

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY
 access to **water** governance one UN
IGUALDAD
 AGENDA DEL DESARROLLO
 food security nutrition **resilient**
 climate change adaptation OPPORTUNITIES
 ACTION **TOGETHER**
 effective development women's empowerment
 inclusive PARTICIPATION
ACCELERATING PROGRESS
 gender equality **sostenibilidad**
 processes DEVELOPMENT AGENDA
UN REFORM ALLIANCES
 public-private partnerships

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS FUND

Terms of Reference and Guidance for Joint Programme Formulation



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS FUND

This document provides policy guidance to UN Country Teams applying for funding under the Sustainable Development Goals Fund (SDG-F). The framework elaborated below sets out the policy goals of the Fund and illustrates the types of interventions the Fund will support. These parameters will also be applied by the technical assessment process that will review applications. These Terms of Reference include an analysis of the “**Lessons learned of the Millennium Development Goals Achievement Fund (MDG-F)**”; this analysis will provide key guidance for Country Teams to prepare strong proposals. These Terms of Reference should be read in conjunction with the “**MDG-F Joint Programme Implementation Guidelines**” ([link](#)). At the end of the ToR, you will also find a list with further reading materials that we consider essential to review before the formulation of a Proposal or Concept Note. Kindly note that the SDG-F will only accept applications from UN Resident Coordinators applying on behalf of their UN Country Team, in eligible countries that have been previously invited to participate¹.

¹ **Countries eligible to participate** include: Bangladesh, Bolivia, Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Honduras, Mozambique, occupied Palestinian territory, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Sierra Leone, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Timor Leste and Viet Nam.

CONTENTS

Section 1	From the MDG-F to the SDG-F: The transition to the Post-2015 development agenda	1
1.1.	Joint Programmes to support selected SDG-F objectives: When and how to apply	2
1.2.	Who can apply	3
1.3.	Policy goals and sectoral areas of work	4
1.4.	Cross-cutting issues	
1.5.	Concept Note eligibility criteria	7
Section 2	Joint Programme Formulation and Design Criteria	9
2.1.	Joint Programmes rationale and number of Agencies	9
2.2.	Budget and duration	10
2.3.	Joint Programme design process	12
2.4.	Applying a One UN vision and a multisector approach to Joint Programme design and formulation	13
2.5.	JP implementation plan	16
2.6.	Governance and coordination structures	17
2.7.	Monitoring & Evaluation	18
2.8.	Communication and Advocacy	20
2.9.	Knowledge Management	20
2.10.	Sustainability of results	21
Section 3	The structure of the SDG-F: Policy Goals and Sector Areas of Intervention and Cross-Cutting elements	22
3.1.	Inclusive Economic Growth for Poverty Eradication	22
3.2.	Food Security and Nutrition	25
3.3.	Water and Sanitation	29
3.4.	Cross-cutting issues	33
3.4.1.	Mainstreaming Gender into Joint Programmes	34
3.4.2.	Sustainability	35
3.4.3.	Public Private Partnerships	36

CONTENTS

Section 4	Keys to a Good Formulation Process: MDG-F Lessons Learned on JP Formulation and Implementation for Aid Effectiveness	38
4.1.	Ownership, alignment and participation of stakeholders in the design of programmes	39
4.2.	One UN vision and the use of a multisectoral approach	43
4.3.	Mutual accountability in Joint Programmes	46
4.4.	Sustainability of results	49
Section 5	Before submission: JP formulation checklist	52
Section 6	ANNEXES	55
	ANNEX I Concept Note and Joint Programme Document checklist	56
	ANNEX II Joint Programme Result Framework Matrix	61
	ANNEX III Joint Programme work plan and budget	62
	ANNEX IV Joint Programme Monitoring plan (formulation stage)	63
	ANNEX V MDG-F Terms of Reference for the National Steering Committee	64

Section I

From the MDG-F to the SDG-F: The transition to the Post-2015 development agenda

In 2007, the Millennium Development Goals Achievement Fund (MDG-F, www.mdgfund.org) was established by an agreement between the Government of Spain and the UNDP on behalf of the United Nations system. This was one of the largest development cooperation mechanisms designed to actively promote MDG achievement and inter-agency cooperation.

With a total contribution of approximately US\$900 million, the MDG-F funded among other activities 130 Joint Programmes (JPs) in eight thematic areas in 50 countries throughout the world. The Fund also supported global partnerships, thematic knowledge management initiatives and the Delivering as One initiative globally.

In continuing their support of inter-agency cooperation aimed at MDG achievement, and based on the experience gained with the MDG-F, the Government of Spain and the UNDP have established a new Fund: the “**Sustainable Development Goals Fund**” (SDG-F). This new Fund will rely on the knowledge, lessons learned and best practices gathered during the former phase, including the recommendations of the Joint Programme evaluations. The new Fund’s focus will be on those areas and projects of selected countries that have the best chance of continuing national actions towards the achievement of the MDGs through Joint Programmes and a multisectoral approach. The SDG-F will be based on the principles of effective development cooperation (including national ownership, alignment, harmonization, simplification, mutual accountability and focus on results), inclusion and participation and One UN coordination.

The SDG-F is being framed within the results of the discussions held on the new Post-2015 development agenda, so as to serve as a bridge between the experience of the MDGs and the SDGs. It will also contribute to strengthen the idea that the new agenda must recognize interconnections between sectors and, therefore, the need for a more integral and interdisciplinary response.

As we approach the term set for the achievement of the MDGs in 2015, and while the Post-2015 development agenda debates and consultations are underway, constant efforts are required to speed up progress in every goal. The purpose of the new Fund is to focus on certain strategic sectors and geographic areas that are key for the achievement of the MDGs and equally relevant for the global debate on the future development agenda. **The SDG-F’s action plan 2014-2016 will pursue the following objectives:**

- **Accelerating progress towards MDGs** by supporting development programmes in areas with the biggest gaps in progress: 1) Inclusive Economic Growth for Poverty Eradication, 2) Food Security and Nutrition and 3) Water and Sanitation.
- **Supporting the transition of the MDGs agenda towards the SDGs Post-2015 development agenda** by including in the requirements of the Joint Programmes key sustainability criteria, not only to be understood as environmental sustainability but also as the sustainability of results in the longer term. This will imply to consider, from the design phase, what the programmes will leave behind at their end as well as the use of the resources during the implementation phase. It will also imply the promotion of gender equality and women’s empowerment adopting a clear “dual strategy” (direct and mainstreaming approaches) and also the generation public-private alliances aiming at promoting entrepreneurship for the poor or creation of decent jobs, among others.
- **Carrying forward and strengthening compliance with the Paris, Accra and Busan commitments** by: 1) Including aid effectiveness in the eligibility criteria for Joint Programmes; 2) Establishing rigorous results-based Monitoring and Evaluation systems; and 3) Adopting a programme governance to implement the above international commitments.
- **Strengthening the UN system’s ability to deliver results in an integrated and multi-dimensional manner** by supporting the Joint Programme modality and by bringing together United Nations Agencies and national counterparts in a collective effort to advance towards the MDGs/SDGs.
- The above combined approach will promote **transformational change**, which is a process whereby positive development results are achieved and sustained over time by institutionalizing policies, programmes and projects within national strategies.²

1.1. Joint Programmes to support selected SDG-F objectives: When and how to apply

To achieve its objectives, the SDG-F will support Joint Programmes (JPs) in the areas of **Inclusive Economic Growth for Poverty Eradication, Food Security and Nutrition, and Water and Sanitation**, to be carried out within eligible countries in Africa, Arab States, Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean (see table in section 1.1 below for a list of eligible countries).

The SDG Fund will award grants to support JPs through a one-time competitive process. The application process consists of two rounds.

² UNDP, 2011, Supporting Transformational Change: Case Studies of Sustained and Successful Development Cooperation.

- **The first round involves the submission of a Concept Note (CN)** that will be assessed by a panel of experts based on the overall quality and results-oriented nature of the proposed initiative as well as on their adherence to the guidelines.

Deadline for submission: June 16, 2014, 11:59pm New York time (EST)

Length of document: Max 20 pages

- **The second round includes the presentation of full proposals, in the form of a Joint Programme Document based on the concept notes that were successful in the first round.** Formulation teams are expected to work closely with the SDG-F Secretariat to incorporate technical feedback and to ensure high standards of programme design and rigorous plans for Monitoring and Evaluation in the final Joint Programme Document.

Deadline: September 15, 2014, 11:59pm New York time (EST)

Time for preparation of JP full-fledged document: Two months from official notification of approval of the first round

Length of document: No maximum length

All applications must be submitted online. The SDG-F will not accept applications submitted via e-mail, regular post and/or fax. Each country office will receive through the Resident Coordinator Office the user and password to use the application. All information must be entered using the online application software, which will be available at: proposals.sdgfund.org. For **concept notes submission**, the application will open **June 1st**.

1.2. Who can apply

The SDG-F has identified 20 eligible countries to participate in the call for Concept Notes' Joint Programme proposals (see table below). Each country may submit more than one concept note Joint Programme proposal but, at this stage, **SDG-F doesn't expect to support more than one programme per country.**

Proposals must be submitted by the UN Resident Coordinator (RC) on behalf of the UN Country Team (UNCT) and the National Steering Committee.

Table 1.1 Countries eligible for SDG-F call for proposals

Region	Country
Africa	Côte d'Ivoire Ethiopia Mozambique Sierra Leone Tanzania
Arab States	occupied Palestinian territory
Asia	Bangladesh Philippines Sri Lanka Timor Leste Viet Nam
Latin America and The Caribbean	Bolivia Colombia Cuba Ecuador El Salvador Guatemala Honduras Paraguay Perú

1.3. Policy goals and sectoral areas of work

The SDG-F will support Concept Notes that focus on three sectoral areas: 1) Inclusive Economic Growth for Poverty Eradication, 2) Food Security and Nutrition, and 3) Water and Sanitation. These areas address some of the most important development gaps, and build on the MDG-F's experience using a multisectoral approach to the MDGs. The SDG-F welcomes applications of Joint Programmes that apply a multi-dimensional approach to these areas of work and that cover several of the policy objectives highlighted in the table below. **Please review section [Section 3](#) for further details on the policy and sectoral framework for Concept Notes.**

SDG-F Concept Notes sectoral policy goals	
Sector	Policy objectives
Inclusive Economic Growth for Poverty Eradication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create opportunities for decent jobs and secure livelihoods. • Create better government policies and fair and accountable public institutions. • Promote inclusive and sustainable business practices.
Food Security and Nutrition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote integrated approaches for alleviating child hunger and under-nutrition. • Promote sustainable and resilient livelihoods for vulnerable households, especially in the context of adaptation to climate change. • Strengthen capacities to generate information through assessment, monitoring and evaluation.
Water and Sanitation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote democratic and transparent water and sanitation governance systems. • Improve access to water and sanitation services for the poor and marginalised. • Ensure healthy lives through sanitation and hygiene education. • Promote integrated water governance and climate change adaptation.

1.4. Cross-cutting issues

Cross cutting	Policy Objectives
Gender	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addressing gender inequality effectively and transforming it with multi-sector approaches and in depth analysis of issues in their national and local context. • Promote women’s empowerment in all the priority sectors for the SDGF.
Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote a vision of a Human rights approach in all JPs. • Promote national/local ownership in all the JPs. • Mainstream environment and climate change in JPs.
Public and Private sector alliances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote shared responsibility (public and private) in development. • Create networks to develop alliances public and private.

1.5. Concept Note eligibility criteria

The appraisal process will involve an expert panel appointed to review proposals that will follow a set of **common criteria**:

	Concept Note eligibility criteria
Budget and duration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The SDG-F will grant a maximum of US\$1.5 million per JP. • Co-financing: the Country Office will have to leverage additional funds of at least the amount granted by the SDG-F. The matching funds can come from the national budget, the UN budget or any other stakeholder's budget, with a cost-sharing or parallel fund modality. • The JP design will correspond to the total budget approved (SDG-F contributions + matching funds). • The JP will be managed by one governance structure and it will be accountable for its results to the SDG-F Secretariat for the total budget approved (i.e. SDG-F contributions + matching funds). • Duration of proposals: 28 months (The four initial months will be for an inception phase oriented towards coordination, strategic and logistical arrangements, and recruitment.)
Thematic focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does the Concept Note underpin the thematic focus proposed by the SDG-F's Terms of Reference?
Quality and relevance of the proposal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact, sustainability and scalability. • How effective is the proposal in targeting beneficiaries? • Previous experience of the participating UN Agencies in Joint Programmes.
One UN Vision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Added value of the UN's joint vision and multi-dimensional approach to solving the development challenges identified by the proposal. • Appropriate oversight and coordination arrangements of the proposal.

	Concept Note eligibility criteria
Paris, Accra and Busan commitments on Aid Effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Endorsement of the National Steering Committee. • Level of ownership and participation of national stakeholders in the JP's design and implementation. • Effectiveness of the JP proposal's innovations and results-based approach to lead to concrete results. • Quality of the Monitoring and Evaluation system: measurable results, existence of baseline indicators and identification of potential risks. • Quality of the Communication and Advocacy measures for accountability purposes. • Quality of the Knowledge Management activities.
Sustainability, Gender and Private-Public Partnerships as cross-cutting issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusion of sustainability, gender and public-private alliances as cross-cutting issues in the situational analysis, design, implementation and management of the JP.
Civil society participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of participation of civil society in decision-making processes, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.
Contribution to the post 2015 development Agenda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JP contribution to the national and global discussion on the post 2015 development agenda and to the transition from the MDGs to the SDGs.

Section 2

Joint Programme Formulation and Design Criteria

2.1. Joint Programmes rationale and number of Agencies

A Joint Programme is a set of integrated activities contained in a common work plan and budget that involve several implementing partners sharing one governance structure and is executed by a government and/or other partners with the support of two or more UN Agencies. **The SDG-F will support JPs involving a maximum of four UN Agencies**, with three Agencies being the ideal number, based on the previous experience of the MDG-F.

The rationale of a Joint Programme is to enhance the development impact of technical assistance by combining inputs from various UN entities, each contributing according to its specific expertise. These programmes are characterised by multiple objectives and partners, longer time frames for implementation, and complex interrelationships among the various initiatives. Hence, careful planning is required to ensure that joint programming results in added value. Typically, this implies a manageable number of participating UN Agencies that have a common focus, understand the benefits of coordinated action, and are prepared to overcome the “business as usual” attitude.

Whether a Joint Programme is the most appropriate form of assistance for a particular country will depend on the extent of the problem being addressed, its institutional and policy framework and the specific technical expertise and value added that different UN Agencies can bring to bear on the achievement of national priorities. **A Joint Programme may prove to be the most effective approach if** the following conditions are present:

- The programme area is a priority for a number of UN Agencies and national partners and it is included in the UNDAF with proper context analysis and coordinated arrangements among UN Agencies;
- Multi-dimensional and complex interventions are required to reach results and achieve adequate geographical and target group coverage;
- A number of UN Agencies share the same the same geographical areas;
- Participating UN Agencies have the capacity to scale up in terms of geographical presence, logistics, human resources and technical expertise;

- Donors and/or other partners (CSO, national/local governments, private sector entities, etc.) wish to channel funds to the joint programme.

