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I. Situation analysis

1. With an area of 144,000 km² and a population of 153.3 million, Bangladesh is one of the world's most densely populated, disaster-prone and climate-vulnerable countries. Despite these challenges, Bangladesh has witnessed considerable development progress over the last two decades, overcoming an initially weak economic performance to realize an average annual gross domestic product (GDP) growth rate of 6.2 per cent since 2004 (up from 3.2 per cent in the 1980s) and a significant reduction in the poverty headcount ratio, which stood at 40 per cent in 2005¹ (down from 58.8 per cent in 1990). In 2010, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) global Human Development Report ranked Bangladesh third out of 95 countries for the greatest progress achieved and for having doubled its Human Development Index since 1980.

2. The significant progress Bangladesh had made over the years reflects the efforts made by successive governments and civil society to tackle poverty and other development challenges, setting the country on course to potentially achieve five out of eight Millennium Development Goals.² Exceptional gains have been made on certain targets (child mortality and primary school enrolment), but progress remains mixed within and between Millennium Development Goals. In spite of this, strong overall economic and social development progress has lent momentum to the aspirations and vision of Bangladesh to attain middle-income country status by 2021. Central to this vision is a strong focus on inclusive growth and poverty reduction, which is also reflected in the Government's Outline Perspective Plan 2010-2021 and the forthcoming Sixth Five-Year Plan, both of which were informed by the results of an extensive Millennium Development Goals assessment exercise undertaken jointly by the Government and United Nations system in 2010.

3. *Democratic governance and human rights:* Following a caretaker government from 2006 to 2008, Bangladesh returned to democratic civilian rule in 2009. Although the Government had a successful start in building the capacity and credibility of democratic institutions, the conclusions of the Millennium Development Goals assessment exercise in 2010 suggests that major challenges remain. Foremost, key institutions such as the Parliament still lack capacity to fully exercise their oversight functions, and the judiciary remains under-resourced and burdened by a backlog of unresolved court cases.³ The Human Rights Commission is still in its formative phase and requires substantial technical and political support and resources while the overall legal framework still constrains vital reforms in institutions like the police. Public service delivery remains hindered by inflexible regulatory frameworks, capacity constraints and a lack of accountability and transparency. These challenges are further compounded by inadequate decentralization. For example, only 3 per cent of the national development budget is devolved to local government institutions.

4. *Pro-poor economic growth with equity:* Although recent macroeconomic performance has been sound, the level and pace of poverty reduction may be undermined by worsening income inequality, notably between regions, relatively low levels of employment participation (58.5 per cent in 2005/2006) and inadequate social protection against external shocks. Women, especially poor, single household heads are the worst affected group. Of utmost concern is urban poverty, which has become acute as large numbers of rural migrants and climate refugees relocate to cities. Extremely rapid and unplanned urban growth of nearly 3.6 per cent per year has put the urban environment and the Government under severe stress and has generated a multifaceted set of complex challenges related to urban planning, security of tenure, service delivery, social capital development, and infrastructure.

¹ The latest year for which United Nations and the World Bank statistics on poverty headcount ratio is available is 2005.

² Millennium Development Goal 1 (Poverty and hunger), 2 (Primary education), 3 (Gender equality), 4 (Child mortality) and 6 (HIV and Other major diseases).

³ The average disposal rate for land-related cases is 9.5 years (The Asia Foundation, 2007).

5. *Climate change, environment, disaster risk reduction and response:* The geography and topography of Bangladesh make it one of the most vulnerable countries in the world to natural disasters, which have increased in frequency and severity as a result of the worsening impact of climate change. The poorest are the most severely affected as they live in the most climate vulnerable parts of the country. While better disaster preparedness strategies and practices have, over time, reduced the number of deaths, the loss of assets and livelihoods remain very high (as much as 3 per cent of GDP), with women being most acutely affected. Bangladesh is currently not on track to meet Millennium Development Goal 7 due to deforestation, growth of urban slums, biodiversity loss, and pollution. About half of the population is dependent on a rapidly degrading natural resource base, including forests, for their livelihoods and only about 50 per cent of households have access to on-grid energy. These environmental and climate change threats, compounded by Bangladesh's population pressure and institutional capacity constraints, can undermine its development potential as well as reverse recent hard-earned gains.

