

Located in the north-west of Bangladesh, Rajshahi district lies under Rajshahi division, and has an area of 2,407 square kilometres. It is bound by Naogaon district to the north, Natore district to the east, and Chapai Nababganj district and the river Padma to the south. The main rivers are the Padma itself along with Mahananda and Baral. Rajshahi is famous for its mango and silk production. It is widely known as the Silk City of Bangladesh.



BRAC School of indigenous Shaotal community in Kakan Hat, Rajshahi.

BRAC operates in Rajshahi with quite a few components such as the microfinance, targeting the ultra poor (TUP), health, nutrition and population (HNPP), education (BEP), community empowerment (CEP), human rights and legal aid services (HRLS), gender justice and diversity (GJD), and skills development programmes. Among them, microfinance offers three types of loans – dabi (microloan), progoti (enterprise loan) and agricultural loans such as – tenant farmers’ development project (BCUP), northwest crop diversification programme (NCDP), second crop diversification project (SCDP). 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*. They have also started a new project called property rights initiative (PRI) in Rajshahi to protect human rights through legal empowerment. CEP builds and strengthens community institutions to ensure socio-political empowerment of poor people. GJD works relentlessly to eliminate gender injustice in society. BRAC’s new initiative, the skills development programme, is providing holistic skills development training and decent employment opportunities to enable young women and men to realise their full potential. A BRAC learning centre (BLC) was also established in Rajshahi. The BLC is a residential centre used as a training centre for BRAC employees.

## General information

Population	2,595,197
Unions	71
Villages	1,727
Children (0-15)	778,559
Primary schools	1,044
Literacy rates	53%
Hospitals	12
Banks	84
Bazaars	293
NGOs	74

## At a glance

(as of December 2015)

### Microfinance

Branches	47
Village organisations	2,865
Members	177,201
Borrowers	74,052

### Progoti

Small enterprise clients	9,669
--------------------------	-------

### Tenant farmers' development project

Village organisations	310
Population covered	7,726
Amount of money disbursed	104,665,000

### Northwest crop diversification programme

Village organisation	895
Money disbursed	198,892,000
Population covered	9,410

### Second crop diversification Project

Village organisation	310
Population covered	5,569
Money disbursed	38,448,000

### Health, nutrition and population

Health volunteers ( <i>shasthya shebika</i> )	800
Health workers ( <i>shasthya kormi</i> )	80

### Community empowerment

Community-based organisation ( <i>polli shomaj</i> )	262
Union-based organisation ( <i>union shomaj</i> )	31
Popular theatre team	9

### Education

Pre-primary schools	204
Primary schools	504
ADP Centres	270
Community libraries	95

## Human rights and legal aid services

Human rights and legal education (HRLE) <i>shebikas</i>	410
HRLE graduates	78,367
Legal aid clinics	11

### Property rights initiative

Number of land entrepreneur training	123
Number of land measurement	8,870
Number of free land measurement	363
Cases filed	30

### Targeting the ultra poor

Specially targeted ultra poor (STUP) member	11,003
Others targeted ultra poor (OTUP) member	6,466
Asset and training received	11,003
Health care availed	10,520

### Gender justice and diversity

#### MEJNIN (*meyeder jonne nirapad nagorikotta*-safe citizenship for women)

Community watch groups	18
Community watch group members	270
Student watch groups	18
Student watch group members	450

### Skills development

Number of master craft persons (MCPs)	134
Number of trades	9
Number of graduate learners	413