A first step is to undertake an assessment of the challenges the country faces. If a Common Country Assessment (CCA)/UNDAF exists, this is the ideal starting point to identify whether there are clear gains in developing a Joint Programme for the specific area of intervention. Sometimes the analysis of the CCA is not sufficient to determine the extent of the problems to be addressed and there is therefore little information on the expertise required, and thus which members of the UN Country Team (UNCT) are best equipped to deal with the issue. In these cases, the next step is to scan national overarching strategies (such as, for instance, the National Poverty Reduction Strategy, National Development Plan or Framework, Employment Promotion Strategy, etc.) to determine whether the promotion of a specific strategy is a priority at national level. Such strategies are underpinned by a situation analysis that shapes the problems to be addressed, sets the Government's policy priorities, and assigns responsibilities across different national and local authorities.

2.2. Budget and duration

The SDG-F will approve a maximum of US\$1.5 million per programme and requires country offices to co-finance Joint Programmes with at least the same amount as that contributed by the Fund. The matching funds can come from the national government, bilateral donors, other UN Agencies, IFIs, private sector, civil society organizations, foundations or other stakeholders. Funds do not need to be deposited in a common account but **their management will have to fall under the umbrella of the SDG-F Governance scheme NSC/PMC, role of the RC, integrated joint programme staff, joint implementation plan, etc.).** If necessary, also the composition of the NSC will have to change to include the new partner/s.

The starting date of the JP will be the day the funds are disbursed to the UN Agencies. Applicants should ensure that the necessary arrangements are in place so that the matching funds can be available at the same time. Funds provided by SDG-F as part of a joint programme should not be allocated to any sort of revolving funds mechanism involving credit schemes.

Regarding progress towards results, JPs will be held accountable to the Secretariat for the entire approved budget, i.e. the financing granted by the SDG-F and the matching funds. If necessary, even the composition of the Secretariat might evolve to include representatives of the cooperating partners. JPs must include in their biannual reports an overview of the programme's global financial progress so that a proper assessment of the JP's performance can be made.

JPs will have a maximum duration of two years and will include an additional inception period of four months (Total time duration = 28 months). The inception phase will be used, among other issues, for:

- Hiring of the JP team
- Establishment of national and local coordination units and governance structures

- Creation of an information system
- Launch of the JP
- Analysis and reflection on MDG-F lessons learned to ensure that they are adequately incorporated into the JP's operative and strategic arrangements
- Further consultations and participatory events at the local level to ensure a proper degree of consensus and ownership
- Development of Monitoring & Evaluation, Communication & Advocacy and Knowledge Management strategies
- Updating baselines for the intervention areas, when needed

The SDG-F will pay special attention to execution modalities and to the definition of the mechanisms that will ensure that national counterparts are part of the decision-making process, even if the JP is executed directly by UN Agencies (essentially through their role in the different levels of the SDG-F governance mechanism).

Funds will be disbursed on an annual basis, depending on the good performance of the JP. Please note that the JP's performance will be assessed as a whole and not by components or UN Agencies. We recommend that the work plan be designed in such a way that no bottlenecks occur as a result of the different paces of implementation of the partnering UN Agencies. If the JP does not show progress as a whole, delays may occur in the approval of further funds despite the good individual performance of the other partners.

The implementation plan and budget is included in the Joint Programme Results Framework matrix (See [ANNEX II](#)), with indications about the timing for the main activities and their approximate costs.

The formulation stage of the JP's full-fledged document also envisages the development of the first year work plan (attached as an annex). The work plan, to be revised at the launch of the Joint Programme, indicates in which quarter of the year activities will be implemented and the human and financial resources required. (See [ANNEX III](#) for a template of a quarterly work plan.)

Given the differences in the financial rules and procedures of the various UN Agencies, it is better to agree upon broad budget categories that all Agencies can use and that are easily understandable for national partners. Budget categories may include items such as staff, consultants, travel, contracts, training, equipment, miscellaneous, etc. However it is very important that participating UN Agencies agree on what different budget categories mean and imply. For example: is a training input/expert accounted under equipment/staff or training? Budget should be presented output-oriented.

Please note that the SDG-F will negatively assess JP proposals that contain incomplete financial information, or whose budgets seem to be overestimated or to contain excessive allocations for personnel, consultants and equipment. Conversely, the SDG-F will positively view JPs that allocate more resources aimed at achieving concrete results and clear outcomes for the direct beneficiaries of the JP. It is thus necessary to ensure that JP staff has both management and technical expertise in the areas encompassed by the Joint Programme.

2.3. Joint Programme design process

The development of a Joint Programme follows the stages of the project cycle (design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation).

Two types of documents are required: a Concept Note and a full-fledged Joint Programme Document.

- A. Concept Note.** The objective of a Concept Note is to explore the interest of the SDG-F in a proposed Joint Programme idea before the applicant develops a full-fledged proposal.

The Concept Note should be developed in a participatory manner, involving national and local counterparts as well as other stakeholders. The establishment of the NSC at this early stage will be critical to involve the main stakeholders from the onset to review the overall SDG-F JP architecture and agree on the JP focus areas and approach. Special value will be placed on the extent to which civil society, local authorities, communities, beneficiaries and private sector are involved in the design of the programme and in its decision-making structures.

The level of participation of national and local entities in the design process will be one of the most important criteria in the SDG-F's selection of proposals to receive funding. In the event that a specific stakeholder's involvement is not possible at the Concept Note stage, JPs must explain this absence and specify how the stakeholder will be involved in the development of the full-fledged proposal. Participation of stakeholders will also be consolidated during the inception phase of successful Joint Programme proposals.

It is at this stage that a preliminary version of the JPs' "Theory of Change" will be presented, showing the main elements leading to the successful achievement of the expected outcomes. See the [UNDG Handbook for Results Based Management](#) for details on how to develop Theories of Change.

- B. Full-fledged Joint Programme Document.** If a Concept Note is approved, a full-fledged Joint Programme Document is produced, which contains a more detailed articulation of the proposed Joint Programme; if the JP is funded, this document will serve as the basis for programme implementation.

The design of a Joint Programme proposal for the SDG-F comprises the steps outlined below:

1. Situation analysis, including sustainability, gender and public and private alliances as cross-cutting issues
2. Joint programme formulation, using a One UN vision and a multisector coordinated and integrated approach
3. Implementation planning
4. Establishment of JP governance and coordination arrangements

5. Monitoring and Evaluation plan
6. JP managerial strategies
 - i. Communication and Advocacy plan
 - ii. Sustainability Strategy
 - iii. Knowledge Management Strategy
7. JP mainstreaming strategies for gender, environment and climate change

[ANNEX I](#) compares the format and contents of Concept Notes and Joint Programme Proposals.

Note that both documents require endorsement before being submitted to the SDG-F. The Concept note must be endorsed by the proposed JP's National Steering Committee (NSC), which is established at the time of the formulation of the Concept Note and consists of the Resident Coordinator, a representative of the national Government and a representative of the Government of Spain/donor. **The full-fledged Joint Programme Document must be endorsed by both the NSC and the Programme Management Committee (PMC),** an organism which coordinates and manages the programme's implementing partners. See [section 2.6](#) on JP governance for further details.

The SDG-F will not consider applications that are not properly endorsed. All applications must comply with the design and endorsement requirements established by the present Terms of Reference. The Resident Coordinator will remain accountable for the overall objectives of the proposals and will be responsible for adherence to the SDG-F's guidance for formulation and implementation.

2.4. Applying a One UN vision and a multisector approach to Joint Programme design and formulation

Proposed JPs must develop a multisectoral approach to the issue they are addressing and respond to a well-established Theory of Change. In addition to providing a narrative description of the expected outputs and outcomes in the Result Framework Matrix (see Annex II), JPs must include a clear explanation of the causal relationship between programme activities, outputs and outcomes. See the [UNDG Handbook for Results Based Management](#) for further details on how to develop Theories of Change.

When developing a multisector programme, the regions of intervention and the proposed beneficiaries of the JP must be carefully selected. The criteria and data used to do so should be clearly explained in the proposal. **The Result Framework Matrix should also include a reference to the region(s) of intervention** (national or local; if local, the name of the specific region should be indicated) at the output level as well as at the activity.

JPs should use the following format to describe their **multisectoral approach, with a separate matrix for local and national level interventions:**

- **Common target group**
- **Overall objective pursued** for this target group
- Description of the **integrated strategy**
- **Sectoral institutions/UN agencies** involved and a description of the **added value and role of each**, including differentiated contributions and complementarities (e.g., technical expertise, political leverage, in-country capacities, etc.)
- **Justification of why a multisectoral approach will have a higher impact** than any other approach and will deliver results at lower costs and/or in less time.

Please note that a set of parallel projects working with different target groups is not considered a multisectoral/interagency approach, and therefore will be not positively valued in the assessment process.

Example of a JP description of its multisectoral approach to youth employment:

- **Local intervention:**
 - » **Target group:** Young people living in neighborhood A or attending school B.
 - » **Overall objective:** Young people are socially and economically empowered, and have improved their employment opportunities.
 - » **Integrated approach:** The target group of young people receives vocational training and takes part in personal development activities to strengthen their participation in policy development. Activities are implemented to address the most vulnerable individuals in this target group.
 - » **UN Agencies and national institutions involved (include explanation of added value):** Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Justice, UN Agencies.
- **National level intervention:**
 - » **Target group:** Young people nationwide.
 - » **Objective:** A national youth policy is developed.
 - » **Integrated approach:** Sectoral institutions collaborate to agree on a national youth plan and mainstream it into sectoral policies. Intersectoral coordination systems and information sharing methodologies are established.
 - » **UN Agencies and national institutions involved (explain added value):** Sectoral institutions, UN Agencies.

In addition, **the interrelation and feedback between the local and the national levels** is an important characteristic that JPs should carefully consider when designing their programme. This will be instrumental in leveraging synergies between partners and activities and will amplify the JP's potential for sustainability and scaling up. National and local components should not operate as parallel projects; rather, the JP should ensure there is feedback and cooperation between them. (See example below.) Note that national and local actors may move at different paces when implementing activities. It is thus important to develop a realistic approach to the interaction between the two with regard to objectives, schedule and outputs planned.

Example of a JP's description of the interaction between local and national components:

National level component: Development of a national policy on food security and nutrition and establishment of a coordination mechanism.

Local level component: Establishment of a pilot project for community A consisting of an integrated package for food security and nutrition.

National and local level interrelation:

- National policy guidelines are translated into a local/community action plan that will define how to deliver the integrated package.
- A control study is carried out comparing results of the target groups receiving the integrated package with a control group. A participatory evaluation involving target groups and national partners is carried out. Lessons learned are introduced into national policy and the pilot project is scaled up to other regions.

JP planning issues to ensure effective interrelation:

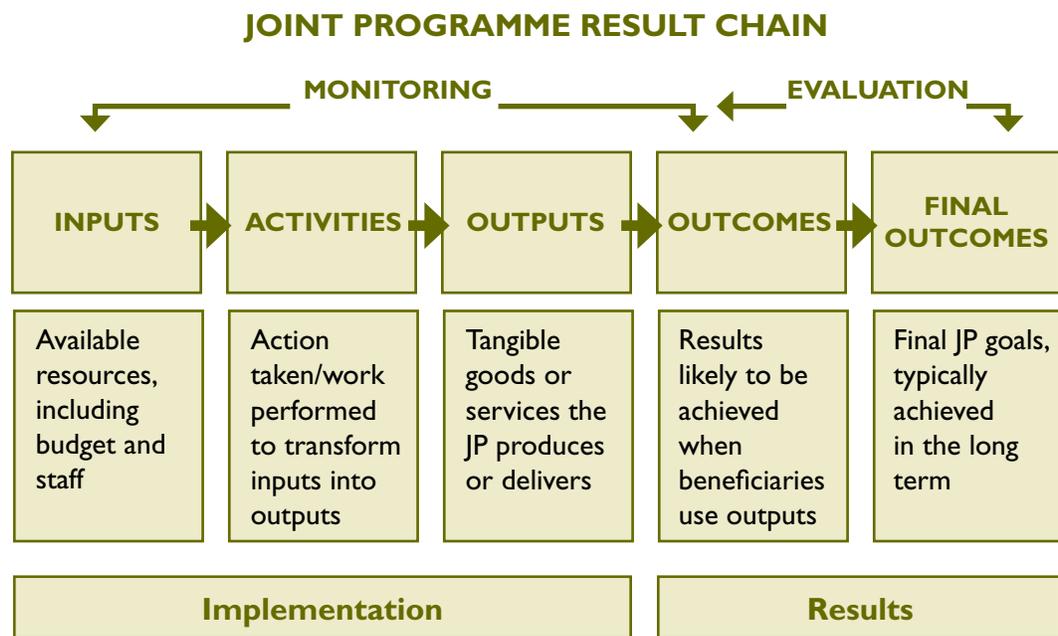
- National and local activities should be planned so that the inputs at each level of implementation are delivered in time to be used by the other. For example, pilot projects at the local level should not start up until the strategic lines for an integrated policy on food security and nutrition are well defined and introduced into national policy. Similarly, the analysis of the experience at the local level should be delivered in time so that its findings can be incorporated into the national policy-making process and used in scaling up the projects.
- The JP should apply coordination and operative arrangements to ensure vertical interaction between local and national levels.
- A risk analysis should be conducted.

2.5.JP implementation plan

Joint Programmes will use a SMART³ outputs methodology to develop their implementation plan.

Typically, a Joint Programme Document lists only the main activities (with more details offered in annual work plans), the sum of which should result in the achievement of the SMART outputs (the targets of the Joint Programme).

The achievement of all the SMART outputs signals the accomplishment of the relevant Joint Programme output (product). The outcomes, outputs and activities – together with the UNDAF overarching outcomes – form the Result Framework, i.e. the matrix that provides a summary of the internal logic of the Joint Programme. The presentation of JP information in a Results Framework allows visualizing the linkages within the programme structure and testing its logical consistency, as well as evidencing the synergies that are generated by different UN Agencies and national partners working in an integrated manner.



Reference: MDG-F/ILO, 2013, [Joint Programming on Youth Employment and Migration: A Training Guide](#)

Risk assessment. “Assumptions” are external factors, i.e. those outside the direct control of the Joint Programme, that are crucial for undertaking the JP’s activities and achieving outputs and outcomes. In a Joint Programme framework, only those assumptions that are important should be included. Higher risks can be tolerated only with less important

³ Specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound

assumptions. For the most important assumptions, risks must be low (or medium). If the risk is high and its occurrence likely, the Joint Programme is unlikely to succeed and needs to be redesigned, either by adopting an alternative strategy or by expanding its activity to control or influence the critical external factors. Risks should be listed in a separate matrix, while assumptions are listed in the Monitoring Framework. (See [ANNEX IV](#))

The **JP's risk assessment matrix should include a specific analysis of the risks related to coordination and management of the programme.** Special attention should be paid to how these risks may affect the JP's alignment with SDG-F pillars such as national ownership, focus on results and One UN coordination. Corrective measures should be identified and clearly included in the JP implementation plan.

