



Interoffice Memorandum

To: Beat Rohr
UN Resident Coordinator
Guatemala

Date: 26 January 2008

From:
Assistant Administrator and Director, Partnerships Bureau
UNDP New York

Extension: 6005

Subject: MDGF- 1660: Strengthening the institutional environment for the advancement of women in Guatemala

File: MDGF 1660

I. Approval Status

On behalf of the MDGF-F Steering Committee I am pleased to inform you that your Joint Programme “Strengthening the institutional environment for the advancement of women in Guatemala” is hereby approved with an allocation of US \$ **7.2 million** over three years. This figure includes 7% for indirect costs incurred by UN Participating Organizations. Please note the 1% AA fee will be reimbursed directly to the MDTF Office and need not be included in your allocation.

II. JP design comments

We have identified a limited number of changes in Section III below (‘JP re-design requirements and/or recommendations’) which we require to the design of your Joint Programme. Once these adjustments have been reflected, you may proceed directly with signature of the Joint Programme document. The UN Resident Coordinator and all Participating UN Organizations should each sign the Joint Programme document in addition to the Government (including primary national counterparts). We would encourage you to ensure some visibility for this event and for the launch of activities.

We consider the Joint Programme a faithful extension of the approved Concept Note. An acceptable effort has been made to address the recommendations of the Technical Sub-Committee and the Steering Committee. The approved budget reflects a \$680,000 reduction from the original indicative budget, in order to accommodate resource constraints in this thematic window (\$102 million in indicative budgets were approved against \$90 million available for programming).

We find the programme’s multi-dimensional approach (social and economic participation, economic empowerment and non-discrimination) a very effective strategy to address gender equality and women’s empowerment with significant potential for a more consistent impact on the improvement of the lives of women, particularly the poorest and most disadvantaged. The articulation of national and local level strategies is also a very positive aspect of the proposed intervention as is the focus on select municipalities as a means of maximizing impact. These measures all raise the prospect of substantial achievements in relation to the gender-related MDGs. The proposed intervention is also firmly in line with the principles of the Paris Declaration, aiming as it does at enhancing national leadership over development policies in the area of gender equality, improved coordination of Country Team actions and those of the wider donor community.

The Monitoring and Evaluation plan is well designed and an accountability framework is clearly described. Potential risks are considered and strategies to mitigate them are included. The programme also clearly differentiates the stages and budgets in the implementation process. Indicators are adequate although



the proposed Monitoring framework does not include indicators relating to UN reform or the Paris Declaration. This has been a common feature across many submissions, and the Secretariat has been tasked with investigating what is feasible within a three-year programme and developing Fund-wide M&E standards.

III. JP re-design requirements and/or recommendations

Changes Required:

The following changes are required to the Joint Programme document before finalization:

- The Budget should be adjusted to \$7.2 million. We would strongly recommend the reductions be found from Outcome 2 and from 'coordination costs' both of which we believe have scope for significant cost-reductions
- The formulation of the Joint Programme Outcomes should be reviewed with a view to aligning them more coherently with the strategic priorities described in the situation analysis (See page 6 of the document).

Recommendations:

- The Joint Programme document would be strengthened by including some explanation of how the designers see the inter-linkages between the three main components (social and political participation, economic empowerment and gender-based violence prevention), how these reinforce each other, as well as how they contribute to the achievement of specific MDG targets and indicators.
- Taking into consideration that a major outcome of the project relates to women's economic empowerment, more emphasis should be given to articulating the synergies between these interventions and ongoing pro-poor strategies and programs. The strategy and activities proposed to improve women's economic empowerment are comparatively less focused and robust than the ones identified to address social and political participation and to combat gender-based violence.
- The project would be well-advised to develop an explicit advocacy strategy.

IV. Management arrangements and delegation of authority

On receipt of a copy of the signed document, the Fund Secretariat will transfer the full three-year allocation to the custody of the Multi Donor Trust Fund (MDTF) Office pending further instructions from you.



Please note the MDTF Office will pass-through funds to Participating Organizations on instruction from you as Resident Coordinator and Co-Chair of the National MDG-F Steering Committee.

As reflected in the Fund's Framework Document (Section 9 'Formulation Process & Release of Funds) and the global MoU with Participating Organizations (Article I, 2-c) the MDTF Office will release resources on an annual, advance basis. For the first advance, these funds will be transferred on the basis of receipt of the first year Annual Workplan and the signed Joint Programme document. Subsequent annual advances will be released on instructions from you and on the basis of a) receipt of the next annual work-plan approved by the National Steering Committee; b) evidence that a formal review of the programme's progress has been undertaken not more than three months earlier, either in the form of an annual progress report (if the timing coincides) or through the minutes of a National Steering Committee where this has been discussed; and c) only when combined commitments against the existing advance have exceeded 70%. Please review the initial year budget requests carefully with participating organizations in order to ensure realistic delivery targets in this regard. The annual agency apportionment projected in the final budget attached to the signed Joint Programme document should also be reviewed and can be revised up to the time of your first funds-advance request. This is important for the reasons outlined below.

