



# FINAL EVALUATION

**Afghanistan**

Thematic window  
Children, Food Security and Nutrition

**Programme Title:**  
Children, Nutrition and Food Security in  
Afghanistan

# Prologue

This final evaluation report has been coordinated by the MDG Achievement Fund joint programme in an effort to assess results at the completion point of the programme. As stipulated in the monitoring and evaluation strategy of the Fund, all 130 programmes, in 8 thematic windows, are required to commission and finance an independent final evaluation, in addition to the programme's mid-term evaluation.

Each final evaluation has been commissioned by the UN Resident Coordinator's Office (RCO) in the respective programme country. The MDG-F Secretariat has provided guidance and quality assurance to the country team in the evaluation process, including through the review of the TORs and the evaluation reports. All final evaluations are expected to be conducted in line with the OECD Development Assistant Committee (DAC) Evaluation Network "Quality Standards for Development Evaluation", and the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) "Standards for Evaluation in the UN System".

Final evaluations are summative in nature and seek to measure to what extent the joint programme has fully implemented its activities, delivered outputs and attained outcomes. They also generate substantive evidence-based knowledge on each of the MDG-F thematic windows by identifying best practices and lessons learned to be carried forward to other development interventions and policy-making at local, national, and global levels.

We thank the UN Resident Coordinator and their respective coordination office, as well as the joint programme team for their efforts in undertaking this final evaluation.

MDG-F Secretariat

*The analysis and recommendations of this evaluation are those of the evaluator and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Joint Programme or MDG-F Secretariat.*

# Children, Nutrition and Food Security in Afghanistan

## Final Evaluation Report

Prepared for:

**Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)/  
MDG Achievement Fund (MDG-F)**

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01 May 2013

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## List of Abbreviations Used

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ANDS	Afghan National Development Strategy
BPHS	Basic Public Health Services
CDC	Community Development Counsel
CHW	Community Health Worker
CNFS	Children, Nutrition and Food Security in Afghanistan
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DCC	District Coordination Committee
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
GM & P	Growth Monitoring and Promotion
GoA	Government of Afghanistan
GWO	Green Way Organization
IYCF	Infant and Young Children Feeding
IP	Implementing Partner
JP	Joint Programme
JPTAC	Joint Programme Technical Advisor and Coordinator
KMU	Kabul Medical University
MAIL	Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock
MAM	Moderate Acute Malnutrition
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MDG-F	Millennium Development Goals Achievement Fund
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoHE	Ministry of Higher Education
MoPH	Ministry of Public Health
MOWA	Ministry of Women's Affairs
MRRD	Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development
MSAM	Management of Severe Acute Malnutrition
MTE	Mid Term Evaluation
MUAC	Mid-Upper Arm Circumference
PCC	Provincial Coordination Committee
PNO	Provincial Nutrition Officer
SAM	Severe Acute Malnutrition
U5's	Children under the age of five years old
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization

## Executive Summary

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Children, Nutrition and Food Security in Afghanistan (CNFS) was a three-year, multi-agency programme that is funded through the Millennium Development Goals Achievement Fund (MDG-F). Its primary aim was to deliver a comprehensive package of community nutrition and food security interventions, while strengthening the institutional framework for addressing malnutrition and chronic food security issues in an integrated manner. It sought to model an integrated and multisectoral approach to tackling the underlying causes of malnutrition.

The Joint Programme was ambitious in both its scope and complexity; it attempted to better integrate the often separate but interrelated field of nutrition and food security, in ten target districts with the involvement of five government ministries, five UN agencies and through sixteen contracts with local and international CSO's.

This final evaluation was conducted in February-April 2013, with an in-country mission taking place between 22 February - 08 March 2013. Some of the main observations can be grouped in the following areas:

- 1) **Programme Design and Structure:** The JP had to operate with some design deficiencies, particularly as JP outputs were based on inputs/responsibility from a single agency. This created a scenario where collaboration is made more difficult as agencies are effectively incentivized to focus exclusively on their own outputs.
- 2) **Internal Coherence:** A wide range of nutrition and food security interventions were implemented throughout the target districts, but often in a disparate manner. The unwieldy numbers of stakeholders in the programme (5 government ministries, 5 UN agencies, and 16 contracts to NGO's/CSO's) were not well connected to each other in terms of sharing resources/expertise or agreeing on common strategies or implementation modalities. Examples of how food security and nutrition were effectively integrated to produce a more effective response to undernutrition were therefore limited, and some of the individual efforts have proven unsustainable.
- 3) **Policy Framework:** There have been achievements here that are innovative, strategic and demonstrate a level of flexibility and positive opportunism on behalf of the JP rarely seen in development programmes. This is an area where the JP has really excelled and has had a much more substantial impact than might be expected by a programme of its size. Of particular note are the inclusion of nutrition information in the national primary curriculum; establishment of the National Dietary-based Guidelines; development and rollout of training materials (Boys and Girls growth charts and measuring guidelines, anthropometric measurement guidelines, MSM guidelines); and the study produced on Barriers to Micronutrient Supplementation that may have a direct impact on government policy.
- 4) **Government Ownership:** The consistency and quality of government engagement has been high throughout the programme, both at the national level and at the provincial/district level where many government staff are active in programme monitoring and implementation (although the level of involvement varies widely by province). Many of the agricultural cooperatives formed during the JP are registered and domiciled at DAIL offices, offering a higher chance of sustainability and ongoing support.

- 5) **Delivering as One:** In terms of formal interaction between the agencies, an inception workshop and regular TWC and PMC meetings have been used to seek approval on key issues and decisions. Beyond this, there is little substantive or impactful collaboration between the agencies in terms of joint programming or innovating ways to collectively address malnutrition and food insecurity.

**The evaluation draws the following conclusions:**

- 6) The JP was well aligned to the Afghan National Development Strategy and oriented towards the achievement of the MDG's, most directly to MDG 1 (eradicating extreme poverty and hunger), MDG 4 (reducing child mortality rates), MDG 5 (improving maternal health). At time of evaluation, the JP was on track to achieve full delivery.
- 7) The evaluation notes many achievements under Output 1, accomplished through an array of partners. However, the JP did not manage to demonstrate a new model of integrating nutrition and food security initiatives in a compelling and replicable way. This was due to the scattered and, at times, isolated manner in which JP partners worked where there was little connection between them. (particularly between IP's and UN agencies). The best examples of an integrated approach came from initiatives implemented directly by the JP team itself, which is understandable as the team itself was comprised of both nutrition and food security specialists.
- 8) Similarly, joint planning and collaborative action between the partner UN agencies was quite limited, focusing mainly on sharing workplans, reporting and a number of joint monitoring mission. Interventions continued to be along traditional agency lines with little evidence of new approaches. This is likely attributable to three main factors: a) the way in which the programme was designed (with outputs divided by agencies); b) the 'pass through' funding mechanism which provided no incentive for joint planning due to separated budget lines; and c) the functioning of the programme coordination mechanisms (esp the PMC) which focused more on process than substance.
- 9) Under Output 2, the JP has had a wider ranging impact that could be expected for a programme of its size, and these successes resulted from an entrepreneurial approach to programming as they were not envisioned in the programme document. Notably among them are the Better Nutrition, Better Learning initiative (inclusion of nutrition information and messaging in the national primary school curriculum), and the development of the Food-based Dietary Guidelines.
- 10) Stakeholder engagement has been very high in the JP. Government partners at the national level are genuinely involved, and subnational government staff was highly engaged in local programme activities in both implementation and monitoring roles. Planning was done in a consultative way through the Inception Workshop and provincial workshops to develop district action plans.

**Sustainability of the JP**

**Outcome 1**

- 11) Due to the quick impact nature of many of the IP projects, some interventions have already completely ceased operations. Early Childhood Centres (ECD) had positive results through



noonday feeding, regular screenings and household hygiene training and follow up, but these have closed down. One IP reported that their food processing work was no longer continuing in the target areas following the closure of their programme. Other centres established report not having the appropriate supplies to continue envisaged services following the cessation of support from the JP.

- 12) There are some indications of areas where sustainability is more likely. Many cooperative formed during the programme are registered with, and domiciled in, MAIL/DAIL. This provides a structural basis for long term existence of, and support for, these cooperatives. Similarly, the study conducted by MI on barriers to micronutrient supplementation intake was presented to the Consultative Group of Health and Nutrition and may influence government policy.
- 13) So much capacity development (through trainings, exchanges and coordination mechanisms) has taken place through the programme that this will undoubtedly have an impact even if it is not possible to measure quantitatively.
- 14) \$95,000 has been raised to replicate a similar package of interventions (nutrition and FS) in a new province (Baghlan), giving the JP some spillover effect. Similarly, Green Way Organization (GWO) received funding from UNHCR to expand its bee keeping activities in additional areas of Daikundi.

#### Outcome 2

- 15) Two initiatives of the JP under Output 2 are highly likely to have wide, sustainable impact in Afghanistan. The first is the inclusion of nutrition content and messaging into national primary school curriculum under the Better Nutrition, Better Learning initiative.
- 16) Similarly, the Food-based Dietary Guidelines initiative that was launched under the JP has received additional funding for two years to ensure its complete development and roll out. It was noted by the Deputy Minister of MoPH that this was a very high priority for her ministry.

#### **Recommendation in the short/immediate term are:**

- 17) Programme stakeholders should be brought back together, particularly the IP's who were implementing both nutrition and FS interventions (as was the JP team), to capture the experiences of integrating both in a single programme area. This would help to understand how the model worked in practice, even if on a smaller scale. Demonstrating that was a key focus of the JP and this would contribute to that end.
- 18) To ensure sustainability and possible scaling of the Better Nutrition, Better Learning initiative, the JP team should approach the MoE to learn what further support is needed to include nutrition information into curriculum of higher level grades.