2.6. Governance and coordination structures

JPs must clarify during the design phase their **governance, coordination and managerial structures. A well-functioning NSC will be essential for this purpose. The NSC will have to be active, engaged and committed to the JP's success and the leadership of the RC will be critical to motivate the NSC members' active participation. The roles and activities of each partner institution and implementing UN Agency should be detailed in the Concept Note as well as in the full-fledged JP Document.** For effective implementation, Joint Programmes require a degree of flexibility and adaptability of the traditional UN business model. It is in the design stage that the JP shows the value added of integrated efforts among UN Agencies and between UN Agencies and national partners, building on the respective strengths of each and clearly identifying accountabilities for the delivery of outputs.

With regard to the JP's governance structure, each JP should include in addition to the National Steering Committee (NSC), a Programme Management Committee (PMC). As mentioned before, the establishment of a NSC should be the first action prior to the formulation of the Concept Note and consists of the Resident Coordinator, a representative of the national Government in the role of Co-Chair, and a representative of the Government of Spain and/or other sponsoring partner entity (see [ANNEX V](#) for a template for the National Steering Committee Terms of Reference). They might decide to include additional actors as deemed appropriate, depending on the circumstances. The NSC should establish the thematic area and the process for the formulation of the concept note and the full JPs. The PMC should be established, at the latest, after approval of the Concept Note. Ideally, though, it will have to be in place from the design phase of the Concept Note. Please see the [MDG-F Joint Programme Implementation Guidelines](#) for more information on the governance structure requirements for SDG-F JPs and lessons learned from the MDG-F on this topic.

Regarding the coordination structure, please note that JPs should ensure horizontal coordination (between sectors) as well as **vertical coordination** (between national, regional and local levels).

Please note that the SDG-F will view negatively large UN teams where the value added of a UN inter-Agency endeavor is not clear, and/or lacks focus with regard to leadership and accountability. Artificial collaboration and partnerships across UN Agencies should be avoided. Instead, JPs should seek to build teams in which

participating Agencies are genuinely willing to **work together**, building on their respective mandates and through an appropriate division of labour.

2.7. Monitoring & Evaluation

JPs must develop sound Monitoring and Evaluation systems and tools. Due to the complexity and diversity of actors involved in a JP, the M&E system must go beyond a simple indicators matrix.

The monitoring capacity should be clearly stated and strong monitoring instruments should be developed. The monitoring system must carefully and comprehensively analyze every aspect involved in the collection of data and the analysis and sharing of information for decision-making processes. Therefore, in addition to the traditional M&E system, the **JP must also describe the information system** that will be used to collectively and jointly carry out Monitoring and Evaluation duties. Please see [ANNEX IV](#) for the monitoring matrix to be included in the Joint Programme Document. For further learning and best practices in developing M&E systems for JPs, review Part 3 of [Joint programming on youth employment and migration: A training guide](#) (MDG-F/ILO, 2013).

All M&E systems, tools, guidelines, and terms of reference must observe the OECD-CAD and UNEG guidelines, indications and quality standards.

The Results Framework provides a starting point for the design of the JP's Monitoring and Evaluation system. Two levels of monitoring are to be included. **The first level – implementation monitoring** – for short-term progress reporting (biannual monitoring reports) will focus on the continuous tracking of activities, outputs and the use of resources. **The second level, carried out once a year** (annual review) will focus on **outcomes and impact orientation**.

The monitoring plan – to be continuously updated during the implementation of the Joint Programme – must be reflected in a matrix that summarizes what will be monitored, when and how. The baseline information should be clearly defined at this stage. The matrix will break down project outcomes into areas of observations; formulate the performance questions; refine the indicators and the baseline used for measurement; and detail the information and data sources to be used. The monitoring system – prepared in consultation with all JP partners will include: 1) What is to be monitored and what is the **baseline?** (what information will be needed to indicate that the anticipated problem is occurring?); 2) Who will do the monitoring?; 3) How and where the monitoring will take place; 4) When to monitor; 5) How the information will be gathered, organized and assessed; and 6) What are the responsibilities, risks and assumptions? 7) Alternatives to address these risks.

JPs should ensure that the M&E system has a clear result-based management orientation and includes clear impact indicators (i.e. results or changes in the underlying reality), rather than focusing on implementation indicators only (i.e. those relating to activities and outputs).

Indicators should be **developed using the SMART approach, and should have the following characteristics:**

- **Simplicity:** Indicators should have simple information-gathering requirements and should be easily understandable by field staff and stakeholders with limited technical training.

- **Reliability and validity:** Indicators should be easy to cross check and verify by multiple methods or sources (triangulation); be consistent and repeatable; and be repeatable at multiple sites.
- **Require minimal resources:** Indicators should have minimum data and cost requirements, and have low time requirements for data gathering and analysis.
- **Appropriateness:** Indicators should be cultural- and gender-sensitive (data on participation and income should be disaggregated by sex and age if relevant); be sensitive to aspects of seasonality and tenure; and employ and facilitate the use of participatory methods.

Developing too many indicators should be avoided. The indicators chosen should be clear and comprehensible, relevant to what needs to be measured and, for those related to the target group, disaggregated by individual characteristics (sex, age group, educational attainment, rural/urban, etc.).

The **monitoring system will also function as an early warning system.** It will help to anticipate possible negative impacts resulting from the project and will provide information for decision-making, such as the establishment of threshold levels, periodic meetings to discuss emerging trends and issues, and iterative project redesign.

Please note that **the SDG-F will very positively value the existence of baselines** in the JP Concept Note. The full-fledged JP Document must include baselines or justify why they are not available and include their assessment in the inception phase.

Monitoring and Evaluation should be as participatory as possible, most particularly in those instances where civil society and the private sector are involved in a particular component of the programme. The M&E framework will be considered the cornerstone for the evaluation process and information should be ready for the evaluators to analyze.

Monitoring reports are prepared and presented to the Joint Programme Steering Committee twice a year and include updated work and monitoring plans. Annual reports will comprise a narrative part detailing the progress made and a financial report that summarises certified expenditures during the reporting period. Templates for the monitoring reports will be developed and shared by the SDG-F with the selected programmes.

The SDG-F will require JPs to produce annual monitoring reports plus a final evaluation report.

In order to guarantee that the M&E system can be feasibly implemented, **programme teams should ensure that enough funding is available for the Monitoring and Evaluation** initiatives of JPs programmes including the cost of final evaluations, a budget to support the evaluations field missions should be planned. While JPs will allocate a budget for final evaluations of the JPs, the SDG-F will commission those final evaluations and screen their quality according to UNEG and OECD-DAC rules. **A good rule of thumb is to allocate 4 percent of the budget to M&E.**

Country Offices must state their commitment to host a potential SDG-F Global evaluation if required.

2.8. Communication and Advocacy

Communication and Advocacy should play a key role in programmes supported by the SDG-F. JPs must thus develop a robust Communication and Advocacy strategy to ensure there is a common vision regarding accountability for results. The JP Concept Note should include a general overview on the main objectives of the C&A strategy. The activities related to C&A should be included in the Results Framework and later in the work plan. The full-fledged JP Document should include a detailed description of the strategy. The inception phase will be key to consolidating the development of the C&A strategy.

JPs are encouraged to use innovative Communication and Advocacy tools such as video, photography and infographics, as well as recorded interviews about the consultation process when elaborating their Concept Note.

All communication efforts should align with a coordinated communication strategy that acknowledges the multisectoral and multipartner nature of the SDG-F's programmes. **Communication channels and reporting mechanisms** should be established at the start of the inception phase. Communication should be directed to key stakeholders through the specific communication vehicles that they usually use.

Note that JPs may be called upon to provide the SDG-F Secretariat with high-quality communications materials, in particular human interest videos and photographs of programme beneficiaries, for use in advocacy and awareness-raising.

Please note that all communication materials developed as part of a JP should acknowledge its several partners. The SDG-F and Spanish Cooperation's logos should always be used jointly in all JP's communications. Further guidance on SDG-F visual identity will be provided by SDG-F's Secretariat.

2.9. Knowledge Management

Knowledge Management refers to a set of specific actions that are developed to transmit the knowledge acquired by an individual or an institution to the largest number of people who can benefit from that knowledge. It involves the promotion of an environment that encourages the systematic creation, enhancement, sharing and dissemination of knowledge, and requires a set of specific actions (gathering data; analysing processes, results and personal experiences; and capturing and sharing lessons learned and good practices).

A **Knowledge Management (KM)** system must be established as a core feature of the initiative from the outset of the Joint Programme. JP teams should ensure adequate resources for these activities and link them to the Communication and Advocacy strategy.

Including Knowledge Management in a JPs from its inception will improve the effectiveness and efficiency of both current JPs and future initiatives. It will increase the capacities of the JP to be accountable for its results; the power of evidence gathered

through KM will also place the Joint Programme team in a unique position to advocate and promote positive change in people conditions through more effective policies.

The KM system will help streamline work processes and foster innovation by capturing lessons learned from SDG-F projects and programmes. Dissemination of this knowledge will also be key to enhancing its use by the public in general, and by decision-makers in particular, to promote innovation and best practices.

2.10. Sustainability of results

A Joint Programme strategy must be credible and include provisions to ensure sustainability and scalability. JP proposals must contain clear indications on how the intervention will be continued by national partners at the end of the Joint Programme and how the lessons learned during implementation will inform the scaling up of activities.

A Sustainability Analysis should therefore be carried out identifying and analyzing the factors that are likely to impact, either positively or negatively, the sustained delivery of project benefits. The analysis must include at least the following aspects: 1) Relevance; 2) Social and cultural acceptability; 3) Economic and financial viability; 4) Environmental sustainability; 5) Implementation and monitoring strategy; and 6) Post-implementation operation and maintenance. (See [section 4.4 on lessons learned about sustainability by the MDG-F's JPs to understand the specific challenges of joint programming](#).)

The Sustainability Analysis should be followed by development of a Sustainability Strategy, which will indicate the way various elements of sustainability are to be identified, assessed and incorporated into a project or a programme, right at the design stage. The Sustainability Strategy will address outcomes, processes, policies and strategies, and institutional capacities promoted by the JP.

The **Sustainability Strategy** should specify all complements/constraints to sustainability and make provisions for their incorporation/tackling during the: 1) formulation/design and 2) implementation stages of the project.

There is a wide range of factors that can affect sustainability. It is therefore imperative that a well-planned monitoring mechanism be put in place to assess the status of a JP's sustainability at regular intervals. This will help in the early tracking of sustainability-related problems and provide necessary feedback for adjustments so as to improve the overall prospects of sustainability. It is useful to base such monitoring on pre-determined indicators. **Sustainability Evaluation** should commence right from the start of the implementation of a project, though not all dimensions of sustainability will necessarily be apparent in a project's early stages.

Section 3

The structure of the SDG-F: Policy Goals and Sector Areas of Intervention and Cross-Cutting elements

The SDG-F has identified three areas in which the greatest gaps still exist in achieving progress towards the MDGs: Inclusive Economic Growth for Poverty Eradication, Food Security and Nutrition, and Water and Sanitation; and three cross-cutting issues that are considered intrinsically relevant for the JPs success: Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment, Sustainability and Public-Private partnerships. This chapter lays out the Fund's objectives in supporting Joint Programmes in these sectors.

3.1. Inclusive Economic Growth for Poverty Eradication

3.1.1. Background and rationale⁴

The Post-2015 High-Level Panel called for a quantum leap forward in economic opportunities for the world's most disadvantaged people and a profound economic transformation to end extreme poverty and improve livelihoods. There must be a commitment to rapid, equitable growth – not growth at any cost or just short-term spurts in growth, but sustained, long-term, inclusive growth that can overcome the challenges of unemployment (especially youth unemployment), resource scarcity and – perhaps the biggest challenge of all – adaptation to climate change. This kind of inclusive growth must be supported by a global economy that ensures financial stability, promotes stable, long-term private financial investment, and encourages open, fair and development-friendly trade.

The first priority is to **create opportunities for good and decent jobs and secure livelihoods for all**, so as to make growth inclusive and to ensure that it reduces poverty and inequality. When people escape from poverty, it is most often by climbing the employment ladder into the middle class; to do this, they need the education, training and

⁴ Conclusions extracted from The Report of the High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda, 2013

skills to be successful in the job market. **Better government policies, fair and accountable public institutions, and inclusive and sustainable business** practices will support their trajectory and are essential parts of a Post-2015 agenda.

A second priority is to strive constantly to **add value and raise productivity, so that growth begets more growth**. Some fundamentals will accelerate growth everywhere: infrastructure and other investments, skills development, supportive policies towards micro-, small and medium enterprises, the capacity to innovate and absorb new technologies, and the ability to produce a higher quality and greater range of products.

Third, countries must put in place **a stable environment that enables business to flourish**. Business wants, above all, a level playing field and to be connected to major markets. For small firms, this often means finding the right business linkages, through supply chains or cooperatives, for example. Business also wants a simple regulatory framework that makes it easy to start, operate and close a business. Small and medium firms, that employ the most people, are especially hamstrung at present by unnecessarily complicated regulations that can also breed corruption.

Fourth, in order to bring new prosperity and new opportunities, growth must also usher in new ways to **support sustainable consumption and production, and enable sustainable development**.

3.1.2. Sectoral objectives

The SDG-F will support initiatives that tackle inclusive growth from a multisectoral perspective and address the following dimensions: **1) Create opportunities for good and decent jobs and secure livelihoods; 2) Support inclusive and sustainable business practices; and c) Promote better government policies and fair and accountable public institutions.**

The initiatives should include the following critical elements:

- **Special emphasis on young people, women, excluded sectors of population in condition of poverty and the reduction of vulnerability.**
- **Involvement/collaboration of the private sector** in promoting investment in capacity-building, job creation and markets' access.
- **An approach that tackles the causes of poverty, exclusion and inequality.**

I. Create opportunities for good and decent jobs and secure livelihoods, with a special focus on the most vulnerable.

Joint Programmes should strive to:

- » **Support national policies and programmes to increase employment opportunities for poor people, with a special emphasis on youth and women.** There is a need for dedicated national policies and programmes to increase job opportunities for the poor, in particular from excluded groups and enhance their employability. **Strengthen institutional capacity to create employment, youth and migration policies.** This can include:

capacity-building for staff of government agencies responsible for employment issues; capacity-building for national stakeholders (including staff of employers', workers', women's and youth organisations) to contribute to the development and implementation of relevant policies and programmes; mechanisms to improve coordinated and concerted action among relevant partners, including the private sector, and to reduce the time for reemployment; and mechanisms to monitor and evaluate progress and effectiveness of the different actions.

- » **Create incentives for entrepreneurship and investment.** The generation of employment opportunities for poor people requires addressing issues like providing greater access to productive resources (including land, natural resources, real property and financial capital), encouraging entrepreneurship and employment-intensive investment, and reducing the costs and risks of doing business. Particular attention needs to be paid to economic sectors in which the poor are strongly represented as producers and consumers.

