



Background to Lalmonirhat District

The Chars Livelihoods Programme (CLP) aims to improve the livelihoods, incomes and food security of at least one million extreme poor men, women and children residing on the remote char islands of North West Bangladesh. The first phase of the programme, known as CLP-1, operated in the districts of Bogra, Gaibandha, Jamalpur, Kurigram and Sirajganj. The second phase, CLP-2, will continue to operate in the two northern districts of Gaibandha and Kurigram, as well as moving into five new districts: Rangpur, Lalmonirhat and Nilphamari (from late 2010) and Pabna and Tangail (from 2013). This brief is part of a set of five, whose aim is to provide background information on the new working districts of CLP-2 to relevant stakeholders.



Lalmonirhat district has a total area of 1,241 square kilometres and a population of 1,109,000, or 245,000 households. It comprises 5 upazilas, 60 unions, 2 municipalities and 476 villages¹. Lalmonirhat district is bordered by Nilphamari, Rangpur and Kurigram.

Map taken from <http://www.bangla2000.com/bangladesh/Districts/lalmonirhat.shtm>

Key Demographic Statistics²

Average household size	4.56 members (versus national average of 4.72)
Male/female population ratio	104 males for every 100 females
% of population tribal	0.12
Marriage registration, last 3 years	79.5%
Birth registration, children under 5 years	0.1%
Average age of marriage for men	22.39 years
Average age of marriage for women	17.97 years

Chars in Lalmonirhat district: Chars are temporary sand islands formed in or along the banks of rivers. Island chars are surrounded by water all or most of the year, whilst attached chars are attached to the mainland all or most of the year. Thus the former are characterised by particular remoteness and environmental instability, meaning poverty levels are especially pervasive.

¹ BBS (2009a), based on 2001 census

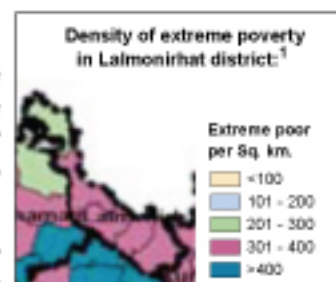
² All figures are from BBS (2009a) and based on the 2001 census, except for household size and marriage age which is from BBS (2009c) and birth registration, which are from UNICEF and BBS (2004)

In Lalmonirhat district, there are 46 island char villages and 18 attached char villages, which are found in all 5 of the district's upazilas, as follows: Lalmonirhat Sadar (24 island char villages and 5 attached char villages, under 5 unions), Aditmari (5 island char villages and 2 attached char villages, under 3 unions), Kaliganj (4 island char villages and 7 attached char villages, under 3 unions), Hatibanda (10 island char villages and 1 attached char villages, under 5 unions) and Patgram (3 island char villages and 3 attached char villages, under 4 unions). CLP-2 will work with selected³ households in all island char villages. In total, these villages are estimated to contain 18,370 households⁴.

Poverty in Lalmonirhat District

According to the 2005 HIES:

- 63% of the population were below the upper poverty line (Tk. 731.73 per capita per month), compared to 40% nationally
- 47% were below the lower poverty line (Tk. 646.51 per capita per month), compared to 25.1% nationally⁵.



Food Security and Nutrition

Food poverty and child nutrition statistics are comparable to national figures

- 40-50% of under 5s are stunted (i.e. have low height for age), compared to 51.1% nationally
- At less than 45%, Lalmonirhat has a relatively low proportion of underweight children (i.e. low weight for age) compared to its bordering districts of Rangpur, Kurigram and Nilphamari, where incidence of underweight children in some upazilas reaches up to 55%
- 10-20% of Lalmonirhat's population suffers from hard-core food poverty (i.e. their calorie intake is lower than the recommended minimum of 1,805 kcal/day)

All figures from BBS and WFP (2004)

61% of households in Lalmonirhat are involved in farming, of which the vast majority (89%) are smallholdings⁶.

