**EVALUATION OF JOINT PROGRAMMES ON DEMOCRATIC ECONOMIC GOVERNANCE**

**General Context: the MDG-F Democratic Economic Governance Window**

In December 2006, the UNDP and the Government of Spain signed a major partnership agreement for the amount of €528 million with the aim of contributing to progress on the MDGs and other development goals through the United Nations System. In addition, on 24 September 2008 Spain pledged €90 million towards the launch of a thematic window on Childhood and Nutrition. The MDGF supports countries in their progress towards the Millennium Development Goals and other development goals by funding innovative programmes that have an impact on the population and potential for duplication.

The MDGF operates through the UN teams in each country, promoting increased coherence and effectiveness in development interventions through collaboration among UN agencies. The Fund uses a joint programme mode of intervention and has currently approved 128 joint programmes in 49 countries. These reflect eight thematic windows that contribute in various ways towards progress on the MDGs.

The programmes in this window are geared towards contributing to achieving Goal 7 of the MDGs, particularly the challenge of reducing the proportion of people without sustainable access to drinking water. The MDG-F finances 11 joint programmes in this programmatic area, with a budget of almost $60 million dollars. These programmes are primarily focused on strengthening government capacity to handle water supply and quality, including poor populations in water planning and policy and increasing financial investments in the water supply sector.

Virtually all stakeholders in the joint programme within this window involve supporting the government, at the national and/or local levels. Many programs also engage civil society, community, and/or indigenous organizations and leaders.

**The following points should be provided by the joint programme team**

* Describe the joint programme, programme name and goals; include when it started, what outputs and outcomes are sought, its contribution to the MDGs at the local and national levels, its duration and current stage of implementation.
* Summarize the joint programme’s scale of complexity, including its components, targeted participants (direct and indirect), geographical scope (regions) and the socio-economic context in which it operates.
* It is also useful to describe the human and financial resources that the joint programme has at its disposal, the number of programme implementation partners (UN, national and local governments and other stakeholders in programme implementation).
* Changes noted in the programme since implementation began, and how the programme fits in with the priorities of the UNDAF and the National Development Strategies.

**2. OVERALL GOAL OF THE EVALUATION**

One of the roles of the Secretariat is to monitor and evaluate the MDGF. This role is fulfilled in line with the instructions contained in the Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy and the Implementation Guide for Joint Programmes under the Millennium Development Goals Achievement Fund. These documents stipulate that all joint programmes lasting longer than two years will be subject to a mid-term evaluation.

Mid-term evaluations are highly formative in nature and seek to **improve implementation of the joint programmes during their second phase of implementation**. **They also seek and generate knowledge, identifying best practices and lessons learned** that could be transferred to other programmes. As a result, the conclusions and recommendations generated by this evaluation will be addressed to its main users: the Programme Management Committee, the National Steering Committee and the Secretariat of the Fund.

**3. SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION AND SPECIFIC GOALS**

The mid-term evaluation will use an expedited process to carry out a systematic, fast-paced analysis of the design, process and results or results trends of the **joint programme**, based on the scope and criteria included in these terms of reference. This will enable conclusions and recommendations for the joint programme to be formed within a period of approximately three months.

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

This mid-term evaluation has the following **specific objectives**:

1. To discover the programme’s **design quality and internal coherence** (needs and problems it seeks to solve) and its external coherence with the UNDAF, the National Development Strategies and the **Millennium Development Goals**, and find out the degree of national ownership as defined by the Paris Declaration and the Accra Agenda for Action.
2. To understand how the joint programme **operates** and assess the **efficiency of its management model** in planning, coordinating, managing and executing resources allocated for its implementation, through an analysis of its procedures and institutional mechanisms. This analysis will seek to uncover the factors for success and limitations in inter-agency tasks within the **One UN** framework.
3. To identify the programme’s **degree of effectiveness** among its participants, its contribution to the objectives of the **Economic Governance Window** and the Millennium Development Goals at the local and/or country level.