2. Support inclusive and sustainable business practices.

Joint Programmes should include initiatives that:

- » **Increase productivity through quality improvement, innovation, competition, networking and decent working conditions.** These are essential elements in order to ensure that the poor can compete successfully in an increasingly globalised economy. In addition to policies that promote entrepreneurship, investment and increased productivity, measures are typically required to overcome information constraints, promote inclusive standards and encourage supply chain upgrading by lead firms (including the upgrading of SME suppliers).
- » **Reduce risk and vulnerability.** Pro-poor private sector development requires that the poor have the means to mitigate risks from various shocks (man-made and natural) that impact them disproportionately, undermining the benefits they might otherwise derive from growth. Many of these risks can and should be offset by sound public policies and the provision of public services. However, in most of the countries eligible to receive SDG-F funding, public provision is weak or non-existent and markets for private risk mitigation, including savings and specialist risk products to underwrite productive resources, have yet to develop. Special emphasis should be placed on initiatives that assist the poor in adapting to climate change, to which they are disproportionately vulnerable.
- » **Encourage sustainable activities and properly cost environmentally and socially hazardous behaviour.** In order to bring new prosperity and new opportunities, growth will also need to usher in new ways to support sustainable consumption and production, and enable sustainable development. Governments should develop and implement detailed policies that incentivise businesses to reduce environmental stresses and improve working conditions for employees.

3. Promote better government policies, good governance and effective institutions to create equal opportunities for growth and employment, with a special focus on the most vulnerable: the poor, women and youth.

Joint Programmes should support efforts to increase:

- » **Participation and dialogue to ensure that the perspective of the poor is included in pro-poor policy development.** There is a need to strengthen the capacity and ability of the poor to participate in and influence decision-making processes and to have a real influence on policy design and implementation. It is essential to augment the range of voices with influence in these dialogues, enriching the representation of both the private and public sectors, **including civil society**. Accountability also works best in an environment of participatory governance, and will allow for more opportunities to include a pro-poor approach in economic and development policies.
- » **Good governance, effective institutions, transparency and accountability.** Increasing openness and accountability helps institutions work properly – and ensures that those who hold power are accountable to ordinary citizens. Good governance and the fight against corruption are universal issues. Everywhere, there is a need to promote core democratic governance principles of equal representation, accountability and transparency at the national, regional and local levels, in economic policy-making and governance. The need for transparency extends to all institutions -- government entities as well as businesses and civil society organisations. There is a particular need to improve the efficiency, access, affordability and quality of public services provided by utilities at the national and local level.

3.2. Food Security and Nutrition

3.2.1 Background and Rationale⁵

The global prevalence of malnutrition and hunger remains unacceptably high. The UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) estimates that nearly 870 million people (12.5 percent of the global population, or one in eight people) were undernourished in 2010–12, reflecting a lack of progress in several regions, even as income poverty has decreased. The prevalence of hunger is particularly high in sub-Saharan Africa and in South Asia. In developing countries, a quarter of all children under the age of five (171 million children) are stunted due to chronic under-nutrition. Micronutrient malnutrition or ‘hidden hunger’ affects some two billion people (over 30 percent of the world’s population), with serious public health consequences.

⁵ This section is inspired on the results of an experts meeting that the MDG-F organized in March in Madrid 2013 to review lessons learned and experiences. See highlights in the report: [Jointly Addressing Food and Nutrition Security: Sharing the practical findings from the MDG-F](#).

Underlying the food and nutrition challenges are multiple challenges in achieving sustainable food production. A rapidly growing and more affluent world population is increasing the demand for food. The global population is projected to increase from seven billion people today to nine billion by 2050, with practically all of the increase expected to take place in less developed countries. With rising incomes, globalisation and urbanisation, diets are changing; in particular, there is an increasing demand for animal products, which are very resource-intensive to produce. According to FAO, these factors mean that global food production must increase by 60 percent to meet the demand for food and bio-fuels by 2050. But it is not just a question of increasing production: poor management of natural resources is threatening our ability to sustainably maintain and increase levels of food production. There are planetary limits that present challenges for sustainable food production and will require re-thinking food distribution systems, with more concentration on reducing waste and loss and improving access to markets. Increased food production will have to happen in the face of dwindling resources and increasing competition for those resources. More will have to be produced per unit of land, using less water, fertiliser and pesticides. If a broad-based approach to addressing food security concerns is not adopted, progress in food security and nutrition will be ever more threatened as a result of pressure on — and poor management of — natural resources.

Climate change is adding to the challenge of achieving sustainable food production and meeting the demands of a growing population. According to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, some 70 percent of disasters are now climate related, up from 50 percent two decades ago, and their impact is worsened by unsustainable management of natural resources.

Increasingly, these erratic weather patterns are leading to major year-on-year fluctuations in production levels, and contributing to high and volatile food prices; extreme weather events often result in acute food crises. Events related to climate change are likely to intensify in the coming years, while rising temperatures are expected to reduce levels of agricultural productivity in large parts of the developing world.

There is no magic bullet that can eliminate hunger and under-nutrition, given the complex nature of these problems. There are many inter-related issues which cause hunger and under-nutrition, some of which are related to poverty and lack of empowerment, including gender issues, discrimination against ethnic groups, land use, rights and ownership, war, the HIV pandemic and environmental issues. Efforts to realise the “right to adequate food” must go beyond improving the production and distribution of nutritious food, if the root causes of hunger and under-nutrition are to be adequately addressed. “Safety nets” should systematically include or be accompanied by measures to promote sustainable livelihoods for households with malnourished children. Adequate feeding and care behaviours should be an integral part of national strategies and programmes to reduce hunger and under-nutrition, including the promotion of exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months of life and appropriate complementary feeding, which are basic requirements for the achievement of nutritional well-being.

3.2.2. Sectoral objectives

Under the Food Security and Nutrition area, the SDG-F will welcome applications from Joint Programmes that apply a multisectoral approach to the problem of food security and nutrition and include the following key dimensions: 1) **Promotion of integrated approaches for alleviating child hunger and under-nutrition;** 2) **Promotion**

of **sustainable and resilient livelihoods** for vulnerable households, especially in the context of adaptation to climate change; and 3) **Strengthening of capacities to generate information** through assessment, monitoring and evaluation to allow for adequate policy-making and advocacy, and the mainstreaming into relevant policies of food security and nutrition.

Initiatives should apply a comprehensive and multisectoral approach to food security and nutrition, and incorporate the following critical elements:

- The relevance of **protecting and promoting biodiversity and food safety** and ensuring appropriate use of local food sources; promoting when possible the preservation and recovery of traditional customs that are beneficial for food security and nutrition.
- **Encouraging policy makers and managers of key institutions to continue advocating and bringing up food and nutrition issues.**
- Acknowledging the key role that women play in all cultures in food security and child nutrition, **women should constitute a major, if not the main, target group of policies and programmes to alleviate child nutrition and improve household food security.** HIV-affected mothers require specific programmatic approaches in order to minimise the chance of transmission of the virus.
- The **relevance of schools** as unique entry points for integrated approaches to promote child nutrition and food security.
- **Addressing disparities** and discrimination within societies and prioritising interventions for the most vulnerable, as well as taking special measures to counter discrimination and correct policy failures.
- **Applying a rights-based approach to food security and nutrition programmes** with the aim of creating the conditions for populations to become self-feeding. This requires involving communities in the design, implementation and evaluation of programmes, as well as including empowerment and capacity-building activities to ensure an adequate level of ownership.

I. Promotion of integrated approaches for alleviating child hunger and under-nutrition.

Joint Programmes should aim to:

- » **Strengthen good governance, create integrated actions across sectors and improve coordination at the national and local level.** This includes developing or strengthening networks of stakeholders (government institutions, UN Agencies, bilateral partners, NGO/CSOs, academic institutions and the private sector). Concrete and explicit partnerships should be established that develop integrated national/local food security and nutrition plans and policies that include parallel action in the sectors of health, education, water, energy and natural resource management. The combination of food security and nutrition issues with agricultural and economic priorities requires strong leadership and political commitment. National and sub-national governments need to be supported and strengthened for optimal implementation of interventions to improve livelihoods, household food security and nutrition, and to incorporate nutrition security into policies and programs. Leveraging specific funding for food and nutrition security is critical for guaranteeing long-term sustainable interventions.

- » **Increase local food security** by supporting vulnerable households and communities to improve the quality and variety of their diets through diversification (as much as possible from local or traditional foods) and fortification of food/condiments with key micronutrients. Specific attention should be given to children under two years of age and vulnerable children (e.g. those living with HIV, disadvantaged groups, and refugees). Initiatives should increase local availability of nutritious foods through support to micro-, small and medium agricultural enterprises by: a) improving their productivity by applying new technologies and facilitating access to financial services; and b) developing local markets and diversifying the availability of nutritious foods. School feeding programmes play a key role in introducing nutritious foods into children's diets.
- » **Promote key feeding and care behaviours** such as exclusive breastfeeding, timely and appropriate complementary feeding for vulnerable groups (with micronutrient supplementation where required), behaviour change initiatives that can impact nutrition status (such as hand washing, parasite control and treatment of diarrhoea), and attention to food safety for poor consumers. Depending on conditions, mothers may opt to use breast milk substitutes or may need support to breastfeed exclusively. Stigmatization by communities can influence choices regarding infant nutrition, and should be addressed. Therapeutic feeding programmes should be implemented where needed to reduce severe-acute malnutrition, with appropriate livelihood support and community nutrition programmes, particularly in countries and regions with high wasting rates.
- » **Integrate nutritional goals into agricultural interventions.** More research must be undertaken to better understand how agricultural policies and nutrition interventions interact, and how agriculture can contribute to improving nutritional outcomes, especially in contexts of extreme poverty and highly vulnerable populations. Inter-institutional and inter-sectoral coordination needs to be promoted to ensure the convergence of priorities and policies of both the agricultural and health sectors.

2. Promotion of sustainable and resilient livelihoods for vulnerable households, especially in the context of adaptation to climate change.

Joint Programmes' effort to improve food security and nutrition should include measures that:

- » **Build adaptive capacity to climate change and reduce agricultural and food security vulnerability to climate change in high-risk areas.** Initiatives should develop coping mechanisms to improve the skills and abilities of vulnerable groups to resist shocks and recover from their impact. Extreme droughts and changing waterfall patterns induced by climate change require specific policies that support sound management of and equitable access to environmental resources and services (biodiversity, land and water). This also includes promoting decentralisation of responsibilities to local authorities.
- » **Offer innovation and technical support to small producers to ensure resilience at the local level.** Certain innovative models of direct land intervention have yielded positive results in agricultural production and surpluses, soil management and changes in traditional beliefs such as slash-and-burn practices. Other novel programs have introduced risk management tools that adapt crop insurance to

climate change effects, thus linking the risks and pay-outs with climate projections and actual events caused by climate change. These have produced increases in farmers' profits.

3. Strengthening of capacities to generate information through assessment, monitoring and evaluation to allow for adequate policy making and advocacy, and the mainstreaming of food security and nutrition into relevant policies.

Joint Programmes should seek to:

- » **Articulate health and agriculture-based information systems.** This includes establishing sustainable institutional mechanisms at local and national level to ensure effective integration and joint reporting of activities and programmes that contribute to improved child nutrition and food security. Existing information systems should be strengthened (in particular health and agriculture) with a view to ensuring appropriate targeting and impact assessment of relevant development and humanitarian policies, programmes and projects on child nutrition.
- » **Predict, monitor and evaluate the impact of development policies and programmes** on food consumption and child nutrition, with particular attention to dietary diversity and the participation of stakeholders and institutions at local and national level.

3.3. Water and Sanitation

3.3.1. Background and Rationale

Access to water is a basic human right. Safe drinking water is a scarce and limited resource. Between 1990 and 2010, more than two billion people gained access to basic drinking water, but 780 million people still remain without. Some two billion people lack access to continuous, safe water. Improving access – as well as quality – is becoming more urgent as the world faces increasing water scarcity. By 2025, 1.8 billion people will live in places classified as water scarce. People living in poverty are likely to be most at risk. Even those who currently have access to basic drinking water do not have a guarantee of continued access.

Better water resource management can ensure there will be enough water to meet increasing competing demands. Distribution of water among industry, energy, agriculture, cities and households should be managed fairly and efficiently, with attention to protecting the quality of drinking water. To accomplish this, we need to establish good management practices, responsible regulation and proper pricing.

The Post-2015 consultation resulted in a call for action to ensure universal access to safe drinking water at home, and in schools, health centres and refugee camps. This is a global minimum standard that should be applied to everyone — regardless of income, gender, location, age or other grouping. Investing in safe drinking water complements investments in sanitation and hygiene. Water, sanitation and hygiene work together to make people healthier, and to reduce the grief, and time and money spent, when family members fall ill and need to be cared for.

The MDG target on increasing access to sanitation is the one we are farthest from reaching. One billion people still defecate in the open and another billion have no toilets, septic tanks, piped sewer systems or other means of improved sanitation. Such poor sanitation contributes to widespread chronic diarrhoea in many lower-income areas. Each year, 760,000 children under five die because of diarrhoea. Those who survive often don't absorb enough essential nutrients, hindering their physical and mental development.

As cities grow and people consume more, solid waste management is a growing problem. Wastewater pollutes not only the natural environment, but also the immediate living environment, and has an enormous detrimental impact on the spread of disease. Establishing or strengthening policies – at national, sub-national and local levels – to recycle or treat wastewater collection, treatment and discharge can protect people from contaminants and natural ecosystems from harmful pollution.

3.3.2. Sectoral objectives

Under the Water Governance area, the SDG-F welcomes applications from Joint Programmes that apply a multisectoral approach to the problem of water and sanitation and include the following key dimensions: 1) **Promotion of democratic and transparent water and sanitation governance systems**; 2) **Improving access to water and sanitation services for the poor and marginalised**; 3) **Ensuring healthy lives**; and 4) **Promoting integrated water governance and climate change adaptation**.

Initiatives should also include the following criteria:

- **An optimal balance between infrastructure and governance activities.**
- **A rights-based approach** to address **disparities and discrimination** within societies and to prioritise interventions aimed at the most vulnerable.
- **Adopting an intercultural approach in the project cycle.** This includes cultivating an understanding of the practices, worldview and aspirations associated with water, sanitation and hygiene of the target group; the promotion of dialogue, respect and trust through consultation and participation processes for consent; a timely and effective system for communicating among stakeholders; and the establishment of long-term supportive relations.
- Recognising the **relevance of schools** as unique entry points for integrated approaches to promote behavioural changes, and the importance of including a social norms perspective in the formulation of interventions.
- **Access to water should be equitable and sensitive to gender and the disadvantaged.**
- **Communication and advocacy** are key tools to ensure that the sustainable management of water resources is prioritised and that existing laws and regulations on water resource management are effectively implemented.
- **Knowledge generation and sharing is critical to** advocacy initiatives at the national, regional and global levels.

