the rural poor in the fringe villages of our national parks or biodiversity hotspots the top most priority is the protection of the environment, forests and other biological resources. In these days of ever increasing global and local awareness drives in the face of depleting bio resources the following poverty ameliorating measures could be of serious implications in our endeavour to manage or restore the eco system while empowering the poor and vulnerable who depend on the bio resources for their survival.

- **A well defined and meticulously structured strategy to create necessary basic social and economic overheads** viz. education and healthcare facilities, potable drinking water supply, uninterrupted power supply, road connectivity and the like involving all identified stakeholders in the system. In the process the **best practices already evolved and successfully tried** elsewhere should be replicated.
- **Mapping of all available natural resources backed by a database of eco friendly and economically viable traditional practices by the locals.** This is important because sustainable development is the direct outcome of locally available natural resources based livelihood options.
- **A practicable framework to introduce and carry forward the innovative measures to achieve sustainable development in line with the SDGs** as enunciated by the UN and adopted by the Governments at the centre and the state.

In our country since time immemorial communities in certain parts have been adopting **good practices towards conservation of forests and wildlife**, e.g. **Sacred Groves** idea (woods of Gods & Goddesses) making people preserve virgin forests in pristine forms, **worshipping of certain trees** as abodes of Gods by communities and tribals (Mundas and Santhals in Chota Nagpur region worship Mahua and Kadamba trees, in Assam our tea tribes community celebrate 'Karam' puja worshipping the Karam Gos (Kadamba), in Bihar and Orissa, practices of worshipping 'Tamarind' and 'Mango' trees are prevalent among some tribals. Hindus in most parts of the country consider the 'Pipal' and 'Banyana' trees as sacred linking God Shiva to these trees and even such trees are made places of worship.

Similarly, in the vicinity of our temples and shrines we can notice large troops of langurs, macaques, goats and birds (mostly pigeons and doves) attracting attention and care of the devotees spontaneously. Not only Hindus but others also have their own nature care traditions. We assign divine qualities to certain gifts of nature like interestingly shaped rock forms, hot/warm mineral springs or streams, mountain peaks, plants with medicinal values etc. Hindus consider cow as the holiest of all animals. In Rajasthan, herds of Chinkara (Black

Bucks), Peacocks and Nilgais have become integral part of society and enjoy protection of villagers. Sights of fearlessly roaming deers alongside the roads in Bandipur and Modumalai national parks in south India (Karnataka and Tamilnadu) are a joy to watch and remind us about nurturing a dream of a similar experience in our back grounds too.

Community and nature are interlinked and to have a desirable impact on socio economic conditions, our thought process, interests and plan of action should converge on devising a strategy as a bulwark in achieving the sustainable development goals in the interest of a healthy environment for all of us to live in. It is amply stated in the following words **extracted from 'Natural Heritage of Assam' by Forest Department, Government of Assam 2011-12, pp. 11, 12, 19).**

In intellectual exercises on rural economic developments, least attention is given on the strength of the natural resources as the foundation of the local economy and livelihood. Hence, the imbalance in economic development continues, disparity widens between the weak and the rich and the livelihood and health security remains an elusive proposition.

Value of Wildlife to get best ecosystem services:

Keeping the gravity of maintenance of the healthy and non-perturbed natural ecosystem in mind, the issue which continues to surface in various thought processes is the need of in-situ wildlife conservation. The whole exercise of conservation of wildlife stems from the fact that wildlife was viewed as the subordinates of the interpretation of the administrators and immediate economic benefit. Hence, putting wild animals in the Zoo and revenue generation through visitor remained for a long time the outer limit of thought.

The role of wildlife in maintaining the ecosystem services were not being focused in the truest sense of the term, which could be understandable to the general people.

Wild animals in their habitat are the dynamic energy processing machines which convert untapped energy in the grasslands and woodlands in the form of photosynthetic products into animal protein and minerals. One very interesting aspect of the energy intake by wild animals in nature from smallest of insects to elephants is their capability to utilize the produce of nature available in all forms. **In the life cycle of animals, insects are often found to be synchronized with the specific requirement available in nature and immediate vicinity, in its own life cycle.** No administration could tone to such an exercise with such precisions in synchronization. Apart from energy conversion, seed dispersal, support in the formation of the smaller ecosystems, creating path in deep forest for other species are also crucial for the efficient ecosystem functions. With millions of species in the nature and multiplied by the complexities due to life cycle of all species, an unimaginable balance in the ecosystem stages has been achieved. No species is worthless in terms of maintaining ecosystem functions and hence ecosystem services.

One specific example of elephants and its role can pinpoint the role of wildlife in natural ecosystems. Elephants are large energy processing machines and live in herds of different numbers. They take huge quantity of food from different plant sources, but they have only 45-50 % of digestion capacity, and they defecate 18 to 20 times a day with huge quantity of half digested materials which forms a different type of ecosystem by itself. On that, a number of insects complete their life cycle and also those insects are being eaten by birds. It serves different ecological roles in the forest while in migration, during foraging, during defecation and while expressing a number of species specific behaviours.

Then Queen Termite is possibly a more ecological valued species than even the Tiger. The termite colony supplies protein to a large number of mammals and birds- where other sources of proteins are not easily available. And to maintain the protein supply uninterrupted, one need not have to spend huge amounts of money.

This analysis clearly defines the dos and donots that we have to respect and follow in practice to inculcate in ourselves the composure and tolerance towards nature and wildlife to protect our own interests. To manage and sustain a biodiversity that encompasses human alongside all living organisms forming a complex network of ecological system in which we are a part and dependent on the system for our own survival. All types of flowering and non flowering plants and grass, trees scrubs and shrubs collectively called flora and all life forms – from microbes, bacteria to large animals represent fauna contribute to preserve the ecosystems through flow of energy and nutrient cycles. All species thereby play their respective roles in maintaining ecosystems. Actions of human or any other factors artificial or natural affecting the biodiversity adversely could disturb the services of the ecosystem.

Thus a rich and vibrant biodiversity is essential to make sure the following*:

- Provision of food, fuel and fibre
- Provision of shelter and building materials
- Purification of air and water
- Detoxification and decomposition of wastes
- Stabilization and moderation of the Earth's climate
- Moderation of floods, droughts, temperature extremes and the forces of wind
- Generation of renewal of soil fertility, including many crops
- Control of pests and diseases
- Maintenance of genetic resources as key inputs to crop varieties and livestock breeds, medicines, and other products
- Cultural and aesthetic benefits
- Ability to adapt to change

**<https://www.cbd.int/2010/biodiversity/>*

It is a case of depleting bio resources and the resultant hardening of all natural options leading to a subsistence living, if not a decent living. We have to find a way out enabling the teeming masses a gasp and the required impetus to surge ahead with the challenges of keeping the ecological base intact in the path of development.

To understand the challenges faced by the poor in a society confronted by the ever increasing awareness campaigns for conservation needs and under constant pressure to calibrate their livelihood resources and means of subsistence in line with the decisions made by groups or guardians of nature which often go against the interests of the people who actually matter in our conservation ethics.

We tried to make a very simple and a layman's insight into the lives of the people who reside in the fringe villages of KNP based on our field experiences. Our findings are recorded in the subsequent chapters categorized on the subject contents. Our research team consisted of young students/professionals from diverse fields and occupations who helped and contributed tremendously in working out the strategy report.

What I could understand is that people in the villages are relatively happy with what they already have and all they have received from nature in abundance. Nature is generous in offering all necessary provisions one could expect for a healthy living away from all the commotions of a chaotic life characterized by unhygienic living conditions amidst pollutions of all sorts. Lush green pastures, expanses of boundless vegetations of endless promises dotted with fresh water bodies teeming with aqua lives of diverse forms and nature – wildlife catching the imagination of a born connoisseur looking for perfection in a life divine. But in attempting to draw an image of this magnude, one stumbles at the paradoxes of the unkind grudges nature is harbouring against the poor souls. Recurrent floods, erosion and the loss of cattle and other assets as add on have forced the already trampled ones on the defensive who might cling to the proverbial twister for change of fortunes.

It is not that all the villagers in the surrounding areas have identical problems or issues to share with us but the majority of the villegers who settled in the low lying areas in the fringe (Sildubi, Kohora 2, Haldhibari, mohpora, Doomjan, lukhurakhonia, Beloguri, Bamungaon, Agoatoli) have the same story to narrate. Almost every year the vagaries of floods with the onset of monsoon having the untold destructive sequence of events leading to loss of valuables, cattle lives have arrested their growth story and confined them to the circle of povety not for demand and supply phenomenon. This circle is the cause of nature's fury with all its vices gripping the poorer of the poors who find themselves in a precarious position. Those marginal farmers suffer the most and their economic conditions remain unchanged over the years. Those who are better off (economically and socially in terms of land holdings and through other sources of earnings) can thrive on successful harvest that follow in the wake of after flood siltations making their farm lands fertile and capable of enhanced yieldings. This is the silver lining associated with recurring floods in the low lying areas of KNP on the north of the national highway. Among other positives that we can easily pick is the availbilty of fresh water fishes that are washed into the water bodies –large and small by the receding floods. Most of these marginal famers take to fish selling occupation as part timers for a few months till next farming season arrives at the end of the winter. During the tourists season KNP with all its adjoining areas become a hub of tourism activities bringing opportunities to one and all to make fast bucks in varied income generating activities. These activities may be broadly classified in the following categories:

- In the hospitality sector: (i) cheap lodging facilities/guest houses in addition to the hotels and resort in organized sector, (ii) creation of additional employment opportunities in hotels and resorts during tourist season. There are large number of lodges/guest houses owned and managd by the local hoseholds along the highway which are mostly extension of their residences/homestead offering job opportunities for the poor and needy during the peak season.

Direct involvement in hospotality sector like casual and part time employment in the tourist resorts/hotels, guest houses, restaurents, dhabas/eateries and such other establishments temporarily as skilled, semi skilled or even as unskilled labours. The skilled category of workers/staff are those who possess the professional qualifications, experiences or trainings as managers, chefs, bar tenders, waiters, gym trainiers,

beauticians and spa guides, experts in identifying birds or may be plants and herbs etc. Demand for these skilled category of workers have increased over the years in view of the new star category resorts and hotels coming up of late.