6. *Gender equality and women's advancement:* Despite impressive gains on gender parity in primary and secondary school enrolment, progress remains weak on gender equality and women's empowerment. Bangladesh is ranked 116 out of 169 countries on the 2010 Gender Inequality Index. Women's participation in politics, political decision-making, and the labour market (29.2 per cent versus 86.8 per cent for men in 2005/2006) remains limited. Other vulnerable groups such as ethnic and religious minorities, people living with HIV/AIDS and the disabled face similar constraints.

II. Past cooperation and lessons learned

7. The 2010 Assessment of Development Results (ADR) noted UNDP alignment with national priorities and its positive contributions to the achievement of transformational results in two major areas: (a) electoral reform and restoration of democracy, where support to legislative frameworks, capacity development and photo-based electronic voter registration resulted in peaceful and credible elections with 87 per cent voter turnout (a historical high); and (b) disaster management, where policy advice on the national disaster framework and support for development of early warning systems resulted in a paradigm shift from emergency response to risk reduction, and the mainstreaming of disaster risk reduction in all line agencies.

8. The ADR further noted that significant results were achieved in other areas, including: (a) human rights, where advocacy and legislative support over 14 years resulted in the establishment of the National Human Rights Commission; (b) urban poverty, where partnerships with local governments, civil society organizations (CSOs) and the private sector resulted in improved livelihoods and living conditions of 2 million people; (c) rural poverty, where interventions that led to sustainable income and food security for nearly 25,000 destitute women constitute a scalable model; and (d) gender mainstreaming across all programmes, resulting in a significant increase in women's participation at the policy and implementation levels.

9. The ADR also underscored areas for improvement now incorporated in the proposed country programme. These recommendations along with lessons from the previous cycle have been reflected in the following ways: (a) stronger emphasis on partnerships with the Government, CSOs and the private sector to scale-up successful pilots and first generation initiatives as well as capture lessons to inform choices; (b) securing balance between implementation and policy advocacy; (c) greater efforts to foster stronger national ownership and align UNDP programmes with the Government's planning and operational priorities; (d) greater attention to building institutional linkages for long-term sustainability; and (e) further advancement of gender outcomes at the policy level.

III. Proposed programme

10. The present country programme responds to the Government's vision to become a middle income country by 2021 and priorities in its Outline Perspective Plan 2010-2021

and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) (2012-2016). With a focus on areas where UNDP has a distinct comparative advantage within the United Nations system (namely, governance, poverty reduction, disaster risk reduction and climate change), it is also driven by the need to accelerate Millennium Development Goal progress, as reflected in the UNDAF, and is closely aligned with the principles of the Joint Cooperation Strategy signed between the Government and its development partners to promote aid coordination.

11. In line with the UNDP strategic plan and building on the foundations of the current cycle, the present country programme document will focus on three areas: (a) democratic governance and human rights; (b) pro-poor growth with equity; and (c) climate change, environment, disaster risk reduction and response. The country programme will seek to consolidate and scale-up past successes by linking practice to policy and by enhancing institutional capacities in a sustainable manner. Under the new cycle, programmatic support in poverty reduction and climate change will be significantly expanded while support in governance will be deepened and consolidated.

12. Given the weak progress on gender equality and women's advancement, gender will continue to be integrated in all programme interventions, as in the current cycle. In response to the critical challenge of weak women's political and economic empowerment, the governance and poverty reduction pillars will include specific interventions at the policy and community levels that focus on women's political participation and involvement in decision-making processes, and on preferential targeting of women in economic development and social protection programmes.

