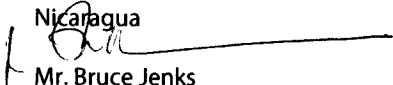




Interoffice Memorandum

To: Mr. Alfredo Missair
UN Resident Coordinator
Nicaragua

Date: 07 July 2009

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

Extension: 6005

Subject: "TUKTAN YAMNI" Integrated Model"

File: MDGF-2014

I. Approval Status

On behalf of the MDG-F Steering Committee I am pleased to inform you that your Joint Programme "TUKTAN YAMNI" Integrated Model "in Nicaragua is hereby approved with an allocation of \$5.000.000 for three years. This figure includes 7% (including coordination costs) 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.

Nevertheless, the release of the Funds will be contingent on the realization of certain adjustments, hereby explained, to address those few aspects that the Secretariat has considered as critical.

II. JP design comments

We have identified in section III below, **some changes we require to the design** of your Joint Programme prior to signature of the Joint Programme document. **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. We would encourage you to ensure some visibility for this event and for the launch of activities.

The proposed Joint Programme intends to address the problem of malnutrition prevalence on children under two years. It focuses on the indigenous population in the municipalities of Bonanza and Prinzapolka. Specifically it will focus on the Sauni Arunka-Sikilta , Prinsu AhuyaUn and Prinsu Awala communities. It presents an integral approach that combines aspects related to food production, access to health services, and institutional strengthening of national and local authorities. The programme supports households in diversifying production of food for consumption. It will also improve feeding behaviors, at the indigenous community levels. At the national level it will improve coordination among the central and local authorities, to promote an integrated approach and strategy on nutrition and food security issues.

External coherence

We see that the Programme is well anchored in the UNDAF, is aligned to the national policy on human development and supports some of its main programmes on food security, namely the Zero Hunger initiative. The Programme is also framed within the Caribbean Development Plan, which has Food Security as one of its main subjects.



The budget is within the indicative approved budget by the Steering Committee. We value the important effort has been made to reduce the initial budget from \$11,941,201 to \$5,000,000.

We value the clear description of the root causes and drivers of the food insecurity situation in the region of Bonanza and Prinzapolka, and how they adversely impact on the indigenous population. However, further details should be provided on some activities as well as on the baselines for the beneficiaries of the programme, as indicated on section III.

We value that the Programme is geographically concentrated in Bonanza and Prinzapolka and targets its indigenous population.

We see that the Joint Programme incorporates lessons learned from previous projects implemented both by the involved UN Agencies and by the National Institutions.

We see that both national and local authorities are represented in the decision making and monitoring processes. However, we are recommending establishing a clear protocol of distribution of competencies and responsibilities among the various actors, in order to avoid duplication and ensure an appropriate ownership of the national counterparts.

The Programme involves a cross-section of UN organizations with a well articulated division of roles and responsibilities that shows complementarity among the proposed UN interventions.

In terms of programme management, we feel that the proposed arrangements for coordination and management are sound and seek synergies. We value the establishment of the Coordination Unit within the North Atlantic Regional Government.

Internal coherence

The Joint Programme is clearly laid out and meets the design standards of the Fund. The problems identified and proposed strategies, outcomes, outputs and activities are built and linked to each other in a logical manner. However, further details should be provided on the proposed activities, specially those related to the Integrated Model, and the family oriented activities.

We value the incorporation of an intersectorial coordination Unit led by the local governments and the regional leaders to ensure the articulation among counterparts. On the other hand the national and local information systems will be connected and harmonized to ensure an integrated action over the beneficiaries.

The programme is based in the use of traditional technologies, but adopting them to the cultural and social context and applying them within an integrated approach that will improve the efficiency in the delivery. However, further details should be provided about the innovation of the Tuktan Yamni-Muih Bin Yamni Integrated Model.

Although great efforts have been made to reduce the overall budget, the cost per beneficiary seems to still to be subject to reductions. We suggest to review the programming and identify points of cost efficiency improvements, that allow increase the number of beneficiaries.



Sustainability

We see that the clear link of the Programme with the national policies, will very positively contribute to its sustainability. However, the commitment and agreement of the local communities and beneficiaries should be also ensured.

We see that developing the capacity of the public institutions will positively contribute to the sustainability of the initiatives as well. However, we highlight the importance of monitoring the impact of these capacity building activities in improving the effective delivery of services.

The value of the community based approach promoting school gardens and productivity packets as a way to ensure the Food sovereignty. However, due to the existence of numerous previous similar experiences in the area which failed, we find necessary to establish a technical, economical and socio cultural viability plan for these activities. This plan should be developed and included in the JP document before its signature.

We value, the programme focus on women, and the overall gender strategy is well explained in the Programme Document.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Monitoring and Evaluation framework is adequate and participatory. An important effort has been made in relation to the definition of process indicators, although more qualitative indicators should be provided. We strongly recommend identifying impact and MDG indicators during the first weeks of implementation and at the same time that the baselines are being established.

III. JP requirements

The release of the Funds will be contingent on the realization of the following modifications:

Results Framework:

- The results framework and the annual work plan should be reformulated providing details of the proposed activities planned to be undertaken at the community and municipal level. A list of organizations and communities should be also included.
- A detailed description of the Integrated Model should be provided.
- Please identify more concretely the direct beneficiaries of the activities. Including a list of organizations and communities to be involved, as well as the recipients of the capacity building activities should be included.

Sustainability, M&E:

- Due to the existence of numerous failed previous experiences on school gardens and productivity packets in the area of intervention, we find necessary to establish a technical, economical and socio



cultural viability plan for these activities. This plan should be developed and included in the JP document before its signature.

- The Indicators framework should be reviewed, supplying activity indicators by results indicators. More qualitative indicators should be included in the framework.

Based on lessons learned, the MDG-F Secretariat recommends that upon receipt of this memo, even prior to the signature of the Joint Programme, consensus building activities should continue. We encourage the further discussion of operational aspects among participating UN agencies, governments and local counterparts. When possible, the recruitment process of the Joint Programme team should begin (such as drafting and getting approval for the TORs, etc).

We also recommend that an inception workshop with wide participation of relevant counterparts is carried out as soon as possible to, inter alia, determine the roles and responsibilities of the implementing parties. This has proven to be useful in helping improve the results framework and better defining the Annual Work Plan. If applicable, it would also be advisable to further refine baselines and M&E indicators during this period.

When submitting the signed Joint programme, **please make sure to include a cover letter** from the Resident Coordinator indicating how the above mentioned recommendations have been taken into account.

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 1, 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
Ms. Rebeca Grynspan, Assistant Administrator and Regional 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. Mrs. María Rubiales de Chamorro, Permanent Representative of Nicaragua 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