- In the transport sector: Jeep safaris and hired taxi services constitute an integral part of tourism during the peak season from November to April. There are more than 200 private vehicles meant for safaris (mostly Maruti Gypsies) registered under the Jeep Safari associations operating in the KNP area. This seasonal business activity directly or indirectly employs more than 300 locals as drivers, part time guides, mechanics and in other auxiliary services. In addition, there are large number of taxis owned and operated by the locals or by the resort/hotel owners for hiring purposes. Jeep safaris fetch handsome earnings to the operators who normally charge @Rs.2,000.00 to Rs.2,800.00 per trip inside the park and the frequency of such trips might be 2/3 per day per vehicle on hectic days during season.

For servicing and maintenance of these vehicles the KNP area witnessed emergence of a number of garages and tyre repairing points at regular intervals on the entire stretch from burhapahar to bokakhat. All these servicing centres/ garages are owned and run by the locals. The running of the NH 37 all the way through the park also increased the frequency of the plying passenger vehicles, buses, heavily loaded trucks transporting goods and industrial equipments etc. creating undesirable sound and air pollutions in the area. The recent intervention by the **National Green Tribunal (NGT)** to suspend all polluting activities could prove to be a **saving grace** in the days to come.

- Increased demand in poultry products, fish, mutton, porks and such other perishable items of consumption including vegetables, rice etc supplied by the locals or marketed by the locals to the resorts/hotels, lodges, guest houses, dhabas and restaurants.
- Increased demand for ethnic or conventional food in eateries for tourists and others making the business brisk with high returns. I have come across a highly motivated and zealous women entrepreneur who created her own little space taking cognizance of the needs of tourists who might be looking not for a sumptuous dinner or lunch but an ethnic touch to the meal and a souvenir to collect for his or her life time remembrance of her/his visit to this world heritage site.
- Increased marketing of locally made arts and handicrafts including handloom products resulting in mushrooming of these cottage industries in the area.

An encouraging sight in recent years has been the rapidly growing handicrafts and wood carving workshops and stalls on the road sides by the artists/craftsmen or the vendors offering their works of art, crafts for sell. These handiworks, crafts and carvings include replicas of wild animals, birds generally found in Assam and in Kaziranga National Park. These models are attractive souvenirs for purpose of gift and models varying in their sizes, qualities and intricate designs and artwork could easily find their places in our living rooms, lobbies and lounges of hotels, offices, airports and such other private and public places. The prices charged from foreigners are normally higher compared to the prices applicable for the same products for locals or Indians. These activities, are being practiced on a micro scale and the manner in which these artisans are increasing their activities over the last

couple of years clearly indicate the potential and prospect of this cottage industry. The target customers are not only the tourists visiting the park but also the travellers who happen to pass through the national highway on vacation, business or otherwise.

Local skilled weavers both tribals and non tribals create their colourful handloom products with value additions in ethnic touch and design which can easily attract the tourists and leisure vacationers alike. These tastefully designed, decorated and woven dress materials are displayed in boutiques and showrooms at Kohora and in some nearby resorts for the tourists and others. Some local enterprising women also put on display their varied products with stock to choose from at their residences. Products are reasonably priced and tourists love to collect a pair or two as beautiful reminders of their visit to this wonderful place or may be a gift for their loved ones back home.

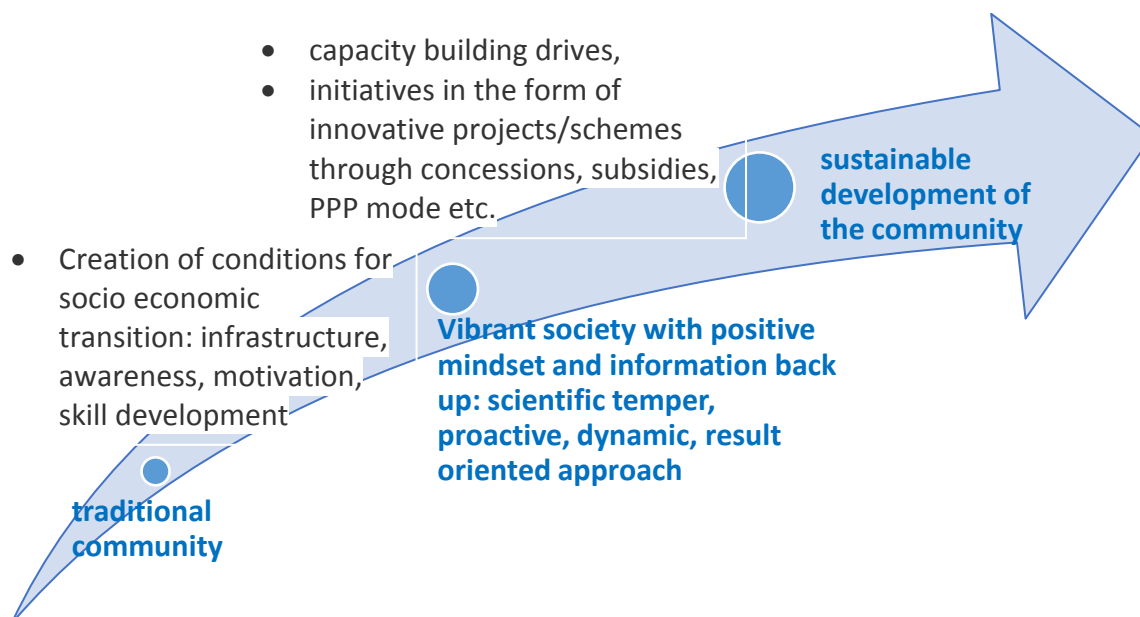
Showcasing of the local culture and traditional values as a tourists attraction have been receiving patronage from the management of the top category hospitality groups like Iora, Borgos, Wildgrass, Landmark Woods etc. As a result a few cultural troupes have come into being from among the local youth who perform like professionals acquainting the tourists with the traditional folk dances, and such other cultural and religious practices of rejoice and merry making. These cultural troupes perform programmes to entertain the tourists at the initiative of the management of the resorts and hotels and earn handsomely in return. These groups earn in the range of Rs. 5,000.00 to Rs.15,000.00 depending upon their skill, expertise and level of performances on offer. I personally interviewed a couple of such groups consisting of young boys and girls who came from families living nearby and were studying in schools and colleges. The total proceeds of the groups at the end of the season are divided among the members giving them the joy of earning, imbibe in the young minds the sense of professionalism. Money thus earned by some young students were utilised in meeting the college admission fees and other dues and even health related expenses relieving their parents of financial stress to some extent (as told).

Economics of KNP people is characterized by several factors influencing the role and behavioural attitudes of the communities in general. This emanates from the fact that those who shape their destiny by living on the mercy of nature and the resources of the park have developed a somewhat unorthodox approach to life. The sense of belonging and the confidence in the system might have dwindled in some sections of the society apparently for deprivation and conflict of interests. Contrary to this majority of the communities lead a life of comfort and wellness on account of their better economic and social status enjoyed compared to the ones living on the edge. Those who prosper under the cover of prevailing conditions unique to KNP environments only, have much to share with those who are not so fortunate for reasons not difficult to understand at all. Based on the lifestyle and the ability to buy comforts of life (may not be in a lavish way) the villagers may be categorized as poor, very poor and affluent. Interestingly the villagers who are poorest and live in identical living conditions inhabit the fringe areas in clusters and belong to socially backward communities. While dissecting the root causes of the differences leading to polarization of the communities in undesirable lines we keep wondering how these inequalities or more precisely the evil transition could be reversed to balance the socio-economic fabric of the society. It may be argued that the haves and havenots learnt

to live harmoniously over the years mutually benefitting each other. The farm lands are owned by the comparatively well to do communities and they share their resources with the poor who earn their share of income in the form of wages, labour charges in kind or in cash. In the low lying areas recurring floods create havoc and torment the rich and the poor alike albeit in different degrees. With the floods receding the KNP with all the villages in its surroundings spring back to normalcy and people tend to forget what they have lost and with renewed hopes and aspirations start investing in new dreams. Having said that we deny the basic idea of creating the foundation of a more vibrant society bereft of vices of inequality and disgruntlement in some sections of the society.

Some agriculture based livelihood practices or programmes need to be introduced to motivate these poor households on cluster basis to improve their economic conditions to help them gain some social prestige. These kinds of activities are required to be taken up considering the incidence of unemployment, underemployment and disguised unemployment in the locality. The livelihood options as may be visualised for these poor people could be cash crop plantations like bamboo, banana, sugarcane, mustard, horticulture, medicinal & aromatic in clusters to benefit from economies of large scale and thereby discouraging the disadvantages of fragmented farming practices. Income generating assets in the form of pigs, goats, poultry are to be distributed freely or at a highly subsidized rates at state initiatives and by encouraging the skilled women weavers to take up weaving as a part time occupation with a commercial mindset.

For successful implementation of the above mentioned livelihood options with traditional farming practices side by side, the focus should be on proper grooming of the poor farmers and the unemployed youth in understanding the importance of self employment needs, self esteem, self belief, commitment and will power to carry forward the task undertaken. The subsidy or free assistance on part of the government should not create a sense of giving up or contentment in the minds of the young entrepreneurs thereby dampening their spirit and challenging attitude. They must develop an approach of ferocious competition from within and outside. Government should step in with its promotional role in creating the basic infrastructures necessary for development instead of resorting to populist measures which actually harm the very root of enterprise. This is applicable for the entire economy and the desired changes are a certainty when the basic infrastructure or the platform necessary for take off become visible. The NGOs and other agencies involved in rural empowerment programmes should come forward in creating awareness and orientation required.