**4. EVALUATION QUESTIONS, LEVELS AND CRITERIA**

**The main users of the evaluation represented in the evaluation reference group (Section 8 of the TOR), and specifically the coordination and implementation unit of the joint programme, are responsible for contributing to this section. Evaluation questions and criteria may be added or modified up to a reasonable limit, bearing in mind the viability and the limitations (resources, time, etc.) of a quick mid-term evaluation exercise.**

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

**Design level:**

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

1. Is the identification of the problems, with their respective causes, clear in the joint programme?
2. Does the Joint Programme take into account the particularities and specific interests of women and men in the areas of intervention?
3. To what extent has the intervention strategy been adapted to the areas of intervention in which it is being implemented? What actions does the programme envisage, to respond to obstacles that may arise from the political and socio-cultural background?
4. Are the follow-up indicators relevant and do they meet the quality needed to measure the outputs and outcomes of the joint programme?
5. To what extent has the MDG-F Secretariat contributed to raising the quality of the design of the joint programmes?

* **Ownership in the design:** **Effective exercise of leadership by the country’s social agents in development interventions**

1. To what extent do the intervention objectives and strategies of the Joint Programme respond to national and regional plans and programmes, to identified needs, and to the operational context of national politics?
2. To what extent have the country’s national and local authorities and social agents been taken into consideration, participated, or have become involved, at the design stage of the development intervention?

**Process level**

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

1. Does the Joint Programme seek complementarity with other initiatives involving infrastructural investment?
2. Does the Joint Programme consider all institutional levels whose missions include Water and Sanitation and involve them in its strategy?
3. Does the Joint Programme take into account the specific characteristics and interests of the population and institutions with jurisdiction in the areas of intervention?
4. Have the lessons learned from previous interventions been taken into account and incorporated into the programme to improve its efficacy?
5. To what extent has the joint programme contributed to improving the ability of Water and Sanitation management entities/institutions to participate in strategic planning for these sectors?
6. How has the joint programme improved the opportunities for Water and Sanitation management entities/institutions to obtain funds for building and maintaining infrastructure?
7. How has the joint programme contributed to improve communication and collaboration between the various institutions involved in the sector?
8. Are management models being created in the country that can be applied in other regions at a later point in time?

**- Ownership in the process: Effective exercise of leadership by the country’s social agents in development interventions**

1. To what extent have the target population and participants made the programme their own, taking an active role in it? What modes of participation have taken place?
2. To what extent have public/private national resources and/or counterparts been mobilized to contribute to the programme’s objective and produce results and impacts?

**Results level**

**- Effectiveness: Extent to which the objectives of the development intervention have been achieved or are expected to be achieved, bearing in mind their relative importance.**

1. Is the programme making progress towards achieving the stipulated results?
   1. To what extent and in what ways is the joint programme contributing to the Millennium Development Goals at the local and national levels?
   2. To what extent is the programme contributing to the goals set by the thematic window, and in what ways?
2. Is the stipulated timeline of outputs being met? What factors are contributing to progress or delay in the achievement of the outputs and outcomes?
3. Do the outputs produced meet the required high quality?
4. Does the programme have follow-up mechanisms (to verify the quality of the products, punctuality of delivery, etc.) to measure progress in the achievement of the envisaged results?
5. Does the programme have follow-up mechanisms (to verify the quality of the products, punctuality of delivery, etc.) to measure progress in the achievement of the envisaged results?
6. Is the programme providing coverage to beneficiaries as planned?
7. In what way has the programme come up with innovative measures for problem-solving?
8. Have any good practices, success stories, or transferable examples been identified?
9. In what ways has the joint programme contributed to the issue of fair youth employment?
10. In what ways has the joint programme contributed to the issue of internal and/or external migration?
11. What types of differentiated effects are resulting from the joint programme in accordance with the sex, race, ethnic group, rural or urban setting of the beneficiary population, and to what extent?

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

1. Are the necessary premises occurring to ensure the sustainability of the effects of the joint programme?

At local and national level:

* + 1. Is the programme supported by national and/or local institutions?
    2. Are these institutions showing technical capacity and leadership commitment to keep working with the programme and to repeat it?
    3. Have operating capacities been created and/or reinforced in national partners?
    4. Do the partners have sufficient financial capacity to keep up the benefits produced by the programme?
    5. Is the duration of the programme sufficient to ensure a cycle that will project the sustainability of the interventions?

