



Timor-Leste MDG-F Case Study Evaluation

Final evaluation report

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Acronyms & Abbreviations

AECID	Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo
BdM	Bolsa da Mãe
C&A	Communication and Advocacy
CCT	Conditional Cash Transfer
CMAM	Community-based Management of Acute Malnutrition
CSE	Case Study Evaluation
DaO	Delivery as One
ERG	Evaluation Reference Group
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FSIEWS	Food Security Information and Early Warning System
GRB	Gender-Responsive Budgeting
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IYCF	Infant and Young Child Feeding
JPs	Joint Programmes
JP-FNS	Joint Programme 'Promoting Sustainable Food and Nutrition Security'
JP-GEWR	Joint Programme 'Supporting Gender Equality and Women Rights'
JSMP	Judicial System Monitoring Programme
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MAF	Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries
MCIE	Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Environment
MDG-F	Millennium Development Goals Achievement Fund
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MED	Ministry of Economy and Development

MNP	Micronutrient Powder
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoF	Ministry of Finance
MoFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MoH	Ministry of Health
MSG	Mother Support Group
MSS	Ministry of Social Solidarity
NGOs	Non-Government Organizations
NPP	National Priority Process
NSC	National Steering Committee
OECD/DAC	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development/Development Assistance Committee
PLA	Participatory Learning Appraisal
PMC	Programme Management Committee
PMU	Programme Management Unit
PNTL	National Police of Timor-Leste
PRADET	Psychosocial Recovery and Development in East Timor
PSF	<i>Promocão Saúde Familiar</i> /Promotion of Family Health
RCO	Resident Coordinator Office
SAM	Severe Acute Malnutrition
SEPI	Secretary of State for the Promotion of Equality
SISCA	<i>Sistema Integrado Saúde Comunitária</i> /Community Health Integration System
SOPs	Standard Operating Procedures
TLSDP	Timor-Leste Strategic Development Plan
TOR	Terms of Reference

UN	United Nations
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEG	The United Nations Evaluation Group
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNMIT	United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste
UNRC	United Nations Resident Coordinator
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
VPU	Vulnerable Person Unit
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization

Executive Summary

Context

The Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste is one of the world's newest nations of the 21st century. Timor-Leste became an independent country in 2002 after a long history of colonization, first as a colony of Portugal and then under Indonesian occupation. The country declared independence from Portuguese rule on November 28 of 1975, but it was invaded by Indonesian military forces on December 7 of 1975.

On August 30 of 1999, under an UN-sponsored referendum, a majority Timorese people voted for independence from Indonesia. Following a period of violence and an UN administration for three years, Timor-Leste was internationally recognized as an independent country on May 20 of 2002.

The process of rebuilding the country started under many challenges and fragile circumstances. A crisis occurred in 2006, due mainly to the fragile existing relationship between the armed forces and the police, which started another period of violence and instability. This had immediate consequences for the economy and for peoples living conditions. By that time, many people were in need of humanitarian support as they had to flee from their homes and seek refuge in temporary camps.

In August 2006, the UN Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) was established. A new government was also established after the elections in April-June 2007 in Timor-Leste and a national recovery strategy was one of the first priorities. Since then, all development partners have made important contributions to both the immediate post-crisis stabilization and for the national process of development.

In Timor-Leste, two Joint Programmes have been implemented with support from the Millennium Development Goals Achievement Fund (MDG-F) - one is "Promoting Sustainable Food and Nutrition Security in Timor-Leste" (November 2009 – March 2013) and the other is "Supporting Gender Equality and Women's Rights in Timor-Leste" (December 2008 – August 2012).

By operating through the UN teams in each country, the MDG-F has been promoting increased coherence and effectiveness in development interventions through collaboration among the various UN agencies, funds and programmes. The Fund uses a joint programme mode of intervention and the Joint Programmes contribute in a variety of ways to the Fund's three pillars of development cooperation: achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), implementing the principles of the Paris Declaration and supporting UN reform.

The overall objectives of the Joint Programmes are in-line with the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) which supports the achievement of the MDGs in the context of Timor-Leste's development strategies. The Joint Programmes are also aligned with the national development strategies and policies.

The two Joint Programmes have been jointly implemented by a number of UN agencies, government counterparts and civil society organisations. The organizations involved with the Joint Programme on Supporting Gender Equality and Women's Rights include five UN agencies (UN Women, UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA and IOM), seven key government implementing partners (SEPI, MoF, MoFA, MoH, MoJ, MoE,

MSS) and five civil society organizations. Whereas the Joint Programme on Promoting Sustainable Food and Nutrition Security is operated by four UN agencies (UNICEF, WFP, WHO and FAO), five government counterparts (MAF, MoE, MoH, MSS, MCIE) and two civil society organisations

Coordination is an important aspect of the Joint Programmes. There is a National Steering Committee (NSC) common to both Joint Programmes for strategic guidance, oversight and coordination which includes Government, UNRC Office and AECID representatives. There's also a Programme Management Committee (PMC) for each one of the Joint Programmes, which comprises Ministries, UN agencies, civil society organizations and experts.

As stipulated in the MDG-F Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) strategy, each Joint Programme has to conduct a mid-term and a final evaluation. In Timor-Leste, the Mid-term Evaluations for the two Joint Programmes were successfully completed in 2010 and 2011 while the final evaluations are on-going and will be finalized at the end of 2012.

Timor-Leste is also one of the nine MDG focus countries with additional MDG-F support. The Fund's M&E Strategy also stipulates that each focus country is to carry out a participatory case study evaluation during the final year of implementation. The CSE is intended to support the countries to assess the cumulative development impact of the Fund's work at national level, through the results of its Joint Programmes and to strengthen their own evaluation capacities. In compliance with this strategy, Timor-Leste is conducting a participatory Case Study Evaluation during 2012.

The case study evaluation has been conducted in four main stages:

Stage 1 involved a preliminary consultation with key stakeholders to decide the areas of study under the case study evaluation.

Stage 2 focuses on the designing and implementation of the case study evaluation at national and sub-national levels.

Stage 3 involves communication and dissemination of evaluation findings to development partners and the wider public at national and sub-national levels.

Stage 4 building on the findings of the case study evaluation, proposes a plan of action for the future.

Purpose, scope and methodology of evaluation

The evaluation objectives and evaluation framework are laid out in the case study evaluation terms of reference. However, as per the direction of the MDG-F Secretariat, a decision was made to further identify one or two key policy areas as the primary focus of the case study evaluation. This decision was based on the need to address those areas of most relevance for the Joint Programmes in Timor-Leste and to meet existing requirements and expectations of the key stakeholders for more research into specific areas of concern. Another consideration was to limit the scope of the evaluation, taking into account the major events in Timor-Leste during 2012, namely the presidential and parliamentary elections and the drawdown of UNMIT.

After consultations with key stakeholders, including representatives from UN agencies, UN RCO, Government and civil society organizations, it was decided by a majority that the case study evaluation would focus on: (a) National Ownership and (b) Coordination as the two main topics at policy level; (c) Changes in behaviour, attitudes and practices as a complementary topic at community level.

