



Interoffice Memorandum

To: Mr. Finn Reske Nielsen
UN Resident Coordinator
Timor-Leste
Date: 08 October 2008

From: Mr. Bruce Jenks
Assistant Administrator and Director, Partnerships Bureau
UNDP, New York
Extension: 6005

Subject: Supporting Gender Equality and Women's Human Rights in nation
building of Timor-Leste
File: MDGF 1703

I. Approval Status

On behalf of the MDG-F Steering Committee I am pleased to inform you that your Joint Programme "Supporting Gender Equality and Women's Human Rights in nation building of Timor-Leste" is hereby approved with an allocation of **USD\$ 4,955,000** 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 in section III below, some changes we require to the **design** of your Joint Programme. Once these adjustments have been reflected in the document, you may proceed with signature of the Joint Programme document. In addition to the Government, the UN Resident Coordinator and 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 implementation.

The MDG-F Secretariat, in collaboration with various experts, has reviewed the draft Joint Programme presented and considers it a faithful extension of the approved concept note. We recognize and appreciate very much the effort made by the formulation team to address the recommendations of the Technical sub-committee and the Steering Committee. We are very pleased to confirm that the Joint Programme has been substantially improved.

External coherence

The Joint Programme fully meets the Fund's Strategic goals and is in line with the Terms of Reference of the Gender thematic window. The Programme is clearly linked to the MDG 3 but also to MDGs 1, 2, 4 and 5, and is anchored in the UNDAF as well as in the national priorities. We consider as positive that the JP is based on the previous experiences, builds on lessons learned from the evaluation of the collaboration between the agencies. We also appreciate that the JP will provide support to the government to strengthen ongoing schemes such as the Conditional Cash Transfer (Bolsa Mae).

We consider that the Programme has substantially improved the division of roles and responsibilities between UN organizations while enhancing coordination with other actors such as the World Bank and fostering the participation of representatives of international and local NGOs within the Programme Management Committee.



In regards to the National Steering Committee, we note that the president of Rede Feto (a women's network of Timor-Leste) has also been included as a member of the NSC. We recommend that implementing partners such as this network is involved at the level of PMC instead of in the instance that provides the overall guidance and oversight. We also recommend considering the possibility of placing the Programme Management Unit within the national counterpart instead of at UNIFEM or providing explanation for this latest choice.

Internal coherence

The Joint Programme, under its current form, is clearly laid-out and meets the design standards of the Fund. Outcomes, outputs and activities are built and linked to each other in a logic manner. We consider that the Programme includes a good set of indicators although outcome indicators and annual targets should be included. We appreciate that the Programme is geographically focused.

We note that the budget has been reduced from the indicative budget approved by the Steering Committee (\$5,961,415 to \$4,955,000) and we consider that it is sufficiently well-justified.

Sustainability, Monitoring and Evaluation

Although the Monitoring and Evaluation framework has been improved after the second review, baseline information could be included. Also, the plan could be further improved by reducing the number of indicators while ensuring that the changes made in the narrative part are captured in the M&E plan.

Nonetheless, the Secretariat plans to work with all approved programmes during 2008 to address their M&E frameworks and to develop a small number of common indicators relating to the MDGs, thematic windows, UN reform and the Paris Declaration.

III. JP re-design requirements

The following changes are required to the Joint programme prior to its finalization and signature. The Secretariat recommends:

- **Implementing partners**, such as Rede Feto, is involved at the level of PMC instead of in the NSC, which is the instance that provides the overall guidance and oversight;
- Considering the possibility of placing the **Programme Management Unit** within the national counterpart instead of at UNIFEM or providing explanation for this latest choice;
- **Outcome indicators** and **annual targets** should be included;
- Ensure that **activities** (especially those corresponding to the UNFPA outputs, for instance output 2.2) are not formulated as inputs;
- The **Monitoring and Evaluation plan** could be further improved by including baseline information, reducing the number of indicators and ensuring that the changes made in the narrative part are captured.



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 (most particularly delivery issues), 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 in consultation with Participating Organizations 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.

As you will appreciate, one of the MDG-F's express goals is to strengthen the role of Resident Coordinators as leaders of Country Teams. 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 signed Joint Programme document and the completed Fund Release Form should be sent to the MDG-F Secretariat and MDTF Office within 30 days of the receipt of this memorandum. If this deadline is not possible, please inform the secretariat accordingly.

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 the Fund's pass-through arrangements.

With best wishes.

cc.

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

Mr. Ajay Chhibber, Assistant Administrator and Director Bureau for Asia and the Pacific, UNDP, New York

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

H.E. Mr. Nelson Santos, Permanent Representative of Timor-Leste to the United Nations

Mr. Gabriel Ferrero y De Loma-Osorio, Deputy Director of Development Policy Planning and Evaluation, MFA Madrid

Ms. Debbie Landey, United Nations Development Operations Coordinator Office (DOCO) MDG-F Secretariat