

SOCIAL PROFILE

2.1 Demographic Features

The southern region of Bangladesh includes 14 coastal districts,¹ which accounts for 27 percent of the area and 21 percent of the population of the country. According to the preliminary results of the Population & Housing Census 2011, the region has a total area of 39,617 sq. km, 6.38 million households and 29.86 million people (Table 2.1).² Population density per km² is relatively lower in the southern region (754) compared to Bangladesh (964) (BBS, 2011), largely because of net outmigration.

Disaggregate data on urban population is not yet available for 2011 census. Based on 2001 census data, 26.1 percent of the population is urban-dweller in the southern region. This proportion is higher than that of the country (23.5 percent). Among the SR districts, concentration of urban population is the highest in Khulna (54%), followed by Chittagong (51%). On the other hand, the least urbanized districts are Satkhira, Barguna and Patuakhali with 12 percent or less urban population (BBS, 2007).

Table 2.1: Area and population of the southern region

District	Area (km ²)	Household (000)	Population (000)			HH size	Population density/km ²
			Total	Male	Female		
Barguna	1,831	215	882	433	449	4.1	482
Barisal	2,790	510	2,291	1,123	1,168	4.5	821
Bhola	3,737	372	1,758	874	884	4.7	470
Jhalokati	758	139	596	288	308	4.3	786
Patuakhali	3,220	347	1,517	745	772	4.4	471
Pirojpur	1,308	255	1,103	544	559	4.3	843
Chittagong	5,283	1,523	7,509	3,783	3,726	4.9	1,421
Cox's Bazar	2,493	418	2,275	1,163	1,112	5.4	913
Feni	928	277	1,420	687	733	5.1	1,530
Lakshmipur	1,456	364	1,711	820	891	4.7	1,175
Noakhali	3,601	591	3,072	1,468	1,604	5.2	853
Bagerhat	3,959	355	1,461	732	729	4.1	369
Khulna	4,395	546	2,294	1,164	1,130	4.2	522
Satkhira	3,858	471	1,973	977	996	4.2	511
SR to tal	39,617	6,382	29,862	14,801	15,061	4.7	754
Bangladesh	147,570	32,068	142,319	71,255	71,064	4.4	964
SR %	27	20	21	21	21		

¹ The "coastal zone" of Bangladesh includes 19 districts as per the Gazette notification of the government of Bangladesh. The "southern region" as defined in this Master Plan is comprised of 14 districts of the coastal zone exposed to the Bay of Bengal.

² Population of 2011 is likely to increase after adjustment for net undercount. The State of World Population 2011 (UNFPA, 2011) cites Bangladesh population as 150.5 million. According to projections based on 2001 census data, Bangladesh population would be 151 million and that of the southern region would be 32 million in 2011 (BBS, 2007).

There are more women (50.4%) than men (49.6%) in the southern region. The average number of member per household is 4.7. This is higher than the national average (4.4) and is indicative of a higher dependency ratio (BBS, 2011).

2.2 Access to Land

According to popular perception, land is the most important natural asset. Land is scarce in the country and even more so in the southern region. According to census of agriculture 2008, average ownership of land per household is 0.79 acre in Bangladesh (BBS, 2010). But in the southern region, average land ownership per household is 0.72 acre (0.29 ha). The situation is also worse in the southern region in terms of homestead area, average per household being 0.07 (0.028 ha) acre compared to the national average of 0.08 acre (Table 2.2).

Table 2.2: Land endowment

District	Number of holdings	Own land (acre)		Average land per holding (acre)	
		Total	Homestead	Total	Homestead
Barguna	201,929	231,438	16,196	1.15	0.08
Barisal	482,075	367,715	31,617	0.76	0.07
Bhola	347,515	276,200	20,788	0.79	0.06
Jhalokati	133,204	120,723	8,146	0.91	0.06
Patuakhali	323,502	375,633	23,196	1.16	0.07
Pirojpur	243,057	215,184	14,270	0.89	0.06
Chittagong	1,298,834	504,104	89,722	0.39	0.07
Cox's Bazar	335,825	180,261	33,225	0.54	0.10
Feni	237,575	149,420	20,226	0.63	0.09
Lakshmipur	332,818	197,862	20,981	0.59	0.06
Noakhali	544,943	419,446	45,947	0.77	0.08
Bagerhat	339,217	346,181	21,673	1.02	0.06
Khulna	502,835	379,965	30,070	0.76	0.06
Satkhira	436,178	401,627	25,861	0.92	0.06
SR total	5,759,507	4,165,759	401,918	0.72	0.07
Bangladesh	28,695,763	22,755,331	2,166,302	0.79	0.08

