



FROM GLOBAL AGENDA TO NATIONAL ACTION

Intersectoriality, national ownership and “ONE UN”:
the MDG Achievement Fund at work

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FOREWORD

Spanish society has shown its solidarity with people in the world's poorest countries for many years, and desires to maintain this same important commitment despite the current economic context. In this spirit, the Master Plan for Spanish Cooperation (2013-2016) was designed to support a dedication to development cooperation that is orientated towards results and based on accountability.

Presenting the results of our work highlights our firm commitment to achieving these goals. The Millennium Development Goals Achievement Fund (MDG-F) was created through an agreement between the Government of Spain and the United Nations system, with a total contribution of approximately \$900 million and a mandate to accelerate progress toward the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The MDG-F has financed 130 joint programmes in eight programmatic areas in 50 countries around the world, as well as established global partnerships, knowledge management thematic initiatives and SARC and JPO programmes for young professionals in the area of development.

All these actions were carried out with a strong foundation in the three pillars that have driven the work of the Fund: the fulfillment of the MDGs, national ownership of development efforts as an essential principle of the Paris Declaration, and improving the UN system by promoting the coordination and harmonization principles at the heart of the ONE UN initiative.

This publication describes results achieved in these three areas through six case studies. It further provides suggestions for the future development agenda, in particular, ensuring the involvement of national actors in the programmes' governance mechanisms, strengthening national ownership, and emphasizing the crucial role of the UN Resident Coordinator in ensuring the ONE UN vision in the field.

The implementation of the Fund's programmes has involved a major effort by the UN system overall and especially by the UNDP, which I would like to thank in particular. I would be remiss if I did not also express my deep gratitude to Spanish society, whose generosity has been a constant characteristic of their identity, be it in good economic times as well as in times of budgetary constraints.

Gonzalo Robles
Secretary-General of International
Development Cooperation, Spain

Photos (top to bottom): Artisans like Florinda Ganán have created cooperatives for wool production and handi-craft-making through an MDG-F program to raise living standards for Ecuador's indigenous populations (photo by Carla Gachet/Iván Kashinsky). ■ When Beauty Begum began raising goats and vegetables through an MDG-F programme to boost nutrition in Bangladesh, not only did her family's health improve, she gained independence and a new position of influence in her household. ■ 25,000 school children in Guinea-Bissau have been trained to raise nutritious food through an MDG-F school gardens programme. ■ The MDG-F improved water delivery to 44,000 households in the Philippines by encouraging investment in services for poor communities and by increasing local capacities to manage water resources (photo by Jason Cardente).



PREFACE

In 2000, the Millennium Declaration captured nations' aspirations for a more peaceful, prosperous and just world. The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were formulated to provide a roadmap that would support the international community and national governments in focusing their efforts toward goals that are indispensable for sustainable human development and a common wellbeing.

International agreements need implementing instruments and mechanisms to be operative and to improve people's lives. It is in this framework that the United Nations MDG Achievement Fund was created as a cooperation mechanism whose aim is to accelerate progress on the MDGs. The Fund was established in 2007 through a landmark agreement between the Government of Spain and the UN system that, with a total contribution of approximately USD 900 million, financed 130 programmes in 50 countries. The UNDP supports both the work undertaken by the Fund and the ongoing strategy for the dissemination of lessons learned and best practices. All this would have not been possible without the generous contribution and support of the Government of Spain.

The MDG Achievement Fund supports national governments, local authorities, private sector entities and citizen organizations in their efforts to target vulnerable groups and tackle multi-dimensional poverty and inequalities. The Fund operates through the UN development system at the country level and finances collaborative UN activities that leverage the UN's added value, particularly where the UN's collective strength is brought to bear on multi-dimensional development challenges.


During 2013, the first generation of our programmes will be completing its implementation phase. It is now time for the Fund to share its know-how and best practices with the development community and national partners.

The preliminary analysis of indicators and development results is confirming the impact of the Fund's activities. As a case in point, it is estimated that more than 14 million youth have benefited from policies and legislation reforms approved with the contribution of the Fund. More than 55 national laws were reformed to promote gender equality, and more than 30 million individuals have been directly affected by laws, policies and plans supported by the Fund to improve access to safe, affordable drinking water and sanitation.

The purpose of this publication – *From Global Agenda to National Action* – is therefore to review and highlight the effectiveness of the Fund as a cooperation mechanism. The Fund focuses on three features that distinguish it from other international mechanisms: (i) the promotion of intersectoral approaches to deal with complex development challenges with a view to “accelerating” the achievement of the MDGs; (ii) the implementation of the Paris Declaration principles, both at national and local levels, as a tool for MDG achievement; and (iii) the enhancement of the UN system-wide coherence to increase coordination and effectiveness in supporting countries in achieving the MDGs.

Stakeholders representing different sectors and nations are coming together to debate the key elements of the post-2015 global agenda. It is certain that the forthcoming development goals will be characterized by multi-dimensional challenges: poverty, gender inequality, exclusion, environmental degradation, country vulnerabilities, market instability, etc. These challenges need a collective response. The findings based on evidence and national case studies presented in *From Global Agenda to National Action* highlight the difficulties and challenges in advancing social and economic development to end poverty and exclusion. The study also provides interesting insights into the need to shape cooperation tools that will bring together development actors on the basis of their competitive advantage. The Fund has been a pioneer in advancing the MDGs agenda, creating synergies as well as the opportunity and space for increased cooperation within the UN system and between the UN system and our national partners. In this sense, it has proved to be an ideal mechanism to support the implementation of the new post-2015 global agenda.

Rebeca Grynspan, Associate Administrator
United Nations Development Programme

A woman with dark hair tied back, wearing a black sleeveless top and bright red pants, is leaning over a wooden platform. She is holding two chickens: a white one in the foreground and a grey one behind it. The background is a wooden wall with some graffiti and a chain-link fence. The scene is outdoors with natural light.

Myriam Ayala is raising egg-laying chickens with a loan from an MDG-F-supported credit union to improve livelihoods for Ecuador's indigenous populations. (Photo by Carla Gachet/Iván Kashinsky)

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This publication is a case study of the Millennium Development Goals Achievement Fund (MDG-F). Its purpose is to examine the effectiveness of the MDG-F as a cooperation mechanism. The discussion focuses on three features that distinguish the Fund from other cooperation mechanisms: (i) the promotion of intersectoral approaches to deal with complex development challenges; (ii) the implementation of the Paris Declaration and Accra Agenda for Action principles at national and local levels; and (iii) the enhancement of the UN system-wide coherence reform – or “ONE UN” initiative – as a means to increase UN effectiveness in supporting countries to achieve the MDGs.

The research is divided into two parts. The first, spanning from Section II to Section V, presents our findings in relation to the three overarching goals outlined above. The evidence we present is based on experiences generated by programmes across the 50 countries in which the MDG-F has operated in the period from 2008-2013.

The second part of the paper, from Section VI to Section XI, presents six in-depth country case studies, in the following order: Ethiopia, Serbia, Colombia, Nicaragua, Egypt and the Philippines, representing the six geographic areas where the MDG-F has focused its efforts. The country cases reinforce and enrich the global arguments of the paper by providing national and local perspectives to a broader debate regarding intersectoral approaches, the implementation of the principles of the Paris Declaration, and the UN system-wide coherence reform.

The research’s policy implications may help national governments to reflect on innovative, intersectoral programmes that can contribute to achieving the MDGs. The report can also inspire the UN system to deepen system-wide coherence reform and reflect upon the added value of multiple-agency coordinated interventions. Finally, the paper can help international donors to consider the appropriateness of investing in intersectoral and joint initiatives at the country level.

The paper argues that intersectoral approaches offer added value in many ways. Such actions can avoid the duplication of interventions among UN sister agencies and between the UN system and national governments. Also, intersectoral approaches can prevent competition for funds and can make positive use of the comparative advantage of each specialized agency. Lastly, they can help to avoid silo behaviors and, in some cases, increase policy effectiveness, simultaneously creating better conditions for long-term sustainability. Lack of such coordination entails higher transaction costs and lessens the UN contribution that supports countries in meeting their national goals.

By targeting multi-dimensional development challenges, MDG-F programmes have helped to increase government cross-sectoral interventions. Framing complex development issues broadly has allowed people from different sectors to work towards common solutions. In several countries, evidence shows that local intersectoral initiatives inspire the scaling up of more coordinated national policies. According to the research, intersectoral actions require inclusive and sustained

Framing complex development issues broadly has allowed people from different sectors to work towards common solutions.

The MDG-F has provided an opportunity to begin building more integrated UN Country Teams and to accelerate the UN system-wide coherence reform.

partnerships, while building trust is paramount to developing and maintaining those connections. Furthermore, the consolidation of partnerships and platforms that the Fund promotes, in line with the Busan high-level forum for effective development, establishes a strong base for future collaboration among crucial development actors at the national level. Finally, intersectoral initiatives require strong organizational arrangements if they are to produce positive results. The governing bodies promoted by the MDG-F, the National Steering Committee and the Programme Management Committee have been essential in enabling dialogue across sectors, and in redefining and refining programme implementation to ensure greater effectiveness. The structure and the function of governing bodies as inclusive and horizontal fora for strategic decision-making seems to be one of the most relevant lessons learned by countries from the MDG-F experiences. Most of them are now applying the same formula to each new joint UN initiative planned or implemented in the country.

The study suggests that by translating the Paris Declaration and Accra Agenda for Action into national programmes, we can improve the cost-effectiveness of international cooperation. The concept of “national ownership” should be applied to central government institutions and expanded to local institutions (local ownership), civil society organizations and communities (citizen ownership). Available evidence suggests a positive trend with respect to ownership of MDG-F programmes. In many cases, national partners gradually increased their active role, shifting from passive receivers of information to active participants and leaders. At the local level, the MDG-F global experience and the national cases of Ethiopia and Egypt prove that the participation of local stakeholders in strategic decision-making and operational planning is critical to defining appropriate methodologies and ensuring that programmes are integrated into existing local processes.

El Salvador is combatting rising rates of violence with an MDG-F-supported campaign called “Yo decido vivir en paz” (“I Choose to Live in Peace”), which teaches tolerance and respect.



The governance mechanisms that the MDG-F promotes are useful platforms for information sharing, engagement, coordination and dialogue. When these bodies are co-chaired by both a government and a UN representative, they promote mutual accountability. Civil society participation in the design and implementation of joint programmes also contributes to this end. Participatory monitoring and evaluation mechanisms have been proven to support mutual accountability, promoting an opportunity to initiate dialogue among partners and providing an opportunity to address challenges. Finally, citizen accountability is linked to the flow of information and decision-making capacity and, as such, should be addressed in joint programmes.

The challenges that the UN system-wide coherence reform – or “ONE UN” initiative in this research – is meant to address at the country level are related to the duplication of interventions, fragmentation of UN contributions, competition for funds among UN sister agencies and uneven capacity to pursue strategic approaches. Evidence suggests that a lack of such coordination entails higher transaction costs. It undermines the efficiency of aid, decreases the possibilities of national ownership and lessens the UN contribution that supports countries in meeting their national goals. The case of Serbia also suggests that the development of intersectoral initiatives or of cross-sectoral cooperation define a niche for the UN in Middle Income Countries.

We argue that the MDG-F constitutes the first significant financial incentive to encourage interagency work on the MDGs and move the “ONE UN” process forward at the country level. The Fund contributes to “ONE UN” in two key ways: (i) its programmes demonstrate the shortcomings of administrative harmonization in contrast with innovative methods at the country level; and (ii) it strengthens leadership and coherence of the UN system at the country level, particularly in regard to the role of the UN Resident Coordinator.

The Colombia, Nicaragua and Philippines cases, which are presented in detail, suggest that the MDG-F provides a concrete opportunity to experiment with implementing coordinated UN interventions on the ground. It thus represents an important contribution to creating a practice and culture of joint intervention.

Creating this culture and practice among sister UN agencies will take time. The MDG-F has provided an opportunity to begin building more integrated UN Country Teams and to accelerate the UN system-wide coherence reform. Together with UN partners, the MDG-F has experimented with and tested various strategies, techniques and tools for improving UN coherence and efficiency, and makes several recommendations based on its experiences. The ideal UN business model that has emerged is one in which: (i) the UN Resident Coordinator has the authority to make decisions on issues of coherence and performance; (ii) UN Coordination Offices are properly staffed to support the UNRC, the UN Country Team and joint programme partners; (iii) national implementation is the preferred modality; and (iv) national partners lead a representative governance mechanism.

The MDG-F global experience proves that the participation of local stakeholders in strategic decision-making and operational planning is critical to defining appropriate methodologies and ensuring that programmes are integrated into existing local processes.



The MDG-F is working to alleviate poverty in four of Peru's most disadvantaged regions by developing creative industries in tourism, handicrafts, organic agriculture and gastronomy.

II. BACKGROUND

The Millennium Declaration was signed by 189 world leaders in 2000, to further enhance international cooperation, inspiring development efforts that would improve the lives of hundreds of millions of people around the world. A year later, the Declaration was translated into eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to provide a development framework and a set of development priorities serving as a focus for nations and the international community. These included halving extreme poverty and hunger, promoting gender equality and women's empowerment, reducing child and maternal mortality, and improving education, health and sustainable development (United Nations, 2010, 2012; Kabeer, 2011).

The [United Nations MDG Achievement Fund](http://www.mdgfund.org/)¹ (MDG-F) is an international cooperation mechanism whose aim is to accelerate progress on the MDGs. The MDG-F supports national governments, local authorities, private sector entities and citizen organizations in their efforts to target vulnerable groups and tackle multidimensional poverty and inequalities.

The MDG-F was established in 2007 through a landmark agreement signed between the Government of Spain and the UN system. With a total contribution of approximately USD 900 million, the MDG-F has financed 130 joint programmes² in eight thematic windows (see Box 1) in [50 countries around the world](#). Figure 1 shows the countries (shaded) where the MDG-F has operated.

Figure 1.

COUNTRIES WHERE THE MDG-F OPERATES



¹ <http://www.mdgfund.org/>

² Joint programmes are development initiatives that coherently coordinate a set of activities in a work plan involving two or more UN organizations and (sub-)national partners. The work plan and budget forms part of a joint programme document, which also details roles and responsibilities of partners in coordinating and managing the joint activities (UNDG, n.d.).

Box 1.

MDG-F THEMATIC WINDOWS

■ **Children, Food Security and Nutrition:** Tackling child hunger and under nutrition

■ **Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment:** Increasing women's access to equality and opportunity

■ **Environment and Climate Change:** Reducing vulnerabilities and helping to adapt to climate change

■ **Youth, Employment and Migration:** Promoting productive and decent work for young people

■ **Democratic Economic Governance:** Democratizing access to services and utilities

■ **Development and the Private Sector:** Inclusive markets and pro-poor development

■ **Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding:** Fostering an enabling environment for development

■ **Culture and Development:** Protecting and enhancing cultural rights and political participation

II.1. WHAT DISTINGUISHES THE MDG-F FROM OTHER INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION MECHANISMS?

The Fund has three overarching objectives: (i) achieving the MDGs through the use of intersectoral approaches³; (ii) increasing development effectiveness by enhancing national leadership and ownership of development programmes; and, (iii) promoting the UN system-wide coherence reform – “ONE UN” in this research – via joint programmes.

The Fund is one of the largest time-limited international cooperation mechanisms established to help countries advance the principles embedded in the Millennium Declaration and MDGs, while simultaneously encouraging the UN system-wide coherence reform.

The Fund operates through the UN development system at the country level and finances collaborative UN activities that leverage the UN’s added value, particularly where the UN’s collective strength is brought to bear on multi-dimensional development challenges. The design of the MDG-F thematic windows responds to this rationale and draws on key expertise at selected UN agencies to identify major, intersectoral policy outcomes that illustrate the added value of the UN system in supporting national development priorities. The call for proposals for each thematic window is part of a competitive process in which the most relevant and highest quality proposals that include an explicit commitment from national partners receive financing.

The MDG-F supports the national and sub-national implementation of the Paris Declaration and the Accra Agenda on Aid Effectiveness. Programmes financed by the Fund are country-led, aligned with government development strategies and policies, and include strong capacity-building components to increase national leadership.

The MDG-F promotes the “ONE UN” via joint programmes (JP). The Fund operates through the UN Country Teams by financing joint programmes that involve different UN organisations and national government institutions. In so doing, it seeks to strengthen inter-agency coherence and the effectiveness of the UN system at the country level (MDG-F, Lenci, 2011, p. 3). The MDG-F’s work builds on the expertise of over 25 UN agencies, bringing them together to make the best use of their comparative advantage.

The structure of the joint programmes financed by the MDG-F at country level, is based on a National Steering Committee (NSC) and a Programme Management Committee (PMC). In most cases, they are operated by a Programme Management Unit (see Figure 2). The programmes are led by national and local partners, including

Bacar Baldé’s Dandum School is at the forefront of an MDG-F programme to reduce malnutrition in Guinea-Bissau by teaching schoolchildren to cultivate gardens. In 2011, the school garden produced more than 100 kilos of vegetables, and has been instrumental in changing village attitudes and behavior about nutrition.



³ Box 2 at the end of this Section gathers, as an example, development indicators and MDGs contribution of the Children Nutrition and Food Security thematic window.

national and local governments, civil society organizations, and private sector entities and are supported by UN agencies.

Another element that distinguishes the Fund's approach is the way in which it addresses development issues at multiple levels. As described below, the Fund has successfully combined the capacity to influence national-level policies with pilot projects on the ground in most programmes. This approach has produced interesting advances by supporting the development of inclusive policies, while targeting the most vulnerable groups with ad-hoc and culturally-sensitive initiatives.

To promote gender equality, the Fund has established a dual strategy that involves joint programmes seeking gender equality and women's empowerment, while simultaneously mainstreaming gender as a cross-cutting priority within all thematic windows (UNDP, 2012a; UN-Women, 2013; MDG-F, 2013).

This discussion paper is based on the MDG-F's extensive field experience. The following sections focus on the three aforementioned aspects that characterize how the MDG-F works in the field. Section III addresses the development of intersectoral programmes to achieve the MDGs. The national and local implementation of the Paris Declaration and Accra Agenda for Action principles are discussed in Section IV. Section V focuses on the promotion of the UN system-wide coherence reform – or "ONE UN" initiative – as a means to increase UN effectiveness on the ground. Sections ranging from VI to XI showcase the experiences of MDG-F in Ethiopia, Serbia, Colombia, Nicaragua, Egypt and in the Philippines.

Figure 2.

JOINT PROGRAMME GOVERNANCE BODY



Box 2.

DEVELOPMENT RESULTS AND SELECTED INDICATORS FROM THE CHILDREN, FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION THEMATIC WINDOW

The Children, Food Security and Nutrition thematic window includes more than 20 MDG-F programmes working to halt preventable deaths caused by child hunger and poor nutrition. Interventions range from providing low cost nutritional packages that can save lives and promote healthy development to engaging with pregnant and lactating mothers ensuring they are healthy and aware of key nutrition issues. Advocacy for mainstreaming children's right to food into national plans and policies is also a key element of the fight against under nutrition.

With US\$134.5 million allocated to 24 joint programmes, this area is the MDG-F's largest representing almost 20% of its programmatic budget. Below we gather some of the consolidated indicators for this thematic window:

■ **Over 1.67 million children** were involved in and received support from the joint programmes. Supported activities engaged in direct child malnutrition alleviation, such as **Targeted Supplementary Feeding Programmes**, promoting exclusive breastfeeding practices through **hospital and health center initiatives** and **increased access to treatment** in the form of micronutrient supplementation, vaccinations and other therapeutic care.

■ Almost **1.4 million women**, including **799,000 pregnant and breastfeeding women**, benefitted from integrated approaches to ending child undernutrition, resulting in an increased focus on gender issues and increased empowerment and capacity-building among women.

■ A primary objective of the MDG Achievement Fund is to empower youth to build a sustainable future. **Over 330,000 breastfeeding and pregnant youth** between 15-29 years of age received support through child nutrition programmes.

■ The largest outreach effort was conducted in the areas of **access to high quality nutrients and vitamin A (4.48 million reached)**, **behavior change communication initiatives (1.9 million)**, promotion of **exclusive breastfeeding (almost 1.2 million)**, and **vaccinations (over 1.0 million)**.

■ **63 national and local policies, 32 laws and 109 plans** were implemented with the support of the joint programmes.

Source: MDG-F (2013) Children, Food Security and Nutrition, Thematic window development results report – June 2013.



Poor rural families in Afghanistan's Badakhshan province were trained in beekeeping as part of an MDG-F programme to improve nutrition and empower vulnerable women and girls.

III. INTERSECTORAL APPROACHES TO ACHIEVE THE MDGs

Much has been written about the linkages that exist among the MDGs. Development literature emphasizes that investments in a specific MDG reinforce the achievements of the others. Take education, for example. World Bank studies show that an extra year of secondary schooling for girls can increase their future wages by 10 to 20%, thus reducing their vulnerability to poverty. Similarly, investing in health has positive impacts on schooling and productivity. Economists believe that malaria is responsible for a growth penalty of up to 1.3% in some African countries, severely restraining economic growth in the region. Based on this argument, we can conclude that investing in MDG-6 (Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases) will boost economic growth in the middle-term (WB, 2012).

However, only few comprehensive studies on implementing intersectoral approaches to achieve or accelerate the MDGs have been conducted. This section seeks to contribute to this debate, arguing that intersectoral approaches, such as those promoted by the MDG-F, offer different types of added value. Intersectoral approaches can avoid overlap and duplication among development programmes. They can increase coordination among donors and line ministries. Intersectoral approaches can also prevent competition for funds and make positive use of the comparative advantage of each specialized development agency. They can help to avoid silo behaviours and, in some cases, can increase policy and development effectiveness, while creating better conditions for sustainability.

The added value of intersectoral approaches does not presuppose that intersectoral action is necessarily superior to single-sector action and

“the question of which approach is appropriate in a given set of circumstances is not a straightforward one. One key factor for consideration is the degree of control or influence over an intended target or outcome. If a single sector exercises complete or near-complete control over an issue, single-sectoral action may be appropriate. When multiple sectors share control over an issue, or when a sector wishes to influence a target over which it has less control, intersectoral action may be more appropriate” (WHO, 2008, p. III).

III.1. MDG-F INTERSECTORAL APPROACHES: CLUES FROM THE FIELD

Unlike the Fund’s contributions to national ownership and the UN system-wide coherence reform, the added value of intersectoral approaches promoted by the MDG-F has not been thoroughly analysed. The conclusions that follow are based on the review of 126 mid-term evaluations, 50 final evaluations, several knowledge management products and a series of eight thematic studies commissioned by the Fund to review the work conducted in connection with its thematic windows. The final overall MDG-F evaluation, to be carried out by an independent firm in 2013, may provide additional insights that can contribute to and improve this analysis.

Intersectoral approaches can avoid overlap and duplication among development programmes. They can increase coordination among donors and line ministries. Intersectoral approaches can also prevent competition for funds and make positive use of the comparative advantage of each specialized development agency. They can help to avoid silo behaviours and, in some cases, can increase policy and development effectiveness, while creating better conditions for sustainability.



Top: Nancy Maria Mejia harvesting potatoes in Ecuador's High Andes. An MDG-F programme is supporting indigenous communities in recovering ancestral knowledge of farming and traditional medicine. (Photo by Carla Gachet/Iván Kashinsky)

Bottom: Children participating in a summer camp supported by the MDG-F to help reduce tensions between Palestinian and Lebanese communities in North Lebanon. Some 2,000 children have been trained in communication, tolerance, conflict-resolution and self-esteem.

By targeting multi-dimensional development challenges, the MDG-F's JPs have helped to increase cross-sectoral government interventions. Both UN and government partners participating in the MDG-F have indicated that the Fund has successfully promoted coordination both within the UN system and within governments. A remarkable finding to date has been the recognition by national counterparts, including national and local governments, ministries and local institutions, that joint programmes contribute to improved intersectoral dialogue among national institutions, thus increasing the possibility of taking an interdisciplinary approach to the design and implementation of development policies and programmes (MDG-F, 2011, p. 16).

The MDG-Fund [Environment and Climate Change](#) thematic window provides an example of how increased government cross-sectoral interventions took shape in the field. This area includes 17 JPs that contributed to environmental sustainability and the integration of sustainable development into country policies and programmes. JPs sought to take integrated approaches, both in dealing with the environment and development in a cohesive manner and in addressing issues at multiple policy and action levels with the involvement of multiple stakeholders. Government buy-in both locally and nationally has played a pivotal role across the programmes. The programmes have improved governments' capacity to establish and implement intersectoral policies that create links between natural resource management and development. In [Peru](#), local governments have mainstreamed environmental and climate change issues into community development plans and budget operational plans in participatory fashion. In [China](#), the JP supported the development of the Basic Energy Law⁴ and in [Colombia](#), the National Policy on Integrated Hydrological Resources Management included strategies that the JP proposed to address climate change vulnerability and adaptation issues. Programmes also supported the development of local actions plans ([Bosnia & Herzegovina](#), [Afghanistan](#)), resulting in more efficient tools for advancing the local administration of environmental resources (MDG-F, 2013c; MDG-F, Onestini, 2013).

A recent study covering all the JPs falling within the thematic window of Youth, Employment and Migration finds that "the involvement of different institutional actors and intersectoral dialogue also foster national ownership and motivation, at the same time strengthening policy coordination and coherence" (MDG-F, Salzano, 2013).

