



*Empowered lives.  
Resilient nations.*

# THE VALUE ADDED OF JOINT GENDER PROGRAMMES

Findings and recommendations to the wider community  
of UN agencies engaging in joint programming

WORKING PAPER

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This paper has been developed by the UNDP Bureau for Development Policy Gender Team as convener of the Knowledge Management Initiative for the MDG-F Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Window. Gayle Lee Nelson was the lead author of the analysis in coordination with Raquel Lagunas (Institutional Development Advisor) and Lucio Severo (Knowledge Management Specialist and Project Manager of the Knowledge Management Initiative).

© United Nations 2013. Manufactured in the United States of America. The analysis and recommendations of this report do not necessarily reflect the official views of the MDG Achievement Fund Secretariat, UNDP, the United Nations or its Member States. Material may be freely reproduced with proper attribution to the authoring agencies, as appropriate.

Copyediting and graphic design: Suazion, Inc.

# CONTENTS

<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>1. INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>2. PURPOSE</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>3. OVERVIEW OF THE MDG-F GENDER WINDOW PROGRAMMES</b>	<b>9</b>
3.1 Programme Design	9
3.2 Strategies for gender equality used by the programmes	13
3.3 Interdisciplinary and multisectoral aspects of programmes	18
<b>4. CHALLENGES AND KEY LESSONS</b>	<b>21</b>
4.1 Big picture challenges	21
4.2 Practical challenges	23
4.3 Key lessons Learned	25
<b>5. VALUE ADDED OF JOINT GENDER PROGRAMMES</b>	<b>29</b>
5.1 Efficiency and Effectiveness	29
5.2 Increased Awareness and Capacity for Gender Responsive Development	29
5.3 Generating Demand for Human Rights and Strengthening Legislative Frameworks	30
5.4 Meeting Practical Needs and Strategic Interests	31
5.5 Innovation and Replication	31
<b>6. RECOMMENDATION: USING STANDARDS TO MAXIMIZE VALUE ADDED POTENTIAL</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>ANNEXES</b>	
Annex 1. Logic Model – Terms and Definitions	34
Annex 2. Proposed Standards for Joint Gender Programmes	35
<b>REFERENCES</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>NOTES</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>BOXES</b>	
Box 1. Establishing the Scale and Reach of Programmes	14
Box 2. Socio-Economic Empowerment and Support to Women in Vulnerable Groups in Ethiopia, Namibia and Viet Nam	16
Box 3. Implementing Programme Strategies in Conflict and Post-Conflict Settings: The Experience in OPT and Timor-Leste	18
Box 4. breaking new ground at the national level	20
Box 5. Addressing the Enabling Environment through Holistic Planning and Multisectoral Partnerships in Morocco	21
Box 6. Transformational Change in Gender Power Relations in Ethiopia	23
Box 7. Capacity Building and Policy Implementation in Guatemala	30
Box 8. Strengthening Legislation and Policy in OPT and Timor-Leste	31
Box 9. Sharing Innovative Approaches: South-South Exchange between Brazil and Colombia	32
<b>TABLES</b>	
Table 1. Overview of MDGF Gender Window Programmes	11
Table 2. Budget Allocation by Type of Intervention	13
Table 3. Criteria Used for Selection of Geographic Areas for Implementing Initiatives	15



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Millennium Development Goals (MDG) Achievement Fund (MDG-F) is an international cooperation mechanism that aims to accelerate progress on the MDGs worldwide. It was established in 2006 by the United Nations with an initial contribution from the Spanish Government of € 618 million (est. \$780 million) disbursed to countries through United Nations agencies.

The MDG Achievement Fund was designed to provide support through funding 'windows' linked thematically to the eight MDGs. The 'Gender Window' was allocated \$90 million to support 13 joint country programmes focused on gender equality and empowerment of women (MDG-3).<sup>1</sup>

This review analysed Gender Window programmes in order to:

- Examine the design and implementation of programme approaches and highlight elements of success;
- Understand the challenges that arose during different programme stages;
- Summarize the added value that gender specific programmes bring to the MDG achievement efforts at the national level; and
- Make recommendations that are linked to specific gender responsive programming standards that can guide funders and implementing partners of future joint gender programmes.

The review demonstrated that Gender Window programmes were innovative in their approaches: designs were diverse and strategies interlinked and implemented through groupings of activities tailored to national needs and capacities. All 13 programmes displayed a common purpose and cohesion by aiming to meet the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) performance indicators for gender equality and women's empowerment, and aligning with the United Nations Development Assistant Frameworks (UNDAFs) and national development plans.

A significant number of the programmes focused on ending gender-based violence and providing

prevention, protection and remedial services to survivors. Other trends included: providing women with increased economic security; building government capacity; raising awareness of governments' roles as duty bearers for human rights; and facilitating women and girls' ability to be agents of change.

Programme activities were generally delivered at the national level, but more than half of the programmes also had at least one local-level planned pilot location; the geographic scale and scope varied greatly among programmes.

In part, the quality and success of programme design and implementation was linked to practical aspects of logistics, functioning of programme teams, and the success of activities. It was also connected to more conceptual—'big picture'—issues, such as synergies produced by collaboration across sectors and the realization of holistic, transformational benefits that make social norms less discriminatory and change women's life chances. The MDG-F Gender Window provided an opportunity for well-resourced programmes to invest in the development of multisectoral initiatives that provide key lessons on improved development effectiveness for gender equality.

In addition to successes, reviewed programmes faced a number of practical challenges—related to planning, implementation and monitoring—that affected quality of design, efficiency and effectiveness. The investment of time and resources during programme planning and start-up stages was frequently cited as a major contributor in this regard. The challenges observed often highlighted gaps in the strategic and practical aspects of joint programme design and implementation. Observations in the mid-term and final evaluations provided insight into the benefits of good planning for successful holistic integration of gender considerations into aid and development effectiveness.

MDG-F gender initiatives show that a joint programming approach can increase gender responsiveness by concentrating funding and technical assistance for gender equality, fostering innovation in development

approaches to produce evidence, and demonstrating the benefits of gender equality. Increased gender responsiveness can, in turn, lead to changes in behaviours, attitudes and social norms that help transform gender relations.

## Key findings and recommendations

1. **Guarantee a stable allocation of significant financial resources to targeted gender programmes and institutionalize related mechanisms.**
2. **Adopt standards for joint gender programmes as a UN system-wide commitment, built on lessons learned and good practices to enhance consistency and quality of future joint programmes.** When lessons learned and good practices are triangulated with internationally recognized analysis frameworks for mainstreaming and empowerment, standards will improve the comparability of programmes, align with existing accepted indicators, and it will be possible to more accurately monitor and evaluate progress on gender equality resulting from joint programmes and related initiatives implemented in the medium to long term.
3. **Promote Interdisciplinary and multisectoral approaches in gender-targeted programmes** to facilitate holistic responses to the complex social and cultural dynamics that perpetuate gender inequality. Overall, coordinated and well-planned multisectoral approaches increase the potential for transforming gendered power relations toward equality between men and women.
4. **Balance strategic long-term change with short-term practical needs** to improve development results for gender equality. MDG-F gender programmes have shown significant potential to concurrently address women's immediate practical needs in areas of education, security and health, while also supporting strategic transformational change.
5. **Maintain focus on 'big picture' issues of transforming gender relations, upholding women's human rights and creating inter-disciplinary synergies, while working to improve quality assurance mechanisms of practical programming.** Ensuring the effectiveness of gender analysis, programme design and planning, management arrangements, monitoring and evaluation, and accountability mechanisms will help maximize the success of joint programmes.
6. **Accurately assess absorption capacity to support effective implementation.** When awareness and buy-in are not developed over the course of the programme, there is a strong risk that once programmes have ended, the gains realized with additional funding and focus may evaporate within a few years. Where absorption capacity was not assessed, programmes were overambitious, resources were thinly spread, and initiatives could not build necessary capacity and support.
7. **Engage an inclusive set of stakeholders at all programme levels to support sustainability and generate demand for ongoing attention to gender equality issues and women's human rights.** Engaging men and boys as stakeholders is a key way to promote transformational change in gender relations.
8. **Increase awareness of central ministries such as finance and planning.** Participation of these ministries and other key stakeholders is critical to the successful implementation of multisectoral strategies for gender equality and sustainable management of future donor contributions and national budgets.
9. **Involve and engage senior government and United Nations officials in programme management.** Engaging senior managers improves programmes' ability to mitigate risks, make mid-course adjustments and entrench programme objectives at the national level.
10. **Develop concrete staffing plans and allocate adequate funds to human resources.** Engaging project managers and staff with appropriate levels of expertise will help build national capacity, ensuring that programmes can operate without staffing gaps or remain effective in spite of them.
11. **Assign targeted budgets to support programme planning and launch.** Support should be allocated to specific technical inputs needed to develop a coherent theory of change, coordinate objectives for gender equality within practical logic frameworks and monitor short- and long-term progress using realistic indicators.

# 1. INTRODUCTION

The Millennium Development Goals (MDG) Achievement Fund (MDG-F) is an international cooperation mechanism that aims to accelerate global progress on the MDGs. It was established in 2006 with an initial contribution from the Spanish Government of € 618 million (est. \$780 million) disbursed to countries through United Nations agencies.<sup>2</sup>

The MDG-F was designed to provide support through funding 'windows' linked thematically to the eight MDGs. Eighty-five percent of MDG-F funds were allocated to 130 programmes in 50 countries, with \$90 million channelled through the Gender Window to support 13 joint country programmes focused on gender equality and empowerment of women (MDG-3).<sup>3</sup>

The MDGs reaffirm that gender equality is a human right and that specific attention needs to be given to: a) mainstreaming gender responsive approaches into institutions and development initiatives, and b) empowering women to act on their own behalf to promote equality and claim their rights.

The need to mainstream gender and have additional gender equality programming is based on an implicit recognition of the tendency for 'evaporation' of gender policy and guidelines when they are completely mainstreamed; and there is consequent acknowledgement that specific programming is still required to emphasize gender equality as a priority for development success while concurrently promoting mainstreaming within sectors.

The MDG-F Gender Window's broad parameters and guidelines are based on the human rights based approach and the above criteria; they also identify priorities areas linked to the other MDGs.

These priorities include multisectoral relationships and creation of holistic and enabling environments for gender mainstreaming to reinforce aid effectiveness principles.<sup>4</sup>

Gender Window programmes funded were UN managed joint programmes, with established cooperation agreements with multiple agencies, aiming to work together and build holistic and synergistic programmes with national partners—including national governments, local authorities and civil society groups.

Programme focus was diverse, ranging from institutional capacity development to violence prevention and race relations. Programmes' results generated a vast body of knowledge, lessons and good practices on the implementation of gender equality and women's empowerment programming.

As convener of MDG-F Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Window, the UNDP BDP Gender Team coordinates the MDG-F Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Knowledge Management Initiative. The initiative seeks to maximize the impact of the strategic gender equality investment made in support of the MDGs by generating useful knowledge, best practices and lessons learned in joint programming for gender equality to be shared at national and global levels.

This research is part of the MDG-F Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Knowledge Management Initiative and aims to provide credible and useful analysis on the **added value** of gender targeted/specific joint UN programmes, and also it provides knowledge for improvement of future gender-specific joint programmes.

## 2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this paper is to provide an overview and an analysis of joint gender programmes funded through the MDG-F Gender Equality window that are linked to the achievement of MDG 3: Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women.

The review methodology included an extensive **desk review** of planning, management, monitoring and evaluation documents from the 13 joint gender programmes,<sup>5</sup> and a scan of other related information including supplemental reports, presentations, programme products and websites produced by and about programmes.

The 13 programmes are large and complex and were required to develop and operate using results-based management logic. They all operated across multiple sectors with multiple partners while attempting to address the social, cultural, economic and political complexities of gender inequality in their specific country contexts.

The primary purpose and objective of this review is to:

- Examine the design and implementation approaches taken by the 13 joint programmes, and highlight elements of success;
- Understand the challenges that arose during different programme stages;

- Summarize the added value that gender specific programmes bring to the MDG achievement effort at the national level; and
- Make recommendations, linked to specific gender responsive programming standards, that can guide funders and implementing partners of future joint gender programmes.

The adoption of programming standards will enable future joint programmes to capitalize on the experiences and lessons learned from the MDG-F Gender Window programmes and increase the value of future UN country programmes across agencies and government sectors.

The scope of this paper was limited by the volume of emerging achievements, lack of time to undertake an exhaustive review of the 13 programmes activity, and absence formal evaluation structure, and therefore does not strive to provide a comparative assessment of which programmes were most or least successful. It does, however, provide a snapshot of the gender window programmes. This overview shows that all countries experienced constraints and successes, acknowledges and attempts to identify the diverse range of factors that influenced the programmes, and makes observations on how this information can inform and improve future initiatives.

# 3. OVERVIEW OF THE MDG-F GENDER WINDOW PROGRAMMES

The review of the approaches used by the 13 MDG-F gender window programmes shows innovation in the diversity of designs and the use and implementation of interlinked strategies through groupings of activities that were selected and tailored to national needs and capacities. It also demonstrated that the common purpose and cohesion in the gender window programmes in that all 13 programmes aimed to meet United Nations Development Group (UNDG) performance indicators for gender equality and women's empowerment and that all are aligned with United Nations Development Assistant Frameworks (UNDAFs) and National Development Plans.

