

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.

Photo credit: BRAC

BRAC operates in Rajshahi with quite a few components such as the microfinance, ultra poor graduation (UPG), 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. UPG 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	1,914
Children (0-15)	779,365
Primary schools	1,049
Literacy rates	54%
Hospitals	14
Banks	84
Bazaars	293
NGOs	78

## At a glance

(as of December 2019)

### Microfinance

Branches	48
Village organisations	4,795
Members	193,635
Borrowers	91,820

### Progoti

Small enterprise clients	12,526
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### Health, nutrition and population

Health volunteers ( <i>shasthya shebika</i> )	614
Health workers ( <i>shasthya kormi</i> )	56

### Community empowerment

Community-based organisation ( <i>polli shomaj</i> )	278
Union-based organisation ( <i>union shomaj</i> )	58
Popular theatre team	9

## Education

Pre-primary schools	225
Primary schools	69
Shishu niketon	82
ADP Centres	30
Community libraries	7
Education support programme	37

### Human rights and legal aid services

Human rights and legal education (HRLE) <i>shebikas</i>	480
HRLE graduates	90,549
Legal aid clinics	9

### Ultra poor graduation

Group - 1 members	365
Group - 2 members	4,982
Asset and training received	5,347
Health care availed	5,347
Group - 3 members	4,642
Asset and training received	4,642
Health care availed	4,642

### Skills development

Number of master craft personns (MCPs) in STAR	554
Number of trades	9
Number of graduate learners	1,159