Addressing complex development issues by identifying the dimensions that define them allow institutions and stakeholders to work toward common solutions. In the context of the MDG-F's thematic windows and development challenges, an intersectoral frame is an appropriate platform to promote multiple stakeholders programmes, creating incentives for participation and proposing holistic responses to complex development problems.

⁴ The approval of the Basic Energy Law involved many sectors. Natural resources and environmental entities are necessarily included in energy-related efforts. The private sector participated in the process, as did the communities where several rural energy development strategies have been planned. An intersectoral approach was needed to convene different stakeholders during the discussions of the law, which was subsequently approved by the Congress.

The formulation and management of integrated youth employment, social and migration policies is an innovative area that receives MDG-F support at the country level. Many countries have had little experience with it until recently. The [Youth Employment and Migration \(YEM\)](#) thematic window includes 15 JPs designed to work with national and local governments to improve the policy coherence of interventions targeting at-risk population groups, reduce the risks of poverty and vulnerability, and, in parallel, empower young people to achieve economic and social mobility. Since its inception, the thematic window has called for intersectoral actions to address youth challenges (MDG-F, Salzano, 2013).

The MDG-F has achieved remarkable results by approaching the obstacles that young people face from different perspectives. We have found that increasing awareness of youth and employment issues is important to improve the understanding among institutional stakeholders, social partners and the private sector and build a consensus around integrated policies benefiting youth. Expanding the knowledge base about the challenges and difficulties facing young people can help to untangle complex phenomena and learn how to tackle them. To succeed, interventions must strengthen policies and institutional environments that embed youth employment targets within national or local development policies and planning frameworks. These broader approaches should be reinforced by tailored and multi-sectoral measures for young people such as education, vocational skills training and entrepreneurship training. Creating localized youth support services, such as One-Stop-Shops

Box 3.

DEVELOPMENT RESULTS AND SELECTED INDICATORS FROM THE YOUTH EMPLOYMENT AND MIGRATION THEMATIC WINDOW

The formulation and management of integrated youth employment, social and migration policies is an area in which many countries have had little experience until recently. Against this background, the MDG-F YEM thematic window was conceived, to work with governments in improving the policy coherence of interventions targeting at-risk population groups, reducing the risks of poverty and vulnerability, and, in parallel, empowering young people towards economic and social mobility. The MDG-F YEM thematic window responds and provides support to countries in complex operational environments where young people invariably experience multiple layers of disadvantage. While each of the 15 Joint Programmes (JPs) has been contextualized according to country situations, all have aimed to increase the chances

of young people in gaining access to decent work, self-employment and entrepreneurship opportunities, as well as promoting respect for youths' fundamental rights. The JPs have also promoted socially inclusive development and worked to improve the situation of migrants.

- It is estimated that **14,3 million youth** have been affected by the policies, law and plans promoted by the Fund.
- The programmes supported **31 national policies, 21 local policies** that relate to youth employment and/or migration management. Programmes influenced **18 national laws, 15 national plans and 53 local plans.**
- The programmes directly **improved the life of more than 642,000 people**, respectively:

127,170 youth; 24,072 migrants, 98,399 citizens, and 365,000 boys and girls.

■ **Training reached 193,614 youth and migrants**, which were involved in capacity building processes (29,417), formal education (23,441), life skill training (25,413), and vocational training (11,000) or supported through one-stop shops and community or youth service centers (68,697).

■ The programmes provided other specific services to migrants: **342,151 children of migrants were registered** in China, **23,206 migrants were supported by community service centers** and support through migrant workers **legal protection** was provided to **7,051 migrants**.

Source: MDG-F (2013) Youth, Employment and Migration, Thematic window development results report – June 2013.

in [Costa Rica](#), Youth Employment Service Centres and Resource Centres (in [Turkey](#), the [Philippines](#) and [China](#)), has increased local capacities to provide a holistic and comprehensive response to youth needs (MDG-F, 2013b).

These YEM examples offer conclusions similar to those from those coming from other thematic windows. They prove the effectiveness of framing development issues broadly to promote the participation of different sectors in efforts that seek common solutions (Box 3 explores some examples of development results achieved under this thematic window).

Local intersectoral initiatives provide evidence that supports scaling up better-coordinated national policies. In several cases, local intersectoral pilot initiatives financed by the Fund have influenced national agendas. The vast majority of joint programmes combine upstream support for public policies, legislation and/or planning processes at national and local levels with downstream concrete actions involving local communities. The programmes provided valuable evidence supporting the mainstreaming of multi-dimensional local interventions intended to achieve the MDGs, promote ownership, and increase development effectiveness and coherence.

In several cases, local intersectoral pilot initiatives financed by the Fund have influenced national agendas. The programmes provided valuable evidence supporting the mainstreaming of multi-dimensional local interventions intended to achieve the MDGs, promote ownership, and increase development effectiveness and coherence.

Building on the effort of the Government of Mauritania, the MDG-F has financed a joint programme that is scaling up the fight against child hunger and malnutrition in south-eastern [Mauritania](#). It is based on an intersectoral approach that tackles malnutrition at different levels with a wide range of interventions, from medical treatment to the promotion of food security. The programme expanded a REACH⁵ initiative and approach into two regions, with an emphasis on sustainable actions for improving food security, changing feeding behaviours and strengthening the management of malnutrition. The programme involves a regional mechanism for coordination and supervision incorporated into an integrated multi-partner and inter-sector approach (MDG-F, Hashem, 2011; MDG-F, 2010).

In 2010, based on the programme's positive results and leveraging the REACH approach, the Government of Mauritania approved the Intersectoral Action Plan on Nutrition 2010-2015, which was incorporated into the four key strategies defined by the government and supported by donors including the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund through the National Poverty Reduction Strategy (UNICEF, 2012, p. 6).

Cases such as this one, where a regional action promoted by the MDG-F influenced national high-level policy plans, are common and can be found in each thematic window. In Section IX, the paper showcases how a regional experience can have a powerful impact on the national debate. The [Nicaragua](#) example demonstrates the

⁵ REACH was established in 2008 by the Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the World Food Programme (WFP), and the World Health Organization (WHO) to assist governments in countries with a high burden of child and maternal undernutrition to accelerate the scaling up of food and nutrition actions. The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) joined REACH later in an advisory capacity. REACH operates at the country level as a facilitating mechanism to coordinate the efforts of the UN and other partners to support national nutrition scale-up plans. REACH was originally established to strengthen UN efforts to end poverty and hunger by 2015, the first of the eight UN Millennium Development Goals.



implementation of an intersectoral model in the Caribbean Coast region, reducing equality gaps in the human, social and economic development of indigenous and Afro-descendant villages, increasing access to water and sanitation, and reducing chronic malnutrition among children.

Intersectoral programmes at the local level produce more visible results in a shorter period of time. Given their complexity, greater efforts and more dialogue are required to reach consensus at the national level but they may produce broader long-term impacts.

Achieving equality and empowerment for women is a challenge that requires the synergistic intervention of multiple actors. Gender equality and empowerment can be achieved through education, employment and political representation, as well as by ensuring women's access to reproductive health services. The MDG-F's [Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment](#) thematic window has worked at both the national and local levels. "The MDG-F gender-targeted joint programmes have broken new ground at the national level," states a recent inter-agency study conducted to evaluate the Fund's dual gender strategy (MDG-F, 2013). The gender programmes have conceptualized, developed and supported the first national strategy to combat gender-based violence in the [Occupied Palestinian territories](#), the first national action plan for preventing domestic and gender-based violence in [Guatemala](#), [Timor-Leste](#) and [Viet-Nam](#), the first law against domestic violence in Timor-Leste, and the first action plan for coordinated implementation of existing gender-based violence laws and policies in [Namibia](#).

An MDG-F-funded programme is helping preserve the environment and improve the quality of life for indigenous communities in Ecuador's Yasuni Biosphere Reserve, one of the world's most biodiverse areas. (Photo by Carla Gachet/Iván Kashinsky)

In [Guatemala](#), the programme supported the implementation of the National Policy for the Promotion and Development of Women (PNPDIM) and the Policy for Equal Opportunity (PEO) 2008-2023. To achieve this, the programme strengthened the capacity of the Presidential Secretary for Women (SEPREM) and the Office for the Defense of Indigenous Women (DEMI). These efforts enabled eight Ministries and Secretariats (including Education, Health, Economy, Labour, Agriculture and Finance) to incorporate the national policy and led to a significant increase in the SEPREM's national budget, which is expected to ensure its continuity and sustainability (MDG-F, 2013d; MDG-F, Rios-Kohn, 2013).

Localized programmes have also proved to be effective. A recent UNDP study notes:

“Through the joint programmes in [Bolivia](#), [Bangladesh](#), Ethiopia and [Morocco](#), local level governments were linked more closely with communities to mobilize community groups, create safe spaces for dialogue on women's empowerment, and bring forward the issue of civil society responsibility for protection/security, women's health, literacy and micro-enterprise. In some cases, community mobilization initiatives also aimed to raise awareness about the role that men and boys can play in creating more gender equal relationships at the household and local level” (UNDP, 2013, p. 11).



In the Democratic Republic of the Congo's troubled province of North Kivu, the MDG-F has assisted 3,700 families with seeds, new tools and fertilizer, helping them rebuild their lives after more than a decade of devastating war.

A programme entitled “[Leave No Woman Behind](#)” was implemented in two northern Ethiopian provinces. A mid-term evaluation (MDG-F, Kabuchu, 2010) found that thanks to the carefully-defined nature of the programme, agents and right-holders had access, or were exposed, to most of the programme's inputs. This created a stronger sense of ownership and a deeper commitment in a shorter time. As in the Ethiopia example, the [Bolivia Gender Equality programme](#) involved a small number of UN partners and similar sub-national aims. Activities in both programmes were linked to control of economic resources and raised awareness about women's human rights and improving the status of women in the family and community. Both cases showed considerable buy-in at the local level. Both programmes used community-level pilot projects as a modality. Evaluations showed that the programme faced increased challenges to maintaining sub-national initiatives that depend on strong national government ownership for continued financial and political support (UNDP, 2013, p.7).

We will return to this interesting national/local debate in Section VIII when we deal with the case of [Colombia](#), while Box 4 records some of the conglomerated results of the Gender Equality and Women Empowerment thematic window.

Intersectoral actions require strong and sustained partnerships. Building trust is key to developing and maintaining inter-sector partnerships (Waddell and Brown, 1997; Kalegaonkar and Brown, 2000). Partnership has been considered a crucial enabling factor since the international community's first steps towards implementing an agenda to achieve the MDGs. MDG-8 , Develop a global

Box 4.

DEVELOPMENT RESULTS AND SELECTED INDICATORS FROM THE GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN EMPOWERMENT THEMATIC WINDOW

The MDG-F is supported 13 joint programmes under the Gender Equality and Women Empowerment thematic window with an allocation of almost US\$90 million. These efforts have contributed to achieving MDG 3: adopting a more comprehensive approach that addresses issues of access to opportunities and the guarantee of rights. Some of these include improving legal systems to respect women's rights, particularly those of marginalized indigenous and ethnic minority groups, strengthening participation in economic life and in decision-making processes and reducing the incidence of violence that women suffer. Below we present a list of selected cumulated achievements of the programmes:

■ Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment programmes **directly benefitted 766,517 women and girls**.

■ **Capacity building was a major focus in all programmes** targeting both rights holders

and duty bearers. At the beneficiaries' level the programmes reached in aggregate a total of **465,869 citizens** (70% or more women). The programmes also **strengthened the capacities of 449 private and 1,523 public institutions**, providing training on gender related issues to a total of **14,982 civil servants**.

■ Programmes supported **victims of violence against women**. It is estimated that **631,033 women and girls (at least 79% rural) gained access** to prevention and protection services, including shelter and medical and/or legal support, as well as anti-discrimination and reproductive health care support.

■ Seven programmes aimed to empower women and increase their participation in the economic life of their community and country. A total of **32,560 women improved their participation in economic life** as a result of the support provided by the joint programmes (90% of beneficiaries located in rural areas). Capacity building

was as a central strategy and a few programmes also provided some sort of financial assistance.

■ At least 75% of women who improved their economic rights also increased their incomes. The six countries that report on this category show that an estimated **24,443 women increased their income** as a result of the support of the programmes.

■ The programmes provided support for formulation, enforcement or institutionalization of **50 national laws, 23 local laws, 44 national plans and 55 national policies** that explicitly address gender based discrimination and promote gender equality and women's empowerment.

■ We estimate that **1,599,677 citizens** have been affected directly by targeted laws, policies or plans, in addition three programmes (Brazil, Timor-Leste and Vietnam) report a broad effect on the total women population.

Source: MDG-F (2013) Gender, Equality and Women Empowerment, Thematic window development results report – June 2013.

partnership for development, reflects this spirit and calls for mutual responsibility. A UNDP study (Jahan, 2003) seeks to explain why partnership is so important to achieve the MDGs and suggests the following: (i) partnership is required to achieve the MDGs because the task is too complex for a single development actor; (ii) partnership creates the conditions allowing partners with diverse expertise and experience to bring different added value to the processes; and, (iii) partnerships provide forums for improving intra- and intersectoral coherence and coordination towards attaining the MDGs (Jahan, 2003, p. 13-14).

Building trust and consolidating strong partnerships can be particularly challenging in fragile states in conflict or post-conflict situations. The MDG-F has financed 20 **Conflict Prevention and Peace Building** (CPPB) programmes, supporting interventions that focus on conflict prevention and violence reduction, mitigation of youth violence, and fostering dialogue and equity. In programmes promoting citizen security, building strong partnerships among the state, local governments, civil society and the private sector has been crucial. This approach has improved national citizen security policies in **Costa Rica, El Salvador and Guatemala**. A key finding of the CPPB work is that “ensuring that programmes create mechanisms to bring local

The Women Artisans of Nizag have improved the production and marketing of their handicrafts through a project to support indigenous populations in Ecuador's High Andes. The initiative helped boost artisans' income by more than 50% and increased women's participation in public life. (Photo by Carla Gachet/Iván Kashinsky)



Box 5.

STRENGTHENING PALESTINIAN SELF-GOVERNANCE TO BUILD PEACE IN LEBANON

For more than 30 years, the running of the refugee camps, home to some 400,000 Palestinians, has depended on a tenuous balance of power between 23 different Palestinian factions and political parties. In 2007, an armed conflict broke out between the Lebanese Army and an insurgent faction in Nahr el Bared. The camp was totally destroyed, 500 people were killed and 40,000 were internally displaced. The event worsened the intrinsic mistrust between Lebanese and Palestinian communities, a dynamic that has the potential to destabilize the country.

A programme funded by the MDG-F provided training to community groups and Popular Committees from refugee camps in northern Lebanon like Nahr el Bared to help the Popular Committees be more inclusive and accountable, and to be better administrators and representatives of the refugees. Strengthening the camps' governance is seen as a way to help ease tensions amongst Palestinian groups and between Palestinian and Lebanese communities.

"Thanks to the workshops I have become an instrumental member of my organization," says 64-year-old Farida Bazzi, a member of the Palestine Women Union who was invited to join the workshop in order to familiarize PC participants with the idea of including women in their groups.

A key objective of the programme was to reduce the risk of a relapse into violence in Lebanon by promoting equity and socio-economic development.

The MDG-F has been a pioneer in addressing the need to work with Popular Committees in Lebanon's refugee camps as a means to help Palestinian communities improve their self-governance, build peace and increase their wellbeing. "The training encouraged me to go back to school after 23 years. What we got in a one-day workshop is equivalent to some full courses that professors are still teaching at the university," said Hamzeh Khader, a 43-year-old member of the Popular Committee in Nahr el Bared camp.

For Farida Bazzi, who has worked in public relations and micro-credit, and is a member of the main political party in the camps as well as a community representative for Palestinians outside the camps, the workshop helped her build valuable personal and professional relationships among the Popular Committees. "The training has not only benefited my professional life but also my personal one. I have learned to count to one million before reacting or making any important decision. My new attitude has helped me to improve my relationships with others."

The Popular Committees capacity-building activity was led by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) as part of the MDG-F-funded Conflict Prevention and Peace Building in North Lebanon programme. Other participating agencies included UNDP, UNICEF, ILO, UNESCO and UNFPA.

Source: <http://www.mdgfund.org/country/lebanon>

actors together for dialogue and co-operation helps build trust and social cohesion as well as the resilience of communities” (MDG-F, 2013e). See Box 5.

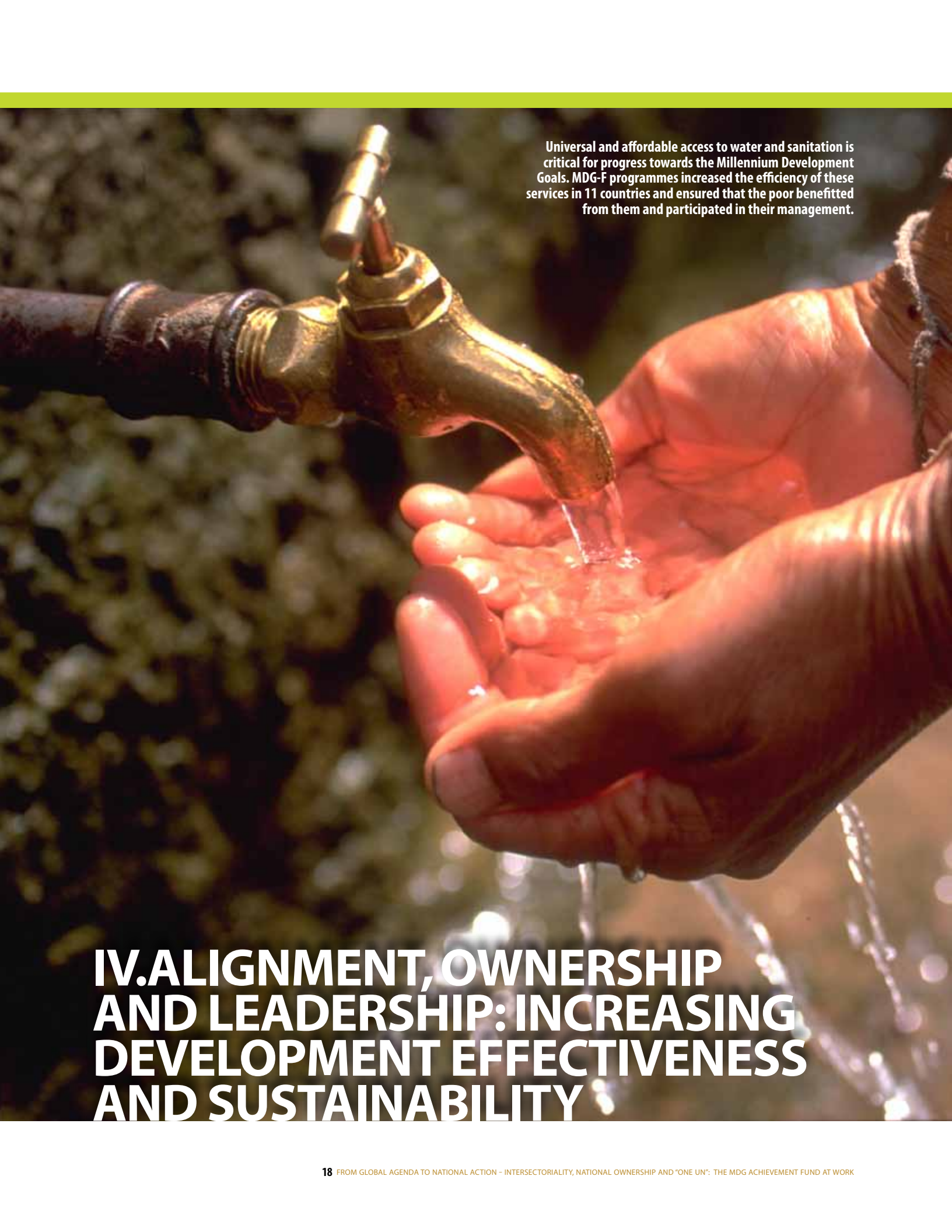
Consultative processes to create buy-in from national actors are critical. Inclusive governing bodies that guarantee mutual accountability and shared responsibility during implementation must be created to manage intersectoral programmes. Multiple actors must be brought together to build a strong case for joint action and to build consensus. Spaces and gatherings must be created so that relevant national actors can participate in an open dialogue. The governing bodies promoted by the MDG-F – the National Steering Committee and the Programme Management Committee – have been essential to create a space for cross-sector dialogue and redefine and fine-tune programme implementation for greater effectiveness.

A recent study that reviewed the joint programme mechanism established by the UNDG notes that “JPs are particularly relevant to deal with important horizontal issues (gender based violence, youth social and economic integration, climate change, governance, environment, others)” (Downs, 2013). Based on the MDG-F experience, citizens and local governments should be included in programmes’ governing bodies. This strengthens both ownership and accountability and will be examined further in the next section.

National monitoring and evaluation systems must be strengthened to monitor the process and outcomes of intersectoral programmes. Stronger M&E national systems increase national actors’ capacity to successfully implement intersectoral programmes and use the lessons learned to influence national policy processes. The MDG-F’s M&E system was designed to respond to the information needs of a wide array of actors, including donors, partner governments, UN agencies, and citizens. These stakeholders have different interests and preferences for using the information that the system captures and analyses. That information can be grouped into the following categories: sound management, mutual accountability, learning and knowledge creation (MDG-F, 2012a).

In consultation with the main stakeholders, the MDG-F Secretariat developed several tools to capture the information and evidence produced by the Fund, including biannual monitoring reports, thematic indicators and mid-term, final, thematic and global evaluations. MDG-F mid-term evaluations were designed as rapid processes (three months on average) with a dual focus: to improve joint programme coherence, relevance, efficiency and effectiveness and to collect information to measure progress towards results. The MDG-F Secretariat has completed 125 mid-term evaluations that have been used to develop an equal number of improvement plans for each JP. This mechanism provided programmes the opportunity to reflect on strategies that deliver positively on commitments and adjust their work plan for the second phase of implementation.

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Universal and affordable access to water and sanitation is critical for progress towards the Millennium Development Goals. MDG-F programmes increased the efficiency of these services in 11 countries and ensured that the poor benefitted from them and participated in their management.

IV. ALIGNMENT, OWNERSHIP AND LEADERSHIP: INCREASING DEVELOPMENT EFFECTIVENESS AND SUSTAINABILITY

The MDG-F has sought to translate the Paris Declaration⁶ and Accra Agenda into national programmes and actions in the 50 countries where the mechanism has operated, thereby increasing the alignment of interventions with countries' national development strategies and helping to strengthen their capacities.

IV.1. INCREASING ALIGNMENT

In two regional workshops held in 2011⁷, the MDG-F Secretariat discussed with governments and UN partners the conceptualization of national ownership as the fundamental component of national capacity development and sustainability of results and its practical application in programme design and implementation. The systematization of the knowledge shared during the workshops indicates that the MDG-F has established interesting mechanisms to ensure alignment in the programme design stage. The lessons learned have relevant policy implications: (i) MDG-F procedures require wide-ranging consultation at the country level and the official endorsement of the lead national institution before the JP is approved. This has proven critical to ensuring that JPs align with national government policies, while enhancing the relevance of activities at the local level. (ii) To ensure continued relevance, the MDG-F has adopted flexible procedures for substantive and financial revisions during implementation. Several JPs have made such revisions in response to design shortcomings or to shifting priorities resulting from changes in government or other contextual factors.

IV.2. MDG-F CONTRIBUTION TO NATIONAL OWNERSHIP

The UN considers that promoting ownership involves the appropriation of development processes by the entire society and not exclusively by duty-bearers. "We can identify two other components – beside central government ownership – that are critical for greater countrywide legitimacy and commitment: a) local government ownership and b) civil society ownership"⁸ (MDG-F, Lenci, 2011, p. 4).

The guiding principles of the MDG-F are based on this broader understanding of national ownership. The MDG-F supports national governments and local institutions, while creating strong incentives for civil society engagement and private sector participation. The MDG-F has focused on ensuring national ownership,

Box 6.

THE PRINCIPLES OF THE PARIS DECLARATION ON AID EFFECTIVENESS

Ownership: Partner countries exercise effective leadership over their development policies and strategies and coordinate development actions.

Alignment: Donors base their overall support on partner countries' national development strategies, institutions and procedures.

Harmonization: Donors' actions are more harmonized, transparent and collectively effective.

Managing for results: Donors and partners manage and implement aid in a way that focuses on the desired results and uses information to improve decision-making.

Mutual accountability: Donors and partners are accountable for development results.

Source: The Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (2005)

⁶ The Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (2005) is based on principles of ownership, harmonization, alignment, results and mutual accountability (see Box 6). The High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness considers these principles as key to improving the effectiveness of international cooperation. The MDG-F adopted the directions established in the Paris Declaration and the Accra Agenda for Action (2008) as the foundations of its development work.

⁷ The MDG-F Secretariat organized two regional workshops in June 2011. The first was held in Cartagena, Colombia, for Latin American and Caribbean countries. The second was held in Casablanca, Morocco, for Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe, Central Asia and the Arab States. The two workshops drew nearly 400 participants, including high level government representatives, UN Resident Coordinators, UN coordination officers, monitoring and communications specialists and joint programme coordinators.

