West Bengal is India’s 4th most populous state in India with 91 million people, a fifth of who are poor. Although poverty reduction in the state was faster after 2005, pockets of high poverty still persist within the state. What’s more, after 2005, the state’s economic growth, which is driven mainly by services, has been weak. So much so that West Bengal grew at an even slower pace than the country’s other low income states. Furthermore, consumption inequality, which increased marginally after 2005, is close to the national average.

**Poverty in West Bengal is close to the national average**

[Bar chart showing poverty levels in different states with West Bengal highlighted in orange.]

*Low Income States are highlighted in orange, All India is All India.*

**Some districts in West Bengal have very high poverty**

[Map showing district level poverty with West Bengal highlighted.]
Like many other states, poverty reduction in West Bengal was faster after 2005.

Population below poverty line, (%)

Low Income States are highlighted in orange, AI is All India.

There was faster poverty reduction in both rural and urban areas of West Bengal after 2005.
Since 2005, West Bengal’s growth has lagged behind most other states in India, including the Low Income States.

Services contribute the most to West Bengal’s growth.
The pace of poverty reduction in West Bengal after 2005 was similar to the national average.

A substantial share of India's poor live in West Bengal.

Interpreting the graph:
- **Share of poor > share of population**: The state's poverty rate is higher than its share of the population.
- **Share of poor < share of population**: The state's poverty rate is lower than its share of the population.
- **Share of poor = share of population**: The state's poverty rate is equal to its share of the population.

Data for 19 large states and All India. Low Income States are highlighted in orange.
Since 2005, consumption inequality has increased marginally in West Bengal

Consumption inequality in West Bengal is close to the national average

Low Income States are highlighted in orange. Al is All India.