A participatory approach was used during the case study evaluation. Hence, all programme stakeholders who had been involved in the design, implementation and assessment process of the evaluation had the opportunity to participate during the evaluation. This included UN agencies, national counterparts, representatives of civil society and programme beneficiaries.

The target audience and principal users of the case study evaluation include UN agencies, government counterparts, beneficiary communities of the programmes and broader civil society at national and sub-national levels. They are the ones who had the opportunity to determine the specific focus and ultimately the use of the case study evaluation.

Fieldwork was carried out mostly from April to June in Dili and in four districts (Oecusse, Covalima, Baucau and Manatuto) and in eight villages (Nipani, Bene-Ufe, Debos, Faululik, Trilolo, Baguia, Cribas, Manelima) by the CSE Task Manager and the National Evaluation Assistant with the support of language assistants in Oecusse and Baucau, as well as an RCO Intern in almost all districts.

The principal evaluation methodologies used were:

A desk review of relevant documents of the Joint Programmes, contextual data for interventions and programmes documentation, where available.

Interviews with key stakeholders at the central level.

Focus groups and interviews at the sub-national level (districts and villages).

Visual images combined with focus groups at community level.

The three major limitations in the evaluation method were lack of comprehensive Joint Programmes information for the inception phase and lack of systematic monitoring information for the Joint Programmes, as well as lack of an organized contact list of all stakeholders at national and sub-national levels. There were other constraints related to: the linguistic factor and the need to rely on translations; the small team to conduct the case study evaluation and; the limited budget to ensure the transcripts and translations were all done on time without constraining the time available for the data analysis.

In light of this context and description, this draft evaluation report presents the scope, objectives, methods of evaluation of the case study and the main findings and conclusions for the topics of 'national ownership' and 'coordination'. This report also presents the main lessons learned and proposes key recommendations on 'national ownership' and 'coordination' to maximize the knowledge gained from the experience of the MDG-F in Timor-Leste and to enhance future joint programming. This report should be read in conjunction with the inception report endorsed by the Evaluation Reference Group for the case study evaluation on 13 April 2012.

A national exhibition will complement the case study evaluation report as it will display the case study evaluation key findings from the community level on 'Changes in behaviour, attitudes and practices' to programme partners and other national stakeholders, as well as to the public. The exhibition entitled 'Voices From the Community' will give voice to the beneficiaries of the two Joint Programmes by sharing their stories as presented through photos, text, video and sound recordings.

Main findings

The main findings in relation to the Joint Programmes national ownership and coordination, as well as some additional initiatives in terms of M&E and advocacy and partnerships are summarized below.

National Ownership

The relevance of the JPs' national ownership is relatively high with the programmes goals and objectives and the promotion of national ownership being taken into account during all stages of the programmes cycle.

It hasn't been easy to devise a definition of national ownership that is empirically relevant. But for the government officials and Timorese people it require the recognition of the relevance and the benefits of the programmes and accept responsibility for them throughout their formulation, design, planning, implementation and evaluation. However, there are many other factors linked to ownership which may interfere with the intention of making the concept fully operational.

There is a gap between the understanding of national ownership and making it fully operational. This gap is inversely proportional to the commitment and involvement of the stakeholders and it has been slightly reduced during the implementation of the programmes.

Only a small number of UN agencies were involved in the design phase and the UN led the process of the programmes formulation. However, it is also important to highlight that the Joint Programmes were designed during a time of instability and recovery in which government, supported by the international community, was trying to solve the 2006 crises and related humanitarian and transitional justice issues. This challenge included many other difficulties related to an environment where informality prevailed, and where governance structures and institutional capacities were weak or almost non-existent.

Under such challenges, the programmes designed were aligned with the priorities of the Government and to the plans and goals set by the UN system in Timor-Leste, although they could have been more synchronized with the country MDG priorities.

A tension between the will of the government counterparts to lead the programmes formally through the existing coordination mechanisms and the practice wish was driven by the need for quick results made the UN the driving force behind the scenes.

All stakeholders were involved in the implementation of the programmes, although in most of the situations the UN led the process and ensured counterparts followed the rules established by the MDG-F guidelines. The NGOs saw the process as bureaucratic and formal, but they now find it much more open and flexible as they can contribute more with proposals.

The MDG Achievement Fund has always been very flexible and supportive of any modifications of the JPs as long as the decisions were approved by the stakeholders.

A top-down approach (i.e. stakeholders from central level provide the main guiding principles and rules to the sub-national stakeholders) applies to all the decision-making process under the JPs in terms of setting priorities, planning and implementing activities, as well as allocating funds.

The low degree of control that the sub-national stakeholders had to exercise over the implementation didn't impede them in building local partnerships and coordinating with several partners in order to reach consensus, even though they didn't always have in mind the mutual interest of working towards the common objectives.

The power for execution at sub-national level is also linked to the capacity to deliver on the ground. There is a gap between the capacity to deliver and the will to act. This gap is primarily related to the type of interventions implemented and the conditions provided. Consequently, these conditions have a strong influence on the local stakeholder's level of commitment. This gap seems to be smaller at village and community levels rather than at district level which may induce a higher level of commitment at the ground level.

Coordination

The architecture of governance of the JPs includes a NSC and two PMCs which are relatively manageable and recognized as a good platform for discussion. However, it didn't function regularly before the reception of the Funds and until the PMU was in place.

The JP-FNS has used an existing working group which has clearly contributed to strengthened efficiency of governance and to avoiding the proliferation of multiple structures.

The JPS have widened stakeholders' participation and engagement by involving several ministries, secretaries of state, UN and NGOs throughout the process. The JPs have also increased multi-sectoral participation and, occasionally, sub-national offices participated in the national structures.

The JPs have improved multi-sectoral decision making over the implementation process as different government departments and non-government actors together with UN were able to dialogue more often, share information, concerns and find solutions.

Overall levels of participation of government sectors and non-government actors have probably improved the coordination between the UN and the Government and NGOs, rather than establish a strong mechanism of coordination with a multiplier effect on the existing government mechanisms.

It seems that there is a weak coordination between government departments, between the different levels of government and poor internal coordination/communication within some government agencies. This still needs to be linked to the existing country governance structures and its development since the independence and periods of political, security and social instability. Although significant improvements have been made, the establishment of a robust government system based on solid structures with adequate resources as a key aspect to good governance remains challenging.

The coordination structures under the JPs are rarely seen under country ownership which means that any decisions taken may be ignored by other relevant government decision makers.

The JPs represented a great opportunity for UN agencies first attempt at 'Deliver as One' (DaO) as there was one funding source which brought people together to discuss cross-cutting issues and plan the implementation of several interventions in a more coherent way towards common goals. But, it seems that the exercise of DaO worked better at the planning stage rather than at the implementation phase.

The UN RCO had a significant role to encourage the process of having UN agencies speaking with one voice and involve people as much as possible in order to make the best use of existing resources.

Gender sensitive mechanisms of coordination were not taken into account during the inception phase. However, a greater participation of women (as implementers, facilitators and/or beneficiaries) was ensured across multi-sectoral interventions at national and sub-national levels.