I. Promotion of democratic and transparent water and sanitation governance systems.

Infrastructure is crucial, but is not always the answer to water and sanitation problems. There are plentiful examples of considerable investments being lost through abandonment or poor operation of newly-built infrastructure. The lack of cultural and social relevance, weak local buy-in and the difficulty of financial and technical sustainability have frequently been the cause of this kind of failure. On the other hand, the large-scale mobilisation of funds for infrastructure construction has also opened the floodgates to corruption; in countries with weak economic and social auditing systems, this has contributed to intensifying problems of inequity.

A democratic and transparent governance system for water and sanitation is key to achieving the MDGs in this area. Joint Programmes should consider the following measures:

- » **Strengthening water and sanitation governance systems to promote participation and multisectoral and multi-level coordination.** Political, legal, social, economic and administrative structures need to be established and strengthened to ensure public management of societies' water resources and sanitation in an effective, inclusive and transparent manner. To do so requires building broad-based alliances of multisectoral and multi-level stakeholders, clarifying institutional roles and responsibilities and promoting effective participation for poor populations. This means also considering traditional organisational systems, ancestral customs, community rules and decision-making processes.
- » **Promoting water transparency and the rule of law.** The governance of water resources should be transparent and socially accountable. Accountability mechanisms need to be established and strengthened to ensure performance-based accountability for public institutions and service providers and to address corruption. Monitoring systems must be put in place to provide effective remedies for violations of the right to water and sanitation, including fair, equitable and accessible redress mechanisms. Access to information is also key to ensuring transparency. Water and sanitation public documents, decisions, rules, regulations and processes should be: readily and freely accessible for everyone, contain complete information, realised on a timely basis, written in easily understandable language, and presented in people-friendly forms and media.
- » **Supporting community capacity-building and empowerment.** Measures should be promoted to increase people's capacity to think and act freely on their own behalf. Having appropriate knowledge, attitude and skills will strengthen their capacity to make decisions affecting them.

2. Improving access to water and sanitation services for the poor and marginalized.

Initiatives such as the following can help expand water and sanitation to populations with little access to these critical services:

- » **Development of infrastructures to improve access to safe water and sanitation services.** Infrastructures need to be developed to provide universal access to safe drinking water at home, and in schools, health centres, and refugee camps. Special attention should be paid to ensuring that a culturally relevant approach is used so that the infrastructures built are socially acceptable and technically and financially sustainable. Ensuring that spare parts are available in the local supply chain and that there is local capacity to maintain the systems will be key elements to the sustainability of the infrastructures. Innovative, inclusive and sustainable financing mechanisms for water also need to be implemented.
- » **Improvement of water and sanitation services delivered by providers.** Entities responsible for the provision of water and sanitation services are very diverse in nature and their functioning is dependant on both the national context and regulations. Measures should be promoted to improve their efficiency and accountability in ensuring a safe, accessible, affordable and reliable water supply, as well as to provide adequate sanitation services.

3. Ensuring healthy lives

Through its Joint Programmes, the SDG-F can contribute to improving the health of people worldwide, in particular the most marginalised populations. JP proposals should promote:

- » **Better sanitation infrastructure and services:** Building sanitation infrastructures and public services that serve everyone, including those living in poverty, and keeping human waste out of the environment are major challenges. Post-2015 discussions highlighted the need to end open defecation, ensure universal access to sanitation at school and work, and increase access to sanitation at home. Community-led approaches should be used to create demand-driven models for improved sanitation; the capacity of the private sector to manufacture and supply socially acceptable and sustainable sanitation equipment should be strengthened. More efforts must be made to position sanitation and basic hygiene on the national and local political agendas and to ensure that adequate resources are allocated to long-term processes such as behavioural changes.
- » **Improved hygiene behaviour among poor, vulnerable and marginalised communities.** Sanitation and hygiene, should be promoted at the household, community and institutional levels to prevent transmission of infectious diseases. Water and sanitation must also be in place in schools and health facilities. Sanitation services should provide for the safe collection, storage, treatment and disposal of human waste, and eliminate the need for open defecation. These measures require the collaborative efforts of the health, education, community development and business development sectors.
- » **Monitoring of water quality.** Ensuring access to safe water is a continuous process. Water drawn from safe sources may be contaminated by the time it is consumed in households. Chemical contamination of water supplies – both naturally occurring and from pollution – and unsafe handling and storage of water compounds are very serious problem. Arsenic and fluoride alone threaten the health of hundreds of millions of people. But more serious still is the microbiological contamination of drinking water supplies, especially from human feces. As water quality problems

become more serious and widespread, water quality monitoring becomes more important, and further efforts must be made at the national and local levels in this sector. Community-level surveillance systems, especially in isolated and remote areas, are critical: through them, people are empowered with the knowledge and tools necessary to monitor the quality of their own water sources.

4. Promoting integrated water management and climate change adaptation

- » **Integrated water management (IWRM).** Water issues cannot be considered in isolation. The 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro⁶ called for integrated approaches to be used in the development, management and use of water resources. But many institutional challenges exist in developing countries that limit the ability of water managers to apply the IWRM⁷. Initiatives should promote a more holistic agenda beyond water, sanitation and hygiene and promote effective linkages between IWRM and national development planning processes. Actions should be promoted to ensure that the management of integrated water resources is carried out at the level of the basin or sub-basin.
- » **Water and sanitation management in the context of adaptation to climate change.** Water-related climate change impacts are being experienced in the form of more severe and more frequent droughts and floods. The poor, who are the most vulnerable, are also likely to be affected the most. It is critical to build long-term resilience to climate change, particularly in disadvantaged communities, through stronger institutions and better water infrastructure, including well-functioning ecosystems. This requires policy shifts and significant investments to: boost the importance of water in national plans and international investment portfolios for adaptation; strengthen the governance of water resources management; improve the integration of land and water management; and improve and share knowledge and information on climate, water and adaptation measures.

3.4. Cross-cutting issues

SDG-F considers sustainability (understood as both environmental sustainability but also in a wider sense of longer term sustainability of results), gender equality/women empowerment mainstreaming and public-private partnerships as central pillars of the future development aid. These three cross-cutting issues have an impact on the success and relevance of every area of development work and hence joint programmes are requested to fully embed these three components -as appropriate- across the Joint Programme's design and implementation. The extent to which they are incorporated into proposed SDG-F Joint Programmes will be considered in the selection of JPs for funding.

⁶ [Agenda 21, UN Conference on Environment and Development](#)

⁷ Synthesis of National Reports for Rio+20

3.4.1. Mainstreaming Gender into Joint Programmes

Proposed JPs must mainstream gender into their implementation plan and monitoring plan. This will be an element of analysis and assessment for the approval of proposals.

The experience of MDG-F Joint Programmes suggests a number of ways to mainstream gender approaches into Joint Programmes. The MDG-F's [Knowledge Management Strategy on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment](#), led by the UNDP's Gender Unit, recommends taking into account the following criteria for designing gender-sensitive programmes:

- Has the project/programme included gender analysis in its design, implementation and management?
- Does the project/programme include specific, measurable outcomes, outputs, activities and indicators related to gender equality and women's empowerment?
- Does the project/programme include age and sex-disaggregated data and gender statistics for the project/programme development and implementation?
- Has the project/programme facilitated participatory processes that involve women equitably, and included their needs and contributions in all the steps of the project and/or programme cycle?
- Have gender experts been involved in all the steps of the project or programme cycle?
- Have all the projects been rated with the Gender Marker?
- Have a proportion of core and non-core funds been clearly indicated for gender equality and/or the empowerment women?
- Have all possible steps been taken to ensure gender parity in the recruitment of project staff, consultants and/or vendors?

For further information, see:

- [Two Roads, One Goal: Dual Strategy for Gender Equality Programming in the Millennium Development Goals Achievement Fund](#) (MDG-F/UNDP/UN Women, 2013)
- [Making Joint Gender Programmes Work](#) (MDG-F/UNDP, 2013)

3.4.2. Sustainability

On Sustainability, the High Level Panel (HLP) of Eminent Persons on the Post 2015 Development Agenda says:

“2. Put sustainable development at the core. For twenty years, the international community has aspired to integrate the social, economic, and environmental dimensions of sustainability, but no country has yet achieved this. We must act now to halt the alarming pace of climate change and environmental degradation, which pose unprecedented threats to humanity. We must bring about more social inclusion. This is a universal challenge, for every country and every person on earth. This will require structural change, with new solutions, and will offer new opportunities. Developed countries have a special role to play, fostering new technologies and making the fastest progress in reducing unsustainable consumption. Many of the world’s largest companies are already leading this transformation to a green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication. Only by mobilizing social, economic and environmental action together can we eradicate poverty irreversibly and meet the aspirations of eight billion people in 2030”.

The HLP very well expresses the multidimensional challenges of sustainability. In this sense we are entering a new territory, where everybody needs to develop new and original forms of adapting the concept of (long term) sustainability to development programmes. In the next chapter ([section 4.4](#)) on **Keys to a good formulation process: MDG-F Lessons learned on JP formulation and implementation for Aid Effectiveness**, the concept of sustainability has been reviewed at length. It involves:

- a) Inclusion and participation in the JPs initiatives within the vision of a Human Rights based approach;
- b) Economic use of resources in JPs implementation;
- c) Sustainability of the JPs achievements after termination of activities; and
- d) Mainstreaming environment and climate change in development programmes.

Specifically, the integration of adaptation in development cooperation requires an analysis of the governance architecture and the different stages of the cycle to identify entry points where the different considerations about sustainability (of climate change adaptation, or others) could be incorporated. At the national level, typical entry points could include various stages in the formulation of national policies, long term and multi-year development plans, sectoral budgetary allocation processes, as well as regulatory processes. On the other hand, the entry points would be very different at the level of on-the-ground projects, where, for instance, climate change adaptation considerations might need to be factored within specific elements of the project cycle.

As an example, **key element to mainstreaming climate change is the use of a climate lens**. There are many different methodologies and manuals to do so, but most of them include the following criteria as essential elements to be observed:

- The extent to which the policy, plan or project under consideration could be vulnerable to risks arising from climate variability and change;
- The extent to which climate change risks have already been taken into consideration;

- The extent to which the policy, plan or project could inadvertently lead to increased vulnerability, and thus to maladaptation or, conversely, miss important opportunities arising from climate change;
- In revising pre-existing policies and plans, what amendments might be warranted in order to address climate risks and opportunities?

The following publications offer useful guidance for introducing environmental sustainability and climate change sensitivity into development programmes:

- [Integrating Climate Change Adaptation into Development Co-operation: Policy Guidance](#) (OECD, 2009)
- [Mainstreaming Climate Change Adaptation into Development Planning: A Guide for Practitioners](#) (UNDP-UNEP Poverty-Environment Initiative, 2011)

See also this [list of references](#) from the UNFCCC on how to mainstream climate change into development programming.

Similar considerations should be developed to assess the sustainability of the JP proposals outcomes in each of the three sector areas: Inclusive Economic Growth for Poverty Eradication, Water and Sanitation and Food and Nutrition at the end of the SDG-F cycle.

3.4.3. Public Private Partnerships

The convergence between public and private institutions towards the achievement of Development results is not a future trend but a current reality-responsibility. One of the priorities of the SDG-F is to facilitate this convergence process that leads to a shared responsibility of both public and private stakeholders in development challenges. The Private Sector's involvement should comply with the UN criteria on this type of partnerships. The experience of the MDG-F's Joint Programmes suggests that Public Private Partnerships can contribute to development goals achievement, capacity building, wealth distribution and economic sustainable growth.

The private sector is understood as micro-small-medium-big companies, self-employed workers, business associations, unions, chambers of commerce and foundations.

The SDG-F suggests taking into account the following criteria for designing JPs regarding public - private partnerships:

- Has the project included the private sector in its design and implementation?
- Does the project include solutions for development changes through core business activities and initiatives that include low income groups into value chains, producers, suppliers, employees and consumers?
- Does the project facilitate discussion between public and private sector and the civil society on specific development theme or industry sector?
- Does the private sector include micro-small-medium-big size companies?
- Does the project promote entrepreneurial activities of disadvantaged or low income persons?

- Does the project promote public and private sector representatives joint decisions?
- Is result-based management approach used in the design of the project?
- Does the project include measurable activities and indicators related to the number and size of private institutions participating in the program?
- Does the project include measurable joint activities between private institutions-private sector and public sector?
- Does the program aim to enhance companies to improve and develop corporate social responsibility? Does it include synergies with current corporate social responsibility initiatives?

For further information, see: Document HR/PUB/11/04, [Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, prepared by the Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights](#)

Section 4

Keys to a Good Formulation Process: MDG-F Lessons Learned on JP Formulation and Implementation for Aid Effectiveness

The Millennium Development Goals Achievement Fund (MDG-F) strove to strengthen inter-agency coherence and development effectiveness of the UN system at the country level through its support of 130 Joint Programmes across four continents. Joint Programmes bring together a wide variety of actors -- including UN Agencies, national and local governments, civil society and the private sector -- to tackle complex development problems.

The governing bodies and management arrangements of the MDG-F Joint Programmes were based on the principles of national ownership and leadership, transparency and mutual accountability to citizens, in accordance with the Paris Declaration. The experience of the MDG-F has resulted in many important lessons learned and good practices -- insights we have used to carry forward this innovative multi-dimensional approach to MDG achievement.

In this chapter we will share lessons learned⁸ from the MDG-F, including issues related to national ownership, the implementation of multisectoral approaches within the One UN framework, mutual accountability, and sustainability of results. These lessons learned were drawn upon in the design of the SDG-F and in the requirements for JPs to qualify for funding.

⁸ The findings are based on discussions held during four regional workshops in June 2009 and 2011, the conclusions of the MDG-F JPs' Midterm and Final Evaluations, JPs' systematization exercises and analysis of lessons learned. Two of the workshops were held in Cartagena, Colombia (for Latin American and Caribbean countries), and two others were held in Casablanca, Morocco (for Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe and the Arab States). These high profile events brought together Senior Government representatives, UN Resident Coordinators and relevant experts from UN Agencies and national counterparts to discuss the experience of the MDG Achievement Fund in contributing to national ownership and the UN reform processes and to advancing the MDG agenda.

4.1. Ownership, alignment and participation of stakeholders in the design of programmes

The experience of the MDG-F highlighted the importance of the following elements to ensuring ownership and sustainability of results of Joint Programmes: 1) The level of **participation of the JP's stakeholders** in all phases of design and implementation; 2) The JP's **governance structure**; 3) The **execution modality**; and 4) **Communication and Advocacy efforts**.

- I. Facilitating a strong participation of national and local stakeholders, including civil society, during the design phase is key to ensuring programme effectiveness, relevance and sustainability.** Ensuring adequate involvement of local counterparts in the decision processes from the design phase through implementation to the evaluation phase proved to be one of the most important challenges for the MDG-F's Joint Programmes. JPs' designs were often unrealistic and overambitious in terms of the number of beneficiaries, and the costs, time and local capacities required to implement them. In other cases, the lack of local participation in the design phase affected the cultural relevance of activities and their sustainability. In order to solve these problems, JPs in many instances had to undergo thorough reformulation, consultation and validation processes at the local level, causing important delays and bottlenecks in implementation that hindered the achievement of expected results. This sometimes happened as late as after the Mid-term Evaluation or as a result of a conflict with the communities.