#### **Some key lessons learned for joint programming:**

- 19) Part of the rationale for this and other MDG-F programmes is to test and validate a model of better programming through joint UN action. This was particularly true in this JP as it set out to demonstrate a more effective means of reducing malnutrition by integrating nutrition and

food security efforts in target areas. The thin spread of limited resources throughout 10 districts, combined with a very high number of partners, made achieving this a nearly impossible goal. **If creating a replicable model is a primary aim, then the geographical scope (and therefore the number of IP's) must be small enough to demonstrate sustained, and measurable, change over time.**

- 20) The number of actors in the JP was too large to effectively manage and coordinate, although this was done to ensure that IP's had access and experience in the 10 target districts. Not nearly enough was done to bring all the actors together at the right times to ensure a coherent approach and sharing of resources, experience and messaging. Therefore, a key learning is that **to reduce the isolated approach happening within the programme, partners that are working on similar initiatives/issue areas should be brought into closer and regular communication.**
- 21) **Coordination is not the same as collaboration.** Much of the interaction between the partner agencies has been on a superficial level focusing on procedures, reporting and approvals, rather than a move towards innovative and integrated approaches. This has greatly limited the potential that a joint programme could offer.
- 22) **Collaboration is a full time job.** The agencies that were most engaged with the JP (UNIDO and WHO) both had a dedicated staff member employed and therefore had greater resources to contribute and get more direct agency buy-in. This was raised in the mid-term evaluation (need for dedicated staff), including a provision that the funds should/could come from the joint budget, but this was never acted on.
- 23) **Opportunities for joint/integrated solutions should be sought during the design phase of JP's,** or they will be structurally set up to fail or, at least, make success elusive. This JP suffered out of the gate as all the outputs were set up along regular agency activity lines, effectively incentivizing agencies to NOT pursue integrated, responsive approaches.
- 24) **Agency funding levels has a direct, and understandable, impact on their ability to fully engage in a programme like this.** Joint Programmes, by their nature, present an additional workload on agencies in terms of coordination meetings, different reporting formats, lengthy approval processes, etc. When the funding level is so low (applies in this case to most agencies, but \$150,000 for WFP over 3 years stands out), it is difficult for agencies to justify full engagement in the programme. This should be considered during the design phase and logic-based decisions taken on what agencies can realistically be expected to contribute to, or even if they should be involved at all.
- 25) **Innovation and the ability to pursue previously unidentified opportunities is incredibly important,** but often are neglected in favour of implementing the programme document verbatim. Some of the most interesting, far-reaching, impactful and sustainable achievements of this programme were not envisioned at the time of design.

## Programme Environment and Context

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1. Outside of Sub Saharan Africa, Afghanistan has the highest rate of child mortality and the second highest maternal mortality rate in the world.<sup>1</sup>
2. Studies estimate that 35-56% of U5 deaths (globally) can be attributed to malnutrition. Of these, 83% of deaths are of children that suffer from mild-moderate malnutrition due to a decreased defense against infection, while only 10% are categorized as acutely malnutrition. Therefore, many of the U5 deaths could be prevented with enhanced nutritional intervention.<sup>2</sup>
3. Malnutrition rates in Afghanistan among women and children are estimated at 30% of the population, with severe acute malnutrition (SAM) affecting 11.3%. This is almost 6 times higher than the international emergency threshold of 2% of SAM cases. 55% of children in Afghanistan are moderately or severely stunted.<sup>3</sup>
4. Micronutrient deficiency rates are high amongst both children and women, with 33.7 and 21.4% respectively being anemic.<sup>4</sup>
5. Infant and young children feeding (IYCF) practices are often poor. Traditional and cultural beliefs can have negative effects on how young children are nourished; breastfeeding is shunned or stopped earlier than optimal; children are weaned at inappropriate ages; and complimentary foods are often inadequate or inappropriate for the nutritional needs of young children. Maternal undernutrition, a lack of support and limited resources, and a mother's workload all contribute to poor IYCF practices. It's estimated that one third of children are growth stunted by the age of twelve months.
6. Many of the most common causes of death for U5's can be linked to undernutrition, evidenced by the manner in which poor nutrition patterns mirror disease rates. Poor hygiene and sanitation practices, and limited access to improved water, also contribute substantially.
7. The Afghan National Development Strategy (ANDS) is the Government of Afghanistan's main strategic planning document, and it addresses nutrition and food security through the "Nutrition Sector Strategy" and the "Agriculture and Rural Development Sector Strategy". However, it is vague in tackling the causes and proposed solutions of undernutrition and household food security, and both political commitment and resource allocation have remained somewhat limited.

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<sup>1</sup> World Bank Indicators, 2011. (<http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SH.STA.MMRT>)

<sup>2</sup> Paraphrased from the JP Programme Document. Originally sourced from <sup>2</sup> Black, R. et al (2008). Maternal and child undernutrition: global and regional exposures and health consequences, *The Lancet*, 371 (9608): 243-260. Caulfield et al. (2004). Undernutrition as an underlying cause of child deaths associated with diarrhea, pneumonia, malaria, and measles. *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*, 80(1): 193-198. Pelletier et al. (1995). The effects of malnutrition on child mortality in developing countries. *Bulletin of the World Health Organization*, 73(4): 443-448.

<sup>3</sup> Afghanistan Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS), 2011 (<http://cso.gov.af/Content/files/AMICS-Jun24-2012-FINAL.pdf>)

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

8. Coordination between ministries in tackling malnutrition in an integrated approach between health and food security interventions has been very limited.

### **Children, Nutrition and Food Security in Afghanistan**

9. The Joint Programme “Children, Nutrition and Food Security in Afghanistan” (CNFS) aimed to support all three pillars of the 2010-2013 UNDAF, namely “Governance, Peace and Stability”, “Sustainable Livelihoods: Agriculture, food security and access to income”, and “Basic Services Delivery: Health, Education and Water and Sanitation”. It sought to contribute to several of the MDG’s, with particular relevance to MDG 1 (eradicating extreme poverty and hunger), MDG 4 (reducing child mortality rates), MDG 5 (improving maternal health).
10. The JP identified four main challenges to be addressed by the programme, namely a) limited prioritization of nutrition in government policies and budgets; b) limited coverage and outreach in less accessible areas; c) limited coordination and integration of interventions in nutrition and food security; and d) limited in-country expertise in nutrition and food security interventions and all levels of government and civil society.
11. The JP organized its efforts through two outcomes and 10 outputs, later reduced to 7 outputs.
12. Outcome 1 represented a comprehensive package of community nutrition and food security interventions to reduce the degree and prevalence of under nutrition at the district level. Outputs target the following areas:
  - ✦ Participatory nutrition and food security assessments
  - ✦ Capacity development of community members on nutritional practices
  - ✦ Improved IYCF practices
  - ✦ Community screening and treatment of acute malnutrition and referrals to health services
  - ✦ Capacity development of health workers on nutritional issues and practices
  - ✦ Increasing household food production and income generation capacity
  - ✦ Nutritional status monitoring in programme locations
13. The JP worked towards Outcome 1 by partnering with NGO’s and CSO’s with expertise and access in one or more outputs in one or more target areas. JP partners contracted these directly without the ‘Nutrition and Food Security Support Fund’ envisioned in the Programme Document, due to a lack of time to establish such a formalized mechanism due to a late programme start.
14. The National Steering Committee (NSC) was technically responsible for the selection of provinces according to the programme document. However, no NSC was ever constituted in Afghanistan due to limited interest from the Government given the small amount of funding involved, and the Deputy Ministerial level of representation at the Programme Management Committee (PMC). The selection of districts was done through consultation with government, partner agencies and UNAMA, and ultimately validated by the PMC.

15. Outcome 1 included the commissioning of a baseline survey, with the intention that it would quantify the baseline data and provide evidence needed to inform a targeted approach to programming. This did not materialize, as delivery of the baseline survey was late (with some contention of the results/methodology), by which time the activities were already determined and were underway.
16. Outcome 2 focused on strengthening the policy frameworks and institutional mechanisms required to support integrated nutrition interventions, addressing undernutrition from a longer-term perspective. Within the three specific outputs under Outcome 2, the JP sought to:
  - ✦ Provide policy advice and advocacy for stronger, better resourced and more focused policies and strategies to address undernutrition and food security
  - ✦ Help establish effective coordination mechanisms for nutrition and food security interventions at the central and provincial levels
  - ✦ Have nutrition and food security modules developed and integrated into pre-service and in-service trainings for health workers and other relevant personnel
17. Activities under Outcome 2 were focused at the central level, directly by the JP Team through the provision of capacity development and specific technical assistance. This included embedding two National Coordinators within the two key partner ministries, as well as support provided by the JP Technical Advisor and Coordinator (JPTAC) and a nutrition and food security curriculum development specialist.
18. The JP was approved on 06 July 2009 by the MDG-F Steering Committee and signed by all partner agencies by 29 July 2009. The programme budget was \$5,000,000 over a period of three years. The JP had FAO as a lead agency partnering with UNICEF, UNIDO, WFP and WHO, with the main government counterparts being the Ministry of Public Health (MOPH) and the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL), as well as substantial involvement of the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD). Over the course of the JP, the Ministry of Education (MoE) and the Ministry of Women's Affairs (MoWA) also became a substantial partner.
19. The first tranche of funds was received in December 2009, making the official start date of the programme 23 December 2009.

## Final Term Evaluation

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### Objectives

This final evaluation has the following **specific objectives**:

20. Measure to what extent the joint programme has contributed to solve the needs and problems identified in the design phase.
21. To measure the joint programme's degree of implementation, efficiency and quality of delivery on outputs and outcomes, against what was originally planned or subsequently officially revised.
22. Measure to what extent the joint programme has attained development results to the targeted population, beneficiaries, participants whether individuals, communities, institutions, etc.
23. To measure the joint programme contribution to the objectives set in their respective specific thematic windows as well as the overall MDG fund objectives at local and national level. **(MDGs, Paris Declaration and Accra Principles and UN reform)**.
24. To identify and document substantive lessons learned and good practices on the specific topics of the thematic window, MDGs, Paris Declaration, Accra Principles and UN reform with the aim to support the sustainability of the joint programme or some of its components.

### Scope

25. This final evaluation measures the degree and quality of implementation of the JP from its inception through the period of the evaluation mission. The JP officially started in late December 2009 when the first tranche of funds were transferred to the UN agencies. The evaluation will include thirteen quarters from the beginning of January 2010 to the end of March 2013, although financial reporting was provided up to December 2012.
26. The final evaluation should be seen as an important opportunity to capture lessons learned to inform future programming. This was an ambitious programme both in terms of objective and number of partners and target areas, and offers experiences that can benefit other UN Country Teams and the MDG-F.

### Methodology

27. The first step in the evaluation was a **desk review** of relevant documents in February 2013, including: Programme Document, annual reports, IP reports, JP funded publications, JP factsheets, MDGF Nutrition Action Plan, programme monitoring reports, MDGF Action Plan Food

Security, MDG-F mission report, MDG Inception Workshop report, results framework, and Field Visit Reports.