1. To what extent are the visions and actions of the partners consistent or divergent with regard to the joint programme?
2. In what ways can the governance of the joint programme be improved so that it has greater likelihood of achieving future sustainability?

**5. METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH**

The mid-term evaluations will use methodologies and techniques as determined by the specific needs for information, the questions set out in the TOR, the availability of resources and the priorities of stakeholders. In all cases, consultants are expected to analyse all relevant information sources, such as annual reports, programme documents, internal review reports, programme files, strategic country development documents and any other documents that may provide evidence on which to form opinions. Consultants are also expected to use interviews as a means to collect relevant data for the evaluation.

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

**6. EVALUATION DELIVERABLES**

The consultant is responsible for submitting the following deliverables to the Secretariat of the MDGF:

**Inception Report** (to be submitted within fifteen days of the submission of all programme documentation to the consultant)

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

**0. Introduction**

**1. Background to the evaluation: objectives and overall approach**

**2. Identification of main units and dimensions for analysis and possible areas for research**

**3. Main substantive and financial achievements of the joint programme**

**4. Methodology for the compilation and analysis of the information**

**5. Criteria to define the mission agenda, including “field visits”**

**Draft Final Report** (to be submitted within 15 days of completion of the field visit)

The draft final report will contain the same sections as the final report (described in the next paragraph) and will be 20 to 30 pages in length. This report will be shared among the evaluation reference group. It will also contain an executive report of no more than 5 pages that includes a brief description of the joint programme, its context and current situation, the purpose of the evaluation, its methodology and its main findings, conclusions and recommendations. The final report will be shared with evaluation reference group to seek their comments and suggestions. This report will contain the same sections as the final report, described below.

**Final Evaluation Report** (to be submitted within ten days of receipt of the draft final report with comments)

The final report will be 20 to 30 pages in length. It will also contain an executive report of no more than 5 pages that includes a brief description of the joint programme, its context and current situation, the purpose of the evaluation, its methodology and its major findings, conclusions and recommendations. The final report will be sent to the evaluation reference group. This report will contain the following sections at a minimum:

1. Cover Page

2. Introduction

* + Background, goal and methodological approach
  + Purpose of the evaluation
  + Methodology used in the evaluation
  + Constraints and limitations on the study conducted

3. Description of interventions carried out

* + - Initial concept
  + - Detailed description of its development: description of the hypothesis of change in the programme.

4. Levels of Analysis: Evaluation criteria and questions

5. Conclusions and lessons learned (prioritized, structured and clear)

6. Recommendations

7. Annexes

**7. ETHICAL PRINCIPLES AND PREMISES OF THE EVALUATION**

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

• **Anonymity and confidentiality**. The evaluation must respect the rights of individuals who provide information, ensuring their anonymity and confidentiality.

• **Responsibility**. The report must mention any dispute or difference of opinion that may have arisen among the consultants or between the consultant and the heads of the Joint Programme in connection with the findings and/or recommendations. The team must corroborate all assertions, or disagreement with them noted.

• **Integrity.** The evaluator will be responsible for highlighting issues not specifically mentioned in the TOR, if this is needed to obtain a more complete analysis of the intervention.

• **Independence**. The consultant should ensure his or her independence from the intervention under review, and he or she must not be associated with its management or any element thereof.

• **Incidents**. If problems arise during the fieldwork, or at any other stage of the evaluation, they must be reported immediately to the Secretariat of the MDGF. If this is not done, the existence of such problems may in no case be used to justify the failure to obtain the results stipulated by the Secretariat of the MDGF in these terms of reference.

• **Validation of information.** The consultant will be responsible for ensuring the accuracy of the information collected while preparing the reports and will be ultimately responsible for the information presented in the evaluation report.

• **Intellectual property.** In handling information sources, the consultant shall respect the intellectual property rights of the institutions and communities that are under review.

