

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), 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. 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
Sub-districts	9
Unions	71
Villages	1,727
Children (0-15)	778,559
Primary schools	1,044
Literacy rates	53%
Hospitals	12
Banks	84
Bazaars	293
NGOs	78

At a glance

(as of December 2016)

Microfinance

Branches	48
Village organisations	2,919
Members	169,359
Borrowers	74,619

Progoti

Small enterprise clients	9,022
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Tenant farmers' development project

Village organisations	283
Population covered	7,654
Amount of money disbursed	211,517,000

Northwest crop diversification programme

Village organisation	479
Money disbursed	2,271,530,000
Population covered	15,255

Second crop diversification Project

Village organisation	301
Population covered	6,064
Money disbursed	15,460,000

Health, nutrition and population

Health volunteers (<i>shasthya shebika</i>)	588
Health workers (<i>shasthya kormi</i>)	66

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	127
Primary schools	72
Shishu niketon	275
ADP Centres	93
Community libraries	95
Education support programme	7

Human rights and legal aid services

Human rights and legal education (HRLE) <i>shebikas</i>	460
HRLE graduates	90,549
Legal aid clinics	11

Property rights initiative

Number of land entrepreneur (<i>aminship</i>) training	176
Number of land measurement	17,681
Number of free land measurement	1,032
Cases filed	55
Complaints resolved	34

Targeting the ultra poor

Specially targeted ultra poor (STUP) member	11,741
Others targeted ultra poor (OTUP) member	7,491
Asset and training received	11,741
Health care availed	5,002

Skills development

Number of master craft persons (MCPs)	154
Number of trades	8
Number of learners	936
Number of graduate learners	910