28. An **in-country mission** took place between 22 February - 08 March 2013, where a combination of first hand observation, interviews and discussion groups were used. Interviews included programme staff from all partner agencies, government counterparts, beneficiaries to the degree possible, provincial/district level nutrition actors, community members and leaders, and implementing partners. One brief field visit was conducted, in Kabul. (Districts 7 and 8)
29. Following the initial interviews and field visits, a stakeholders briefing was held where initial findings were shared and discussed, and clarifications were made.
30. Following the mission, a draft report was shared with the MDG-F and country team for review and comment.

### **Constraints and limitations on the study conducted**

31. **Logistics and Security:** During the in-country mission, five separate booked field visits were cancelled due to technical issues with the plane, snow or security. As a result, the consultant was unable to leave Kabul during the mission to visit the target areas.

## **Main Substantive and Financial Progress of the Joint Programme**

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### ***Design level***

#### **Relevance**

32. The JP document made a clear case that it addresses a critical need in Afghanistan, effectively using quantitative socio-economic data as the basis for its analysis. It leverages the experiences and comparative advantages of each of the participating agencies. It also tied in clearly with national priorities and the UNDAF 2010-2013, which was in its development at the time of preparing this programme document. Finally, the JP document provides a realistic and frank assessment of challenges particular to the sectors (limited political commitment, low funding, etc) and identifies planned means to overcome them.
33. The JP was designed to directly support three Millennium Development Goals, namely MDG 1 (eradicating extreme poverty and hunger), MDG 4 (reducing child mortality rates), MDG 5 (improving maternal health).
34. The programme document was prepared through a collaborative process involving all UN partner agencies, the RCO and government staff from the MoPH, MAIL and MRRD.
35. However, the complete segregation of the programme outputs by agency in the programme document (reflective of their 'typical' types of activities) imposed a structural impediment to effective collaboration. The design encourages agencies to subsume their JP outputs into their larger initiatives, both for terms of economies of scale and to avoid a projectised approach internally. A lack of exploration or clarity of how these disparate components might fit together in an integrated fashion constitutes a major design flaw for an inter-agency programme.
36. This was raised during the mid-term evaluation, along with a recommendation for agencies to work together to find innovative, integrated solutions to the overlapping challenges of undernutrition and food insecurity but this coming together never happened in a substantive way.

#### **Scope**

37. The geographical reach of the programme was unmanageable, particularly given the difficulty and cost of movement in Afghanistan, coupled with the limited field-based staff and monitoring capacity. The programme was implemented in two districts in each of the following five provinces: Badakhshan, Nangahar, Daikundi, Bamiyan and Kabul. Many of the target districts were regularly/entirely inaccessible for UN staff due to security protocols.

#### **Time**

38. Even with the inherent challenges of implementing programmes in Afghanistan, the programme document allocated sufficient time for the intended activities. However, despite a quick start in the recruitment the JPTAC position, a programme criticality review (assessing the benefits/risks of fielding international staff) led the PMC to delay the placement of the JPTAC until November 2010. While some preparatory work was done prior to her arrival, most of the substantive work did not begin until the JPTAC was in place. This put a high level of pressure on the programme team to issue contracts and start activities.



## Cost

39. The total budget allocated for the programme was adequate for the scale of planned activities, although some were inadequately budgeted such as the baseline survey that resulted in extra time being required to move ahead with it. The 'pass through' funding mechanism caused delays for some UN agencies, as they had spent their 1<sup>st</sup> tranche allocations but the JP could not request further tranches until the collective commitment was over 70%. This is discussed further below under Fund Management.

## ***Processes level***

### Efficiency

40. For the period covered in this final evaluation, overall delivery (disbursement) was 85%, with the balance committed under contract, as of December 30, 2012<sup>5</sup>. Specific delivery figures are as follows:

	<b>FAO</b>	<b>UNICEF</b>	<b>UNIDO</b>	<b>WFP</b>	<b>WHO</b>	<b>Total</b>
Budget	3,665,178	511,266	478,825	149,456	195,275	\$4,997,000
Committed	442,481	174,479	93,871	0	41,578	\$752,409
Disbursed	3,222,697	336,516	384,594	149,456	153,697	\$4,246,960
<b>Total Exp</b>	<b>3,665,178</b>	<b>510,995</b>	<b>478,465</b>	<b>149,456</b>	<b>195,275</b>	<b>\$4,999,369</b>
% Disbursed	87.9%	65.8%	80.3%	100.0%	78.7%	85%

### Achievements under Outcome 1

<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Output</b>	<b>Achievements</b>
Child Nutrition and household food insecurity are reduced by 2013	1 · 1 Community's needs are assessed in a participatory way and results are used to form the district-level programme design and implementation plans.	Inception workshop was held with all stakeholders to identify priorities, define indicators and foster engagement. Participatory appraisal workshops were held in all target provinces to develop district level action plans PCC's and DCC's established to provide local coordination and monitoring of programme activities RFP for IP contracts was circulated to the province and district level for input
	1 · 2 Awareness and knowledge of healthy nutrition practices increased	154 staff from MoPH and BHPS implementers received TOT as Master Trainers on IYCF, Micronutrients and Health and Hygiene 1154 medical staff, CHS and CHW were trained on community IYCF Over 900 beneficiaries (including health shuras, community shuras and teachers) were trained on micronutrient supplementation and health and hygiene practices Following a TOT of staff from DoPH, DAIL, DRRD, DoWA, and DoED, along with community groups like CDC's, 2851 people received

<sup>5</sup> At the time of the in-country mission for this evaluation, delivery rates were higher than the figures above. However, most agencies did not supply the requested updated delivery figures as requested so the December figures are used in this report.

		<p>training on family nutrition, including dietary requirements by age, food hygiene and healthy recipes</p> <p>240 health staff received training on breastfeeding counseling and practices</p> <p>Nutrition education materials (USI, Breastfeeding, WASH, micronutrient guidelines) were developed and distributed (16,500 pieces of a variety of materials)</p> <p>1000 MSAM booklets, and 30,000 growth charts (boys/girls) printed</p> <p>50 staff from MoPH and BPHS implementing NGO's received training as 'Master Trainers' in growth monitoring</p> <p>District level staff of DAIL, DoWA, DRRD and the PNO were trained on cooking sessions for complimentary feeding, who then trained community level 2816 beneficiaries, while growth monitoring training packages were translated into local languages for distribution</p>
1 . 3	Improved access for acutely malnourished children to CMAM	<p>Development of anthropometric measurement guidelines supported, with 70 CHS and 1000 CHW receiving training for screening for acute malnutrition</p> <p>100,986 MUAC screenings were conducted on children and 38,530 pregnant and lactating women in the target areas (over three rounds)</p> <p>Kabul PNO was supported to attend a MSAM TOT in Khartoum, with 98 MoPH staff receiving master training in MSAM</p> <p>7 Therapeutic Feeding Units (TFU's) received 2162 cases of food items to treat SAM cases, while 10 Outpatient Therapeutic Care (OTP) sites received almost 6200 cases of feeding supplies for treatment of SMA cases, along with other supplies</p> <p>Micronutrient powder (sprinkles) were provided for 45,000 children, and 1,345 packs of micronutrient tablets were provided to PLW</p> <p>Training was given on targeted supplementary feeding (TSFP) and CMAM to a range of health practitioners, including from MDG-F target areas. 35.993 MT of RUSF (Plumpy'sup©) and 1500 MUAC tapes were procured and supplied for use in JP target areas.</p> <p>Targeted Supplementary Feeding Programme (TSFP) projects utilizing CMAM approach were implemented in eight MDG-F districts in the four MDG-F provinces; through these TSFP projects 6,891 children (3,859 girls; 3,032 boys) were treated for moderate acute malnutrition.</p> <p>A total of 22 gardens were established at health clinics to provide nutrition education for mothers/caretakers</p>
1 . 4	Increased household food production and 20% increase in household income	<p>4393 community members received training in gardening skills, including establishment, maintenance, types of vegetables, pest management, home composting and diversification</p> <p>Over 125,000 pieces (in Dari and Pashto) of educational material were developed and distributed</p> <p>Solar dehydration for food products introduced, with 110 people receiving TOT and 1400 attending community demonstrations on dehydrating techniques. 140 solar dehydrators were provided in different districts</p> <p>Milk processing introduced, with 27 receiving TOT, 320 women trained, equipment for 4 centres provided and the engagement of a marketing agent to take the milk to the provincial capital</p> <p>Potato processing introduced, with 25 receiving TOT, equipment provided and 320 others trained on potato processing</p> <p>Food processing and packaging training provided (15 TOT, 160 others) along with equipment and marketing skills training</p> <p>Additional funding to replicate the JP activities in Baghlan have been received (\$95,000)</p>
1 . 5	Nutritional status of U5 and women of reproductive age, and HH food security situation, monitored	<p>A total of 60 monitoring visits were reports by MDG-F agencies, a small number of which were joint monitoring missions of at least two partner agencies.</p> <p>A baseline study was conducted, but the results were not used on</p>

		programming or, to the knowledge of the consultant, for monitoring purposes. Very little data exists post implementation, making impact assessment untenable
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41. A total of 16 contracts were awarded to CSO's through the joint fund for the implementation of nutrition and/or food security initiatives or studies at the district level. Contracts were awarded to CSO's that had relevant experience and had existing presence in the target districts. In addition, agencies have implemented activities such as: food processing (UNIDO and FAO); developing trainings/TOT's and local language materials on SAM, MSAM and GM&P (WHO); and purchase of micronutrients (UNICEF) and targeted supplementary feeding (WFP).
42. A baseline survey was commissioned in order to quantify the existing situation and provide information required for evidenced-based interventions. However, given the late delivery of the baseline survey, and that all IP contracts were awarded and defined prior to its completion, the survey had minimal impact on programming or monitoring. UN partner agencies did not report using it to guide their interventions.
43. In addition, MUAC screening was being conducted directly by IP's or through training of Community Health Workers (CHW's) or teachers (conducted in different areas by UNICEF, FAO, WHO or the IP's themselves). WHO collected data over a 9 month period, but noted that CHW capacity and reporting mechanisms did not allow the results to be viewed with credibility. The results from the WHO MUAC reports for the three screenings are as follows:

