



The Future of MDGs : Bangladesh as a Case Study

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PAST SUCCESSES



Successes to Celebrate, Failures to Remember

- A “Test Case” of Development?
- Different Times, Different Theories?
 - Example: Kissinger on Bangladesh
- Seven Pillars of Pessimism
 - Population
 - Female empowerment
 - Agrarian
 - Export
 - Urban
 - Governance
 - Climate change
- Echoes of “Dysfunctional State” can be heard even in the 2000s
 - Minus-Two Solutions were sought through Military-Driven Transition



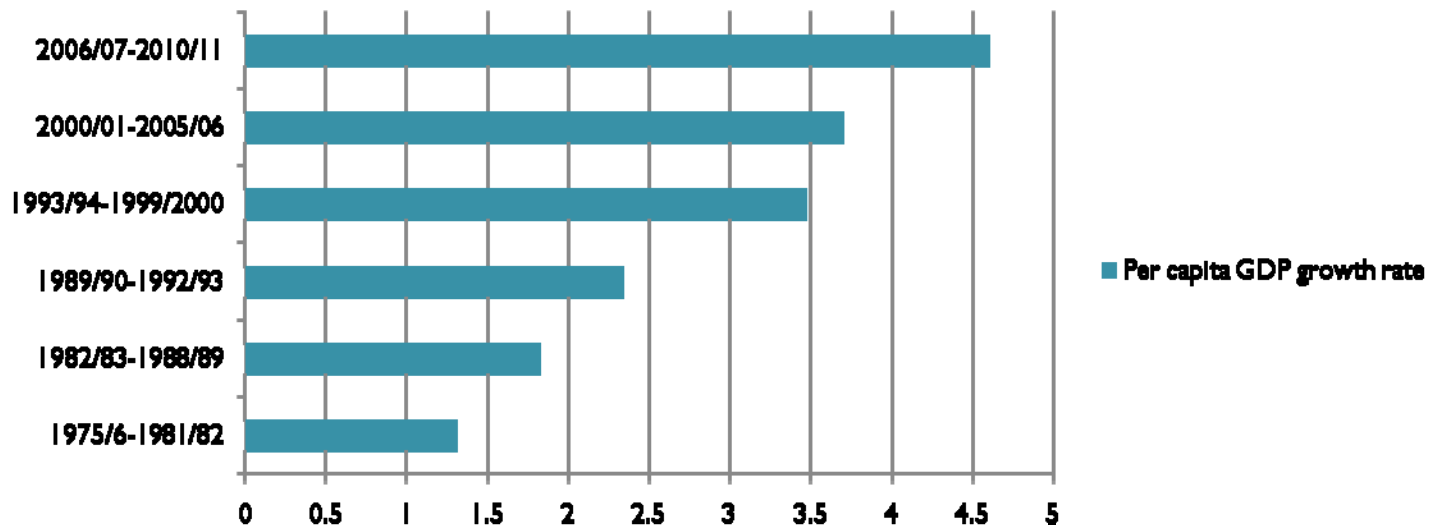
Successes to Celebrate, Failures to Remember (2)

- Turn-Around in 2000s
 - Growth accelerated with structural change in successive decades
 - On-track on a number of MDGs or MDG related targets:
 - poverty
 - MMR
 - IMR/CMR
 - Gender parity on child mortality
 - Primary and secondary education enrollment
 - Improvement in sex-ratios