There was limited decision-making and lack of resource allocation power within sub-national structures as they have worked mostly as implementers of programmes determined at the central level.

The sub-national coordination mechanisms within the JPs appear to be largely incorporated in the traditional and government structures of coordination.

At the district and village levels, it seems they have very minimal to no information on the MDG-F and how the funds have been allocated and spent in their districts. However, a vast majority of the local authorities are aware of the interventions, as most of them are part of their current work plans because most of the activities are not new.

Local authorities and NGOs recognized that some of the interventions under the JPs have fostered dialogue and a very close relationship with some of their counterparts, government and non-government, at the different levels.

The Declaration of Comoro signed at the national level seems to be a strong reason for some of the relevant local government authorities to work and sit together, to talk to each other and to share information in the area of nutrition.

Government district departments have had mostly a technical/coordination role through the regular meetings they conducted among themselves and with counterparts whether local/international NGOs or with representatives of UN agencies. But there is a kind of tension between sectoral approaches and common interests and trying to address them together in a harmonized way during the meetings.

The low capacity of the local government officers in terms of number of available staff, technical skills, equipment, transport and limited precision about roles and responsibilities of the coordination mechanisms and its members may have undermined the effective and efficient working of partners throughout the process of implementation. Also, the fund didn't allocate funds specifically for coordination structures.

Village, sub-village and community leaders know their roles and operating procedures in regard to communicating with each other under the traditional coordination mechanisms. Community-led groups

were recognized as one of the key aspects that significantly strengthened those coordination mechanisms within the JPs' interventions in the villages.

Overall

In general, the JPs increased awareness about gender issues and raised responsiveness in the areas of nutrition and food security and its related links which has never received such attention before.

Some knowledge transfer occurred, particularly through the groups formed at community level and the training/awareness campaigns conducted at the different levels. Consequently, people and communities in particular become more aware that investing in prevention is better than waiting for illnesses and injuries to occur and then treating them, at least regarding situations that can actually be prevented.

The JPs helped to address the needs of some of the most vulnerable groups, especially women, which were rarely taken into account by the national public policies and programmes.

The JPs contributed to lever more resources and facilitated some interventions being scaled-up, as well as opened new windows for rethinking interventions at national and sub-national levels.

The national systems were improved and technical capacity of national staff built due to the cross-sectoral interventions and related training. It also proved that using a joint mode of intervention is possible and can compensate in terms of costs-benefits towards the achievement of common goals.

Nevertheless, two major overall challenges remain and need to be taken into account in future similar programmes to enable efforts to achieve the established common objectives and have an impact on the achievement of the MDGs. It's very challenging, on one hand, to ensure that there are logical links between interventions and related activities and, on the other hand, to guarantee that adequate resources (human and material) will be allocated equitably in future to support the continuing implementation, management and monitoring, as well as to guarantee that there would be no backsliding.

Other MDG-F Initiatives

The MDG-F M&E initiatives improved 'to a great extent' the evidence-based quality of the JPs according to the majority of the partners. It also contributed 'to a great extent' to individual and/or organizational learning and to strengthening capacities. Furthermore, it strengthened national ownership significantly and reinforced coordination among all partners 'to a great extent'.

The MDG-F communication and partnerships initiatives increased 'somewhat' awareness and support for the MDGs among policy makers and among government staff as reported by the majority of the partner. It also increased 'somewhat' engagement with and appreciation of the MDG among Timorese citizens. In addition, it strengthened 'somewhat' national ownership and improved considerably coordination among all partners.

Lessons Learned

There are a number of broad lessons that can be drawn from the case study evaluation. Fourteen lessons learned were generated which could be used for enhancing national ownership and coordination in future Joint Programmes in Timor-Leste.

Lesson Learned 1: The delay in the establishment of the Programme Management Unit and getting Programme Managers on board had implications for commitment over the joint programming, planning and implementation.

Lesson Learned 2: A participatory process of interaction and dialogue between the donor and stakeholders and among stakeholders from the very beginning of the process impacts on the Joint Programmes' national acceptance and potential success.

Lesson Learned 3: A permanent and pervasive pressure for quick results had implications for decision-makers and civil servants across policy areas in terms of enhancing their commitment over the programmes implementation.

Lesson Learned 4: A top-down approach within the decision-making process within the Joint Programmes affected the level of conviction among key partners at sub-national level.

Lesson Learned 5: The commitment of the local authorities was partly dependent on the involvement of the relevant government partners in the process at national level.

Lesson Learned 6: The levels of ownership at community level are strongly related to the conditions offered within interventions.

Lesson Learned 7: The effective commitment and participation of communities, both women and men, are very dependent on the gender sensitive mechanisms within interventions.

Lesson Learned 8: The NSC and the PMCs, as the main governance mechanisms, had an effect on the multi-sectoral coordination within the Joint Programmes at national level.

Lesson Learned 9: The coordination mechanisms within the Joint Programmes had an effect on the existing government coordination structures.

Lesson Learned 10: The use of Tetum during coordination meetings matters.

Lesson Learned 11: Opportunities for UN 'Deliver as One' were created.

Lesson Learned 12: Missed opportunity for developing an integrated information management system to track progress.

Lesson Learned 13: Partnerships had an effect on coordination at sub-national level.

Lesson Learned 14: The budget allocation for coordination purposes affected the improvement of coordination at the different sub-national levels.

Major Recommendations

The case study evaluation proposes some recommendations focused on the national ownership and coordination, as well as some overall recommendations.

National Ownership

Recommendation 1: Ensure the involvement and participation of all key stakeholders during the inception and design phases of the Joint Programmes' to enhance national recognition and leadership by the Government.

Recommendation 2: Support institutions and capacity building.

Recommendation 3: Strengthen domestic accountability.

Recommendation 4: Improve communication and advocacy campaigns before and throughout the implementation of the programmes at national and sub-national levels.

Recommendation 5: Ensure an integrated approach is implemented at the local level to create opportunities for synergies amongst interventions and build strong local capacities.

Recommendation 6: Ensure a continuous follow-up is carried out together with the stakeholders and end-beneficiaries as part of the monitoring and evaluation phase to ensure improvement and sustainability of the initiatives.

Recommendation 7: Develop gender sensitive mechanisms to ensure an effective commitment and participation of women and to allow them to recognize that 'spending expensive time' in the different activities is worthwhile.

Coordination

Recommendation 8: Ensure that any joint coordination mechanism such as the NSC and the PMU is established and performing its roles from the inception phase onwards.

Recommendation 9: Enhance the multi-sectoral coordination approach to all areas of the Joint Programmes.

Recommendation 10: Support and enhance the use of any existing country mechanisms or structures to improve coordination.

Recommendation 11: Ensure official languages are used in all coordination mechanisms and supporting materials are provided in local languages to facilitate learning processes.

Recommendation 12: Reinforce UN inter-agency coordination to enhance an integrated approach towards the improvement of 'Deliver as One'.

Recommendation 13: Include an integrated information management system to track progress of the programmes results.

Recommendation 14: Increase transparency of funds flow to create a better environment for local partners to improve coordination among themselves and, consequently, for local government partners to use such information for accountability purposes.