⁸ Lenci proposes several indicators to measure national ownership that are inspired by this broader approach: (i) leadership of national and local counterparts, expressed in strategic, administrative and operational decision-making; (ii) engagement of national and local stakeholders in monitoring and evaluation processes; (iii) citizen demands for continuity of processes launched or supported through the JP; (iv) the amount of co-financing from national and local governments, cash or in-kind; (v) government replication or scaling up of pilot initiatives launched under the JP; and, (vi) engagement of national institutions in intersectoral dialogue around MDG-related issues that the JP addresses.

respecting country leadership and supporting capacity building for such leadership. To ensure that policies truly respond to nationally-shared necessities, in most countries the Fund has promoted the formulation of plans, laws and policies based on broad consultative processes. The Fund was also involved in creating mechanisms allowing citizens to discuss, participate in decision-making processes and hold the government accountable.

The MDG-F experience provides critical lessons for ensuring ownership during programme implementation. The Fund represents a platform for political and technical dialogue among different national stakeholders and the UN system at the country level.

“Through the setting-up of councils and committees involving public authorities and non-profit stakeholders, JPs have contributed to increased accountability and distributed leadership and responsibilities among different actors. This is demonstrated in [Namibia’s National Steering Committee on Intangible Cultural Heritage](#), involving cultural and educational institutions, private sector actors and civil society organizations, which should contribute to inventorying and safeguarding intangible heritage assets and promoting long-term partnerships; and [Ethiopia’s Steering Committee on Shared Cultural and Religious Values](#), including policy-makers and academics, who were selected following a participatory workshop, and which was seen to contribute to a common understanding and language among different cultural and religious groups and to identify weaknesses. These developments should provide the basis for sustainability beyond the JP’s lifetime” (MDG-F, Baltà, 2013).

The MDG-F experience provides critical lessons for ensuring ownership during programme implementation. The Fund represents a platform for political and technical dialogue among different national stakeholders and the UN system at the country level. The available evidence suggests that programme ownership has become stronger among national partners. In many cases, they gradually assumed an increasingly active role, shifting from passive receivers of information to active participants and leaders. In addition, as anticipated in Section III, national counterparts recognize that programmes are contributing to improved intersectoral dialogue among national institutions, thus fostering an interdisciplinary approach to the design and implementation of development policies and programmes.

In [El Salvador](#), a [Development and the Private Sector](#) programme “succeeded in capturing the attention of senior policymakers with a carefully targeted set of reforms in land tenure and banking. In [Serbia](#), the government has taken ownership of the rural tourism sector. The programme developed a National Rural Tourism Master Plan and submitted it to the government; in doing so, the JP managed to get the subject of rural tourism firmly on the policy agenda, in terms of economic diversification. The Ethiopian oil seed programme’s objectives and implementation modality fit the Ministry of Industry’s agro-industry strategy so well that the programme has been seen as an opportunity for the Ministry to turn several of the key recommendations of its agro-industry master plan into concrete interventions” (MDG-F, 2013f).

China's Youth Migration and Employment's JP is a remarkable example of how scaling up pilot interventions allows national ownership to expand programme impact. The final programme evaluation suggests:

“A high degree of ownership of the YEM programme’s achievements by national and local level partners, while the majority of stakeholders had been involved in consultations on the various activities. Some interventions, for example, life skills training and one-stop community service centres have already been extended beyond the pilot areas to other regions with government support and resources. The China Employment Training Technical Instruction Centre has introduced life skills training to 200 rural labour model counties (MDG-F, Meng, 2012, p. 44).

The prospects for policy-level sustainability are very positive. The formation of the policy recommendations on social inclusion, female domestic workers and the “Young Volunteers Caring for Migrant Children” should have a positive long-term impact, particularly as the Chinese government anticipates policy reforms in these areas. Similarly, the Young Volunteers Caring for Migrant Children action has already been expanded and the entrepreneurship training proved to be a successful capacity-building process for local government departments. The training enabled Cangzhou to submit a successful application to become one of the first three “Building Up an Entrepreneurial City” pilot projects in Hebei Province. Financial support from the provincial government will be available in the future to further promote entrepreneurship training (MDG-F, Meng, 2012).

IV.3. MDG-F CONTRIBUTION TO LOCAL AND CITIZEN OWNERSHIP

The actual participation of local stakeholders in strategic decision-making and operational planning has proved critical to better define the most appropriate methodologies for implementing activities and ensuring that they are integrated into existing local processes. A variety of solutions have been adopted to address this challenge. Some JPs created Local Working Groups to complement the Programme Management Committee. Other Programmes decentralized the PMC meetings in the intervention areas to establish stronger links between the national and the local levels. It is important in this regard to ensure a regular flow of information among the different Programme governance levels.

A recent independent study commissioned to review the results and the lessons learned from the Youth, Employment and Migration thematic window states:

“The joint programmes have shown that **national and local leadership is of the essence for realizing outputs and improving the sustainability of results**. Governments at national, regional and municipal levels more readily assume ownership and responsibility when they feel that initiatives build on their existing visions, strategies and institutional frameworks. In these cases, there was a significant increase in national commitment to



When Sheuly Begum’s son started getting fortified biscuits at school, he became much more attentive in class, and his enthusiasm towards his studies motivated his younger sister to start going to school, too. His family is participating in an MDG-F programme to boost nutrition and empower women in Bangladesh.

Box 7.

WATER LEADS TO EMPOWERMENT IN RURAL PANAMA

Until recently, the inhabitants of Bisira had only two ways to get water - collecting rain or drinking from the river Cricamola. In this region in northwest Panama, fully 70% of people did not have access to safe water or sanitation.

Lack of clean water and sanitation is a health hazard that produces diarrhea and other gastrointestinal and skin diseases. The child mortality rate in this region, where most of the country's indigenous people live, has been almost 2.5 times higher than the national average.

But for the past three years, Bisira and neighboring villages have been changing this situation through an MDG-F-supported joint UN programme that focuses both on improving infrastructure as well as on strengthening the villagers' capacity to organize and manage their own water and sanitation systems.

"Our job is to ensure that the communities have water, and also that they pay their fees," says Elena Mixila Castillo, president of Bisira's Administrative Board of Rural Aqueducts (JAAR). "We're responsible for

the administration, operation and maintenance of the system."

Encouraging local water management

Ninety-one per cent of the indigenous population of the Ngöbe-Buglé Region, where the water programme operates, live in extreme poverty. Their dispersion, mobility and location in remote and inaccessible areas make traditional sanitation solutions too costly and limit investment and private participation. The aim of the joint programme is to empower rural and indigenous populations to manage their own water resources and thus improve the quality of, and access to, public water and sanitation services.

JAAR president Castillo and Carmen Villagra, the JAAR's Treasurer, say that before the joint programme began, the Board was poorly organized and not an effective advocate for Bisira's residents. Now, they say, not only has it organized and trained the villagers in water management and maintenance, it has been able to reduce delinquency in water payments and increase water fees by eight-fold. Bisira's Board now regularly meets with the JAARs from Kankinú and Sirain, two

neighboring communities which share the same aqueduct.

"We're elected for two-year terms by men and women who are up-to-date on their water payments. Anyone who hasn't paid has neither a voice nor a vote in the assembly," says Villagra.

Strengthening equity and empowering communities

"Strengthening equity in access to safe drinking water and sanitation by empowering citizens and excluded indigenous groups in rural areas" is one of four joint UN programmes funded by the MDG-F to support Panama's national, local and traditional authorities in their efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

So far, nine communities in Panama have participated in the design and construction of water infrastructure and now have access to safe water. Water management committees in nine indigenous communities have been strengthened and provided with technical equipment and are able to maintain and ensure the sustainability of the system's infrastructure.

Source: <http://www.mdgfund.org>

programme outcomes and the ownership of the policy, procedural and legislative changes initiated" (MDG-F, Salzano, 2013).

The improvement of local ownership and citizen ownership has been developed specifically in the [Democratic Economic Governance \(DEG\) Thematic Window](#). The 11 JPs in this area have been planned and implemented to enhance access to, and provision of, services by utilities, increasing their efficiency and affordability. The joint programmes have achieved positive results in terms of enhancing the capacity and ability of the poor to participate in and influence reform and policy development processes. Most joint programmes focused on the inclusion of vulnerable groups, resulting in: increased women's participation and leadership in water projects ([Angola](#)); active participation of women and community youth groups in Municipal Management Boards ([Bosnia & Herzegovina](#)); priority to the participation of ethnic minorities, indigenous and Afro-descendant groups ([Nicaragua](#)); and increased leadership by women ([Guatemala](#)). Valuing and incorporating cultural diversity has also facilitated the participation and inclusion of right-holders and their knowledge in development processes (MDG-F, Indij, 2013).

“Local development and decentralized models evidence show that operations implemented at local level may be particularly well-placed to be replicated in other local areas within the country. This appears to be the case mainly where competences have been decentralized at local or regional level, as this enables local authorities to recognize relevant models in other cities or villages and consider adapting them, whereas national authorities and international agencies can also facilitate the replication of approaches once they have been tested. Examples taken from [Turkey, Bosnia and Herzegovina](#) and Morocco, among others, appear to indicate this” (MDG-F, Baltà, 2013).

The Fund’s [Culture and Development](#) Thematic Window has carried out a very relevant work on decentralization as a means to increase local ownership. An analysis financed by the Fund (MDG-F, Baltà, 2013) estimates that the decentralization of cultural competences can facilitate opportunities for participation in cultural life, integration of cultural activities in broader local development strategies and enhancement of local ownership for new programmes and facilities. The author states:

“Several JPs facilitated the setting-up of regional and local cultural councils and working groups, as well as the design of local cultural agendas. It is also worth noting that often this was linked to a more holistic understanding of local development, wherein culture, gender, human rights and other issues promoted in the context of the JP can play an important role. This is visible, among others, in [Morocco](#), where, in the context of 2009’s National Strategy for Economic and Social Decentralization and 2011’s subsequent Decree, the JP contributed to the integration of cultural heritage preservation, gender and tourism promotion in the design of new Local Development Plans in 6 communities, through a participatory approach. The new model, which following its successful implementation in 6 towns was due to be replicated in a total of 54 municipalities, allowed for elected decision makers, staff of public authorities and civil society to strengthen their dialogue and design plans jointly, based on the recognition of cultural assets and the strengthening of participation and social inclusion.”

Similarly, [Honduras](#) received support to decentralize cultural policy development in the context of a broader trend towards decentralization, which also served to affirm internal cultural diversity. Measures included the formation of nine Regional Cultural Councils as mechanisms providing for public debate and policy design. In addition, Local Cultural Agendas were drafted to highlight the links between culture and local development (MDG-F, Rojas Muñoz, 2012).

IV.4. ALIGNMENT AND OWNERSHIP ARE ENHANCED WHEN JPS ARE EXECUTED NATIONALLY

The JP execution modality is a fundamental question for national ownership and alignment during implementation. Experience to date suggests that alignment and ownership are enhanced when JPs are executed nationally and

The improvement of local ownership and citizen ownership has been developed specifically in the Democratic Economic Governance (DEG) thematic window, while the Culture and Development thematic window has carried out a very relevant work on decentralization as a means to increase local ownership.

their Coordination Unit is located within the lead national counterpart. However, although almost all of the UN development system's agencies, funds and programmes have endorsed the principle of "national execution"⁹, in practice, several JPs, or some components within the same programme, still operate under the "direct execution"¹⁰ modality. The latter excludes national counterparts from controlling budget administration and may create a power imbalance between national authorities and UN organizations. The comparative analysis of different JPs operating through direct execution suggests that the latter naturally leads to

Box 8.

DEVELOPMENT RESULTS AND SELECTED INDICATORS FROM THE DEMOCRATIC ECONOMIC GOVERNANCE THEMATIC WINDOW

The MDG-F has supported 11 joint programmes under the thematic window programmatic area of Democratic Economic Governance with a value of almost US\$60 million. These programmes focus mainly on strengthening the government's capacity to manage water provision and water quality, including citizens, especially the poorest, in plans and policies regarding water, and increasing financial investments in the water provision sector. These efforts contribute directly to meeting the MDG target of halving the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water and increasing access to improved sanitation facilities, MDG-7.

■ It is estimated that at least **440,816 citizens** gained access to safe affordable drinking water contributing to provide access to safe drinking water in 337 communities, of which 80% are rural communities and the remaining 20% belong to urban areas.

■ Programmes supported **29 national and 12 local laws** or regulatory frameworks, **28 national and 50 local policies**, plus **6 national and 151 local plans** that

explicitly aim to improve water and sanitation policies and management.

■ **31.7 million citizens** have been directly affected by laws, policies and plans supported by the Fund. Law, policies or plans are estimated to affect **1,827 local public institutions**, 77% of which are rural and 23% in urban areas. Programmes also directly affected **120 national institutions** and **278 private sector institutions**.

■ Programmes have promoted community empowerment and participation in the water management decision processes; **669 community organizations** have been strengthened or created to increase the civil society participation in the decision-making processes, guaranteeing the involvement of **5,305 citizens**, of which 2,265 are women and 3,040 are men.

■ In **five countries**, programmes report having increased the affordability of water, in **six countries** programmes positively affected children schooling (via diminishing illnesses or lowering their labour charge) and in **seven countries** improvement on livelihood are reported. **Eight countries**

highlight improvements in both women and children safety and health.

■ Programmes strengthened national capacities to take informed decisions on water management and sanitation issues by the means of training. **9,701 citizens and more than 2,000 civil servants** have been trained to this purpose.

■ Estimation indicates that across programmes, the thematic window has strengthened **665 providers of water and sanitation** services at local level.

■ Eight out of eleven countries report the improvement of the capacity of public institutions for a global number of **142 institutions**, being the highest number of institutions concentrated in Albania (58) and the Philippines (47). Programmes strengthened the capacities of providing water and sanitation services across, at least **568 community organizations**, in the six countries that are reporting on this item.

■ Globally **466 water and sanitation suppliers** have developed a financial plan and sustainability system.

Source: MDG-F (2013) Democratic Economic Governance, Thematic window development results report – June 2013.

⁹ "National execution" refers to programmes that are managed and executed by national government institutions. This modality is suitable whenever national authorities are capable of undertaking the project activities. The "national execution modality" contributes to enhanced sustainability of development projects by increasing national ownership and commitment to programme/project activities and objectives. The national institution that manages the project must be the one most closely involved in the project activities.

¹⁰ "Direct execution" refers to programmes where UN agencies take full responsibility for project execution. In this case, a UN agency's country office must play many roles, including formulating, appraising, approving, executing, implementing, monitoring and evaluating and overseeing its own performance. In these cases, local or central governments are partners but do not direct the execution process.

a dominant role for the UN, limiting national partners' participation in decision-making (MDG-F, Lenci, 2012).

Governments need to be directly involved and visible in implementation on the ground so that citizens do not identify the JPs as exclusively UN initiatives.

This could have political consequences affecting the JPs' capacity-building intentions. Implementing partners should report to national institution or governance bodies, including national government institutions, to promote national and local governments as the legitimate leaders responsible for overseeing development processes (MDG-F, Lenci, 2012).

IV.5. MUTUAL ACCOUNTABILITY¹¹

The governance mechanisms promoted by the MDG-F are useful platforms for information sharing, engagement, coordination and dialogue. When these bodies are co-chaired by a government representative and a UN representative, they can help to promote mutual accountability. Civil society participation in the design and implementation of joint programmes also enables greater accountability.

Based on the Fund's experience in strengthening mutual accountability among all partners, M&E capacities in both the UN agencies as well as national counterparts should be increased. **Ownership is strengthened by engaging national and local stakeholders in monitoring and evaluation processes,** as previously mentioned. The national partners should own the programmes' M&E function. For this reason, development programmes should include funds for developing appropriate M&E systems within government. The quality of programme documents must be improved, including in the area of results orientation, M&E frameworks and indicators, so that investing resources and time in an inclusive and comprehensive formulation process is a cost-efficient strategy.

Roles and responsibilities of all partners must be clarified from the outset to ensure that all are included in the monitoring processes for management purposes. If governance mechanisms are used appropriately and include decision makers, they will increase mutual accountability. Positive outcomes also result when forums at the local level and, if appropriate, technical-level meetings are held to complement these more high-level central forums. Finally, citizen accountability is linked to the flow of information and decision-making ability and, as such, should be addressed in joint programmes (MDG-F, Lenci, 2012).



Helping rural women become successful farmers is the cornerstone of a food-secure world. In the DRC, returned refugee families are farming donated plots of land with quality seeds, new tools and fertilizers, and learning techniques like crop rotation to improve their yield.

¹¹ "Transparency and accountability to each other" is one of the common principles which form the foundation of cooperation for effective development, in accordance with the outcome document of the Fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness, held in Busan in 2011. The document indicates that "mutual accountability and accountability to the intended beneficiaries of our cooperation, as well as to our respective citizens, organizations, constituents and shareholders, is critical to delivering results" (Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation, 2011).

A woman, Kadra Abdi, is shown from the waist up, wearing a brown headscarf and a matching long-sleeved robe. She is smiling and holding a small black and white goat kid with both hands. The background features a large, light-colored tent made of canvas or similar material, with some dry branches and trees visible behind it. The ground is dry and dusty.

MDG-F-backed cooperatives are improving the business skills of eastern Ethiopian pastoralists like Kadra Abdi, a 38-year-old widow who is supporting her six children by buying, fattening and reselling goats. (Photo by Edwina Stevens/Small World Stories/Ethiopia Delivering as One)

V. PROMOTING UN COLLABORATION AND EFFECTIVENESS THROUGH “ONE UN”

The “ONE UN” approach emerged from intergovernmental decision-making on the operational activities of the United Nations system. The 2005 World Summit Outcome (see General Assembly resolution 60/1) included suggestions on improving the coherence, effectiveness and relevance of the United Nations development system.

The UN system-wide coherence reform is a work in progress. The “ONE UN” is a tool for implementation of the Paris Declaration and Accra Agenda for Action principles. **An independent study based on the results of a broad consultative process finds that the MDG-F has been the first significant financial incentive for inter-agency work on MDG and for making progress in the “ONE UN” process at the country level** (MDG-F, Lenci, 2011, p. 6). The experience of jointly formulating programmes has contributed to the preparation of new UNDAFs in many countries where MDG-F JPs are being implemented (MDG-F, 2011, p.11). For example, the Fund created incentives for El Salvador, Ethiopia and Nicaragua to become a DaO Self-Starter country and has prompted the UN system in Bosnia and Herzegovina to make the transition to “One Office”.

The Fund contributes to “ONE UN” in two key ways: i) programmes demonstrate the shortcomings of administrative harmonization in contrast to innovative methods at the country level; and, ii) it strengthens leadership and coherence of the UN system at the country level, particularly in regards to the role of the UN Resident Coordinator.

The MDG-F discussed the “ONE UN” process with government representatives and UN partners during two participatory regional workshops held in Colombia and Morocco in 2011. Debate was generated around harmonization at country level, the UN system-wide leadership, and coherence among UN agencies. The main findings of these two knowledge-generating events are summarized below.

V.1. SHORTCOMINGS OF ADMINISTRATIVE HARMONIZATION IN CONTRAST TO INNOVATIVE METHODS AT THE COUNTRY LEVEL

The MDG-F JPs provide incentives for greater coordination, synergy and efficiency on the ground. The available evidence suggests that the MDG-F offers a concrete opportunity to experiment with implementation of coordinated UN interventions on the ground. In so doing, it represents an important contribution to creating a practice and culture of joint intervention.

Programmes demonstrate the shortcomings of administrative harmonization in contrast to innovative methods at the country level. The potential of joint programmes to increase UN efficiency and effectiveness was limited by a number of constraining factors related to the UN system’s internal structures and politics (MDG-F, Lenci, 2011, p.7). Administrative norms and procedures and implementation modalities may differ sharply from one organization to the other. These differences represent constraints on achieving greater efficiency and synergy in implementing JPs and may increase transaction costs significantly.

Some JPs adopted creative solutions to overcome the administrative bottlenecks, including the development of shared formats for financial reporting and shared protocols for goods procurement. Many evaluations, study recommendations and statements by government representatives on the MDG-F National Steering Committees participating in regional workshops emphasize that the UN must reach consensus on innovative solutions to addressing the lack of unification in inter-agency procedures and make greater efforts to simplify and harmonize them (MDG-F, 2012a).

Some MDG-F Joint Programmes adopted creative solutions to overcome the administrative bottlenecks, including the development of shared formats for financial reporting and shared protocols for goods procurement.

V.2. LEADERSHIP AND COHERENCE OF THE UN SYSTEM

Leadership and coherence of the UN system at the country level is relevant to address multi-dimensional challenges and benefit from the added value of different agencies. Under the MDG-F management model, the UN Resident Coordinator (UN RC) co-chairs the NSC together with the lead national counterpart. The UN RC's role is complemented by the Lead Agency, which is assigned technical leadership of the JP. The MDG-F thus supports the empowerment of the UN RC and the coherence of the UN system at the country level. By working through the Resident Coordinator (RC) system for coordination and oversight and using the joint programme modality for implementation, **the MDG-F provides a unique opportunity for RCs to strengthen their vital role as leaders of United Nations Country Teams (UNCT).** A key structural limitation to the UN RC's effective leadership relates to the discussion on administrative harmonization. In fact, heads of agencies, funds and programmes report directly to their respective headquarters. Because the UN RC does not have a supervisory role, it can exercise only moral authority or influence over the UNCT. Another factor that seems to influence the opportunity for the MDG-F to actually contribute to the "ONE UN" is the relative weight of the JP budgets relative to the overall resources managed by the different organizations at the country level. Available evidence suggests that the more significant the budget, the stronger the representational and oversight role of the UN RC.

Rural indigenous communities in Peru's Andean highlands have been hit hard by climate change, which is impacting traditional crops like potato, maize and quinoa. The MDG-F is assisting them to adapt by reforesting with native species.



The discussion of the critical factors influencing the leadership and coherence of the UN system and the MDG-F contribution to it cannot be separated from the discussion of national ownership. In fact, **government leadership in promoting "ONE UN" is proving to be a critical success factor.** The national government can best empower the RC to lead coordination and harmonization within the UNCT. In this respect, the JPs are good entry points for the government to exercise this pressure. However, some ministries are more comfortable and invest more heavily in establishing a bilateral partnership with a UN organization with a similar sectoral mandate than in engaging in a more holistic approach to partnering with the UN through the lead national counterpart and the UN RC. This involves a higher level of inter-institutional dialogue and coordination on the part of the government. In this respect, the national government representatives who participated in the regional workshops acknowledged that the challenge is to achieving both "ONE UN" and "One Country", which refers to this stronger coordination mechanism among line ministries.

V.3. MAKING "ONE UN" WORK FOR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

In 2012, the MDG-F reviewed its experience to make an evidence-based contribution to the UN [Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review \(QCPR\)](#). Based on the Fund's experience, some of the recommendations in this document were formulated to encourage greater coherence, relevance, efficiency and effectiveness within the UN system. Some of them are already operational within the MDG-F:

1. The number of JP programme partners should be limited and based on their ability to contribute added value to the programme. Operational capacity should also be assessed.

2. Programmes should be nationally-owned and -led and national/local partners must also have the time to be fully engaged if results are to be achieved and sustained. Preference should be given to nationally-/locally-led coordination platforms, ensuring synergies between national and local levels.
3. The UN Resident Coordinator and UN Agency Representatives must be committed and engaged in programme oversight (the former) and programme management (the latter).
4. UN oversight responsibilities for inter-agency programmes require additional support for the UN Coordination Offices, specifically in the areas of monitoring and evaluation and communication and advocacy (MDG-F, 2012a).


El Salvador and **Timor-Leste** have recently conducted evaluation exercises covering all joint programmes financed by the MDG-F (three in El Salvador and two in Timor-Leste). The evaluations have examined the impact of the MDG-F mechanism on the “ONE UN” and the conclusions have showed mixed results. In Timor-Leste, the participatory country evaluation states that:

“According to the majority of UN partners, the JPs have strongly encouraged them to attempt to ‘Deliver as One’. One funding source brought people together to discuss and plan what they were going to do to achieve the common goals, taking into account that each UN agency has its own expertise so that they could avoid duplication. Most people (UN, Government and NGOs) recognized that the PMC meetings have been one of the most relevant mechanisms to strengthen UN agencies to deliver as one” (MDG-F, Fernandes, 2012, p. 69).

In El Salvador, the impact of the MDG-F extends well beyond the outcomes of the three joint programmes funded. Based on the positive results that the UNCT obtained through the JPs and considering the experiences of other DaO pilot countries, the UN system and the government decided together that El Salvador would become a self-starter DaO country. An independent study stressed that implementation of three JPs in El Salvador “has provided the country with relevant lessons on coordination, harmonization and increasing the effectiveness of UN system actions” (Fernández de Velasco, 2013). The study “highlights the effective management of joint programmes and the possible replicability of the institutional governance structure in other UN joint interventions” (MDG-F, Fernandes, 2012).

Together with UN partners, the MDG-F has experimented with and tested various strategies, techniques and tools to improve UN coherence and efficiency and has made several recommendations on that basis. The ideal UN business model that has emerged is one in which: (i) the UN Resident Coordinator has authority and can make decisions on issues of coherence and performance; (ii) UN Coordination Offices are properly staffed to support the UNRC, the UN Country Team and joint programme partners; (iii) if UN agency procedures cannot be harmonized, they work through “ONE UN” agency; (iv) national implementation is the preferred modality; and, (v) a representative governance mechanism is led by national partners (MDG-F, Lenci, 2012).