<i><b>MUAC interpretation</b></i>		<i><b>Findings</b></i>							
		<i><b>1<sup>st</sup> round</b></i>		<i><b>2<sup>nd</sup> round</b></i>		<i><b>3<sup>rd</sup> round</b></i>		<i><b>Total</b></i>	
		<i><b>No</b></i>	<i><b>%</b></i>	<i><b>No</b></i>	<i><b>%</b></i>	<i><b>No</b></i>	<i><b>%</b></i>	<i><b>No</b></i>	<i><b>%</b></i>
<i><b>Total children 6-59 months Screened</b></i>		<i><b>66366</b></i>		<i><b>64189</b></i>		<i><b>45904</b></i>		<i><b>176459</b></i>	
<i><b>Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM)</b></i>	<i><b>MUAC &lt; 12.5 cm and/or bilateral oedema</b></i>	<i><b>16858</b></i>	<i><b>25.4</b></i>	<i><b>7576</b></i>	<i><b>11.8</b></i>	<i><b>5732</b></i>	<i><b>12.5</b></i>	<i><b>30166</b></i>	<i><b>17.1</b></i>
<i><b>Moderate Acute Malnutrition (MAM)</b></i>	<i><b>MUAC 11.5 cm – 12.4 cm and no oedema</b></i>	<i><b>9479</b></i>	<i><b>14.3</b></i>	<i><b>4994</b></i>	<i><b>7.8</b></i>	<i><b>3739</b></i>	<i><b>8.1</b></i>	<i><b>18212</b></i>	<i><b>10.3</b></i>
<i><b>Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM)</b></i>	<i><b>MUAC &lt; 11.5 cm and/or bilateral oedema</b></i>	<i><b>7379</b></i>	<i><b>11.1</b></i>	<i><b>2582</b></i>	<i><b>4</b></i>	<i><b>1993</b></i>	<i><b>4.3</b></i>	<i><b>11954</b></i>	<i><b>6.8</b></i>

#### Achievements under Outcome 2

<b>Outcome</b>		<b>Output</b>	<b>Achievements</b>
Policy and strategic fraframe	2.1	Nutrition and household food security are adequately addressed in	Mapping of ongoing interventions and functional areas of responsibility for various government bodies to identify service gaps done Support provided by JP members to several policy initiatives, including the National Nutrition Action Framework, the National Program on Food for Life,

	Government policies and strategies and resources allocated increased	UNDAF, etc. The JP has helped support and shape the Food-based Dietary Guidelines for Afghanistan
2.2	Effective coordination mechanisms for the promotion, supervision, implementation and evaluation of nutrition and food security interventions at central and provincial levels are established	Provincial Coordination Committee and District Coordination Committee established in each MDG-F target area to facilitate local coordination of programme activities JP provided support to the establishment of an integrated, high level Food Security and Nutrition Steering Committee chaired by the 2 <sup>nd</sup> Vice President
2.3	Nutrition and food security training modules are integrated in existing pre-service and in-service trainings for health, agricultural, education personnel (and other relevant sectors)	JP helped to integrate nutrition into the national curriculum of primary school children (Better Nutrition, Better Education initiative) This included material development, curriculum development and teacher training 514 MOE staff/teachers received training on the nutrition materials to be included in the new curriculum.

44. Activities under Outcome 2 deviated significantly from those planned in the programme document, due to a reluctance (of the programme team and the government) to produce stand alone policy documents as originally detailed in the prodoc, as well as reflecting ongoing efforts in the sector that the programme team/its members are supporting. (Notably the FAO/WFP-led Afghanistan Food Security and Nutrition Agenda, and the multi-sectoral Nutrition Action Framework, to which FAO, UNICEF, WFP and WHO were active contributors).
45. Innovating significantly from the planned activities of Outcome 2, two major accomplishments stood out. The first was the inclusion of nutrition educational material in the national primary curriculum, both as a standalone topic and one which was mainstreamed into other subject areas. This involved substantial inputs from the programme in terms of advocacy, providing technical assistance on curriculum development and teacher training, and should be recognized as an entrepreneurial and exciting departure from the programme document.
46. Similarly, the JP helped to spearhead and support the creation of food-based dietary guidelines, along with a process to field test and refine the way in which it will be communicated to people at the village and district level. Again, this was an excellent innovation of the JP that will give it a board and sustainable impact, at least in these areas, than might be expected from a programme with a fairly modest budget. The production and roll out of the guidelines is a major priority of the Ministry of Public Health, and funding has already been secured to extend FAO technical support to the ministry for this process over the next two years.

## **Fund Management**

47. The JP utilized a pass-through funding modality, with FAO as the Managing Agent. Each agency received its respective funding directly (based on the initial workplan), while FAO received and utilized the funds referred to in the programme document as the “pooled” funds. These funds were disbursed entirely by FAO for IP contracts, advocacy materials and operational costs such as staff and travel.
48. Several weaknesses were observed related to this funding modality. This first is that the threshold to request subsequent funding tranches was set at 70% of the total commitment as per MDG-F guidelines, which meant that agencies that utilized their initial allocation quicker were forced to wait until total JP commitment reached 70%, causing delays and frustrations. The second issue is separate fund management by each agency provided little incentive for collaborative planning or implementation. A pooled funding mechanism, managed by FAO but falling under the purview of the PMC, would have allowed for more flexibility in allocating funds to different agency activities based on shifting priorities, as well as eliminating the issues with the 70% commitment threshold.
49. The PMC was convened regularly and gave approval on all major decisions. However, its role appears to be more functional rather than strategic; it was a forum for each agency to report on progress and for the JPTAC to seek confirmation on ongoing and planned directions, rather than a forum for substantive discussion and strategic input.
50. The typical programme management structure of MDG-F funded programmes includes 1) a high level National Steering Committee (NSC) that provides strategic guidance and overall oversight all JP’s in the country, 2) Programme Management Committee (PMC) comprised of agency heads, senior government officials and technical staff, to which the JPTAC reports to, and 3) Technical Working Groups (TWG) made up of agency staff that meet regularly to discuss implementation and operational issues. An NSC was never established in Afghanistan due to the high level of PMC representation (Deputy Minister) and limited interest due to limited budget levels. In this context, the PMC acted as the highest decision making body for the JP.

## **Communication and Advocacy**

51. The unique identity of the programme was exceedingly well developed. Programme staff and government counterparts identified themselves as working “with the MDG programme”; there was a tight core programme team working within the MAIL (not in agency offices); and activities and events funded by or organized through the programme were clearly identified as MDG-F.
52. The JP supported large events such as International Women’s Day and food festivals with the MAIL, raising the profile of MDG issues to the broader public.
53. Internal communications within the partner agencies was frequent and oriented towards the practical, process aspects of the programme. Most substantive discussion on programmatic issues and joint solutions was limited, particularly as the implementation period moved towards the end.

## **Monitoring and Evaluation**

54. Government staff did a significant portion of the district level monitoring, with Provincial Nutrition Officers (PNO's) and District Agricultural Extension Officer overseeing activities related to their respective areas. Reporting was done vertically through established ministry channels, with additional feedback provided through the Provincial and District Coordination Committees, which were established by the programme to facilitate communication. (PCC/DCC) However, the quality of both the PCC/DCC mechanisms and engagement of government counterparts appeared to vary widely between provinces, as (likely) did the quality and frequency of their monitoring.
55. Each UN agency was designated as focal point for each of the provinces, to facilitate direct monitoring of programme activities. This, too, seems to have been done with varying success and rigor depending on the province.
56. Some direct monitoring was conducted by programme staff through field visits, including joint agency monitoring on multiple occasions, as well as one JP-funded staff member regularly working out of Badakhshan.
57. In general, the M&E structures and methods focused mainly on anecdotal stories and activity reporting, rather than providing verifiable evidence of change. Much of it is based on IP reports, with some UN field missions that served to verify the status of activities. For example, activities regarding micronutrient supplementation were reported on in terms of sachets or posters distributed, rather than a reduction of micronutrient deficiencies. Many factors (access, capacity, communications) make district level monitoring challenging in Afghanistan, but it makes discussions of impact and change hard to address.

## **Interagency Coordination**

58. In terms of formal interaction between the agencies, an inception workshop, and regular TWG and PMC meetings have been used to seek approval on key issues and decisions. Beyond this, there is little substantive or impactful collaboration between the agencies in terms of joint programming or innovating ways to collectively address undernutrition and food insecurity.
59. Significant frustrations existed between agencies and the JP team around issues of communication and participation, possibly leading to the lessening of a collaborative relationship.
60. Collaboration and JP-specific reporting and activities were higher in the two agencies (UNIDO and WHO) that had a dedicated staff member funded by the JP. The recommendation in the mid term evaluation that all agencies have staff (at least partly funded) which are accountable primarily to the JP was not taken up.

## **National/Local Ownership**

**61.** The JP was successful at establishing ownership of the programme by government, civil society and other community stakeholders. Critical to developing ownership and building consensus was the Inception Workshop held in January 2011 with all UN agencies, government and community stakeholders from all of the target districts. This had a much greater role in defining the interventions and targets than the baseline survey.

### Central Government

**62.** The level of government engagement in the CNFS was exceedingly high, which should be seen as a major success of the programme to date. Visits to various government ministries made clear that the programme team/members were very regularly there, and a collegial relationship was observed. Government staff (from Deputy Ministers to technical staff) knew the “MDG programme” and spoke in a way that showed they felt a good degree of ownership over it.

**63.** Government ownership and a sense of real partnership over the programme is engendered through physical presence; the programme team was located within MAIL offices (with one staff member based in the MoPH on a ½ time basis) and this proximity allowed for regular, instant access without the formality common with UN/Govt meetings.

### Local Government

**64.** Government staff at the subnational level implemented or supported many of the programme activities—as well as coordination and monitoring functions. The experience of how well this worked varied greatly across provinces, as in some cases the role of the PNO was considered highly valuable and critical, where in others engagement by the PNO was extremely limited.

**65.** Many of the cooperatives that were formed during this programme were registered and, in many cases located at, local government offices. This represents an important linking of community bodies and government representatives. It also significantly enhances the likelihood of their sustainability following the programme closure.

**66.** Many of the programme activities were implemented directly by government staff, or monitored by them. This served to increase the accountability of local government for programme results.

### CSO's and Community Level

**67.** Representatives of civil society groups and local leaders participated in the Inception Workshop, helping to define priorities and establish a direct link between the programme and its target population. CSO's were responsible for the implementation of many of the activities under Outcome 1.

**68.** It is not feasible to comment on the role or involvement of the target population/community members in the JP as no field travel was possible during the evaluation.