Recommendation 15: Ensure a sufficient budget allocation for coordination purposes at the sub-national levels.

Overall

Recommendation 16: Locate coordination structures within the wider public administration system, as this may hold important implications for levels of country ownership and the authority a structure can exercise. For example, the NSC could be under the Prime Minister's Office to give structures political legitimacy and demonstrate political commitment.

Recommendation 17: Make sure the Donor(s) and the Government acknowledge and address the problems in national level coordination and focus more attention and resources on strengthening sub-national coordination, if the gap between intent and practice is to be narrowed.

Recommendation 18: Ensure lessons learned are taken into account in the process of drafting the new UNDAF and future Joint Programmes. This case study evaluation and all the evaluations carried out under the Joint Programmes are important resources, which should be used as a basis for discussion among key stakeholders.

Recommendation 19: Make sure lessons learned are shared with other development partners and influence other coming programmes or funds such as the EU MDG Initiative on Infant and Young Child Nutrition Security: Expanding High-Impact Nutrition Package in Timor-Leste for sustainable achievement of MDG1, target 1c.

1. Introduction

The Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste is one of the world's newest nations of the 21st century. Timor-Leste became an independent country in 2002 after a long history of colonization, first as a colony of Portugal and then under Indonesian occupation. The country declared independence from Portuguese rule on November 28 of 1975, but it was invaded by Indonesian military forces on December 7 of 1975.

On August 30 of 1999, under an UN-sponsored referendum, a majority of Timorese people voted for independence from Indonesia. Following a period of violence and an UN administration period of three years, Timor-Leste was internationally recognized as an independent country on May 20 of 2002.

The process of rebuilding the country started under many challenges and fragile circumstances. A crisis occurred in 2006, due mainly to the fragile existing relationship between the armed forces and the police, which started another period of violence and instability. This had immediate consequences for the economy and for peoples living conditions. By that time, many people were in need of humanitarian support as they had to flee from their homes and seek refuge in temporary camps.

In August 2006, the UN Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) was established. A new government was also established after the elections in Timor-Leste in April-June 2007 and a national recovery strategy was one of the first priorities. Since then, all development partners have made an important contribution to the immediate post-crisis stabilization and to the national process of development.¹

In Timor-Leste, two Joint Programmes have been implemented with support from the Millennium Development Goals Achievement Fund (MDG-F) - one is "Promoting Sustainable Food and Nutrition Security in Timor-Leste" (November 2009 – March 2013) and the other is "Supporting Gender Equality and Women's Rights in Timor-Leste" (December 2008 – August 2012).

By operating through the UN teams in each country, the MDG-F has been promoting increased coherence and effectiveness in development interventions through collaboration among the various UN agencies, funds and programmes (hereinafter referred to as the UN agencies). The Fund uses a joint programme mode of intervention and the Joint Programmes contribute in a variety of ways to the Fund's three pillars of development cooperation: achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), implementing the principles of the Paris Declaration and supporting UN reform.

The overall objectives of the Joint Programmes are in-line with the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) which supports the achievement of the MDGs in the context of Timor-Leste's development strategies. The UNDAF establishes three main priority areas: 1) Democratisation and Social Cohesion; 2) Poverty Reduction and Sustainable Livelihoods; and 3) Basic Social Services. The third priority area includes a focus on maternal, neonatal and child survival interventions, thus supporting the achievement of the MDGs 4 and 5, whereas the first and second priority areas give particularly attention to vulnerable groups, including children and women, thereby contributing to achieve MDGs 1 and 3.

¹ Please see Annex 1 for a detailed background and context of Timor-Leste.

The overall objective of the Joint Programme on Promoting Sustainable Food and Nutrition Security in Timor-Leste is to strengthen the nutritional status of women of reproductive age and children under-five years old. This objective is linked to UNDAF Outcome 2 which establishes that “by 2013, vulnerable groups experience a significant improvement in sustainable livelihoods, poverty reduction and disaster risk management within an overarching crisis prevention and recovery context” and UNDAF Outcome 3 stating that “by 2013, children, young people, women and men have improved quality of life through reduced malnutrition, morbidity and mortality, strengthened learning achievement and enhanced social protection”.

The overall objective of the Joint Programme on Supporting Gender Equality and Women’s Rights in Timor-Leste is to improve the conditions of women and girls through the protection of their rights and their empowerment. This objective is linked to UNDAF Outcome 1 which states that “by the year 2013, stronger democratic institutions and mechanisms for social cohesion are consolidated” and UNDAF Outcome 3.5 which states that “vulnerable populations, especially children and women, benefit from quality social protection, particularly social welfare services, including in emergencies”.

The Joint Programmes are also aligned with the national development strategies and policies. The Government of Timor-Leste recently launched the Timor-Leste Strategic Development Plan (TLSDP) for 2011-2030 which sets out strategies and actions to allow the transition of Timor-Leste from a low income to upper middle income country with a healthy, well educated and safe population by 2030. It comprises a package of strategic policies which aim to accelerate progress across the multiple sectors to improve infrastructures, education, health and other basic needs for the country while also ensuring sources of sustainable economic development.²

Previous to TLSDP, from 2008-2011, the National Priorities Process (NPP) functioned as the Government’s primary socio-economic development planning and programming framework. Every year, seven national priorities were identified to be addressed by the Government and its development partners, with coordination and monitoring support from Ministry-led Working Groups. This NPP contributed to improve development partner coordination, particularly in areas such as justice, security, food security, social protection and social services. Also, several line ministries used the NPP for developing their own strategic plans.

The two Joint Programmes have been jointly implemented by a number of UN agencies, government counterparts and civil society organisations. The organizations involved with the Joint Programme on Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment, these include five UN agencies (UN Women, UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA and IOM), seven key government implementing partners (SEPI, MoF, MoFA, MoH, MoJ, MoE, MSS) and five civil society organizations. Whereas the Joint Programme on Children, Food Security and Nutrition is operated by four UN agencies (UNICEF, WFP, WHO and FAO), five government counterparts (MAF, MoE, MoH, MSS, MCIE) and two civil society organisations.³

² Government of Timor-Leste (2011), *The Timor-Leste Strategic Development Plan*, Timor-Leste.

³ See Annex 2 for an overview of the Joint Programmes.

Coordination is an important aspect of the Joint Programmes. There is a National Steering Committee (NSC) common to both Joint Programmes for strategic guidance, oversight and coordination which includes Government, UNRC and AECID representatives. There's also a Programme Management Committee (PMC) for each one of the Joint Programmes, which comprises Ministries, UN agencies, civil society organizations and experts. This Committee is responsible for technical/operational decisions. Furthermore, a Programme Management Unit (PMU) manages the day to day programme under the guidance of PMC.

The NSC for the Joint Programmes is co-chaired by the former Minister of Economy and Development⁴ and the UN Resident Coordinator. The PMC for the JP- Supporting Gender Equality and Women's Rights is co-chaired by the country representative of UN Women with responsibility of UNRC and the Secretary of State for the Promotion of Equality. The PMC for the JP- Promoting Sustainable Food and Nutrition Security is co-chaired by the Chief of Health and Nutrition Section of UNICEF and the Head of National and International Cooperation and Food Security Department of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries and it has been constituted by expanding the membership of the National Food Security and Nutrition Working Group, including Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, Ministry of Health and Ministry of Social Solidarity, as well as UN agencies and civil society organizations.