Together with UN partners, the MDG-F has experimented with and tested various strategies, techniques and tools to improve UN coherence and efficiency and has made several recommendations on that basis. The ideal UN business model has emerged as a result.

A photograph of a man, Ali Hamadu, standing in a dry, open landscape with a herd of sheep. He is wearing a striped shirt and a checkered skirt. The background shows a vast, arid plain with sparse vegetation under a clear sky.

Ali Hamadu lost all his livestock in the drought that has ravaged Ethiopia since 2008. Today he is thriving, thanks to an MDG-F programme to improve rangeland management and boost livelihoods for 32,000 pastoralists.

The case study was authored by Ines Mazarrasa with the support of the United Nations and the MDG-F joint programmes team in Ethiopia.

VI. ETHIOPIA: PATHWAYS OF CHANGE TO ACHIEVE MDGs

Since 2008, under the leadership of the government and the UNCT, Ethiopia has voluntarily adopted the Delivering as One approach, aimed at improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the UN system in Ethiopia¹². The UNCT and the government supported the formulation of the five joint programmes financed by the MDG-F in this context of UN reform.

These programmes, funded through the MDG-F, total \$26.5M USD, making Ethiopia the largest MDG-F beneficiary on the African continent (and the fifth worldwide), both in terms of number of programmes and volume of funds.

The programmes address a wide range of development challenges linked to one or more MDGs under the five thematic windows: Environment, Gender, Culture, Children Food Security and Nutrition, and Private Sector Development. The joint programmes target the most vulnerable populations and communities, including women, children, youth and pastoral communities. Ten UN agencies participate in the joint programmes: FAO, ILO, UNDP, UNEP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNIDO, WFP and WHO.

In addition, Ethiopia is one of the nine focus countries that has received additional funds (up to \$500,000 USD) to implement the M&E and the Communication and Advocacy Action Plans. A country-wide evaluation to assess the overall performance of the MDG-F joint programmes in Ethiopia is scheduled to be conducted in the coming months.

Figure 3.

MDG-F JOINT PROGRAMMES IN ETHIOPIA

JP Title	Thematic Window	UN Participating Agencies	Lead Government Partner	Total Budget Approved in USD
Leave No Woman Behind	Gender	UNFPA (Lead), WFP,	MINISTRY OF WOMEN'S AFFAIRS	7,500,000
Harnessing Diversity for Sustainable Development and Social Change	Culture and Development	UNESCO (Lead) UNDP	MINISTRY OF CULTURE AND TOURISM	5,000,000
National Nutrition Programme	Children and Food Security	UNICEF (Lead), WFP, WHO, FAO	MINISTRY OF HEALTH	7,000,000
Enabling Pastoral Communities to Adapt to Climate Change and Restoring Rangelands Environments	Environment	UNDP (Lead), UNEP, FAO,	MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT	4,000,000
Edible oil Value Chain Enhancement	Private Sector Development	UNIDO (Lead), FAO, ILO	MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY	3,000,000

12 Additional information on the DaO reform in Ethiopia can be found at: <http://www.et.one.un.org/index.php/unct>

VI.1. BUILDING MORE SECURE LIVELIHOODS FOR VULNERABLE COMMUNITIES

The general context in which the five MDG-F programmes in Ethiopia have been implemented is characterized by limited access to resources and opportunities, particularly in terms of credit and productive resources, inadequate infrastructure and/or services (health, food, education, knowledge, and skills). The programmes' target groups are communities that have traditionally been marginalized, either economically or socially, due to social biases. For example, pastoralists are often seen as having a poor relationship with the environment and are rarely recognized as economic agents, and handcraft makers' productive activities are considered as low value and edible oil producers are assigned to the informal sector.

Although the individual programmes were not designed as complementary parts of a *meta-programme* with common objectives, the theory of change underlying all of the programmes identifies three pathways where change is necessary to build more secure livelihoods for vulnerable individuals and communities targeted in the different programmes.

Changes are necessary at the individual level, where capacities must be strengthened through training in life skills, hygiene, basic mother-child care, literacy and bookkeeping and through facilitating access to productive services, infrastructures and assets. Changes also need to take place at the community level, by strengthening collectives (such as economic groups like cooperatives and savings associations or self-help associations) to build confidence, trust, knowledge and awareness of the social norms, attitudes and practices that often undermine individuals' ability to move out of poverty. Finally, changes are needed at the institutional level, where institutions need to develop policies that create an enabling environment for improved opportunities.

The MDG-F joint programmes have addressed these multidimensional challenges by leveraging the knowledge and expertise of the different sectors involved and the comparative advantage of relevant UN agencies.

VI.2. INTERSECTORAL APPROACH: DRIVING INNOVATION AND DEVELOPMENT RESULTS

The five joint programmes in Ethiopia have proven to be a strong catalyst for intersectoral work, resulting in increased coordination of policy dialogue and coherence among the stakeholders involved. Both UN agencies and government institutions have overcome silo behaviours and benefited from this more articulated implementation modality. Moreover, the intersectoral approach has created opportunities to innovate and pilot actions with clear development impacts.

An initial example of successful intersectoral approach is the [Leave No Women Behind](#) (LNWB) programme, which seeks to enhance gender equality and women's empowerment. The Programme has designed a package of interventions that takes



The MDG-F's "Leave No Woman Behind" programme targeted 100,000 Ethiopian adolescent girls and women with literacy training, business skills and access to credit, as well as HIV/AIDS and reproductive health education.

a holistic approach to women's empowerment. It includes a high level of mobilization and outreach to the community to promote life skills, Reproductive Health (RH) and HIV and literacy training, and linkages to services such as rural credit and income-generating activities. The mid-term evaluation shows behavioural changes and increased asset base and incomes and highlights the *"involvement of several levels of administration and large groups of stakeholders; for example, National Steering Committee, technical committees, cooperatives, component groups at community level and groups of trainers"* (MDG-F, Kabuchu, 2010, p. 6). The programme has generated a need for the sectoral bureaus at the regional level (Health, Education and Women's Affairs) to strengthen dialogue and identify areas where joint efforts are necessary so that common results can be achieved. The exchange of experiences and lessons benefit the current programme and similar future interventions (Box n. 9 collect some of the results of this programme).

The Children and Food Security joint programme complements government strategies and plans as articulated in the National Nutrition Programme (NNP). The National Nutrition Strategy recognizes nutrition as multi-sectoral and it falls under the overall coordinating responsibility of the Federal Ministry of Health (FMOH). The four UN agencies involved - UNICEF, WFP, FAO and WHO - have distinct but complementary expert roles in nutrition and are well-positioned to support the country's effort to scale up NNP implementation. The design of the JP appropriately addresses the various components of an appropriate approach to addressing malnutrition: awareness and knowledge building; therapeutic support; affordable alternative complementary food; and, an information system to improve management of and the response to malnutrition. The main added value of the MDG-F support is that for the first time, the four UN agencies joined efforts in a single, common nutrition intervention that required stronger interagency coordination, planning and monitoring. This has stimulated cross-fertilization and piloting of promising innovations to prevent and treat malnutrition. The practice of providing discharge rations to children with severe acute malnutrition after treatment but before the next screening is a good practice developed by the JP and it can be replicated.

Another major innovation is the piloting of local production of complementary food for children. The programme conducted a study which found that the complementary food given to children lacked sufficient nutrients and calories to support their growth. The combined expertise of UNICEF, FAO and research institutes of local universities has led to the development of recipes and the launch of production of locally-based complementary foods.

The Ministry of Health (MoH) is following the community-based local production of complementary food piloted by the Children and Food Security/National Nutrition Programme very closely to determine the extent to which it can be scaled up to the entire national programme. UNICEF and FAO are conducting additional studies on the two models to further confirm the positive nutritional effects of local production and improve the production models.

Box 9.

THE LEAVE NO WOMAN BEHIND'S DEVELOPMENT RESULTS

The programme, implemented in the region of Tigray, is an integrated girls' and women's empowerment initiative that has provided loans, literacy training and business skills to help vulnerable women support themselves and their families.

■ **7,297 adolescents and women** were involved in literacy and life skill programmes, while **9,842 adolescents and women** attended formal education and 2,500 attended non formal education courses.

■ **1,117 women** received new loans and **1,702 adolescent girls** and women were trained on income generation activities.

■ Programme raised awareness on sexual and reproductive health issues, involving **14,385 adolescent girls and women**, while **1,541** attended reproductive health training.

■ **53,472 community members** participated in literacy classes in the regions of Tigray and Amhara.

■ The programme **significantly decreased the number of early marriages** and the number of women married below the age of 18.

■ The programme **increased the value that community members place on education** with a very good impact on the number of children dropping out of schools.

Source: MDG-F (2012) *Leave No Woman Behind's Development*, Second biannual monitoring report; MDG-F (2013) *Leave No Woman Behind*, Programme Final Independent Evaluation.

Box 10.

COPING WITH ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGE IN ETHIOPIA by Claire Balbo

Climate change has hit hard in the Afar Region of Eastern Ethiopia. Ali Hamadu has lost all his livestock as a result of five years of drought. Once a thriving pastoralist, today Ali and his wife and three children rely on food aid from the government and humanitarian organizations.

"I was previously a respected figure in my community for my wealth, having nearly a hundred heads of animals, including sheep, goats and cattle. All of a sudden, I have nothing," he explains. Depending on food aid, Ali says, makes him feel desperate.

In Ethiopia, pastoralist communities constitute 14% of the total population and have among the highest rates of poverty and the lowest human development indices. With their large numbers of livestock, they have been accused of overgrazing and causing land degradation. Because the health of their animals is so weather-dependent, pastoralists are seen as being particularly vulnerable to climate change.

Adapting to climate change

To help pastoralists like Ali face the effects of climate change, the MDG-Fund has been working with the Ethiopian government to

provide long-term adaptation tools to individual pastoralists and to mainstream climate change mitigation and adaptation into the country's development plans, strategies and policies.

Specifically, the joint UN programme, *"Enabling Pastoral Communities to Adapt to Climate Change and Restoring Rangeland Environments"* has developed water facilities and created activities to improve livelihoods for 32,000 pastoralists in some of Ethiopia's most geographically isolated, vulnerable and impoverished areas.

Ali is now a member of Jeldi Livestock Marketing Cooperative, which was established with seed money from the MDG-Fund and comprises 172 household heads, of which 37 are women. Activities of the cooperative include buying sheep for low cost from community members and fattening them for resale at a higher price.

Just a year old, Jeldi Cooperative is already making a profit to be shared among its members, including Ali. The Jeldi Cooperative is one of three created in this area of Afar region; the joint programme has established similar cooperatives in another area as well as in three other regions of the country.

Towards environmental sustainability

The programme has focused on developing water facilities, rangeland management activities and cooperatives to improve pastoral communities' abilities to cope with climate change, while maintaining their traditional livelihoods and way of life. It has also worked to mainstream climate change mitigation and adaptation into national, regional and district development frameworks, and to build capacity and provide trainings for government agencies and pastoralist community institutions to effectively respond to the risks and challenges of climate change.

Project administrators say the programme's initiatives are catching on. "Seeing the changes in livelihood of cooperative members, other pastoralists are frequently asking our office to organize them and facilitate the establishment of cooperatives," explains Firehiwot Mattewos, of the Ada'ar District Cooperatives Office Head. "Community members hoping for a bright future and searching for alternative livelihood schemes see a successful right-holder, such as Ali Hamadu from Jeldi Cooperative, as a role model," she says.

Author: Balbo C (2013), integral text available at <http://www.mdgfund.org/story>

Similarly, the Enabling Pastoral Communities to Adapt to Climate Change and Restoring Rangeland Environments Programme sought to enhance climate resilience within the pastoralist communities in four remote regions of Ethiopia. The intersectoral approach combines three components, addressing policy, awareness raising/capacity building/training, and on-the-ground activities. This approach has promoted horizontal linkages across sectors (agriculture and environment) as well as vertical ones, connecting specific community-based interventions with strategic policy formulation. The integrated approach is helping to effectively address the challenges of rangeland management now exacerbated by climate change. For example, according to the final programme evaluation, "action to improve access to water in areas suffering from increasing frequency of droughts with training both

on immediate concerns regarding health and sanitation plus awareness raising help beneficiaries to better understand and prepare for increasing weather variability” (MDG-F, Woodfine, 2013, p. 21). Beyond the programme’s immediate achievements, the intersectoral approach also seems to promote long-term ownership and sustainability of the results. “Respondents at the regional level noted that the JP was the only programme they were aware, which integrated the key sectors – and furthermore identified this as a design element which contributed to the long term sustainability of programme achievements – also acceptance by the communities” (MDG-F, Woodfine, 2013).

The [Harnessing Diversity for Sustainable Development and Social Change](#) programme seeks to demonstrate the potential of Ethiopia’s cultural and natural diversity to promote development and social progress through a range of inter-linked areas: i) promotion of cultural dialogue and social cohesion; ii) policy and institutional development for cultural heritage protection and promotion; and, iii) economic empowerment of creative industries and handicraft making. The combination of UNESCO’s expertise, which offers a comparative advantage in the promotion of culture, and the UNDP’s, in economic empowerment, has helped to break down the boundaries defining “culture” for government institutions. It has changed decision makers’ attitudes, particularly at the regional level, helping them to understand the potential of the cultural sector as an agent of economic development and wealth creation. The programme has helped to build partnerships among relevant public and private sectors, civil society organizations, and development partners to create synergies among relevant stakeholders (Box 11 gathers some of the results of the programme).

The [Edible Oil Value Chain Enhancement](#) joint programme aims to enhance the country’s edible oil sector by improving the supply system for raw materials, strengthening oil seed processing efficiency and expanding relevant stakeholders’ access to markets. The programme is being implemented under the leadership of the Ministry of Industry, with the technical support of UNIDO as the lead agency, FAO and ILO, together with a series of national counterparts, which include the Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and their regional and *woreda* (district) level representatives in two areas of Oromia Region and Amhara Region. As the term suggests, the phases of the value chain are highly interdependent and require continuous dialogue and feedback among stakeholders. This interaction allowed a truly integrated approach using the leverage and core expertise of each agency and ministry to address bottlenecks in the pre-harvest, production, post-harvest and marketing phases. It also helped to strengthen mutual accountability and support to deliver the final results.

Box 11.

HARNESSING DIVERSITY FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL CHANGE PROGRAMME

The programme drafted a policy on languages in Ethiopia and submitted it to the Parliament for endorsement. The program has prepared the first Ethiopian Ethnographic Linguistic Atlas, which will help to identify and map the existing ethnic groups and languages in the country.

Four proclamations, together with their respective implementation regulations, were drafted to protect the four World Heritage Sites (Tiya, Lalibela, Aksum, and Gondar Fasiladas).

867 artisans were included in a poverty reduction initiative harnessing the potential of cultural industries for income generation. Groups of women engaged in basketry at Frewoini (Tigray) increased their monthly household income by 35% (from an average of US\$ 18.6); embroidery at Wukuro (Tigray) by 65% (from an average of US\$ 26.6); wood sculptures at Zegei (Amhara) by more than double (from US\$ 14.6 to US\$ 39.9).

Source: Tadesse B. (2013) Independent Final Programme Evaluation: Harnessing Diversity for Sustainable Development and Social Change in Ethiopia

VI.3. ALIGNING WITH GOVERNMENT PRIORITIES AND MULTI-LEVEL OWNERSHIP

All programmes are fully aligned with the Government of Ethiopia's priorities, as set forth in the government's development plans, which include the former Plan for Accelerated and Sustained Development to End Poverty (PASDEP) and the current Growth and Transformation Plan (2010-2015). All programmes focus on priority development areas of the MDG agenda, specifically MDG-1 by supporting farmers and/or artisans to enhance productivity and more broadly, by diversifying the income of targeted populations. The gender dimension of poverty (MDG-3) has received particular emphasis. Specific interventions have been designed to target women and gender equity in all programmes. The environment (MDG-7) and its role in enabling healthier and more sustainable livelihoods has been a cross-cutting dimension of the programmes.

Moreover, the programmes are aligned with sector priorities, thus contributing to enforcement and strengthening of specific policies. The *Edible Oil Value Chain Enhancement programme* is framed within the Agro-Industry Master Plan. The Government of Ethiopia has described it:

"As an opportunity to enforce newly passed legislation, strengthen the sector through stakeholders' clustering while at the same time empowering producers and trade unions to improve supply, and above all raising standards for both local consumption and possibly export (of edible oil) in the medium term" (MDG-F, Levebvre, 2012).

The MDG-F is helping empower girls in Ethiopia's Tigray and Amhara regions, where only a third of adult women can read and write and few have access to adequate health, social and financial services.



In the context of the cluster approach introduced by the Edible Oil Value Chain Enhancement programme, companies are formed and legally registered to establish common facilities, such as refinery and packaging plants, and the joint purchase of raw materials and spare parts. The increasing financial contribution by members to the established business companies (PLCs) is a clear indication of the target groups' strong ownership of the project, which in turn will guarantee the sustainability of the project achievements.

The cluster members have agreed to relocate their pressing machines to an industrial zone, which would facilitate safe operation and meet national and international manufacturing norms. Regional governments have provided the land for the relocation and development of the industrial zones in the two JP regions, demonstrating their strong ownership of and commitment to programme sustainability.

Similarly, the government's Climate Resilient Green Economy policy acknowledges the vulnerability of pastoralist communities to climate change. The "Enabling Pastoral Communities to Adapt to Climate Change and Restoring Rangeland Environments programme" was designed to contribute to strengthening capacities to implement GoE strategies and programmes at the national, regional and community levels, while supporting the government in its effort to address climate change.

At the national level, the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development and the UN Resident Coordinator share the overall coordinating role of the MDG-F programmes. The MDG-F governance structure established for each Programme operates across the different levels of government, from the federal level, represented by the line ministries, to the lowest administrative level at the community level. This has promoted a strong sense of ownership and provided direction to the different institutions involved in the programmes.

The Mid-Term Evaluation of the LNWB Programme shows the extent to which the program has promoted:

"Ownership with national partners lower down to sub-district and community levels. The ownership has been enhanced by the programme management and oversight structures, the Programme Management Committees (PMC) from national level, to regional, district (*woredas*) and sub-district level (*kebeles*) coordination committees. The involvement of community representatives on the local PMC and in the Community Conversations has created confidence and buy-in into the programme by the communities" (MDG-F, Kabuchu, 2010).

Likewise, the Children and Food Security Programme is fully aligned with the National Nutrition Programme and has built on the existing management structures established by the FMOH, rather than establishing parallel ones. National institutions have implemented the activities. The JP works within this overall framework, thereby ensuring that its processes and outcomes are nationally owned. In

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addition, specific interventions at the local level are developed in close consultation and coordination with local authorities at the regional and sub-regional levels. At the district level, the Woreda administrations are actively engaged in selecting the *woredas* where the interventions are implemented, project sites and project right-holders. The Regional Working groups meet on a monthly basis and include international non-governmental organizations (INGOs), local NGOs and other partners with a presence in the respective regions.

VI.4. CONTRIBUTION TO “ONE UN” IN ETHIOPIA

The five programmes are the clearest example of effective development results achieved by the DaO agenda. The UN agencies involved in these joint programmes have different management procedures, but the experience of working together has enabled them to identify areas where operational harmonization is required. Overall, the MDG-F mechanism has enabled UN agencies at the country level to explore what can be jointly implemented in the realm of operations implementation without deviating from their operations guidelines.

Programmes have helped to build on complementarities among agencies that were not previously explored fully. The NNP offers a good example here, too. All four agencies work in the area of nutrition, from different perspectives, under the Ministry of Health. However, they had never worked together to plan, monitor and implement in the same community. The JP has helped to highlight complementarities among agencies’ expertise across the entire spectrum of nutrition interventions. For example, it helped to strengthen the linkages among interventions addressing moderate and severe malnutrition.

In addition, beyond the operational aspect, the experience of agencies working together has helped to demonstrate that cooperation and, thus, synergies can be achieved at the country level and that this translates into specific development results, as shown in previous sections.

On the operational side for example, during implementation of the “Harnessing Diversity for Sustainable Development and Social Change Programme”, the programme leadership realized that the different UNDP and UNESCO procedures for the transfer of funds to the same implementation partners was increasing transaction costs and, thus, negatively impacting the interventions’ efficiency. This led UNESCO to pilot the adoption of HACT¹³, a major change in operational procedures, which represented a step towards greater harmonization of procedures, in line with the DaO agenda.

The five programmes are the clearest example of effective development results achieved by the DaO agenda. Programmes have helped to build on complementarities among agencies that were not previously explored fully.

¹³ Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers to Implementing Partners (HACT) was launched in April 2005. The HACT shifts the management of cash transfers from a system of rigid controls to a risk management approach. Source: UNDG website: www.undg.org



The government acknowledges the One Leader and the RC co-chairs the High Level Steering Committee with the government. The RC and RCO have played a major role in providing strategic guidance and promoting knowledge exchange among programmes.

In terms of working through One Agency, our experience with one programme contradicts the model proposed. The initial NNP design included only two agencies (UNICEF and WFP) to which the AA would release funds. However, different rules and procedures proved to be a major constraint on inter-agency funds transfers, leading to implementation delays. It was finally decided that each agency would have to obtain the funds directly from the AA to overcome operational limitations.

The five joint programmes funded through the MDG-F are the first set of JP implemented in the country. The knowledge base generated by the experience with this initial set of programmes has been useful in designing future joint programmes and thus serves as a valuable precedent for improving the efficiency and effectiveness of UN support to Ethiopia. For example, a major lesson from the MDG-F programmes is the need to establish a strong and appropriately resourced coordination structure with a clear division of labour and reporting lines when implementation is launched. The time required to establish this mechanism and create a common understanding of programme objectives must be factored into the programme planning stage. This has been taken into consideration to the extent possible in the design of new JPs in Ethiopia.

Left: Ethiopia's climate-dependent livestock farmers are likely to bear the brunt of the negative impact of climate change in the region. The MDG-F's programme to assist these communities to adapt includes trainings like this one for animal health workers in southern Ethiopia.

Right: The MDG-F has provided increased access to water for communities living in drought prone areas of Ethiopia through the construction of wells, water harvesting facilities and reservoirs. (Photo by Edwina Stevens/Small World Stories/Ethiopia Delivering as One)

A photograph of two men in the foreground, both wearing black t-shirts with a graphic of a clenched fist and the text 'ROCK N' ROMA'. The man on the left is wearing a grey baseball cap and white gloves; one glove has the text 'DA JIM CMI...' on it. The man on the right is wearing a black baseball cap and orange gloves; one glove has the text 'TOLERANTNI?' on it. They are standing in front of a multi-story building with many windows. Other people are visible in the background.

Youth from all ethnic backgrounds celebrated the 2010 International Day of Peace with the MDG-F's Peace-Building programme in southern Serbia.

The case study was authored by Borka Jeremic with the support of the United Nations and the MDG-F joint programmes teams in Serbia.

VII. SERBIA: INNOVATIVE PARTNERSHIP MODELS

VII.1. AN INTERSECTORAL APPROACH OFFERS ADDED VALUE

VII.1.1. Addressing critical challenges to achieving the MDGs

Serbia is a middle-income country where, based on the main indicators, MDG achievement was on track when the MDG-F mechanism was established in 2006. In the meantime, Serbia was heavily affected by the global economic crisis and has started the recovery only recently. The consequence was that some positive results achieved in the pre-crisis period were annulled or deteriorated. Today, the remaining challenges to achieving the national MDGs involve amongst others: i) improving the situation of the most vulnerable populations, including the Roma, refugees, Internally Displaced Persons (IDP), minorities, the disabled, and victims of violence across the country, and ii) addressing the situation of people living in underdeveloped geographical areas, particularly those with recent conflicts or current inter-ethnic tensions (such as southern, south-western, and eastern Serbia). The critical weakness preventing the national structures from addressing those challenges, besides constraints posed by the financial crisis, was the lack of an intersectoral approach and capacity. The MDG-F was an excellent mechanism that promoted intersectorality, both within the UN system and between the UN and its development partners. For example, the [Youth Employment and Migration \(YEM\) programme](#) helped Serbian institutions establish a coordinated, multi-sectoral system to deliver services to youth at risk of social exclusion at the local level. It also strengthened policy coherence and coordination among government institutions, particularly between the Ministry of Economy and the National Employment Service and between the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy and Centres for Social Work (MDG-F, Newkirk, 2012).

Figure 4.
MDG-F PROGRAMMES IN SERBIA

JP Title	Thematic Window	Value in USD	Agencies
Support to National Efforts for the Promotion of Youth Employment and Management of Migration	Youth Employment and Migration	6,143,000.00 (+1,900,000 Government)	IOM (lead), UNDP, ILO, UNICEF SEIO, Ministry of Economy and Regional Development, Ministry of Labor and Social Policy, Ministry of Youth and Sports, Ministry of Human and Minority Rights, Public Administration and Local Self-Government, Statistical Office, National Employment Service
Promoting Peace Building in Southern Serbia	Conflict Prevention and Peace Building	2,500,000.00 (+5,420,000 PBILD other donors)	UNDP(lead), UNHCR, UNHABITAT, IOM, UNICEF SEIO, Ministry of Human and Minority Rights, Public Administration and Local Self-Government, Ministry of Economy and Regional Development, Commissioner for Refugees, Ombudsman's Office, Coordination Body for Presevo, Bujanovac and Medvedja
Sustainable Tourism for Rural Development	Development and Private Sector	4,000,000.00	UNDP(lead), UNICEF, UNWTO, FAO, UNEP, UNESCO SEIO, Ministry of Economy and Regional Development, Ministry of Agriculture, Trade, Forestry and Water Management, Tourism Organization of Serbia

Box 12.

