

Located in the north-east of Bangladesh, Sunamganj district lies under Sylhet division, and has an area of 3,670 square kilometres. The district is bordered by Khasia and Jaintia hilly area of Meghalaya (Indian State) to the north, Habiganj district to the south, Sylhet district to the east, and Netrokona district to the west. The main rivers are Surma and Kushiyara. Sunamganj is famous for its stone and sand business. It has been supplying river sand, natural sand, crushed stone, gravel and shingle since 1960.

BRAC operates the majority of its programmes at Sunamganj, 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), integrated development (IDP) and skills development programme. Among them, microfinance offers two types of loans – *dabi* (microloan) and *progoti* (enterprise loan). HNPP provides health education through health volunteers (*shasthya shebika*) and health workers (*shasthya kormi*). BEP identifies children from marginalised families and provides basic education



Photo credit: BRAC

Microfinance village organisation meeting supervised by integrated development program (IDP) held at Derai.

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 of poor people. IDP works at Derai sub-district, tackling the various dimensions of poverty in haors (shallow land depressions in north-eastern Bangladesh subject to yearly flooding). It offers livelihood training and support, education support, health and sanitation support, and legal aid support. 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.

Sunamganj is a tourist destination for many domestic tourists since it has more haors and *beels* (wetlands ecosystems) than any other district in Bangladesh. Tanguar Haor is the largest inland billabong located in this district.

General information

Population	2,467,968
Unions	87
Villages	2,782
Primary schools	1,421
Literacy rates	35%
Hospitals	12
Banks	90
Bazaars	216
NGOs	57

At a glance

(as of December 2015)

Microfinance

Branches	39
Village organisations	2,882
Members	52,855
Borrowers	48,343

Progoti

Small enterprise clients	3,417
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Health, nutrition and population

Health volunteers (<i>shasthya shebika</i>)	1,920
Health workers (<i>shasthya kormi</i>)	135

Community empowerment

Community-based organisation (<i>polli shomaj</i>)	1,642
Union-based organisation (<i>union shomaj</i>)	12
Popular theatre team	9

Education

Pre-primary schools	761
Primary schools	393
Adolescent development programme (ADP) Centres	483
Community libraries (<i>gonokendros</i>)	47

Human rights and legal aid services

Human rights and legal education (HRLE) <i>shebikas</i>	743
HRLE graduates	49,786
Legal aid clinics	9

Targeting the ultra poor

Specially targeted ultra poor (STUP) member	6,046
Other targeted ultra poor (OTUP) member	1,910
Asset and training received	6,046

Water, sanitation and hygiene

Committee members	9,613
Sanitation coverage	57%
Loans for sanitary latrines	1,370
Sanitary latrines installed in school	450

Skills development

Number of master craft persons (MCPs)	90
Number of trades	18
Number of graduate learners	195
Disabled learners	18

Integrated development

Derai sub-district area	
Population covered	170,583