Applying the lens of a Communication and Advocacy perspective to the JP design phase helps to create a participatory and dialogue-friendly environment that will contribute to greater national ownership. For some MDG-F JPs, creating and establishing participatory communication channels and platforms during the consultation process proved to be very strategic. Recording the consultation process with pictures, videos and stories can help to build the story and narrative of the Joint Programme; communication can help to engage partners and potential participants on an equal footing by ensuring people, communities and governments who have been consulted that they have, indeed, been listened to.

Tools like stakeholders mapping and stakeholders analysis can be used in this consultation phase to identify key partners and stakeholders that should be engaged. It is important to note that "stakeholders" is a wide concept that goes beyond traditional partners to include civil society, advocates, communities, governments, media and others. Dedicating the time and resources to integrate reporting from the first stage of the process can be very useful in engaging all actors. Communicating with and listening to stakeholders and partners is a valuable investment in the long-term success of the Joint Programme.

The MDG-F's approach



The MDG-F JPs introduced a number of good practices to deal with these challenges. These included: the planning of an inception phase for participatory processes at the beginning of the JP; the use of flexible planning tools that allowed for the governance structure to reorient activities as needed; and the establishment of local coordination and governance units to involve stakeholders in decision-making processes. When time and resources for designing Joint Programmes are limited, supporting the continuation or scaling up of existing initiatives is an effective way to ensure ownership and relevance. In the MDG-F's experience, the level of co-financing committed by the national Government is also a good indicator of national ownership and alignment with national priorities.

2. For the MDG-F, the **Governance structure proved to be crucial for introducing innovations into the way the UN works in programme countries. When applied properly, it democratised the decision-making process, and facilitated the flow of information, dialogue and ultimately better coordination and stronger ownership.** The experience of many MDG-F countries showed that strong government leadership, a united Country Team lead by the Resident Coordinator, and the participation of the sponsoring Government are imperative for making strategic choices and delivering development results effectively.

The MDG-F Governance structure included a National Steering Committee (NSC) and a Programme Management Committee (PMC). The NSC was the highest body for strategic guidance, oversight and JP coordination. The first step in a JP preparation is to establish the NSC that will guide in the decision of the thematic area for the development of the JP Document and Agencies' involvement. The PMC was a programmatic organism that frequently developed technical Subcommittees to lead the operational and technical orientation in the field. The two main decision-making bodies were supported at all times by the Resident Coordinator's Office and by the JP Coordination Unit. The Coordination Unit and the programme manager should be based in a government office (central or local) or within the local beneficiary community, as opposed to the programme manager sitting in a UN Agency. This would contribute to a better national ownership, capacity building and improved coordination between sectoral institutions.

In addition to national level governance structures, JPs in most cases also established **local coordination structures**. These bodies facilitated participation

of local counterparts and stakeholders, including civil society members, in the implementation, decision-making and integration of JPs into existing local processes. MDG-F JPs adopted a variety of solutions to address this challenge that can serve as a reference. Some Programmes decentralised the PMC meetings in the intervention areas to establish stronger links between the national and the local levels. All cases included local authorities, local leaders, civil society (including NGOs, the private sector and community-based organisations), UN Agencies, and representatives of local targeted populations. It is important to ensure that the local level reports to the national level, in order to avoid parallel coordination processes and to guarantee a regular flow of information among the different Programme governance levels.

3. Regarding **the execution modality**, the experience of the MDG-F suggests that alignment and ownership are enhanced when JPs are executed nationally and their Coordination Unit is located within the lead national counterpart. These two criteria proved helpful in improving the participation of national partners in strategic and financial decision-making processes and in strengthening national ownership. However, sometimes direct execution by UN Agencies can be more appropriate and effective; specific local conditions can make it the preferred modality and the one agreed by the programme partners. In these situations, it is important to make adequate arrangements so that decision-making processes still include all relevant national stakeholders.

4. **Communication and Advocacy.** Ownership and communication are closely interlinked. One of the key findings from the MDG-F's global and Joint Programme evaluations is that, in many JPs, Communication and Advocacy activities began relatively late in the game. Those JPs that adopted a communication perspective earlier in the programme's cycle and adapted the MDG-F Secretariat's Communication and Advocacy strategy nationally, locally and regionally produced "longer lasting effects". The key lesson learned in this regard is that effectively designed and implemented Communication and Advocacy strategies can contribute to national ownership by:

- Promoting dialogue among partners.
- Sharing advances and challenges throughout the Joint Programme's duration.
- Knitting together the different components of, in many instances, were wide-scoped Joint Programmes.
- Disseminating results throughout the programme cycle.
- Advocating and mobilising communities and opinion leaders around key social challenges.
- Promoting dialogues about the international and local development agendas in the context of the Post 2015 Development Agenda..

An important lesson learned from many of the MDG-F programmes is that national counterparts became the main advocates and communicators of JPs' results. When designing and implementing a communication strategy, the communication channels of national counterparts and UN Agencies (websites, publications, newsletters, social media, etc.) become strategic, not only to communicate the work done but also to strengthen national ownership.

Ensuring national ownership is a key element that the JP's communication specialist should consider. Indicators and communication outcomes should also be agreed – and their progress measured -- during the JP's duration. JP teams are encouraged to use a broad perspective in considering their Communication and Advocacy strategy, including the several concepts and tools outlined in the Table below. One of the most significant indications that a development programme has been successful in creating national ownership and sustainability is when it has been able to trigger new laws, rules and local and national plans. Effective advocacy strategies should be conducive for this to happen.

During its term, the MDG-F acted as a powerful advocacy tool. It is expected that the new Fund will play a similar, or even greater, role in mobilising actors, stakeholders and partners around the need for more comprehensive, coordinated and effective development strategies.

Communication and Advocacy strategies in Joint Programmes

Among others objectives, the use of communication in Joint Programmes can contribute to:

- Creating communication channels among the programme's stakeholders (participating UN Agencies, national counterparts, beneficiaries, civil society, local communities, etc), thus reinforcing the programme's shared responsibility and mutual accountability.
- Advancing social and public advocacy towards the achievement of development goals and promoting awareness on sustainable development. For example, the Joint Programme can be used as a platform for debate and social mobilisation on the Post-2015 development agenda at the country level.
- Generating social changes that advance the programme's objectives through "Communication for Development" activities. The brochure "[Communication for Development: Strengthening the effectiveness of the United Nations](#)" includes some examples and general principles on communication for development which can serve as a reference.
- Raising the public and political profile of certain social, economic or environmental issues that might be relevant in the context of the particular programme.
- Communicating results and lessons learned that could prompt scaling-up and sustainability of development initiatives born out of the programme.

4.2. One UN vision and the use of a multisectoral approach

Both UN and Government partners who participated in the MDG-F have indicated that **when a multisectoral approach was properly included in the JP design, it not only contributed to improving coordination and effectiveness of the UN System, but also to intersectoral dialogue and coordination among national institutions** (MDG-F, 2013). However, to ensure that JPs fully benefit from this advantage, some fundamental criteria must be applied: 1) A results-based approach must be used in planning; 2) The most vulnerable regions and populations must be targeted; and 3) Strong leadership and sound coordination arrangements must exist; and 4) Provisions must be made for joint communications.

- 1. Using a results-based approach to planning.** In terms of strategy selection, the MDG-F found that Joint Programme proposals often failed to reflect a full understanding of the integrated approach underpinning an effective strategy to promote progress towards MDGs. Very often JPs were designed based on a juxtaposition of activities and didn't respond to a common "Theory of Change." JPs were carried out as parallel projects under the umbrella of a common funding and management structure. This affected the capacity of JPs to achieve their expected outcomes, reduced their effectiveness, and ultimately put into question the added value and relevance of applying a Joint Programme modality.

Applying a results-based approach to developing the JP's Theory of Change should be the first step of the design phase, and should precede the identification of partners, resources and activities required. It should determine the common objective and vision, and the multisectoral strategy needed. The Theory of Change should be based on a careful analysis of a specific problematic, and should lead to a tailored action plan, specifically developed for it. The experience of the MDG-F highlights that when deciding on the roles and budgets of the implementing partners, in-country implementation capacities should be adequately assessed in addition to the sectoral mandates and areas of expertise. It is also important to take into account the operational issues and bottlenecks that can result from the use of different implementation modalities; enough consideration should be given to the fact that different UN Agencies are able to move from planning to implementation at different rates.

- 2. Regional and population focus.** MDG-F Joint Programmes that concentrated their efforts on common target groups and regions were more efficient in the implementation of a multisectoral approach. Appropriate targeting facilitated a common platform for synergies, better coordination, smoother planning and evaluation of results. It also fostered more efficiency and cost effectiveness of multisectoral interventions by focusing resources on groups or individuals at the highest risk. Conversely, geographic dispersion, division and atomisation of efforts among different groups were common reasons for weaknesses in JP delivery and efficiency. Availability of baseline data is essential in the design of relevant targeted interventions; it is a key for a good targeting exercise and will also provide the necessary foundations for monitoring and evaluating project progress.

3. Joint Programme leadership. One of the most important issues raised by the MDG-F was the relevance of strong leadership, decision-making capacity and convening power of the National Steering and Programme Management Committees to ensure coherence and cohesiveness within the JP. It is important to use inclusive leadership models that balance involvement, transparency and functionality and clarify institutional roles. Fostering trust between partners also builds an important base for coordination.

The Resident Coordinator (RC) had a critical role at the MDG-F in ensuring an effective functioning of the governance structure and in promoting and applying the MDG-F's principles at the country level. The RC was therefore instrumental in supporting the MDG-F in fulfilling its mission and overall purpose. The RC facilitated and took leadership in the coordination and integration of UN Agencies and very often promoted the Delivering as One process and the refinement of the UN reform.

Managerial and coordination arrangements. The experience of the MDG-F highlights that in the context of JPs, the effectiveness of implementing a multisectoral approach is improved if it relies on an empowered Program Management Unit (Coordination Unit) that reports directly to the Programme Management and National Steering Committee. This unit should have the ability to identify implementation problems, duplication of activities and possible synergies, and to produce data for the governance bodies to make informed decisions. There are two levels of coordination that need to be considered: horizontal coordination between sectors, and vertical coordination between the national and local levels. The MDG-F experience shows that Joint Programmes were more successful at promoting **a common image, vision and strategy at the local level**. They also provided spaces for inter-institutional dialogue between sectoral institutions and levels of government, and supported programme operations to efficiently coordinate the interface between the activities of different Agencies. The local level committees took many different forms, but they all included local authorities, local leaders, civil society (including NGOs, the private sector and community-based organisations), UN Agencies and local representatives of targeted populations.

4. Joint communications. Part of the One UN approach is articulating and coordinating communication efforts in such a way that all partners align their messages and communication activities.⁹ Many MDG-F Joint Programmes encountered communication obstacles such as a weak advocacy culture, a low profile of the MDG-F in relation to the external MDG reality and resistance to the use of the MDG-F logo by UN Agencies. Reaching agreement on these tools at the design stage might avoid or minimise such challenges.

MDG-F programme evaluations have recommended that “the communication strategy needs to be agreed at the design stage” and that this requires the “support of a specialist”. UN communication teams should play an important role, but, **when possible, communication specialists from national counterparts should also participate in the process of designing the communication strategy**. Preparing an effective communication strategy requires time and resources, and for that reason should be included as part of the inception phase that all approved Joint Programmes go through.

⁹ The SDG-F recommends using also [UNDG Guide on Communicating as One](#) that can provide guidance on how address Communicating as One.

Having a clear and agreed Communication and Advocacy strategy **should increase the impact and outreach of communication activities during the programme's execution.** It is important to remember that Communication and Advocacy should be an integral part of the programme, as it is a valuable tool in advancing the JP's goals and objectives. One of the most frequent communication initiatives in the MDG-F's Joint Programmes was awareness-raising campaigns, which increased NGO and citizen participation.

Producing and sharing quality content from the start of the implementation phase is especially key. As a result of the communication efforts of the MDG-F JPs, the SDG-F now has access to a vast archive of stories, publications, images and videos that vividly portray the impact of Joint Programming. That said, the process of gathering these materials took time and, in the case of many JPs, the bulk of the content was produced at the very end of the programme, limiting its usefulness.

Not only should Joint Programmes begin generating and accumulating quality communication materials early, they should also create a centralised method to store these materials -- with proper captioning, including identification of partners -- so as to facilitate the dissemination and use of communication materials both within the programme area and by the SDG-F Secretariat.

One important communication consideration is the selection of a title for the Joint Programme. Many MDG-F JPs adopted titles that were overly technical, difficult to communicate or complicated to remember. Added to the large number of JP partners whose names must be mentioned in programme communication, these cumbersome titles made it difficult to promote the programmes to stakeholders, the public, the media and other audiences. Most importantly, excessive UN jargon may have prevented some Joint Programmes' titles from resonating in partners' and participants' minds. An inspiring, short, concise and meaningful Joint Programme title can help partners to align communication efforts, strengthen branding and improve name recognition.

The creation of a Joint Programme communication team, which gathers at least quarterly, can ensure that the communication strategy is smoothly and effectively applied. It should be composed of the communication specialist leading the Joint Programme's communication strategy, participating UN Agency communication focal points and also, ideally, focal points from national counterparts. While convening such a broad team may present some logistical challenges, it should in the long term ensure that communication tasks are shared and communication materials are owned and shared among partners.

In the MDG-F's experience, giving adequate recognition to each and every agency for their contribution to results proved to be a very sensitive topic that was difficult to manage from a communication perspective. All MDG-F Joint Programmes had on average six participating UN Agencies and an even greater number of national counterparts, in addition to the MDG-F and the donor countries. Securing proper credit for all partners is especially difficult when journalists cover stories from multi-partner programmes such as those of the MDG-F and SDG-F. When crafting and preparing their communications, programme representatives must ensure that the UN, the SDG-F, national counterparts and the donor country are properly mentioned and acknowledged, even if journalists ultimately omit some of this information. It is precisely the multisectoral and multi-partner features of the MDG-F that contributed to its results, and these aspects of future SDG-F Joint Programmes should be highlighted.

4.3. Mutual accountability in Joint Programmes

We have already stressed the importance of a strong and democratic governance structure and decision-making system to facilitate leadership, mutual accountability, ownership and participation of stakeholders. In order for the governance structure to deliver these services, it must have access to technical information on the JP in a complete, non-fragmented way. The Monitoring and Evaluation system should provide the raw information that will later be processed and shared with JP partners.

4.3.1. Information flow for decision-making. For the MDG-F's Joint Programmes, National Steering Committees and Programme Management Committees provided solid platforms for Governments to take the lead in planning and implementation. However, their capacities for mutual accountability can be hindered if there is not equal access to information for all JP partners and a common understanding of its interpretation. The accountability lines of UN organisations that report directly to their Headquarters can make it a challenge to share information, as can the co-existence of divergent technical and financial monitoring systems between UN partners and their counterparts. For this reason, it is crucial to establish rules about sharing technical and financial information at the start of the programme.