• **Delivery of reports.** If delivery of the reports is delayed, or in the event that the quality of the reports delivered is clearly lower than what was agreed, the penalties stipulated in these terms of reference will be applicable.

**8. ROLES OF ACTORS IN THE EVALUATION**

The main actors in the mid-term evaluation process are the MDGF Secretariat, the management team of the joint programme and the Programme Management Committee that could be expanded to accommodate additional relevant stakeholders. This group of institutions and individuals will serve as the evaluation reference group. The role of the evaluation reference group will extend to all phases of the evaluation, including:

* Facilitating the participation of those involved in the evaluation design.
* Identifying information needs, defining objectives and delimiting the scope of the evaluation.
* Providing input on the evaluation planning documents,( Work Plan and Communication, Dissemination and Improvement Plan).
* Providing input and participating in the drafting of the Terms of Reference.
* Facilitating the evaluation team’s access to all information and documentation relevant to the intervention, as well as to key actors and informants who should participate in interviews, focus groups or other information-gathering methods.
* Monitoring the quality of the process and the documents and reports that are generated, so as to enrich these with their input and ensure that they address their interests and needs for information about the intervention.
* Disseminating the results of the evaluation, especially among the organizations and entities within their interest group.

The MDGF Secretariat shall promote and manage Joint Programme mid-term evaluation in its role as commissioner of the evaluation, fulfilling the mandate to conduct and finance the joint programme evaluation. As manager of the evaluation, the Secretariat will be responsible for ensuring that the evaluation process is conducted as stipulated, promoting and leading the evaluation design; coordinating and monitoring progress and development in the evaluation study and the quality of the process.

**9. TIMELINE FOR THE EVALUATION PROCESS**

1. **Preparation of the evaluation (approximately 45-60 days before the date the programme reaches a year and a half of implementation). These preparatory activities are not part of the evaluation as they precede the evaluation exercise.**
2. An official e-mail from the Secretariat is sent to the RC, coordination officers in the country and joint programme coordinator. This mail will include the official starting date of the evaluation, instructive on mid-term evaluation and generic TOR for the evaluation.
3. During this period the evaluation reference group is established, the TOR are adapted to the context and interest of stakeholders in the country and all relevant documents on the joint programme are sent to the evaluator.

This activity requires a dialogue between the Secretariat and the reference group of the evaluation (the body that comments on and reviews but does not interfere with the independent evaluation process). This dialogue should be aimed at rounding out and modifying some of the questions and dimensions of the study that the generic TOR do not cover, or which are inadequate or irrelevant to the joint programme.

1. The Secretariat's portfolios manager will discuss with the country an initial date for having the field visit.
2. From this point on, the evaluation specialists and the portfolio manager are responsible for managing the execution of the evaluation, with three main functions: to facilitate the work of the consultant, to serve as interlocutor between the parties (consultant, joint programme team in the country, etc.), and to review the deliverables that are produced.
3. **Execution phase of the evaluation study (87-92 days total)**

**Desk study (23 days total)**

1. Briefing with the consultant **(1 day).** A checklist of activities and documents to review will be submitted, and the evaluation process will be explained. Discussion will take place over what the evaluation should entail.
2. Review of documents according to the standard list (see TOR annexes; programme document, financial, monitoring reports etc.).
3. Submission of the inception report including the findings from the document review specifying how the evaluation will be conducted. The inception report is sent and shared with the evaluation reference group for comments and suggestions (within **fifteen days of delivery of all programme documentation to the consultant**).
4. The focal person for the evaluation (joint programme coordinator, resident coordinator office, etc) and the consultant prepare and agenda to conduct the field visit of the evaluation. (Interview with programme participants, stakeholders, focus groups, etc) (Within **seven days of delivery of the desk study report**).

**Field visit (10-15 days)**

1. The consultant will travel to the country to observe and contrast the preliminary conclusions reached through the study of the document revision. The planned agenda will be carried out. To accomplish this, the Secretariat’s programme officer may need to facilitate the consultant’s visit by means of phone calls and emails, making sure there is a focal person in the country who is his/her natural interlocutor by default.
2. The consultant will be responsible for conducting a debriefing with the key actors he or she has interacted with.