## 3.1 Programme Design

**Situation analysis** of gender relations in the national setting was the starting point for the design of gender window programmes, but it was not developed or presented in the same way.<sup>6</sup> In countries like Brazil and Viet Nam, a broad gender analysis of the country context vis-à-vis national priorities and gender issues as a basis for legislative and policy level interventions was provided. In other cases, such as Bolivia, Colombia, Ethiopia and Namibia, the discussion was centered on the rationale behind each programme's area of focus.

**The styles of joint programming** used in the 13 MDG-F gender programmes varied in the complexity, nature and degree of 'jointness'. The number of participating UN and national partners varies by programme: there are 12 UN agency partners Viet Nam and only 2 in Ethiopia. The majority of countries had at least six national development partners from central and line government agencies (Morocco and Algeria had the highest number of government partners at 13) and less than half the programmes partnered with NGOs. NGOs were also engaged to

varying degrees as stakeholders in most programmes. Table 1 provides an overview of the differences and similarities in programme scope and focus.

**The complexity of programme designs and intervention level** were diverse. All programmes were multi-layered and attempted to create lateral linkages between outcome areas. This was done through management structures and the leveraging of partners' comparative advantages. The intervention levels among programmes varied with more than half of the programmes addressing issues around a core thematic there, in particular Gender Based Violence (GBV), at the micro, meso and macro levels. Other programmes such as Guatemala, Namibia and Viet Nam, focused on the legislative and institutional level across government sectors. These programmes sought to build capacity in a range of government agencies and to improve implementation of laws and policies by integrating gender responsiveness in both central government documents and in ministry-level planning processes.

**Design of programme logic frameworks** was standardized across programmes: 11 programmes had 3 outcomes and 2 programmes had 4 outcomes. The outcomes were linked in about a third of the joint programmes and divergent in the remainder, which tried to capture multiple aspects of the interrelated problems identified in the wide-ranging situational analyses. The distribution of funds between outcomes varied depending on a number of focus areas (single or multiple) (see Table 2).

**Thematic allocation of funds** was predominately targeted toward **ending gender based violence** and the provision of prevention, protection and remedial services to violence survivors. Other thematic areas included providing women with increased economic security; building government capacity; raising awareness of governments' roles as duty bearers for

**TABLE 1. OVERVIEW OF MDGF GENDER WINDOW PROGRAMMES**

Country	Start/End Dates (including no cost extensions)	Value of JP USD in millions	Population F/M in millions 2011	Outcome Areas	Programme location(s)	Number of Planned Outcomes, Outputs Activities	Number of national partner orgs	Lead UN Agency
<b>Algeria</b>	Start: 26/2/10 End: 26/2/13	3.6	Total 35.9 F – 17.8 M – 18.1	1) Strengthening the process of fair decision-making on strategies and development programmes 2) Improving the employability of women, particularly rural & vulnerable women, & enhancing their access to decent work 3) Media and work with CSOS to promote & strengthen the values of gender equality	National level with planning for 2 pilot areas	3 Outcomes 13 Outputs 35 Activities	7 UN agencies 13 gov't agencies	UNDP
<b>Bangladesh</b>	Start: 14/4/10 End: 30/6/13	8	Total 150.4 F – 74.3 M – 76.1	1) Policies and legal framework aimed at preventing violence against women (VAW), protecting and supporting survivors adopted, implemented and monitored. 2) Social attitudes and behavioural changes effected to reduce VAW and discriminatory practices 3) Conducive environment created, and capacities enhanced for providing support and care for women and girls who are vulnerable to, and/or have survived, violence	38 Districts	3 Outcomes 7 Outputs 33 Activity categories	9 UN Agencies 11 gov't agencies	UNFPA
<b>Bolivia</b>	Start: 15/5/08 End: 24/5/12	9	Total 10 F – 5.0 M – 5.0	1) Support women in extreme poverty to increase their productive assets 2) Support women to be able to exercise their civil and political rights 3) Creation of an enabling environment for women to exercise their rights	National 4 Regions 18 Districts	3 Outcomes 18 Outputs 18 Activity categories	4 UN agencies 9 gov't agencies (1 national, 4 local, 4 departmental)	UNDP
<b>Brazil</b>	Start: 17/2/09 End: 31/8/12	4	Total 196.6 F – 99.9 M – 96.7	1) Crosscutting gender and racial discrimination in policies and programmes and public services expanded and enhanced 2) Regional local capacities for promoting gender and racial equality strengthened and integrated 3) Egalitarian, plural and multiracial participation of women in decision-making strengthened and expanded 4) Items related to promotion of gender and racial equality featured in the media	National and state level	3 Outcomes 5 Outputs 80 Activities	6 UN agencies 2 gov't agencies	UN Women
<b>Colombia</b>	Start: 6/6/08 End: 31/12/11	7.2	Total 26.8 F – 23.8 M – 23.0	1) Prevention, detection and monitoring of GBV 2) Services for GBV are improved at national and local levels 3) Contribution to legal frameworks and public policies	National level and 4 Regions	3 Outcomes 6 Outputs 33 Activity categories	3 UN agencies 19 gov't agencies (executive, judicial and public offices and ministries)	UN Women
<b>Ethiopia</b>	Start: 31/1/09 End: 31/1/13	7.5	Total 84.6 F – 42.5 M – 42.1	1) Increased enjoyment of human rights at grass-roots level through strengthened gov't efforts in promotion and protection of human rights (mainly women and girls) 2) Regional efforts to strategically address gender disparities in literacy, education, SRH and GBV are strengthened 3) Improved access to & demand for quality gender sensitive & integrated reproductive health care, including HIV prevention services at all levels 4) Women and their families enjoy improved & sustainable livelihoods with increased income, improved food security and enhanced resilience to shocks	2 Regions 11 Districts	4 Outcomes 8 Outputs 29 Activities	2 UN agencies 7 gov't agencies Community groups (district & subdistrict)	UNFPA
<b>Guatemala</b>	Start: 12/5/08 End: 31/8/11	7.2	Total 14.6 F – 7.5 M – 7.1	1) Strengthen gov't agencies resp for gender equality and indigenous rights to ensure that existing policy on women's rights is incorporated into National and Local plans and budgets 2) Institutional strengthening of gov't agencies responsible for gender equality to promote economic empowerment, end VAW, and increase women's social and political participation	National level 7 Regions	3 Outcomes 4 Outputs 20 Activity categories	6 UN agencies 2 gov't agencies	UNFPA

Continued on page 11

Continued from page 10, Table 1: Overview of MDGF Gender Window Programmes

Country	Start/End Dates (including no cost extensions)	Value of JP USD in millions	Population F/M in millions 2011	Outcome Areas	Programme location(s)	Number of Planned Outcomes, Outputs Activities	Number of national partner orgs	Lead UN Agency
<b>Morocco</b>	Start: 28/5/08 End: 28/6/12	8.4	Total 32.2 F – 16.4 M – 15.8	1) Policies and programmes to end VAW are reinforced and adequately financed 2) Policy reinforcement for human rights in national & local governance with adequate financing 3) Improved services to VAW victims & survivors 4) Empower girls & women as change agents 5) Advocacy & education for human rights	Nation wide 6 Regions	4 Primary Outcomes (plus 2 facilitative outcomes) 9 Outputs 100 Activities	5 UN agencies 13 gov't agencies CSOs	UN Women
<b>Namibia</b>	Start: 20/2/09 End: 12/7/12	8	Total 2.2 F – 1.1 M – 1.1	1) Awareness and protection of women and girls human rights 2) Improved implementation of gender equality laws and policies 3) Food security and livelihood interventions for vulnerable groups	National level 7 Regions	3 Outcomes 8 Outputs 82 Activities	5 UN agencies 6 gov't agencies 3 CSOs and 2 universities	UNDP
<b>Nicaragua</b>	Start: 21/8/08 End: 15/5/12	8	Total 5.8 F – 2.9 M – 2.9	1) Strengthening capacities of women at municipal level 2) Increased gender responsiveness in municipal development plans 3) Increased gender responsiveness in national policies and budgets (mainly health and employment)	National level 5 Regions 22 Municipalities	3 Outcomes 8 Outputs 45 Activities	9 UN agencies 9 gov't agencies	UNFPA
<b>OPT</b>	Start: 30/1/09 End: 30/11/12	9	Total 4.1 F – 2.0 M – 2.1	1) Reducing GBV 2) Increase women's representation in decision making 3) Increase women's economic participation	Nation wide (with limitations on programmes in Gaza)	3 Outcomes 9 Outputs 33 Activities	6 UN agencies 6 gov't agencies	UN Women technical lead agency and UNDP administrative lead agency
<b>Timor-Leste</b>	Start: 15/12/08 End: 15/6/12	5	Total 1.14 F – .56 M – .58	1) Improved legal frameworks to protect women and girls 2) Reduce women's vulnerability through improved outreach services and social protection schemes 3) Gender responsive budgeting to improve women's and girls socio-econ situation	National level 5 Districts (incl national capital)	3 Outcomes 8 Outputs 74 Activities	5 UN agencies 2 lead gov't agencies (total of 6 involved) 5 NGOs	UN Women
<b>Viet Nam</b>	Start: 29/4/09 End: 27/4/12	4.5	Total 88.7 F – 44.8 M – 43.9	1) Improved skills, knowledge & practices for implementation, monitoring, eval & reporting on Laws related to gender equality & domestic violence 2) Enhanced partnerships & coord for gender within and outside government 3) Strengthened evidence based data systems for promoting gender equality	National level Selected local level sites	3 Outcomes 10 Outputs 47 Activities	12 UN agencies 3 gov't agencies 12 Co-implementing partners (gov't, NGOs, academia, mass organizations)	UNFPA

Source: <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/products/indwvm/>.

human rights; and facilitating women and girls' ability to be agents of change.

The thematic programmes were generally delivered through national-level activities, with more than half of the programmes planning a pilot at the sub-national level. The geographic scale and scope of the programmes varied greatly. Tables 1 and 3 provide an overview of subnational delivery points and criteria for selection of pilots.

**Consideration of socio-economic and cultural rights** in programme designs was guided by each situation analysis and status of country development and poverty rate. Across these different contexts, programmes identified the need to reach a range of stakeholders and beneficiaries, including women, who were particularly vulnerable or isolated. In addition, criteria used for the geographic location of pilots and local level interventions show that a

**TABLE 2. BUDGET ALLOCATION BY TYPE OF INTERVENTION**

Country	Value of JP in USD	Outcome Areas	Budgets by Outcome
<b>Algeria</b>	\$3.6 Million	1) Strengthening the process of fair decision-making on strategies and development programs (incl GRB) 2) Improving the employability of women, particularly rural & vulnerable women, & enhancing their access to decent work 3) Media and work with CSOS to promote & strengthen the values of gender equality	1) \$ 1,212,000 2) \$1,295,000 3) \$ 675,000 Additional programme costs \$ 458,000 (assumed – breakdown not found)
<b>Bangladesh</b>	\$8 Million	1) Policies and legal framework aimed at preventing violence against women (VAW), protecting and supporting survivors adopted, implemented and monitored. 2) Social attitudes and behavioural changes effected to reduce VAW and discriminatory practices 3) Conducive environment created, and capacities enhanced for providing support and care for women and girls who are vulnerable to, and/or have survived, violence	1) \$ 943,312 2) \$ 3,043,739 3) \$ 2,685,700 Additional programme costs \$1,006,837
<b>Bolivia</b>	\$9 Million	1) Support women in extreme poverty to increase their productive assets 2) Support women to be able to exercise their civil and political rights 3) Creation of an enabling environment for women to exercise their rights	1) \$ 6,501,244 2) \$ 778,664 3) \$ 308,907 Additional programme costs \$822,400
<b>Brazil</b>	\$4 Million	1) Crosscutting gender and racial discrimination in policies and programmes and public services expanded and enhanced 2) Regional local capacities for promoting gender and racial equality strengthened and integrated 3) Egalitarian, plural and multiracial participation of women in decision-making strengthened and expanded 4) Items related to promotion of gender and racial equality featured in the media	1) \$1,681,071 2) \$ 332,491 3) \$ 440,751 4) \$ 450,920 Additional programme costs \$1,094,760
<b>Colombia</b>	\$7.2 Million	1) Prevention, detection and monitoring of GBV 2) Services for GBV are improved at national and local levels 3) Contribution to legal frameworks and public policies	1) \$ 2,690,944 2) \$ 1,861,321 3) \$ 762,905 Additional programme costs \$ 1,884,830
<b>Ethiopia</b>	\$ 7.5 Million	1) Increased enjoyment of human rights at grassroots level through strengthened gov't efforts in promotion and protection of human rights (mainly women and girls) 2) Regional efforts to strategically address gender disparities in literacy, education, SRH and GBV are strengthened 3) Improved access to & demand for quality gender sensitive & integrated reproductive health care, including HIV prevention services at all levels 4) Women and their families enjoy improved & sustainable livelihoods with increased income, improved food security and enhanced resilience to shocks	1) \$ 1,498,000 2) \$ 570,764 3) \$ 922,229 4) \$ 4,018,353 Additional programme costs \$ 490,654
<b>Guatemala</b>	\$7.2 Million	1) Strengthen gov't agencies resp for gender equality and indigenous rights to ensure that existing policy on women's rights is incorporated into National and Local plans and budgets 2) Institutional strengthening of gov't agencies responsible for gender equality to promote economic empowerment, end VAW, and increase women's social and political participation (incl GRB)	1) \$ 1,102,466 2) \$ 5,733,463 Additional programme costs \$ 364,071 (assumed – breakdown not found)
<b>Morocco</b>	\$ 8.4 Million	1) Policies and programmes to end VAW are reinforced and adequately financed 2) Policy reinforcement for human rights in national & local governance with adequate financing (incl GRB) 3) Improved services to VAW victims & survivors 4) Empower girls & women as change agents 5) Advocacy & education for human rights	1) \$ 2,533,334 2) \$ 1,245,061 3) \$1,173,820 4) \$ 1,136,820 5) \$ 1,366,041 Additional programme costs \$ 946,059
<b>Namibia</b>	\$8 Million	1) Awareness and protection of women and girls human rights 2) Improved implementation of gender equality laws and policies 3) Food security and livelihood interventions for vulnerable groups	1) \$ 3,343,273 2) \$ 771,000 3) \$ 2,957,363 Additional programme costs \$ 887,014
<b>Nicaragua</b>	\$8 Million	1) Strengthening capacities of women at municipal level 2) Increased gender responsiveness in municipal development plans 3) Increased gender responsiveness in national policies and budgets (mainly health and employment)	1) \$ 4,612,320 2) \$ 1,063,790 3) \$ 929,500 Additional programme costs \$ 1,333,413
<b>OPT</b>	\$ 9 Million	1) Reducing GBV 2) Increase women's representation in decision making 3) Increase women's economic participation	1) \$ 4,442,057 2) \$ 1,605,865 3) \$ 2,365,181 Additional programme costs \$ 547,347
<b>Timor-Leste</b>	\$ 4.9 Million	1) Improved legal frameworks to protect women and girls 2) Reduce women's vulnerability through improved outreach services and social protection schemes 3) Gender responsive budgeting to improve women's and girls socio-econ situation	1) \$ 867,311 2) \$2,214,563 3) \$ 991,165 Additional programme costs \$ 824,222
<b>Viet Nam</b>	\$ 4.5 Million	1) Improved skills, knowledge & practices for implementation, monitoring, eval & reporting on Laws related to gender equality & domestic violence 2) Enhanced partnerships & coord for gender within and outside government 3) Strengthened evidence based data systems for promoting gender equality	1) \$ 2,666,022 2) \$ 767,368 3) \$ 1,155,420 Additional programme costs incl in above (breakdown not found in documents)