MORE THAN 2,000 UNEMPLOYED SERBIAN YOUTH GET TRAINING AND JOBS

After Aleksandar Jovanovic's parents lost their jobs, his family was without any income for months. Today, they are helping their son run his new car wash business, which now provides the family with a steady income. "I'm proud of my business," said Aleksandar, a 20-year-old from Novi Sad, Serbia's second largest city. "I called it 'The Green Oasis.' It's my first job and my friends are impressed."

The Youth Employment Fund (YEF), supported by the MDG-F, is working to increase employment and improve the employability of disadvantaged young people through grants, training and work placements in companies. The initiative targets young people from Roma communities, rural towns and villages, migrants, internally displaced persons and returnees, those with minimal education

between the ages of 15 and 30, and young people with disabilities.

Dragana, a 23-year-old mother, got a job at a local coffee roasting and retail company in Backa Palanka after completing YEF-sponsored training. "I'm proud that I managed to secure full-time employment," said Dragana. "I really enjoy my work and the daily interaction with my colleagues."

"The greatest success of this project is witnessing individual cases of satisfied young people who, having been registered with the unemployment office for, say, 14 years, are finally working or gaining new knowledge and skill," said Natasa Ivanovic, employment advisor with the YEF.

Jelena Stanković, Head of the Group for Additional Education and Training from the

National Employment Service, said that the programme has gained a lot of interest from young people, employers, and trainers. "The programme is a success, and more such projects should be encouraged," said Ms. Stanković.

The programme is implemented by the International Labour Organization (ILO), International Organization for Migration (IOM), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), in cooperation with five ministries, the Centres for Social Work, the National Employment Service and the Republic Statistical Office. Programme activities are implemented in over 50 municipalities in South Backa, Belgrade, Pcinjski, Nisavski and Pomoravski regions.

Source: <http://www.mdgfund.org/country/serbia/story>

Box 13.

SELECTED RESULTS FROM THE PROGRAMME "SUPPORT TO NATIONAL EFFORTS FOR THE PROMOTION OF YOUTH EMPLOYMENT AND MANAGEMENT OF MIGRATION"

The YEF (Youth Educational Fund) has been one of the most effective outputs of the programme, in both direct initiatives (employment of young disadvantaged youth) and in the medium and longer term (establishing a policy and programme framework of active labour market initiatives). By March 2012, the joint programme contribution of US\$ 1.9 million was matched by US\$ 1.7 million provided by the Government of Serbia to support the YEF.

YEF allowed the treatment of 2,682 young individuals in Belgrade, Novi Sad, Nis,

Jagodina and Vranje (51.4 % young men and 48.6 % young women). Over two thirds of young right-holders (69.5 %) participated in the on-job training programmes organized in private sector enterprises; self-employment programmes were taken up by 6.7 % of young right-holders/agents, while 23.7 % benefitted from work placement schemes. Over 4.5 % of participants were young persons with disabilities. The contribution made by the Government to the YEF allowed the targeting of additional 1,478 young men and women (11.4 % participated in labour

market training, 54% benefitted from work placement schemes and 34.6% from self-employment programmes).

An Integrated Service Delivery (ISD) system providing labour market, migration and social services for youth was established and is now functioning.

22 municipalities were successful in accessing the financial resources made available by the Serbian Government, on a competitive basis, for the implementation of local employment initiatives.

Source: MDG-F, Newkirk, J. A. (2012) Independent Final Programme Evaluation: Support to National Efforts for the Promotion of Youth Employment and Management of Migration.

VII.1.2. Supporting the UN's positioning in Serbia

An intersectoral approach was also valuable in supporting the UN's positioning on the development agenda in a middle-income country (MIC). It was not always easy to demonstrate the UN's relevance in development programmes in a country like Serbia, which possesses appropriate national sectoral capacities and is not in critical need of UN support. However, Serbia's capacity to address problems that require intersectoral cooperation was limited because it lacked an appropriate culture of horizontal cooperation and was experiencing the political challenges common to coalition governments (one sector managed by one coalition government member political faction). By working together under the Delivering as One (DaO) initiative to address complex development problems through comprehensive, multi-sectoral approaches, the UN development partners showed that they could offer a comparative advantage in an MIC. This finding was most useful in preparing the new UNDAF for Serbia (2011-2015).

An intersectoral approach was valuable in supporting the UN's positioning on the development agenda in a middle-income country.

VII.1.3. Building political cohesion around human development and MDG priority issues

Serbia has been governed by a series of coalition governments since the major political shift occurred in late 2000. In general, the political factions divided power vertically, with one coalition member party managing one sector. Working on initiatives that promote cross-sectoral cooperation, with the active involvement of UN agencies, helped to build bridges between factions. This was facilitated by the fact that the themes/thematic windows defined by the MDG-F focused on promoting core human values to which all political actors subscribed. The management mechanism – the Programme Management committee (PMC) – was the primary vehicle for institutionalizing cooperation among different sectors/political partners. It helped to ensure that the intersectoral objectives and joint efforts to address them remained in place, despite political differences and changes in participating stakeholders.

VII.2. THE MDG-F'S CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE PARIS DECLARATION AND ACCRA AGENDA FOR ACTION

VII.2.1. Enhancing Serbia's role in the multilateral cooperation arena

Serbia is still burdened by the legacy of the past regional conflicts and political challenges. It has received humanitarian and development aid for the last 20 years. Prior to that time, as part of the former Yugoslavia, Serbia was a donor country. The MDG-F multilateral cooperation model helped Serbia, in close cooperation with the UN and the donor (the Spanish government), to shift from the cooperation relationship typical of aid recipient countries to an open partnership model, where all three parties share responsibilities and ownership in addressing development challenges. National ownership is very strong in all three MDG-F programmes implemented in Serbia. This open partnership model piloted through the MDG-F JPs was scaled up in connection with the UNDAF for Serbia (2011-2015) whose additional title – Country Partnership Strategy – highlights this joint work/partnership between the UN and the government in addressing development challenges in Serbia.

The Serbian EU Integration Office (SEIO), with its Development Aid Coordination Unit (DACU), is the national NSC Chair. The SEIO-DACU office is the official government focal point that coordinates implementation of the Paris Declaration. The UN selected SEIO/DACU to act as the MDG-F JPs NSC national co-chair. When the new UNDAF 2011-2015 for Serbia was launched, SEIO-DACU accepted to co-chair the UNDAF NSC. This management element was critically important for ensuring that the MDG-F JPs and UNDAF in Serbia were aligned and consistent with the Paris Declaration, which eased its implementation in Serbia.



The MDG-F conducted workshops to increase dialogue and understanding amongst youth from southern Serbia's diverse ethnic groups.

The [Promoting Peace Building in Southern Serbia](#) (PBILD) Programme attracted other donors and ensured a harmonized approach to addressing problems in southern Serbia. This Programme allocated funds to help address issues resulting from previous conflicts and threats associated with current inter-ethnic tensions. It received \$2.5 million USD from the MDG-F. Three other donors (Switzerland, Sweden and Norway) contributed to a sister project dealing with inclusive development-related issues in southern Serbia. Together, they contributed an additional \$5 million USD. A single joint programme document was signed with the Government of Serbia, which included both programmes. One joint project implementation unit was established in Bujanovac, southern Serbia. All donor funds were channelled via the same fund transfer mechanism, the Multi-Partner Trust Office in New York. This programme demonstrated its commitment to Paris Declaration principles and coherence at the local grassroots level through an initiative involving four donors, six UN agencies and dozens of national (mostly local) partners. In addition to PBILD, several other initiatives were implemented in the same geographic area, including the UNOPS-implemented EU/PROGRES programme, with EU IPA funding, and USAID local development programmes. PBILD PMCs provided forums for regular discussion of international development aid to southern Serbia and an opportunity for representatives of other agency programmes to participate as observers.

Both the UN and the Government of Serbia value the UN Trust Funds mechanism. The mechanism by which MDG-F resources are provided to the UN at the country level through the Multi-Partner Trust Fund in New York inspires confidence among all parties, reduces competition and guarantees significant coherence.

Donor assistance levels in MICs are decreasing gradually. Many donors are phasing out, while others are cutting back their activities. The EU pre-accession funds, the IPA, constitute the key element of international aid. The government takes an increasingly active role and progressively requires less support from international partners like UN in this programming process. To the Serbian government and other partners at national level, the funds provided through UN trust funds (including the MDG-F, Human Security Trust Fund and Trust Fund to End Violence Against Women), which are distributed through the UN headquarters' Multi-Partner Trust Funds Office (MPTF), constitute additional resources available for programming at the country level. The government appreciates these funds as a demonstration of the UN's commitment to provide additional resources for development

activities in the country. Trust is based further on the understanding that the Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office operates in compliance with the Paris Declaration principles and on a simple reporting/monitoring process that does not create an additional burden for the national development aid coordination systems (for example, double-counting, lack of adequate information and overlap with other funds). The government particularly appreciates that cooperation through trust funds allows several UN agencies to be involved in a single comprehensive programme, provides a single source of funding, and involves a single reporting mechanism and leading entity on behalf of the team.

MDG-F good practices in Serbia are referred to in all other applications for similar funding opportunities, including the HSTF, UN Trust Fund to End Violence Against Women and the Human Rights Mainstreaming Mechanism.

VII.2.2. Increasing alignment

Alignment was achieved through the design and implementation of the three MDG-F JPs in Serbia. The key focus areas include the following:

- **Alignment with national development priorities, including those relevant for EU integration:** As required by the MDG-F programming procedures, activities proposed for implementation under three MDG-F programmes in Serbia were fully aligned with national development priorities. This was ensured through early establishment of the MDG-F NSC and the respective PMCs, which participated actively in the design and implementation of these activities throughout the process. All three programmes underwent a comprehensive review by all relevant parties in the government prior to obtaining formal approval from the Government of Serbia. Functional and active PMCs ensured that activities were adjusted properly during implementation. This flexibility of JPs logframes was necessary, given the time lag between project design and implementation (programmes were designed in 2006-2007 and most were implemented between 2008 and 2013). In addition, with the SEIO/DACU office in charge of the MDG-F programmes' NSC, programme activities comply fully with EU integration priorities.
- **Alignment with other donors' activities:** The national co-chair of the MDG-F National Steering Committee, SEIO/DACU helped to ensure that MDG-F activities were properly coordinated and complemented the activities implemented by other international donors in the country. SEIO/DACU leads the EU pre-accession funds programming, which follows a sector-wide approach implemented at national level through eight sector groups operating in Belgrade and including a wide range of partners based in the capital. Donor coordination was often on the agenda at MDG-F PMC meetings, where complementarity with other donor activities in the respective sector was discussed. This was particularly relevant for southern Serbia and PBILD PMC, which introduced coordination and cohesion issues on its agenda, in the absence of adequate coordination forums at the local level.

The mechanism by which MDG-F resources are provided to the UN at the country level through the Multi-Partner Trust Fund in New York inspires confidence among all parties, reduces competition and guarantees significant coherence.

- **Alignment with the UNDAF for Serbia:** Three MDG-F programmes in Serbia were designed and adopted when the new UNDAF for Serbia was developed. Priorities defined in connection with three MDG-F programmes were included in the UNDAF prioritization exercise and are now reflected in the UNDAF 2011-2015 document, thus setting the stage for other similar activities. The most active and functional MDG-F JP NSC was upgraded to direct the UNDAF execution. UNDAF NSC meetings were organized back-to-back with the MDG-F JPs NSC meetings. MDG-Fs are thus seen as integral to the overall UN effort in Serbia and successful in implementing the DaO principle.
- **Alignment with the Alliance of Civilizations (AOC):** Thanks to the active engagement of the Spanish government and Spanish embassy in Serbia, the AOC agenda was introduced to the UN team at the outset. Links between MDG-F JPs and the AOC were established in 2008, before the MDG-F JPs began. SEIO/DACU national counterpart in charge of the MDG-F and the MFA in charge of developing AOC action plans noted this link and ensured that contributions made through MDG-F JPs in advancing AOC objectives were reflected in the AOC action plan for Serbia. Particularly strong links were identified in Serbia between MDG-F programmes developed in response to the thematic windows of conflict prevention and peace-building and the promotion of youth employment and management of migration. The YEM JP Manager participated in the first AOC regional meeting held in Sarajevo in 2009. The links between the two were also discussed at the 2009 and 2011 MDG-F workshops in Morocco. As the series of second regional action plans for the AOC around the world developed in 2012-2013 shifting AOC activities from policy to concrete programmatic activities (administered by UNOPS), MDG-F JPs implementation models are being proposed to serve as a reference. The RCO Serbia offers support in this area. It is being considered that in some ways, the AOC could represent the continuation of the MDG-Fs (e.g. social inclusion, culture and development etc).
- **Alignment with post-2015 and SDG agenda:** Serbia is one of the countries where post-2015 consultations are conducted. Studies commissioned under the MDG-F JPs were used extensively as a basis for the desk review that preceded the actual consultations process. Early results suggest that Serbians consider unemployment, low standards of living and poverty, corruption, the lack of rule of law and weak institutions as the country's major problems. Citizens also cited the lack of a culture of tolerance, accountability and inclusiveness as significant barriers to progress. These results indicate that follow-up to the MDG-F JPs implemented in Serbia would be important to addressing issues that are relevant to the post-2015 agenda and SDGs.

VII.2.3. The MDG-F contribution to national, local and citizen ownership

National/local ownership took different forms in the three MDG-F JPs in Serbia. [The Youth Employment and Migration programme](#) was the best model of the three JPs implemented under the MDG-F in Serbia, as evidenced by the final evaluation (MDG-F, Newkirk, 2012). The programme was implemented with strong leadership from the primary national counterpart, the Employment Department, which was based initially in the Ministry of Economy and Regional Development and shifted to the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Welfare after the 2012 election. The programme remained linked to the Employment Department, even with the change of ministry.

The programme addresses core MIC development challenges, such as youth unemployment and regional disparities that cause the migration flows. At the same time, JP managed to obtain strong local ownership which was significant as many activities were implemented at the local level. Approximately 33 per cent of the programme budget was implemented through the National Employment Service as a nationally executed initiative (NEX), invested in the creation and operation of the Youth Employment Fund (YEF) that provided a package of innovative employment measures to disadvantaged youth. This Fund received additional financial contributions, totalling \$2 million USD, from the Serbian government. This practice, which is still relatively rare in Serbia, further strengthened national ownership.

Given the strong national ownership and the relevance of the topic, this programme is likely to be proposed for follow-up funding from appropriate government counterparts, with the continued active participation of UN agencies. Additionally, as many of the outputs contributed to policy, procedures and legislation improvements, they will have a long-lasting impact.

The [Sustainable Tourism for Rural Development](#) programme focused on both rural development and sustainable tourism development. To reconcile the programme's two aspects, the project management structure was designed to incorporate the active participation of two strong national counterparts in both areas relevant for the programme - the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Economy and Regional Development (Tourism Department). The latter took a more active role in programme implementation and demonstrated significant ownership. On the UN side, FAO took a more active role leading the rural development components. This arrangement resulted in uneven ownership at the national level and occasionally posed challenges to a smooth transfer of practices from UN partners, particularly non-resident ones.

On the other hand, the programme benefited greatly from strong local support and ownership, particularly among local tourist boards and their clients. A key programme achievement involved improved linkages between central and local levels (local rural tourism providers, National Tourism Office of Serbia, local tourism offices, and municipalities). Combined with strong ownership among local partners, this had a positive impact on the intervention's sustainability.



People in Serbia's rural areas are twice as poor as city dwellers, and 75% are subsistence farmers. The MDG-F helped develop tourism to boost economic activity, increase employment and reduce emigration from rural areas.

Street cricket brings fun and the chance for cross-cultural communication to Serbian, Albanian and Roma children in the multi-ethnic town of Bujanovic. The game was part of an MDG-F programme to reduce conflict and build peace in southern Serbia, the poorest part of the country.



However, the government will probably not replicate the programme in its original form. The Tourism Department (now within the Ministry of Finance and Economy) is more likely to propose that other donors support scaling-up and provide funding for tourism-related activities without the rural development component. UN agencies will probably not play a significant role in follow-up project implementation.

Of the three MDG-F programmes implemented, [Promoting Peace Building and Inclusive Development in Southern Serbia](#) posed a challenge to promoting national ownership. In responding to the conflict prevention and peace building thematic window advertised by MDG-F, the Serbian national partners put emphasis in project design on inclusive development aspect rather than conflict prevention. The Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government served as the main lead government counterpart and mayors of the 13 concerned municipalities were the key local partners, showing a strong commitment throughout the programme.

The programme received support from the Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government during implementation, while other national counterparts provided limited support. The 13 municipalities demonstrated strong support and ownership at the local level. This local ownership is an important asset for a programme that addresses a series of sensitive issues relevant to people living in southern Serbia.

The current structure of development aid coordination in Serbia foresees that each programme needs to be supported and led by a lead national institution/ministry to which a local ownership is a valuable additional asset. With the change of government in mid-2012, the programme faced serious management challenges when its lead ministry was disbanded and its components incorporated into three other ministries. During the last year of its implementation, PBILD lacked a lead national partner. Because it is difficult to identify a national counterpart that would adopt such a complex programme at this advanced stage of its implementation, it may be difficult to submit the follow-up programme for funding. Local ownership remains very strong, but insufficient to replace national level ownership.

VII.3. THE MDG-F'S MAIN CONTRIBUTIONS TO PROMOTING UN COLLABORATION AND DEVELOPMENT EFFECTIVENESS

The first JPs in Serbia were funded under the MDG-F. Experience gained through these programmes was extremely valuable and inspired similar initiatives. The proportion of the UNCT Serbia programme portfolio under the JPs has increased gradually since the MDG-Fs were introduced. Over 20 per cent of the current portfolio are JPs. The pipeline programmes in Serbia have a significantly higher rate of JPs (from 40 to up to 50 per cent).

The MDG-F PMCs played a crucial role in promoting mutual accountability amongst stakeholders. The presence of a lead national government institution as PMC co-chair was particularly important, as it conveyed and encouraged a sense of responsibility, accountability and coherence among all other stakeholders involved, including the UN partners. The PMC national chair worked closely with the UN RC to promote UN reform and cohesion.

The MDG-F helped the agencies to adopt the DaO culture. The UNCT in Serbia was not ready and experienced in working with JPs prior to the MDG-Fs. For example, it missed the opportunity to apply to the first two thematic windows advertised by the Fund. When the agencies conformed the programmes teams, they aligned smoothly with DaO operating principles by following the MDG-F Operational Guidance. Coming together to implement the MDG-F joint programmes was, in practice, a faster and more efficient way to promote DaO than following the guidance received from UN HQ through UNDOCO and/or the Regional Directors' Team regarding the DaO management values and principles. Visits and regular communications (video conference during UNCT retreats) with the MDG-F Secretariat were very efficient in conveying the DaO culture to the UNCT in Serbia.

The experience of implementing MDG-F programmes diversified the UN team in Serbia. Thanks to the MDG-F JPs, several of the most relevant non-resident UN agencies participated actively in development activities in Serbia, including the UN WTO, UNESCO and UNEP. FAO and UN Habitat extended their in-country project presence in Serbia through the MDG-F JPs. Thanks to the MDG-F JPs, these agencies positioned themselves in the UNDAF 2011-2015.

All project-based and non-resident agencies are vocal in their support of DaO and "ONE UN". Resident agencies with a large in-country presence have reservations regarding DaO and accept it only cautiously as described above.

JPs and cross-sectoral cooperation define a niche for the UN in MIC. As these countries offer limited opportunities for individual UN agencies to implement programmes, working together under the JPs proved to be the most suitable model for both the UN, with its reform objectives, and host governments, which value the UN's coherent, more cost-effective operating methods. Still, design of effective JP management arrangements remain a challenge and will require further attention, as recommended by all three MDG-F evaluations.

The MDG-F JPs appreciated the advisory role of the UNHCR and UN Women. Although they lack an explicit role in project implementation, these two agencies have contributed to strengthening the programmes' gender and human rights aspects. During implementation, they organized training sessions with project staff and local partners to increase knowledge in these two areas important for UN programming.

Once the three MDG-F JPs in Serbia were approved it was concluded that strengthening of the RC Office capacity in Belgrade was needed in the domain of communication and advocacy (C&A) and monitoring and evaluation (M&E). MDG-F Secretariat agreed to support partial funding of these two positions (to be matched by programme funds). The UN agencies never agreed to establish a joint M&E function, but did accept joint C&A support, which increased cohesion in their communications strategies. Even so, the RCO contributed to the monitoring and evaluation exercises and to the JPs reporting.

Experience gained through these programmes was extremely valuable and inspired similar initiatives. The proportion of the UNCT Serbia programme portfolio under the JPs has increased gradually since the MDG-Fs were introduced.

A photograph of four indigenous and Afro-Colombian children sitting at a wooden table. The child on the far right is smiling and holding a stack of colorful bowls (green, red, blue). The other three children are looking towards the camera. The background is a wall with orange and white patches.

The MDG-F is improving food security and nutrition among women and children of Colombia's indigenous and Afro-Colombian communities, which suffer from marginalization, vulnerability and exclusion.

The case study was authored by Patricia Fernandez-Pacheco with the support of the United Nations and the MDG-F joint programmes team in Colombia.

VIII. COLOMBIA: TRANSLATING A GLOBAL AGENDA INTO NATIONAL ACTION

The four programmes financed by the MDG-F in Colombia, with an overall budget of USD 25.7 million, tackled various themes (such as adaptation to climate change, the eradication of gender violence, and the promotion of food security and nutrition), which were linked directly with one or more of the MDGs (1, 3, 4, 5 and 7) along with a programme that, with its focus on the theme of peace-building, corresponded to the principles of the Millennium Declaration. In addition to the relevant government institutions led by the Colombian Presidential Agency for International Cooperation, nine of the 23 agencies, funds and programmes of the United Nations in Colombia participated in its formulation, with the active leadership of the office of the Resident Coordinator (Figure 3 provides further details).

Colombia was also selected as one of the [nine focus countries](#) supported by the MDG-F Secretariat with technical assistance and additional financial resources (USD 500,000) for the Office of the Resident Coordinator to develop initiatives for the monitoring, evaluation, communication and advocacy that link efforts in every joint programme by driving actions on a national scale. Reflection on the MDGs from the perspective of indigenous populations is also supported via a strategic alliance with the Consejo Regional Indígena del Cauca (CRIC, Indigenous Regional Council of the Cauca) and a MDGs report called [“The other vision”](#) that collects a reflection upon the MDGs from the perspective of the indigenous populations of Colombia (USD 260,000).

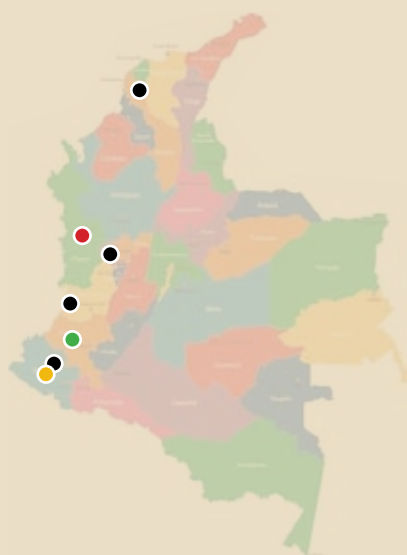
Figure 5.

MDG-F JOINT PROGRAMMES IN COLOMBIA

JP Title	Thematic Window	UN Participating Agencies	National Partners	Total Budget Approved in USD
Integral strategy for the prevention and awareness of all forms of gender-based violence	Gender equality and women's empowerment	IOM, UNFPA, UN WOMEN	Presidential Council for Women's Equality, National Department of Planning, National Administrative Department of Statistics, Ministry of the Interior and Justice, Ministry of Communications, Ministry of National Education, Ministry of Social Protection, Ministry of National Defence, Armed Forces, Supreme Council of the Judiciary, Supreme Court Gender Committee, National Institute for Legal Medicine and Forensic Science, Family Commissioners, Citizens' Council, Attorney-General of the Nation	7,200,000
Integration of ecosystems and adaptation to climate change in the Colombian Massif	Environment and climate change	FAO, PAHO/WHO, UNDP, UNICEF	Regional Autonomous Corporation of the Cauca (CRC), Institute of Hydrology, Meteorology and Environmental Studies (IDEAM), Ministry of the Environment, Housing and Territorial Development (MAVDT)	4,000,000
Strengthening local capacities for peace-building in the Department of Nariño	Peace-building	UNHCR, FAO, UPDP, UNICEF, UN WOMEN	Municipal Mayoralities, Indigenous Councils of Pastos and Eperara-Siapidaara, Afro-Colombian Community Councils of ASOCOETNAR, Government of Nariño	7,000,000
Indigenous and Afro-Colombian Communities in the Chocó Department promote their Food Security and Nutrition	Children, food security and nutrition	FAO, PAHO/WHO, WFP, UNDP, UNICEF	Government of Chocó, Colombian Institute of Family Wellbeing, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Ministry of Social Protection, Ministry of the Interior and Justice	7,500,000

Figure 6.