## Results level

### Outcome 1

69. A primary aim of the JP was to serve as a model to demonstrate the effectiveness of integrating nutrition and FS interventions to reduce undernutrition. Given the geographical spread and the lack of internal incoherence or approach, this was not achieved in a compelling manner.

70. The observation on a lack of internal coherence refers to the impact of many different actors implementing similar activities, but with limited communication and with wildly different implementation strategies and structures. The lack of coherence was, at least in part, almost inevitable given the large number of stakeholders involved. (16 NGO contracts, 5 agencies, and 5 government ministries). There have been many one-off activities (based on the tool box of different CSO's), and the limited connection between the IP's and partner agencies means opportunities for collaboration. Some anecdotal examples of this are:

<b>Nutrition</b>		
	<b>Example</b>	<b>Implication</b>
Community Outreach Method	Primary outreach vehicle were CHW's, Community-based Educators (CARE), Early Childhood Development Centres, school based Child Clubs, depending on IP	Different models, different sustainability implications, different reporting lines for MUAC results. (some screening results were reported to DoPH, some to the IP's HQ, etc)
MUAC Screening	In some cases done through CHW's, some directly done by IP's	Capacity development not focused on sustainable structures (i.e. CHW); varied quality and reporting lines of results
IYCF Materials	IYCF Materials and messages used were from UNICEF or WHO, or developed independently by IPs	Best practises not shared adequately; potential for inconsistent messaging; resources spent on 'reinventing the wheel'
Shared use of materials and messaging	One IP (MI) did a study on micronutrient uptake and appropriate messaging in Bamyan, while another IP (that was distributing micronutrients) in Bamyan was not aware of the study or the materials that had been developed	Excellent resource (study) not used to inform approach by others; possibly inconsistent messaging even within the same province; resources spent on 'reinventing the wheel'
<b>Food Security</b>		
Food Processing training	Each IP conducted trainings and chose and distributed different FP equipment, even where activities were similar	Different approach used and equipment provided; possibly differing levels of quality of support; one IP was relatively



		new to food processing and didn't benefit from experience of other
Sharing Agency expertise	-One NGO (ME) reported not knowing that UNIDO was involved in the programme	UNIDO is very active and experienced in this area, and could have been a valuable resource to help guide programming/shorten the learning curve, especially in such as short programme

71. In short, many of the activities under Outcome 1 were done in isolation, and many were implemented in such a way as to make sustainability unlikely. Many programme resources developed by IP's (such as the Childhood Development Centres, School Clubs, programme-funded community mobilizers) were no longer operational at the time of the evaluation mission.
72. In addition, there is little evidence that the UN partner agencies have made any fundamental changes in their approach to their specific programming as a result of being brought together under the JP. Most activities conducted at the agency level follow long-established business practices.
73. This is not to say that there was no cross fertilization or innovation by the agencies during the JP. Examples like the guidelines produced under the JP by WHO being picked up by other agencies as a shared resource, or UNIDO implementing significantly varied food processing activities in different areas depending on agricultural resources and market conditions, can be seen. The greatest integration of nutrition and food processing initiatives can be seen in activities implemented directly by the JP Team, aided by the fact that they were a single team working together over a period of time.
74. However, when looking at the JP from a wide-angle lens, there was a lack of internal coherence between the wide array of actors and limited examples of how food security and nutrition were effectively integrated to produce a more effective response to undernutrition in the target areas of the programme.
75. There was some anecdotal evidence of impact and sustainability of activities under Outcome 1. Green Way Organization secured an additional \$150,000 in funding from UNHCR to scale up its beekeeping activities in Badakhshan, based on the results of its work under the JP. Many cooperatives that were formed during the programme (esp food processing) are registered under, and domiciled in, DAIL offices, giving them a stronger opportunity from continuing and evolving following the closure of the programme. Further, all partners (UN agencies and IP's) conducted a huge amount of capacity development activities, which will have a lasting impact even if it is difficult to assess at this point. Finally, the creation of PCC/DCC has brought together various government departments at a local level that could, in some cases, continue even if on a less formal basis as many noted seeing value in the enhanced cooperation.

76. In addition, \$95,000 in additional funding was secured to continue certain activities, as well as implement a similar package of interventions in Baghlan Province.

## **Outcome 2**

77. Attempts to harmonize reporting and monitoring systems of the main government partners (MoPH and MAIL), as proposed in the programme document, were never actively pursued. Given the timeframe of the programme, the complexity of the task and the inherently programme-centric justification to do so, not pushing ahead with this was a positive decision.

78. Several of the outputs and achievements under Outcome 2 were innovative, strategic and demonstrate a level of flexibility and positive opportunism on behalf of the JP often not seen in development programmes. These are where the JP has really excelled and has had a much more substantial impact than might be expected by a programme of its size.

79. One example of this was the inclusion of nutritional information in the national primary curriculum. This required a substantial amount of advocacy and support, including fielding a national specialist to help develop the messaging and to work with the Ministry of Education to ensure its mainstream integration in several modules of the revised curriculum for primary students across the country. It also involved organizing a series of trainings for teachers and teacher trainers. This was done during the periodic revising of the curriculum by the MoE, so integrated nicely with ongoing national processes rather than being an ad hoc programme-driven initiative.

80. Another major achievement was the development of the Afghan Nutrition-based Dietary Guidelines in partnership with the MoPH. This has enormous potential to have a wide-ranging impact on perceptions and awareness of nutritional issues through Afghanistan. The approach has been consultative and thoughtful, with extensive field-testing to identify the best means of effectively communicating the guidelines to populations with varying educational and literacy levels.

81. The initiative, and approach, has been highly appreciated by the MoPH and there is a veritable guarantee of its continued high level of engagement following the closure of the JP. Agencies active in this field such as UNICEF are positive about this initiative and have expressed interest in future engagement. In order to help finance elements of the finalization and national rollout, a new programme focusing solely on this has been funded by FAO for a two-year period and has already begun, so there should be minimal/no gaps in support.

82. In terms of research and policy, some of the materials developed and produced by WHO under the JP (Boys and Girls growth charts and measuring guidelines, anthropometric measurement guidelines, MSM guidelines) have been translated in local languages and distributed in many areas of the country. The study conducted by MI on Barriers to Micronutrient Supplement intake has been presented at the Consultative Group of Health and Nutrition and may have a direct impact on government policy.

## Sustainability

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### Outcome 1

- 83) Due to the quick impact nature of many of the IP projects, some interventions have already completely ceased operations. Early Childhood Centres (ECD) had positive results through noonday feeding, regular screenings and household hygiene training and follow up, but these have closed down. One IP reported that their food processing work was no longer continuing in the target areas following the closure of their programme. Other centres established report not having the appropriate supplies to continue envisaged services following the cessation of support from the JP.
- 84) There are some indications of areas where sustainability is more likely. Many cooperative formed during the programme are registered with, and domiciled in, MAIL/DAIL. This provides a structural basis for long term existence of, and support for, these cooperatives. Similarly, the study conducted by MI on barriers to micronutrient supplementation intake was presented to the Consultative Group of Health and Nutrition and may influence government policy.
- 85) So much capacity development (through trainings, exchanges and coordination mechanisms) has taken place through the programme that this will undoubtedly have an impact even if it is not possible to measure quantitatively.
- 86) \$95,000 has been raised to replicate a similar package of interventions (nutrition and FS) in a new province (Baghlan), giving the JP some spillover effect. Similarly, Green Way Organization (GWO) received funding from UNHCR to expand its bee keeping activities in additional areas of Daikundi.

### Outcome 2

- 87) Two initiatives of the JP under Output 2 are highly likely to have wide, sustainable impact in Afghanistan. The first is the inclusion of nutrition content and messaging into national primary school curriculum under the Better Nutrition, Better Learning initiative.
- 88) Similarly, the Food-based Dietary Guidelines initiative that was launched under the JP has received additional funding for two years to ensure its complete development and roll out. It was noted by the Deputy Minister of MoPH that this was a very high priority for her ministry.

## Conclusions

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- 89) The JP was well aligned to the Afghan National Development Strategy and oriented towards the achievement of the MDG's, most directly to MDG 1 (eradicating extreme poverty and hunger), MDG 4 (reducing child mortality rates), MDG 5 (improving maternal health).

- 90) The evaluation notes many achievements under Output 1, accomplished through an array of partners. However, it did not manage to demonstrate a new model of integrating nutrition and food security initiatives in a compelling and replicable way. This was due to the scattered and, at times, isolated manner in which JP partners worked where there was little connection between them. (particularly between IP's and UN agencies). The best examples of an integrated approach came from initiatives implemented directly by the JP team itself, which is understandable as the team itself was comprised of both nutrition and food security specialists.
- 91) Similarly, joint planning and collaborative action between the partner UN agencies was quite limited, focusing mainly on sharing workplans, reporting and a number of joint monitoring mission. Interventions continued to be along traditional agency lines with little evidence of new approaches. This is likely attributable to three main factors: a) the way in which the programme was designed (with outputs divided by agencies); b) the 'pass through' funding mechanism which provided no incentive for joint planning; and c) the functioning of the programme coordination mechanisms (esp the PMC) which focused more on process than substance.
- 92) Under Output 2, the JP has had a wider ranging impact that could be expected for a programme of its size, and these successes resulted from an entrepreneurial approach to programming as they were not envisioned in the programme document. Notably among them are the Better Nutrition, Better Learning initiative (inclusion of nutrition information and messaging in the national primary school curriculum), and the development of the Food-based Dietary Guidelines.
- 93) Stakeholder engagement has been very high in the JP. Government partners at the national level are genuinely involved, and subnational government staff was highly engaged in local programme activities in both implementation and monitoring roles. Planning was done in a consultative way through the Inception Workshop and provincial workshops to develop district action plans.

## Recommendations

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- 94) Programme stakeholders should be brought back together (particularly the IP's who were implementing both nutrition and FS interventions, and the JP team) to capture the experiences of integrating both in a single programme area. This would help to understand how the model worked in practice, even if on a smaller scale. Demonstrating that was a key focus of the JP and this would contribute to that end.
- 95) To ensure sustainability and possible scaling of the Better Nutrition, Better Learning initiative, the JP team should approach the MoE to what further support is needed to include nutrition information into higher-level grades.