Note: Additional costs may include admin costs, coordination and evaluation.

number of programmes considered these factors relevant in addressing poverty issues and/or reaching the most vulnerable populations of women.

In upper-middle income countries such as Colombia and Brazil, programmes demonstrate how ethnic-racial and economic equity approaches can intersect with gender equality to address sets of disparities between population groups. The combined approach applied recognized that national economic and development progress in middle-income countries does not benefit women equally, and that specific groups of women in these countries may be subject to disadvantages related to civil and/or economic rights. In Brazil, the attempt to combine racial and gender equality addressed civil rights issues that inhibit Afro-descendent and indigenous women's development potential.

The country programmes, such as Bolivia, Colombia and Guatemala, that considered poverty and gender based violence to be higher in geographic regions with concentrations of indigenous peoples, targeted those areas to provide specific benefits and support more equitable development. Other programmes, mostly with a subnational focus, chose their activity areas less on socio-economic factors and more on partner agencies' comparative advantages and/or subnational presence. This approach tried to ensure the best reach and coverage for programmes (see Table 3).

### 3.2 Strategies for gender equality used by the programmes

Monitoring and mid-term evaluation reports from the 13 MDG-F gender window programmes highlighted that in general **national partners were effectively engaged** through different high-level, gender-responsive development strategies to promote gender equality and build national ownership. The strategies are inter-connected, complementary and contain lower level strategic activities. They were implemented through a range of activities depending on national priorities, capacity and programme partners. There are commonalities and differences in the strategies, but overall the review shows that **the joint programmes made a concerted effort to work within the MDG-F terms of reference and to ensure that women's and girls' human rights were a development priority.**

#### BOX 1. ESTABLISHING THE SCALE AND REACH OF PROGRAMMES

Programmes with wide geographic scope, such as Bangladesh, which operated in 38 districts, reached a large number of stakeholders but found that resources dedicated to initiatives were diluted and that stakeholders did not receive a holistic set of activities and services. While awareness raising can be wide spread, and activities can create a base for future initiatives, the synergistic potential of programmes is reduced when the geographic scope is too broad. The Ethiopia joint programme operated at the national level and in only two regions (11 districts); the programme's evaluation found that the beneficiaries had access, or were exposed, to most of the programmes inputs. This created a more pervasive sense of ownership and a deeper base of commitment in a shorter time—albeit in a smaller population group.

Like in Ethiopia, Bolivia had a small number of UN partners involved and similar subnational aims. Activities in both programmes were linked to controlling economic resources, raising awareness about women's human rights, and improving the status of women in the family and in the community; in both cases there was considerable buy-in at the local level. Both programmes used community level pilot projects as a modality— however, Bolivia's pilots did not include strong emphasis on national level strategies. As a result, strong national government ownership for continued financial and political support was not achieved, and Bolivia's programme faced more challenges to sustainability of the subnational initiatives.

#### ENDING GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

Gender based violence (GBV) is both a symptom of gender inequality and a barrier to women's ability to exercise their human rights. Achievement of the long-term goal to eliminate gender based violence will indicate that men recognize and respect women

**TABLE 3. CRITERIA USED FOR SELECTION OF GEOGRAPHIC AREAS FOR IMPLEMENTING INITIATIVES**

Country	Economic development designation*	Geographic scope	Criteria for selection of target areas
Algeria	U-MIC	National, 1 region	One local level pilot area planned
Bangladesh	LIC	38 Districts	Districts selected for links to existing UN Agency presence and priorities to facilitate delivery and M&E
Bolivia	L-MIC	National, 4 Regions, 18 Districts	Regions selected for capacity to provide good practice examples for other regions and support replication
Brazil	U-MIC	National and local	4 States identified to monitor policy implementation. Rationale for selection not found
Colombia	U-MIC	National level and 4 Regions	Regions selected have a) high severity and prevalence of GBV; b) presence of UN agencies with capacity to support JP
Ethiopia	LIC	2 Regions, 11 Districts	Regions selected have a) low status of women and girls; b) high rates of child marriage; c) limited RH knowledge; and d) limited livelihoods opportunities.
Guatemala	L-MIC	National, 7 Regions	Areas selected based on a) high poverty and b) indicators of women's vulnerability to violence
Morocco	L-MIC	Nation wide, 6 Regions	Selection criteria for regions were a) the rate of poverty by region and gender disparities (literacy, school enrolment and employment) and b) the presence of UN agencies that could provide support to the JP.
Namibia	U-MIC	National, 9 Regions	9 regions implementing activities (p 7 and 38 MTE) – rationale for regional selection not found
Nicaragua	L-MIC	National, 7 Departments, 15 Municipalities	Selection linked to <i>inter alia</i> a) indicators of vulnerability and b) presence of CSOs with specified levels of capacity to support JP initiatives
OPT	L-MIC	Nation wide (West Bank and Gaza)	Nationwide scope but programmes were adapted and tailored for Gaza to adjust for conflict situation and related constraints
Timor-Leste	L-MIC	National, 5 Districts (incl national capital)	Districts selected have a) high incidence of GBV and b) are border areas where trafficking, migration and poverty is high
Viet Nam	L-MIC	National, 4 Provinces	4 Provincial areas selected to deliver Training of Trainers to provincial staff. Rationale for selection not found

\* Development status based on World Bank classifications using Gross National Income per capita. The groups are: low income (LIC) \$1,005 or less; lower middle income (L-MIC) \$1,006 - \$3,975; upper middle income (U-MIC) \$3,976 - \$12,275. See [http://data.worldbank.org/about/country-classifications/country-and-lending-groups#Low\\_income](http://data.worldbank.org/about/country-classifications/country-and-lending-groups#Low_income). Note that UN Least Developed Country (LDC) status identifies Bangladesh, Ethiopia and Timor-Leste as the only LDCs in this list. See <http://www.unohrrls.org/en/lcdc/25/>.

and girls equal rights to make decisions and participate in all areas of life. Living free of violence will enable women to more actively pursue their rights and develop their capabilities. The importance of ending GBV as a gender equality strategy has been widely recognized and considerable development work has been done on the issue globally.

Gender based violence was the central thematic focus for 6 of the 13 programmes—Bangladesh, Colombia, Morocco, Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT), Timor Leste and Viet Nam—and it was addressed at the activity level by most other programmes. In all cases, activities were multi-faceted. Some programmes opted to use top down approaches to end GBV (Namibia, Timor-Leste and Viet Nam), which supported **development or improvement of laws and policies** as well as improved **implementation of existing legal and policy mechanisms**. These activities engaged multiple agencies, including the police, the judiciary

and politicians. Other programmes **worked from the ‘grass-roots’** up to address the patriarchal roots of inequality and the private nature of GBV. In these cases, the programmes worked with communities and NGOs (including faith based organizations) to engage men and women in discussions about the negative impacts of GBV on families, women’s health and child development. Programmes in countries like OPT and Colombia used concerted **communications and media elements** to build awareness and generate demand for action across society.

Ministries and government offices responsible for gender equality and/or women’s NGOs tend to have the greatest capacity to absorb funding and effectively implement initiatives aimed at women’s security, protection and empowerment, including gender based violence. This is in part because so much effort and investment has gone into GBV as a development issue, building capacity and increasing

ownership of the issue at the national level. Sharing of experiences between the programmes is now strengthening south–south partnerships, national ownership and sustainable advocacy and action on the issue.

### SOCIO-ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

Men and women's relative access to and control of economic resources are specific indicators of gender equality. In general, women lag behind men on this indicator when compared within cultural, racial/ethnic, age and geographic groups. **Seventy-five percent of the country programmes included activities designed to increase women's access to and control of economic resources** in some way. These activities were implemented in specific social contexts, and the majority of programmes included activities to mitigate risk and backlash against women's new economic power.

Activity examples include interventions to increase women's control of economic, agricultural and land resources at the regional/local level. This occurred in Bolivia and Ethiopia where women were taught skills and support was given for **women's rights to participate in decision-making at the community, municipal and national levels**. Other programme countries, including Algeria, Bangladesh, OPT and Nicaragua, implemented practical **small scale or pilot interventions** (for income generating activities/skills development), which increase women's economic security at the household level and contribute to improved status. In OPT, lessons were learned about the need to **raise awareness** among men on the programme intentions so they understand why women are being provided with economic support. This will help future initiatives to avoid backlash and appropriation of material resources by male household members—as happened in OPT.

When women have equitable access to economic resources such as credit, and when women can make their own decisions about how to spend their own income as well as family income, they can invest in their own capabilities and in family welfare, and engage in further income generation or business ventures to contribute to community and national development. In Bolivia, women not only gained

## BOX 2. SOCIO-ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT AND SUPPORT TO WOMEN IN VULNERABLE GROUPS IN ETHIOPIA, NAMIBIA AND VIET NAM

The use of economic empowerment strategies can improve women's status and decision-making power in the household, and in some situations it can contribute to reduced risk of gender based violence. Each situation is unique, and therefore it is necessary plan interventions carefully so that women in vulnerable positions are supported through changes in community and family power dynamics.

In Namibia, emphasis was placed on the importance of age, race, and rural/urban breakdown analysis to determine appropriate strategies. It was assumed that the women in these different groups would experience varying degrees of benefit depending on their personal set of circumstances. For this reason, the programme determined that blanket approaches were unlikely to reduce vulnerabilities for all groups.

It is also critical to analyse vulnerabilities as they relate to social groupings. The Ethiopian programme noted that when targeting vulnerable women who are heads of households, there is a risk of missing married women who are even more poor, HIV positive, or physical disabled. The programme in Viet Nam noted that some women, such as domestic workers, fall outside national social protection schemes and therefore require different targeted approaches in order to support them.

financial independence they were also issued government-required identity documents to allow them to access finance and land as well as to participate in national and local elections. MDG-F programmes can be used as case studies to help other joint programmes replicate proven practices as either gender specific or gender mainstreamed initiatives.

## **STRENGTHENING LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY FRAMEWORKS**

Supporting legislative and policy frameworks to recognize, ensure and facilitate gender equality as an area of rights was a key strategy of the MDG-F gender window programmes. Approximately 75 percent of the programmes included work to improve legislative and policy frameworks at the national level, and the remaining programmes had regional or local level policy elements. This emphasis demonstrates an understanding that achieving gender equality is a government responsibility and requires national ownership. The way in which these strategies were implemented also demonstrates recognition (by all joint programme partners) that obligations to ensure human rights need to be shared across levels of government and with civil society.

A majority of programmes, including Bangladesh, Brazil, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Namibia, OPT and Viet Nam, used awareness raising and capacity development modalities to support government staff in improved implementation of laws and policies. Technical assistance was provided to increase gender analysis knowledge and skills in sectoral ministries (e.g. health and agriculture) and in ministries responsible for planning and/or gender equality.

In Viet Nam, the ministry responsible for gender equality was the lead agency for the gender window programme. It supported efforts to end GBV by helping to finalize related legislation, raising awareness on the illegality of GBV, and training government staff to understand the law and to develop and implement gender responsive policies. In addition, the Viet Nam joint programme worked to strengthen data collection and monitoring and evaluation frameworks to allow future monitoring of GBV. Tracking sustainable results will need to be done over time, but strengthened data collection is a significant short-term achievement that will support more accurate monitoring of government commitment and actions.