As stipulated in the MDG-F Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) strategy, each joint programme has to conduct a mid-term and a final evaluation. The mid-term evaluations are commissioned by the MDG-F Secretariat and are aimed at improving the Joint Programmes in the second half of their implementation period⁵. The final evaluations are commissioned by the programme teams with the objective of capturing the results of the programme and drawing key lessons and recommendations for development cooperation beyond the lifespan of the MDG-F⁶. In Timor-Leste, the Mid-term Evaluations for the two Joint Programmes were successfully completed in 2010 and 2011.

Timor-Leste is also one of the nine MDG focus countries with additional MDG-F support for Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) and Advocacy and Partnerships. In terms of M&E, priority has given to support the M&E capacity of the Government implementing partners through training provided to their M&E Officials, and to promote further development and use of DevInfo in Timor-Leste. Work has also concentrated on developing and implementing a MDG M&E Training Package for government staff, focusing on the use of planning, monitoring and evaluation methods applied to the context of Timor-Leste.

The Fund's M&E Strategy stipulates that each focus country is to carry out a participatory Case Study Evaluation during the third (final) year of implementation. In compliance with this strategy, Timor-Leste is conducting a participatory Case Study Evaluation during 2012.

⁴ Under the 4th Constitutional Government.

⁵ Mid-term evaluations are formative evaluations which assess the progress in terms of implementation and achievement of expected results. It also addresses problems and difficulties while the programmes are on-going and provides future orientation for adjusting and improving the performance of the Joint Programmes.

⁶ Final evaluations are summative evaluations which assess whether the Joint Programmes achieved the expected outcomes and impacts. It also provides recommendations for future programming.

The participatory Case Study Evaluation concept was developed by the MDG-F Secretariat as a way of supporting countries to assess the cumulative development effect of the Fund's work at national level through the results of its Joint Programmes and to strengthen national evaluation capacities. The results of the joint programme model in Timor-Leste will be brought to the forefront of the Fund's work around the world, shared with senior levels of government and amongst other participating countries with the intention of inspiring further action. The findings, conclusions and recommendations of this evaluation will feed into the Fund's final meta-evaluation of the overall impact of its 128 Joint Programmes worldwide.

An Inception Report for the case study evaluation, providing an outline of the proposed approach and methods and specified themes to be studied, was approved and endorsed by the Evaluation Reference Group for the MDG-F Case Study Evaluation on 13 April of 2012.

In light of this context and description, this final evaluation report presents the scope, objectives, methods of evaluation of the case study and the main findings and conclusions for the topics of 'national ownership' and 'coordination'. This report also presents the main lessons learned and proposes key recommendations on 'national ownership' and 'coordination' to maximize the knowledge gained from the experience of the MDG-F in Timor-Leste and to enhance future joint programming.

A national exhibition will complement this case study evaluation report as it will display the key case study evaluation findings for the topic of 'Changes in behaviour, attitudes and practices' to programme partners and other national stakeholders, as well as the public. The exhibition entitled 'Voices From the Community' will give voice to the beneficiaries of the two Joint Programmes by sharing their stories as presented through photos, text and sound recordings.

2. Background to the case study evaluation

2.1. Purpose of the case study evaluation

The concept of the participatory case study evaluation (hereinafter referred to as case study evaluation) was developed by the MDG-F Secretariat for nine focus countries selected in 2009⁷ to receive additional financial support for the implementation of Communication and Partnerships and M&E strategies at national level and, consequently, stimulating innovative interventions that can be highlighted as exemplary cases of collective action and impact on the MDGs.

Timor-Leste is also one of the nine MDG focus countries with that additional MDG-F support. The additional funding is to assist the M&E capacity of the government implementing partners through training provided to their M&E Officials, and to promote further development and use of DevInfo in Timor-Leste. Work has also concentrated on developing and implementing a MDG M&E training package for government staff, focusing on the use of planning, monitoring and evaluation methods applied to the context of Timor-Leste.

The Fund's M&E Strategy stipulates that each focus country is to carry out a participatory case study evaluation during the third (final) year of implementation as a way of supporting the countries to assess the cumulative development impact of the Fund's work, at national level, through the results of its Joint Programmes and to strengthen their own evaluation capacities. In compliance with this strategy, Timor-Leste is conducting a participatory Case Study Evaluation during 2012.

It has been designed to be knowledge-generating rather than be summative or formative. It seeks to be a forward looking and learning exercise rather than a pure assessment of the Joint Programmes. This means that the evaluation seeks to influence thinking and, indirectly, action on specific issues through the insights generated in the analysis.

The case study evaluation has been conducted in four main stages:

Stage 1 involved a preliminary consultation with key stakeholders to decide the areas of study under the case study evaluation.

Stage 2 focuses on the designing and implementation of the case study evaluation at national and sub-national levels.

Stage 3 involves communication and dissemination of evaluation findings to development partners and the wider public at national and sub-national levels.

Stage 4 building on the findings of the case study evaluation, proposes a plan of action for the future.

⁷ The nine countries selected are Bosnia & Herzegovina, Colombia, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Honduras, Mauritania, Morocco, Philippines, and Timor-Leste. These countries represent a range of regions in which the Fund is active as well as distinct geographic, political, and social features, such as post-crisis contexts, large indigenous populations, or densely populated land area.

It is expected that the case study evaluation will bring significant understanding and serves, first and foremost, as a conclusive assessment of the overall contribution of the Fund in Timor-Leste since the beginning of implementation of its Joint Programmes. The findings, conclusions and recommendations of the case study evaluation will feed into the Fund’s final meta-evaluation of the overall impact of all Joint Programmes worldwide. However, the utility of the evaluation extends far beyond this purpose and it is ultimately more forward-looking than retrospective.

First, it is up to MDG-F programme partners, including UN agencies, government implementing partners and civil society, as follow-up to the evaluation, to determine whether and how any programme components are to be appropriated and extended after programmes completion, and how to ensure the sustainability of other programme results in the medium- and long-term.

Partners should also propose plans for potential replication or scale-up of programme interventions. In addition, the evaluation process should also serve to highlight good practices and lessons learned from the Joint Programmes which can be applied to development interventions beyond the lifespan of the MDG-F.

Finally, key to ensuring the utility of the evaluation is to effectively disseminate and communicate its main findings to development partners and the wider public. It is hoped that the evaluation process and conclusions will ultimately generate momentum and stimulate dialogue that will help define future development priorities in Timor-Leste and shape joint programming for MDG achievement. For this purpose, a plan of action on how to address the case study evaluation recommendations will be developed by the key stakeholders, including Government, NGOs, UN agencies and civil society partners, as the last step of the evaluation.