In order to allow the implementation team some flexibility to adapt the strategy to unexpected challenges and opportunities, and to empower Resident Coordinators in their oversight responsibilities, this memorandum also provides you with the authority over the three year duration of the programme and with the agreement of your National Steering Committee to (a) transfer up to \$1,000,000 or 20% of the total value of the project budget – whichever is lowest – *between Participating Organizations* identified in the original Joint Programme budget and (b) re-phase up to \$1,000,000 or 20% of the total value of the project budget – whichever is lowest - *between years*. The base-line against which these ceilings will be measured is the annual budget projection (by year and by participating organization) confirmed at the time of your first funds-advance request. The MDTF Office must be informed of any revisions of this kind, decided locally and is responsible for tracking these delegation ceilings for each programme. Any changes that fall outside these parameters will have to be referred back to the (Global) MDG-F Steering Committee for approval.

The success of the MDG-F activities will depend on your ongoing leadership and engagement. We count on you to exercise this leadership and to ensure this Joint Programme remains an ongoing, integrated effort by the UN system in support of national priorities. Please also use the National Steering Committee mechanism to help ensure national ownership by the Government in particular and involve it in important financial and programmatic oversight decisions.

The Executive Coordinator of the MDTF Office, Bisrat Aklilu, will be in contact with any specific documentation requirements to ensure the programme meets compliance requirements for UNDG pass-through arrangements.

With best wishes.



cc.

Mr. Bisrat Aklilu, Executive Coordinator, Multi-Donor Trust Fund Office

Ms. Rebeca Grynspan, Assistant Administrator and Director Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean, UNDP New York

H.E. Mr. D. Juan Antonio Yáñez-Barnuevo, Permanent Representative of Spain to the United Nations

H.E. Mr. Jorge Skinner-Klée, Permanent Representative of Guatemala to the United Nations

Ms. Milagros Hernando, Director-General for Planning & Evaluation, MFA Madrid

Ms. Sally Fegan-Wyles, Director, Development Group Office

MDG-F Secretariat

MDG-F 1660 Strengthening the Institutional Structure for Women in Guatemala

Executive Summary

Guatemala is a signatory to various instruments for protecting women's human rights, among them the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence Against Women and the American Convention on Human Rights.

In order to meet these international commitments, the "Política Nacional de Promoción y Desarrollo de las Mujeres Guatemaltecas" and its "Plan de Equidad de Oportunidades 2001-2006" (National Policy for the Promotion and Development of Guatemalan Women and its Plan for Equal Opportunity, known respectively as PNPDMG and PEO) were published in 2001 by the Secretaria Presidencial de la Mujer (SEPREM) (Presidential Secretariat for Women).

Nevertheless, significant advances in the status of women, particularly indigenous and rural women, have been impeded by the fact that this Policy and its accompanying Plan have not been incorporated institutionally into the government bodies and their implementation has been limited at all levels.

Now that the Policy's period of validity has come to an end, the evaluation that is currently being carried out concludes that the main obstacles to institutionalizing and implementing it were, among other factors, scant participation by some government bodies in the design process, high turnover of personnel, weak follow-up and evaluation systems and a lack of political will to assign priority to the policy.

The 2007 Policy update incorporates the strategic alliance of SEPREM and DEMI (Defensoría de la Mujer Indígena, Office for the Defence of Indigenous Women), and the purpose of this Joint United Nations Programme is to support its institutionalization and implementation over the next three years by strengthening capabilities at the three governmental levels and in civil society. The Joint Programme's desired Outcome 1 thus concentrates on institutionalizing the Policy, while Outcome 2 focuses on implementing the Policy through three strategic pillars whose interrelationship has a direct impact upon women's development and guaranteeing their individual rights: violence against women, economic equality and equal socio-political participation.

The Guatemalan government's main partners in implementing the programme are SEPREM, as the controlling entity for public policies aimed at women, and DEMI, as the advocate for the rights of indigenous women. Strategic alliances will also be established with the Secretaría de Planificación y Programación de la Presidencia (SEGEPLAN) (the Presidential Office's Department of Planning and Programming) and several line ministries (Economy, Public Finance, Public Health and Social Assistance, Agriculture) and the National Statistics Institute. The programme's main partners from civil society are the women's representatives within the Urban and Rural Development Council System, women in public posts, female leaders and women's organizations, involving mainly Mayan and rural women. The United Nations System agencies participating in the Joint Programme are: UNFPA, UNIFEM, UNDP, PAHO, FAO, WFP and UNV.

The programme will be implemented during a new period of government that begins on 14th January 2008. Lobbying and negotiations are currently being carried out between governmental institutions, political parties and women's organizations in order to alleviate the potential risk of a change of direction in policy. The institutionalization and implementation of the National Policy for the Promotion and Development of Guatemalan Women and its accompanying Plan 2008-2012 will also benefit from lessons learned from the policy evaluation that will be presented in late 2007.

The Joint Programme will be applied in three phases: the first (Outcome 1) will be the designing of a new strategy to guide the advocacy-related activities of SEPREM and DEMI, with the joint aim of positioning the policy on the national and local stage and generating information at all levels, from local to national, that will help to establish baselines and measure progress in the status of women. The second phase (Outcome 2) will be implemented simultaneously and will be limited to actions within the framework of the three strategic pillars mentioned above. The third and final phase will be to consolidate the strengthening of SEPREM and DEMI, to evaluate the results of the programme and the progress made in institutionalizing and implementing the policy and to identify the lessons learned and the successful experiences that could be repeated in other areas of the country.