Analysis of programme reports provided to-date show solid uptake of improved legislative frameworks and commitment to improve implementation in a sustainable manner. Mid-term and final evaluations showed that inter-disciplinary relationships were

fostered across sectors to improve policy interaction. However, long-term monitoring will be needed to ensure that changes in government structures to support gender equality across central and line ministries are lasting, and financing for ongoing implementation of policies is maintained.

## **PROMOTING ADEQUATE FINANCING FOR GENDER EQUALITY**

The implementation of legal and policy frameworks to promote and ensure gender equality requires funding and integration into government budget lines. More than a decade of work has gone into to creating and applying gender responsive budgeting (GRB) mechanisms as a way to finance gender equality. GRB contributes to enabling environments for gender equality and is a means to address gender equality through public financial management systems. It commits government bodies to support gender issues and encourages them to diversify their fund source to reduce reliance on donor support, which can be short term and variable.

GRB is a complex undertaking that requires time and specific types of technical assistance to move beyond advocacy to lasting, mainstreamed reform. It requires robust national budget systems that meet a number of standard criteria necessary to integrate changes required by gender responsive budgeting approaches.<sup>7</sup>

Four of the programmes (Algeria, Morocco, Nicaragua and Timor-Leste) included outcomes or outputs related to gender responsive budgeting.<sup>8</sup> The success of these interventions varied depending on whether there had been previous work on GRB. Results were better in countries where there was analysis of existing financial management systems for intervention points and awareness building to increase capacity for gender budgeting across government.

In Algeria and Timor Leste, where no previous work was undertaken in support of gender budgeting, significant progress was not made. The Nicaragua programme fostered important capacity and awareness development related to GRB. Greater progress was achieved in Morocco because the country had experience with GRB, including previous analysis of its government financial systems.

## **WORKING ACROSS SECTORS TO MAINSTREAM GENDER ISSUES**

All country programmes worked with the sectoral ministries corresponding to their thematic focus. This helped to build capacity, which allowed gender issues to be mainstreamed into these sectors, ministries, departments and organizations. It also underlined the relevance of gender in the context of issues and services and supported effective policy and programme implementation.

In Guatemala, Ethiopia and Timor Leste mainstreaming gender issues primarily involved line ministries or offices involved in social service provision. In Bangladesh, Namibia, Viet Nam the initiatives also engaged national statistics offices. This was done to better understand and create improved data frameworks that would be more sensitive to multisectoral gender programmes, which could support sectoral ministries to improve the quality of their policies, planning and implementation.

The joint programmes addressed a range of data issues, including the need to improve availability of sex-disaggregated data at finer levels of detail and the need to harmonize gender-related statistical information from different sectors for analysis purposes. A number of joint programmes made progress in this area, however there are still challenges to i) increase the quality of multisectoral statistical analysis using existing data sources, ii) ensure that staff in national statistics offices understand the purpose of gender analysis of data, and iii) present data as evidence to support government officials and policy makers in central and line ministries.

The strategy of mainstreaming gender across sectors demonstrates a key strength of gender specific programmes—that is their integral role in building capacity for gender analysis and reinforcing commitment to, and uptake of, gender mainstreaming. However, gender mainstreaming interventions are challenging and require supportive organizational cultures within government offices, investments of time from government officials, adequate numbers of counterparts to work with development agencies, development of general capacity on gender responsiveness in policy and service delivery, and translation of capacity building into day-to-day action.

## **BOX 3. IMPLEMENTING PROGRAMME STRATEGIES IN CONFLICT AND POST-CONFLICT SETTINGS: THE EXPERIENCE IN OPT AND TIMOR-LESTE**

In conflict, post-conflict or fragile countries, joint programme management and design had to be tailored to complex settings and to respond to the impacts of conflict on social behaviour and on the capacity and availability of human resources to manage and implement programmes. In Timor-Leste, the history of colonization and repression—as well as emigration—meant that capacity to manage the newly independent state was low and that government officials were overburdened by donor demands and the actual work at hand. This capacity shortage created ongoing challenges, and it was difficult to find and keep national staff and to engage officials across sectors in the joint programme.

Conflict and its legacy have different impacts depending on settings, but they tend to universally increase stress, support cultures of hyper-masculinization (where being tough and macho is required of men), and infantilize women who are perceived as needing male protection. All of these factors contribute to increased likelihood of gender based violence and reinforce cultural forms of violence such as punishing women for 'honour' crimes in OPT.

At the same time, conflict and post-conflict settings can offer women the opportunity to step outside restrictive roles and act as agents of change. The Timor-Leste programme engaged women in a number of ways: consulting about shelters and ending violence and trafficking, managing services for gender based violence survivors of GBV, and advocating for change at the local government level. In OPT, entrepreneurial support was offered to women in the West Bank and Gaza—including refugee women. This created opportunities to break cultural barriers and establish new models of women's independence that have the potential to benefit families, communities and the nation.

## GENERATING DEMAND FOR GENDER EQUALITY AT THE LOCAL LEVEL

A supplement to the capacity development with government officials mentioned in the previous point was raising awareness and analysis skills at the local level. Generating demand for women's empowerment initiatives at the local level is fostered through awareness raising efforts. The demand supports women to articulate and exercise their rights, and it can also positively influence men and boys who are often gatekeepers of women's autonomy. Demand generation as a strategy supports strong civil societies, fosters open communication about power dynamics and equality, and improves governance through creating a feedback loop where citizens begin to drive policy change in support of human rights.

Through the joint programmes in Bolivia, Bangladesh, Ethiopia and Morocco, local level governments were linked more closely with communities to mobilize community groups, create inclusive and 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 economic activity. In some cases, community mobilization initiatives also aimed to raise awareness about the constructive role that men and boys can play in creating more gender equal relationships at the household and local level.

A number of programmes, including Bangladesh, Bolivia, Morocco, Guatemala, Ethiopia, provided training (literacy, numeracy, health and information on rights) and facilitated community engagement to create a common base of awareness on which to promote future empowerment initiatives.

Programmes have reported that women gained self-confidence and saw an increase in their community status, which helped them to advocate in family and community forums. There is also a generational effect to demand creation; when children see their parents in new roles and with shared responsibilities it sets new norms and can question the purpose of discriminatory values about gender roles and power relationships.

## 3.3 Interdisciplinary and multisectoral aspects of programmes

Gender inequality is entrenched in social, institutional, economic and cultural systems, therefore to address it effectively and transform unequal power relations between men and women requires multi-sectoral approaches and in-depth analysis of issues in their national and subnational contexts.

As noted above, the scale of resources provided by the MDG-F allowed programmes to attempt to address the inter-linkages between several identified priorities using diverse sets of strategies and activities. Among the sets were upstream (political) and downstream (policy and capacity) issues, and the three identified domains (capabilities, access to resources, ending gender based violence) laid out in the MDG-F terms of reference.

One of the most complex aspects of the programmes seems to have been building and demonstrating inter-linkages—between sectors, programme domains and MDG-F priorities—within the outcomes, outputs and activities of logic frameworks to increase the visibility of existing synergies during monitoring and reporting. Major challenges faced by programmes included managing the level of inter-agency relationships and accountabilities, and trying to demonstrate results against inexact or mismatched sets of indicators. These challenges were linked to the lack of adequate and timely data creation outside the control of programmes and to the limitations on resources available for the creation of baseline information. In addition, the MDG-F set specific thematic indicators that did not always mesh with available data at the national or subnational level.

Although the programmes faced some challenges with the multisectoral approaches, they also benefited from them. In particular, awareness was raised on how gender issues are relevant to development effectiveness in different sectors, and on how to improve planning to address gender inequalities in a coordinated and concurrent manner. Increase awareness also extended to **central ministries, such as those responsible for finance and planning**, which can improve the prospect for sustainability in

## BOX 4. BREAKING NEW GROUND AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL

In many countries, MDG-F Gender Joint programmes have represented a great opportunity to break new ground and demonstrate how attention to gender equality can benefit families, communities and countries. Some examples:

### FORMULATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF NATIONAL STRATEGIES, PLANS AND LAWS TO COMBAT GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

- First-ever national strategy to combat gender-based violence: **Occupied Palestinian territory**
- First-ever national action plan for preventing domestic or gender-based violence: **Guatemala, Timor-Leste, Viet Nam**
- First-ever law against domestic violence: **Timor-Leste**
- First-ever rollout plan of action for coordinated implementation of existing gender-based violence laws and policies: **Namibia**

### BROAD-BASED CIVIL-SOCIETY AND MEDIA ADVOCACY

- First-ever large-scale (regional and local) advocacy campaign targeting men and boys: **Colombia**
- First-ever advocacy campaign concurrently combating gender-based, racial and ethnic discrimination: **Brazil**

### RESEARCH AND DATA COLLECTION, MANAGEMENT AND ANALYSIS

- First-ever dataset and national study on domestic violence against women: **Guatemala, Viet Nam**
- First-ever attempts at harmonizing gender-based violence data derived from different sources into national systems with common indicators: **Bangladesh, Brazil, Namibia, Viet Nam**
- First-ever centralized gender-equality monitoring system and database of women in decision-making bodies: **Occupied Palestinian territory**

### PROVISION OF VICTIM SERVICES

- First-ever shelter for victims of domestic violence: **Gaza, Occupied Palestinian territory**
- First-ever tools to enable women to report incidents of gender-based violence: **Bangladesh** (mobile phones); **Namibia** (free reporting hotlines)

the management of future donor contributions and in the allocation of national budgets. This was the case in Bangladesh, Colombia, Ethiopia, Morocco and Nicaragua on gender analysis of development and aid effectiveness. **The UNCT Gender Theme Groups were instrumental in the facilitation of the multisectoral nature of the joint programmes** through advocacy within their own agencies and, in many cases, through team building with national development partners, including media and other donors.

The knowledge management aspects of the MDG-F gender window programmes have been valuable; they have effectively shared information between sectors, provided profile and status to ministries involved, and created new knowledge through research and development of baseline information. As demonstrated by the OPT and Colombia programmes, work done to raise awareness and

develop improved capacity to report on gender issues can have a significant impact by changing the quality of reporting on issues like harmful practices and GBV. The multisectoral nature of most of the programmes allowed them to break new ground in many areas, such as GBV. Box 4 highlights 'firsts' achieved in GBV-focused joint programmes.

The planning of gender window programmes took into consideration the pervasive nature of gender inequality: across sectors, societies and institutions. Successfully managing and implementing the complex multisectoral plans was challenging and influenced by i) how well plans were coordinated with the available capacity and time of involved ministries and local departments; ii) level of government commitment (political will and staff retention); and iii) availability of skilled staff to actually coordinate and manage the programmes.

## BOX 5. ADDRESSING THE ENABLING ENVIRONMENT THROUGH HOLISTIC PLANNING AND MULTISECTORAL PARTNERSHIPS IN MOROCCO

The Morocco joint programme focused on two inter-secting areas related to an enabling environment: i) promoting the human rights of women and girls, and ii) ending gender based violence. The programme had strong UN and government leadership and buy-in. It involved 13 government departments—led by the ministry responsible for gender equality—8 UN agencies and more than 40 NGOs. The programme relied on a clearly defined logic framework to guide coordination across sectors and to clarify partnership roles. It was organized into 6 outcome areas with 10 outputs and approximately 100 planned activities, making it a very complex programme.

The multisectoral approach was intended to more effectively mobilize agencies already responsible for aspects of gender equality and ending violence against women and girls and to increase consistency and coherence in their actions. This demonstrated potential for significant synergies, improved ability to monitor gender equality and gender based violence initiatives, increased mutual accountability, and resulted in overall improvements in communication between government, NGO and UN partners.

The complexity of the programme design and the number of partners required an extended, year-long, start-up phase. However, this attention to partnership arrangements and the strong senior level commitment to the programme contributed to coherence with aid effectiveness principles and overall quality.

In Colombia, Ethiopia and Morocco these factors all fell into place in a favourable manner. In Timor Leste, there were **challenges related to the country's post-conflict setting and low capacity in government ministries**. In Bangladesh, the geographic scale of the programme created difficulties in tracking partner capacity at the local level. Programmes in Bolivia, OPT, Timor Leste and Viet Nam were constrained by staffing constraints in the programme management units and/or the counterpart.

As noted earlier, the conceptual nature and the implementation of the programme designs varied considerably, but there were some commonalities; over half of the joint programmes focused around a single issue and used a multisectoral approach to address a specific set of problems with relatively clear cut desired outputs and indicators. The programmes in Colombia and Ethiopia are two examples: in Colombia, the programme focused on ending violence against women and in Ethiopia, the programme centred on improving women and girls' access to resources. Other programmes (Namibia and Viet Nam) started out applying a multisectoral problem analysis related to the enabling environment for gender equality but broadened their scope to include a wider set of gender responsive solutions.

In the case of Viet Nam, a One UN pilot country, this seems to be linked to the large number of UN partners involved in the programme and the desire to develop a programme that was as comprehensive as possible. The Viet Nam evaluations note that this spread the programme effort too thin and created difficulties in coordination between partners and programme coherence. A related success factor noted in a number of joint programme evaluations is the availability and willingness of senior UN decision makers to support strategic decisions about the programmes when they faced problems.

Where programmes had strong support from the office of the Resident Coordinator and agency heads—as well as from senior government officials—it was easier to manage changes and adaptations in programme design and implementation, confirm responsibilities and document achievements.