As shown in the above diagram the sustainable development for the community could be achieved following a strategy of socio economic infrastructure build up supplemented with state initiatives and incentives. The incentives should be introduced only when a prudent community is readied to take up the challenges with adequate information back up. Information is important for plausible and practicable decisions in the sphere of economic actions. The role of NGOs/social activists, universities, colleges, state agencies and the trained panchayat officials is crucial in creating awareness, possibilities and potentials in the back drop of prevailing socio economic environment. Role of international organizations should be proactive and their task should be cut out and direct supervision is a must for results to be visible. It is not understood what ails the present mechanism in bringing about the changes much desired inspite of the fact that little is done in meeting the challenges from the view point of community empowerment. A mission mode approach could solve the issues to a considerable extent. Use of GIS and RS in monitoring activities and the findings should not be confined and shared with all the stake holders.

Creation of adequate socio economic overheads is a stimulus to sustainable growth. Inclusive development which formed the basis of our development strategy during eleventh five year plan period, could not achieve the targets we set as per available statistics. Strong socio economic overheads create the basis of a speedy economic progress. In the absence of all weather road connectivity in interior and remote areas, uninterrupted power supply conditions, adequate provision for potable drinking water in remote villages and access to affordable primary education and healthcare facilities to the poor it is not possible to enable and empower the rural poor to escape poverty. Dr. Kalam, had a vision for India. He nurtured a dream and coined the Providing Urban Amenities in Rural Areas (PURA) model for development in the real sense of the term for rural India. Interestingly, the communication network (mobile phones and internet connectivity) have made successful entry into the lives of our rural populace, practically a revolution in the country. But this huge achievement is not supplemented by other means of development

as already mentioned. If we can make provision for adequate all weather road network, ensure quality education and healthcare services, hygienic living conditions and uninterrupted power supply in rural areas, government do not have to take recourse to subsidy schemes and concessional measures as a means of support to empower the rural poor. Entrepreneurship is bound to flourish in the presence of development infrastructure.

We have discussed and analysed the issues and prospects in separate chapters dedicated to numerous aspects influencing the lives of the people living in the Kaziranga National Park (KNP) and its vicinity. During my field investigation a group of talented youngsters chosen from diverse disciplines helped and supported me in arriving at deductions drawn on the basis of empirical evidences and findings. Some statistical data collected from authentic sources also helped me in generating this report.

Strategy Adopted	Status
Health camps and veterinary/vaccine camps in selected areas were initiated in 2010 with the help of state health and veterinary departments with the dual objective of a ground assessment of needs and socio-economic transition phase.	Completed
Creation of a database of the area on GIS and RS platform. Resource/asset mapping for study, research and planning purpose. Atlas of the households of the KNP and adjoining areas.	study in progress
Soil mapping for classification of soil by collection of adequate samples for study and analysis: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Directorate of agriculture (Soil Survey & Testing) Assam b) NEIST for augmentation of agriculture by proper study of micro flora distribution and population. c) NBSSLUP for mineralogical classification of soil. 	To be recommendation in the final report
Awareness programs/PRAs/social mobilization to educate on conservation needs with the aim to make people aware of the needs of technology and scientific knowhow in increasing productivity, and learning the biodiversity management techniques.	25 rounds completed.
Circulation of publicity materials i.e. leaflets, banners and hand outs to bring about awareness among the people.	Circulation of materials from time to time.
Welfare measures and traditional and non-traditional economic activities compatible with nature in order to intervene the core issues identified with socio economic life of rural poor in the area to attack poverty in a systematic/methodical approach.	In progress
Linking of government packages/schemes to the economic activities through involvement of all local gaon panchayats and other agencies of rural development to get involved in selection of beneficiaries and in organizing training programs.	Process to continue with the help of SIRD and other NGOs with Government support

Socio Economic Activity
To make the people of Kaziranga National Park area understand needs of biodiversity conservation, to make them responsible citizens, to inculcate confidence in the system of governance. In order to win their trust and goodwill some welfare measures/activities have been taken up based on requirements and traditional values/practices.
For economic empowerment of poor women in the area distribution of income generating livestock assets in the form of poultry/duckery, goats and pigs to encourage back yard farming practices in selected areas by forming self help groups. In addition, weavers groups are created to boost traditional handloom skills in modern lines as a source of livelihood to augment the family income. SIRD Assam is associated in training of beneficiaries and by providing the kind support under the Women Empowerment programme.
Assistance to small, marginal or subsistence farmers by providing power tillers, pump-sets etc for mechanization in farming practices. This is done by forming farmers groups through subsidized loan facilities.
To assist unemployed educated youth, making provision of subsidized loan facilities to set up horticulture firms, fisheries, vermicompost units, poultry firms, and such other agriculture and allied activities in groups or in individual capacity.
Skill development measures through trainings in cutting & tailoring, bed side assistance, beautician courses for girls and skill development training as motor mechanic, electrician, welder, and in ac/refrigerator and mobile repairing etc for boys. While State Institute of Rural Development (SIRD) Assam is involved in training the youth and women in activities mentioned above and facilitating subsidized bank loans for them, the Don Bosco Institute (DBI) is involved in job linked capacity building measures under Employment Generation Mission (EGM) of Assam Government
To develop banking habit and resultant access to organized sector for financing, opening of bank accounts in groups/individual or joint and understanding of transaction procedures. SHGs, JLGs and all individuals whether literate or semi literate need to be acquainted with banking habits.
Computer literacy among educated unemployed by creating learning centres in schools, clubs and community centres.
Setting up of a series of village/community libraries for children/adults of all age group to develop the interest of reading books.
Students of schools and colleges to be trained and involved in conservation activities, who eventually become volunteers in awareness camps and such other programmes in the area.

A resource cum research centre in central Kaziranga area to cater to various needs like – capacity building in different bio friendly livelihood options with demonstration facilities, library/ e-library for research on conservation needs and innovative socio economic activities, conference/video conference facility, showcasing of local culture, tradition and heritage, accommodation facility for research scholars, botanical garden and animal healthcare facility.

Stakeholders Analysis:

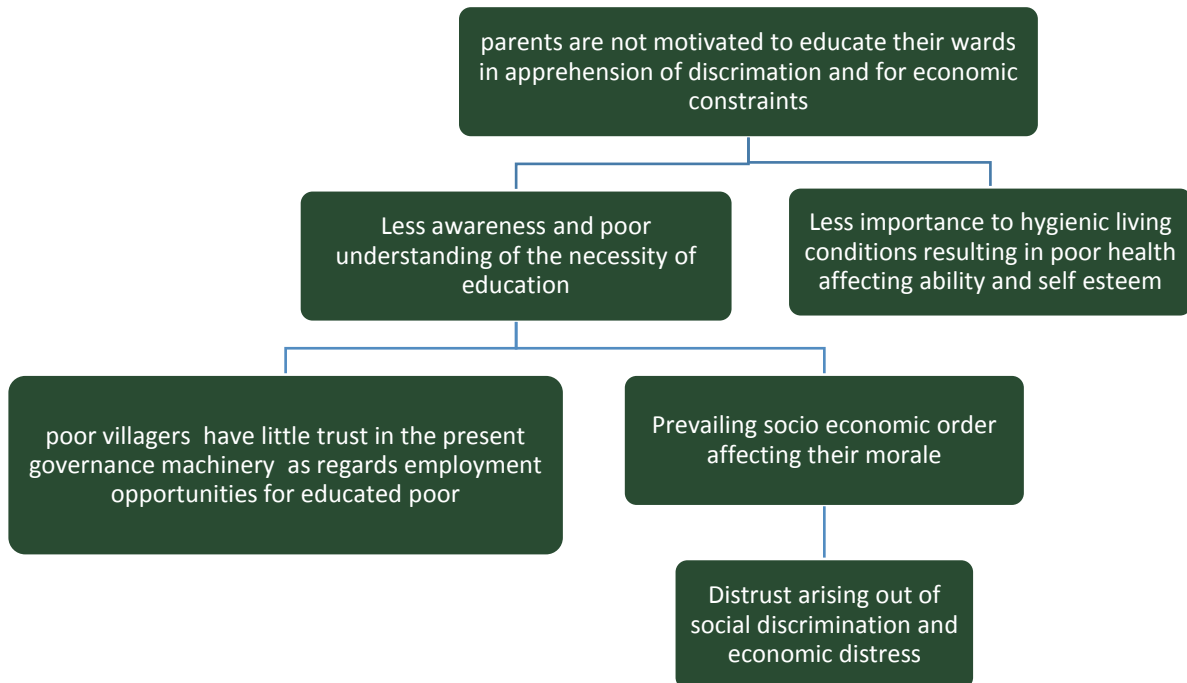
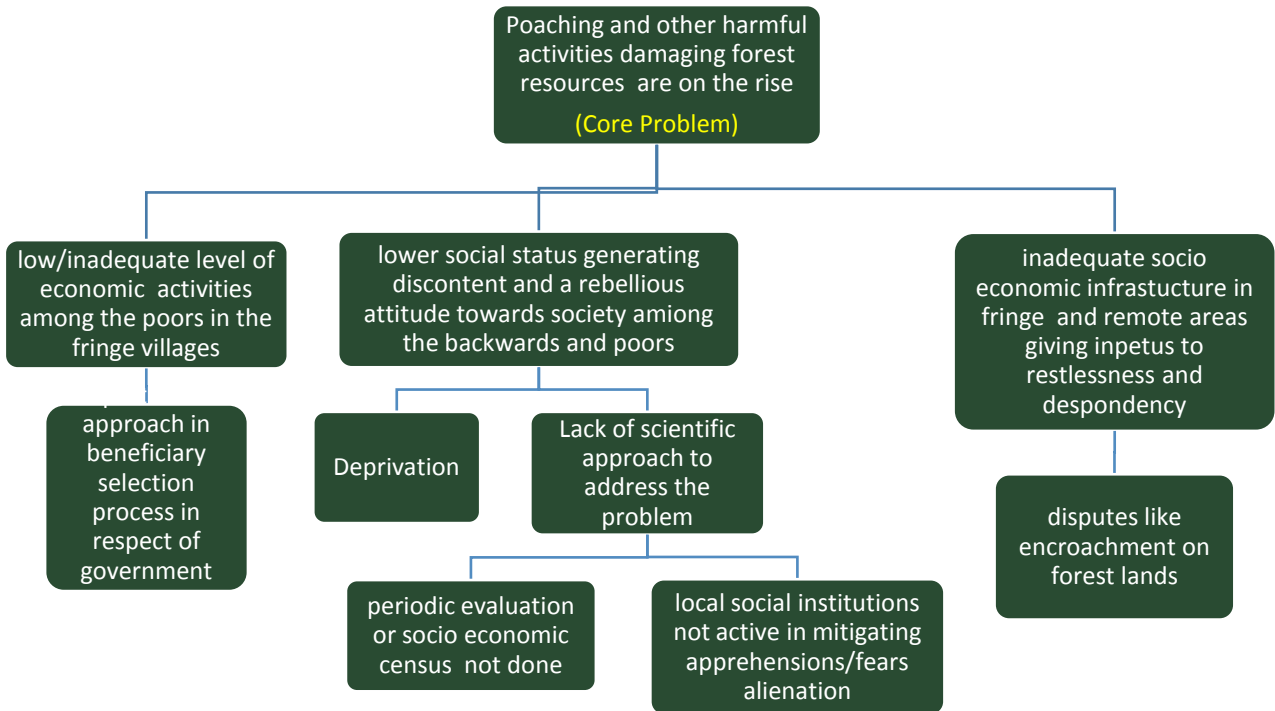
Categories				
Beneficiaries	Potential opponents	Implementing agencies	Decision Makers	Funding Agencies
Villagers living in the entire KNP area in general and those living in the fringe villages in particular	Anti socials (poachers, smugglers, owners of businesses like illegal quarrying of natural resources, and those who are not interested in development of the area and its people for vested interest. They are against increase in awareness level, education of education. Mostly work for status quo of the social and economic problems.	Government both at the Centre and at the State level, Panchayats, Banking institutions in the organized sector, NGOs	Assam Government, Planning & Development Department , State Institute of Rural Development	Government (Planning & Development Department)
Tourism activities related suppliers groups e.g. dealers of FMCG, transport operators, skilled and semi skilled labour etc			Local Village Panchayats, Citizens of KNP area	Potential entrepreneurs
Local entrepreneurs/small business community			Banking organizations	SBI, UBI, AGVB etc operating in the area
Tourists and tourism sector both-public and private				

