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ATTENTION: NEWS EDITOR / CHIEF REPORTER

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HDR 2010 Recognizes Bangladesh's Great Progress over Time

Bangladesh's Human Development Index (HDI) increases by 81% between 1980 and 2010

Dhaka: The 20th anniversary edition of UNDP's *Human Development Report*, launched on 4th November in New York, in a ceremony with UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and Nobel laureate Amartya Sen, spotlights Bangladesh as one of the countries that has made the greatest progress in recent decades as measured by a new version of the Human Development Index (HDI).

The 20th anniversary edition of the Report, ***The Real Wealth of Nations: Pathways to Human Development***, that revisits the original analytical exercise of 1990, using new methodologies and international data sources, clearly recognizes Bangladesh's developmental achievements. On the basis of comparable data, Bangladesh's HDI has almost doubled since 1980, and out of the 95 countries for which data is available, Bangladesh is ranked 3rd in terms of the improvement over that period.

"This should be a source of national pride for every single citizen of Bangladesh. To have managed to continue its vision of development in a very steady manner despite many enormous challenges is a very considerable achievement", UNDP Bangladesh Resident Representative, Stefan Priesner said.

The Human Development Reports, commissioned annually by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) since 1990, are editorially independent from UNDP. The first Human Development Report introduced its pioneering HDI and analyzed previous decades of development indicators, concluding that "there is no automatic link between economic growth and human progress." The 2010 Report's rigorous review of longer term trends - looking back at HDI indicators for most countries over the last 30 to 40 years - shows there is no consistent correlation between national economic performance and achievement in the non-income HDI areas of health and education.

The Report's analysis, for those countries where complete HDI data are available, shows the 2010 HDI for Bangladesh is 0.469. This gives the country a rank of 129th out of 169 countries. When comparing HDI trends over past two decades, Bangladesh and Cambodia have been the best improvers in the Asia and Pacific region (a group which includes 24 countries). A big factor has been improvements in life expectancy. Indeed, over the past 40 years, this increased by 23 years in Bangladesh, compared with 18 years in Iran, 16 years in India and 10 years in Afghanistan .

New HDI plus new Indices for Inequality, Gender and Poverty

The Report this year includes 2010 HDI rankings based on a reformulated HDI and new Indices for Inequality, Gender and Poverty.

The HDI sees major changes to its specification and includes new indicators, and therefore, cannot be compared with past data. Previously, the HDI was calculated as the simple average of the dimension indices. This method of aggregation allowed for low achievement in one dimension to be compensated for by high achievement in another. This year, a new method is used which limits the trading-off of dimensions against each other. It ensures that a one per cent decline in, for example, life expectancy at birth, has the same impact on the HDI as a one per cent decline in education or income.



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Moreover, wholly new indicators, reflecting the number of years spent in school by new and past generations, are used in the Education Index.

Comparable country rankings in the HDI (on the basis of re-estimated data) are reported over a five-year comparative period, rather than on a year-to-year basis, to better reflect long-term trends. Due to the methodological refinements of the HDI formula, the 2010 rankings are also not comparable to those published in earlier reports.

The 2010 *Human Development Report* continues the HDI tradition of measurement innovation by introducing new indices that address crucial development factors not directly reflected in the HDI:

- ***The Inequality-adjusted Human Development Index (IHDI)***

For the first time, HDI data are examined through the lens of inequality, adjusting HDI achievements to reflect disparities in income, health and education.

- ***The Gender Inequality Index (GII)***

The 2010 Report introduces a new measure of gender inequities, including maternal mortality rates and women's representation in parliaments.

- ***The Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI)***

The report features a new multidimensional poverty measure that complements income-based poverty assessments by looking at multiple factors at the household level, from basic living standards to access to schooling, clean water and health care.

The Nobel laureate, Amartya Sen writes in his introduction to the Report: "Twenty years after the appearance of the first Human Development Report, there is much to celebrate in what has been achieved. But we also have to be alive to ways and means of improving the assessment of old adversities and of recognizing - and responding to - new threats that endanger human well-being and freedom."

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About the Report: *Human Development is the expansion of the freedoms that people have to live their lives as they choose. This conception—inspired by the path-breaking work of Nobel laureate Amartya Sen and the leadership of the late Mahbub ul Haq, and known also as the capabilities approach because of its emphasis on the freedom that people have to achieve vital 'beings and doings'—has been at the core of UNDP's approach since the first Human Development Report in 1990, and is as relevant as ever to the design of effective policies to combat poverty and deprivation. This approach has proved powerful in reshaping thinking about topics as diverse as gender, human security and climate change.*

Note to editors: *For HDI calculations and other purposes, the report includes 24 countries in its East Asia and Pacific region: Cambodia, China, Fiji, Indonesia, Kiribati, Korea (Republic of), Lao PDR, Malaysia, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nauru, Palau, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu and Viet Nam.*

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