



MEDIA RELEASE

ATTENTION: NEWS EDITOR
February 2005

DATE: 16

GoB/UN report shows Bangladesh's potential to combat poverty

Three landmark reports on the Millennium Development Goals launched

DHAKA: The potential of Bangladesh to combat poverty was revealed today by the first "Bangladesh MDG Progress Report", jointly prepared by the Government of Bangladesh and the UN Country Team in Bangladesh, which shows Bangladesh is on the right track to achieve the Millennium Development Goals by 2015.

During the launch of the report, Government of Bangladesh and the United Nations Head-of-Mission reaffirmed their commitment to the Millennium Development Goals, which was first initiated by world leaders at the Millennium Summit in 2000 through the Millennium Declaration to translate globally agreed priorities into a better world for everyone.

The Millennium Development Goals are a set of internationally agreed targets for reducing poverty, hunger, disease, illiteracy, environmental degradation, combating HIV/AIDS and discrimination against women by 2015.

The MDGs represent a simple, but powerful idea. By setting basic targets for a number of critically important development outcomes, they provide guidance and direction towards the achievement of eight key goals, beginning with decisive reduction of poverty.

If the world achieves the MDGs, more than 500 million people will be lifted out of poverty. A further 250 million will no longer suffer from hunger. 30 million children and two million mothers who might reasonably have been expected to die will be saved.

With a view to fulfill the commitments, Bangladesh has made significant progress in achieving universal primary education (goal 2), which is just 17% below than the target set for 2015 and in promoting gender equality and women empowerment (goal 3) which is very close to fulfill its target set for 2015.



MEDIA RELEASE

The report also indicates Bangladesh's strong initiative to reduce child mortality (goal 4) as presently the number of deaths per thousand stands 82 for children under the age of five while the target for 2015 is to bring that figure to 50 deaths per thousand.

But, challenges remain in other fields like eradication of extreme poverty and hunger (goal 1), improving maternal health (goal 5) and to ensure environmental sustainability (goal 7). In terms of combating HIV/AIDS, Bangladesh needs stronger advocacy and awareness building among the people.

Also, to develop a global partnership for development with the developed countries, Bangladesh needs strong advocacy policy to assure cooperation from the donors.

After China and India, Bangladesh has the third largest number of poor. The MDGs are the global common goals to be achieved by all the development partners and offer themselves as the nucleus around which development efforts can be elaborated at the country level.

The "First Bangladesh MDG Progress Report" is meant to bring attention of all stakeholders the development concerns that need especial focus, if the MDGs are to be achieved in Bangladesh by 2015 and highlights the gaps and challenges that need to be addressed to meet the MDGs.

This report will contribute to a substantive discussion on specific policies in the on-going Bangladesh PRSP process. The report also holds significant relevance for the country programme planning of the UN agencies under the forthcoming Bangladesh UNDAF 2006 -2010.

ENDS...

For further information please contact: Ms. Lisa Hiller, UNDP Communications Officer via email: lisa.hiller@undp.org, ph: 811 8600, ext. 2403, mob: 011812042, or Mr. Sakil Faizulla, UNDP Assistant Communications officer via email: sakil.faizullah@undp.org, ph: 8118600, ext. 2415, mob: 011 812046 or Mr. Binoy Khisha, UNDP Communications Assistant via email: binoy.khisha@undp.org, ph: 8118600, ext. 2431.