13. Democratic governance and human rights: This major programme area remains a key national priority for the Government as it underpins the country's future development and its progress on Millennium Development Goals achievement, especially during this democratic consolidation phase. UNDP support is framed around two outcomes, including the scaling up of support to service delivery and access to justice. Under Outcome 1.1 (Enhanced capacity and accountability of democratic institutions, civil service and local government), UNDP will work with the United Nations Children's Fund, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the United Nations Capital Development Fund and others to continue supporting the Government with strategic public administration reforms and in further developing capacity of key democratic institutions and local government entities for better public service delivery. The capacity and accountability of the public sector will be strengthened by: (a) directing technical support to parliamentary standing committees to more actively and effectively perform their oversight functions; (b) further deepening the capacity of institutions such as the Election Commission to continue overseeing electoral processes effectively, including the conduct of credible elections; and (c) emphasizing the role of CSOs and the media. Information and communications technology will continue to be leveraged to improve access to information and services under the Digital Bangladesh initiative of the Government.

14. Under Outcome 1.2 (Improved human rights and access to justice), UNDP will provide support to reduce the court system's case backlog, and remove structural barriers that impede the fair and transparent delivery of justice. UNDP will also continue to support the improvement of law enforcement agencies to fulfil their role in justice and human security and strengthen the capacity of independent institutions such as the new National Human Rights Commission.

15. Pro-poor economic growth with equity: This critical area for Millennium Development Goals acceleration will be significantly expanded under the new programme cycle. The focus will be on scaling-up social safety nets and linking them to policy development, as well as taking to scale in collaboration with UNICEF, the World Food Programme, and the United Nations Population Fund, the proven United Nations inter-agency area-based development approach developed under the previous cycle. The main thrust of Outcome 2.1 (Economic growth achieved in a more inclusive manner) is to

enhance the ability of the poor, especially women, to participate in the economy through better targeted employment and training opportunities, and to improve social protection systems through safety nets and access to micro-insurance. To this end, UNDP will work at both the downstream and policy levels with relevant United Nations agencies, such as the International Labour Organization and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, and other development partners. UNDP strategy downstream is to focus on targeted interventions on labour-intensive sectors, vulnerable groups and economically deprived areas. This will be complemented by policy interventions that include Millennium Development Goals-based planning methods and the promotion of pro-poor trade and foreign direct investment.

16. The urgency and magnitude of challenges related to unplanned urban growth and urban poverty call for specific interventions that promote pro-poor urban development. These will be undertaken jointly with the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT), UNICEF and ILO. At the community level, UNDP will focus on generating skills, promoting access to finance, and diversifying livelihoods for women and the most disadvantaged. This will be complemented with support to the Government to reform urban development policies and strategies aimed at improving urban governance, the security of land tenure, and living conditions and livelihoods of the poor. The country programme will also seek to strengthen the capacity of municipal governments for better urban planning and the delivery of services to the urban poor.

17. **Climate change, environment, disaster risk reduction and response:** Climate change, environmental protection and disaster risk reduction are critical areas of concern for Bangladesh, where current and past UNDP programmes have established strong building blocks which will go to scale alongside wider adaptation and mitigation efforts. Under Outcome 3.1 (Improved resilience of vulnerable communities and institutions to adapt to risks), UNDP will continue to focus on developing the capacity of the Government to mainstream the climate-environment-poverty nexus into policy and planning frameworks across ministries, while augmenting community-based risk reduction and adaptation capacities. Under Outcome 3.2 (The poor and vulnerable benefit from better management of natural resources and access to low carbon energy), UNDP will focus on building climate and environmental governance capacity at the national and local levels, specifically on policy compliance and the implementation of conservation plans and regulations to protect the natural resource base of the poor, including biodiversity, while at the same time support Bangladesh's policy objective to promote low emission growth, the spread of green technologies, and affordable energy access for the poor.