**Final Report (54 days total)**

1. The consultant will deliver a draft final report, which the Secretariat’s programme officer shall be responsible for sharing with the evaluation reference group **(within fifteen days of the completion of the field visit).**
2. The Secretariat will assess the quality of the evaluation reports presented using the criteria stipulated by UNEG and DAC Evaluation Network **(within seven days of delivery of the draft final report).**
3. The evaluation reference group may ask that data or facts that it believes are incorrect be changed, as long as it provides data or evidence that supports its request. The evaluator will have the final say over whether to accept or reject such changes. For the sake of evaluation quality, the Secretariat can and should intervene so that erroneous data, and opinions based on erroneous data or not based on evidence, are changed **(within fifteen days of delivery of the draft final report).**

The evaluation reference group may also comment on the value judgements contained in the evaluation, but these may not affect the evaluator’s freedom to express the conclusions and recommendations he or she deems appropriate, based on the evidence and criteria established.

All comments will be compiled in a matrix that the Secretariat will provide to the evaluation focal points.

1. On the completion of input from the reference group, the evaluator shall decide which input to incorporate and which to omit (**ten days**) and submit to the MDG-F Secretariat a final evaluation report.
2. The Secretariat will review the final copy of the report, and this phase will conclude with the delivery of this report to the evaluation reference group in the country **(within seven days of delivery of the draft final report with comments).**
3. **Phase of incorporating recommendations and improvement plan (within fifteen days of delivery of the final report):**
4. The Secretariat’s programme officer, as representative of the Secretariat, shall engage in a dialogue with the joint programme managers to establish an improvement plan that includes recommendations from the evaluation.
5. The Secretariat will publish the evaluation in its website.

**10. ANNEXES**

**a) Document Review**

**This section must be completed and specified by the other users of the evaluation but mainly by the management team of the joint programme and by the Programme Management Committee. A minimum of documents that must be reviewed before the field trip shall be established; in general terms the Secretariat estimates that these shall include, as a minimum:**

MDG-F Context

* MDGF Framework Document
* Summary of the M&E frameworks and common indicators
* General thematic indicators
* M&E strategy
* Communication and Advocacy Strategy
* MDG-F Joint Implementation Guidelines

Specific Joint Programme Documents

* Joint Programme Document: results framework and monitoring and evaluation framework
* Mission reports from the Secretariat
* Quarterly reports
* Mini-monitoring reports
* Biannual monitoring reports
* Annual reports
* Annual work plan
* Financial information (MDTF)

Other in-country documents or information

* Evaluations, assessments or internal reports conducted by the joint programme
* Relevant documents or reports on the Millennium Development Goals at the local and national levels
* Relevant documents or reports on the implementation of the Paris Declaration and the Accra Agenda for Action in the country
* Relevant documents or reports on One UN, Delivering as One

**c) File for the Joint Programme Improvement Plan**

After the interim evaluation is complete, the phase of incorporating its recommendations shall begin. This file is to be used as the basis for establishing an improvement plan for the joint programme, which will bring together all the recommendations, actions to be carried out by programme management.

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| **Evaluation Recommendation No. 1** | | | | |
| **Response from the Joint Programme Management** | | | | |
| **Key actions** | **Time frame** | **Person responsible** | **Follow-up** | |
| 1.1 |  |  | **Comments** | **Status** |
| 1.2 |  |  |  |  |
| 1.3 |  |  |  |  |
| **Evaluation Recommendation No. 2** | | | | |
| **Response from the Joint Programme Management** | | | | |
| Key actions | Time frame | Person responsible | **Follow-up** | |
| 2.1 |  |  | Comments | Status |
| 2.2 |  |  |  |  |
| 2.3 |  |  |  |  |
| **Evaluation Recommendation No. 3** | | | | |
| **Response from the Joint Programme Management** | | | | |
| Key actions | Time frame | Person responsible | **Follow-up** | |
| 3.1 |  |  | Comments | Status |
| 3.2 |  |  |  |  |
| 3.3 |  |  |  |  |

**b) Evaluation timeline**