2.2. Case study evaluation objectives and scope

Evaluation objectives

The Case Study Evaluation has the following overall main objectives:

- Assess the Fund’s contribution, at national level, to the achievement of the MDGs, the principles of the Paris Declaration, and the UN reform initiative to “Deliver as One” through an in-depth, explanatory analysis of cause and effect.

- Inform future joint programming for development through the identification of best practices and lessons learned from the experiences of the Fund.

- Connect local level programme interventions with national level policy-making processes by highlighting successful pilot initiatives with potential for replication and scale-up

- Strengthen evaluation capacity that is gender sensitive among UN partners and national counterparts, particularly through the incorporation of participatory mechanisms, and the development of innovative evaluation tools.

The Case Study Evaluation has the following nine specific objectives:

- a) Take into account the stated objectives and planned outcomes of the MDG-F Joint Programmes and assess their contribution on achieving the MDGs at national level.
- b) Examine whether the Fund's Joint Programmes have been implemented in line with the principles of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness – particularly those of alignment and national ownership.
- c) Assess whether the Fund has effectively supported the “Delivering as One” UN reform initiative through the inter-agency design and implementation mechanisms of its Joint Programmes.
- d) Consider the Fund's contribution to achieving other national development objectives as set out in the country's national development plans and international agreements.
- e) Identify good practices from the MDG-F experience to inform future development programming, ensuring alignment and national ownership, and effectively coordinating joint implementation.
- f) Link MDG-F programme interventions at the local level with policy-making at the national level through an explanatory analysis of the funds achievements and contribution - not only the identification, but also the explanation of “how” and “why” certain drivers and conditions led to specific outcomes.
- g) Increase the involvement of UN, government, and civil society partners in the evaluation process so as to give citizens a voice and influence on policy-making.
- h) Develop innovative evaluation methods and products with gender sensitivity that can be appropriated by MDG-F partners and transferred to future development programming.
- i) Ensure the sustainability of the Fund's impacts at country level through an action plan for continuation, replication, or scale-up of its programme interventions.

Evaluation scope

In this Case Study Evaluation, the *unit of analysis* is the combined work of the MDG-F in Timor-Leste assessed at the national level through the aggregate contributions of the individual Joint Programmes that have been implemented at national and sub-national levels.

Multiple *cases* within several sites were selected for the evaluation in order to strengthen the internal and external validity, as well as to help in finding explanations based on the observations of patterns or replications among the cases.

The *time frame* studied in the case study evaluation corresponds to the periods of design and implementation of the Joint Programmes in Timor-Leste. However, the start and end dates differ between the Joint Programmes given the varying proposal submission dates and programme time-frames.

The evaluation objectives and evaluation framework are laid out in the case study evaluation terms of reference. However, as per the direction of the MDG-F Secretariat, a decision was made to further identify one or two key policy areas as the *primary focus of the case study evaluation*. This decision was based on the need to address those areas of most relevance for the Joint Programmes in Timor-Leste and to meet existing requirements and expectations of the key stakeholders for more research into specific areas of concern. Another consideration was to limit the scope of the evaluation, taking into account the major events in Timor-Leste during 2012, namely the presidential and parliamentary elections and the drawdown of UNMIT.

After consultations with key stakeholders, including representatives from UN agencies, RCO, Government and civil society organizations, it was decided by a majority of key stakeholders that the case study evaluation focuses on: (a) National ownership and Coordination as the two main topics at policy level; (b) Changes in behaviour, attitudes and practices as a complementary topic at community level.

According to the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the Accra Agenda for Action, *national ownership* is understood according to the following basic definition: “Countries exercise effective leadership over their development policies and strategies and coordinate development actions”. In general, ownership is seen as a combination of leadership, energy and responsibility which is put into an action(s).

At the policy level, national ownership is understood by following five criteria:

- Initiative for programme formulation and implementation (i.e. to what extent the initiative was on the recipient/partner country or the donor’s side);
- Level of intellectual conviction among key policy makers (i.e. to what extent there was a commitment in support of reform among key actors in the government at central and local levels);
- Expression of political will by top leadership (i.e. to what extent concrete actions were taken as the expression of this commitment);
- Efforts towards consensus-building among key stakeholders (i.e. to what extent civil society and other key actors participated in all relevant processes); and
- Capacity to exercise ownership is supported and strengthened by donors (i.e. to what extent donors are committed to respect country leadership and help strengthen their capacity to exercise it).

Regarding *coordination*, the definition was based on a general consensus that it refers to managing interrelationships between activities. Since activities must, in some sense, be performed by different actors, the definition implies that all instances of coordination include actors performing activities that are interdependent. It also refers to a situation in which certain programmes or policies ‘work together’ in a somewhat coherent and complementary way. It may include the following attributes: the avoidance of overlap and inconsistencies, the need for coherence and an agreement on priorities, the minimization of conflict and the promotion of a comprehensive perspective instead of narrow sectoral views.

The case study evaluation focuses on the following key aspects of coordination:

- Management of relationships between various levels of government (i.e., does the method of coordination provides an effective platform for bottom-up and top-down learning?);
- Management of interdependent programmes and policies across the state administration (i.e. is the method effective in providing coordination across policy areas?);
- Relationship(s) between government and society (i.e. how citizens/peoples groups and other non-state actors are given a voice, and how decisions are made on issues of public concern?);
- Linkages between government and donor-funded Joint Programmes (i.e. to what extent the coordination mechanisms have contributed to strengthen national dialogue and commitment?);
- UN Inter-agency and donor' coordination with government (i.e. do these processes promote "Delivering as One" and strengthen aid effectiveness and efficiency?); and
- Gender-sensitive coordination mechanisms (i.e. to what extent do the Joint Programmes coordination mechanisms promote the participation of women so that they are included equally in policy process, and so that gender equality is one of the goals or results?).

Finally, on the topic '*changes in behaviour, attitudes and practices*', a comprehensive understanding of what is happening and why in terms of changes in behaviour, attitudes and practices at community level is analysed. The following general questions guided the exercise of evaluation:

- How the direct beneficiaries see the Joint Programmes interventions and related benefits? Are the benefits corresponding to their expectations?
- How the Joint Programmes benefits have contributed for changing behaviour, attitudes and practices in order to achieve the expected results?

Through this approach, a descriptive and illustrative analysis was obtained through the collection of perceptions from the beneficiaries at community level as a way of connecting local level programme interventions and their effects on national policy-making processes and also giving the beneficiaries the opportunity to express their voices and influence the decision makers through their recommendations.

A *participatory approach* was used throughout the case study evaluation. Hence, all programme stakeholders who had been involved in the design, implementation and assessment process of the evaluation had the opportunity to participate during the evaluation, including UN agencies, national counterparts, representatives of civil society and programme beneficiaries.

The *target audience and principal users* of the case study evaluation include UN agencies, government counterparts, beneficiary communities of the programmes and broader civil society at national and sub-national levels. They are the ones who had the opportunity to determine the specific focus and ultimately the use of the case study evaluation.

3. Case study evaluation methodology

The Case Study Evaluation Task Manager carried out a literature review based on programme documents, results and M&E frameworks, monitoring reports, mid-term evaluations, as well other relevant documents such as minutes and presentations. Documents also included relevant national strategies and country-specific documents.

