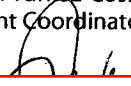




Interoffice Memorandum

To: Ms..Gülden Türköz-Cosslett
UN Resident Coordinator
Albania 

Date: 21 April 2008

From:
Officer-in-Charge - Partnerships Bureau
UNDP-New York

Extension: 6005

Subject: Subject: MDGF-1805-Albania's cultural Transformation: From
isolation to participation

File: MDGF 1805

I. Approval Status

On behalf of the MDG-F Steering Committee I am pleased to inform you that your Joint Programme Albania's cultural Transformation: From isolation to participation is hereby approved with an allocation of USD\$3,260,000 million for two 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.

We consider this Joint Programme has the important task to strengthen the role of culture in promoting Albania's social and economic development at the local and regional levels. The Programme clearly advances Government priorities in the context of EU accession, rural development and fostering a national identity. The programme includes elements of policy support, governance, cultural heritage preservation, pro-active role of communities towards cultural heritage and creation of employment opportunities.

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 that an acceptable effort has been made to address the recommendations of the Technical Sub-Committee. The independent technical review has highlighted a number of critical issues including the need for a broader civil society engagement and a clearer regional and municipal's participation in the project implementation to be addressed in the final document prior signature. The Secretariat concurs with a number of observations which we intend to share with the Country Team as mentioned below.

The Joint Programme is framed within the five development outcomes of the "One UN Vision for Albania". There is a clear division of labor between the UN Participating Agencies (UNESCO and UNDP). Conversely, given Albania is a Pilot Country, one would have expected greater UN agencies's contribution under this thematic window.



We believe that the Joint Programme meets a number of the Fund's strategic goals and it is aligned with UNDAF for Albania. Although not explicitly mentioned the Joint Programme is expected to contribute to the attainment of MDGs 1, 8 and 3. Ideally, the Joint Programme could benefit from a more explicit analysis on how it intends to address the MDGs and how the project will have an impact on them. It is coherent with regional and national policies and legislation. The national ownership is evident in the involvement of the center level government institutions and their co-chairmanship of the Programme Management Committee; perhaps a broader consultation with additional local government institutions and non-governmental stakeholders including academic and research institutions would have been desirable. The communication strategy of this joint programme is minimal and given the scope of the programme activities, it would be necessary to develop a communication plan.

We also think that the logic of the results framework could be improved. The proposed activities do not present enough detail to justify the allocated resources. For example, the document indicates there will be two pilot projects led by UNESCO but they are not determined at this stage. Furthermore when presenting the activities to transformed the National Museum in a modern cultural institution, the results framework only refers to the execution of a Phase I of a long term plan with a price tag of \$700,000 without providing further information on the longer term plan. The duration of the programme is two years and it seems a rather ambitious timeframe.

The Monitoring Plan could be improved by including baseline information, outcome indicators and strengthening the gender aspects of the programme, especially at the level of indicators. Currently, the proposed systems to measure processes and impact are insufficient. 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:

- The **Results Framework** is revised in order to provide sufficient detail to the proposed activities, including the identification and strategies of pilot projects.
- The **analysis and identification of beneficiaries and project sites** needs to be further explained and specified in the project document. A more concrete strategy in terms of **gender** is required.
- The **participation of civil society** and **regional and local government** throughout the life of the Joint Programme must be ensured to maximize the impact of proposed interventions. The methodology describing how these stakeholders will be involved should be developed. Ideally the Civil society should also be represented in the Programme Management Committee.
- The **Government seconds staff** to the Programme Coordination Unit.
- The **Monitoring and Evaluation framework** should be improved and include specific MDG and **outcome indicators** and targets.

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/or (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.

Bisrat Aklilu, Executive Coordinator, Multi-Donor Trust Fund Office
Mr. Kori Udovicki, Assistant Administrator and Director Bureau for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States, UNDP, New York
H.E. Mr. D. Juan Antonio Yáñez-Barnuevo, Permanent Representative of Spain to the United Nations
H.E. Mr. Lublin Dilja, Permanent Representative of Albania 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