

Barishal, the Venice of Bengal, set on the famous river Kirtankhola, is located in the south-central of Bangladesh. It lies under Barishal division, and has an area of 2,784 square kilometres. As a major rice production hub in the country, it produces the famous Balam (basmati) rice at a very large scale. As this city is located near the coast, it is well known for producing fish and coconut on a large scale.

There are several rivers flowing into the city eg, Arial Khan, Katcha, Tentulia, Naya Bhanga, Jayanti, Shwarupkathi and Amtali. Barishal is the second largest river port in Bangladesh. BRAC operates various programmes in Barishal, such as microfinance, ultra poor graduation (UPG), health, nutrition and population (HNPP), education (BEP), community empowerment (CEP), human rights and legal aid services (HRLS), and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) programme. Among them, microfinance offers three types of loans – dabi (microloan), progoti (enterprise loan) and agricultural loans such as – tenant farmers’ development project (BCUP) to



Children attend a BRAC pre primary school in a rural village.

the clients. 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*. CEP is building and strengthening community institutions to ensure socio political empowerment to poor women. WASH is working on ensuring safe drinking water and basic sanitation for rural people. A BRAC learning centre (BLC) was also established in Barishal. The BLC is a residential centre used as a training centre for BRAC employees.

## General information

Population	2,487,012
Sub-districts	10
Unions	87
Villages	1,116
Children (0-15)	572,025
Primary schools	1,572
Literacy rates	66%
Hospitals	12
Banks	16
Bazaars	381
NGOs	77

## At a glance

(as of December 2019)

### Microfinance

Branches	32
Village organisations	2,084
Members	87,395
Borrowers	55,608
Progoti	
Small enterprise clients	6,346

### Health, nutrition and population

Health volunteers ( <i>shasthya shebika</i> )	903
Health workers ( <i>shasthya kormi</i> )	130
Health centres	2

### Ultra Poor Graduation

Group - 1 members	15
Group - 2 members	595
Asset received	610
Training received	610
Healthcare availed	72
Group - 3 members	1,822
Training received	1,822
Healthcare availed	214

### Community empowerment

Community-based organisation ( <i>polli shomaj</i> )	180
Popular theatre team	7
Human rights violation cases reported	248

## Education

Pre-primary schools	102
Community libraries ( <i>ganokendros</i> )	62

### Human rights and legal aid services

HRLE graduates	74,356
Legal aid clinics	10

### Skills development

Number of master craft persons (MCPs) in STAR	79
Number of trades in STAR	7
Number of learners in STAR	350
Number of learners in PROGRESS	145

### Water, sanitation and hygiene

Sanitation coverage	82%
Sanitary latrines installed in schools	25