The main outputs of the desk review consisted of the Joint Programmes contextual analysis in Timor-Leste and the initial development of a case study evaluation framework, followed by an elaboration of the evaluation methodology proposed by the CSE Task Manager to the Evaluation Reference Group. Through the initial development of the framework, the evaluation questions presented in the Terms of Reference were adapted to the specific context of the country. As part of the inception process, consultations with 31 key stakeholders, including representatives from UN agencies, RCO, Government and civil society organizations, were conducted between 7 and 16 of March 2012 to decide on the case study evaluation topics and main questions.

The data collection was carried out in three periods of time at national and sub-national levels (from 20 of April to 25 of May at central level; from 30 of May to 29 of June at district and village levels and; from 6 to 24 of August 2012 at central level) by Rita Fernandes (International Consultant and the CSE Task Manager, Romaldo da Costa (National Consultant and Evaluation Assistant), Inacia Teixeira (RCO National Coordination Analyst assisted as a Language Assistant in Oecusse) and Amalie Kristiansen (RCO Intern assisted in all districts except Baucau).

At central level, data collection was conducted in Dili. At sub-national level, data collection was focused in four districts (Oecusse, Covalima, Manatuto and Baucau) and two villages within each of the districts (Nipani and Bene-Ufe in Oecusse; Debos and Fatululic in Covalima; Cribas and Manelima in Manatuto; Trilolo and Baguia in Baucau). The degree of interventions (high and low), location (remote and non remote) and gender were the primary criterion for selection of districts and villages.

Concerning the degree of interventions, Oecusse and Baucau had interventions from both Joint Programmes. Manatuto had interventions under the JP – Promoting Sustainable Food and Nutrition Security in Timor-Leste while Covalima had interventions under the JP – Supporting Gender Equality and Women Rights. Regarding the location, in each district a village was chosen near the capital of the district and another one in a remote place.

The main evaluation tools used were interviews, focus groups and visual images. This was also supported by ethnographic observations and secondary data, qualitative and quantitative.

The CSE Team conducted 36 in-depth interviews focused on national ownership and coordination at central level from 20 of April to 25 of May 2012. The CSE Task Manager drew up a list of key stakeholders to be interviewed, sent a formal letter of invitation to those in the government departments and NGOs and set up a schedule of interviews. The interviewees included key partners from UN (19), Government (10), NGOs (6) and AECID (1). All of the interviews took place face to face in Dili. Tetum, English and Portuguese were the languages used. Interviews were generally conducted over a 1.5 to 2 hour time frame.

A mix of 11 in-depth interviews and 9 focus groups centred on ownership and coordination were also carried out by the CSE Team at district and village levels between 30 of May and 29 of June 2012. The CSE Task Manager drew up a list of key stakeholders to be interviewed, drafted a programme and wrote a formal letter of invitation to those in the local government departments, including the district and village head offices, and NGOs. Then the Evaluation Assistant sent those letters and set up a schedule of interviews and focus groups.

At district level, 11 interviews and 9 focus groups with a total of 33 key partners were carried out. This included key informants from the local government and NGOs in the districts of Oecusse (10), Covalima (7), Manatuto (5) and Baucau (11). The total number of interviewees or focus groups participants by type of organisation and by district are summarised in Annex 3.

At village level, 8 focus groups were carried out in a total of 8 villages (2 villages per district) with a total of 42 local leaders. In general, focus groups comprised the members of the Council of Villages, including the chief of village, chief(s) of sub-villages, a representative of women, representatives of youth (women and men), an elder (called '*Ansiaun*') and a *Lia-Na'In*.

Tetum, Baikeno (in the district of Oecusse) and occasionally Portuguese were the languages used. Interviews and focus groups were generally conducted over a 1.5 to 2 hours time frame. At the district level, they were held in the district offices of local government and NGOs while at the village level they were held at the village head office '*sede de suco*'.

The CSE Team also combined focus groups with visual images through the photovoice method to explore beneficiaries' perceptions on changes in behaviour, attitudes and practices. The objective was to widen the range of stakeholders consulted and assess the effectiveness of interventions from both Joint Programmes in which a range of beneficiaries had participated and to elicit contributions to the understanding of the overall situation. Photovoice was conducted with a group of 48 beneficiaries from 8 villages (Nipani and Bene-Ufe in Oecusse; Debos and Fatululic in Covalima; Cribas and Manelima in Manatuto and; Trilolo and Baguia in Baucau) from 30 of May to 29 of June 2012. The CSE Task Manager drafted a concept note and wrote a formal letter of invitation to all chiefs of village explaining the objectives of the evaluation, the participatory methodologies and the type of beneficiaries to be part of the evaluation exercise. Then the Evaluation Assistant sent the letters and contacted all the chiefs of villages to ask them to identify the target group who fit the criteria and set up a schedule.

The meetings were held in Tetum at the villages head offices and approximately 3 hours. The CSE Team provided logistical support (cameras, laptops, paper and pens) and refreshments for participants. The methodology was participatory with two small-group discussions divided by sex, a photography/shooting phase using a digital camera and feedback to the group of discussion.

Another tool used by the CSE Team was a questionnaire to assess the effects of all Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) and Advocacy and Partnerships initiatives conducted under the MDG-F. The questionnaire was implemented at central level with 35 people (18 men and 17 women), including 11 people from the government, 11 from UN and 2 from NGOs. The CSE Task Manager drew up a list of key stakeholders to be interviewed and the Evaluation Assistant contacted all of them by phone between 6

and 24 of August 2012. Tetum and English were the languages used. Each questionnaire was conducted in approximately 10 minutes.

In terms of strategies employed to manage, analyse and interpret the data generated by the data collection procedures, a combination of both systematic and creative approaches were used. As indicated above, the qualitative 'raw' data generated by multiple methods were in the form of audio-digital records and researcher notes. All the audio records were transcribed into Tetum by the Evaluation Assistant and then sent for translation from Tetum to English, except the transcripts from the villages which the CSE Task Manager analysed in Tetum.

During the analysis, all the materials were revised and a thematic analysis of the data was considered as the most appropriate approach. Themes were sorted, grouped under a smaller number of broader categories and, then, placed within an overall framework.

With the help of MAXQDA, the original data was synthesized to a more manageable level and helped understand the essence of the evidence, its meaning and relevance for the subject under enquiry to finally provide a descriptive and explanatory analysis.

Triangulation helped to search for consistency, reliability and validation of the findings and interpretations, as well as to accentuate final conclusions and recommendations. The first summary of the preliminary analysis was presented to the MDG M&E Working Group on 27 of July 2012 and to the Evaluation Reference Group for the Case Study Evaluation on 2 of August 2012.

4. Key roles and responsibilities in the evaluation process

As per the TORs, there are several main actors involved in the implementation of the MDG-F Case Study Evaluation⁸:

The Resident Coordinator Office, as Commissioner of the evaluation, leads the evaluation process throughout the main phases of a final evaluation (design, implementation and dissemination), ensures the evaluation quality standards in collaboration with the MDG-F Secretariat, provide administrative support to the evaluation task manager and the rest of the evaluation team throughout the whole evaluation process and takes the responsibility for the publishing and distribution of the evaluation report.

