



Interoffice Memorandum

To: Kim Bolduc
UN Resident Coordinator
Brazil

Date: 25 January 2008

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

Extension: 6005

Subject: MDGF-1662: Inter-agency programme for the promotion of
Gender and Ethnic-Racial Equality

File: MDGF-1662

I. Approval Status

On behalf of the MDG-F Steering Committee I am pleased to inform you that your 'Inter-agency programme for the promotion of gender and ethnical-racial equality' is hereby approved with an allocation of USD\$4 million for 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. In addition to the Government, the UN Resident Coordinator and all Participating UN Organizations should each sign the Joint Programme document. 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 \$500,000 reduction in the original indicative budget, in order to accommodate resource constraints in this window.

The Secretariat notes that the Programme plans to establish an especially close relationship with the most relevant national government counterparts as far as gender and race are concerned (eg. Special Secretariat of Policies for Women and the Special Secretariat of Policies to Promote Racial Equality) which should clearly assist in ensuring strong national ownership and sustainability. We would recommend that where appropriate, the Results Framework 'Implementing Partners' column also identify where other line Ministries such as Health, Education or Labor, will also be involved, in order to illustrate clearly how gender and race perspectives will be mainstreamed into regular programs and projects.

The Secretariat also appreciates that the Joint Programme builds on the solid experience of Country Team collaboration in the framework of the Interagency Theme Group for Gender and Race and the various lessons already learned from different agency experiences. The programme document articulates the different roles and responsibilities of each participating organization. Less attention has been paid to articulating how these different inputs truly complement each other to build outcomes that go beyond simply the 'sum of the parts'. In this respect, any key lessons that relate to previous *collaborative* efforts of



Country Team members should also be reflected in the 'Lessons Learned' section of the document. In the same vein, the Results Framework appears somewhat compartmentalized, for example where UNIFEM and UNICEF are undertaking apparently identical activities but for a succession of different target groups, or where a series of apparently separate agency-specific publications is identified without explicit recognition of the clear inter-linkages between the themes and target audiences involved. We trust these activities will in fact be designed and implemented in an integrated fashion and would recommend some of the activities in the Results Framework be revisited to more concretely capture the different kinds of inputs brought by different agencies to a shared output or beneficiary or result. At minimum, the Annual Work plan should choose 'Annual Targets' very deliberately to ensure a more integrated presentation vis-à-vis agency activities. We recognize these concerns may be misplaced and simply a product of the way the information is presented (and the budget allocated) in the Results Framework but the importance of ensuring an integrated, collaborative approach by participating UN organizations in MDG-F supported programmes is one of the highest priorities of the Fund.

The overall budget is adequately distributed and is within the indicative budget approved by the Steering Committee. Nevertheless, the 'Agency Management Support' costs identified are surprisingly high. We would recommend this be the first place to look in finding the reductions necessary to cover the \$500,000 short-fall.

The Fund Secretariat may revert to you with comments on your Monitoring Framework in the first part of 2008. We note 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

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

- The Results Framework should be reviewed, with a view to:
 - Identifying, where appropriate, any line-Ministries which will participate as implementing partners in select activities;
 - Reformulating activities, where appropriate, in order to provide clearer emphasis on complementarity (vs. duplication) between agency inputs. Outputs referring to media training, 'public policy dialogues' and publications are especially relevant here.
- The budget should be reduced to \$4 million total, including indirect costs of 7%.

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. Ronaldo Mota Sardenberg, Permanent Representative of Brazil 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