



Latest Bangladesh Poverty Maps Launched

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The Honourable State Minister, Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Planning, M.A. Mannan MP, today launched the Bangladesh Poverty Maps 2010. This is the third generation of poverty maps in Bangladesh, which is an important statistical instrument for estimating the poverty incidence up to sub-district (upazila) levels. The poverty mapping exercises show that Rangpur and Barisal Divisions have the highest incidence of poverty while Chittagong and Sylhet division have the lowest. The maps were developed in a joint exercise by the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS), the World Bank and the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP). "With these latest poverty maps we have responded to demand from policy makers, researchers and the development partners. It will also facilitate the ongoing efforts to prepare database of the poor people across the country," said Md. Nojibur Rahman, Secretary, Statistics and Informatics Division, Ministry of Planning. "The latest poverty maps provide disaggregated poverty estimates to better understand the geographical variations in poverty incidence, explained Golam Mostafa Kamal, Director General, BBS. Recognizing the geographical and regional variations and spatial inequality in growth and poverty allows for more effective targeting of policy interventions based on local conditions. Poverty maps can become an important instrument for prioritization of policy interventions and resource allocations. "The poverty map is an essential planning tool that provides powerful visuals to identify poor areas with greater accuracy," said State Minister Mannan in Dhaka. "The poverty map 2010 will also provide inputs for the Seventh Five Year Plan, keeping in view the targets proposed under Vision 2021. While Bangladesh has made impressive economic and social gains over the past decade, poverty levels continue to be a challenge with around 32 percent of people living below the poverty line in 2010. These maps show that poverty rates vary considerably according to location, with pronounced inequalities at the division, district (zila) and sub-district (upazila) levels. "Comparing poverty maps with maps of social and other indicators that are correlated with poverty helps identify key impediments and bottlenecks that poor people face," said Salman Zaidi, Lead Economist, World Bank. "I hope the Government will find the poverty maps helpful to plan better targeted interventions. The maps show that the northern and southern districts, apart from Barisal, have a high prevalence of poverty and low primary school completion rates. Similarly, poverty appears to be high in chronic disaster-prone areas, such as the districts along the Jamuna River where communities are repeatedly affected by river erosion and flooding, and in the south-west which is prone to cyclones, tidal surges, salt water intrusion and water-logging. "These poverty maps also provide a good indication of where the most food insecure areas of the country are. In Bangladesh, with well-functioning markets, peoples purchasing power remains the most important factor in their access to food," said Christa Räder, WFP Representative. The Bangladesh Poverty Map 2010 and the Bangladesh Extreme Poor Poverty Map 2010 show the incidence of poverty (percentage of people living below the upper poverty line) and the incidence of extreme poverty (percentage of people living below the lower poverty line) respectively in each upazila. The zila and upazila estimates of poverty have been produced by applying a Small Area Estimation technique on data from the 2010 Household Income and Expenditure Survey and the 2011 Population Census. The World Bank
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