



UNDP HUMAN DEVELOPMENT REPORT 2020 AND BANGLADESH

YPF POLICY BRIEF

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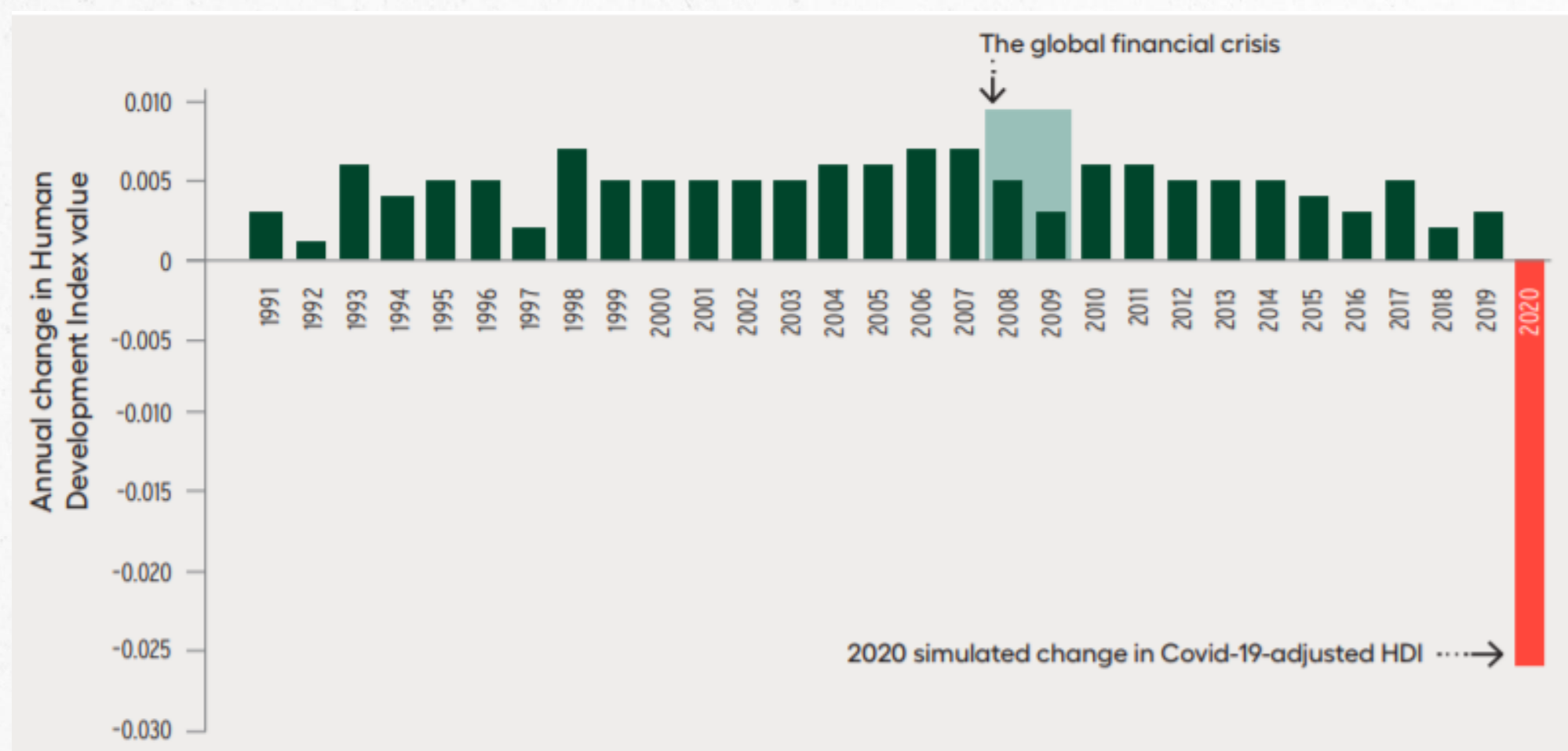


HUMAN DEVELOPMENT REPORT 2020 – THE NEXT FRONTIER

As the world braces to welcome 2021, in both hope and trepidation, the stark differences in human experiences around the world have laid bare the profound notion that economic “progress” does not equate to human development. It was the same belief which prompted UNDP to establish the Human Development Report (HDR) 30 years ago, which focused on various indices on freedom and opportunity instead of GDP to measure a country’s, and consequently the world’s, progress. Over the years, thanks to the annual report, it has become clear that while we may revel in new innovations and economic achievements, it is of paramount importance to tackle issues that stunt our human experience all over the globe. As shown by HDR 2020, climate crisis, rising inequality, biodiversity collapse are a small portion of that growing list of issues.