MAP OF MDG-F JOINT PROGRAMMES IN COLOMBIA



- Indigenous and Afro-Colombian Communities in the Chocó Department promote their Food Security and Nutrition
- Integral Strategy for the Prevention and Awareness of All Forms of Gender-Based Violence
- Integration of Ecosystems and Adaptation to Climate Change in the Colombian Massif
- Strengthening local capacities for peace-building in the Department of Nariño

This country case study aims to summarise concisely the aspects that have made the work of the teams in Colombia a regional and global reference in terms of creativity and commitment with what the MDGs represent in every thematic area of focus. By making use of its rich stock of “lessons learned” and “good practices”, this study reflects on how the MDG-F has been applied to the Colombian context as a mechanism for joint inter-agency and intersectoral cooperation. It is a definitive account that connects efforts on a global scale for a better world with a multilateral donor’s support and a country’s desire to work alongside the United Nations to transform reality from the national level to the community.

This case was based on the document entitled “Systematisation of Experiences of Inter-Agency joint programmes of the MDG-Fund, the Human Security Fund and the Multi-Donor Basket Funds of the United Nations in Colombia” (Suarez, forthcoming), as well as the documentation produced for each of the four programmes.

VIII.1. INTERSECTORAL APPROACHES TO ACHIEVE THE MDGS

The “Integral Strategy for the Prevention and Awareness of All Forms of Gender-Based Violence” in Colombia (Gender joint programme) supported an integral approach to the topic by strengthening and merging a number of processes led by the government as well as social and women’s organisations. Noteworthy results include expanding and improving the national standard on violence against women, which culminated in the implementation of Law 1257/08 on violence against women and the development of national policy guidelines on gender equality (See Box n. 14 for further details).

Similarly, the joint programme, “Indigenous and Afro-Colombian Communities in the Chocó Department promote their Food Security and Nutrition”, in the area of Children, Food Security and Nutrition (CFSN joint programme) was designed as an integral proposal to provide simultaneous indices using various indicators of food security and nutrition, including basic sanitation, water quality and production for self-consumption. The joint programme achieved an impact on six of the eight MDGs in communities selected by the programme. It reduced the prevalence of overall and acute malnutrition in children under 6 and reduced food and nutritional insecurity. It also had several unquantifiable achievements, such as involving and empowering community authorities, increasing the number of women who participate in training processes and increasing the participation of men in activities to care for the family.

The “Integration of Ecosystems and Adaptation to Climate Change in the Colombian Massif” joint programme (Climate Change joint programme) also applied a multi-sectoral approach, as evidenced by the work linking health and climate change by strengthening mechanisms and coordination platforms, such as the Inter-Institutional Board of Climate Change and Health, and encouraged national debate, on an institutional level and with social organisations, on the relationship between poverty and climate change.

The intersectoral interventions have also made it possible to: (i) generate baseline information, (ii) promote intersectoral dialogue; and (iii) support intersectoral experiences and models with the potential to influence national public policies and/or be replicated.

VIII.1.1. Generating baseline information

A common problem highlighted by most joint programmes supported by the MDG-F is the lack of current baseline information. One of the programmes' first activities was usually to update (and in many cases, to gather) information that they could be used later to assess the impact of inter-institutional action. In the case of Colombia, some programmes, such as the Climate Change and the Children, Food Security and Nutrition programmes, generated baseline information that incorporated the territory as a relevant variable for understanding the progress of each of the eight MDGs.

The Climate Change joint programme thus supported the establishment of the MDG baseline, carried out by the University of Cauca, which created the Millennium Chair as part of its curricular structure.

The Children Food Security and Nutrition programme generated reports such as "Afro-Colombians and the Millennium Development Goals" and "Shock: The State of Progress of the Millennium Development Goals in 2012", which were presented to inform the local population and government and make them aware of the theme. The joint programme also adopted the practice of sharing its monitoring and evaluation reports with departmental and municipal authorities and ethnic-territorial organisations. Local authorities praised this practice because of its ability to improve informed decision-making.

Box 14.

COLOMBIA – INTEGRAL STRATEGY FOR THE PREVENTION AND AWARENESS OF ALL FORMS OF GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE JP

The programme aims to eradicate all forms of gender-based violence in Colombia through an integrated strategy of prevention, detection, recording, awareness and promotion of a political and legal framework in agreement with international guidelines. A special focus is given to the issue of violence against vulnerable women.

■ **17,710 citizens** were benefited by the laws, policies and plans promoted by the programmes.

■ **4 regulatory decrees** for Law 1257/08 on VAW, **1 law** for victims of violence with a gender component, **9 policies, 3 protocols, 88 plans and projects** for improving service quality for

VAW victims, **9 institutional reports, 5 documents** for basis of policy development, plus **mainstreaming of gender approach in public entities**.

■ Development of **baseline information**, including VAW indicators for Afro-Colombian population; 10 studies on the causes, consequences and prevention of VAW (i.e. Social and institutional tolerance of VAW, migrant women, etc); development of manuals, protocols and models for institutional service provision (i.e. Manual on documentation of VAW cases in armed conflict situations, model for government ombudsman for VAW victims, etc);

Innovative jurisprudential analysis on VAW sentencing by the Constitutional Court, among others.

■ **27 national institutions and 60 local institutions** with strengthened capacities for implementing VAW initiatives. **2,985 civil servants** trained with the support of the JP.

■ Programme raised awareness on VAW, including an intersectoral campaign at the national and local level with **850 appearances in different media, 15 radio ads, 6 TV ads**, etc.; *Nothing Justifies Violence Against Women* campaign; strengthening of national *Women you have Rights* campaign.

Source: MDG-F (2012) End of Project Narrative Report, MDG-F (2011), First biannual monitoring report, Final Evaluation (2012).

The gender joint programme established a baseline for social and institutional tolerance and gender-related violence. The objective was to assess the situation in terms of social and institutional stereotypes, practices and attitudes that make such violence commonplace. Using the baseline results, and with the leadership of the Supreme Council for Women's Equality and the Ministry of Technologies and Communication, a communications strategy was developed that reduced social and institutional tolerance of gender-related violence.

VIII.1.2. Promoting intersectoral dialogue

The analysis of various joint programmes implemented in Colombia leads to the conclusion that in addition to generating intersectoral coordination between government institutions and between these and civil society organisations, by adopting essential themes such as the MDGs, the programmes have functioned as "links" and "mediators" between rival sectors or those with political and ideological differences. The programmes have thus made it possible to overcome differences among these actors by building "small agreements" around methodology that, after creating trust, may lead to more extensive political agreements.

The Children Food Security and Nutrition programme offers a good example of how to promote intersectoral coordination beyond the governance mechanisms, with its emphasis on creating a programme based on dialogue among different actors in the community, organisations and institutions. The participatory focus was not limited to the design phase, but was a constant, together with implementation of the programme. One of its three objectives was to strengthen the actors, institutionally and organizationally.

The MDG-F's "Embera Wera" initiative worked with 25,000 women from the Embera Chami, one of 30 indigenous groups in Colombia in danger of extinction. The project campaigned to end the practice of female genital mutilation and to increase women's participation in decision-making processes.



Box 15.

“I AM AN INDIGENOUS WOMAN, AND I DO NOT PRACTICE FGM”

The first alarm was sounded in 2007, when a newborn Indian girl died after a traditional procedure in which her clitoris was excised. A local official tipped off the national media, and Colombia joined the ranks of countries known to be practicing female genital mutilation (FGM).

The Congress of the Embera People ratified the community's decision to ban FGM throughout the western department of Risaralda and impose fines and penalties on those who practice it.

“I am a woman, I am an Embera and I do not practice female genital mutilation!” says Norfilia Caizales, women's councillor at CRİRES, repeating the slogan of the campaign. “We have since 2007

been looking for new ways to empower our girls, and it's time to say “No more!” to the practice of genital cutting.”

The Embera Chami, one of 30 indigenous groups in Colombia in danger of extinction, have historically lived in very vulnerable conditions marked by extreme poverty, exclusion and discrimination.

The most visible result of the “Embera Wera” campaign has been the community's commitment to eradicate FGM, but the programme has also promoted other initiatives to help women gain a place in decision-making processes and to know their rights, such as the creation of a Law

School or the holding of the First Congress of Embera Women.

Miriam Nengarabe, an Embera, says that although indigenous women were historically not valued enough in their communities, now, through education and organization, they are beginning to recognize their rights: “Because women are the same as anyone else.”

The “Embera Wera” initiative, which works with about 25,000 indigenous women in Risaralda, is supported by the Colombian government and the United Nations, and works with indigenous authorities and community members.

Source: <http://www.mdgfund.org>

VIII.1.3. Support for intersectoral experiences and models with the potential to influence national public policies and/or be replicated

A successful aspect of the MDG-F joint programmes in Colombia was its ability to use interventions in local or regional areas to test the proposed strategy, validate its relevance, make appropriate methodological and conceptual changes and draw lessons that will be incorporated to broaden or replicate the strategy in other national contexts.

This is the case of the joint programme, “Strengthening Local Capacities for Peace-Building in the Department of Nariño” (Peace joint programme). Although the goal is not to generate an intervention model, this proposal seeks to achieve peace and development in the department of Nariño, a region with high levels of unmet basic needs and a high level of political conflict. The Children Food Security and Nutrition programme, which was implemented in the department of Chocó, succeeded in generating a model to promote food and nutritional security that can be replicated in contexts marked by ethnic diversity and complexity.

Similarly, the Gender joint programme combined prevention, awareness and gender-related violence activities on a national scale with four pilot projects (in Cartagena, Pasto, Buenaventura and the Pueblo Rico and Mistrató shelters in the department of Risaralda). This programme incorporated the diversity of the country's population and the various ways in which gender-based violence is carried out. One of the programme's most prominent achievements was thus a ban on the practice of female circumcision in the Embera-Chamí community, using a method that combined a focus on human rights, gender rights and ethnic rights and that can serve as a reference for targeted interventions to fight this problem (see Box 15).

VIII.2. NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND ALIGNMENT FOR GREATER PARTICIPATION, DEVELOPMENT EFFECTIVENESS AND SUSTAINABILITY

The document for the systematisation of the experience of joint programmes in Colombia includes an explanation of the new position of Colombian institutions with respect to official development aid. Joint programmes provide an example of putting the Paris Declaration into practice by aligning it with national and local strategies for cooperation, policies and current government plans in the development phase.

However, there have been problems in applying the principles of the Paris Declaration and the Accra Agenda. With experience, a series of key elements must be taken into consideration to promote their application. They are: (i) adaptation of technical concepts to the cultural context, (ii) participation of qualified and legitimate partners and (iii) flexibility in planning and implementing complex contexts.

VIII.2.1. Adapting technical concepts to the cultural context

The technical concepts addressed under the joint programmes require social and institutional “acclimatisation” and a respectful and sensitive dialogue with different cultures. Ensuring that agencies, operators, authorities and those involved in programmes “speak the same language” has been a challenge.

In this regard, the Climate Change joint programme established a work team on an operational level with additional “knowledgeable people” and local technicians, which promoted organizations’ approval of the project. The joint programme also supported reflection on the MDG agenda from the perspective of indigenous populations in the Cauca by establishing a strategic alliance with the CRIC. This process was quite important politically and managed to continue thanks to additional support from the MDG-F and the UNDP for a study on Indigenous Populations in Colombia and the MDGs. The study gathered views and studies in coordination with national indigenous organisations. The study included a comparison of differential indicators for the indigenous population based on political-organisational, sociocultural and economic-environmental characteristics, and sought to formulate public policies that could address inequalities.

The Food Security and Nutrition joint programme prepared a series of additional good practices for promoting mutual understanding by all actors involved in a joint initiative. The programme’s title – Indigenous and Afro-Colombian Communities in the Chocó Department promote their Food Security and Nutrition – explicitly conveys the intention that programme actions should be defined based on the culture of the populations involved (in this case, Afro-Colombians and indigenous populations). The joint programme defined individuals as agents of change and social transformation. If populations are to take a prominent role, the search for understanding must be on-going, from design to implementation. For example, the notion of malnutrition and many other concepts that the programme addressed do

A series of key elements must be taken into consideration to promote their application. They are: (i) adaptation of technical concepts to the cultural context, (ii) participation of qualified and legitimate partners and (iii) flexibility in planning and implementing complex contexts.

not exist in the indigenous communities' culture. This can be overcome through reflective dialogue. In the inception phase, the joint programme established a shared framework of principles and the minimum standards and commitments that all partners must accept to ensure that ethno-cultural diversity is respected.

VIII.2.2. Participation of qualified and legitimate partners

Colombia's national institutions have gradually acknowledged the importance of participating in governance bodies (NSC and PMC). Some of those institutions initially found it difficult to modify the nature of their interaction with international cooperation agencies. The relationship had to change from instrumental (based on negotiation over funding) to more participatory (in which they were involved in decision-making at both the technical and political level). The population's effective participation has been thus acknowledged as vital to legitimising the cooperation initiatives and avoiding damage. In some cases, discussions in community assemblies on aspects of programme implementation (for example, identifying community leaders and sponsors or those from participating families) were a factor for success. However, the experience shows that "the effectiveness, opportunity and relevance of participation" must be weighed by avoiding a disordered decision-making process, over-representation or the participation of partners who lack the necessary legitimacy. It is also important to anticipate and defuse potential conflicts of interest that may delegitimise the initiative or paralyse its implementation.

Climate change has the strongest impact on the poorest sectors of Colombian society. The MDG-F developed an adaptation strategy that targeted the most vulnerable populations – farmers and indigenous communities living in remote parts of the country.



Colombian indigenous leaders discuss community plans to combat environmental degradation, reduce climate change-related risks and implement adaptation measures.



VIII.2.3. Flexibility in planning and implementing complex contexts

If the joint programme teams agree that the “planning procedures must maintain technical rigour and strategic relevance,” it should also be noted that the work is often carried out in “local scenarios of chronic and sustained governance crises”. The Peace joint programme experienced high turnover of governments in ethnic communities where it was working and needed to strengthen recognition by the government agencies carrying out the work.

Planning and implementation must thus use flexible models, which allow for adjustments based on changing contexts and situations. Monthly schedules are an example of a good practice in this regard, as they are more sensitive and can take into account the combination of political volatility, precarious governability and high conflict found in certain contexts. The issues of security for teams in the field and protection for participating communities are also crucial factors for ensuring sustainability.

As part of its efforts to improve nutrition among Colombia's indigenous communities, the MDG-F conducted workshops to ensure that initiatives take into account the needs, customs and knowledge of all the projects' participants.



VIII.3. “ONE UN” IN PRACTICE

The Colombian government has excelled in its dedication to promoting the philosophy of “ONE UN” as a strategy for achieving greater impact for UN interventions. Practically all UN country teams that have implemented joint programmes with the support of the MDG-F indicate that the greatest challenge in applying this philosophy is the lack of previous experience. It has involved an intense process of “learning by doing” and large doses of creativity. Thus, the key has been to gradually define the meaning of a joint programme and to find an integrated balance that promotes complementarity and ensures effective results. In its recommendations to teams, the MDG-F emphasises three elements that are critical to creating this balance: (i) joint planning; (ii) joint monitoring and evaluation and (iii) joint communication and advocacy.

VIII.3.1. Joint planning

The experiences of programmes in Colombia have confirmed the importance of setting aside a minimum of six months to establish the basis that will facilitate later implementation by adjusting the “architecture of the joint programme”.

Joint planning requires investment of time and implies both the active involvement of all participating United Nations agencies, national institutions and partners. To achieve participation, especially with local interventions, joint programmes organized start-up workshops with the management committee, holding meetings with local authorities, sharing the intervention strategy with non-governmental organisations, identifying partners for implementing agreements, creating a consultation committee or signing agreements with municipal authorities.




The MDG-F has funded four programmes to improve lives in Colombia's Chocó region, where the majority of the population is indigenous or Afro-descendant. Nearly 80% of people here live below the poverty line and infants die at twice the rate elsewhere in the country.

VIII.3.2. Joint monitoring and evaluation

A monitoring system that enables access to information on progress by all partners, as well as informed decision-making, is another basic element that promotes the coordinating work of a joint programme. In the case of Colombia, an online monitoring system called SIPRO has been used. SIPRO was first adopted by the Gender joint programme – provided by the UNFPA, one of the agencies participating in the joint programme – and was later transferred to other joint programmes in Colombia.

VIII.3.3. Joint communication and advocacy

Each of the four joint programmes in Colombia incorporated elements of communication to influence the public agenda. The inter-agency communication strategy that was developed in 2013 to mobilise civil society and the private sector to take collective action to address inequalities provides an excellent example of the initiative's accomplishments. Using the slogan "Together we can - eight steps, one goal", it had a national impact on MDGs. This became the advocacy and communications strategy of the United Nations system in the country. *Claro*, one of the main cable, internet and mobile telephone operators in Latin America and Colombia, covered most of the production and distribution costs of the information, contributing approximately USD 360,000, which met 97.5% of the overall expenditure. The strategy has a clear focus on communication for social change and its messages concentrated on highlighting the country's unequal progress towards meeting the MDGs.

A woman with short dark hair, wearing a white and grey striped sleeveless shirt, is smiling as she operates a manual water pump. The pump has a large blue wheel and a white pipe leading to a white container. The background is a lush green forest.

Miskito families are protecting Nicaragua's environment through an MDG-F programme to provide renewable energy and increase incomes and services to rural populations near the Bosawas Biosphere Reserve.

The case study was authored by Deborah Sequeira with the support of the United Nations and the MDG-F joint programmes team in Nicaragua.

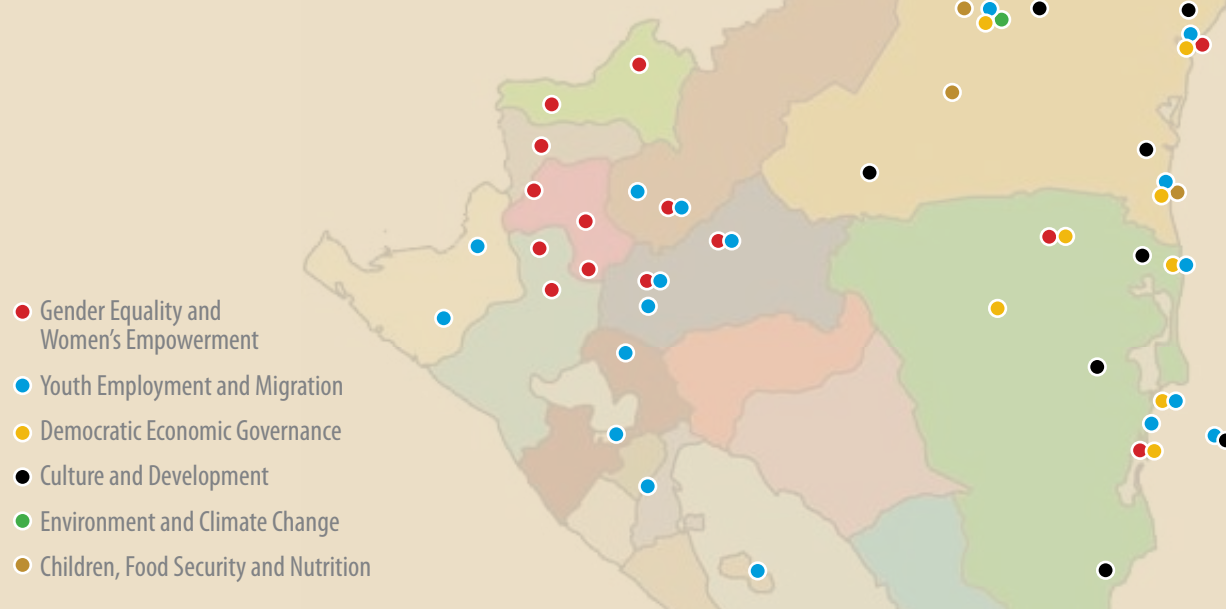
IX. NICARAGUA: AN INTEGRATED COUNTRY MECHANISM

Nicaragua has received more MDG-F funds – USD 39.2 million - than any other country in the Latin American/Caribbean region. The funds have enabled Nicaragua to make progress in achieving the MDGs and further advance the United Nations reform process. The six joint programmes implemented fall under the following thematic windows: Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment; Environment and Climate Change; Culture and Development; Democratic Economic Governance; Youth, Employment and Migration; and Children, Food Security and Nutrition. The six MDG-F joint programmes have targeted the most vulnerable populations and communities, including women, children, youth and indigenous and Afro-descendant communities. The Caribbean Coast of Nicaragua has benefited the most from the MDG-F initiatives. Five of the six programmes have been implemented in this region, which has received approximately USD 27.5 million (70%) of MDG-F total funding as a priority area because it is the country's poorest and most vulnerable region. This investment has increased the total United Nations System (UNS) cooperation in the Caribbean Coast to USD 65 million during the UNDAF's 2008-2012 programme cycle. The MDG-F joint programmes have been regions. The direct number of right-holders and agents participating in the six MDG-F joint programmes total to 89,164 persons (72% women).

Instead of adopting an individual approach to implementing the MDG-F joint programmes, the UN system and the Nicaraguan government agreed to establish a joint mechanism for strategic leadership and management and to undertake joint implementation by operational agencies.

Figure 7.

MAP OF MDG-F JOINT PROGRAMMES IN NICARAGUA



IX.1. A MULTI-SECTORAL APPROACH

The joint programmes' accomplishments supported the empowerment of populations to lead the development processes and promote women's, indigenous and Afro-descendant and youth rights and participation. In addition, the joint programmes have facilitated closer inter-institutional cooperation and coordination at the various levels of government. This coordination method, used to develop initiatives, has created opportunities for closer cooperation amongst national bodies and has paved the way for the adoption of an enhanced intersectoral approach.

Unlike other interventions, the joint programmes have facilitated a multidimensional approach to development issues, allowing greater coordination among legislation, strategies, public policies, and national processes, with full involvement and initiative in activities from the community level upwards. This clear vision of the intervention by thematic window has produced successful results and has consolidated the processes that will strengthen the sustainability of the actions.

Box 14.

SOME DEVELOPMENT RESULTS FROM THE MDG-F EXPERIENCE IN THE NICARAGUA

Cultural Recovery and Creative Productive Development

The aim of the programme is to reduce equality gaps in the human, social and economic development of indigenous and afro-descendant populations in the Caribbean Coast, by way of cultural reclamation and productive development activities, increased awareness on tangible and intangible heritage, and development of statistics, research and studies to support cultural public policies and their regionalization.

- An estimate 208,450 citizens benefited from the regional policies aimed to revitalize and manage cultural industries, including 12 local (village) cultural development plans finalized.

- 113 projects supported by the *ProCultura Fund*, and 98 entrepreneurs reported improvement in their businesses through access to revolving credit funds.

- 6 Cultural Community Centers were built or renovated, benefiting more than 66,169 citizens; a Regional Cultural Center built, equipped and functioning.

- Awareness initiatives, including 200 children and youths with improved capacities on intercultural issues through radio programmes on intercultural issues transmitted in 60 regional schools.

- The programme also developed social and cultural statistics, including 132 indicators on the cultural and economic development of indigenous and afro-descendants populations; 1,530 cultural studies on the Caribbean Coast, 64 research studies on cultural reclaim with the support of BICU University, etc.

Democratic economic governance in the Water and Sanitation sector in the RAAN and RAAS

The programme aimed to increase sustainable access to water and sanitation for poor population groups by empowering communities and increasing participation and coordination between social and institutional actors, and by strengthening institutional frameworks, and investment in infrastructure.

- 16,800 citizens gained access to improved water quality, and 7,479 got

access to improved sanitation services; 35 communities with access to safe drinking water through the JP.

- 31 community work plans. A total of 419,463 citizens are expected to benefit from the plans and policies supported by the programme.

- Establishment of the Water and Sanitation Investment Fund for the Caribbean Coast; 35 projects financed on water and sanitation at the community level or in schools.

- 67 regional and local civil servants received technical trainings on water and sanitation issues.

- 109 community members trained on construction and maintaining water and sanitation systems, of which 81 received certification as independent constructors on water and sanitation.

- 3 Cultural Multimedia Centers established, and 3 Community Radios strengthened, contributing to the communication and access to public information for the community members.

Sources: (i) MDG-F Fact-sheet, Nicaragua C&D JP (October 2012), (ii) MDG-F (2012) Culture and Development First biannual monitoring report, (iii) MDG-F Fact-sheet, Nicaragua DEG JP (October 2012), and (iv) MDG-F (2012) Democratic Economic Governance First biannual monitoring report.

The Gender Equality Joint Programme (intervention in 15 municipalities) is an example of a holistic approach. The programme successfully promoted citizen participation and the empowerment of approximately 13,000 women involved in economic activities (business and agriculture), and in various social and health skills trainings. Other relevant achievements include increasing women's participation in national and municipal budget planning practices and strengthening the national institution capacity (Women Nicaraguan Institute) to ensure implementation of the national gender policy. The programme's implementation has contributed to achieving MDG 3 through work in two areas that are key to women's lives and empowerment: adopting a holistic approach to developing economic activities and health. At the institutional level, the programme has developed methodologies to include a gender-based focus in the budget framework of national and municipal entities.

The Environment & Climate Change Joint Programme focused on the two municipalities in the Bosawas Biosphere Reserve and established 25 community committees to manage catchment areas and facilitate access to water and sanitary facilities using renewable energy, creating an early warning system, developing sustainable productive activities, and raising awareness on environmental issues (In Box n.6 a story from the programme is presented).

