

Barisal, the Venice of Bengal, set on the famous river Kirtankhola, is located in the south-central of Bangladesh. It lies under Barisal division, and has an area of 2,784 square kilometres. As a major rice production hub in the country, it produces the famous Balam (basmati) rice at a very large scale. As this city is located near the coast, it is well known for producing fish and coconut on a large scale.



Children attend a BRAC pre primary school in a rural village.

There are several rivers flowing into the city eg, Arial Khan, Katcha, Tentulia, Naya Bhanga, Jayanti, Shwarupkathi and Amtali. Barisal is the second largest river port in Bangladesh. BRAC operates various programmes in Barisal, such as microfinance, targeting the ultra poor (TUP), health, nutrition and population (HNPP), education (BEP), community empowerment (CEP), human rights and legal aid services (HRLS), migration, and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) programme. Among them, microfinance offers three types of loans – dabi (microloan), progoti (enterprise loan) and agricultural loans such as – tenant farmers’ development project (BCUP) and second crop diversification project (SCDP) to the clients. HNPP provides health education through

health volunteers (*shasthya shebika*) and health workers (*shasthya kormi*). BEP identifies children from marginalised families and provides basic education through its informal schools. TUP focuses on tackling extreme poverty in multiple fronts. HRLS serves the disadvantaged community through its human rights and legal education (HRLE) *shebikas*. CEP is building and strengthening community institutions to ensure socio political empowerment to poor women. WASH is working on ensuring safe drinking water and basic sanitation for rural people. Migration works on ensuring easy access to services of all Bangladeshi migrants to avoid exploitation. A BRAC learning centre (BLC) was also established in Barisal. The BLC is a residential centre used as a training centre for BRAC employees.

## General information

Population	2,348,440
Unions	85
Villages	1,173
Children (0-15)	1,045,456
Primary schools	1,749
Literacy rates	65%
Hospitals	69
Banks	36
Bazaars	152
NGOs	148

## At a glance

(as of December 2015)

### Microfinance

Branches	30
Village organisations	1,535
Members	148,011
Borrowers	42,195

### Progoti

Small enterprise clients	4,615
--------------------------	-------

### Tenant farmers' development project

Village organisations	80
Population covered	2,041
Amount of money disbursed	15,000,000

### Second crop diversification Project

Village organisation	706
Population covered	10,439
Money disbursed	85,000,000

### Health, nutrition and population

Health volunteers ( <i>shasthya shebika</i> )	550
Health workers ( <i>shasthya kormi</i> )	49
Health centres	90
Delivery centres	9

### Community empowerment

Community-based organisation ( <i>polli shomaj</i> )	168
Union-based organisation ( <i>union shomaj</i> )	21
Popular theatre team	7

## Education

Pre-primary schools	102
Primary schools	77
Adolescent development programme (ADP) Centres	90
Community libraries ( <i>gonokendros</i> )	58

## Human rights and legal aid services

Human rights and legal education (HRLE) <i>shebikas</i>	97
HRLE graduates	11,740
Legal aid clinics	10

## Targeting the ultra poor

Specially targeted ultra poor (STUP) member	14,505
Asset and training received	14,505
Health care availed	650

## Migration

Popular theatre show	605
Community meeting	1,759
Forum meeting	1,722
Workshop	60