We must acknowledge the closely intertwined fate of the planet and us and imagine a new path forward that embraces radical ideas to achieve true progress. It is the Anthropocene, the Age of Humans, and unless we realize that the effect we have on our planet comes back to haunt us in social, economic, and political aspects, we can never achieve true progress, true development.

COVID-19 “is the tip of the spear” and forces us to reimagine what is “normal”. This is not the first pandemic, and will not be the last, and it is a fact that it jumped from animals to humans - underscoring human’s dependency on planets. While we get bogged down by transmission numbers around the world, we forget the ravaging effect COVID-19 had on the progress the world made on the human development front in the last 30 years. *Figure 1* from UNDP HDR 2020 shows exactly that:



Source: Source: Updated version of figure 3 in UNDP (2020).

Figure 1: The Covid-19 pandemic’s unprecedented shock to human development

But behind this grim picture of the past and future lies the hopeful present. HDR 2020 recognizes the truly remarkable, innovative, and daring nature of our generation which provides us the opportunity to right many wrongs and work on a new model of sustainable

progress mitigating overlapping inequalities. The 2020 HDR proposes new metrics towards that bold new approach while offering specific steps to catalyze that path of action. Figure 2 shows the structure of 2020 Human Development report:

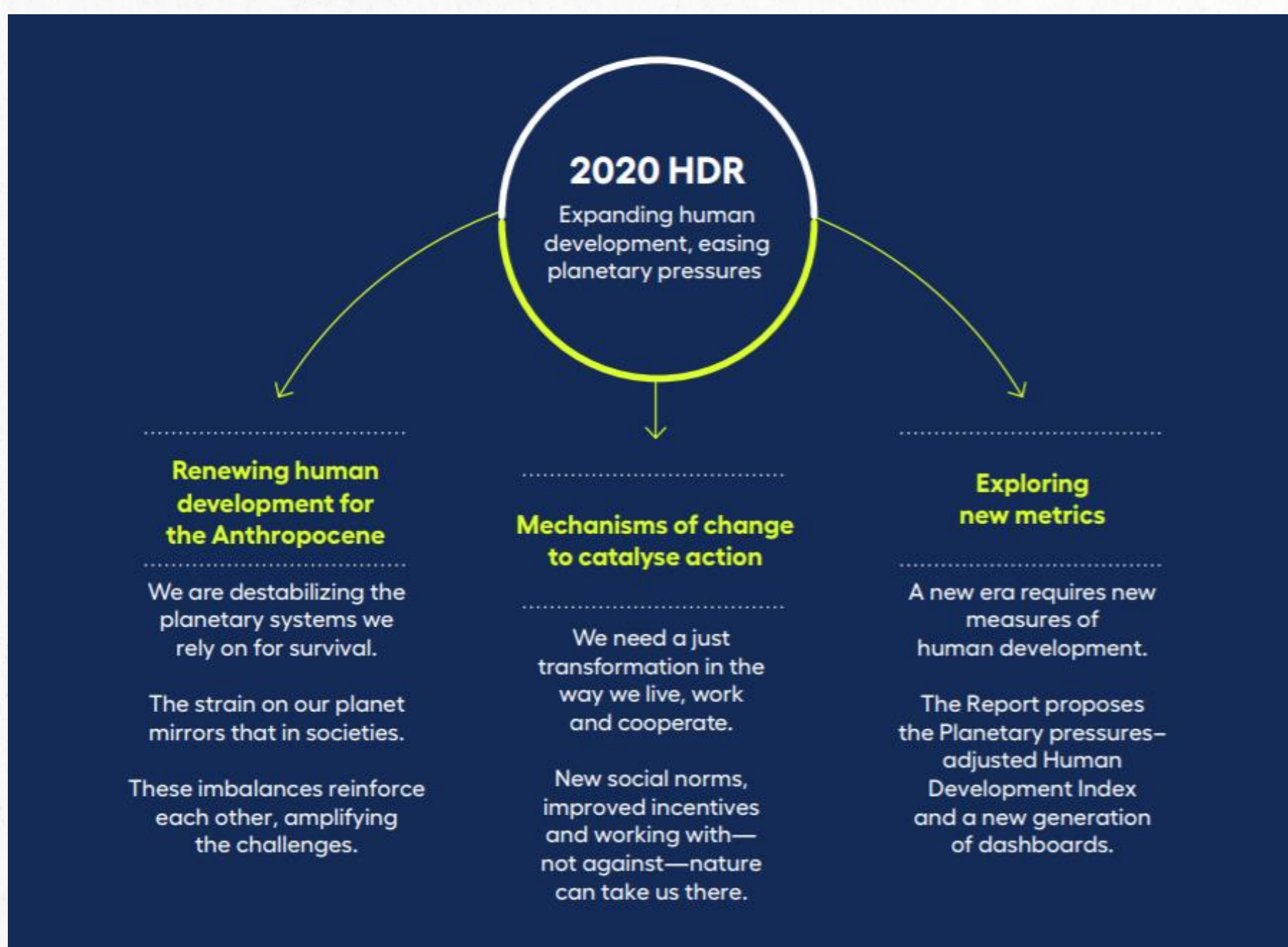


Figure 2: Structure of the 2020 Human Development Report



EVALUATION OF BANGLADESH'S INDEX AND ITS COMPARISON WITH OTHER SOUTH ASIAN COUNTRIES

“The HDR 2020 -- “The Next Frontier: Human Development and the Anthropocene” was launched in Bangladesh on December 21, six days after the global publication. Bangladesh has settled its position to 133rd place among 189 countries in the Global Human Development Index (HDI) for 2019 by moving up two notches compared to the previous index. In the last two successive years, Bangladesh has made progress in uplifting its position. From the 136th position in 2017, the country climbed up a notch to secure the 135th position in HDI for 2018.

According to the latest Human Development Report (HDR) 2020 of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), among the eight South Asian countries Bangladesh stands at the fifth position getting over Pakistan and Afghanistan respectively.

In the new planetary pressures-adjusted human development index (PHDI), Bangladesh has successfully bounced up nine notches as the report asserted.