# 4. CHALLENGES AND KEY LESSONS

All of the gender window joint programmes experienced challenges. The way that these challenges were addressed resulted in programme design and implementation schedule adjustments. While a detailed listing of challenges experienced by all programmes is beyond the scope of this paper, the country programme documents, reports and evaluations identify common challenges linked to: a) expectations about development effectiveness, synergies and the extent to which programmes can transform gender relations (big picture challenges); and b) practical issues: design, planning, management, implementation and monitoring (practical challenges). Sections 4.1 and 4.2 address the overarching challenges experienced by programme countries and draw lessons learned to guide future joint gender programmes.

## 4.1 Big picture challenges

The quality of joint gender programmes is linked to several factors. One of set of factors includes the practical aspects of logistics, the functioning of programme teams, and the success of activities. Another set of factors comprises the more conceptual or 'big picture' issues: i) the synergies produced by collaboration across sectors, and ii) the realization of holistic, transformational benefits that make social norms less discriminatory and change women's and girls' life chances. The MDG-F Gender Window has provided an opportunity for well-resourced programmes to invest in development of multisectoral initiatives that provide key lessons on improved development effectiveness for gender equality.

### MEETING EXPECTATIONS FOR TRANSFORMATIONAL CHANGE IN POWER RELATIONS BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN

According to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), "Transformational change is the process whereby positive development results are achieved and sustained *over time* by institutionalizing

policies, programmes and projects within national strategies. It should be noted that this embodies the concept of institutionally sustained results—consistency of achievement over time. This is in order to exclude short-term, transitory impact.<sup>9</sup> Transformational change should contribute to human development and towards the achievement of MDGs, including the related targets and indicators. In the context of this analysis, transformational change for women and girls implies that improvements in their lives and in gender equality are sustained over time by a change at policy, programming, institutional and social norm levels. Transformational change that will support gender equality implies changing gendered power relations, and this is a strategic aim of gender and development initiatives regardless of strategy. Engaging men and boys directly to increase their understanding of the benefits of gender equality and to recruit them as advocates for women's equal rights is acknowledged as a mainstreaming strategy that has strategic transformational potential. The underlying theory is that without men's solid commitment to changes in gender relations—be that women's empowerment and control of economic resources, women's participation in politics or in decision-making in the household—there will be no sustainability to gender specific or gender mainstreaming programmes.

Engaging men and boys in the MDG-F gender programmes was attempted to different degrees in approximately half of the programme countries, and there is potential to use these examples to understand challenges and foster this approach to transformational change. Situation analyses have clear statements about root causes of discrimination, and planning documents indicate engagement of opinion leaders, decision makers, men and boys in communities, community groups (including faith-based groups) and other gate keepers of social norms and values that discriminate against women.

## **BOX 6. TRANSFORMATIONAL CHANGE IN GENDER POWER RELATIONS IN ETHIOPIA**

The Ethiopia programme included extensive consideration of the need to engage men and boys in the promotion of gender equality. Programme activities conducted at the local level engaged men in community conversations about gender equality, which explored development issues and gendered power relations. It also engaged faith-based leaders and decision makers as key stakeholder and gatekeepers who, through awareness raising and engagement, could be included in the effort to support women's empowerment. However, the mid-term evaluation of the programme noted that in one programme site, contrary to programme design, men had begun to take spaces in literacy classes intended for women. A dilemma arose about whether to prohibit this or accept that non-literate men who could also benefit from participating in the classes with women—creating some strategic advantages and becoming programme supporters—even at the cost of some women missing the opportunity to participate. It was noted that to restrict men's access after they had already started classes could create resentment and backlash.

Unfortunately, at the level of the literature review there was not enough detail to assess if problems were related to lack of continuity in the management of the specific programme site (i.e. from staff turnover), weak monitoring and evaluation of this aspect of programmes, or if men attempted to hijack processes. In the end, men continued to participate and the situation served to provide a control group and comparison for the other pilot areas.

Gender window programmes in Bangladesh, Bolivia, Brazil and Ethiopia have design elements related to engaging men (and sometimes boys) to change social attitudes, but the information on beneficiaries reported across programme documents lacks clarity

and consistency. In some cases, men have been identified as direct beneficiaries in planning documents, but their participation in programmes during implementation has been noted as potentially problematic.

Development programming, in theory, takes place along a continuum that runs from gender exploitive, gender neutral, gender sensitive and to gender transformative. Moving along this continuum toward transformational approaches is important, but it cannot be assessed without articulation of desired progress and indicators of specific desired changes. For example, straightforward indicators of community level change might be i) the number of community declarations against violence and harmful practices that are supported by men and women and have associated municipal funding available for related services, or ii) the number of men and women caring for children as measured by who brings children for immunization or to school programmes. To assess where the MDG-F gender programmes fall on the gender transformational continuum will require focused follow-up on specific interventions and development/monitoring of a simple set of short to medium term progress indicators.<sup>10</sup>

### **MEETING EXPECTATIONS FOR SYNERGY IN JOINT PROGRAMMES**

UN joint programmes are defined as collaboration between two or more agencies working with development partners. The MDG-F specifically adds that programmes should demonstrate attention to the principles of aid effectiveness. These principles imply synergy and achievement of results that are greater than the sum of the component parts. In the context of the MDG-F gender window joint programmes, the expectation of multisectoral synergies and increased aid effectiveness is linked to a number of issues, such as: how institutions operate and develop inclusive democratic ownership, including numbers of men and women holding key posts; the ability of institutions to demonstrate that they recognize the relevance of gender equality to development effectiveness as reflected by organizational culture and male leaders substantive support for gender initiatives; and the way they achieve, or do not achieve, medium-term outcomes that are stepping stones

to long-term transformational change in gendered power relationships.

Evaluations note that **UN agencies and national partners were not always able to develop a common vision for the joint programmes** and that this undermined the potential for multisectoral collaboration, national ownership of gender equality priorities, and synergies related to effectiveness and sustainability of gender initiatives.

Evaluations and other documents also note that in a minority of cases joint programmes seem to consist of parallel initiatives run by individual agencies with their respective government partners. Multisectoral and interdisciplinary synergies can still result depending on whether initiatives have overlapping activities, target common beneficiaries, and share communication mechanisms, but they are nonetheless assessed as less than optimal by a number of evaluators.

Both programme partners and evaluators have stressed that **the three-year time frame is too short to see meaningful change at the outcomes and results level in gender relations** and associated social, cultural and economic indicators. They also noted that synergies in partnerships can only be confirmed after external programme funding is removed and sustainability can be assessed.

**Achievement of synergies requires a clear vision and careful planning as well as a sustainability strategy developed in advance.** This is challenging in the development environment where there are many unknowns, and particularly when financing for gender equality is linked to changing donor priorities. Consistent application and monitoring of tools such as the UNCT performance indicators for gender are a good starting point, but they remain UN-centric. Developing agreements in donor round tables on 5–10 year commitments to build gender related capacity with national partners and into national plans is also useful. At the same time, agreements must be enforceable and linked to accountability mechanisms such as incentives and conditionality.

## 4.2 Practical challenges

Programmes faced a number of practical challenges linked to planning and especially to the implementation and monitoring of planned approaches.

### PROGRAMME DESIGN AND CLARIFICATION OF THE THEMATIC FOCUS

Factors mentioned repeatedly in evaluation documents as impacting the quality of design and the efficiency and effectiveness of programme implementation were related to the investment of time and resources during the planning and start-up stages of programmes.

Each country was assigned a UN lead agency by the MDG-F along with a first level of funding to develop a design level submission. In practice, this arrangement had inconsistent results in terms of the quality of programme start up and resulting plans. Quality assurance standards were used to support the development of solid results-based management frameworks and programme plans, but in some cases programmes designs presented weaknesses. This may be in part because programme managers and/or gender specialists at the country level were responsible for drafting the plans. While the managers/specialists are likely competent, complex programme design for multi-million dollar initiatives and monitoring and evaluation are both areas of technical specialization. The MDG-F gender programmes would have benefited significantly from a consistent source of gender responsive technical assistance during the design process and before or after the final selection of proposals. This would have proactively increased overall programme feasibility as well as improved collation of existing baseline data, theories of change and related logic frameworks.

Programmes varied in how, and at what level, they focused their efforts. As highlighted earlier, upstream institutional strengthening initiatives tend to be more bureaucratic and demonstrate less immediate 'results', whereas community mobilization initiatives directly involve beneficiaries and provide success stories that are more immediate, but may have less reach and long-term impact than legislative and policy change.

Programmes that combined the upstream and community mobilization approaches demonstrated a mix of parallel achievements and were able, in some instances, to use community achievements to demonstrate the potential of policy change. Designing programmes at multiple levels was most successful when a) the design was built on proven models, such as in the case of the Colombia programme, which used a strategic approach previously developed and tested by the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO);<sup>11</sup> b) successful precedents were reinforced as when the Morocco programme incorporated gender responsive budgeting into its programme to end violence against women and girls; or c) parallel programmes sought to provide support to the overlapping groups of beneficiaries at both national and subnational levels as in the case of Ethiopia.

#### **USE OF RESULTS-BASED MANAGEMENT AND LOGICAL FRAMEWORKS**

The results-based logic frameworks of the MDG-F Gender Window programmes reflect different interpretations of how results-based planning is done, and they are not consistent in terms of the information provided. They showed significant differences in how outcomes, outputs, baselines and indicators are understood, articulated and organized. Where logic frameworks were weak, the subsequent monitoring and evaluation processes were also undermined. Approximately one third of the programmes obviously struggled with logic framework terminology at the planning stage, confusing planning levels and using terms inconsistently. Evaluators seemed to be almost universally critical of the quality of logic framework indicators, which in many cases did not link to or demonstrate progress toward the stated outputs and outcomes.

Most of the evaluations examined the 'theory of change' aspects of each joint programme as well as the logic frameworks. Unfortunately, each evaluator, for the most part, had his/her own understanding of what a theory of change is and how to apply it to the respective programme. The gender window programmes did not have access to a consistent theory of change model that can

help clarify assumptions and create a common vision for a programme. The model developed by the Act-Knowledge organization is particularly useful and shows connections between actions, outputs and outcomes both horizontally and vertically, and would have informed the gender window programmes.<sup>12</sup> Clear understanding of a theory of change can increase accuracy, consistency and feasibility in a programme's logic framework and identify where it is necessary to plan for long-term ownership and sustainability. The consistency and comparability in and between joint programme logic frameworks would have been much improved if the programmes had been required to use a consistent theory of change model.

Evaluators widely agreed that while programmes demonstrated considerable success in achievements at the activity level, results at the output and outcome level were elusive. Designing logic frameworks that have increased clarity and smaller steps between levels of results can demonstrate progress and achievement at different programme stages, and could improve future joint programmes. An example used by the Canadian International Development Agency, included as Annex 1, uses five steps from activities to ultimate outcomes: activities, outputs, immediate outcomes, intermediate outcomes, and ultimate or long-term outcomes.<sup>13</sup>

#### **MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS AND AID EFFECTIVENESS**

Management arrangements refer to the division of responsibility and harmonization between development partners for all aspects of joint gender programmes. Key challenges include identifying ways to ensure: a) decision-making can be shared between partners at each stage of the programme; b) senior decision-makers are engaged and active in supporting the programme; c) information sharing procedures and reporting protocols are effective, timely and do not overburden national partners; d) dedicated programme staff are located where they can have the most impact; and e) programme staff receive ongoing support from both national and UN programme partners.

The MDG-F joint gender programme documents indicate that the quality of management arrangements impacted implementation, monitoring and reporting as well as national ownership and mutual accountability between the UN, governments and civil society. Management arrangements also impacted effectiveness at a finer level between government partners and between local and national levels within ministries.

On average the programmes have had six UN partners and seven government partners, which indicates a very high level of management complexity, even just to arrange meetings, encourage/solicit consistent and regular representation from programme partners, review information and make decisions. Within the context of the joint gender programmes the complexity was increased because it was also necessary to raise awareness and build capacity among partners about gender issues and human rights so that decision making was as informed and progressive as possible.

Leadership of the joint programme varied from country to country, and where the leadership rested with a well-established UN agency with solid relationships to government and NGO partners there was a higher level of communication and trust to support smooth management. Management functions were also highly impacted by staffing and human resources issues—when programmes could not fill staff positions there were slow downs and gaps in management of budgets, implementation and reporting. The functioning of governance structures such as National Steering Committees and Programme Management Committees was also important to the strengths and weaknesses in effectiveness, ownership and synergies.

#### **TECHNICAL CAPACITY AND HUMAN RESOURCE AVAILABILITY**

Most programme evaluations noted challenges related to hiring of Programme Management Unit (PMU) staff with the right mix of skills and experience. The optimum skill set for a programme manager includes the ability to do gender analysis and advocate for the programme with government officials, an understanding of the UN system, experi-

ence with joint programmes, negotiating skills to support collaborative work among UN partners, financial management and reporting skills, and seniority and authority to influence senior level decision-makers. It is difficult to find individuals available with this skill set. In addition, the temporary nature of the programme cycle may have deterred qualified people from applying.

Staffing became problematic in a number of countries. Finding, hiring and retaining staff was difficult for many programmes and hindered the start up phase, implementation of activities, and development of partnerships with different stakeholder groups. In a number of cases staff turnover created information gaps about the programmes and impeded development of working relationships across UN and government agencies.

Causes for staff turnover varied, but it must be assumed that staff faced challenges in reporting to multiple UN and government agencies with many layers of bureaucracy and different protocols. In some country programmes management was tasked to junior professional staff or UN volunteers who had a high rate of turnover and who were generally not in the country long enough to establish a base of credibility and authority. There were also unanticipated costs for coordination of human and financial resources related to staff turnover, and this exacerbated the problems faced in some countries.

