



**Interoffice Memorandum**

To: Diene Keita  
UN Resident Coordinator ai  
Mauritania

Date: 14 January 2008

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

Extension: 6005

Subject: Subject: 1724 - Mainstreaming Local Environmental management  
in the Planning Process (Mauritania)

File: MDGF 1724

**I. Approval Status**

On behalf of the MDG-F Steering Committee I am pleased to inform you that your Joint Programme 'Mainstreaming Local Environmental management in the Planning Process' is hereby approved with an allocation of USD\$ 5 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 in the document, you may proceed 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 find the integrated, bottom-up approach of the programme extremely compelling, particularly against the backdrop of Mauritania's needs. The geographically targeted approach and mix of direct assistance in a range of sectors, complemented by institution-building at the community and local level is very effective. We also see a well-defined role for each UN agency and national/local counterpart working within an integrated and well-coordinated programme. This approach seems to leverage the real added-value of a Country Team approach to a complex set of development challenges.

The substantial down-stream impact promised by the Joint Programme is not well captured in the Executive Summary and we would encourage the Summary to be edited and expanded in this regard. The summary will likely be used in many different forms for public information purposes so this would be a worthwhile investment. We also presume the reference in the Executive Summary to 'UNDP leadership' was meant to say "Resident Coordinator leadership' and would urge this be corrected in order to avoid any misunderstanding.

We found the SMART outputs and activities under Outcome 2 ('Enhanced National Capacity') less well defined than those under Outcome 1 and would recommend they be revisited before finalization of the Framework. Also, please note that SMART outputs should be agency-specific, and will therefore either need to be further broken down, or lead responsibility assigned to one or other of the agencies identified.



The Annual Workplan should also be revised to be built around annual targets, rather than the outputs identified over the full duration of the programme.

The comments of our technical reviewer on the Joint Programme document are also attached for reference. The review is very positive and includes some useful recommendations you may wish to consider in the finalization of the document or during the course of the programme's implementation. Please note the changes recommended by the reviewer are not required by the Fund, unless specified under Section 'III' below. We do find the Reviewer's suggestions regarding future funding mechanisms and sustainability important and would urge you to look at these carefully. An Inception Workshop with key stakeholders at the outset of the programme and before finalizing the Workplan might also assist in identifying additional synergies with related initiatives.

Finally, the Fund Secretariat may revert to you with comments on your Monitoring Framework in the first part of 2008. While the proposed Monitoring framework is thorough, it focuses primarily on output-related indicators and does not sufficiently include indicators touching on broader development outcomes nor 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 Executive Summary should be edited in order to better capture the impact intended by the programme by its conclusion. The leadership by the Resident Coordinator should also be reflected in this write-up;
- The Results Framework should be reviewed, and in particular:
  - One agency should be assigned responsibility for each SMART output under Outcome 2
  - A 'total' column should be included in the far-right of the Framework
  - The 1% Administrative Agent fee should be removed from the Framework and budget as this will be administered separately.

Before launching activities, the Annual Workplan should also be reviewed at an Inception Workshop. 'Annual Targets' should be introduced into the Workplan.

### **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 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.

[With Executive Summary]

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

Mr. Gilbert Houngbo, Assistant Administrator and Director Bureau for Africa, UNDP New York

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

H.E. Mr. Mohamed Ould Tolba, Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania 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