The new report published amid the Covid-19 crisis highly reaffirms the threat of an alarming catastrophic natural disaster and calls for a just transformation that expands human freedoms while easing planetary pressures.

Usually, the annual HDI report measures a country's health, education, and living standards. But in the 30th Anniversary Edition of the report, two more elements: a country's carbon dioxide emissions and its material footprint have been included. In the recent report, more than 50 countries have slipped away from the very high human development group, reflecting their dependence on fossil fuels and material footprint.

As per Bangladesh's concern, it has secured the Medium Human Development category. The country's upward trail remains to continue as it has moved up eight notches since 2014.

Bangladesh's HDI value for 2019 was **0.632**. However, the HDI report also provides an inequality-adjusted HDI or IHDI depending on the inequalities in the distribution of human development across the border of a country. The IHDI value for Bangladesh fell by 24.4% which caused the value to reach **0.478**.

Bangladesh is enlisted in the 4th group of **Gender Development Index**. The country's GDI value for 2019 is 0.904. Belonging to the fourth group represents Bangladesh as a country with medium to low equality in HDI achievements between women and men (absolute deviation of 7.5–10 percent).

In the **Gender Inequality Index** Bangladesh ranked 133rd position among the 189 countries ensuring **0.537**.

According to the UNDP's recent Human Development Report, the Multidimensional Poverty Index or MPI value for Bangladesh is 0.104. The headcount percentage of 24.6 reflects those people who are multidimensionally poor. And the average intensity of poverty is 42.2% which reflects the rate of deprivation among poor people. Population with a deprivation score of at least 33 percent is considered multidimensionally poor. Bangladesh's current value and calculations showcase its progress in MPI although the discrimination observed is unusual for such a fast developing country.

Among the South Asian nations, Only Sri Lanka and the Maldives were listed as High Human Development countries securing 72nd and 95th position respectively. The rest of the nations in the region failed to make ground on the top 100 list. Except for Afghanistan, the other four South Asian countries have been listed as Medium Human Development countries. Our neighboring country India dropped two spots to 131 from 129 out of 189 nations. Bhutan surpassed India to claim the 129th position being third in the region. The countries listed below Bangladesh are Nepal at 142, Pakistan at 152. Afghanistan being one of the countries with no IHDI measurements ranked 169th.