Detailed Analysis:

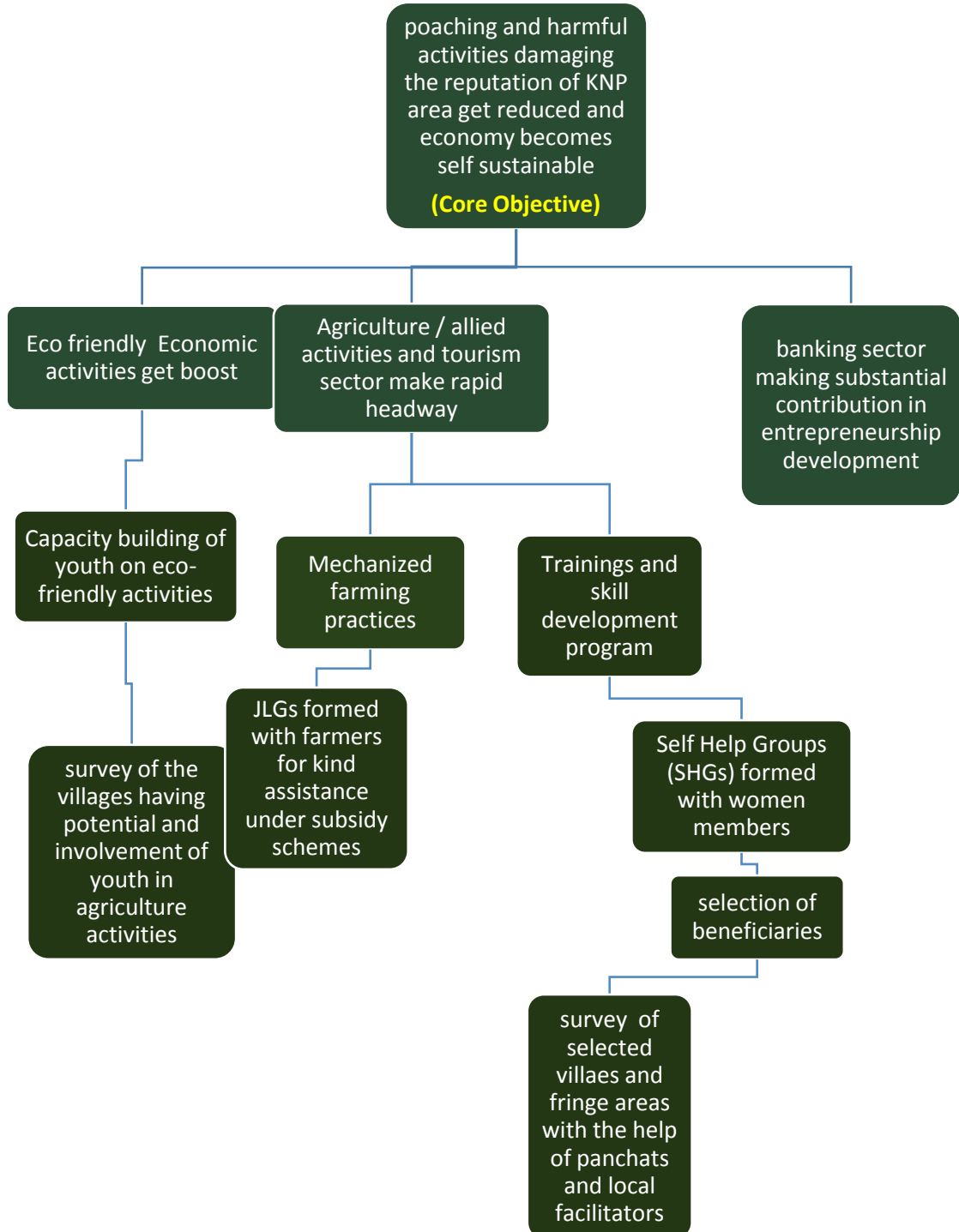
Community Empowerment: socio economic transition				
Basic Information	Problems/weaknesses		Strength/Potentials	Actions to take
Agriculture and allied activities coupled with tourism is a vital source of empowerment	Floods inundating low lying areas of the villages during rainy seasons affecting a large populace mostly economically backward	Single cropping practices in certain areas, poor farmers do not have access to mechanized farming practices, less dependence on HYVs and fertilizers etc by poor and marginal farmers.	Agriculture and tourism being the mainstay of the KNP area, a major boost in these sectors make their living conditions improve further.	Skill Development and introduction of job linked training modules by the state (Employment Generation Mission –EMG, SIRD, NIRD with the help of reliable NGOs)
		Seasonal nature of tourism		
Funding sources: Government, PublicPrivate Sector Banking, Private investments, Community investments		Middle/lower level employees in the tourism sector are not being trained. In agriculture and allied activities proper skill development measures have not been introduced	Residents of 'KNP' area	Awareness drives by NGOs/Development agencies, banking and other stakeholders. Tea garden management in the area need to be more actively involved in socio economic development.
Organisational Structure:	Absence of any organized or methodical approach in dealing with common issues	Poor maintenance facility of assets created	Innovative biofriendly avenues of employment sources	Resource centres to be set up for the training of potential entrepreneurs in the area.
More than 30% of the inhabitants of KNP area are directly or indirectly linked with tourism industry	Inadequate skill development mechanism to meet the ever increasing demand on a professional lines		It can be a model for areas having identical issues.	Social mobilization and publicity of actions taken up in the area

People of Kaziranga National Park Area: The Beneficiaries				
Basic Information	Problems/weaknesses		Strength/Potentials	Actions to take
People in wide variety of social hierarchy on the economy of KNP	Common people of KNP area are not comfortable with uncertainty of the nature of economy based on Agriculture & allied activities and seasonal nature of tourism.	Educated Youth reluctant to take up agriculture and allied activities and prefer jobs like	It could have strong influence over the government, tea plantation groups as well as the organized tourist resort owners, if the local inhabitants unite for a common cause.	People of the KNP area can form an organization and use it in order to share possible improvement ideas with the park authorities, other government agencies and tourist resort owners.
Most people depend on agriculture related activities and partly tourism as source of livelihood.	Being a world heritage site and protected eco system, economic activities not friendly to the ecology can be taken up.			The NGOs involved to undertake massive awareness programs, health camps, veterinary vaccination camps to make people aware of government intentions
	Perennial flooding of low lying areas during rainy season used for farming and living is a deterrent in the path of economic recovery.			Government in general and park authorities in particular can think of suitable employment programme for the local youth

Problem Analysis: (from socio economic) view point:



Objective Analysis:(Direct Means)



Objectives Analysis: Direct Ends



Project Selection:

The project study required a time lag of 36 months and subsequent follow up-

Component	Socio economic condition Improvement Approach	Facility Improvement Approach	Beneficiary oriented Approach
Target Group	People living in the KNP area in general and the poor in particular	Available infrastructure and services that contribute to development: Government Services, Banking Services, Private Services	Beneficiaries selected under the different programs introduced
Related Agencies	NGO conducting the study and as facilitating agency in implementation of development programs, SIRD, concerned government departments, local panchayats, village level workers, banking sector,	NGO conducting the study and as facilitating agency in implementation of development programs, SIRD, concerned government departments, local panchayats, village level workers, banking sector,	NGO conducting the study and as facilitating agency in implementation of development programs, SIRD, concerned government departments, local panchayats, village level workers, banking sector,
Strategies to be adopted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete database of population, • Resources mapping • Awareness drives/PRAs • Cluster development initiative for economic activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete database of population, • Resources mapping • Awareness drives/PRAs • Cluster development initiative for economic activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete database of population, • Resources mapping • Awareness drives/PRAs • Cluster development initiative for economic activities
Policy priorities	Government emphasizes friendly agriculture related activities in its policy(for this area)	Government emphasizes friendly agriculture related activities in its policy(for this area)	Government emphasizes friendly agriculture related activities in its policy(for this area)
Possible impact	Positive (boost in income generation and entrepreneurship development) impact	Positive (boost in income generation and entrepreneurship development) impact	Positive (boost in income generation and entrepreneurship development) impact
Feasibility	FEASIBLE		
Sustainability	No issues in carrying out agriculture & allied and tourism activities for sustainable development		