Households are broadly categorized into four major groups in the BBS literature. These are

- *non-farm* holdings, owning no land or less than 0.05 acre of land;
- *small farmer*, owning 0.05 to 2.49 acres of land;
- *medium farmer*, owning 2.50 to 7.49 acres of land; and
- *large farmer* owning 7.50 acres or more.

Non-farm households are 46 percent of total households. Another 19 percent own less than 0.5 acre each who are considered as "functionally landless". Hence the extent of landlessness is as high as 65 percent in the southern region.

households (medium and large farmers) own 36 percent land and top one percent households (large farmers) own 10 percent land, while the bottom 46 percent households own only 13 percent land in the southern region. The highly unequal distribution of land is reflected in Figure 2.1 through a land endowment curve. If all households would have equal ownership of land, then the curve would have taken the shape of the diagonal. The further the curve is from the diagonal, higher is the degree of inequality.

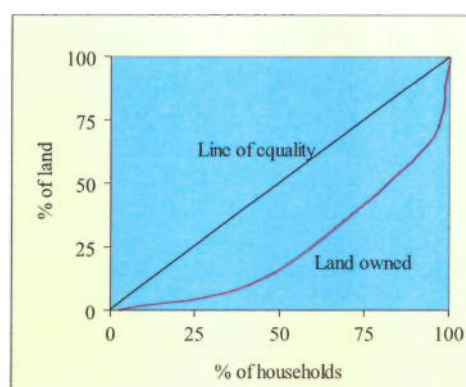


Figure 2.1: Distribution of Land Holdings

Table 2.3: Land ownership pattern in the southern region

Farm strata	Percentage		Cumulative percentage	
	Household	Acreage	Household	Acreage
Non-farm	46	13	46	13
Small	46	51	92	64
Medium	6	26	98	90
Large	2	10	100	100

From 1960 to 1996, number of non-farm and small farmer households in the region increased, while the proportion of medium and large farms declined considerably (Table 2.4). Data from agriculture census 2008 shows further increase of non-farm households, whereas households in other three categories decreased.

Table 2.4: Trend in Land Ownership Pattern

Strata	Percentage of households*		
	1960	1996	2008
Non-farm	19	30	46
Small	41	57	46
Medium	31	11	6
Large	9	2	2
Total	100	100	100

2.3 Livelihoods

Certain activities are common everywhere and some are typical of the southern region. Specific activities in the southern region are those which stem from geo-physical characteristics of the area conditioned by its unique natural systems and opportunities. Some occupations can be exclusively attributed to the southern region and some are prevalent in the region to a greater extent than other regions of the country.

In the southern region, farmers and agriculture labourers are major livelihood groups. There are other occupational groups who earn their living from activities determined by coastal conditions. They often vary from each other in terms of production relations. Some of them work independently (shrimp fry collector); some work as lessee or sharecropper (salt farmer, shrimp farmer) and some are contractual labourer (fishers hired by a *bahadder*). Some live by utilizing natural resources (salt farmer, fry collector, fisher, honey collector) and some live on skill-based activities (boat-building carpentry, net making). Profiles of some livelihood groups are briefly presented below.

2.3.1 Small farmer

According to 2008 agriculture census, there are about 3.1 million farm households in the southern region. Among them 2.7 million are small farmers who own less than 2.5 acres each. They are 46 percent of total households in the region, which is slightly higher than that of Bangladesh (45%). They are the largest occupational group. Among "farm households", overwhelming majority small farmers, percentage of such households being 87 and 84 respectively in the southern region and Bangladesh (BBS, 2010). They are more concentrated in Lakshmipur, Feni, Barisal and Cox's Bazar (90% or more).