The six MDG-F joint programmes have contributed significantly to the quality of the normative framework on legislation, policies, plans, and models/systems, with a total of 21 interventions at the national, regional and municipal levels. The most important include: the Integrated Model on Food Security and Nutrition; the design and implementation of the National Plan on Employment and Decent Work for the Young People of Nicaragua 2012-2016; the proposed revision of Law 550: Public Administration and Budgetary Regime Law; the gender policy of the Autonomous Region of the North Atlantic, based on an ethnic and multicultural focus; the establishment of a Water and Sanitation Investment Fund for the Caribbean Coast; and, the regional policy to revitalize and manage cultural industries on the Caribbean Coast.

The joint programmes have also contributed to capacity building in the areas of research, trainings and teaching in the academic sector, particularly within the Autonomous Regions' institutions.

IX.2. GOVERNMENT'S INVOLVEMENT IN JOINT PROGRAMME INITIATIVES

The results of the MDG-F joint programmes have contributed to achieving the priority targets outlined in the 2008-2012 programme cycle of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF). The government of Nicaragua has had a wide-ranging, participative, and leadership role in leading the planning stage and during the joint programmes' conception and implementation phases. At the same time, the joint programme results are also consistent with priorities defined by the government as part of the 2007-2011 National Human Development Plan and the Development Strategy for the Caribbean Coast. The government of Nicaragua



An MDG-F programme to preserve Nicaragua's Bosawas Biosphere Reserve included a communication strategy for environmental education that focused on women's roles and risk management.

has also played a leading role in defining initiatives, results, and territories. Based on the government's priority to focus efforts in the Caribbean Coast, five of the six joint programmes have been carried out there.

The Secretariat for the Development for the Caribbean Coast (a Presidential secretariat) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs have played an important role, via the joint programmes, in providing strategic leadership and supporting the capacity-building efforts of the regional governments and Councils of the North and South Autonomous Regions in terms of appropriation and leadership of the joint programmes.

As part of the country mechanism, a sub-joint mechanism was established for the Caribbean Coast. Through this sub-joint mechanism, a forum for strategic discussion was established, bringing together the regional authorities from the various governments and councils, the Secretariat for the Development of the Caribbean Coast, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the UNS.

IX.3. CONTRIBUTION TO "ONE UN"

The MDG-F joint programmes aim to strengthen the "ONE UN" process. In the case of Nicaragua, this mechanism has strengthened the UN's capacity to work

Box 17.

MISKITO FAMILIES PROTECT NICARAGUA'S ECOLOGICAL TREASURES

Plowing, planting and raising rice, beans, cassava and bananas is a daily task for Javier Smith Lino, a peasant from the village of Waspam, in Nicaragua's North Atlantic Autonomous Region. It's hard labor, but he depends on the crops to feed his nine children. Land is life for Javier's family, and for 276 other families in this community of mostly Miskito indigenous people living along Nicaragua's border with Honduras. But that life has changed radically ever since the community gained a supply of clean energy, thanks to an initiative of the Millennium Development Goals Achievement Fund (MDG-F).

Empowering communities

The programme Local and regional environmental management for the management of natural resources and provision of environmental services" focused on providing renewable energy and increasing incomes and services to

rural populations in the zone near the Bosawas Biosphere Reserve, the largest in Central America, while at the same time enlisting the communities to manage the watershed and other natural resources.

The Bosawas Biosphere Reserve is one of the central elements of the so-called "Heart of the Mesoamerican Biological Corridor," known for its rich biodiversity and numerous rare and endangered species, such as the giant anteater, Baird's tapir and spider monkey, among others.

The programme set up water and sanitation systems, an agroforestry programme and a communication strategy for environmental education which focused on women's roles and risk management. Families now receive health services and adults who cannot read and write participate in special evening educational programs.

Renewable energy

Under one of the programme's initiatives, solar panels were installed in households, empowering families not only to manage their own resources, but also to work together to generate a community fund to maintain the power system.

Contributions to the fund are collected monthly in each of the seven participating communities. As part of the effort to increase women's participation in decision-making, 70% of the committee which manages the fund is made up of women. In addition, community leaders were trained in maintenance, so that if panels fail, the communities themselves can repair them.

Obtaining energy through photovoltaic systems avoids the production of air pollutants, thus preventing acid rain. If the homes of the 276 families served by the joint programme were powered electrically instead of by solar panels, they would require 11.7 gallons of fuel a day.

Source: <http://www.mdgfund.org/story>

with a joint programme modality. During the UNDAF's 2008-2012 cooperation programme cycle, two other joint programmes were launched in addition to the six MDG-F joint programmes: HIV/AIDS and the Economic Agenda for Women. At the end of the UNDAF 2008-2012 programme cycle, the eight joint programmes represented 23% of all UNS cooperation activities. In preparation for the next cycle, three new joint programmes were signed, amounting to approximately USD 8 million. At the same time, the UN is formulating four new joint programmes. The UNDAF's new 2013-2017 programme cycle includes a larger number of joint initiatives among UNS agencies, both in terms of thematic windows and territorial approach.

The MDG-F joint programmes have resulted in a new work practice for joint programming, contributing to the change in UN organizational culture towards a self-starter Delivery as One model. Furthermore, the donor community recognizes joint programmes as an efficient mechanism in terms of the impact of results and an opportunity to consolidate UN reform at the country level. In addition, based on the MDG-F experience, donors have begun to channel their cooperation with the UN's technical assistance through joint programmes.

The Resident Coordinator is responsible for the strategic leadership of the six joint programmes. The decision-making mechanism involves, and is based on, a national steering committee comprising the government representative (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, MINREX), the AECID coordinator, and the Resident Coordinator, with operational support provided by government national counterparts as well as UNS agencies.

The role of both the Resident Coordinator and the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) has been further strengthened in regard to strategic and complementary leadership and joint programme interventions. As far as the UN Country Office Team is concerned, quarterly follow-up reports prepared for the six joint programmes ensure successful implementation, complementarity of actions and a strategic vision for the country mechanism.

Coordination among the National Steering Committee and the joint programmes' Coordinating Committees has proven to be an effective way to manage the joint programmes in a situation characterized by an ever-increasing and varied number of stakeholders. The role of the coordinating committees has been strengthened further in terms of strategic leadership throughout the implementation process, as is as the role of leading agency and institution.

In addition, the Office of the Resident Coordinator, in collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Technical Secretariat, promoted forums to provide feedback and shared experiences among the joint programme coordinators.

A new element introduced into the joint programmes was the involvement of local promoters or national volunteers (UNV) from the United Nations (37 volunteers). This was a key contribution to implementation of the joint programmes, particularly in terms of territorial coordination, social participation and development coherence processes.





Egyptian farmers are improving their livelihoods through an MDG-F-financed programme to give small landholders more of a voice in the food production chain.

The case study was authored by Heba Wafa with the support of the United Nations and the MDG-F joint programmes team in Egypt.

X. EGYPT: IMPLEMENTING PROGRAMMES IN A RAPIDLY CHANGING SITUATION

Since the May 2007 launch of the MDG Achievement Fund, Egypt has applied to six of its programme areas and has received funding for three joint programmes in the areas of Environment and Climate Change, Culture and Development and Development and Private Sector, for a total budget allocation of \$14.5 million USD (See figure n. 8).

The broad-based consultative process established for the design of these programmes ensured national ownership through strong government involvement. A National Steering Committee (NSC) was formed for each programme area, bringing together representatives of UN agencies, focal points from line ministries, and local experts. When the proposal was approved, the NSC was also responsible for revising and approving the full-fledged programme document, ensuring alignment with national policies, plans and goals and necessary government buy-in and future support. All three joint programmes were aligned with national development strategies and the UNDAF (2007–2011). Joint programmes helped to support achievement of MDGs 1, 3, 7 and 8.

The joint programme implementation phase has faced enormous challenges following the January 25 revolution and subsequent political turmoil. The political and institutional setup changed significantly, resulting in shifting priorities and frequent changes in institutional missions, senior management and the focal points assigned to the joint programmes. Joint programmes sought to adopt adaptive

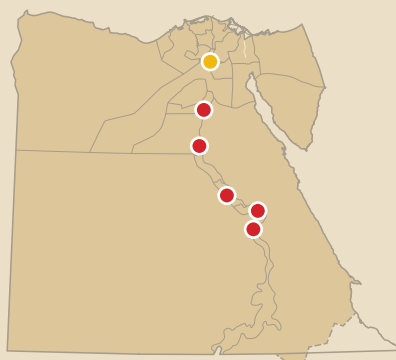
Figure 8.

MDG-F JOINT PROGRAMMES IN EGYPT

JP Title	Thematic Window	UN Participating Agencies	National Partners	Total Budget Approved in USD
Climate Change Risk Management in Egypt	Environment & Climate Change	UNDP, UNIDO, UNESCO, FAO, IFAD, UNEP	Cabinet of Ministers, the Ministry of State for Environmental Affairs, the Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation (MWRI), and the Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation (MALR)	4,000,000
Pro-poor Horticulture Value Chains in Upper Egypt	Development & Private Sector	UNDP, UN Women, UNIDO and ILO	Ministry of Trade and Industry and the Ministry of Investment	7,499,704
Dahshur World Heritage Site Mobilization for Cultural Heritage for Community Development	Culture & Development	UNDP, the World Trade Organization (WTO), UNIDO, ILO, UNESCO	Social Fund for Development, the Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency (EEAA), the Industrial Modernization Centre (IMC), the Ministry of Tourism, the Tourism Development Authority and the Supreme Council of Antiquities	3,095,086

Figure 9.

MAP OF MDG-F PROGRAMMES IN EGYPT



- Pro-poor Horticulture Value Chains in Upper Egypt
- Dahshur World Heritage Site Mobilization for Cultural Heritage for Community Development

management mechanisms and Programme coordinators provided information to the new focal points on the programmes, work plans and planned activities. Programme Management Committee meetings were held more frequently, sometimes monthly, to tackle implementation challenges in a rapidly changing situation.

The aim of the [Climate Change Risk Management in Egypt](#) Joint programme (CCRMP) was to help Egypt align its climate risk management and human development efforts in order to achieve the MDGs in the face of climate change and predicted serious threats to the country. The Programme sought to optimize the joint actions of key government partners.

The [Pro-poor Horticulture Value Chains in Upper Egypt](#) programme aimed to support pro-poor horticulture value chains in Upper Egypt to improve their position in export and domestic markets. This was achieved by promoting equitable partnerships between small farmers and private sector investors in efficient pro-poor horticulture value chains in three locations in the poorest Upper Egyptian Governorates. The approach was characterized by a high degree of innovation, with an integrated concept of assisting service providers and right-holders/agents in order to develop sustainable agribusiness.

Finally, the [Dahshur World Heritage Site Mobilization for Cultural Heritage for Community Development](#) programme is designed to achieve sustainable development in Dahshur by working simultaneously on three inter-connected fronts: preserving cultural heritage, managing natural resources, and generating income opportunities for Dahshur residents. Dahshur forms an integral part of the Memphis UNESCO World Heritage Site and its Necropolis. The joint programme sought to ensure that the intervention was fully integrated into the Memphite Necropolis Management Plan, as set forth by the Supreme Council of Antiquities in coordination with UNESCO and its World Heritage Centre. Additionally, the joint programme sought to preserve the Dahshur seasonal lake, a unique natural asset within the surrounding community. Coordinated efforts were designed to ensure that the lake is preserved in its natural state through community-owned conservation.

X.1. INTERSECTORAL APPROACH

The Climate Change and Risk Management Programme included four components: (i) a policy component, to update/reform Egypt's energy policy and achieve a more sustainable energy economy; (ii) a Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) component, to expand the CDM market and mainstream Green House Gas (GHG) mitigation and CDM into national policies; (iii) a water sector adaptation component, to support the development of a Regional Circulation Model (RCM) to strengthen Egypt's ability to forecast water flows impacted by climate change; and (iv) an agricultural sector adaptation component, to advocate for climate-sensitive policies and plans, develop climate stress-tolerant crops, and disseminate knowledge on stress-tolerant crop varieties.

Box 18.

SIGNIFICANT INDEPENDENT FINDINGS FROM THE MDG-F EXPERIENCE IN EGYPT

Dahshur World Heritage Site Mobilization for Cultural Heritage for Community Development

Following the recommendations of the Tourism Plan, the Ministry of Tourism (MoT) allocated 50 million EGP (about USD 7.2 million) for basic infrastructure in Dahshur and allocated 4.4 million EGP (US\$ 636,059) to build the visitors center.

The programme with collaboration with BEST Foundation set up a microcredit line (revolving fund) benefiting Dahshur community. This revolving fund that started with around 1.5 million EGP (equivalent to USD 217,000) has grown to be nearly 2.5 million EGP (USD 361,000) in 2 years.

200 men and 100 women received entrepreneurship training to help them to start their businesses and market their products.

The program established Local Economic Development (LED) forums and links between the producers, NGOs, designers, trade fairs and traders, and have created contracts and agreement to guarantee sustainability and to generate income. The LED Forum is now a fully functional and a well-equipped Non-Governmental Organization representing all the five villages of the project.

Climate Change Risk Management in Egypt Programme

The JP contributed to the establishment of the Energy Efficiency Unit (EEU) at Cabinet level. The

EEU was recently moved to the Information and Decision Support Centre (IDSC) – a government “think-tank”. Two new EE units have been established at the Tourism Development Authority and the Housing & Building Research Center.

The Programme also contributed to the establishment of the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) and Awareness and Promotional Unit (APU) and supported GIZ and World Bank to develop carbon trading market.

The JP supported the development of a regional climate model for the Nile Basin. Nile Forecast Center at MWRI has developed water management scenario based on the developed RCM and available models.

Sources: (i) MDG-F, Otero, E (2013) Independent Final Programme Evaluation: Mobilization of the Dahshur world heritage site for community development (ii) MDG-F, Bellamy, J and Genena, T (2013) Independent Final Programme Evaluation: Climate Change Risk Management in Egypt.

The intersectoral interventions provided a solid platform for coordination and information exchange on the ministries working to address adaptation to and mitigation of climate change. The joint programmes promoted inter-ministerial dialogue and linkages to address climate change risks encouraging an integrated, coherent cross-sectoral approach, rather than stand-alone policies reflecting the work and efforts of single ministries. The intersectoral approach brought different sectors to the table because mitigation and adaptation issues are linked, and the sectors were able to work together to reach one goal. It also allowed ministries to support each other, create integrated strategies, and meet their targets. The JP contributed to raising awareness and developing capacity among key decision makers and development actors to mainstream climate change into key policy, regulatory, institutional and operational frameworks.

The joint programme in Dahshur represents an innovative approach by integrating initiatives to improve quality of life for Dahshur residents through community development, while preserving the area’s unique cultural heritage and biodiversity for future generations. The programme design helped to introduce new management to Egypt’s archaeological sites, where the Ministry of Antiquities has openly embraced the idea of engaging the community in protecting archaeological sites.

The programme has sought to sensitize local communities to the importance of preserving cultural and natural heritage and has helped to directly link their livelihood to protecting this unique setting. Programme activities targeting the community have sought to improve the local population’s livelihoods and working conditions, particularly women and youth, by preparing the community to support the transformation of the tourist site.

Box 18. presents some of the significant results achieved by the Culture and Development, and Environment and Climate Change programmes, as stated in the available independent final evaluations.

X.2. MDG-F CONTRIBUTION TO NATIONAL OWNERSHIP

The Dahshur World Heritage programme promoted national ownership. The Ministry of Tourism allocated around USD 7.2 Million to develop infrastructure in the Dahshur area as part of the Spatial Tourism Plan, which was developed by the programme and approved by the government. In addition, the Ministry of Antiquities allocated land within the archaeological site to create a visitor centre and, recognizing the importance of the seasonal lake, the Ministry of Environment has placed this natural feature under environmental management.

The Ministry of Tourism is also replicating the Dahshur initiative in other areas, including Baherya Oasis, Fayoum and Minya, using the same concept to integrate cultural and environmental heritage conservation with community development aspects.

On the other hand, the Climate Change programme activities were geared towards developing the capacity of partners involved in climate change analysis and strategies that better equip the government to tackle climate change risks, both in mitigation and adaptation. The JP supported the establishment of a Cabinet-level Energy Efficiency (EE) Unit and a CDM unit within the Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency, which operates as Egypt's primary main carbon trading entity. This provided the institutional structure required to carry out a climate change mitigation agenda. The EE Unit contributed to several initiatives, including identifying energy indicators and drafting an EE roadmap for Egypt. It serves as the main coordinating body for energy efficiency and the Cabinet's 'go-to' entity on EE-related issues at the national level. In parallel, in the spring of 2012, the government created an inter-ministerial EE committee that includes the Ministries of Transportation, Tourism, Electricity, Petroleum, Industry and Environment. The programme also contributed to creating the CDM Awareness and Promotional Unit (APU) in mid-2009. The Unit supported training activities to develop capacity among staff and stakeholders on CDM and the development of CDM projects. As a result, eight new CDM projects were registered, bringing Egypt's CDM portfolio to 12 registered projects, and total estimated Carbon Dioxide Equivalent Reduction of 8-10 million tons of CO₂ per year was achieved. An additional 16 projects are being validated. Those projects will be sent to the UNFCCC for registration when that process is complete.

The Unit also supported the development of a forecasting capacity to model water flow variation using different climate change scenarios within the National Forecast Center of the Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation. Last, the programme supported the development of research capacity to explore crops with greater resilience to climate change. Professional staff in the MWRI and MALR have benefited from capacity development activities, with increased attention to

The Dahshur World Heritage programme promoted national ownership. The Ministry of Tourism allocated 50 million EGP to develop infrastructure; the Ministry of Antiquities allocated land within the archaeological site to create a visitor centre; and the Ministry of Environment has placed the seasonal lake under environmental management. The Ministry of Tourism is also replicating the Dahshur initiative in other areas, using the same concept to integrate cultural and environmental heritage conservation with community development aspects.

climate change at the policy-making level in the two ministries. Working with an international consultant, MWRI and MALR prepared a key economic study on the potential impacts of climate change on the economy, which was used as a guide for policy recommendations. The National Water Research Center completed the Climate Change Strategy for Available Water Resources under varying climate change scenarios. In the agricultural sector, the Agricultural Research Center (ARC) conducted field experiments as the basis for recommendations to policy makers and farmers to maximize productivity under climate change conditions. A Nile Basin Workshop was held to share information about the Regional Circulation Model on the Nile Basin, the NB countries shared information on their climate change experiences and new partnerships were established.

X.2.1. Contribution to local and citizen ownership

The joint programmes helped to empower populations, with a special focus on women's empowerment. This has been demonstrated through the following approaches.

The Dahshur World Heritage joint programme promoted local community participation, involvement and ownership. A Local Economic Development (LED) forum representing the stakeholders in the five villages participating in the joint programme was created. The Programme helped the forum become fully functional and properly equipped and register as an NGO. The LED forum provided a platform for local citizens to discuss their needs and aspirations and assume a leading role within the community. The programme sought to help Dahshur's citizens take a leading role in cultural and environmental preservation in the area and to pave the way for citizen participation in the tourism industry.

The Pro-poor Horticulture Value Chains in the Upper Egypt joint programme provides another example of citizen ownership. This programme adopted the notion of local and citizen ownership from the outset. It targeted farmers' associations and reached out directly to them. The six farmer communities in Upper Egypt's six governorates were involved and participated in planning programme strategy and activities to ensure ownership and, ultimately, sustainability.

The Programme's technical interventions were designed to upgrade farmers' horticultural skills and respond to the needs of farmers facing challenges in pest control, fertilization, irrigation, and the negative impacts of climate change. The new techniques involved the guided use of inputs, resulting in significant cost reductions and a 25 per cent increase in quality and production for all five main crops. Advanced processes were introduced that encourage the effective use of low-cost materials, such as protected cultivation and sun-drying. The success of these techniques both promoted a new culture and created a strong sense of ownership by rooting them in the local culture and practices.

All small farmers in the partner local communities were very concerned about crop marketing. In response, the programme developed a strategy linking farmers directly with major processors through contract farming. Creating ownership



Egyptian communities that live near Egypt's Dahshur pyramids benefit from an MDG-F joint programme that combines cultural preservation with improving livelihoods and working conditions in local creative industries, which particularly employ women and young people.

of the business models that organized farmers and created viable relationships with private sector partners was a key strategy component. To that end, activities involved skills upgrading and restructuring the partner farmers' associations so that they could bring together existing members and attract new ones by providing guidance, from seeding and planting to post-harvest processes and delivery to high-end markets, both as processors and exporters. Ownership extends to a culture of group farming, where farmers purchase inputs jointly to reduce costs and plant and sell together in local markets.

Updated statistics on marketing efforts show that approximately 1,500 farmers sold their crops in the second half of 2012 and the first quarter of 2013, with a gross profit of more than 43 million EGP.

The election of women's committees within the farmers' associations represented a breakthrough in conservative communities. In 2011, women in Upper Egypt participated in the first women's committee elections in Egypt. Over 100 women gathered at the Beni Soliman Farmers' Association in Beni Sweif to participate in this historic experience and vote. Through their role on the committee, they will represent the needs and demands of female farmers and work to empower local women and strengthen their role in the wider community.

These farmers in Qena Governate set up an enterprise to dry tomatoes, a major crop in Upper Egypt, and to sell their products directly to consumers. The MDG-F's SALASEL programme supported six farmers' associations and trained 1000 farmers in skills such as agricultural methods and small enterprise management.

The Climate Change and Risk Management Programme also conducted outreach to local communities and businesses via awareness-raising sessions on CDMs, their benefits and contribution to improving the environment, and to farmers and local universities.



X.2.2. Alignment and ownership are enhanced when JPs are nationally executed

The Climate Change and Risk Management Programme has pioneered UN agencies' efforts to support the government to identify climate change risks and help it develop intervention strategies to mitigate and adapt to these risks.

By responding to national priorities, the joint programme has strengthened national ownership and influenced the national agenda on climate change risk management. One of the key factors in the programme's success was appointing focal points within each government agency that were specific to each programme component and that facilitated coordination and communication among stakeholders and UN agencies. This served multiple long-term goals, including capacity building for government counterparts, preserving the institutional memory of the joint programme within the government entities, and ensuring long-term sustainability. The joint programme outputs are being incorporated into sectoral policy mechanisms, including the Agricultural Sustainable Development Strategy Towards 2030, the MWRI's soon-to-be published Climate Change Adaptation Strategy, and policy recommendations on achieving a more sustainable energy economy, mitigating greenhouse gas emissions, and adapting to climate change in the water and agriculture sectors. These outputs will have an impact for years to come.

The government's adoption of the Master Plan for the Dahshur World Heritage Site, developed by the programme, is another example of national ownership. The Master Plan is a cornerstone and incorporates three sub-plans – environment, tourism and archaeology – that serve as a road map for the government in developing the area and for future development projects.

One of the key factors in the programme's success was appointing focal points within each government agency that were specific to each programme component and that facilitated coordination and communication among stakeholders and UN agencies.

X.3. THE MDG-F'S PRINCIPAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO PROMOTING UN COLLABORATION AND DEVELOPMENT EFFECTIVENESS

The UN Development System in Egypt is composed of 23 resident agencies, funds and programmes and eight non-resident entities. UN agencies collaborated under the UN Resident Coordinator leadership in supporting national development priorities and achieving the Millennium Development Goals. The UN Resident Coordinator leads the UN Coordination Office, which supports UN inter-agency work, including joint analytical work and development of joint programmes, monitoring and evaluation, and internal and external communications. It offers policy advice to the UNCT on coordination issues and acts as an interlocutor with the Regional UNDG Team, the UN Development Operations Coordination Office (DOCO), other UN Development Group mechanisms, and units in the UN Secretariat, such as UN DPA and UN DESA. It also serves as an interlocutor with the Government of Egypt, primarily the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of International Cooperation, on joint UN initiatives, such as joint programmes. The Resident Coordinator also chairs the Development Partners Group (DGP), composed of 23 bilateral and 17 multilateral partners. In accordance with the principles embodied in the Paris Declaration and the Accra Agenda for

An important lesson learned from implementing these Joint Programmes is how multiple UN agencies' programme implementation processes may hinder smooth programme implementation, thus preventing successful implementation of the "ONE UN" concept. Applying this concept effectively requires harmonizing these rules and procedures.

Action on Aid Effectiveness, the DPG embraces the notion of development effectiveness, including through improved coordination of policy and programme activities among development partners and by establishing a mutual accountability system with the Government of Egypt.

The MDG-F has had a major influence on how to make joint programmes in Egypt operational and has highlighted the benefits of working together to address multi-dimensional challenges, such as climate change and poverty alleviation.

joint programmes have helped to improve UN coordination, effectiveness and efficiency in supporting the achievement of national goals and outcomes as outlined in the UNDAF. joint programmes built and capitalized on the comparative advantage and expertise of different UN organizations, helping to reduce duplication among UN agencies, across development partners and across government ministries. joint programmes provide an excellent platform for data exchange, information dissemination, collaborative decision-making and streamlined government dialogue.

The office of the Resident Coordinator has played a pivotal role in facilitating and coordinating the work of all UN agencies. It has also taken on the role of focal point between all implementing agencies and the MDG-F Secretariat. The participation of two non-resident agencies in two programmes – UNEP and UNWTO – provide a good example for future initiatives. The Resident Coordinator provided strategic leadership and oversight of implementation to ensure that programmes remained on track, promised results were achieved, and participating organizations met their obligations.