IV. Programme management, monitoring and evaluation

18. The country programme will be nationally executed and implemented in close collaboration with the Economic Relations Division of the Ministry of Finance and other implementing agencies. Direct implementation will be used where deemed appropriate. Under the UNDAF Action Plan, other modalities may include non-governmental organization, United Nations agency or intergovernmental organizations implementation to enhance delivery and results. UNDP fast-track procedures may be invoked if the need arises. Coordination will be ensured through steering committees to monitor each component and jointly review work plans. The annual National Implementation Modality audit will enhance the results-based monitoring and evaluation of the country programme.

19. In line with the UNDP evaluation policy, the country programme will be monitored and evaluated against the UNDAF results matrix and UNDP results and resources framework. UNDP will adopt harmonized approaches under the Joint Programme and UNDAF monitoring and evaluation framework and will work with the Economic Relations Division, United Nations agencies and implementation partners to monitor the projects at the output and outcome levels. Project and outcome evaluations will be conducted, including jointly with other United Nations agencies, where relevant. Detailed results frameworks with measurable indicators will be developed in partnership with the Government, the United Nations system and other stakeholders. Outcome and output data

will be sufficiently disaggregated to record variations in performance between men and women, and between ethnic groups. UNDP will continue to document good practices and lessons as well as communicate results.

20. To strengthen the national ownership, aid coordination and development effectiveness of the country programme, UNDP will forge strong partnerships with the Government, civil society and donors. As a signatory to the Joint Cooperation Strategy and with a global mandate to support capacity for aid coordination, UNDP will play a key role in the Local Consultative Group, including support to leadership of thematic groups with government counterparts and contributing to capacity development of national institutions.

21. The estimated resource envelope for the country programme is \$553.6 million, of which \$55.6 million will be allocated from UNDP regular resources and \$250 million has already been mobilized as cost-sharing with partners. The remaining amount of \$248 million will be mobilized from other development partners, including global trust funds such as the Global Environment Facility and Montreal Protocol. The non-core resource target is based on past performance and current trends, and UNDP will continue to deepen and broaden its partnerships throughout the cycle. During the last three years, the UNDP country office has delivered over \$83 million (on average) and has augmented its programme, operational and advisory capacity through filled vacancies and additional staffing where necessary.

Annex. Results and resources framework for the country programme for Bangladesh (2012-2016)