2.3.2 Agricultural labourer

The next largest occupational group is agricultural labourer. There are over 1.6 million households in the southern region whose predominant source of livelihood is agricultural labour. They compose 28 percent of total households in the region compared to 31 percent in Bangladesh (BBS, 2010). Satkhira has the highest proportion of agricultural labourer households (52%), followed by Bagerhat (43%). Chittagong, Jhalokati and Feni have less proportion of such households (14%, 16% and 21% respectively).

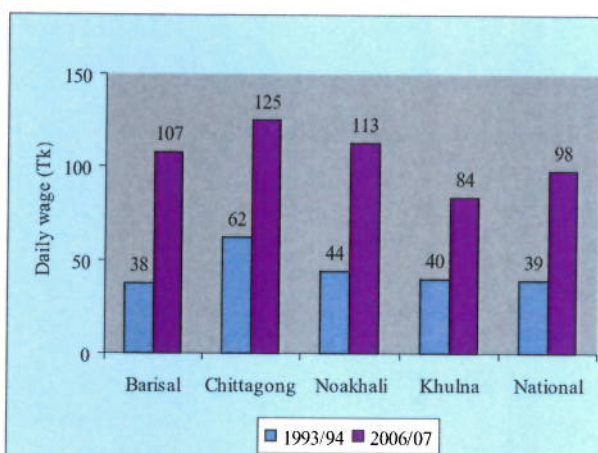


Figure 2.2: Average wage rate for male agriculture workers

Distinct livelihood conditions of this group are:

- seasonal employment / unemployment;
- low demand for labour in most periods of the year in many parts of the region, as those areas are single-cropped;
- low wage in the lean season (period between plantation and harvesting);
- discriminatory wage for women; and
- chronic indebtedness.

Average daily wage for agricultural labourers is relatively higher in Chittagong and Noakhali (Figure 2.2) (Planning Commission, 2011).

2.3.3 Salt farmer

Salt farming is overwhelmingly concentrated in Cox's Bazar district where 15 percent of total rural households are salt farmers. They meet bulk of the demand for raw salt in the country. Moheshkhali Upazila has the highest concentration of salt farmers (BSCIC, 2003). According to Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industry Corporation (BSCIC) sources, target area for salt farming in 2011-12 is estimated at 29,138 ha. About 55,000 farmers would be engaged and the production target is 1.4 million tonnes (Daily *Prothom Alo*, 21 November 2011).

2.3.4 Fisher

Eight percent of rural farm households in Bangladesh live on fishing. But in the southern region, fishing is the predominant source of livelihood for 14 percent of households, which is currently 0.8 million households (BBS, 1999, 2010). They operate in the estuary, on coastal waters and sometimes in the deep sea. Barguna has the highest proportion of fisher households (38%), followed by Khulna (29%) and Jhalokati (26%).

Monsoon months are the main fishing season. A small stratum of bahadders (boat-owners), with nets and cash resources exercise control over fishers' lives. With increasing poverty at one end (landlessness) and growing entrepreneurship at the other end (investments in boat and gear), more and more people are encroaching into the domain of traditional fishers. As a result, fish resources along the coast are dwindling fast.

2.3.5 Shrimp fry collector

Estimated number of fry collectors in the coastal zone was about half a million (Frankenberger, 2002). A large number of them are children.

The cycle of fry collection is from mid-February to mid-August. In Khulna region, the main period of bagda fry collection is mid-November to mid-July. However, golda fry is collected round the year, though the peak season is April-May.

The number of fry collectors is high in Patuakhali and Barguna, which indicates the dependence of poor people on this particular activity. Although shrimp farms are more concentrated in the greater Khulna district, there are fewer fry collectors from that region. Opportunity (or lack of opportunity) for gainful employment in other activities is plausible explanation for this employment pattern (Ahmad, 2004).

2.3.6 Extractor of forest resources

Many households depend on forest resources for their livelihood. According to a baseline survey conducted by the Sundarban Biodiversity Conservation Project (SBCP), 18 percent households in 17 upazilas of five districts in the Sundarban-impact zone are dependent on Sundarban resources, having a population of 3.5 millions (SBCP, 2001). Among them are fry collector (35%), fishers (33%), bawali (22%), boatman (4%), golpata collector (3%), shell/crab collector (2%), mawali, and medicinal plant collector. Many poor households depend on recently planted forests in chars and islands in Patuakhali, Bhola and Noakhali for fuel wood and materials for house construction.