The information system should consider different levels of decision-making processes, provide a common understanding for outcomes and agree on a methodological approach to analysing information and assessing progress. The first step in designing a system is identifying the levels of information it might contain, and the specific needs and particularities of each. The MDG-F experience suggests that at least four levels be considered: a) The political and strategic decision-making level (SDG-F Secretariat, National Steering Committee and Programme Management Committee); b) The operational and quality control level (coordination units, technical programme management committees, results interagency working groups, etc.); c) The implementation level (all stakeholders involved in executing activities); and d) The beneficiary level (communities that are both recipients and partners of programme implementation).

Second, the JP will have to choose a platform to share information. Its accessibility, user friendliness and economy of effort will be critical to its success as a management tool that promotes transparency and mutual accountability. The experience of the MDG-F suggests that using existing information platforms is preferable to generating ad hoc tools. It further highlights the importance of finding a balance between rigor in the analysis of progress, feasibility of implementation of the system, and optimisation of the information feed process to avoid duplication of efforts. The roles and responsibilities of each partner in the management and analysis of information should be clarified and a list of reports and other information outputs clearly defined.

4.3.2. Monitoring and Evaluation of results (M&E). The M&E system should not be an afterthought in the design of the programme; rather, it should be a critical part of the design process that will be instrumental in defining realistic strategies and effective

action plans. Furthermore, as we have highlighted before, the M&E framework will also be crucial for ensuring the availability of information for decision-making processes and accountability. Implementation and Monitoring strategy refers to consideration of a project's management arrangements - for example, is the implementation period realistic? is there a well-developed implementation plan with clearly-defined functions and responsibilities, and have necessary provisions been made? Quite often weak management and inadequate monitoring provisions contribute to implementation problems, which eventually weaken the project's sustainability. Therefore, M&E should not be considered isolated and external to the project management arrangements but as an intrinsic part of them. **A well-defined Theory of Change** is one of the clear connecting dots between the design phase and the evaluation phase, since it is instrumental in defining the evaluation approach to measuring progress towards results.

4.3.3. The main challenges faced by the MDG-F JPs regarding **their capacity to evaluate progress toward common results** were: a) poor design of Monitoring and Evaluation frameworks; b) weaknesses in results definitions; c) difficulties in determining attribution and contribution; and d) limitations in the assessment of programme sustainability, particularly from a political standpoint.

- a) Several factors contributed to the **uneven quality of the Monitoring and Evaluation frameworks**. First, there were difficulties associated with coordinating a large number of programme partners and the diversity of understandings of the JPs' outcomes. Individual strategic and political interests, and differing technical and in-country capacities to monitor activities made it a challenge to agree on how to measure progress toward results. Furthermore, JPs were frequently very dispersed geographically and focused on isolated and remote regions, including those suffering from ongoing conflicts. This made it very challenging to apply sophisticated and rigorous approaches to Monitoring and Evaluation; in these cases, it was more effective to apply simplified systems, with low costs and high frequency of information, and where communities played an important role in collecting and analysing information.

Second, the task of establishing baselines and indicators for the large diversity of individual programme components proved to be challenging; it was even more difficult to include each indicator under the umbrella of each result area, and to reflect the linkages between them. This resulted in common weaknesses of Monitoring and Evaluation frameworks such as the lack of baseline studies, overemphasis on activities rather than results, and a large number of indicators that were either duplicated, lacked correlation to intended results and outcomes or were difficult to measure. Moreover, Monitoring and Evaluation frameworks and monitoring reports often referred solely to individual activities and results, without providing the 'big picture' of overall programme achievements resulting from these activities.

- b) Another weakness observed **in many Joint Programmes' Results Frameworks was the application of a somewhat narrow definition of programme results**. Often, results indicators were merely defined as direct products of the individual activities undertaken, failing to take into account the processes leading to these results. Such processes were not only important as means of achieving intended outcomes but also constituted significant results in and of themselves. Establishing a solid vision around the JP Theory of Change (ToC) should be of great help for this task.

A key issue when identifying the outcomes and outputs indicators for **JPs** are **the competing strategic and political interests of the actors, which can make it difficult to agree on how to measure progress and can lead to the ramification of outcomes indicators into activities indicators**. The needs and priorities of different actors (UN Agencies, national counterparts, civil society, etc.) should be recognised in the design and implementation of an M&E system; agreement should similarly be reached on a common understanding of the outcome being pursued, as well as the way to measure and analyse it. Identifying who will be responsible for collecting the data and analysing it in a Joint Programme can be challenging when several actors share and contribute to the same outcome. At the same time, this exercise can become a tool to better define the common and joint strategy to be implemented in the programme, and to establish a more realistic and feasible approach to its execution.

- c) A further challenge to Monitoring and Evaluation was **the capacity to assess attribution and contribution of activities to results**. This was found to be particularly evident when Joint Programmes adopted marginal roles in supporting bigger processes of legislation and policy planning, for example. A results-based approach to the JP design can be very useful to avoid the problems in attribution and contribution, since it helps to define activities and outcomes based on the capacity to evaluate them.
- d) Perhaps the **most complex criteria to monitor and evaluate in the MDG-F experience were the programmes' prospects for sustainability**. In general, financial and technical aspects were simpler to measure, but the political and socio-cultural dimensions proved more difficult to gauge. These can change with time since they depend on temporary factors such as government priorities, government's longevity, government staff rotation and socio-cultural dynamics. A careful analysis of these issues when designing the JP Monitoring and Evaluation framework is key, including all four dimensions of sustainability: technical, financial, political and socio-cultural.

The experience of the MDG-F has also served to highlight the important role that M&E can have in strengthening ownership by engaging national and local stakeholders in Monitoring and Evaluation processes, from their design to the collection of data and participation in evaluation processes. Measures should be implemented to ensure that national partners own the programmes' M&E function, and that its information is used for decision-making processes inside and outside the JPs' scope.

4.3.4. Communication for results. How to effectively communicate and report results was a challenge faced by many Joint Programmes. Good communication was important in terms of ownership and long-term sustainability and allowed for programmes to be scaled up by Governments and their partners. Close collaboration among communication and Monitoring and Evaluation professionals proved to be very effective in many cases.

It was also important that communities and stakeholders participating in the Joint Programme phases received information of the results achieved, within their communities but also beyond, as part of other programmes' components. This motivated participants and partners to feel part of a national process of change in which they were key actors.

Even if results and the best stories were often not known until the end of the project, it proved important to produce content that communicated the JPs' work during the full

execution of the process. Content should ideally be story-driven, useful for stakeholders, easily findable, engaging, current, flexible and sharable. All partners, especially those with a presence at the local level, should have a “communication approach” that allows them to identify stories, videos or images that will appeal to the audiences and stakeholders that these stories are intended to reach.

A Joint Programme’s communication content should be adaptable to different channels and should be tailored to the social, cultural and linguistic context of the different stakeholders. This will help to strengthen ownership of the JP by local private institutions. The programme should particularly take into consideration the communication channels used by vulnerable population groups. Some programmes found that working with indigenous radio stations, for example, was instrumental in generating dialogue spaces that produced greater impact of results. In the same vein, many MDG-F JPs used social media and alternative communication channels to convey the programme’s messages to young people.

In order to publicise results in the final phase of the programmes, many countries organised final closing events and results fairs, where they presented compelling pictures and stories and disseminated systematisation reports and lessons learned.

4.4. Sustainability of results

Sustainability remains a challenge for development and public interventions; the lack of financial resources for the continuation of activities was especially limiting in the MDG-F JPs. When working through the Joint Programme modality, a first challenge in analysing sustainability is to generate a consensus on the concepts and criteria to be used to measure it.

One aspect that differentiates a Sustainability Analysis in a Joint Programme is the fact that sustainability goes far beyond the results, including the continuity of the multisectoral vision supported by the JP. Often, JPs bring together sectoral institutions that are not accustomed to working together and whose natural tendency is to separate when the JP comes to an end. A JP will truly succeed if it consolidates the integrated model of work and the partner institutions continue working together after the end of the Joint Programme. A JP will be sustainable if it succeeds in providing long-term solutions to national and local needs that the benefiting stakeholders can maintain after the end of the programme.

Project sustainability is a tremendous challenge in many developing countries. All major donors have expressed concern about the large number of projects that are implemented at huge cost but run into difficulty with sustainability. According to several recent studies, while the trend with implementation is showing significant improvement, the trend with post-implementation sustainability is disappointing, with fewer and fewer projects being sustained. Thus, while countries are incurring great costs in implementing projects, poor sustainability is depriving them of the returns expected on these investments.

Several factors are responsible for poor sustainability. Some are simple. Some are quite complex. Some are within the control of the project management, while others come as external threats. Some of the factors can be (and indeed ought to be) dealt with right at the design stage of a project. It is therefore important that the factors that affect

sustainability are articulated well and incorporated, as far as possible, at the design stage. Other factors can be tracked and corrected during implementation, through monitoring.

4.4.1. The multi-dimensional attributes of sustainability imply that, in order to enhance project sustainability, a rigorous Sustainability Analysis is needed at the time of formulation of a project or a programme. This analysis must consider several levels -- meso (institutional), macro (national) and micro (community) -- and should include all social, economic and political factors that could influence the sustainability of results. Once the Sustainability Analysis is complete, a sustainability strategy should be developed to assist in incorporating the elements of sustainability right at the design stage of a project (see the [section on sustainability of results](#) for more details on this aspect).

There are a whole variety of factors that can affect sustainability, and there are many tools that have been developed to track/evaluate sustainability. The MDG-F experience highlighted some key elements that can improve sustainability if adequately considered during the design phase:

- » **Increasing local participation and ownership:** Actions must address and meet beneficiaries' needs and fit their values and culture. This can be achieved by involving multiple community partners in the planning processes.
- » **Adapting technology to local and national resources:** When working at the local level, JPs must ensure local access to materials and technology through the value chain. Involving community members in selecting technology or equipment is key, as is training them to operate, maintain and repair such equipment on their own.
- » **Ensuring financing:** National and local funding is crucial to provide long-term operation, maintenance, repair and project longevity.
- » **Providing awareness-building and training:** Communities must be strengthened and empowered to meet project objectives. Training, education and community outreach activities are key to ensuring this.
- » **Encouraging long-term support from national partners:** Programme partners must understand the importance of providing on-going technical support to communities after the end of the JP. Many MDG-F initiatives ground to a standstill soon after closure of the JPs due to the lack of continuous support to the communities to consolidate changes and the learning process.
- » **Adapting to a shifting policy environment:** Consideration must be given to how to deal with a potentially shifting policy environment during the lifetime of a Joint Programme due to changes in government priorities, longevity, staff rotation or socio-cultural dynamics. Corrective measures that involve a high level of participation and a broad range of actors will help reduce the impact of such changes at the local and national levels. Involving civil society has also proved useful in maintaining momentum and continuing activities during and after a programme's closure.
- » **Addressing issues of gender equality and socio-cultural factors:** While some JPs can appear gender neutral in their content, in practice they may have a very differential impact on women and men, and thereby result in reinforcing existing inequalities. It is therefore important not to make general assumptions when designing programmes, for example that women will automatically benefit

from the planned activities, or that the activities will benefit men and women equally. Addressing the following questions from the sustainability strategy perspective will help to identify some of the specific needs of women and men:

- **Management and organizational framework:** Leadership and capacities need to be ensured so that national and local partners have the ability to meet programme objectives and continue them in the future.
- **Monitoring and Evaluation systems:** These will be key for developing clear and measurable programme objectives. Baseline data for evaluation capable of demonstrating significant change for at least three years.

4.4.2. Sustainability monitoring and the development of a strategy for sustainability monitoring form the core of a project or programme management. This will help in the early tracking of problems related to sustainability, provide necessary feedback for adjustments, and enhance the prospects of sustainability. It is useful to base such monitoring on pre-determined indicators.

As a matter of practicality, unsustainability is easier to identify, measure and address at the project level. Some of the most common manifestations of unsustainability in a development project are: 1) Situations in which local participation in the activity declines over time, and participation must be prodded or prompted; 2) The distribution of project benefits is inequitable, or conflicts arise over project resources; 3) Project activities cannot be continued without external inputs or subsidies provided by the donor; and 4) Social welfare does not increase, or some groups are placed at a greater disadvantage as a result of the project.

4.4.3 Knowledge Management and sustainability. A Knowledge Management (KM) system is critical to the sharing of expertise and experience that improves the effectiveness of policy-making and development aid. By disseminating lessons learned and good practices, KM also plays an important role in promoting sustainability of results and scaling up successful experiences. The contribution is greatest when the Knowledge Management system is set up as a core feature of the initiative, is in place from the outset of Joint Programme development and is closely linked to the Communication and Advocacy strategy.

The knowledge generated from evidence from the field can be used to influence government policies, business strategies and civil society action. It can be used to work with partners to deliver change on the ground that alleviates poverty and strengthens society. Connecting the Knowledge Management strategy with the Communication and Advocacy strategy will help to engage decision-makers to carry out the ideas and elevate the impact of the programme.

Section 5

Before submission: JP formulation checklist

Before submitting the Joint Programme Document for approval, applicants are encouraged to run a final check of all the proposal's components.

Please review: 1) The technical content of the Joint Programme (see also Part 2 of this package); 2) The Joint Programme strategy, structure and Result Framework (logical sequence of activities, outputs and outcomes); 3) The Accountability Framework (roles and responsibilities of all the partners involved in implementation); and 4) The Monitoring and Evaluation plan.

Please keep in mind that a well designed, clear and technically sound Joint Programme Document facilitates implementation, smoothes relations and collaboration efforts among the various partners, ensures a cost-efficient delivery of outputs and helps maximise the impact of the intervention. Also, side-stepping the problems that may arise during the JP formulation stage (different ideas on how to tackle issues, responsibilities of the various partners, lack of clarity with regard to national priorities, etc.) will only result in cumbersome implementation modalities, delays and, eventually, the breaking down of communication among the partners.

Please see the checklist below for **guidance on this final check:**



Joint Programme technical content and logic

- ✓ Does the **situation analysis** clearly identify the core problem (s) and the cause-effect relationships? Does it provide sufficient **baseline** data to construct measurable indicators?
- ✓ Are the **intended beneficiaries** and the **geographical areas** of intervention clearly identified?
- ✓ Is the **management and coordination framework** clearly outlined? Were all relevant **national and local partners** consulted and included in the definition of the problem to be tackled? Are the **roles and responsibilities** of each UN Agency and national/local partner clearly articulated?
- ✓ If the **activities** are completed, will the SMART outputs be achieved? Are the activities necessary and sufficient to achieve the SMART outputs? If all SMART outputs are achieved, will the related output be produced?
- ✓ If the **outputs** are produced, will the outcome(s) be achieved? Are the outputs necessary and sufficient to achieve the outcome(s)? Are the outcomes related to the target population?
- ✓ If the **outcome(s)** is achieved, will it contribute to achieving the higher-level outcomes of the UNDAF (or another framework the JP is linked to)?
- ✓ Are the **risks** identified likely to occur? What impact will they have on the attainment of results? Is the **contingency plan/mitigation strategy** realistic and sufficient to minimise the risks? Are coordination and decision-making processes included in the analysis?
- ✓ In the light of the overall Joint Programme logic, are the **indicators** valid, e.g. do they really represent progress? Are the indicators SMART? What data will be needed to measure them? Is the information easily available? Can it be collected at reasonable cost?
- ✓ Are the **resources** and **timeframe** envisaged adequate to ensure the efficient implementation of activities and the attainment of results?
- ✓ Is the **Monitoring and Evaluation plan** robust, coherent and in line with result-based management principles? Are the roles and responsibilities in the collection, analysis and sharing of information clearly defined?