National priority (Outline Perspective Plan 2010-2021: Improve governance to uphold the rights and tenets of justice, realize gender equality, and foster a skilled, talented and knowledgeable work force					
Country programme/UNDAF Outcome 1.1: Government institutions at the national and subnational levels are able to more effectively carry out their mandates, including delivery of public services, in a more accountable, transparent, and inclusive manner					
Outcome indicators: Quality of oversight and conduct of national and local elections; number of standing committees active; status of civil service human resources management system; women as percentage of senior civil servants					
Related Strategic Plan focus areas: Democratic governance					
Government partner contribution	Other partner contributions	UNDP contribution	Indicator(s), baselines and target(s) for UNDP contributions	Indicative country programme outputs	Indicative resources by outcome (in thousands of United States dollars)
Government of Bangladesh commits to ensuring independence and more capacity strengthening of the Election Commission and Parliament. Government of Bangladesh will lead on further electoral reform as well as public admin reform (including passing the Civil Service Act), and devolve financial authority to newly elected subdistrict and local levels	Development partners will strengthen financial oversight capacity and accountability of Parliament. World Bank will support the development of improved national identity cards under the Election Commission, and manage a trust fund to enhance public finance management. Developing partners will also support civil service training and the nationwide grant system for local governments. CSOs will support civic education, election monitoring and performance of Members of Parliament	UNDP will strengthen Parliamentary Standing Committees, the Election Commission and select CSOs (to promote democratic oversight and enhance public sector accountability). UNDP will also support strategic public administration reform at the central, subdistrict and local levels to enhance public service delivery and gender responsiveness, including through e-governance and information and communications technology.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Status of revision of Parliamentary Standing Committee Rules of Procedure. Baseline: 2010: No; Target: 2014: Yes - Number of ministries responsible for service delivery with performance monitoring systems (Baseline: 2010:0; Target: 2016: 5). - Status of civil service network for women (Baseline: 2010: No; Target: 2016: Yes) - Percentage of local plans fully integrating Millennium Development Goals (Baseline: 2010: 8%; T: 2016: 60%) - Number of people benefiting from information and service centres under Digital Bangladesh, disaggregated by gender (Baseline: 2010:2 million; Target: 2016: 20 million) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Parliamentary Standing Committees are able to actively and effectively perform their functions of oversight and legislation - Electoral oversight and conduct of elections by Election Commission result in credible elections - Business processes for service delivery by central and local government institutions are more gender-responsive - Civil society and media better able to hold public sector accountable for performance 	Regular 16,000
					Other: 85,000
Country programme/UNDAF Outcome 1.2: Justice and human rights institutions are strengthened to better serve and protect the rights of all citizens, including women and vulnerable groups					
Outcome indicators: Status of approval of National Strategy for Justice Sector; percentage of citizens satisfied with the police force; women as percentage of Bangladesh police force, including at officer level					
Government of Bangladesh commits to bolster independence of judiciary, develop pro-poor justice system and modernize law enforcement. Government will also create momentum within the judiciary system to increase efficiency and address backlogs, which	Development partners will support the informal justice sector, focusing on community legal services through NGOs. Development partners will also provide assistance for specialized training programmes aimed at the judiciary and police force, as well as provide financial and technical support for prison reform. UNICEF	UNDP will strengthen capacity of key formal justice institutions, including Ministry of Law, Supreme Court, and Village Courts. UNDP will also support human rights protection through statutory bodies, as well as support comprehensive police reform, focusing on sensitizing and professionalizing the police	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of cases backlogged (B: 2010: 365,000 Supreme Court cases; T: 2016: 292,000) - Number of village courts functioning (Baseline: 2010: 224 village courts; Target: 2016: 500) - Number of women and children benefiting from improved victim support services (Baseline: 2009:500; Target: 2016:7000) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Key justice sector institutions are able to undertake sectoral coordination and administer legal aid to reduce case backlog - Human Rights Commission has administrative systems and processes in place to more effectively monitor and protect human rights - Services performed by law enforcement agencies are sensitive to gender and human rights 	Regular: 9,000
					Other: 48,000