PDM (Project Design Matrix):

Project Name: Landscaping through Community Participation in eco friendly activities

Target Area: National Park (KNP) area

Duration: April, 2010 to March, 2017

Target Group : People living in the KNP area

Narrative Summary	Objectively Verifiable Indicators	Means of Verification	Important Assumptions
<p>Overall Goal: Reduction in harmful activities in the park area with a boost in socio economic condition of poor in KNP area.</p>	<p>Survey and statistical reports conducted to assess the status by Forest and other agencies.</p>	<p>Evaluation Study/Investigation reports of the different stakeholders/government departments and 3rd party evaluation as well</p>	
<p>Project Purpose: Vibrant economy and decent living condition for the poor in the area</p>	<p>Household survey results indicating changes in income level as results of increase in employment avenues and in income generating assets</p>	<p>Incidence of crime or poaching in the KNP area reported and registered in Police Stations/outposts</p>	<p>No drastic untoward incidents with far reaching consequences to affect adversely the life and property of people and wildlife in the area</p>
<p>Outputs:</p>			
<p>People become aware of conservation needs and continuously thrive to attain the desired level of conservation standards</p>	<p>70% of the crime/poaching activities fall as a result of locals not cooperating with the smugglers /antisocials from outside</p>	<p>Project survey and periodic evaluation reports</p>	<p>As a result of increase in economic activities the social disparity of the poor and not so poor narrows down.</p>
<p>Initiatives to increase the tourism season through development of nature tourism/eco tourism. Development of areas as tourist attraction on the southern part of the highway normally not affected by floods</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More and more eco friendly agriculture and allied activities come up. • Tourism related activities get boost with increase in no. of tourists and even during the off seasons 		
<p>Entrepreneurship skill improved/More and more skill development trainings</p>	<p>60% of youth are trained in special skills in the field of tourism, eco friendly economic activities.</p>		
<p>Banking sector enthusiastic to finance more schemes based on local resources</p>	<p>30% rise in employment opportunities in tourism and agriculture related activities</p>		

An analysis of population pattern with reference to literacy and occupation in KNP area under study based on Census 2011 Data

Kaziranga National Park area and its inhabitants:

The stretch of the AH 1 (erstwhile NH 37) running through KNP from Burhapahar in Nagaon District to Bokakhat in Golaghat district can be divided into six clusters of villages under 6 GPs viz. Moridhanshri, Pub Kaziranga, Uttar Pub Kaziranga, Madhya Kaziranga, Paschim Kaziranga (Golaghat District) and Kuthori (Nagaon District). In our study we are taking into consideration the park areas lying to the south of river Brahmaputra which constitute the basic core zone. *However, the villages under Kuthori GP is yet to be covered under the assistance programme*

The number of total villages under the above mentioned GPs are:

- Moridhanshri GP : 09
- Pub Kaziranga GP : 06
- Uttar Pub Kaziranga GP : 05
- Madhya Kaziranga GP : 09
- Paschim Kaziranga GP : 09
- Kuthori GP : 12

Our interpretation of Census Data revealed that area coverage of some census villages differed from revenue villages as may be found in Gaon Panchayat records.

Interesting findings of the data analysis are-

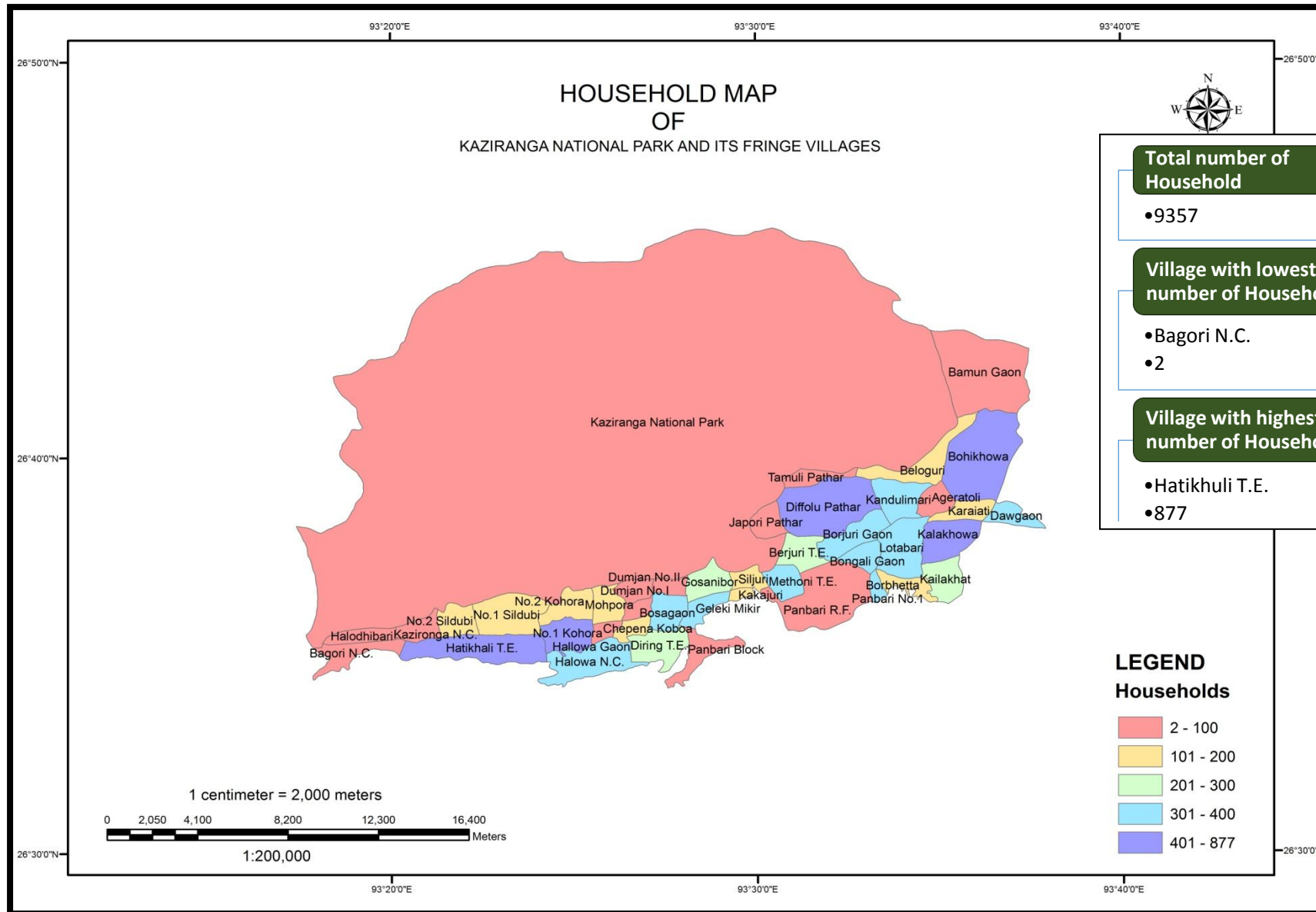
- Literacy and employment are not directly related.
- Social backwardness is not a determining factor in employment

Employment opportunities are mostly in agriculture and tourism related activities scantily requiring skill of high quality institutional training, but performance oriented like manual jobs in hotels, resorts, dhabas and in traditional farming, share cropping practices and related works. However, some traditionally skilled wood carvers and artisans are also having a comfortable livelihood. *(tables and graphics in the following pages).*

Village	Population	Literate Population	% of Literacy	Working Population	% of working population
Agoratoli	156	88	56.41	85	54.49
Bacha Gaon	1401	1023	73.02	499	35.62
Bagori N.C.	9	8	88.89	4	44.44
Bahikhowa	3140	1458	46.43	1660	52.87
Bamun Gaon	319	87	27.27	148	46.39
Beloguri	956	409	42.78	516	53.97
Bongali Gaon	1425	877	61.54	571	40.07
Borbheta Gaon	926	483	52.16	399	43.09
Borjuri Gaon	1463	655	44.77	611	41.76
Borjuri T.E.	1201	654	54.45	540	44.96

Village	Population	Literate Population	% of Literacy	Working Population	% of working population
Chepena-Kubua	647	472	72.95	290	44.82
Da-Gaon	1720	1269	73.78	640	37.21
Diffloo Pathar	3010	1865	61.96	1295	43.02
Diring T.E.	1155	510	44.16	550	47.62
Domjan No.1	341	181	53.08	175	51.32
Domjan No.2	145	74	51.03	57	39.31
Geleki Mikir	1614	887	54.96	628	38.91
Goshanibar	1069	638	59.68	494	46.21
Halidhibari	413	315	76.27	158	38.26
Halowa	47	36	76.60	17	36.17
Halowa N.C.	1308	936	71.56	608	46.48
Hatikhuli T.E.	4366	1667	38.18	1882	43.11
Japari Pathar	297	234	78.79	149	50.17
Kakajuri	706	335	47.45	315	44.62
Kalakhowa	2723	1726	63.39	965	35.44
Kandhulimari	1602	938	58.55	724	45.19
Karaiati	526	381	72.43	144	27.38
Kaziranga N.C.	197	43	21.83	87	44.16
Kaziranga National Park	161	147	91.30	159	98.76
Koilakhat	1141	684	59.95	369	32.34
Latabari	1753	820	46.78	888	50.66
Lukhura-Khonia	384	318	82.81	139	36.20
Methoni T.E.	1749	933	53.34	898	51.34
Mohpara	529	303	57.28	176	33.27
No.1 Kohora	1899	1453	76.51	791	41.65
No.1 Sildubi	594	416	70.03	297	50.00
No.2 Kohora	672	403	59.97	160	23.81
No.2 Sildubi	624	253	40.54	158	25.32
Panbari Block	114	62	54.39	57	50.00
Panbari N.C.	1935	1237	63.93	638	32.97
Panbari R.F.	25	15	60.00	11	44.00
Siljuri	584	257	44.01	294	50.34
Tamuli Pathar	527	379	71.92	211	40.04
Total	45573	25929	59.47	19457	43.67