- ✓ Is the **Communication and Advocacy** plan foreseen into the JP implementation plan? Have sufficient resources been allocated? Does the programme expect to launch advocacy and awareness-raising actions to increase the programme's impact? What means of communications are expected to be used to guarantee communication flows among the programme stakeholders?
- ✓ Has the **sustainability analysis** been carried out and corresponding corrective measures included in the JP implementation plan and risks analysis?
- ✓ Are the interventions to **mainstream gender, environment and climate change** issues easy to identify in the Result Framework and work plan? Is there a clear budget allocated to these purposes? Has enough consideration been given to these issues in the background analysis and design of the JP?
- ✓ Is **Knowledge Management** adequately included in the Result Framework and work plan? Is it clearly connected with the Communication and Advocacy strategy? Have enough resources been allocated to KM?
- ✓ Is the overall proposal **technically sound**? Are all the parts of the Joint Programme coherent and consistent (Result Framework, accountability, budget, timeframe, monitoring plan)?

Source: Modified from MDG-F/ILO, 2013: Learning package: youth employment and migration JPs

Key guidance documents for JP design and implementation

- MDG-F, 2011, [Joint Programme implementation guidelines](#).
- MDG-F/ILO, 2013, [Joint programming on youth employment and migration: A training guide](#).
- MDG-F/UNDP/UNWomen, 2013, [Two Roads, One Goal: Dual Strategy for Gender Equality Programming in the Millennium Development Goals Achievement Fund](#).
- MDG-F/UNDP, 2013, [Making Joint Gender Programmes work](#).
- MDG-F/UNICEF, 2013, [Addressing Malnutrition Multisectorally](#).
- MDG-F/SIWI, 2013, [Recommendations for the application of an intercultural approach in rural water and sanitation projects](#).
- MDG-F Joint Programme [systematisations](#).
- MDG-F Joint programming [tools](#).
- MDG-F Joint Programme [Final Evaluations](#).
- MDG-F [Online Library](#).

Section 6

ANNEXES

ANNEX I: Concept Note and Joint Programme Document checklist

ANNEX II: Joint Programme Results Framework

ANNEX III: Joint Programme work plan and budget

ANNEX IV: Joint Programme monitoring plan (formulation stage)

ANNEX V: Terms of Reference for the National Steering Committee



	Concept Note (suggested length: 20 pages)	Joint Programme Document
Joint Programme summary	Brief description of what the Joint Programme aims to achieve and the means it will deploy to achieve the objectives	Brief description of what the Joint Programme aims to achieve and the means it will deploy to achieve the objectives
Background and rationale (See sections 2.1 and 4 of ToR and Guidance Document)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Problem(s) to be addressed, including its/their scope, history and causes • Intended beneficiaries and geographic area of intervention (with baseline data) • Priority the Government attaches to the problem(s) and the key public policies in place • Relation of the proposed Joint Programme to existing national planning and policy instruments • Summary of ongoing or recently completed efforts in the area and the principal local, national and international actors involved in the issue • Relation to ongoing activities in the field; innovation and /or complementarity of the JP with on-going/planned interventions • Contribution to achieving the MDG(s), other international commitments on the issue at national level • Alignment to UNDAF principles • Gender, environment and climate change perspective included in the background analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Problem(s) to be addressed, including its/their scope, history and causes • Intended beneficiaries and geographic area of intervention (with baseline data) • Priority the Government attaches to the problem(s) and the key public policies in place • Relation of the proposed Joint Programme to existing national planning and policy instruments • Summary of ongoing or recently completed efforts in the area and the principal local, national and international actors involved in the issue • Relation to ongoing activities in the field; innovation and /or complementarity of the JP with on-going/planned interventions • Contribution to achieving the MDG(s), other international commitments on the issue at national level • Alignment to UNDAF principles • Gender, environment and climate change perspective included in the background analysis
Mainstreaming of gender and women's empowerment (See section 3.4.1 of ToR and Guidance Document)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe how gender and women's empowerment have been considered in the JP design, implementation and management • Highlight specific, measurable outcomes, outputs, activities and indicators related to gender equality and women's empowerment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe how gender and women's empowerment have been considered in the JP design, implementation and management • Highlight specific, measurable outcomes, outputs, activities and indicators related to gender equality and women's empowerment • Inclusion of age and sex-disaggregated data and gender statistics • Describe measures to ensure women's participation in JP design and implementation process • Highlight gender markers • Proportion of core and non-core funds allocated to gender equality

	Concept Note (suggested length: 20 pages)	Joint Programme Document
Sustainability (See section 3.4.2 of ToR and Guidance Document)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe how environment and climate change issues have been considered in the JP design, implementation and management Highlight specific, measurable outcomes, outputs, activities and indicators related environment and climate change Explain how the programme intends to sustain the results in the longer term after the joint programme's termination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe how environment and climate change issues have been considered in the JP design, implementation and management Highlight specific, measurable outcomes, outputs, activities and indicators related environment and climate change Explain how the programme intends to sustain the results in the longer term after the joint programme's termination Proportion of core and non-core funds allocated environment and climate change The extent to which the policy, plan or project under consideration could be vulnerable to risks arising from climate variability and change The extent to which the policy, plan or project could inadvertently lead to increased vulnerability, and thus maladaptation, or, conversely, miss important opportunities arising from climate change
Public-private partnerships (See section 3.4.3 of ToR and Guidance Document)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe how the programme intends to promote public-private partnerships. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe how the programme intends to promote public-private partnerships.
Justification of the Joint Programme modality (See sections 2.1 and 4.2 of ToR and Guidance Document)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conditions that would make a Joint Programme the most effective approach (common priority area for implementing partners, multi-dimensional development problem, convergent priority geographical areas, scalability, etc.) Added value of the UN Agencies and national partners Previous experiences of the UN Agencies in JPs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conditions that would make a Joint Programme the most effective approach (common priority area for implementing partners, multi-dimensional development problem, convergent priority geographical areas, scalability, etc.) Added value of the UN Agencies and national partners Previous experiences of the UN Agencies in JPs
Regions of intervention (See sections 2.4 and 4 of ToR and Guidance Document)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regions and criteria for selection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regions and criteria for selection Available resources for implementation in these regions (human resources, offices, infrastructure, etc.)

	Concept Note (suggested length: 20 pages)	Joint Programme Document
Targeted groups (See sections 2.3, 4.1 and 4.2 of ToR and Guidance Document)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primary beneficiaries: who will benefit from this project and whose lives are expected to change? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primary beneficiaries Main characteristics of primary beneficiaries (age, socioeconomic level, location, etc.) Baselines data
Design, multisectoral strategy, results and implementation plan (See sections 2.4 and 4.2 of ToR and Guidance Document)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multisectoral approach JP Theory of Change Intended outcomes, outputs, activities and budget of the proposed JP (Results Framework) Regional overview of the intervention (results by region) Measurable outputs to be delivered, outcomes to which they will contribute and their relationship; budget by output Enhanced local/national capacities that will be present at the end of the Joint Programme Measures to ensure sustainability of results 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multisectoral approach JP Theory of Change Intended outcomes, outputs, activities and budget of the proposed JP (Results Framework) Regional overview of the intervention (results by region) Measurable outputs to be delivered, outcomes to which they will contribute and their relationship; budget by output Enhanced local/national capacities that will be present at the end of the Joint Programme Measures to ensure sustainability of results
Coordination and Governance arrangements (See sections 2.5, 4.1 and 4.3 of ToR and Guidance Document)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General overview of National coordination system and regional/ local coordination systems Approach to and overview of sectoral and regional coordination Identification of potential members of the Governance Structures Overview of the information system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General overview of National coordination system and regional/local coordination systems Identification of partners (local and international), roles and responsibilities, accountability matrix Description of the decision-making process and how participation of national and local stakeholders will be ensured Detailed description of the information system Description of the main JP team: identification of team members at national and local level, profiles and percent of time dedicated to the JP
Risk analysis (See sections 2.4 and 4.5 of ToR and Guidance Document)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential risks and mitigation strategy regarding: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Achievement of Joint Programme results Effective interagency and inter-institutional coordination Multisectoral approach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential risks and mitigation strategy regarding: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Achievement of Joint Programme results Effective interagency and inter-institutional coordination Multisectoral approach

	Concept Note (suggested length: 20 pages)	Joint Programme Document
Sustainability of Results (See sections 2.10 and 4.4 of ToR and Guidance Document)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainability Analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainability Analysis and strategy
Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) (See sections 2.7 and 4.3 of ToR and Guidance Document)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring and Evaluation indicators matrix (qualitative/quantitative) • Methodology for data collection and analysis • Indicators baselines, if available, will be highly valued • Measures to ensure joint implementation of M&E activities • Estimated allocation of resources for M&E • Link to Knowledge Management and Communication and Advocacy activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring and Evaluation indicators matrix (qualitative/quantitative) including indicators baselines • M&E and information sharing system • Reporting system (frequency, audience) • Description of participatory approach and community involvement • Reference all activities included in implementation plan for Monitoring and Evaluation purposes • Measures to ensure joint implementation of M&E activities • Estimated allocation of resources for M&E • Link to Knowledge Management and Communication and Advocacy activities
Communication and Advocacy (C&A) (See sections 2.8 and 4 of ToR and Guidance Document)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication and Advocacy overview (communication objectives, audiences and activities) • Estimated allocation of resources for C&A • Measures to ensure joint implementation of C&A activities • Link to Knowledge Management and Monitoring and Evaluation activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication and Advocacy overview (communication objectives, audiences, activities, performance indicators) • Reference all activities included in implementation plan for Communication and Advocacy purposes • Communication arrangements • Measures to ensure joint implementation of C&A activities • Estimated allocation of resources for C&A • Link to Knowledge Management and Monitoring and Evaluation activities
Knowledge Management (KM) (See sections 2.9 and 4.3 of ToR and Guidance Document)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge Management overview (objectives, audience and activities) • Link to Monitoring and Evaluation and Communication and Advocacy activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge Management overview (objectives, audience and activities) • Reference all activities included in implementation plan for KM purposes • Link to Monitoring and Evaluation and Communication and Advocacy activities

	Concept Note (suggested length: 20 pages)	Joint Programme Document
Civil society participation (See section 4 of ToR and Guidance Document)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain the level of participation of civil society in decision-making processes, design, implementation and Monitoring and Evaluation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain the level of participation of civil society in decision-making processes, design, implementation and Monitoring and Evaluation
Contribution to the post 2015 development Agenda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JP contribution to the national and global discussion on the post 2015 development agenda and to the transition from the MDGs to the SDGs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JP contribution to the national and global discussion on the post 2015 development agenda and to the transition from the MDGs to the SDGs

Expected Results (Outcomes & outputs)	Indicators (with baselines & indicative timeframe)	Means of verification	Collection methods (with indicative timeframe & frequency)	Responsibilities	Risks & assumptions
<p>JP Outcome 1</p> <p>JP Output 1.1.</p> <p>Outputs are listed in sequence under each of the respective outcomes, as stated in the Result Framework.</p> <p>JP Output 1.2.</p> <p>JP Output 1.3.</p>	<p>Indicators</p> <p>The indicators per each output are listed as they appear in the Result Framework with their respective baseline value.</p> <p>Baseline</p>	<p>For each of the indicator listed to the left, one or more sources of data need to be specified. For example: "Quarterly Labour Force Survey".</p>	<p>This column details how the data is collected and the frequency of collection. For example, if the source of data is the quarterly LFS, the collection method is through the regular LFS bulletin published by the Statistical Institute, while the frequency may be every two quarters or annually.</p>	<p>This column reports the UN Agency and/or national/local partner that is responsible for collecting monitoring data.</p>	<p>Risks</p> <p>Assumptions</p> <p>This part summarises the main assumptions made about JP implementation and lists the risks as identified in the risk matrix.</p>

Source: MDG-FILO, 2013: Learning package: youth employment and migration JPs

MDG-F Terms of Reference for the National Steering Committee

A National Steering Committee (NSC) will be set up. There will be one Committee per country overseeing all Joint Programmes.

Role: Oversight and Strategic Leadership of Joint Programmes at the national level.

Composition: To guarantee its independence, the NSC should include parties who are not involved in programme implementation:

- A representative of the Government, in the role of Co-Chair;
- The Resident Coordinator of the United Nations Systems (UNRC), in the role of Co-Chair; and
- A representative of Spain.

Additional members may be invited as observers at the discretion of the National Steering Committee.

Functions:

Formulation

- To approve the Joint Programme before submission to the Fund Steering Committee. Minutes of the NSC meeting are to be sent to the MDG-F Secretariat with final programme submission.

Management set up

- To revise and approve the regulations and other tools of the National Steering Committee and to amend them as necessary.
- To approve the duly documented agreements or arrangements for the management and coordination of Joint Programmes.
- To approve the selection process for the Joint Programmes Coordinator/Manager.

Planning and reporting

- To approve the JP Annual Work Plans and the Annual Budgets as well as any adjustments required to achieve the desired results in line with the implementation guidelines, when applicable.

- To review/approve the annual report for each of the Joint Programmes, to make observations and make strategic decisions.
- To propose corrective actions for the implementation of Joint Programmes when it becomes apparent that there have been deviations from the Work Plans and to make recommendations on how to improve the implementation of programmes at the national level.

Monitoring, evaluation and audit

- To review the internal and external Evaluation and Audit reports for the programme or its components and ensure the recommendations are put into practice.
- To ensure and guide implementation of monitoring mechanisms and administrative procedures to enable the Joint Programmes to be managed efficiently.
- To review the biannual monitoring reports to assess progress and delivery on the implementation of Joint Programmes and to make observations and recommendations accordingly.
- To endorse management response to the Mid-term Evaluation Report (MTR).

Advocacy and Communications

- To request and provide impetus to the articulation of National Advocacy Action Plans that are in line with the MDG-F Advocacy and Partnerships strategy.
- Discuss and approve the National Advocacy Plan and request periodic updates on its implementation, ensuring that key national development priorities are targeted through articulated advocacy interventions that bring together UN Agencies, local governments as well as citizen groups.
- Ensure that policy outcomes are consistently being sought and that the MDGs are at the centre of development efforts.

Coordination and participation

- To promote synergies between the Joint Programmes and related projects and/or programmes, even if they are funded by Government or other development partners.
- To make sure that the participatory consulting processes with the main national and local partners take place, so as to ensure ownership, enable synergies and avoid any duplication or overlapping between the Fund and other financial mechanisms, thus reducing transaction costs.



SDGF

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS FUND