2.4. Poverty

2.4.1: Extent of Poverty

In Bangladesh, 31.5 percent are below the upper poverty line³ based on the Household Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES) 2010 of BBS (Table 2.5). Barisal Division has the highest number of poor people (39.4%). With respect to the lower poverty line indicating extreme or hardcore poverty, Barisal division has also the highest concentration of poor people (26.7%) compared to Bangladesh (17.6%) (Planning Commission, 2011).

³ Upper poverty line indicating 'absolute poverty' corresponds to a level of minimum dietary energy consumption of 2122 kcal/capita/day. The lower poverty line indicating 'extreme or hardcore poverty' corresponds to dietary consumption of 1805 kcal/capita/day.

Table 2.5: Percentage of population in poverty

Division	Extreme poverty			Absolute poverty		
	Total	Rural	Urban	Total	Rural	Urban
Barisal	26.7	27.3	24.2	39.4	39.2	39.9
Chittagong	13.1	16.2	4.0	26.2	31.0	11.8
Khulna	15.4	15.2	16.4	32.1	31.0	35.8
Bangladesh	17.6	21.1	7.7	31.5	35.2	21.3

In terms of several human development indicators, the situation in the southern region is mixed. For example, primary school enrolment rate is lower, while literacy rate is higher. Access to sanitation is slightly better (Table 2.6). On the other hand, the health situation is poorer in terms of population-hospital bed ratio, as well as the extent of severe child malnutrition (Ahmad, 2003).

2.4.2: Poverty and vulnerability

Poverty does not necessarily correspond to low income or low consumption alone, but also to lack of linkage, opportunity and power, and susceptibility to exogenous factors. Often poverty is defined as vulnerability. For poor people, vulnerability is both a condition and a determinant of poverty, referring to the ability of the people to avoid, withstand or recover from adverse impacts of factors that disrupt their lives, and that are beyond their immediate control. This includes:

- shocks (sudden change, such as natural disasters, conflict or collapsing prices);
- seasonality (low demand for farm labor between plantation and harvesting periods); and
- trend (environmental degradation, deteriorating terms of trade).

Table 2.6: Position of the coastal zone with respect to country situation

Strength	Weakness
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Agriculture wage rate is high ○ Literacy rate is high ○ Primary school density is high ○ Proportion of households with durable wall is high ○ Proportion of households with sanitary latrine is high ○ Density of road is high ○ Land is accreting in some areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Average size of household is high ○ Demographic dependency ratio is high ○ Proportion of small farm households is high ○ Per capita GDP is low ○ Poverty (both absolute and extreme) is high ○ Primary school enrolment rate is low ○ Severe child malnutrition is high ○ Population per hospital bed is high ○ <i>Union Parishad</i> density is low ○ Per capita gross cropped area is low ○ Proportion of functionally landless is high ○ Proportion of households with durable roof is low ○ Proportion of households with electricity connection is low ○ Proportion of households with access to tap and tube well is low ○ Household coverage by major micro-credit NGOs is low ○ Share of industrial sector in GDP is low ○ Density of growth centers is low ○ Land erosion is severe in some areas ○ Susceptible to cyclone and storm surge

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In the southern region, a wide range of vulnerabilities is identified. These are:

- ◇ the threat of cyclones and storm surges that cause deaths and destruction;
- ◇ the threat of land erosion;
- ◇ deterioration and the declining viability of many distinctive and threatened coastal ecosystems;
- ◇ limited livelihoods opportunities (especially outside agriculture) and poorly developed economic linkages;
- ◇ poor level of service provision that make the isolation of many coastal areas worse.
- ◇ changing patterns of land use (including the growth of shrimp and salt production) that are affecting the coast's morphology and water resources characteristic;
- ◇ resource degradation;
- ◇ salinization including saline intrusion into the freshwater aquifers; and
- ◇ flood and congestion of drainage system.

These vulnerabilities affect different households differently. The more affluent a household is and, in particular, the more assets it possesses, the more resilient it is to disruption of its livelihood base from these phenomena (PDO-ICZMP, 2002).