includes adoption of the National Strategy for Justice Sector	plans to support juvenile justice	force to improve conduct and service orientation		- Local justice systems and processes for rural populations are in place	
<p>National priority: Accelerate growth and promote productive employment for sustainable poverty reduction and achievement of Millennium Development Goals 1 (Poverty), 3 (Gender equality) and 7 (Quality of life of slum-dwellers)</p>					
<p>Country programme/UNDAF Outcome 2.1: Economic growth is achieved in a more inclusive manner, with economic opportunities reaching the rural and urban poor and the protection of vulnerable groups against shocks</p> <p>Outcome indicators: Percentage of women’s participation in labour force; percentage of poorest quintile in national consumption; rate of extreme poverty headcount in urban areas (CBN⁴)</p> <p>Related Strategic Plan focus areas: Poverty reduction and Millennium Development Goals achievement</p>					
To achieve middle-income county status by 2012, the Government of Bangladesh will pursue and invest in public works, regional integration, trade promotion, and foreign direct investment. The Government will also promote reforms and investment from GDP, especially in education and health, to protect the most vulnerable, particularly in the context of rapid urbanization	CSOs will promote dialogue and create demand for pro-poor policies. Development partners will support policy reform and maintain financial support for large poverty reduction programmes and private sector development. International financial institutions will support urban infrastructure. The World Food Programme (safety nets for food security), ILO (employment), and UNIDO (trade) will complement UNDP efforts as lead among United Nations agencies	UNDP will support Millennium Development Goals-based planning and promote macroeconomic and trade policy reforms that enable the poor to benefit more from growth UNDP will also promote economic equity and protection of vulnerable groups through social safety nets, including cash-for-work, asset transfers and employment in labour-intensive sectors. UNDP will target urban and rural poor and disadvantaged groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Percentage increase in formal sector employment (Baseline: 2010: n/a; Target: 2016: base +10%) - Number of households benefiting from United Nations social safety net programmes (Baseline: 2010: 24,000; Target: 2015: >100,000) - Female-headed households as percentage of United Nations social safety net programme beneficiaries (Baseline: 2010: n/a; Target: 2016: >50%) - Percentage of urban households in UNDP project areas with improved security of tenure (Baseline: 2009: 50%; Target: 2016: 75%) - Number of households with increased incomes in project-based areas (Baseline: 2011: n/a; Target:2016: 50,000) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gov at all levels better able to undertake MDG-based planning. - SSN in place to protect the poor from external shocks. - Employability of disadvantaged women in priority areas improved. - Urban poor acquire better housing, land tenure and market based skills. - Municipalities better able to practice participatory pro-poor urban gov. - Vulnerable groups from project-based areas in Chittagong Hill Tract have better access to sustainable livelihoods. 	<p>Regular: 20,000</p> <hr/> <p>Other: 232,000</p>
<p>National priority: Promote environmental sustainability, disaster risk reduction and build better energy and other infrastructures to achieve Millennium Development Goal 7 (Environment), 2 (Education) and 3 (Gender equality).</p>					
<p>Country programme/UNDAF Outcome 3:1: By 2016, populations vulnerable to climate change and natural disaster have become more resilient to adapt to risks</p> <p>Outcome indicators: Environment, climate and disaster vulnerability reduced;⁵ Community Asset Score for disaster risk and reduction⁶</p> <p>Related Strategic Plan focus areas: Environment and sustainable development</p>					
Government of Bangladesh will implement a	Development partners will commit significant financial	UNDP will strengthen capacity at the community level to	- Number of lowest tier governments with climate adaptation strategies	- Adaptation and risk reduction integrated at sector and community	Regular: 6,600

⁴Cost of basic needs (CBN): Standard method for estimating poverty in least developed countries used by the World Bank.

⁵Index to be developed in 2012.

⁶Indicator developed by World Food Programme to capture and assess community assets that reduce vulnerability to disasters. Each asset for which information is collected is assigned a factor score, which is then used to create the break points.

Comprehensive Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan using the Climate Change Trust Fund already established	support through a World Bank-administered multi-donor trust fund (Department for International Development, European Union, etc.) and the World Bank-led Global Priority Pilot Climate Resilience Fund	develop longer-term climate change adaptation strategies. UNDP will also promote greater consideration of climate-poverty nexus in national policy	(Baseline: 2010: 50; Target: 2016: 500) - Number of rural settlements with climate-disaster resilient habitat and capacity to protect community assets (Baseline: 2010: 0; Target: 2016: 13)	level - Emergency and early recovery policy framework, institutions and services result in fewer deaths and quicker recovery	Other: 105,000
Country programme/UNDAF Outcome 3.2: By 2016, vulnerable populations benefit from better natural resource management and access to low carbon energy Outcome indicators: Number of new government policies, strategies or plans formulated in support of sustainable use of natural resources; Energy from renewable sources; Land area covered by forest					
Government of Bangladesh will implement pro-poor sustainable environment policy, establish a Sustainable Energy Development Agency, and invest in enhancing capacity for environmental diplomacy	CSOs will advocate for sustainable environmental solutions. Asian Development Bank and World Bank will support the development of required infrastructure and private sector to enable sustainable energy to be generated	UNDP will enhance governance for sustainable natural resource management and protection of ecosystems, including biodiversity. UNDP will also promote low carbon financing and enhance access of the poor to green energy	- Percentage of households in targeted areas with renewable energy (Baseline: 2010: to be established in 2012; Target: 2016: 15% improvement) - Number of sites under community-based natural resource management (Baseline: 2010:8; Target:: 2016: 20)	- National and local planning authorities are better able to manage natural resources to benefit the poor - The poor are able to access on- and /or off-grid clean energy that is affordable	Regular: 4,000 Other: 28,000