Education Statistics⁷ The table below compares Lalmonirhat district with national averages for key education statistics:

	Lalmonirhat district		National average	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
Net primary enrolment (%)	85.1	84.2	81.1	84.4
6-10 year olds never enrolled in school (%)	9.6	4.4	14.8	12.6
Literacy rate 7+years (%)	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban
	57	46	51	68

³ according to CLP selection criteria

⁴ This data was collected by CLP's Implementing Organisations (IOs) for information on the upazila and union breakdown of these villages, contact CLP's Innovation, Monitoring and Learning division at info@clp-bangladesh.org

⁵ World Bank, WFP and BBS (2005), poverty calculated using Cost of Basic Needs Method, based on HIES 2005 data

⁶ BBS (2009a)

⁷ BBS and UNICEF (2004), except literacy rate, which is from BBS (2009b)



Chars Livelihoods Programme

Reducing Extreme Poverty in the Jamuna Chars



NGO Activities

CLP undertook a mapping exercise to investigate NGO activities in Lalmonirhat district over the past four years. Mapping revealed that a number of international and national NGOs have operated in Lalmonirhat district. Whilst not a complete list, some of the main NGOs who have been working in various areas are as follows:

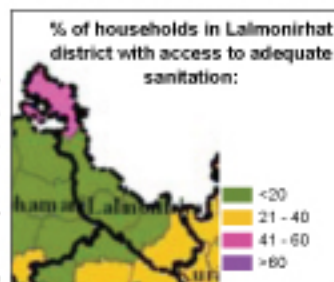
NGO	Social mobilisation	Microfinance	Asset transfer	Market development	Plinth raising	Water and sanitation	Other infrastructure	Health	Education	Agriculture
ASCD	x	x						x	x	x
BRAC			x					x	x	
BRIF	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
CARE	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
DCPUK	x		x	x		x		x	x	x
GLK-Gaibandha	x									
Oxfam					x	x				
POPH	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x
RDRS	x		x		x	x				x
SKS	x	x		x	x		x	x	x	x
UDPS	x									x

Infrastructure, Hygiene and Sanitation Statistics⁸

The information below compares Lalmonirhat district with national averages for key infrastructure, hygiene and sanitation statistics:

- 82% of the population live in tin/wooden dwellings, compared to 57% nationally, whilst 12% reside in bamboo homes, versus 6% nationally, 5% in semi-pacca dwellings, compared with 13% nationally and less than 1% in mud structures or buildings, versus 14% and 9% respectively at the national level
- Less than 20% of households have access to electricity, compared to 30% nationally
- Open defecation is well above the national average of 19.3% at 44.8%
- 35.4% had heard of the issue of arsenic contamination of water, versus a national average of 76.1%
- 97.5% of tubewells have not been tested for arsenic, compared to a national average of 40.2%
- 63.8% use water and ash when washing their hands, whilst 8.6% use water and soap, versus national averages of 20% and 15.3% respectively

This brief was produced in July 2010. For more information on the Chars Livelihoods Programme, see the website www.clp-bangladesh.org, or contact the CLP's Innovation, Monitoring and Learning Division on info@clp-bangladesh.org



⁸ BBS and Unicef (2004), except for dwellings figures, which are from BBS (2009c), and map, which is from WFP (2004)

Infants and children in Lalmonirhat district

The infant mortality rate (IFR) in 2007 was 54.2 per 1000 live births, against a national average of 43 per 1000 live births. Whilst the country overall has seen a significant reduction in the IFR between 1998 and 2007 of 14 per 1000 births, Lalmonirhat has seen a small reduction, of just 1 per 1000 in 1996.

According to a child risk measure developed by UNICEF and the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, Lalmonirhat is rated 17th highest out of the country's 64 districts.

Health Statistics⁸

The table below compares Lalmonirhat district with national averages for key health statistics:

	Lalmonirhat district	National average
Rural households using contraception (%)	51	51
Prevalence of disability (per 1000 people)	16.56	8.96
Exclusive breastfeeding rate, children under 4 months (%)	11.6	11.6
Measles immunisation coverage in rural areas, children aged 12-23 months (%)	83.1	83.4
Diarrhoea prevalence over last 15 days, under 5s (%) - boys	20.8	24.8
Diarrhoea prevalence over last 15 days, under 5s (%) - girls	19.9	22.2
Iodised salt consumption, rural areas (%)	40.4	69.6
At least one antenatal visit during last pregnancy, rural areas (%)	48.9	42.3
Last delivery assisted by doctor/nurse/midwife/trained TBA or FAV	16.1	25.4

References

- Ahamed, Mazbaha/ Golam et al (2010). Infant mortality abatement in Bangladesh in 2007: a district level analysis
- BBS/BBS (2009a). Statistical Pocketbook of Bangladesh 2008
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- BBS/BBS (2009c). Report on Sample Vital Registration System 2008
- BBS/BBS and WFP (2004). A local estimation of poverty and malnutrition in Bangladesh
- UNICEF and BBS (2004). Progress Pathway 2003 - On the road to progress



For more information about CLP please visit our website: www.clp-bangladesh.org or email us at info@clp-bangladesh.org