Evidence suggests that governing bodies in all programmes have contributed to the smooth implementation of initiatives and have provided the space to tackle challenges and make strategic decisions to avoid obstacles. The Implementation Guidelines for MDG Achievement Fund joint programmes produced by the MDG-F was exemplary and was adopted when new joint programmes were formulated in Egypt.

An important lesson learned from implementing these joint programmes is how multiple UN agencies' programme implementation processes may hinder smooth programme implementation, thus preventing successful implementation of the "ONE UN" concept. Applying this concept effectively requires harmonizing these rules and procedures. The agencies' differing financial procedures placed an additional burden on the project management units (PMUs).

Box 19.

MDG-F BACKS A REVOLUTION IN EGYPTIAN FARMING

When the Arab Spring blew over Egypt in early 2011, most investors predicted chaos and fled, pushing already massive unemployment even higher and plunging the economy into profound uncertainty. The success story of Mohamed Embarak, a farmer in Egypt's depressed South, is a significant result of Joint Programme intervention in Egypt. The programme "Pro-poor Horticulture Value Chains in Upper Egypt (SALASEL)" provided an opportunity for Embarak and four other farmers by investing their life saving in creating "Goodies for Agricultural Investment" the first agri-business company in Upper Egypt.

As per Embarak, "to lift small-scale farmers out of poverty, we desperately need to break the long chain of middlemen trading that has for so long eaten up the small farmers' potential profits; we need to provide the farmers with direct access to the big markets." The MDG-F funded SALASEL programme helped farmers match their production to market demands,

boost their productivity and profitability by reducing food loss after harvest, and improved their positions in export and domestic markets by helping them develop direct links with large agri-businesses, food processing firms and wholesalers.

Although Egypt is the world's fifth-largest tomato producer, its exports have plummeted by more than 90% over the past 15 years, primarily due to massive losses in the crop that occur at post-harvest and processing levels. The SALASEL programme has also supported post-harvest center for farmers, which has helped them preserve their product's high quality through appropriate treatment and packaging, as well as provided training on farming economics with a focus on how to manage and minimize the costs of production.

The programme offers farmers strategic guidance to match their production plans with existing demand, a market-driven technique known as "contract farming". "Goodies" plans

to provide supplies such as seeds, pesticides and fertilizers to ease the financial burden on farmers at the early stages of cultivation. Advisors will also help farmers market their produce to ensure that they get fair prices for their hard work. "This is a very strong incentive for them to adopt new, more advanced techniques and practices," said Hany Nashed, marketing officer of the SALASEL programme's Luxor office, which has six full-time agronomists.

Goodies founder Mohamed Embarak says he is confident that the SALASEL programme, and the work of Goodies, will bring new activity, industries and trade to Upper Egypt, and provide a better future for his three young children. "This simply means that my children will have better chances and more choices of employment when they grow up. . . To me, this venture is more than just an investment. It is about seeding hope for my family, friends and a whole community of small farmers in Upper Egypt."

Source: <http://www.mdgfund.org/country/egypt>



Mohamed Embarak invested his life savings to create the first agri-business company in Upper Egypt owned and run by small farmers. The MDG-F offered farmers like Embarak and his partners training and guidance as part of its work to improve livelihoods in Egypt's economically depressed south.



The MDG-F is working with farmers from the Philippines' Cordillera region on ways to adapt to the impacts of climate change. This farmer displays her newly-harvested KS Kuroda carrots, which are tolerant to heavy and prolonged rainfall and produce 20% more yield than the traditional variety.

The case study was authored by Alicia Gimenez with the support of the United Nations and the MDG-F joint programmes team in the Philippines.

XI. THE PHILIPPINES: CONTRIBUTING TO THE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AGENDA

XI.1. FOUR INTERSECTORAL PROGRAMMES

The MDG-F in the Philippines financed four joint programmes that brought together 18 national government institutions, 85 municipalities and 10 UN agencies. Further to these programmes, as part of the [Focus Country](#) initiative, the Philippines implemented Monitoring and Evaluation and Communication and Advocacy activities involving national partners, thus extending the MDG efforts to students, civil society organizations, academia, policy makers and influential entities.

The [Climate Change Adaptation Program](#) was the first initiative to be completed successfully (see Box 20). This programme mainstreamed climate risk reduction into national and local plans and processes, enhanced national and local capacities, and improved coping mechanisms via pilot projects. A Climate Change Adaptation Measures pilot programme was implemented at five demonstration sites, focusing on agricultural production, rural finance, local governance, urban housing and public health. These measures were tested in four provinces, one city and the Metro Manila Region. This initiative reached about 1,800 people.

The [Democratic Economic Governance](#) joint programme enhanced access and provision of water services to the poor through water policy and governance reforms, as well as local capacity development. Five mechanisms were established, including a human rights-based approach to water supply planning and community organizing, localized customer service code, mentoring for small water service providers, and communications planning for community-based development. Thirty-six municipal water sector plans were drafted and 36 localized customer service codes have been adopted. Thirty-six water and sanitation councils and 65

Box 20.

INDEPENDENT FINDINGS FROM THE MDG-F EXPERIENCE IN THE PHILIPPINES

Environment and Climate Change

The Philippines government adopted the Climate Change Law in 2009 and the Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Law in 2010 as its main policy responses. A National Framework Strategy on Climate Change and a National Climate Change Action Plan were also put in place.

The Innovative Financing Scheme in Agusan del Norte was launched and it had shown impressive results. Around 837 farmers have benefitted from the financing scheme which was coursed

through a local co-operative, a rural bank, and Municipal Governments.

A Weather Index-Based Insurance (WIBI) System was also piloted in the area, which already paid out indemnities to 327 farmers.

Climate Change Academy was created and envisioned to be a learning centre on climate change adaptation by government and private sector personnel.

Youth Employment and Migration

The Department of Labour and Employment (DOLE) adopted 70% of common recom-

mendations of the Philippine Labour and Employment Agenda and the YEM National Action Agenda. The seven strategies were adopted by both DOLE and National Youth Commission (NYC) as part of the key strategic priorities to address youth employment challenges.

4 One-Stop Shop Resource Centers (OSRC), known locally as Youth and Migrants centres, were established.

1,620 disadvantaged youth completed technical vocational skills training including on-the job training and gender-sensitivity training; and 916 graduates were employed.

Source: (i) MDG-F, Carravilla, C. (2013) Independent Final Programme Evaluation: Alternatives to migration: decent jobs for Filipino youth.
(ii) MDG-F, Beasca, J. (2012) Independent Final Programme Evaluation: Strengthening the Philippines' Institutional Capacity to Adapt to Climate Change.

Figure 10.

MDG-F JOINT PROGRAMMES IN THE PHILIPPINES

JP Title	Thematic Window	UN Participating Agencies	Total Budget Approved in USD
Alternatives to migration: Decent Jobs for Filipino youth	Youth, Employment and Migration	IOM, UNICEF, ILO, UNFPA	6,000,000
Ensuring Food Security and Nutrition for Children 0-2 Years Old in the Philippines	Children and Food Security	FAO, UNICEF, ILO, WHO, WFP	3,500,000
Enhancing Access to and Provision of Water Services with the Active Participation of the Poor	Democratic Economic Governance	UNDP, UNICEF	5,675,000
Strengthening the Philippines' Institutional Capacity to Adapt to Climate Change	Environment and Climate Change	UNDP, UNEP, FAO, ILO, UN-HABITAT, WHO	8,000,000

water users' organizations were established. This programme received additional funding to scale up its primary achievements and reach out to 419 more towns lacking water services.

The Youth, Employment and Migration joint programme developed nine good practices responding to the high unemployment rate and threats of exploitation – both workplace and migration-related, inside and outside of the country – to which Filipino youth are particularly vulnerable. It improved policy coherence and programme implementation in youth employment and migration. Access to decent work in four selected provinces was addressed through entrepreneurship and technical/vocational skills trainings for disadvantaged youth. Basic education was provided through an inclusive approach, offering life skills. Migration-related risks were addressed through technology and livelihood education, employment facilitation and provision of safe migration services. Local capacities for economic development and model mechanisms to channel remittances were also offered as pilot-testing initiatives. At the national level, a national strategy paper on youth employment and migration was developed, and the National Action Plan for Youth Employment and Migration has neared adoption by the government (Caravilla, 2013; Damiani, 2011).

The fourth joint programme, Children, Food Security and Nutrition, complemented government efforts to improve infant and young child feeding practices based exclusively on breastfeeding and the introduction of complementary feeding through six initiatives that can now be replicated nationwide. The programme trained 3,750 peer counsellors and completed a national-level advocacy plan based

on the Expanded Breastfeeding Act and the Milk Code. A recent survey showed that more Filipino municipalities are now familiar with this campaign. Training manuals addressing community mobilization for infant and young child feeding and recipe preparation were produced and an early warning system on food security and nutrition was established in Camarines Sur. Eight national and 35 local institutions are benefiting from this programme.

XI.2. NATIONAL OWNERSHIP, LEADERSHIP AND PARTICIPATION

XI.2.1. Government ownership

The Government of the Philippines is a key MDG Fund partner. Eighteen national government agencies and more than 85 municipalities are working together to accomplish the MDGs. The four programmes in the Philippines were co-chaired by Filipino governmental bodies and the United Nations system.

Programmes were aligned with Philippine government (GOP) priorities: Water Governance supports the Presidents' Priority Program on Water and the Philippine Water Supply Sector Roadmap; Children, Food Security and Nutrition supports the government's renewed focus on children of 0-24 months of age through exclusively breastfeeding and complementary feeding practices; Youth Employment and Migration complements the GOP's vision of productive and competitive youth by 2010; and Climate Change Adaptation supports the 2004-2010 MTPDP and the National Framework for Physical Planning (NFPP), which provides for the mitigation of natural disasters.

The government of the Philippines has prioritized 36 municipalities where the MDG-F advocated for improved water supply systems and will make up to US\$0.23 million of investments in each municipality. (Photo by Erwin Lim)



The MDG-F implementers (18 national government agencies led by the National Economic and Development Authority, Department of Labour and Employment, and the National Nutrition Council) will promote linkages with future potential partners to scale up and sustain MDG-F work in other geographic areas.

XI.2.2. Local government ownership

Acknowledging the need to intensify efforts at the local level as the 2015 deadline approaches and the crucial role of the Department of the Interior and Local Government of the Philippines (DILG) and the Local Government Academy (LGA) in meeting this deadline, the MDG-F is preparing to leverage the knowledge and results generated by the joint programmes and support the DILG in localizing the MDGs, especially in municipalities where development is most needed.

A forum and marketplace on accelerating the MDGs is being organized as a joint initiative. The forum will provide a timely opportunity to call for accelerating the achievement of the MDGs through local autonomy and good governance. The direct implementers at the local level will showcase 41 methodologies produced by MDG-F. The marketplace will promote the tools on the demand side (local government units) and the supply side (donors) by sharing the tools' main objective, implementation processes, contact persons, benefits and results. The forum and marketplace will involve local chief executives from many of the country's municipalities. The event will bring together MDG-F partners, both national and local, government agencies, academia, private sector, the development community and other interested stakeholders.

The MDG-F implementers (18 national government agencies led by the National Economic and Development Authority, Department of Labour and Employment, and the National Nutrition Council) will promote linkages with future potential partners to scale up and sustain MDG-F work in other geographic areas.

XI.2.3. Citizen ownership and participation

The MDG-F supported and worked with the Millennium Campaign and the HD2010 platform along with Focus Country initiatives. The MDG-F has carried out communications and advocacy as well as monitoring and evaluation activities with several civil society organizations in the Philippines, expanding knowledge and impact and promoting advancement toward achieving the MDGs.

One of the most recent projects implemented by the Focus Country initiative highlighted the most vulnerable Filipino citizens. The initiative convened policy makers at the House of Representatives of the National Congress and nine groups on behalf of the "left-behind sectors". That day, legislators pledged to carry out the agendas presented by the marginalized and reaffirmed their commitment to achieve the MDGs and combat inequality.

Approximately 18.2 million Filipinos are between 15 and 24 years of age, representing about 20% of the total population. The youth sector has worked hard to make progress toward achieving the MDGs. Young people are recognized as key participants in decision-making, both in government and non-government sectors. This is reflected in the many youth organizations and committees that exist in the country. Through joint efforts with students, activists and future leaders of the Philippines, the MDG-F provided a forum and opportunities for youth-led initiatives.

XI.3. ADVANCING TOWARD “ONE UN”

All four JPs in the Philippines are consistent with the (extended) UNDAF of 2005-2011. UNDAF implementation strategies include a focus on the MDGs, gender equality, poor regions and specific impoverished groups and on promoting effective links and relationships among state, civil society, and the private sector. The JP on Climate Change Adaptation aligned with the UNDAF Outcome on Environmental Sustainability and Climate Change Adaptation. The DEG programme was in line with the UNDAF Outcome on Good Governance, the YEM programme with the UNDAF Outcome on Macroeconomic Stability, Broad-Based and Equitable Development and the CFSN JP accomplishment with UNDAF Outcome on Basic Social Services.

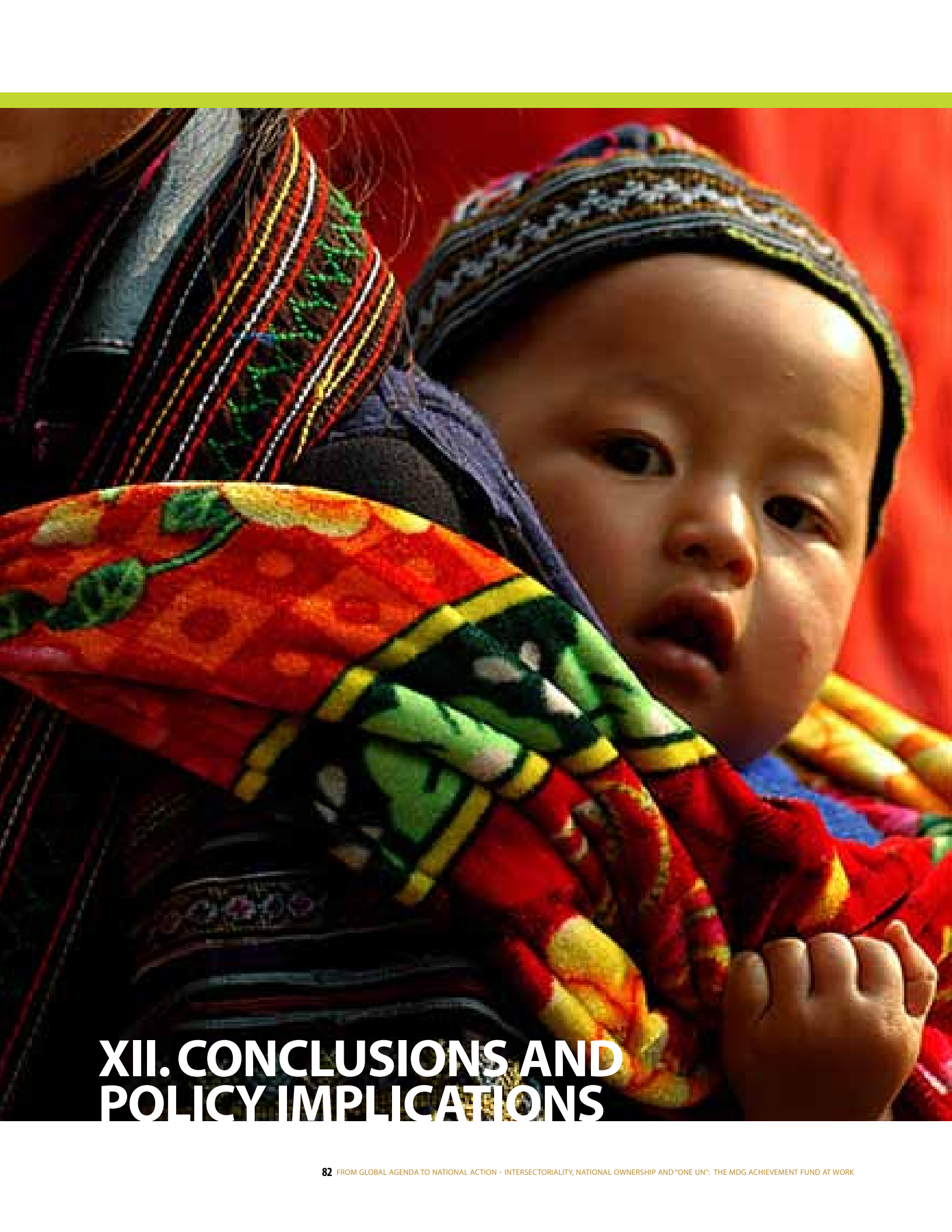
UN RCO in the Philippines recognizes that the Fund has contributed to the UNCT work, paving the way towards a joint implementation plan of the UNDAF 2012-2018. The experience and lessons learned along the implementation of the four joint programmes have influenced and shaped the coordination of the UN Agencies in addressing multi-dimensional challenges leveraging specialized mandates and expertise.

The legacy of the MDG Achievement Fund in the Philippines has inspired the UNCT to develop new joint programmes and to enhance the coordination between UN Agencies and the Government, and among other development partners in order to fully address the principles of the Paris Declaration and Accra agenda in the country.

Joint programme evaluations note that the MDG-F provided a common platform for facilitating harmonization and coherence of efforts. The UN Resident Coordinator has played a pivotal role in coordinating with the Philippines' Government, the Spanish Agency for Cooperation and International Development (AECID) and the MDG-F Secretariat.



Close to 1.5 million young Filipinos were unemployed in 2010. The MDG-F works to provide youth with decent jobs as an alternative to migration, including technical skills training and educational subsidies to reduce school drop-out rates.



XII. CONCLUSIONS AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The MDG-F experience suggests that when multiple sectors exercise influence over or share control of a development issue, intersectoral actions tend to be more appropriate and create better conditions for achieving the MDGs. The experience of the MDG-F across 50 countries introduces valuable evidence that captures the added value of intersectoral approaches. Intersectoral actions have proved to be effective in addressing complex multi-dimensional development challenges, avoiding overlapping and duplication, and increasing coordination among UN sister agencies and line ministries and between the UN and national governments. The experience of Egypt, especially, proves that intersectoral interventions provide a solid platform for coordination and information exchange. This evidence promotes inter-ministerial dialogue and linkages, rather than stand-alone policies.

Strengthening coordination is a challenge both for the UN system and national governments at the local and national level. The field experience highlighted in this research suggests that intersectoral approaches can promote positive use of the comparative advantages of specialized development agencies. Thus, intersectoral programmes can increase aid effectiveness, while simultaneously creating better conditions for long-term sustainability.

The Fund's experience shows, as in the case of Colombia, that complex development challenges should be addressed at multiple levels and that combining upstream policy influence with pilot projects on the ground can be a successful strategy. In Ethiopia, local initiatives provided the opportunity for piloting. Programmes generated evidence that motivated governments in support of the scaling up of these initiatives. Joint programme interventions in local or regional areas were ideal to test, innovate, validate and fine-tune new strategies before broadening or replicating them in other national contexts. This appears to have been the case mainly where competences have been decentralized at a local or regional level.

The experience of the Fund in Serbia shows the potential of an intersectoral approach in supporting the UN role in a Middle-Income Country (MIC). By working together under the Delivering as One (DaO) initiative to address complex development problems through comprehensive, multi-sectoral approaches, the UN development partners showed that they could offer a comparative advantage in a MIC.

The case of Nicaragua shows that joint programmes facilitate a multidimensional approach to development issues, allowing greater coordination among legislation, strategies, public policies and national processes, with full involvement and initiative in activities from the community level upwards. The author of the case study covering the programmes implemented in Egypt argues that "joint programmes have helped to improve UN coordination, effectiveness and efficiency in supporting the achievement of national goals" and that "joint programmes built and capitalized on the comparative advantage and expertise of different UN organizations, helping to reduce duplication among UN agencies, across development partners and across government ministries." Meanwhile, describing the experience of

The Fund's experience shows that complex development challenges should be addressed at multiple levels and that combining upstream policy influence with pilot projects on the ground can be a successful strategy.

24-year-old Haitian Naomie Desmornes received skills training and additional support after winning a contest for women entrepreneurs with her business producing handicrafts out of recycled plastic and debris. (Photo by Andres Martinez Casares)



Almost half of Peru's population is of indigenous origin, the majority of which live in poverty. The MDG-F funded four programmes to increase incomes, boost nutrition, protect the environment and improve job prospects for disadvantaged Peruvians. (Photo by Jorge Villar Fernandez)

Ethiopia, the author of the case study, Mazarrasa, states that: "programmes have helped to build on complementarities among agencies that were not previously explored fully."

One of the most significant challenges of intersectoral actions is building partnerships and creating trust among development actors. The MDG-F has created several platforms for dialogue and participation at the country level, thereby consolidating social capital. These mechanisms are creating positive conditions for pursuing additional coordinated strategies to achieve the MDGs at the local and country levels.

Establishing governing bodies that include representatives of governments, civil society, agents/beneficiaries and UN agencies guarantees mutual accountability and shared responsibility during implementation. Creating a National Steering Committee and a Programme Management Committee for each programme financed by the MDG-F has proved to be a strategic way to improve alignment and national ownership during the entire programme cycle.

The case of Nicaragua shows that this model can be scaled up or decentralized to have a joint mechanism for strategic leadership and management at national level or a regional mechanism bringing together decentralized authorities. Meanwhile, the case of Serbia testifies that an inclusive Programme Management Committee (PMC) is a key risk mitigation element to deal with the turnover of participating stakeholders and to negotiate political differences.

To increase accountability, the roles and responsibilities of all partners must be clarified from the outset. If used appropriately, governance mechanisms can increase mutual accountability. Experience shows that complementing these bodies with fora at the local level has positive results. Citizen accountability is linked to the flow of information and decision-making mechanisms. Transparent and timely information transmitted to citizens and inclusive governing bodies is critical to guarantee accountability.

Based on the Fund's experience in strengthening mutual accountability among all partners, monitoring and evaluation capacities in both the UN agencies as well as national counterparts should be increased. Ownership is strengthened by engaging national and local stakeholders in monitoring and evaluation processes.

Promoting national ownership implies working at different levels: central government institutions, local institutions (local ownership), civil society organizations and communities (citizen ownership). At the local level, the MDG-F experience proves that the participation of local stakeholders in strategic decision-making and operational planning is critical to define appropriate methodologies and ensure that programmes are integrated into existing local processes.

The case of Ethiopia demonstrates that governing bodies are key elements to ensure national ownership "at different levels of government, from the federal

level, represented by the line ministries, to the lowest administrative level at the community level.” It also shows that “this has promoted a strong sense of ownership and provided direction to the different institutions involved in the programmes.” Moreover, programmes in Egypt show that adopting the notions of local and citizen ownership from the outset increase long-term sustainability.

The MDG-F has been the first significant financial incentive for interagency work on MDGs and for moving forward in the UN system-wide coherence reform at the country level. Advancing towards “ONE UN” is challenging and requires strategic decisions at many levels. The experience of the Fund shows that practically all UN country teams faced an intense process of “learning by doing” in taking on the challenges of joint programme implementation. In its recommendations to teams, the MDG-F emphasises three elements that are critical: (i) joint planning; (ii) joint monitoring and evaluation; and (iii) joint communication and impact.

On one side, MDG-F programmes show the shortcomings of UN administrative harmonization; on the other, they highlight innovative methods implemented at country level to overcome the bottlenecks of joint implementation.

The Fund has contributed to the UN system-wide coherence reform by strengthening the leadership and coherence of the UN system at the country level, particularly as related to the role of the UN Resident Coordinator. The discussion of critical factors influencing the leadership and coherence of the UN system cannot be separated from the discussion of national ownership. Indeed, government leadership in promoting “ONE UN” is proving to be a critical success factor. The national government is in the best position to empower the UN Resident Coordinator to lead coordination and harmonization within the UN Country Team. In this respect, the joint programmes are good entry points for the government to exercise this pressure.

The MDG-F offers a concrete opportunity to experiment with the implementation of coordinated UN interventions on the ground. In so doing, it represents an important contribution to creating a practice and culture of joint intervention. The joint programmes have resulted in a new work practice for joint programming, contributing to a change in UN organizational culture. Furthermore, in countries as Nicaragua, the donor community recognized joint programmes as an efficient mechanism in terms of the impact of results and as an opportunity to consolidate the UN reform at the country level.

The UN should continue to work to create a culture and practice of joint action. The MDG-F has experimented and tested various strategies for improving the UN system-wide coherence. The ideal UN business model that has emerged is one in which: (i) the UN Resident Coordinator has authority and can make decisions on issues of coherence and performance; (ii) UN Coordination Offices are properly staffed to support the UN Resident Coordinator, the UN Country Team and joint programme partners; (iii) national implementation is the preferred modality; and (iv) national partners lead a representative governance mechanism.

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The MDG Achievement Fund (MDG-F) was established in 2007 through a landmark agreement between the Government of Spain and the UN system, with the aim of accelerating progress on the MDGs. With a total contribution of approximately US\$ 900M, the MDG-F has financed 130 joint programmes in eight programmatic areas in 50 countries around the world, in addition to global partnerships and thematic knowledge management initiatives. Our programmes cover nutrition, youth and employment, gender equality, environment, culture, conflict resolution and peacebuilding, water resources management and private sector development.

For more information: www.mdgfund.org