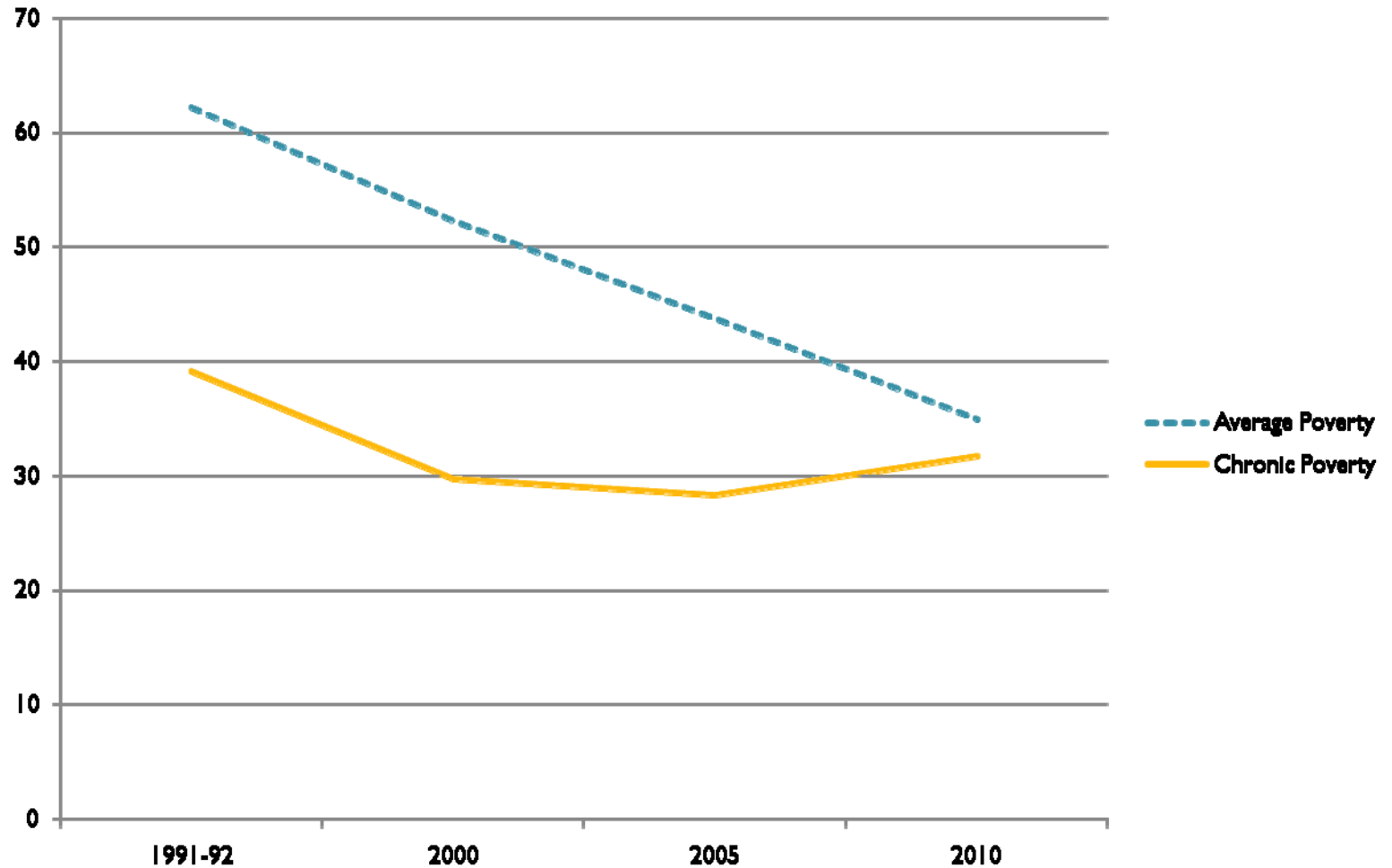
Sustained Growth Acceleration

- For growth, a necessary precondition is good long-term growth performance sustained and accelerated over decades. **It is difficult to be inclusive when growth is faltering.** Per capita GDP has more than doubled in during 1991-2011. Bangladesh thus passes this initial screening on “necessary condition”

Per capita GDP growth rate



Sustained Poverty Reduction





Successes to Celebrate, Failures to Remember (3)

- Two Neglected Factors in Explaining MDG Outcomes
 - Role of High Population Density (faster spread of technology by “learning by doing” or “seeing”)
 - Pre-existing role of social, cultural and political movements
- All Routes Mattered: Causes of Turn-Arounds
 - Role of public policy at a relatively low level of fiscal deficit and inflation
 - Role of private income growth
 - Role of institutions promoting gender-friendly norms and inclusive development
 - “Latent demand” for higher human development
 - GO-NGO collaboration
 - MDG ownership by political elites (example of girl’s education, social protection, and current discussion on health insurance)



NEW CHALLENGES



Addressing Differences in Development: Persistent Divides in MDGs

- Regional gaps, often not in predictable directions
 - Chittagong and Sylhet lag on social MDGs
 - East-west divide in the pace of poverty reduction is fast disappearing
- Rich-poor divide in basic education, health, and child nutrition is still persistent
- Gender gaps in non-MDG social targets such as post-secondary education as well as work force participation
- Ethnic minorities lag behind and face social discrimination



Moving Up the Ladder on MDGs

- From “Quantity” to “Quality”
 - Participation in internationally comparable competence tests in English and computer literacy, math and science skills
 - More emphasis on quality education at all levels
- From “First Generation” to “Second Generation” MDGs
 - Primary → Secondary and technical/vocational education
 - Preventative → Curative (especially health insurance for the poor to prevent health shocks of breadwinners)
- This would require different kinds of policy support
 - From “microcredit” to “microenterprise”—from self-employment to wage-employment
 - Migration financing for the poor (including overseas migration, as the latter explains 70% increase in rural income inequality)
 - Blending traditional, modern and post-modern (example: safe delivery in institutions; scaling up of BRAC non-formal primary education at secondary level; assessment of quality of tertiary educational institutions through centralized competence tests)



Incorporating New Concerns

- Everything has consequences for society. MDGs are no exception to this rule.
- MDGs foster social transformation, but also create linkages for other sectoral priorities which cannot be ignored any more on the policy front
- Three examples: (i) job creation, (ii) social cohesion, (iii) democratic governance
 - Educating girls with primary and secondary education is part of MDGs , but to follow-through these measures with job creation is not part of MDGs.
 - The same applies for the educated youth to ensure social cohesion.



Incorporating New Concerns (2)

- Spread of education via MDGs creates higher demand for **transparency, accountability** and **citizen rights** – currently not part of MDGs (the government needs to be more fiscally responsive to such citizen demands)
- The MDG effects on the “language of rights” is also connected to rising democratic/ civic aspirations:
 - Greater intolerance for wealth inequality
 - Freedom of media
 - Better quality of political candidates (the puzzle of regime instability)
 - Pro-poorest social protection
 - Environmental governance
- These concerns merit consideration in the formulation of “New” MDGs beyond 2015



**CONCLUDING REMARKS:
ADDRESSING GAPS IN “OLD”
AND INCLUDE “NEW” SOCIAL
CONCERNS**



Need for Blending “Old” and “New” MDGs

- MDGs are important in themselves, but also as factors influencing faster growth, better social cohesion, and greater demands for democratic governance
- Equality concerns within “old” MDGs (spatial, gender, ethnic, rich/poor)
- Mobility concerns within MDGs (from “quantity” to “quality”; integrating preventative with curative; primary with secondary and technical/ vocational, etc.)



Need for Blending “Old” and “New” MDGs (2)

- Inclusive citizenship concerns demanding new MDGs
 - Jobs for female stipend recipients
 - Towards a more democratic and accountable governance
 - Greater tax-financed re-distributive allocations to address growing awareness of citizen rights
 - Environmental governance
 - Addressing inequality for better social cohesion
 - Better political candidates



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Thanks for listening!

QUESTIONS?