Staffing issues created particular risks for joint programmes, including getting the right people for the job, keeping them in the job and providing senior level support to bolster their credibility and authority. The need to develop staffing plans during the programme start-up and have mitigation strategies for gaps in capacity is a clear lesson from the programmes.

### **4.3 Key lessons Learned**

The challenges experienced by programmes have highlighted gaps that need to be filled or adjustments that could be made to improve both strategic and practical aspects of joint programme design and implementation.

Programme logical frameworks provide the initial map of concepts and approaches used as the basis for detailed planning of the 13 programmes. Frameworks guided development of planning processes and mechanisms that established roles, responsibilities and relationships between national and UN partners. They also shaped strategies that defined how male and female stakeholders would be engaged as recipients and/or future owners of the programme results. Observations in the mid-term and final evaluations provide additional insight into how good planning is critical for successful holistic integration of gender into aid and development effectiveness. Examples of the elements of success demonstrated by the joint programmes include:

#### **CLEAR VISIONING AND ARTICULATION OF ISSUES**

An clear vision and well described path forward can support government ownership, alignment and harmonization when it is endorsed by all programme partners and is based on an understanding of gender power relations in each country. Vision clarification requires a sound situational analysis and it must ensure that each of the joint programme partners (UN, government, civil society organization) understands a) how gender inequalities constrain achievement of their development mandates; b) the contributions they can make (as individuals and institutions) to the programme to advance gender equality; and c) how increased gender equality will improve development effectiveness in their sector.

A number of country programmes, including Colombia, Ethiopia and Morocco, clearly articulated their vision of the issues and scope for action as reflected in the context of their situation analyses. This provided clear direction to development partners and served as the basis for further communications about programme objectives and intended results.

#### **BALANCING STRATEGIC LONG-TERM CHANGE WITH SHORT-TERM PRACTICAL NEEDS**

Catalysing and appropriating resources to meet long- and short-term needs as well as developing a means to measure change, can improve development results for gender equality. Programmes that demonstrate

the most potential for sustainability and impact create a balance between: a) tangible and short-term desired results—for example in women's educational, health or economic status; b) strategic, higher level changes such as legislation or changes in social norms; and c) capacity development and awareness raising among key stakeholders and decision-makers.

Tangible results, such as development of pilot interventions and/or increased provision of services for specific groups of women, bring immediate, visible, practical results. They are also easier to track, as shown in Colombia, Ethiopia, and Guatemala. Short-term tangible results can provide a clear entry point for civil society groups to focus on supportive advocacy and communication work.

More conceptual results are harder to keep track of and assess on a year-to-year basis. These can include the creation of an enabling environment and the capacity building of government officials—for example to undertake ongoing implementation of gender equality legislation and policy. This requires collection and collation of clearly defined qualitative information over an extended period. In order to maintain government interest and investment in gender equality there should ideally be a balance in gender programming, which combines strategic longer-term conceptual results with short-term tangible and more practical gains for beneficiaries. The joint programmes in Colombia, Morocco, Nicaragua and Timor Leste are examples of where this balance of results was clear during the programme design and planning periods.

#### **ABSORPTION CAPACITY**

In general, absorption capacity relates to how well national stakeholders—government, NGOs and in a few cases the private sector—are able to absorb and embrace changes and results introduced by the programmes. In the case of gender equality, absorption capacity can be difficult to achieve because gender norms tend to be personalized differently depending on group, and they are deeply rooted in institutional, cultural and religious systems. Entrenched values and institutional norms that discriminate against women can make organizational cultures very resistant to gender mainstreaming. And

once programmes have ended, the gains realized with additional funding and focus may diminish over time—particularly if ministries responsible for gender equality are marginalized from central government decision-making.

Success absorption capacity seems to be linked the level of government ownership, ability of civil society to monitor progress and advocate for continuity, awareness within the private sector—particularly the media—and willingness of donors to provide long-term coordinated support to maintain a consistent focus in support of gender mainstreaming. The continuity of results experienced by programme countries tends to be higher for programmes that are fully engaged with central as well as line ministries and have clear strategies to build capacity and political will for gender equality. This is further reinforced when there are strong communication strategies that provide positive reinforcement to communities and to political leaders that support gender equality. Success or failure in this area should be documented in a way that other stakeholders can benefit from.

#### **CLEAR AND CONSISTENT USE OF TERMINOLOGY**

The use clear and consistent terminology by programmes to describe how activities will help to achieve outputs and outcomes at the technical level supports achievement of development results. This is a very practical programme management issue, but it has significant impact on coherence, efficiency and effectiveness. It is an aspect of good planning and depends on a clear situation analysis, an understanding of how to involve different stakeholder groups to influence change, and ensuring that specific technical expertise in gender-responsive results based planning and management is a core aspect of programme start-up.

Programmes that had access to technical assistance in gender analysis, planning and M&E—as well as good communication mechanisms—seem to have maintained better programme focus. Most programmes used the terminology of outcomes, outputs, activities in their logic frameworks, however some also included the use of goals, objectives and products and used the same terms to mean different things in different

sections of the logic frameworks. This created challenges for the evaluations and in some cases made the semi-annual monitoring reports very confusing.

#### **HAVING OF A MINIMUM SET OF NATIONALLY RELEVANT GENDER SPECIFIC INDICATORS**

Measuring change using available data is a prerequisite to tracking and assessing the achievement of management results. This follows from the above point and in many cases depends on technical assistance that can link analysis of gendered power relations to careful planning for programme monitoring and evaluation. Building links for data and evidence was a challenge for all programmes, but those that had a clear vision, roadmap or theory of change did better than those that did not. In addition, programmes whose indicators could be linked to standardized data, for example on sexual and reproductive health, as in the case of Bangladesh's activities on HIV prevention, Ethiopia's data on contraception uptake provide potential for trend monitoring over the long term.

#### **ENGAGING AN INCLUSIVE RELEVANT GROUP OF STAKEHOLDERS**

Facilitating the involvement of stakeholders and providing them with adequate technical support to contribute to meaningful and sustainable change directly impacts ownership and mutual accountability. Careful analysis of stakeholders is critical to ensuring that programme objectives for gender equality (at the political, economic and social level) are integrated into national, subnational and community level institutions. Transforming unequal power relations between men and women requires that women and men can be active agents of development and benefit from changing social norms.

Programmes in Colombia, Ethiopia and Guatemala have local level pilots that consider men and boys as stakeholders, including male politicians and officials, community and religious leaders, and family members. This is an important step toward transformation and sustainability by highlighting that achieving gender equality requires involving men and women at all levels of society. Engaging stakeholders at this depth of personal change and mobilization

further increases the potential for long-term change in social values about gender equality. In addition, where men are at least made aware of the scope and objectives of local-level initiatives they are less likely to be threatened by women's new activities and more likely to see benefits—for example in the introduction of micro-credit initiatives or literacy activities. This also reduces risks of backlash against women participants.

Senior level decision makers are also key stakeholders who must be engaged and made aware of programme planning and processes. Programmes with strong senior level involvement from both the government and the UN had increased flexibility

and strength to mitigate risks, adjust programmes as needed, and optimize achievements for wide groups of beneficiaries. While participation in National Steering Committees and management groups is important, additional informal avenues are necessary to engage senior decision-makers and allow them to exercise their influence in support of gender responsive organizational culture and gender equality. Ongoing, informal and opportunistic support for gender programmes reflects high awareness of the benefits of gender equality on the part of senior leaders, and it can have significant positive effects.

# 5. VALUE ADDED OF JOINT GENDER PROGRAMMES

The MDG-F gender window initiatives have shown that joint programme approaches can increase gender responsiveness in country programmes and UN initiatives in a number of ways by concentrating funding and technical assistance for gender equality, fostering innovation in development approaches to produce evidence, and demonstrating benefits of gender equality. This can in turn lead to changes in behaviour, attitudes and social norms that will help transform gender relations.

## BOX 7. CAPACITY BUILDING AND POLICY IMPLEMENTATION IN GUATEMALA

The Guatemala joint programme final evaluation noted that capacity building and engagement of government officials has resulted in a cadre of staff who can articulate gender issues in policy and who have established spaces for negotiation and dialogue among government agencies. Concurrently, the programme has supported advancements in awareness, policy making and advocacy for the human rights of indigenous women and these have received government support.

Staff are also initiating capacity building on gender in induction processes for new staff to ensure continuity and in policy and programme implementation. The final evaluation noted that staff were taking responsibility for policy implementation to improve the status of women and advocating for increases in financial resources and budgeting for gender equality. Having a clear sustainability plan for the programme—from the programme start-up phase—would support these gains even further.

### 5.1 Efficiency and Effectiveness<sup>14</sup>

While there are challenges in terms of management arrangements, joint programmes do create efficiencies by concentrating technical capacity and financial investment for gender in a programme hub. A number of the joint programmes established this type of mechanism to provide outreach across two or more sectors. Having a hub of information and technical assistance also builds a consistent understanding of gender analysis among stakeholders and support future collaboration and improves effectiveness.

The Guatemala joint programme (see Box 7) demonstrates how the programme hub served to provide technical assistance for a range of government sectors, increase capacity and support sustainability for gender analysis.

Joint gender programmes have also added value in terms of efficiency and effectiveness by learning lessons from previous initiatives, building on experience of multiple agencies, enhancing the depth and reach of prior achievements, and supporting continuity and sustainability in progress already made on gender equality. A number of the MDG-F Gender Window joint programmes built on historical programming experience.

### 5.2 Increased Awareness and Capacity for Gender Responsive Development

A significant way in which the MDG-F gender programmes have added value to the work of UN Country Teams is by raising the profile of gender equality as an inter-disciplinary issue. In many countries they have made significant contributions to the base of evidence about the dynamics and interactions of gendered power relationships and clearly demonstrated how harmonized approaches—between government agencies, donors, the UN and

## BOX 8. STRENGTHENING LEGISLATION AND POLICY IN OPT AND TIMOR-LESTE

The Timor-Leste programme contributed to the approval of a law against domestic violence, which was passed by the national parliament in May 2010. The related implementation approach detailed in the National Action Plan on gender based violence and the National Action Plan on human trafficking are in the process of finalization. Extensive advocacy, public awareness campaigns, technical support, and other capacity building efforts were provided to support formulation, approval, promulgation and implementation of the law and the national action plans.

The OPT National Strategy to Combat Violence Against Women 2011–2019 (NSCVAW) was developed under the MDG-F Programme on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women in the OPT and led by the Ministry of Women's Affairs. This strategy organized the efforts of all parties, including the Palestinian Authority (PA), civil society organizations (including community-based organizations), academia, and the private sector, to work towards the elimination of VAW. The strategy also addressed gaps that resulted from the lack of a long-term comprehensive plan between all the organizations working on VAW in OPT. Memorandums of Understandings (MoUs) were signed between the Minister of Women's Affairs and five line ministries. The MoUs clearly state the obligations and commitments of each of the ministries to provide financial and human resources to ensure implementation of their component of the NSCVAW.

Moreover, the programme supported the horizontal and vertical review of the Labour Law, policies and procedures. This resulted in proposed amendments for certain articles in the Law that hinder women's participation and enrolment in the work force. In addition, the Palestinian Cabinet endorsed establishment of the National Committee for Women's Employment to track women advancement in the world of work.

civil society—can boost government and civil society effectiveness, benefit families and communities, and empower specifically targeted beneficiaries.

The programmes that focused on capacity building in government showed that an increased profile for gender programming supports changes in organizational culture. This means that gender analysis and responsiveness is a required consideration in decision-making and contributes to the quality and effectiveness of development processes.

Programmes are showing that where gender is more visible as an issue it creates a critical mass effect, more people will raise gender inequality as an important issue relevant to development effectiveness and it has more 'staying power' in the policy environment. This is not an instant process, and organizational culture can experience reversals if donors and civil society are not engaged in keeping gender 'on the agenda' so that substantive gender analysis and programming criteria become a standard element of government and NGO development initiatives.

A central source of technical expertise in a programme hub also increases flexibility to provide follow-up capacity building through monitoring, mentoring and coaching to supplement workshops or one-off training sessions.

### 5.3 Generating Demand for Human Rights and Strengthening Legislative Frameworks

Linked to the above points, the MDG-F programmes are showing that they can add value by catalysing awareness and influence across sectors with multiple development actors. This creates both understanding of and demand for human rights and gender equality, which can foster behaviour change to realign social norms and demonstrated political will at family, community and government levels. This was done, for example, by supporting women's civil rights in, Bolivia, Brazil and Guatemala; by supporting women's right to health in Bangladesh, Ethiopia and Guatemala; and by supporting women's rights to live free of violence through all programmes.

The MDG-F programmes also worked to entrench human rights in new or strengthened legislative frameworks in, *inter alia*, Namibia, Timor Leste, Viet Nam and enhanced policy implementation of rights-based legislation by building capacity of government and non-government stakeholders in a number of countries including Algeria, Brazil, Morocco, Nicaragua and OPT. This attention to the enabling environment for human rights is critical to sustainability of gender equality.

## 5.4 Meeting Practical Needs and Strategic Interests

The MDG-F gender window programmes have shown that there is significant potential for joint programmes to concurrently address women's immediate and practical needs for education, security and health while also supporting strategic transformational change. Strategic change promotes women and girls as capable, respected and informed actors in the development of their families, communities and countries; and works in the medium to long term to transform social and cultural norms.

This improves women's status at the household level and reduces structural discrimination against women and girls in political and economic systems. Joint programmes involve multiple agencies and partners, and because of their profile and multisectoral scope they have potential to attract long-term support from donors and governments.