## Lessons Learned

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- 96) Part of the rationale for this and other MDG-F programmes is to test and validate a model of better programming through joint UN action. This was particularly true in this JP as it set out to demonstrate a more effective means of reducing malnutrition by integrating nutrition and food security efforts in target areas. The thin spread of limited resources throughout 10 districts, combined with a very high number of partners, made achieving this

a nearly impossible goal. **If creating a replicable model is a primary aim, then the geographical scope (and therefore the number of IP's) must be small enough to demonstrate sustained, and measurable, change over time.**

- 97) The number of actors in the JP was too large to effectively manage and coordinate, although this was done to ensure that IP's had access and experience in the 10 target districts. Not nearly enough was done to bring all the actors together at the right times to ensure a coherent approach and sharing of resources, experience and messaging. Therefore, a key learning is that **to reduce the isolated approach happening within the programme, partners that are working on similar initiatives/issue areas should be brought into closer and regular communication.**
- 98) **Coordination is not the same as collaboration.** Much of the interaction between the partner agencies has been on a superficial level focusing on procedures, reporting and approvals, rather than a move towards innovative and integrated approaches. This has greatly limited the potential that a joint programme could offer.
- 99) **Collaboration is a full time job.** The agencies that were most engaged with the JP (UNIDO and WHO) both had a dedicated staff member employed and therefore had greater resources to contribute and get more direct agency buy-in. This was raised in the Mid-term Evaluation (need for dedicated staff), including a provision that the funds should/could come from the joint budget, but this was never acted on.
- 100) **Opportunities for joint/integrated solutions should be sought during the design phase** of JP's, of they will be structurally set up to fail or, at least, make success elusive. This JP suffered out of the gate as all the outputs were set up along regular agency activity lines, effectively incentivizing agencies to NOT pursue integrated, novel approaches.
- 101) **Agency funding levels has a direct, and understandable, impact on their ability to fully engage in a programme like this.** Joint Programmes, by their nature, present an additional workload on agencies in terms of coordination meetings, different reporting formats, lengthy approval processes, etc. When the funding level is so low (applies to most agencies, but \$150,000 for WFP over 3 years stands out as particularly unreasonable) it is difficult for agencies to justify full engagement in the programme. This should be considered during the design phase and logic-based decisions taken on what agencies can realistically be expected to contribute to, or even if they want to be involved at all.
- 102) **Innovation and the ability to pursue previously unidentified opportunities is incredibly important,** but often are neglected in favour of implementing the programme document verbatim. Some of the most interesting, far-reaching, impactful and sustainable achievements of this programme were not envisioned at the time of design. Introduction

## Annex 1: Terms of Reference

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### **TOR FOR FINAL EVALUATIONS OF MDG-F JOINT PROGRAMME ON ‘ FEEDING THE CHILDREN OF AFGHANISTAN TOGETHER’**

Feeding the Children of Afghanistan Together

#### **1. GENERAL CONTEXT: MDG ACHIEVEMENT FUND (MDG-F)**

In December 2006, the UNDP and the Government of Spain signed a major partnership agreement for the amount of €528 million with the aim of contributing to progress on the MDGs and other development goals through the United Nations System. In addition, on 24 September 2008 Spain pledged €90 million towards the launch of a thematic window on Childhood and Nutrition. The MDG-F supports joint programmes that seek replication of successful pilot experiences and impact in shaping public policies and improving peoples’ life in 50 countries by accelerating progress towards the Millennium Development Goals and other key development goals.

The MDG-F operates through the UN teams in each country, promoting increased coherence and effectiveness in development interventions through collaboration among UN agencies. The Fund uses a joint programme mode of intervention and has currently approved 130 joint programmes in 50 countries. These reflect eight thematic windows that contribute in various ways towards progress on the MDGs, National Ownership and UN reform. With US\$134.5 million allocated to 24 joint programmes in the **thematic window ‘Children, Food Security and Nutrition’** this area represents almost 20% of the MDG-F’s work. The efforts contribute to achieving the MDG goals of reducing child mortality and eradicating extreme poverty and hunger.

This UN Joint Programme (JP) on ‘Feeding the Children of Afghanistan Together’ was designed shortly after Afghanistan was selected as one of the countries for the initiative “Delivering as One” . According to UNICEF, 60 percent of Afghan children are stunted because of poor feeding practices and malnutrition, and 2 out of 5 are moderately to severely underweight. With a budget of 5 million as parallel (\$1,832,158 ) and joint funding (\$3,167,842) the JP is tackling the issue by promoting an integrated package of nutrition and food security interventions at the community level and helping to establish the necessary policy frameworks, legislation, national capacity, coordination mechanisms and information management to support interventions at central, provincial, district and community-levels for the medium and long-term. It brings together health, agricultural and education activities to attack the immediate and underlying causes of malnutrition, by empowering communities to use their own resources to create lasting solutions to the problem. Most of the activities complement existing agency programmes on nutrition and food security in some selected provinces /districts of short term mitigating efforts: CMAM to provide support to malnourished children in district Health facilities, to longer term sustainable interventions, like FAO’s interventions focussing on improving diets and nutrition education in urban/rural areas.

The main Government partners of the Joint Programme are the Ministry of Public Health (MOPH) and the Ministry of Agriculture Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL). The focal point departments for the Joint Programme in these ministries are the Public Nutrition Department (MOPH) and the Extension directorate of (MAIL). The UN agencies participating in the Joint Programme are FAO, UNICEF, WHO, WFP and UNIDO. UN partners have designated FAO as the managing agent of the jointly funded components. Joint Programme Goal: to contribute to the reduction of undernutrition through sustainable and multi-sectoral efforts and, thus, contribute to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals in Afghanistan

(<http://www.mdgfund.org/program/feedingchildrenafghanistantogether>)

Outcome 1 - Child undernutrition and household food insecurity are reduced by 2013 through the implementation of an integrated community nutrition and food security package in 10 districts (in 5 provinces).

Outcome 2 - Policies, strategic frameworks and institutional mechanisms supporting integrated nutrition and household food security interventions are established

The anticipated start/end date of the 3 year programme was: 01 Jan. 2010- 31 Dec. 2012 but it actually started on 20 Nov, 2010.

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## 2. OVERALL GOAL OF THE EVALUATION

The objective of this evaluation is to provide an independent evaluation as instated on the M&E Strategy and the implementation Guide for Joint Programmes under the Millennium Development Goals Achievement Fund.(MDG-F).

Final evaluations are **summative** in nature and seek to:

1. Measure to what extent the joint programme has fully implemented their activities, delivered outputs and attained outcomes and specifically measuring development results.
2. Generate substantive evidence based knowledge, on one or more of the MDG-F thematic windows by identifying best practices and lessons learned that could be useful to other development interventions at national (scale up) and international level (replicability).

As per TOR, particular attention is to be paid to the design, process and results level of this intervention, to measure the level of Relevance, Efficiency, Effectiveness, ownership and sustainability of the JP intervention on childhood, nutrition and food security. As a result, the findings, conclusions and recommendations generated by these evaluations will be part of the thematic window Meta evaluation, the Secretariat is undertaking to synthesize the overall impact of the fund at national and international level.

## 3. SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION AND SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

The final evaluation will focus on measuring development results and potential impacts generated by the **joint programme**, based on the scope and criteria included in this terms of reference. This will enable conclusions and recommendations for the joint programme to be formed within a period between four and six months.

**The unit of analysis or object of study for this evaluation is the joint programme**, understood to be the set of components, outcomes, outputs, activities and inputs that were detailed in the joint programme document and in associated modifications made during implementation.

This final evaluation has the following **specific objectives**:

1. Measure to what extent the joint programme has contributed to solve the needs and problems identified in the design phase.
2. To measure joint programme's degree of implementation, efficiency and quality delivered on outputs and outcomes, against what was originally planned or subsequently officially revised.
3. Measure to what extent the joint programme has attained development results to the targeted population, beneficiaries, participants whether individuals, communities, institutions, etc.
4. To measure the joint programme contribution to the objectives set in their respective specific thematic windows as well as the overall MDG fund objectives at local and national level. **(MDGs, Paris Declaration and Accra Principles and UN reform)**.
5. To identify and document substantive lessons learned and good practices on the specific topics of the thematic window, MDGs, Paris Declaration, Accra Principles and UN reform with the aim to support the sustainability of the joint programme or some of its components.

#### **4. EVALUATION QUESTIONS, LEVELS OF ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION CRITERIA**

The evaluation questions define the information that must be generated as a result of the evaluation process. The questions are grouped according to the criteria to be used in assessing and answering them. These criteria are, in turn, grouped according to the three levels of the programme.

##### **Design level:**

**- Relevance: The extent to which the objectives of a development intervention are consistent with the needs and interest of the people, the needs of the country and the Millennium Development Goals.**

- a) To what extent was the design and strategy of the development intervention relevant



(assess including link to MDGs, UNDAF and national priorities, stakeholder participation, national ownership design process)?

b) How much and in what ways did the joint programme contribute to solve the (socioeconomical) needs and problems identified in the design phase?

c) To what extent was this programme designed, implemented, monitored and evaluated jointly? (see MDG-F joint programme guidelines.)

d) To what extent was joint programming the best option to respond to development challenges stated in the programme document?

e) To what extent the implementing partners participating in the joint programme had an added value to solve the development challenges stated in the programme document?

f) To what extent did the joint programme have a useful and reliable M&E strategy that contributed to measure development results?

g) To what extent did the joint programme have a useful and reliable C&A strategy?

h) If the programme was revised, did it reflect the changes that were needed? Did the JP follow the mid-term evaluation recommendations on the programme design?

#### **Process level**

**- Efficiency: Extent to which resources/inputs (funds, time, human resources, etc.) have been turned into results.**

a) To what extent did the joint programme's management model (i.e. instruments; economic, human and technical resources; organizational structure; information flows; decision-making in management) was efficient in comparison to the development results attained?

b) To what extent was the implementation of a joint programme intervention (group of agencies) more efficient in comparison to what could have been through a single agency's intervention?

c) To what extent the governance of the fund at programme level (TWG ) and at national level (PMC) contributed to efficiency and effectiveness of the joint programme? To what extent these governance structures were useful for development purposes, ownership, for working together as one? Did they enable management and delivery of outputs and results?

d) To what extent and in what ways did the joint programme increase or reduce efficiency in delivering outputs and attaining outcomes?

e) What type of work methodologies, financial instruments, and business practices have the

implementing partners used to increase efficiency in delivering as one?

f) What was the progress of the JP in financial terms, indicating amounts committed and disbursed (total amounts & as percentage of total) by agency? Where there are large discrepancies between agencies, these should be analyzed.

g) What type of (administrative, financial and managerial) obstacles did the joint programme face and to what extent have this affected its efficiency?

h) To what extent and in what ways did the mid-term evaluation have an impact on the joint programme? Was it useful? Did the joint programme implement the improvement plan?

