



**Interoffice Memorandum**

To: Ms. Maria Do Valle Ribeiro  
UN Resident Coordinator  
Mauritania

Date: 26 January 2009

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

Extension: 6005

Subject: Mauritania/Conflict Prevention and Peace Building:  
"Strengthening conflict prevention capacities and the rule of law  
in Mauritania"

File: MDGF-1958

**I. Approval Status**

On behalf of the MDG-F Steering Committee I am pleased to inform you that your Joint Programme "Strengthening conflict prevention capacities and the rule of law in Mauritania" is hereby approved with an allocation of USD\$5,000,000 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 actions that need to be taken and guidance on the necessary changes we require to the design of your Joint Programme** prior to its signature. 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.

We consider that the Joint Programme intends to address the main structural factors that could destabilize the country. A comprehensive human rights based analysis has been used as the basis to identify the root causes of the problem and the most vulnerable groups. The proposed strategies respond clearly to this logic and guide the interventions in order to strengthen social cohesion on the one hand, and on the other promote civic engagement and a culture of democracy and participation. The programme targets indigenous populations most particularly, former slaves and their descendents, and returned refugees in regions of the country *Hodh Echargui* and *Hodh Elgharbi* located in the area of *Lehdada*.

We recognize that an acceptable effort has been made to address the recommendations of the Technical Sub-Committee.

**Relevance and external coherence**

The Joint Programme meets a number of the Fund's strategic goals and it is aligned with UNDAF for Mauritania. It is expected to contribute to the attainment of MDGs 1, 2 and 3 through undertaking a national campaign of sensitization, developing and implementing a national strategy for conflict prevention and also for the eradication of slavery, providing livelihood opportunities to former slaves and their descendents as well as returnees in two geographical areas of *Hodh Echargui* and *Hodh Elgharbi* with an special emphasis in empowering women and promoting youth.



A National Steering Committee has been formed, including Government and Spanish representation and endorses the programme design.

The Joint Programme is framed within the national priorities as stated in the Strategic framework for Poverty Reduction. There is a clear value added in the UN Participating Agencies (UNFPA, UNICEF, UNODC, UNDP) and a good division of labor between agencies.

#### **Internal Coherence**

The JP 's logic is sound. However, we are of the view that the budget allocated to each of the outputs has been poorly justified, and activities in the results framework needs to be further elaborated particularly at the level of activity descriptions and corresponding budgetary allocations.

In terms of the programme management, we feel that the proposed arrangements for coordination and management are sound and seek synergies, maximize the coordination and logistics with other joint programmes funded by the MDG Achievement Fund in the area of environment and culture.

#### **Sustainability, monitoring and evaluation**

The programme supports the efforts of the government in investing in basic infrastructure to welcome the reintegration of returnees. Local authorities and communities are engaged in the design and will be part of the implementation and monitoring of the proposed activities, more specifically the livelihoods component.

The monitoring and evaluation framework is sound although some of the indicators at the MDG and outcome levels need to be developed. Baseline data has been identified, although we would welcome further sex disaggregation of the data in the baseline and proposed indicators.

The Secretariat plans to work with all approved programmes during 2009 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**

Nonetheless, the Secretariat has carefully assessed the revised draft Joint Program, and recommends it for approval with some reservations that will warrant a close monitoring during the implementation phase of the joint programme to ensure the expected impact of the Joint Programme. When transmitting the signed joint programme, please indicate in the cover letter how the following Secretariat's recommendations have been taken into account in the signed programme document:

#### In regards internal coherence

1. To **re-work the Results Framework** in order to provide additional details in some of the activities and to justify the allocated amount to each of the proposed activities, more specifically:
  - to insert adequate numbering in each of the proposed activities



- for example, in output 1.3, activity 1.3.2 with the amount of \$1,200,000, to explain how the criteria will be developed for the selection of micro-projects, systems in place to execute and monitor the use of funds, and to disaggregate the budget allocated;
- similarly, in output 2.1; output 2.2 and output 3.1, provide specific details for example of number of dialogue structures that will be supported, number of people that is expected to participate in the training programmes, scope and dimensions of the advocacy and sensitization programme, number of community legal support units, description of the scope and range of the proposed communication programme, etc.

In regards to sustainability, M&E:

2. To **formulate indicators to capture progress at the MDG levels.**
3. To include **gender disaggregated data** and identify **gender indicators.**

#### **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. Moustapha Soumare, Assistant Administrator and Regional Director a.i., 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  
Mr. Juan López-Doriga, Director-General of Development Planning & Evaluation, MFAC Madrid  
Ms. Debbie Landey, Director, United Nations Development Operations Coordinator Office (DOCO) MDG-F Secretariat