*Census 2011



Total number of Household

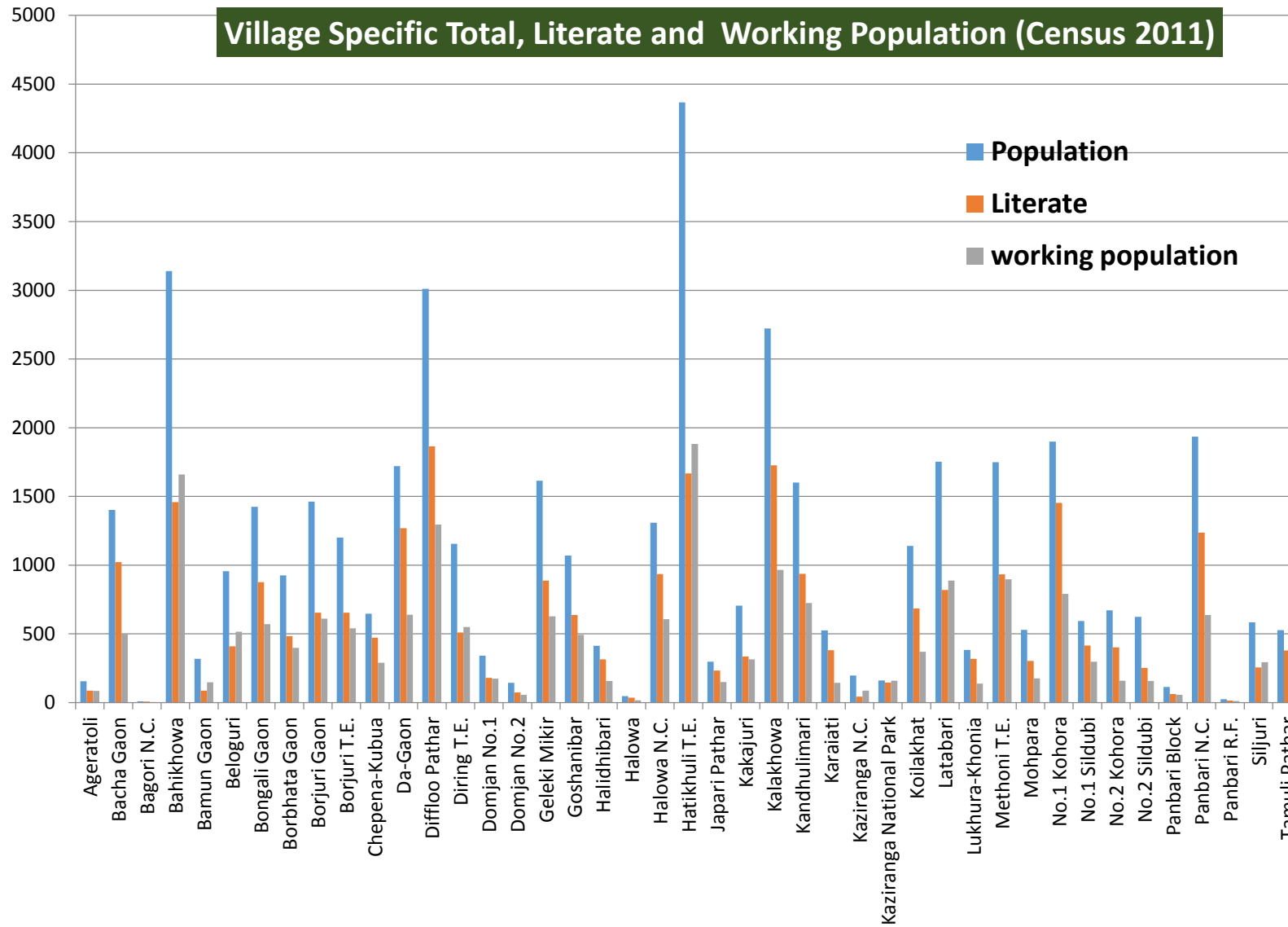
- 9357

Village with lowest number of Household

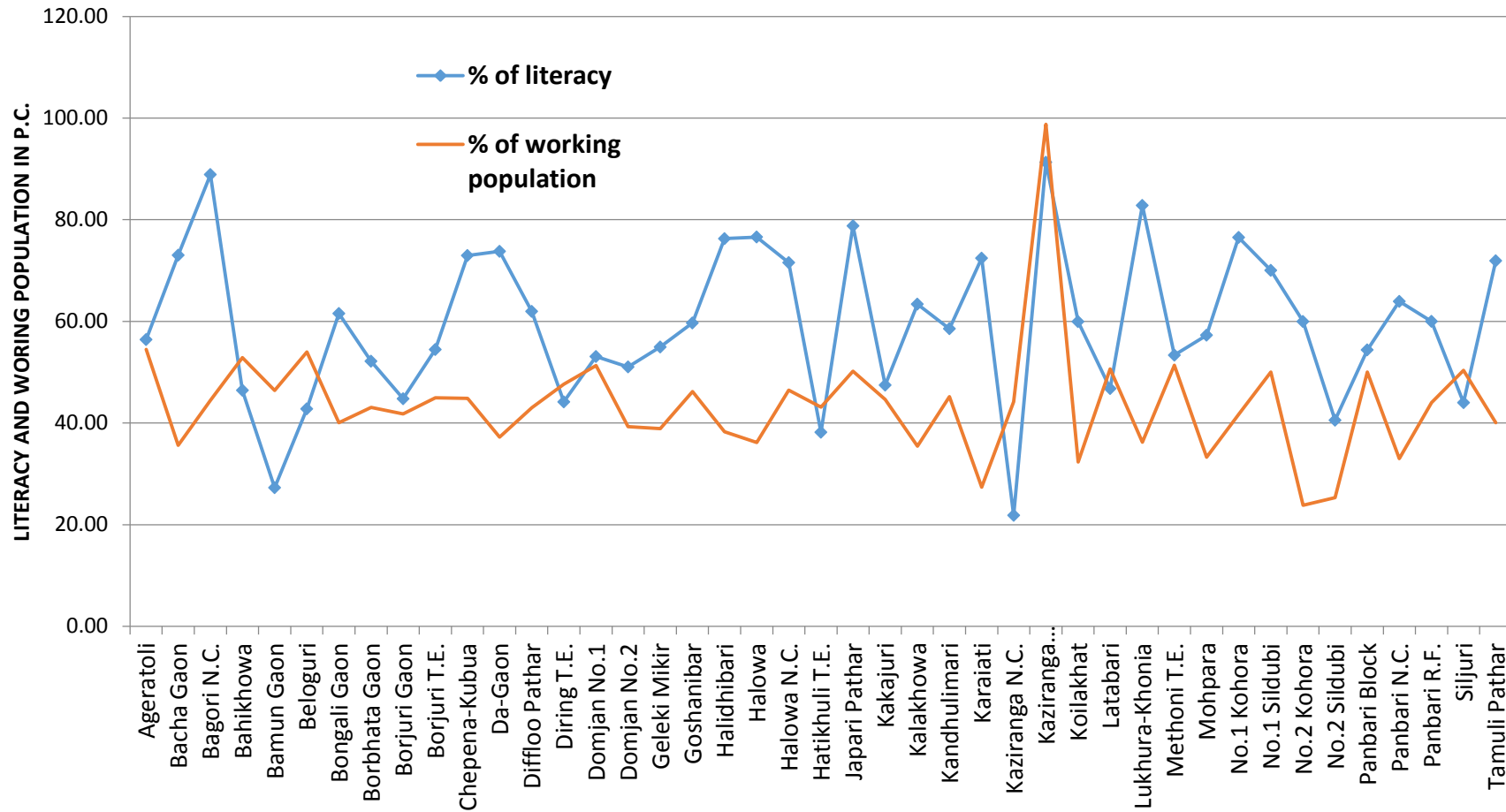
- Bagori N.C.
- 2

Village with highest number of Household

- Hatikhuli T.E.
- 877



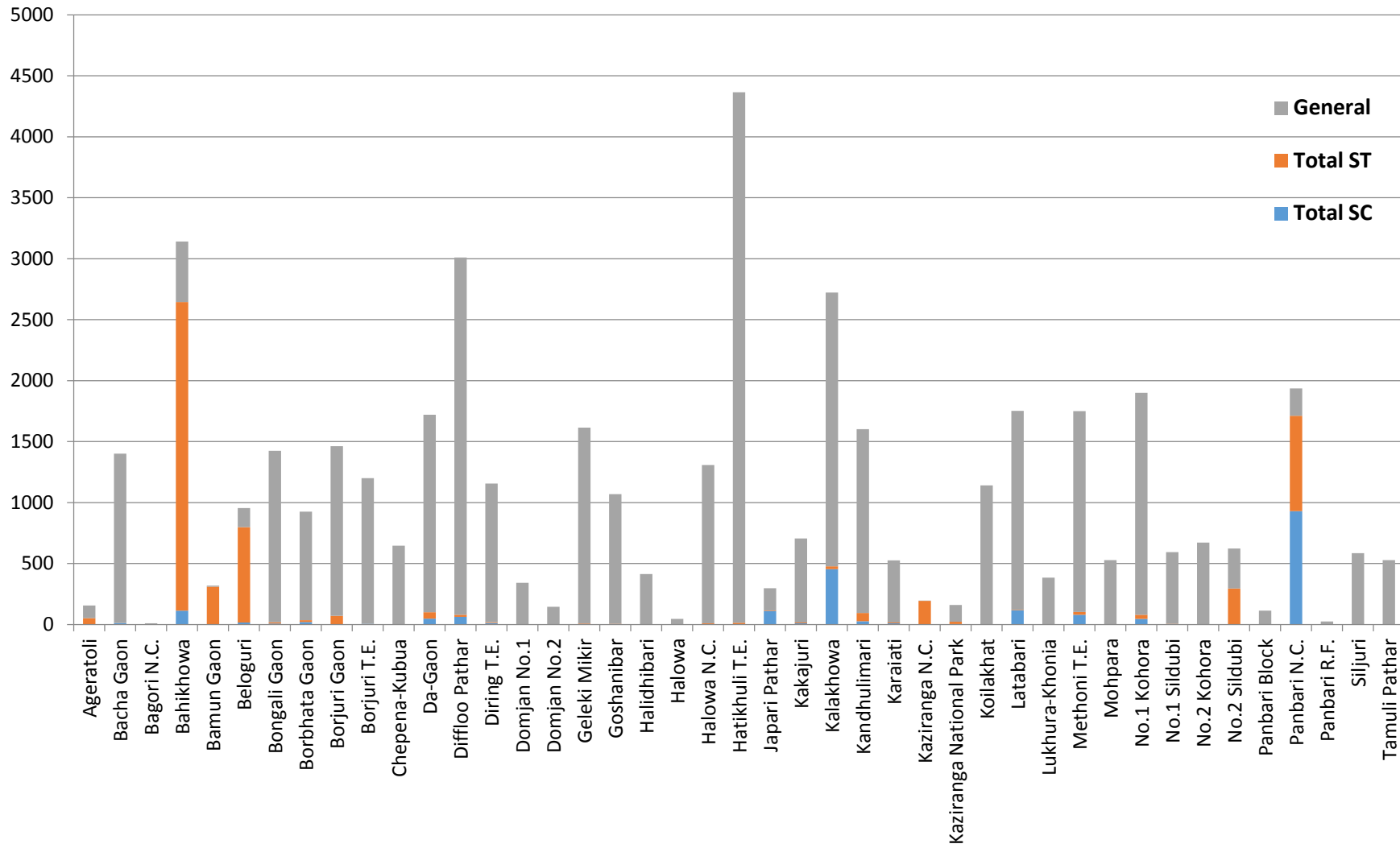
Village Specific Literacy and Working Population in p.c.(Census 2011)