**- Ownership in the process: Effective exercise of leadership by the country's national/local partners in development interventions**

a) To what extent did the targeted population, citizens, participants, local and national authorities made the programme their own, taking an active role in it? What modes of participation (leadership) have driven the process?

b) To what extent and in what ways has ownership or the lack of it, impacted in the efficiency and effectiveness of the joint programme?

**Results level**

**- Effectiveness: Extent to which the objectives of the development intervention have been achieved.**

a) To what extent did the joint programme contribute to the attainment of the development outputs and outcomes initially expected /stipulated in the programme document? (detailed analysis of: 1) planned activities and outputs, 2) achievement of results).

b) To what extent and in what ways did the joint programme contribute:

- I. To the Millennium Development Goals at the local and national levels?
- II. To the goals set in the thematic window?
- III. To the Paris Declaration, in particular the principle of national ownership? (consider JP's policy, budgets, design, and implementation)
- IV. To the goals of delivering as one at country level?

c) To what extent were joint programme's outputs and outcomes synergistic and coherent to produce development results? What kinds of results were reached?

d) To what extent did the joint programme had an impact on the targeted citizens?

e) Have any good practices, success stories, lessons learned or transferable examples been identified? Please describe and document them.

f) What type of differentiated effects are resulting from the joint programme in accordance

with the sex, race, ethnic group, rural or urban setting of the beneficiary population, and to what extent?

g) To what extent has the joint programme contributed to the advancement and the progress of fostering national ownership processes and outcomes (the design and implementation of National Development Plans, Public Policies, UNDAF, etc.)

h) To what extent did the joint programme help to increase stakeholder/citizen dialogue and or engagement on development issues and policies?

i) To what extent and in what ways did the mid-term evaluation recommendations contribute to the JP's achievement of development results?

**Sustainability: Probability of the benefits of the intervention continuing in the long term.**

a) To what extent the joint programme decision making bodies and implementing partners have undertaken the necessary decisions and course of actions to ensure the sustainability of the effects of the joint programme?

b) At local and national level:

- I. To what extent did national and/or local institutions support the joint programme?
- II. Did these institutions show technical capacity and leadership commitment to keep working with the programme or to scale it up?
- III. Have operating capacities been created and/or reinforced in national partners?
- IV. Did the partners have sufficient financial capacity to keep up the benefits produced by the programme?

c) To what extent will the joint programme be replicable or scaled up at national or local levels?

d) To what extent did the joint programme align itself with the National Development Strategies and/or the UNDAF?

## **5.METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH**

This final evaluation will use methodologies and techniques as determined by the specific needs for information, the questions set out in the TORs and the availability of resources and the priorities of stakeholders. In all cases, consultants are expected to analyze all relevant information sources, such as reports, programme documents, internal review reports, programme files, strategic country development documents, mid-term evaluations and any other documents that may provide evidence on which to form judgements. Consultants are also expected to use interviews, surveys or any other relevant quantitative and/or qualitative tool as a means to collect relevant data for the final evaluation. The evaluation team will make sure that the voices, opinions and information of targeted citizens/participants of the joint programme are taken into account.

The methodology and techniques to be used in the evaluation should be described in detail in the desk study report and the final evaluation report, and should contain, at minimum, information on the instruments used for data collection and analysis, whether these be documents, interviews, field visits, questionnaires or participatory techniques.

## 6. EVALUATION DELIVERABLES

The consultant is responsible for submitting the following deliverables to the commissioner and the manager of the evaluation:

- **Inception Report** (to be submitted within 15 days of the submission of all programme documentation to the evaluation team).

This report will be 10 to 15 pages in length and will propose the methods, sources and procedures to be used for data collection. It will also include a proposed timeline of activities and submission of deliverables. The desk study report will propose initial lines of inquiry about the joint programme. This report will be used as an initial point of agreement and understanding between the consultant and the evaluation managers. **The report will follow the outline stated in Annex 1.**

- **Draft Final Report** (to be submitted within 20 days after the completion of the field visit, please send also to MDG-F Secretariat)

The draft final report will contain the same sections as the final report (described in the next paragraph) and will be 20 to 30 pages in length. This report will be shared among the evaluation reference group. It will also contain an executive report of no more than 2 pages that includes a brief description of the joint programme, its context and current situation, the purpose of the evaluation, its methodology and its main findings, conclusions and recommendations. The draft final report will be shared with the evaluation reference group to seek their comments and suggestions. This report will contain the same sections as the final report, described below.

- **Final Evaluation Report** (to be submitted within 10 days after reception of the draft final report with comments, please send also to MDG-F Secretariat)

The final report will be 20 to 30 pages in length. It will also contain an executive summary of no more than 2 pages that includes a brief description of the joint programme, its context and current situation, the purpose of the evaluation, its methodology and its major findings, conclusions and recommendations. The final report will be sent to the evaluation reference group. **This report will contain the sections in Annex 2.**

## 7. EVALUATION REPORT QUALITY STANDARDS

The following UNEG standards should be taken into account when writing all evaluation reports<sup>1</sup>:

1. The **final report should be logically structured, containing evidence-based findings, conclusions, lessons and recommendations** and should be free of information that is not

relevant to the overall analysis (S-3.16).

**2. A reader of an evaluation report must be able to understand:** the purpose of the evaluation; exactly what was evaluated; how the evaluation was designed and conducted; what evidence was found; what conclusions were drawn; what recommendations were made; what lessons were distilled. (S-3.16)

3. In all cases, evaluators should strive to **present results as clearly and simply as possible** so

NOTE: Using evidence implies making a statement based on valid and reliable facts, documents, surveys, triangulation of informants' views or any other appropriate means or techniques that contribute to create the internal validity of the evaluation. It is not enough to just state an informed opinion or reproduce an informant's take on a specific issue.

that clients and other stakeholders can easily understand the evaluation process and results.(S-3.16)

**4. The level of participation of stakeholders in the evaluation** should be described, including the rationale for selecting that particular level. (S-4.10)

**5. The Executive Summary should "stand alone"**, providing a synopsis of the substantive elements of the evaluation. The level of information should provide the uninitiated reader with a clear understanding of what was found and recommended and what was learned from the evaluation. (see Outline in Annex 2 for more details). (S-4.2)

**6. The joint programme being evaluated should be clearly described** (as short as possible while ensuring that all pertinent information is provided). It should include the purpose, logic model, expected results chain and intended impact, its implementation strategy and key assumptions. Additional important elements include: the importance, scope and scale of the joint programme; a description of the recipients/ intended beneficiaries and stakeholders; and budget figures. (S-4.3)

7. The **role and contributions of the UN organizations and other stakeholders** to the joint programme being evaluated should be clearly described (who is involved, roles and contributions, participation, leadership). (S-4.4)

**8. In presenting the findings, inputs, outputs, and outcomes/ impacts should be measured to the extent possible (or an appropriate rationale given as to why not).** The report should make a logical distinction in the **findings, showing the progression from implementation to results with an appropriate measurement** (use benchmarks when available) and analysis of the results chain (and unintended effects), or a rationale as to why an analysis of results was not provided. Findings regarding inputs for the completion of activities or process achievements should be distinguished clearly from outputs, outcomes. (S-4.12)

9. Additionally, reports should **not segregate findings by data source**. (S-4.12)

10. **Conclusions need to be substantiated by findings** consistent with data collected and methodology, and represent insights into identification and/ or solutions of important problems or issues. (S-4.15)

11. **Recommendations should be firmly based on evidence and analysis**, be relevant and realistic, with priorities for action made clear. (S-4.16)

12. **Lessons, when presented, should be generalized beyond the immediate subject being evaluated** to indicate what wider relevance they might have. (S-4.17)

## 8. KEY ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES IN THE EVALUATION PROCESS

There will be 3 main actors involved in the implementation of MDG-F final evaluations:

1. The **Resident Coordinator Office** as **commissioner** of the final evaluation will have the following functions:

- Lead the evaluation process throughout the 3 main phases of a final evaluation (design, implementation and dissemination);
- Convene the evaluation reference group;
- Lead the finalization of the evaluation ToR;
- Coordinate the selection and recruitment of the evaluation team by making sure the lead agency undertakes the necessary procurement processes and contractual arrangements required to hire the evaluation team;
- Ensure the evaluation products meet quality standards (in collaboration with the MDG-F Secretariat);
- Provide clear specific advice and support to the evaluation manager and the evaluation team throughout the whole evaluation process;
- Connect the evaluation team with the wider programme unit, senior management and key evaluation stakeholders, and ensure a fully inclusive and transparent approach to the evaluation;
- Take responsibility for disseminating and learning across evaluations on the various joint programme areas as well as the liaison with the Program Management Committee;
- Safeguard the independence of the exercise, including the selection of the evaluation team.

2. The **Joint programme coordinator** as **evaluation manager** will have the following functions:

- Contribute to the finalization of the evaluation TOR;
- Provide executive and coordination support to the reference group;
- Provide the evaluators with administrative support and required data;
- Liaise with and respond to the commissioners of evaluation;

- Connect the evaluation team with the wider programme unit, senior management and key evaluation stakeholders, and ensure a fully inclusive and transparent approach to the evaluation;
- Review the inception report and the draft evaluation report(s);
- Ensure that adequate funding and human resources are allocated for the evaluation.

**3. The Technical working group** will function as the **evaluation reference group**.

This group will comprise the representatives of the major stakeholders in the joint programme and will:

- Review the draft evaluation report and ensure final draft meets the required quality standards;
- Facilitating the participation of those involved in the evaluation design;
- Identifying information needs, defining objectives and delimiting the scope of the evaluation;
- Providing input and participating in finalizing the evaluation Terms of Reference;
- Facilitating the evaluation team’s access to all information and documentation relevant to the intervention, as well as to key actors and informants who should participate in interviews, focus groups or other information-gathering methods;
- Oversee progress and conduct of the evaluation the quality of the process and the products;
- Disseminating the results of the evaluation.

**4. The MDG-F Secretariat** will function as a **quality assurance member** of the evaluation, in cooperation with the commissioner of the evaluation, and will have the following functions:

· Review and provide advice on the quality the evaluation process as well as on the evaluation products (comments and suggestions on the adapted TOR, draft reports, final report of the evaluation) and options for improvement.