## 5.5 Innovation and Replication

The MDG-F joint programmes were catalysed by the participation, knowledge and interest of a wide range of stakeholders, the political profile of the programme, and the related availability of adequate financial resources. Using these resources, they were able to rigorously examine issues of gender inequality on a national and subnational level and develop innovative interventions. These innovations can serve as the basis for replication in national planning and programme delivery as well as in future donor funded initiatives. In some cases, innovations were built on existing promising practices, and in some

### BOX 9. SHARING INNOVATIVE APPROACHES: SOUTH-SOUTH EXCHANGE BETWEEN BRAZIL AND COLOMBIA

The Colombian joint programme developed an Educational Communication Strategy based on a study by the Programme on Social and Institutional Tolerance of Gender based Violence. The strategy supported the creation of the first inter-institutional Communication Committee to Prevent Violence Against Women and a national communication strategy entitled '*Mujer tienes derechos*'. The strategy was scaled up and implemented at the subnational level holding workshops and producing educational material to sensitize journalists to the issue of gender based violence.

Thanks to the MDG-F Knowledge Management Initiative for the Gender Window, the experience was shared with the Brazilian joint programme during a learning exchange ('Knowledge Transfer Agreement' – KTA) and was replicated in Brazil in the context of the educational and advocacy campaigns on new masculinities as well as on racial discrimination. Thanks to peer support missions, the Brazilian programme followed the Colombian strategy and developed a study on institutional tolerance on which they based the development of their communication/advocacy strategy, which focused on innovative aspects to fight against racial discrimination. The Brazilian programme also adapted from Colombia the software for the monitoring and evaluation of programme results (SIPRO). The KTA was created to transfer knowledge on SIPRO, however, the peer missions allowed the Brazilians to identify other areas of thematic exchange, which became the core of the experience and have ensured sustainability beyond the end of the programmes.

cases, they filled gaps related to legislation, policy, baseline knowledge, and engagement of men and boys to promote gender equality. The MDG-F also

facilitated exchange of information and south-south learning so immediate benefits and replication could take place—a number of joint programme exchanges took place to support national partners' capacity development and creation of international networks of gender equality advocates.

Innovative ways of working and models for stakeholder engagement and partner collaboration add value by building critical mass in support of gender equality for sustainable and transformative change. This includes collaboration and sharing of responsibility between the government, non-government and private sector as was introduced through the programmes in Colombia, Guatemala and Morocco.

In OPT and Timor Leste shelter management is a shared responsibility between government and NGOs, which supports flexibility and responsiveness of services. In Bangladesh, the programme was fully engaged in support of BRAC, a long-standing NGO, that can ensure continuity of initiatives and physical and economic security of women in vulnerable situations.

All MDG-F joint programmes developed knowledge products that were used for capacity development,

advocacy and awareness raising. In addition, a number of programmes commissioned original research on the status and position of women in the programme countries. This research has been strengthened by the multisectoral input from stakeholders and development partners, contributing to a base of inter-disciplinary knowledge that will support future programmes as well as government decision-making. In addition a number of initiatives were undertaken to collect and harmonize data, particularly on GBV, and to engage the national statistics offices in ownership, analysis and management of that data.

In Viet Nam the General Statistics Office conducted the first national survey on domestic violence in collaboration with the ministry responsible for gender equality. In Brazil, the joint programme supported first attempts to harmonize GBV data from different sources into a national data system with common indicators, including indicators linked to race and ethnicity. The Bangladesh joint programme used local and national level consultations and contributed to the development of a dynamic database on violence against women managed by the Bureau of Statistics.

## 6. RECOMMENDATION: USING STANDARDS TO MAXIMIZE VALUE ADDED POTENTIAL

The review of the 13 MDG-F joint gender programmes points to common programme successes and benefits as well as their weaknesses and gaps. Addressing these in a logical and consistent manner will build on the considerable experience and progress made under the MDG-F initiative and strengthen and improve future gender and development work.

The value that joint programmes dedicated to gender equality will add to national development and can be increased by the development and application of standards. Standards can be drawn from the experiences of the MDG-F Gender Window and other examples of good practice. If lessons learned and good practices are triangulated with internationally recognized frameworks of analysis (for mainstreaming and empowerment), standards will improve the comparability of programmes, align with existing

accepted indicators, and more accurately monitor and evaluate progress on gender equality resulting from joint programmes and related initiatives implemented over the medium to long term.

It is recommended that systematic standards for joint gender programmes be adopted as a UN system-wide commitment in line with this review of the MDG-F Gender Window portfolio and meshed with the findings of the UN Joint Evaluation of Joint Gender Programmes. Preliminary findings are complementary and will guide agencies to improve relevance, effectiveness, efficiency of programmes in support of gender equality and women's human rights.

Annex 2 provides a list of proposed standards that can serve as a starting point for discussion among development partners. This annex also stands as the detailed recommendations of this paper.

# ANNEX 1. LOGIC MODEL – TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

**Result:** A describable or measurable change in state that is derived from a cause and effect relationship. Results are the same as outcomes and further qualified as immediate, intermediate or ultimate.

<p><b>ULTIMATE OUTCOME</b></p>	<p>The highest level change that can be reasonably attributed to an organization, policy, program or initiative in a causal manner, as is the consequence of one or more intermediate outcomes. The ultimate outcome usually represents the <i>raison d'être</i> of an organization, policy, program or initiative and takes the form of a sustainable change of state among beneficiaries.</p>	<p>WHY?</p>
<p><b>INTERMEDIATE OUTCOME</b></p>	<p>A change that is expected to logically occur once one or more immediate outcomes have been achieved. In terms of time frame and level these are medium term outcomes, which are usually achieved by the end of a project/program and are usually at the change of behaviour/practice level among beneficiaries.</p>	<p>WHAT?</p>
<p><b>IMMEDIATE OUTCOMES</b></p>	<p>A change that is directly attributable to the outputs of an organization, policy, program or initiative. In terms of time frame and level these are short-term outcomes and are usually at the level of an increase in awareness/skills of beneficiaries (or their ability to access those awareness/skills).</p>	<p>WHAT?</p>
<p><b>OUTPUTS</b></p>	<p>Direct products or services stemming from the activities of an organization, policy program or initiative.</p>	<p>WHAT?</p>
<p><b>ACTIVITIES</b></p>	<p>Actions taken or work performed through which inputs are mobilized to produce outputs.</p>	<p>HOW?</p>
<p><b>INPUTS</b></p>	<p>The financial, human, material and information resources used to produce outputs through activities and accomplish outcomes.</p>	<p>HOW?</p>

Source: Canadian International Development Agency, 2008

# ANNEX 2. PROPOSED STANDARDS FOR JOINT GENDER PROGRAMMES

Based on this review of the MDG-F joint gender programmes, the following categories of standards are recommended and should be linked to associated criteria for quality assurance. These should be scrutinized by gender specialists with experience in different development settings and adapted to each specific context.

Standards	Criteria	Rationale
<b>Initial Staffing</b>	Main programme staff (coordinators or managers) with a minimum of 5 – 7 years (P-4/P-5) experience in gender programming and joint programmes, hired, seconded or deployed from existing posts to lead programme and hire national counterpart(s) prior to programme start-up	Complex multi-stakeholder programmes on gender require in-depth experience in gender analysis, the ability to influence senior decision makers and manage a large number of stakeholders. Ensuring programmes are transformational, efficient and effective requires a solid base of gender related experience
<b>Situation Analysis</b>	Situation Analysis is basis for programme design and meets the following criteria <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Government and gender equality organizations involved in preparation and/or review of the analysis, including subnational organizations representing the rights of vulnerable and/or minority groups of women (for example disabled women, indigenous women, women in poverty)</li> <li>Considers existing analyses of gender equality in the country and any related recommendations. Including at a minimum a) CEDAW Committee concluding comments where they are available; b) national and/or regional women's development policies and plans; and c) other national situation analyses of gender undertaken by development partners and human rights institutions within the previous 10 years</li> <li>Issues identified in the analysis are reviewed in the context of recognized gender analysis frameworks to identify points for influence and transformational change</li> </ul>	A comprehensive situational analysis is critical for ensuring programmes can be aligned with and relevant to national priorities for gender equality, tailored to the country's socio-economic and cultural context and that they accurately engage with the interests of key stakeholders and beneficiaries. Situational analyses assess how national priorities overlap with gender equality and human rights indicators. They apply gender analysis frameworks to the issues and point to areas where specific types of interventions will most effectively promote gender equality. Building on prior analyses, recommendations from human rights bodies and lessons learned from previous initiatives can increase effectiveness and maximize the transformational potential of gender-focused programmes.
<b>Programme Planning, Design &amp; Start Up</b>  Allocation of funds for start-up activities	X% programme funding and time allocated for technical assistance to ensure gender responsive programme design and successful start-up. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Specific gender expertise &amp; M&amp;E technical assistance provided for development of the following plans and strategies</li> </ul>	The inception and start up phase of programmes is critical – this has been mentioned repeatedly in the mid-term and final evaluation of the MDG-F Gender Window programmes. Regardless of the thematic area the planning and start up of a programme is important, but ensuring gender responsiveness and building in transformational elements requires specific strategies, and plans as quality assurance mechanisms. Investing time and resources for technical assistance at start-up can strengthen the programmes' planning, implementation and achievement of results. Balancing resources between sound planning and implementation will enhance overall relevance, efficiency and effectiveness.
Stakeholder engagement strategy	Involvement strategy to enable national ownership includes key stakeholders with interests related to programme focus area. Stakeholder include at a minimum: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resident coordinator, heads of involved UNCT agencies and Gender Theme Groups to endorse key decisions and partnership arrangements</li> <li>UNCT gender focal points and technical staff with expertise in data collection, M&amp;E, relevant sectoral issues, financial management, operations</li> <li>Women's rights focused organizations at national and subnational level</li> <li>Government ministries and local offices responsible for planning, finance, gender equality, national statistics and sectoral focus areas</li> <li>Community/ NGO/ FBO representatives (including men and women) who are opinion leaders and potential gatekeepers on women's autonomy</li> </ul>	Different stakeholder groups have different interests – some are competing and can block progress if they are not managed, some interests are shared and can create synergies and support rapid progress if they are fostered. Because gender equality is a sensitive issue implying changes to social norms and values it is important to invest time to bring together an inclusive group of stakeholders and to support them to understand the benefits that can be realized through gender responsive development approaches
Theory of Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Theory of change mapping facilitated with technical assistance from gender expert and monitoring and evaluation specialist</li> <li>Involvement of all stakeholders (including all relevant government ministries and local level departments) in consultation about, and development of, theory of change, particularly to identify key intervention points</li> <li>Incorporation of gender transformational elements clearly identified with key indicators and change processes identified.</li> <li>Senior level decision makers have endorsed the theory of change and related roadmap before it is translated into a logic framework.</li> </ul>	Using a clear, simple theory of change model – with involvement of stakeholders committed to gender equality – will contribute transparency and correctly grounded stepping stones to gender equality in each country context. Technical assistance of a gender specialist combined with planners and M&E specialists to facilitate stakeholder involvement in a theory of change mapping exercise will link the situation analysis of root causes of gender inequality to a strategic approach that is gender responsive and potentially transformational. Provision of time and in-kind support from stakeholder groups including central and line ministries will support ownership and feasibility.
Logic Framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Logic framework developed by team of gender and M&amp;E specialists</li> <li>Logic framework includes activities, outputs, immediate outcomes, intermediate outcomes and high level outcomes with relevant indicators and targets</li> <li>Logic framework baselines and high-level outcome indicators are verifiable using standardized and available sex disaggregated data sources from existing surveys or censuses.</li> <li>Baselines are drawn as much as possible from existing information sources</li> </ul>	Gender equality and monitoring and evaluation are both specialized areas of expertise and to ensure that all components of the framework are transparent and linked, the logic framework needs to be developed with specific technical assistance in those areas. Using a logic framework with multiple levels of outcomes supports demonstration of progress toward results. To demonstrate change over time and ensure sustainability and efficiency indicators and baseline data must be linked to existing data and to the capacity of each country to document and track information on men and women.

