



Interoffice Memorandum

To: Ms. Renata Lok-Dessallien
UN Resident Coordinator
Bangladesh

Date: 02 July 2008

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

Extension: 6005

Subject: Joint Programme to Address Violence Against Women

File: MDGF 1706

I. Approval Status

On behalf of the MDG-F Steering Committee I am pleased to inform you that your Joint Programme "Joint Programme to Address Violence Against Women" is hereby approved subject to a number of changes, hereby explained, to address those aspects that the Secretariat has considered as critical.

The Joint Programme is approved with an allocation of **USD\$ 8 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 in section III below, those **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 resubmitted and considers it an extension of the approved concept note. We recognize that an effort has been made to address the recommendations of the Technical sub-committee and the Steering Committee, especially in respect to reducing the initial budget from \$9 to \$8 million. We appreciate the fact that you sent the minutes of the national Steering Committee endorsing the resubmitted document. However, we consider that some adjustments should be made to fully address the Secretariat's recommendations.

Relevance and external coherence

We consider that the Joint Programme, in its current form, responds to the terms of reference of this thematic window and to the goals of this Fund. In regards to Paris Declaration, the Joint Programme shows governmental ownership, in particular from the Ministry of Finance. However, we recommend a higher degree of involvement at all stages of the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs and relevant local authorities to ensure maximum results and the success of proposed activities.

We very much appreciate that the Joint Programme is framed within the UNDAF for Bangladesh and the main national policies and frameworks including the comments of the CEDAW Committee. We note that



there is a fairly clear division of labor between the 9 UN Participating Agencies although more information should be provided to reflect the cross cutting nature of some of the problems addressed, particularly in the case of activities dealing with HIV/AIDS that seem rather isolated and not sufficiently linked as a cause and a consequence of violence against women (VAW).

It should also be explained in more detail the role of the lead agency per joint output versus lead agency per SMART output in order to make sure that the agencies will perform in a truly joint fashion and that transaction costs will be kept at minimum.

Internal coherence

We note that there is a good identification of the problem and that the Joint Programme builds on substantiated lessons learned. We would recommend providing further details on the concept of UN VAW shelter and its link to the existing Victim Support Centers.

We appreciate that a considerable amount of effort has been devoted to further explain the linkages and rationale of proposed activities and products. However, we are in the view that there is insufficient information in relation to the criteria and number of selected geographical areas of intervention and targeted population.

We also recommend reconsidering the scope of intervention of this very ambitious Programme, particularly in the case of outcome 1 where we note that there is a high number of legal instruments that will be targeted and a limited amount of information on the relevant ministries to act as counterparts and they are only identified at this stage as "other relevant line ministries".

Sustainability, monitoring and evaluation

In terms of sustainability we consider that the engagement of the Ministry of Finance as the main national counterpart in the Joint Programme provides certain assurances of the sustainability of the results. However, more information could be provided on strategies to ensure sustainability of shelters for victims of violence envisaged under outcome 3 once the Joint Programme is finished.

The Monitoring and Evaluation framework appears to be particularly weak given it is a fairly ambitious Programme. We strongly recommend including baseline data as well as qualitative, process and impact indicators especially in the case of outcome 2, where the Programme foresees to train a fairly large number of beneficiaries. We also suggest that M&E is considered a joint responsibility of the participating agencies instead of an individual agency task. Nevertheless, note that the Fund Secretariat plans to work with all approved Programmes during the current year to address their M&E frameworks and to develop a small number of common indicators relating to the thematic windows, UN reform, Paris Declaration process and the Millennium Declaration.



III. JP re-design requirements and/or recommendations

The Secretariat recommends that:

In regards to external coherence:

- Ensure a higher degree of involvement at all stages of the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs and relevant local authorities in the design, implementation and monitoring of the Joint Programme;
- Provide more information to reflect the cross cutting nature of some of the problems addressed, particularly in the case of activities dealing with HIV/AIDS that seem rather isolated and not sufficiently linked as a cause and a consequence of violence against women;
- Explain in more detail the role of the lead agency per joint output versus lead agency per SMART output.

In regards internal coherence:

- Provide further details on the concept of UN VAW shelter and its link to the existing Victim Support Centers;
- Define the criteria and number of selected geographical areas of intervention and targeted population;
- Reconsider the scope of intervention, particularly in the case of outcome 1.

In regards to sustainability, M&E:

- Provide more information on strategies to ensure sustainability of shelters for victims of violence envisaged under outcome 3;
- Include baseline data as well as qualitative, process and impact indicators especially in the case of outcome 2;
- Ensure that M&E is conducted by the participating agencies in a joint manner instead of by an individual agency.

IV. Management arrangements and delegation of authority

On receipt of the report of the inception workshop and a copy of 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 Pacific, UNDP New York

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

H.E. Ms. Ismat Jahan, Permanent Representative of the People's Republic of Bangladesh to the United Nations



Mr. Gabriel Ferrero, Director-General for Planning & Evaluation, MFA Madrid
Ms. Sally Fegan-Wyles, Director, Development Group Office
MDG-F Secretariat