**5. The evaluation team** will conduct the evaluation study by:

· Fulfilling the contractual arrangements in line with the TOR, UNEG/OECD norms and standards and ethical guidelines; this includes developing an evaluation matrix as part of the inception report, drafting reports, and briefing the commissioner and stakeholders on the progress and key findings and recommendations, as needed

**9. EVALUATION PROCESS: TIMELINE ( Oct 2012- Dec 2012)**

Evaluation Phase	Activities	Who	When Dates- indicative	# days ET
Design	Establish the evaluation reference group	CE*	Done	
Design	General final evaluation TOR adapted	ERG**	Done	
Implementation	Procurement and hiring the	EM***	Oct 1-15,	

	evaluation team		2012	
Implementation	Provide the evaluation team with inputs (documents, access to reports and archives); Briefing on joint programme	EM*** ERG**	Oct 15, 2012	
Implementation	Delivery of inception report to the commissioner, the evaluation manager and the evaluation reference group	ET****	Oct 25 -31, 2012	Within 15 days
Implementation	Feedback of evaluation stakeholders to the evaluation team. Agenda drafted and agreed with evaluation team	CE,* EM,*** ERG **	Nov 10, 2012	
Implementation	In country mission	ET****, EM***, CE*, ERG**	Nov 10-30. 2012	
Implementation	Delivery of the draft report	ET****	Dec 15,2012	submitted within 20 days after the field visit
Implementation	Review of the evaluation draft report, feedback to evaluation team. Fact-checking revision by MDG-FS, to be done at the same time as the ERG (5 business days)	EM***, CE*, ERG ** MDGFS*****	Dec 22,2012	
Implementation	Delivery of the final report	EM***, CE*, ERG**, MDG-FS*****, ^PMC	Jan 5,2013	10 days after feedback
Dissemination/ Improvement	Dissemination and use plan for the evaluation report designed and under implementation	EM,*** CE*, ERG**, ^PMC	Jan 2013	

**\*Commissioner of the evaluation (CE) –Resident Coordinator Office**  
**\*\*Evaluation Reference group (ERG) or Technical working group**  
**\*\*\*Evaluation manager (EM) or Joint Technical Advisor & Coordinator (JTAC)**  
**\*\*\*\*Evaluation team (ET)**  
**\*\*\*\*\*MDG-F Secretariat (MDGF-S)**  
**^Program management Committee**



## 10. USE AND UTILITY OF THE EVALUATION

Final evaluations are summative exercises that are oriented to gather data and information to measure the extent to which development results have been attained. However, the utility of the evaluation process and products should go far beyond what was said by programme stakeholders during the field visit or what the evaluation team wrote in the evaluation report.

The momentum created by the evaluations process (meetings with government, donors, beneficiaries, civil society, etc.) it's the ideal opportunity to set an agenda for the future of the programme or some of their components (sustainability). It is also excellent platforms to communicate lessons learnt and convey key messages on good practices, share products that can be replicated or scaled-up at the country and international level.

The commissioner of the evaluation, the reference group, the evaluation manager and any other stakeholder relevant for the joint programme will jointly design and implement a complete plan of dissemination of the evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations with the aim of advocating for sustainability, replicability, scaling-up, or sharing good practices and lessons learnt at local, national or/and international level.

## 11. ETHICAL PRINCIPLES AND PREMISES OF THE EVALUATION

The final evaluation of the joint programme is to be carried out according to ethical principles and standards established by the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG).

- **Anonymity and confidentiality.** The evaluation must respect the rights of individuals who provide information, ensuring their anonymity and confidentiality.
- **Responsibility.** The report must mention any dispute or difference of opinion that may have arisen among the consultants or between the consultant and the heads of the Joint Programme in connection with the findings and/or recommendations. The team must corroborate all assertions, or disagreement with them noted.
- **Integrity.** The evaluator will be responsible for highlighting issues not specifically mentioned in the TOR, if this is needed to obtain a more complete analysis of the intervention.
- **Independence.** The consultant should ensure his or her independence from the intervention under review, and he or she must not be associated with its management or any element thereof.
- **Incidents.** If problems arise during the fieldwork, or at any other stage of the evaluation, they must be reported immediately to the Secretariat of the MDGF. If this is not done, the existence of such problems may in no case be used to justify the failure to obtain the results stipulated by the Secretariat of the MDGF in these terms of reference.

- **Validation of information.** The consultant will be responsible for ensuring the accuracy of the information collected while preparing the reports and will be ultimately responsible for the information presented in the evaluation report.
- **Intellectual property.** In handling information sources, the consultant shall respect the intellectual property rights of the institutions and communities that are under review.
- **Delivery of reports.** If delivery of the reports is delayed, or in the event that the quality of the reports delivered is clearly lower than what was agreed, the penalties stipulated in these terms of reference will be applicable.

## 12. QUALIFICATIONS OF THE CONSULTANT/TEAM OF CONSULTANTS

- The evaluator will work for estimated 38-46 working days
- The evaluator will be independent, meaning that he/she has no previous engagement with the joint programme in the design/implementation.

### **Academic Qualification:**

- A master degree or equivalent on international development, public policy, social science, engineering or related field is a requirement. Further education or a concentration in monitoring and/or evaluation would be an asset.
- A combination of 5 years of recognized expertise in conducting or managing evaluations, assessments, audits, research or review of development projects, programmes, countries or thematic areas
- Have thematic expertise in, one of the MDG-F windows, international development programmes and or assessing or evaluating one or more of the MDG-F thematic areas; ( youth and employment; economic and private sector development; environment and climate change; conflict prevention and peace building; cultural diversity and development, economic governance, children and nutrition, gender and women's empowerment).

### **Experience:**

- The evaluator should have at least 5 years of recognized expertise in conducting or managing evaluations, research or review of development programmes, and experience as main writer of an evaluation report. Evaluation experiences and knowledge within United Nations system will be considered an asset;)
- The evaluator should have a good knowledge on MDGs, Development Effectiveness (Paris Declaration, Accra Agenda for Action) United Nations and other Multilateral Development Actors as well as bilateral donor processes and interventions.
- Evaluation experiences and knowledge on countries where MDG-F operates will be considered an asset providing that the independence of the evaluator is not compromised
- Should have excellent communication skills, be computer proficient a

- Must be conversant in monitoring, evaluation and/or social research methodologies (qualitative/quantitative) and have extensive knowledge and analytical skills based on studies, research, experience, or occupation in MDG-F one or more thematic areas
- Proficiency in English (written and spoken)

### 13. DISSEMINATION AND COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

The highlight of final report will be shared with national and sub national stakeholders. Each JP partner will take the lead responsibility for sharing the report at sub national level. At national level, JTAC will organize the dissemination meetings.

### 14. ANNEXES

#### ANNEX I: INCEPTION REPORT OUTLINE

1. Introduction
2. Background to the evaluation: objectives and overall approach
3. Identification of main units and dimensions for analysis and possible areas for research
4. Main substantive and financial achievements of the joint programme
5. Methodology for the compilation and analysis of the information
6. Criteria to define the mission agenda, including “field visits”

#### ANNEX II: DRAFT & FINAL REPORT OUTLINE

##### · Cover Page

Including JP title, thematic window, report date, name of the evaluator/s.

##### · Table of contents

Including page references for all chapters & annexes.

##### · Acronyms page

##### · Executive Summary

No more than 2 pages. Summarize substantive elements of the report, including a brief description of the joint programme, purpose and objectives of the evaluation, evaluation methodological approach, key findings and conclusions, main recommendations.

##### 1. Introduction

Explain why the evaluation is being conducted, including the following content:

##### · Background

MDG-F, thematic window, joint programme.

##### · Purpose, Goals and Methodology of Evaluation:

Purpose and goal of the evaluation, methodologies used (including evaluation criteria, scope), constraints and limitations on the study conducted.

##### · Description of the development intervention

Provide sufficient detail on the joint programme so that the readers of the report can easily understand the analysis done in the next chapter.

##### - Context

Social, political, economic, institutional factors that affect the JP.)

**- JP description**

Title, timeframe, intervention logic, objectives, intended outcomes/outputs, scale of the intervention, total resources, geographic location, etc.)

**2. Levels of Analysis**

This section should be evidence based, guided by the evaluation criteria and questions.

**· Design | Relevance**

Include a description of the initial concept and subsequent revisions, and all pertinent information for the reader to clearly understand the analysis done in this section. Assess the design relevance and address all evaluation questions (including link to MDGs, UNDAF and national priorities, stakeholder participation, national ownership design process, M&E framework and communications strategy and implementation of mid-term evaluation recommendations).

**· Process | Efficiency, Ownership**

Include a description of the JP's governance structure, coordination mechanisms, administrative procedures, implementation modalities, UN coordination, national ownership in the process and all pertinent information to clearly understand the analysis done in this section. Address all evaluation questions (including JP's level of financial progress and implementation of mid-term evaluation recommendations).

**· Results | Effectiveness, Sustainability**

Assess the level of attainment of the development results compared to what was initially expected. Show progression of implementation with an appropriate measure and analysis of the results chain (organized by outcome, and distinguishing findings on completion of activities and outputs from outcomes). If some of this analysis is not included, explain why it is not. Also, include an analysis of the effect of the mid-term evaluation on the JP's results achievement. For sustainability, please mention availability of financial resources and examples of or evidence for replicability and scale up of JP. Address all evaluation questions.

**3. Conclusions**

**4. Lessons Learned**

Define the scope of each lesson (joint programme, national policy, local intervention, etc.)

**5. Recommendations**

Prioritized, structured and clear. The scope and relevant stakeholder should be clearly defined for each recommendation.

**6. Annexes**

**ANNEX III: DOCUMENTS TO BE REVIEWED**

MDG-F Context

- MDGF Framework Document

- Summary of the M&E frameworks and common indicators

- General thematic indicators
  - M&E strategy
  - Communication and Advocacy Strategy
  - MDG-F Joint Implementation Guidelines
- Specific Joint Programme Documents
- Joint Programme Document: results framework and monitoring and evaluation framework
  - Mission reports from the Secretariat
  - Quarterly reports
  - -monitoring reports
  - Biannual monitoring reports
  - Annual reports
  - Annual work plan
  - Financial information (MDTF)
- Other in-country documents or information
- Evaluations, assessments or internal reports conducted by the joint programme
  - Relevant documents or reports on the Millennium Development Goals at the local and national levels
  - Relevant documents or reports on the implementation of the Paris Declaration and the Accra Agenda for Action in the country
  - Relevant documents or reports on One UN, Delivering as One