Continued on page 35

Standards	Criteria	Rationale
Management plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Joint gender programme management plan developed and signed by all partners. Plan includes at a minimum: in-kind contributions to staffing, commitments to internal capacity building for gender equality, roles, reporting relationships, timelines and implementation responsibilities for all UN, government and NGO partners.</li> <li>Management plan has rationale section that articulates how partnership and coordination arrangements support efficiency and effectiveness to promote national and international gender equality commitments</li> </ul>	<p>A sound management plan supports aid effectiveness principles of harmonization and alignments and will facilitate efficient and effective use of resources. In addition it will support decision-making and problem solving related to the sensitivities related to gender equality and human rights programming.</p> <p>A management plan assumes that UN and donor agencies are accountable to their own gender equality strategies and work with governments to realized international agreements and commitments such as the Beijing Platform for Action and CEDAW</p>
Sustainability plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sustainability plan in place for transition of programme to national ownership at the end of the programme cycle</li> <li>Plan assesses shared responsibilities and is presented to all partners to demonstrate who will be responsible and how sustainable progress on gender equality will be made and managed after the programme ends.</li> </ul>	Sustainability planning is a pro-active way to maximize UN investments. Advance planning for hand-over of joint gender programmes also increases the profile of gender issues as an important aspect of development effectiveness. A sustainability plan increases accountability to the logic framework by clarifying that future ownership of programme elements rests with government and that joint programme partners are responsible to produce time-sensitive achievements and results.
Staffing plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staffing plan is in place prior to programme implementation.</li> <li>Plan details a) types of national and international inter-disciplinary gender expertise and technical assistance required to achieve outcomes across sectors; b) budget for programme staff in-kind contributions of space and equipment by programme partners; and c) UN and government agency responsibilities for co-management of programme staff</li> </ul>	Staffing plan supports advance coordination of gender and other specific expertise and reduces gaps in technical capacity for the programme operations. In addition it lays out partnerships around staffing contributions of various agencies for sectoral technical assistance inputs and clarifies human resource management.
Capacity building strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Capacity building strategy, with budgets and timelines, is in place. Strategy is designed to support application of gender theory into practice for all parties, including ministry responsible for gender equality, finance and planning ministries</li> </ul>	Capacity building is most effective if the recipients can apply their new skills and knowledge to advance gender equality in the context of the programme and related initiatives. Capacity building strategies identify capacity gaps, what types of capacity building is required and why, how enhanced capacity is intended to be applied and who is responsible to support that.
Communication strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communication strategy in place to share information on successes and constraints to activities and outputs.</li> <li>All communications to include a gender analysis to assess how activities contribute to gender equality and development effectiveness</li> <li>Strategy includes dissemination approaches to be used to reach, and receive feedback from, stakeholders at national and subnational levels</li> </ul>	Communication strategies will increase the profile of gender equality at all levels and ensure that stakeholders and the public are aware and accurately informed about the objectives and achievements of the programme. Communication strategies support transparency and facilitate problem solving between programme partners. They can also defuse tensions between stakeholders by ensuring that clear objective information is easily available and that gender programmes do not put women at risk or alienate gatekeepers.
Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Based on the situational analysis, theory of change, and logic framework realistic risk assessments and mitigation options are developed for activities and/or outputs.</li> <li>Senior decision-makers in UN, civil society and government contribute to the programme at key decision points, and facilitate regular briefings on the gender aspects of the programme (eg in UNCT mtgs, donor round-table mtgs, briefings to Ministers, public meetings)</li> <li>All stakeholders receive common training on gender responsive programming priorities, gender transformational programming approaches, and application of the theory of change as developed in planning phase.</li> <li>Stakeholders have clear schedule for implementation and clear recourse to technical assistance and monitoring support from gender and sector specialists.</li> <li>Ongoing support from programme management team to assess, address and mitigate issues arising related to gender power dynamics and operational issues (eg financial, human resources, reporting)</li> <li>Mitigation approaches are linked to communication strategy to seek and respond to feedback from stakeholders and beneficiaries</li> </ul>	<p>Programming for women's empowerment and gender equality has a high number of potential risks due to the sensitivities of gender and power in different socio-cultural settings. Having identified options for risk mitigation and involvement of senior officials with authority to make major decisions can support problem-solving and rapid action. This also supports mainstreaming as it demonstrates political will and reinforces gender as a valid development consideration.</p> <p>Likewise, supporting stakeholders on the process of implementing the programme in a gender responsive and transparent manners has benefits in terms of advocacy and ownership for gender equality objectives.</p> <p>Regular and consistent technical assistance in programme management logistics, operations and thematic areas with integrated gender analysis reinforces understanding about how gender mainstreaming works and how different aspects of institutional functioning and community engagement can support it.</p> <p>Effective implementation will apply the strategic guidance developed in the start up phase and based on those plans will have clear roles, responsibilities and timeframes for implementation. Problems arising related to gender power dynamics can therefore receive more rapid and strategic attention.</p>
Monitoring and Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Technical assistance provided to develop and facilitate simple, standardized reporting on gender equality aspects of activities (sex-disaggregated information on beneficiaries, adherence to timelines by each partner, identification of barriers to progress).</li> <li>Reporting formats are standardized across partner agencies and government ministries so that collaborating partners are reporting on facets of the same event at the same level.</li> <li>Technical assistance provided to partners who have difficulty with reporting</li> <li>Reports are analysed with activity level progress indicators (from logic framework) to show movement toward achievement of outputs and outcomes.</li> <li>Monitoring of sustainability plan to track indicators on a) each partners' engagement and in-kind investments, b) ongoing communication and engagement with donors and government for sustainable capacity building and financing for gender equality in national systems</li> </ul>	<p>Consistent monitoring of simple linked indicators allows assessment of efficiency and harmonization and verification of progress. Standardized reporting frameworks that are reviewed and follow-up help to build capacity and concurrently minimize reporting burden on partners.</p> <p>Monitoring and reporting will be simplified and made more effective by the use of a consistent 'theory of change' model linked to technically sound logic frameworks. Quality assurance mechanisms in the programmes' plans and strategies provide transparency so that the efforts and short-term impact of the programme can be more transparently evaluated</p>
Accountability for Results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Joint gender programmes take guidance from UNCT performance indicators on gender and the UN System Wide Action Plan for gender equality reporting framework.</li> <li>Senior management in UNCT accountable for clearly identified programme milestones with reporting requirements to (national partners meetings, Exec Boards, ...?)</li> <li>Senior management in UNCT and programme management teams invited to present joint programme outputs in international meetings (eg CSW, regional commissions, regional donor meetings)</li> </ul>	Large investments in joint gender programmes have the potential to add value to national development efforts. Consistency is increased by the use of programming standards and guidelines, engagement of senior officials at the national level and through use of the UN System Wide Framework for Gender Mainstreaming and UNCT performance indicators for gender equality and women's empowerment. These frameworks and indicators support UNCT senior managers to report successes and investment in gender equality is a way that is comparable across UN agencies and which is clearly linked to aid and development effectiveness

# REFERENCES

- Gênero Raça e Etnia, Gênero Raça e Etnia and MDG-F Joint Programme website for Brazil, accessed 2012, <http://www.generoracaetnia.org.br/>.
- Grown, Caren, Geeta Rao Gupta and Alishan Kes, *Taking Action: Achieving Gender Equality and Empowering Women*, UN Millennium Project, Task Force on Education and Gender Equality, 2005, <http://www.unmillenniumproject.org/documents/Gender-complete.pdf>.
- MDG-F (MDG Achievement Fund), 'About Us', MDG-F website, Accessed 2012, <http://www.mdgfund.org/aboutus>.
- MDG-F, 'Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment', Thematic Window on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment on MDG-F website, accessed 2012, <http://www.mdgfund.org/content/genderequalityandwomensempowerment>, 2012.
- MDG-F, "'Tamkine' Programme Morocco: Modelling of the Joint Multisectoral MDG-F Gender Programme for International Transfer', MDG-F, UN Women and Ministry of Social Development, Family and Solidarity, 2011.
- MDG-F, 'Implementing the National Study on Domestic Violence against Women: Experience and Lessons from Viet Nam', Draft report, Documentation Initiative on Promising Practices in Gender Programming MDG Fund, April 2012.
- MDG-F, 'Programa Integral Contra Violencias de Género', MDG-F Joint Programme website for Colombia, accessed 2012, <http://www.programacontraviolenciasdegenero.org/>.
- Ministère de la Solidarité, de la Femme, de la Famille et du Développement Social, 'Focus', MDG-F Joint Programme website for Morocco, accessed 2012, <http://www.social.gov.ma/fr/index.aspx?mod=2&rub=8&srub=219>.
- Palestinian National Authority; Ministry of Women's Affairs', Palestinian National Authority and MFG-F Joint Programme website on OPT, accessed 2012, <http://mdg-f.mowa.pna.ps/>.
- PRB (Population Reference Bureau) and USAID (US Agency for International Development), *A Summary Report of New Evidence that Gender Perspectives Improve Reproductive Health Outcomes*, PRB, 2011, [www.prb.org/igwg\\_media/summary-report-gender-perspectives.pdf](http://www.prb.org/igwg_media/summary-report-gender-perspectives.pdf).
- Promundo, UNFPA and MenEngage, *Engaging Men and Boys in Gender Equality and Health: A Global Toolkit for Action*, UNFPA, 2010, <http://www.unfpa.org/public/home/publications/pid/6815>.
- Schoofs, Steven, Rosan Smits and Serena Cruz, *Men, Masculinities and the Security – Development Nexus*. Peace, Security and Development Network, Clingendael, Netherlands Institute of International Relations, 2010, [http://www.humansecurity-gateway.com/documents/CLINGENDAEL\\_MenMasculinitiesAndTheSecurityDevelopmentNexus.pdf](http://www.humansecurity-gateway.com/documents/CLINGENDAEL_MenMasculinitiesAndTheSecurityDevelopmentNexus.pdf).
- UNDG, *UNCT Performance Indicators for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment*, UNDG, 2008, <http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/BSP/GENDER/PDF/Gender-Score-Card.pdf>.
- UNDG, *UNCT Performance Indicators for Gender Equality: Users Guide*, UNDG, 2008.
- UNDP (United Nations Development Programme), 'Algeria', UNDP and MDG-F Joint Programme website for Algeria, accessed 2012, [http://www.dz.undp.org/Projets\\_Cooperation/projets\\_PNUD/MDGF.htm](http://www.dz.undp.org/Projets_Cooperation/projets_PNUD/MDGF.htm).
- UNDP, *Supporting Transformational Change: Case Studies of Sustained and Successful Development Cooperation*, UNDP, New York, 2011.
- United Nations Working in Guatemala (Naciones Unidas Trabajando por Guatemala), 'Naciones Unidas Trabajando por Guatemala', Government of Guatemala and MDG-F Joint Programme website on Guatemala, accessed 2012, <http://onu.org.gt/contenido.php?ctg=1583-1339-fondos-odm>.
- UN-Women, 'Analysis of Gender Mainstreaming in MDG-F Joint Programmes', Draft report, UN-Women. 2012.
- Final Evaluation reports for Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Colombia, Guatemala, Morocco, Namibia, Vietnam.
- Biannual monitoring reports for all MDG-F Gender Window joint programmes.
- Promising practice draft submissions for Bangladesh, Bolivia, Colombia, Ethiopia, Morocco, OPT (Mapping initiative – MDG-F KM initiative for the Gender Window).
- Presentation material from 2011 Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Knowledge Management Initiative mid-term knowledge sharing workshop.

# NOTES

- 1 The 13 countries with joint programmes for MDG 3 are: Algeria, Bangladesh, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, Colombia, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Morocco, Namibia, Nicaragua, occupied Palestinian territory, Timor-Leste and Viet Nam.
- 2 See <http://www.mdgfund.org/aboutus>.
- 3 The 13 countries with joint MDG-3 programmes are: Algeria, Bangladesh, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, Colombia, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Morocco, Namibia, Nicaragua, occupied Palestinian territory, Timor-Leste and Viet Nam.
- 4 The priorities in the MDG-F Gender Window ToRs are linked to the other seven MDGs and the 2005 Gender Task Force report. Aid effectiveness principles, as laid out in the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the Accra Agenda for Action, are National Ownership, Mutual Accountability, Alignment, Harmonization and Managing for Development Results.
- 5 The MDG-F Gender Window programmes produced consistent sets of documentation that have been used in this analysis. These include 12 programme planning documents, 13 mid-term evaluations and 6 final evaluations. Each of the 13 programmes also provided biannual monitoring reports (all the reports for the 2<sup>nd</sup> semester 2011 and selected previous reports). The analysis has also included knowledge products developed by the programmes and by the MDG-F Knowledge Management Initiative for the Gender Window.
- 6 There is no clear rationale in the documents about how situation analyses were used in programme design so some statements are acknowledged to be speculative.
- 7 The OECD identifies three key basic budgetary functions that should be in place prior to the introduction of gender responsive budgeting: i) one universal and unified budget without off-budget items or parallel budgets, ii) effective recording and reporting of expenditures and revenues, and iii) transparency and openness about budget processes and disbursements to clarify disparities between pledges and actual allocations.
- 8 The programme in Bangladesh also included activities on gender responsive budgeting, mainly related to UN Women's support to the Ministry of Finance.
- 9 See UNDP, 'Supporting Transformational Change: Case Studies of Sustained and Successful Development Cooperation', 2011.
- 10 Indicators of where programming falls on the continuum from gender neutral to gender transformational include ownership by government, engagement of men and boys, comprehensive attention to factors of structural and systemic discrimination that constrain achievement of women's human rights.
- 11 The final external evaluation notes that the strategy of the programme is based on the Critical Route that Women Take in Dealing with Violence ("Ruta crítica") model developed by the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO). For more information about the model, see Pan American Health Organization and World Health Organization, *Domestic Violence: Women's Way Out*, 2000.
- 12 See <http://www.theoryofchange.org/about/how-does-theory-of-change-work/>.
- 13 See <http://www.acdi-cida.gc.ca/acdi-cida/ACDI-CIDA.nsf/eng/ANN-923155220-RB9>.
- 14 The OECD distinguishes between efficiency and effectiveness as follows: *Efficiency* measures the outputs—qualitative and quantitative—in relation to the inputs. It is an economic term, which signifies that the aid uses the least costly resources possible in order to achieve the desired results. This generally requires comparing alternative approaches to achieving the same outputs to see whether the most efficient process has been adopted. *Effectiveness* is a measure of the extent to which an aid activity attains its objectives.



**MDG Achievement Fund Secretariat**

220 East 42nd Street, 20th floor, New York, NY 10017, USA  
[www.mdgfund.org](http://www.mdgfund.org)

**United Nations Development Programme**

220 East 42nd Street, 21st floor, New York, NY 10017, USA  
[www.undp.org/gender](http://www.undp.org/gender)