2.5 Gender Aspects

State of reproductive health, in Barisal Division, according to Bangladesh Demographic and Health Survey (BDHS) 2007, 46 percent of women receive ante-natal care from medically trained providers, while the percentage of deliveries assisted by medically trained providers is only 13 percent. Such proportions are 52 percent and 18 percent respectively for Bangladesh (Planning Commission, 2011).

Households are overwhelmingly male-headed with only 5.0 percent being headed by women in the southern region and 4.6 percent in the country (BBS, 2010). This data may not reflect the ground reality. Men are socially perceived as "head of the household", though there are many more "women-managed households". When men migrate to other areas for one season or more for employment, women become de facto head of the household.

Households often resort to more than one economic activity to maximize income and to minimize risks. Choices are largely determined by opportunities, skills and cultural norms. Many activities are of seasonal nature and people seek employment as many days as possible by diversifying their choices. Besides household chores, women also engage themselves in multiple remunerative activities (Table 2.7) (Ahmad, 2003).

Table 2.7: Combination of livelihood activities

MALE	FEMALE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ Agriculture, day labour; ◇ Agriculture, trading; ◇ Agriculture, sawing (timber) ◇ Agriculture, salt production, trading; ◇ Agriculture, rickshaw van driving; ◇ Agriculture, fishing, rickshaw van driving; ◇ Agriculture, work in brickfield; ◇ Agriculture, paddy husking; ◇ Agriculture, fishing, cattle trading, pond aquaculture ◇ Agriculture, shrimp farming, pond aquaculture, day labour; ◇ Day labour, salt farming; ◇ Day labour, net repairing, shrimp fry collection ◇ Fishing, net making; ◇ Pond aquaculture, trading. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ Homestead gardening, poultry keeping, labour management; ◇ Agriculture, livestock rearing, pond aquaculture, poultry keeping; ◇ Agriculture (harvesting), paddy husking, net making; ◇ Agriculture, poultry keeping, livestock rearing, making of cow-dung fuel; ◇ Agriculture (harvesting), <i>muri</i> trading, paddy husking, livestock rearing, poultry keeping, egg selling; ◇ Day labour, salt farming; ◇ Day labour, net making, earthwork, crab collection, <i>kantha</i> making; ◇ Day labour, net repairing, shrimp fry collection, ◇ Day labour, spice grinding; ◇ Day labour, housemaid, fuel collection; ◇ Day labour, shrimp fry collection, paddy husking, earth work, <i>kantha</i> making; ◇ Fishing, net making; ◇ Embroidery, handicraft making, block printing; ◇ Making cow-dung fuel, poultry keeping.

2.6 Nutritional Status

As of 2009, 45% of children under the age of five are underweight. Since 2000 the fall has been quite slow. During the period from 2005 to 2009, there has hardly been any improvement. Against this backdrop, it seems unlikely that Bangladesh will reach the MDG target of 33% prevalence rate by 2015. As per projections, the malnutrition prevalence rate would be 39% in 2015 (GED, Planning Commission, 2011).

According to Child and Mother Nutrition Survey of Bangladesh (CMNS) 2005, prevalence of child malnutrition in the southern region is the highest in Barisal Division in terms of all available indicators (Table 2.8).

Table 2.8: Extent of child malnutrition (2005)

Area	Children with malnutrition (%)			
	Underweight	Stunted	Wasted	Overweight
Barisal	41.6	52.9	14.7	3.4
Chittagong	39.7	51.4	13.4	1.2
Khulna	35.1	43.6	8.4	0.1
Bangladesh: All	39.7	46.2	14.5	1.4

2.7 Institutions

In Bangladesh, the institutional setting is quite complex, comprising national government, local government, private sector and a wide range of civil society organizations including NGOs which play complementary roles in development. Besides, there are formal and informal functional

groups and coalitions of the people at the community level who are increasingly being acknowledged as focus of development efforts. All these social and institutional entities operate within a network of power relations and linkages, which frame the overall institutional environment (Figure 2.3).