Village	Household No.	Population	Total SC	Total ST	General
Ageratoli	32	156	0	53	103
Bacha Gaon	321	1401	12	0	1389
Bagori N.C.	2	9	0	0	9
Bahikhowa	505	3140	114	2530	496
Bamun Gaon	48	319	0	310	9
Beloguri	162	956	16	782	158
Bongali Gaon	314	1425	7	11	1407
Borbhata Gaon	191	926	21	15	890
Borjuri Gaon	306	1463	2	69	1392
Borjuri T.E.	245	1201	6	0	1195
Chepena-Kubua	140	647	0	0	647
Da-Gaon	395	1720	49	52	1619
Diffloo Pathar	626	3010	62	17	2931
Diring T.E.	246	1155	13	6	1136
Domjan No.1	68	341	0	0	341
Domjan No.2	28	145	0	0	145
Geleki Mikir	361	1614	6	3	1605
Goshanibar	229	1069	0	5	1064
Halidhibari	84	413	0	0	413
Halowa	13	47	0	0	47
Halowa N.C.	310	1308	4	7	1297
Hatikhuli T.E.	877	4366	1	14	4351
Japari Pathar	63	297	112	4	181
Kakajuri	142	706	9	8	689
Kalakhowa	524	2723	454	24	2245
Kandhulimari	311	1602	26	68	1508
Karaiati	107	526	11	6	509
Kaziranga N.C.	29	197	0	193	4
Kaziranga National Park	56	161	4	19	138
Koilakhat	241	1141	0	0	1141
Latabari	381	1753	115	5	1633
Lukhura-Khonia	79	384	0	0	384
Methoni T.E.	391	1749	80	22	1647
Mohpara	104	529	0	0	529
No.1 Kohora	415	1899	47	33	1819
No.1 Sildubi	126	594	0	5	589
No.2 Kohora	126	672	0	0	672
No.2 Sildubi	112	624	0	295	329
Panbari Block	25	114	0	0	114
Panbari N.C.	379	1935	930	782	223
Panbari R.F.	5	25	0	0	25
Siljuri	139	584	0	0	584
Tamuli Pathar	99	527	0	0	527
Total	9357	45573	2101	5338	38134

*Census 2011. **Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes are socially and economically backward classes in India with special provision made in the Indian Constitution.

Village Specific ST, SC and General Population (Census 2011)



Shifting of occupation from agriculture to others over the years:

The crop pattern in respect of Kaziranga National Park of Golaghat District includes different crop areas such as sali paddy, boro paddy, early ahu paddy, regular ahu paddy, mustard, potato, lentil, pea, black gram, rabi vegetables and kharif vegetables. A total number of 32 villages are undertaken in this study.

Different mitigating measures are undertaken in order to develop the agricultural practice in these villages. Seeds, pesticides and fertilizers are distributed to the farmers by different Government schemes through F.M.C.

The natural calamities and other factors affecting the crops are situations like flood, drought and wild animals. About 30-40% of the crop area gets damaged in every year due to different factors, mentioned above.

It is observed that people from the study area have shifted from agriculture to other occupations in order to attain a better living standard. Stone quarry is one of the important sector to which the village men have shifted to. In the hills of Karbi Anglong District, stone quarry is going on by cutting the stones for multiple purposes. The men folk of the villages have taken active participation in this work. About 1000 men of the villages were engaged in stone quarry and received an amount of Rs. 200 as the daily wage, thus earning an income of 4000-5000/month. However, with the introduction of Bulldozer/ Excavators and Crane, from a couple of years, the requirement of daily wage laborers has decreased. The disguised labors have now become unemployed. They have, therefore, migrated to places like Bangalore, Chennai and Hyderabad and got engaged to other small sectors.

On the other hand, with the opening of the tourist resorts, restaurants and hotels in the Kaziranga National Park area, many people have also got engaged in these places. They are mostly involved in cleaning, cooking, house-keeping, gardening, security and other such purposes.

Some people have also started their own small-scale businesses like a grocery shop, selling of the cane/wood products etc. In the schools, mid-day meal is cooked by village females who get paid by the Government.

Thus, the above mentioned factors stand rightly to point out the causes of shifting of the occupation from agriculture to other occupations by the village folks of the Kaziranga National Park area, Golaghat District, Assam.

Financial Inclusion:

Introduction of Jan Dhan Yojana by Government of India made every household, who did not have an account with organised banking sector, to open an account with nationalised or regional rural banks across the country. The impact has been visible in KNP area. The major bank branches operating in the area are SBI, AGVB and UBI. We have collected information from a few branches of SBI and AGVB which reflected the status of banking services in the area for rural villagers. A separate report on financial inclusion have been prepared.

***Plight of Rural Poor:**

The following excerpts from the chapter '*Dimensions of Deprivation*' an ADB study (*Learning findings from Participatory Poverty Assessments in India pp57-59*) best explains the expenditure pattern of the rural poor in KNP area.

High cost of living for the poor : The poor pay more than the rich.

Forced by poverty to live in outlier areas, the cost of transport is significant in terms of cost impact on the already overstretched poor. This is a problem even in remote pockets of well-developed and well-connected states,

Those living in remote and in peripheral areas (including tribes) bear the heavy brunt of transportation costs that adds to prices.

Since many of the poor buy on credit, they have to pay more at the outset. A thing costing Rs.10 costs them Rs.12 for a week's credit. The poor lose on economies of scale since they buy in small amounts.

There are still many barter transactions and use of inputs for self consumption. Monetary values have changed. Estimates of expenditure levels may not necessarily be accurate.

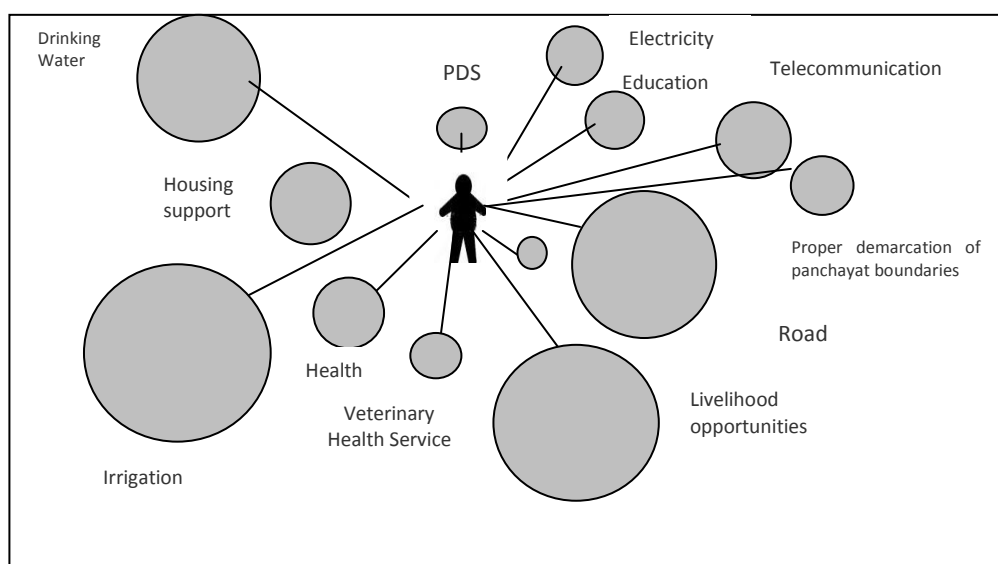
How can we tell you accurately how much we earn? In the old days, if we sold a coconut, we could buy enough fish for a meal with it. Today, if you want fish worth Rs10, you have to sell five coconuts.

High social expenditure:

Expenditure on social commitments is a serious problem of the poor as is well known. Almost all PPA teams came across this problem. It was widely observed that borrowing for social obligations often resulted in a debt trap for the poor.

Also, large parts of personal incomes are spent on undesirable patterns of expenditure encompassing alcohol.

Basic Services:



The poor suffer from poor access to basic services because of the location, quality (when these services do exist), cost of these services, and due to systemic factors leading to exclusion. The basic services and basic infrastructure involved include drinking water facilities, sanitation, roads, electricity, public irrigation, schools, and health services

A large number of groups consulted in many locations attributed their backwardness to the lack of basic infrastructure and access to basic services. Services and programs especially targeted for the poor also do not reach them. Poverty is greatly influenced by poor physical infrastructure—particularly poor quality of roads—low concentration of health infrastructure, and relatively underdeveloped agriculture affected by limited irrigation facilities.

