

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, ultra poor graduation (UPG), 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. UPG 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	88
Villages	2,887
Primary schools	1,470
Literacy rates	35%
Hospitals	11
Banks	12
Bazaars	112
NGOs	30

At a glance

(as of December 2019)

Microfinance

Branches	49
Village organisations	4,367
Members	217,206
Borrowers	117,228

Progoti

Small enterprise clients	9,139
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Health, nutrition and population

Health volunteers (<i>shasthya shebika</i>)	624
Health workers (<i>shasthya kormi</i>)	77

Community empowerment

Community-based organisation (<i>polli shomaj</i>)	116
Union-based organisation (<i>union shomaj</i>)	23
Popular theatre team	5

Education

Pre-primary schools	1,235
Primary schools	332
Adolescent development programme (ADP) Centres	144
Community libraries (<i>gonokendros</i>)	37

Human rights and legal aid services

Human rights and legal education (HRLE) <i>shebikas</i>	8
HRLE graduates	795
Legal aid clinics	4

Ultra poor graduation

Group-1 Members	32
Group-2 Members	501
Asset and training received	501
Healthcare availed	501
Group-3 Members	742
Asset and training received	742
Healthcare availed	742

Water, sanitation and hygiene

Committee members	9,273
Sanitation coverage	31%
Loans for sanitary latrines	207
Sanitary latrines installed in school	20
Deep tubewells installed	14

Skills development

Number of graduate learners in STAR	961
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