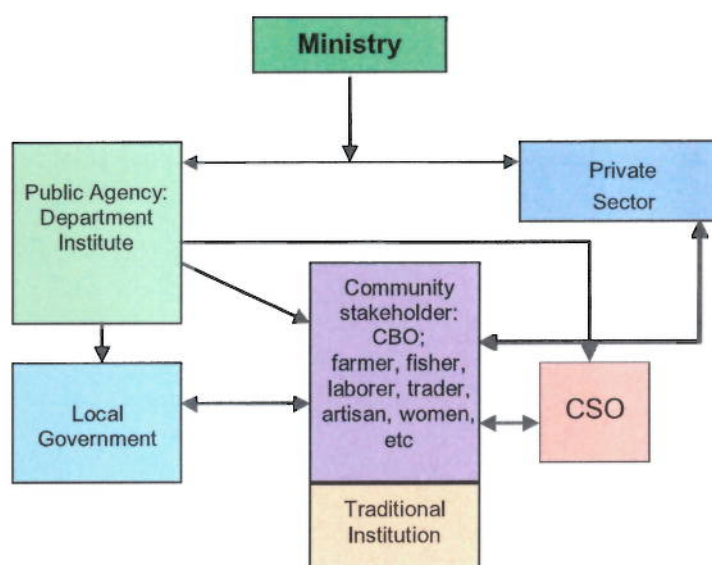


Figure 2.3: Current institutional setting

2.7.1 Public agency

The people have intricate relationship with these government institutions. They utilize services provided such as physical infrastructures, health, education, relief and rehabilitation and agricultural extension. Among other services are law and order, justice, natural resource management and credit.

Roles played by public agencies are very important. But access to services is influenced by socio-economic factors, and various rules and regulations. Several of these agencies have offices up to the district and upazila level, while some of them cover the entire country from their headquarters.

2.7.2 Local government

Union Parishad (UP) is the lowest level local government in the administrative structure of the country. It is an elected body with designated administrative, development and extension roles. There are 996 unions in the southern region out of 4,466 in the country. The next higher level local government is the *Upazila Parishad* (UZP) based in each Upazila. There are 117 upazilas in the southern region out of 508 in the country (23%). In urban areas, the local government is named as the *Pourasabha* (for smaller ones) and the *City Corporation* (for the larger ones). There are 49 municipalities/ city corporations out of 223 in the country (BBS, 2010a) (Table 2.9).

Table 2.9: Distribution of administrative units (2010)

Region	Upazila	Union	Village	Municipality
Southern region	117	996	12,213	49
Bangladesh	508	4,466	87,362	223
SR%	23	22	14	22

2.7.3 Traditional informal institution

In rural areas, many traditional institutions are also present. These are centuries-old, informal, but functional. Among these are *samaj* (a platform based on kinship, neighbourhood or caste) and *salish* (a forum for mediation comprising the clergy or influential community leaders), which play roles in different contexts.

2.7.4 Community based organization

There are many community based organizations (CBOs) operating with different objectives, mandates and functions. These sometimes evolve based on needs of particular interest groups or are induced by public agencies or NGOs. These are mainly membership organizations. Among these are various types of

- *samabaya samity* (cooperative society) linked with BRDB and the Department of Cooperatives (DoC);
- water management group (WMG) linked with the BWDB and LGED;
- landless contracting society (LCS) linked with BWDB and LGED; and
- savings and credit groups linked with NGOs.
- IPM Clubs emerging from Farmer Field Schools (FFS).

2.7.5 Private sector

Private sector is expanding in many spheres. It contributes to the construction of infrastructure (as contractors), production (manufacturing, agriculture), marketing (input distribution, value chain management) and services (health, education, etc). Private sector institutions are mainly membership organizations. Among these are Bazar Committee, Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Trade Association, Employers Association, etc. Most of these have local level committees.

2.7.6 Civil society organizations (CSOs)

Civil society organizations (CSOs) including NGOs are active in all the coastal districts. Chittagong district has the highest number of NGOs, closely followed by Khulna and Barisal, while Feni is covered by the lowest number of NGOs, followed by Jhalokati (ADAB, 2000). Among NGOs which work exclusively in rural areas, the highest number is involved in water and sanitation (53%), closely followed by environment and social forestry (51%), fisheries (49%) and micro-credit (48%) (Ahmad, 2003a).