The access of the poor to basic services has two major dimensions, namely availability and accessibility. Together they determine the use of the services by the poor. Availability refers to the physical existence of the services, with characteristics like:

- Adequate quantity,
- Acceptable quality,
- Location and distance (convenient),
- Regularity of supply (dependable),
- Information about the availability (awareness), and
- Proper maintenance (sustainability). Access, on the other hand, is determined by:
 - ✓ Affordability,
 - ✓ Utility, and
 - ✓ Equality of opportunity

Kaziranga National Park & Tiger Reserve

Visitor Information for Kaziranga Range

When to Visit
Park remains open from 1st November to 30th April

Visiting hours
7:00 AM - 12 Noon, 01:30 PM - till sunset

How to visit
Visitors can enjoy the wilderness and the wildlife of Kaziranga by availing Elephant safari & vehicle safari. Entry permits are available at Kaziranga Range office/Centenary Convention Centre, Kohora.

Elephant Safari
Time: 5:30 AM - 7:30 AM, Afternoon: 3:00 - 4:00 PM
Duration: 1 hour (approx)

Vehicle safari
Time: 7:00-12:00 Noon, 01:30 PM till sunset
Duration: 2 hours (approx)

Vehicle safari Route

Grasslands of Kaziranga

Habitat
Nearly two third of park's area consists of grasslands dominated by Elephant grasses. Tropical moist mixed deciduous forests & semi ever green forests of Assam alluvial plains and Eastern Dillenia swamp forests form the bulk of woodlands. The park has more than 180 wetlands of varying sizes.

Brief History of the park

- 1905 Preliminary notification as Reserve Forest
- 1908 Final notification of Reserve Forest
- 1916 Declared as "Game Sanctuary".
- 1937 Sanctuary opened for visitors.
- 1950 Declared as "Kaziranga Wildlife Sanctuary".
- 1974 Declared as "Kaziranga National Park".
- 1985 Inscribed as " World Heritage Site".
- 2005 Completed 100 years of conservation.
- 2007 Park became a Tiger Reserve

Wildlife Population Status
(Species estimated in the Park)

1. Greater One Horned Rhinoceros	- 2290
2. Royal Bengal Tiger	- 106
3. Asian Elephant	- 1165
4. Asiatic Wild Buffalo	- 1937
5. Eastern Swamp Deer	- 1168

Park Rules

- Please obtain permits before you enter the park.
- Please stop only at designated places & watch towers.
- Visiting the park on foot is strictly prohibited due to safety concerns.
- Honking, overtaking of other vehicles and driving off the road is prohibited.
- Do not throw rubbish or litter the park area. Bring back all your waste with you.
- Activities like consumption of alcohol, walking, camping, trapping wildlife, starting fire, collecting plants etc inside the park is strictly prohibited.
- Safari timings are subject to change without any notice.
- Visitors enter the park at their own risk.

For more information contact:
Range officer, Kaziranga Range, Kohora, or visit: www.worldheritagekaziranga.com

Concept & Design by R G Garawad

KAZIRANGA: Fact File

Kaziranga is located between latitudes 26°30' N and 26°45' N, and longitudes 93°08' E to 93°36' E within two districts of Assam viz. the Kaliabor subdivision of Nagaon district and the Bokakhat subdivision of Golaghat district in India.

Known for the world's largest population of Great One-horned Rhinoceros, Kaziranga National Park also has the highest density of tigers in the World and was declared a Tiger Reserve in 2006. The park has many Elephants, Water Buffalos and Swamp Deers. It is recognized as an Important Bird Area by Birdlife International for conservation of avifaunal species. In spite of various constraints the park has been famous for some wildlife conservation activities over the years.

Beautifully landscaped with significant presence of water bodies of different sizes all over the area, the dense tropical moist forests are characterized by vast stretches of tall elephant grasses, marshy lands. Four rivers viz. Brahmaputra, Dipholu, Mora Dipholu and Mori Dhansiri interlace this gorgeous biodiversity hotspot.

A Chronology of events leading to its gaining status of a national park and a world heritage site may be summarized in the following image. Data /figures authenticated from Forest Authority KNP.

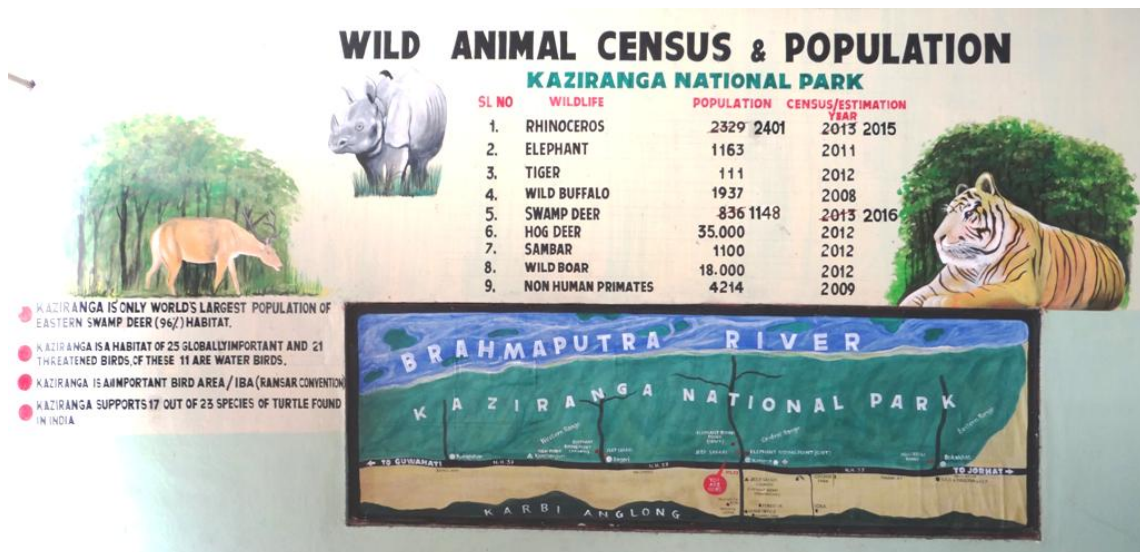


Image: Courtesy: Hornbill Group Kohora –data checked with Forest Department, Govt. of Assam

The park formally became a Reserve Forest in 1908, a game sanctuary in 1916, and it was closed officially for shooting in 1926.

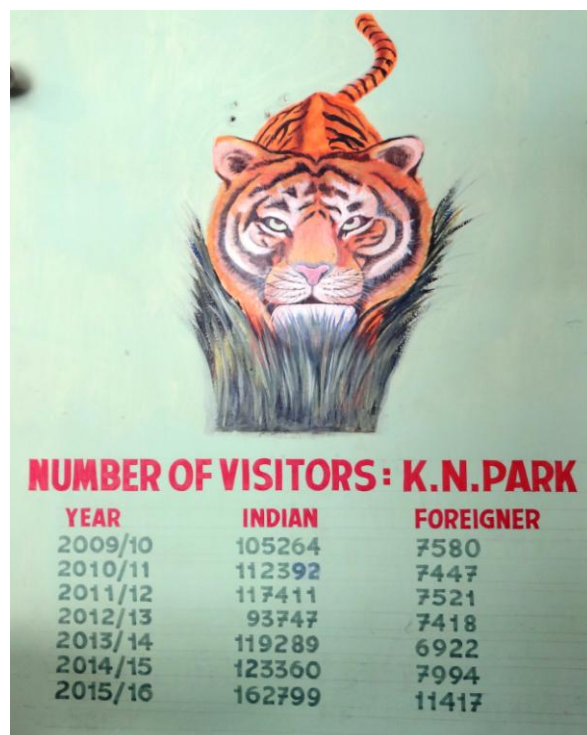
- Kaziranga was thrown open to visitors in 1938.
- After the independence of India, Kaziranga was declared a Wildlife Sanctuary in 1950.
- In 1974 it was designated a National Park, the first national park in the state of Assam.
- UNESCO declared Kaziranga a **World Heritage Site in 1985**.

The landscape of KNP formed by extensive grasslands, large number of water bodies and woodlands present a perfect blending of habitats for a diversity of flora and fauna. One of the largest legally protected areas in the country KNP makes home the wide range of flora from microscopic aquatic plants to lofty moist deciduous trees and fauna ranging from the soil invertebrates to mega fauna such as the Rhino and the elephant. Over the last century of its sustenance with effective conservation and protective measures the area has turned into one of the largest and rich wildlife habitations. Among the most famous 'Big Five' are the Great Indian One horned Rhinoceros (*Rhinoceros unicornis*), The Tiger (*Panthera tigris*), the Asiatic Elephant (*Elephas maximus*), the Asiatic Wild Buffalo (*Bubalus bubalis*) and the Swamp deer (*Cervus duvauvceli ranjitsinghi*).



Images by Courtesy: Hornbill Group Kohora –data checked with Forest Department, Govt. of Assam

The park contains about 35 mammalian species (15 are reported threatened and in Red list of IUCN). KNP can boast of 60 species of reptiles, 24 species of amphibians, 42 species of fishes, 440 species of plants and 491 species of butterflies. KNP is situated at the Australasia and Indo-Asian flyway junction, thereby providing an important migrating, breeding and nesting site for over 550 species of Avifauna. This enhances importance of KNP as a birding paradise too. All the facts as mentioned here is enough to make KNP the global destination of wildlife researchers, enthusiasts and tourists.



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Three main types of vegetation of KNP are alluvial inundated grasslands, tropical wet evergreen forests and tropical semi-ever green forests. In KNP one can see the tall elephant grasses on the higher ground and short grasses on the lower ground surrounding the bheels. These grasslands have been maintained by annual floodings and burnings over time immemorial. The park holds vital conservation value of the Brahmaputra valley flood plain grasslands and forests with its large herbivores, avifauna and wetland values (including turtles, dolphins, etc)