The Task Manager within the Resident Coordinator Office as Evaluation Manager and Lead Author provides overall management of the evaluation and strategic guidance, provides coordination and management within the evaluation team, coordinates communication and information flow between key stakeholders, guides the conceptualization of the evaluation, provides overall intellectual leadership and leads all of the phases of the evaluation process. The Task Manager also serves as the principal writer, ensures overall analytical cohesion and presents the finding and conclusions to evaluation stakeholders and the wider public.

The Evaluation Reference Group includes representatives of the National Steering Committee, Programme Management Committees, government counterparts and civil society organizations and it is responsible for providing documentation and overall strategic guidance to the evaluation team, as well as reviewing and providing feedback on the draft inception and evaluation reports.

The Advisory Panel, including an Evaluation Advisor, Evaluation Specialist from the MDG-F Secretariat and an Evaluation Advisor from UNEG, provides overall strategic guidance to the evaluation team and advisory support in defining scope, objectives and methodology, as well as reviews and provides feedback on draft inception and evaluation reports and ensures quality standards on data collection, analysis and final deliverables.

It is important to highlight that during the inception phase of the case study evaluation, key stakeholders, including others that were not part of the ERG, were involved in preliminary consultations by giving inputs to the definition of areas of interest to be studied under the Case Study Evaluation.

Finally, the case study evaluation also involved beneficiaries of the interventions under the both Joint Programmes as one of the objectives is to empower them and give them a voice in the assessment process and thereby strengthen their influence on decision-making at the national level. For that purpose, key informants from the local government and NGOs at district and village level had a crucial role in indentifying and mobilizing the beneficiaries for the data collection process, as well as in organizing them for the expected feedback as per the dissemination plan.

⁸ See Annex 4 for a detailed list of roles and responsibilities as per the TORs.

5. Constrains and limitations in the case study evaluation process

Evaluation method

The two major limitations in the evaluation method were:

- The lack of organized and comprehensive Joint Programmes information held by UN Agencies (e.g. detailed descriptions of interventions, disaggregated data by village, training participants' lists) for the inception phase.
- The lack of systematic monitoring information for the Joint Programmes.
- The lack of an organised contact list of all stakeholders at national and sub-national level.

These limitations have imposed some difficulties in terms of elaboration of the case study evaluation framework, design and selection of a sample, particularly for the district and village levels. Most of the stakeholders didn't have information for those indicators that required data on incidence. Instead a simple monitoring of whether specified activities had taken place. This means that the CSE had to rely on stakeholders' recollections and opinions. These limitations were mitigated to some extent by triangulation of information and acknowledging when different perspectives about an issue were held by different stakeholders. However, lack of monitoring data remained a limitation for this case study evaluation as for any other evaluations.

Language, Culture and Interpretation

The official languages in Timor-Leste are Tetum and Portuguese. However, in some areas where the field work was conducted some people were not able to speak any of the official languages. Baikeno was spoken in the villages of Nipani and Bene-Ufe (Oecusse) and Makasae in Baguia village (Baucau). Not being able to speak any of these, the CSE Team had to rely on using a language assistant when conducting interviews and group discussions in the villages. The use of a language assistant may also mean that cultural and linguistic nuances are lost in transcripts and translations.

Another factor that may have had some influence is the fact that some of the interviewees who are key informants from the local government and NGOs were observing some of the focus groups discussions, meaning that some respondents at village level (beneficiaries of interventions) might have given strategic answers to gain favours with the government or NGO presence. This was minimised by stating that the evaluation was independent and that the respondents were guaranteed anonymity. Overall the tone of the interviews suggested straightforwardness and in only few cases was clear that the answers were strategic and biased with an objective of sending specific messages.

During the other interviews and focus groups, Tetum was used as the working language. Still, the linguistic factor and the need to rely on translations from Tetum and local languages into English might also have influenced, to some extent, the information collected.

Time and Resources

It is important to take into account the major events in Timor-Leste during 2012. There were two sets of election in 2012. On March 17 and April 16, Timor-Leste conducted a first and a second round of peaceful presidential elections. Parliamentary elections were also successful conducted on 7 July. Also, in light of Timor-Leste's progress, the Government and the UN have planned for the withdrawal of the UN peacekeeping mission (UNMIT) by the end of 2012.

In this context, the case study evaluation had to reschedule some of the interviews with national key stakeholders and readjust the dates of the field trips visits to the districts to avoid massive political campaigns. There were only a few cases in which local stakeholders could not spare the time to participate in the case study evaluations activities, due to the political campaigns.

In terms of data management, the case study evaluation had some limitations relating to time and budget allocation constraints for the transcripts and translations. Transcribing all the audio records from the interviews and focus group discussions collected and then translating the transcripts from Tetum into English was a very time consuming task and some of the details and nuances may have been lost during the process.

There were also some limitations in terms of what the TOR proposed and the reality. The TOR envisioned an Evaluation Team consisting of four/five members: the Task Manager, Lead Author, 2-3 Technical Experts and a Research Associate. However, the Evaluation Team for the case study evaluation includes only an international evaluation team leader and a national evaluation assistant. The evaluation team leader accumulates the two functions: task manager and lead author. The Resident Coordinator Office and the Evaluation Reference Group decided to undertake the evaluation with an international evaluator and a national assistant.

The TOR also suggests an Advisory Panel which should include an Evaluation Advisor, Evaluation Specialist from the MDG-F Secretariat and an Evaluation Advisor from UNEG. The panel was to have an active role in terms of providing overall strategic guidance to the evaluation team, supporting in defining scope, objectives and methodology and providing feedback on draft inception and evaluation reports. However, feedback was never received, except for an initial meeting held in New York on February 2012 between the Evaluation Specialist from the MDG-F Secretariat and the Head of Office of the Resident Coordinator.

6. The main findings

6.1. Joint Programmes' National Ownership

6.1.1. National ownership

Understanding of national ownership

It is generally agreed by all partners that in the beginning of the process, the joint programme brought a new concept and modality of work which seemed difficult to understand and created confusion for all the involved partners even for UN Agencies. However, it seems that most people have significantly improved their understanding of the joint programme concept and of ownership, particularly during the process of implementation.

"I think UN Agencies have now a better understanding of the joint programme. We have regular meetings and we always invite all partners to come. Not only UN Agencies but also NGOs which are working together became more aware of what the joint programme is. From government side, I think they have been more involved so that they have a better understanding about the joint programme and there has been some improvement in terms of ownership" (R16)

A vast majority of partners have a similar understanding of national ownership. Overall, it means that government takes the initiative and is the main decision maker, as well as drives the process since the formulation, designing to approval, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes. Therefore the policies and programmes are anchored somewhere in a ministry or whatever place is appropriate and then that person, group of people and/or institution is involved in every single step throughout the cycle.

In that sense, some respondents said that national ownership is closer aligned to leadership although people who feel the ownership do not necessarily become the leaders.

The process has to be driven by national principles, legal framework and aligned with national priorities, for example, the use of official languages.

Most of the partners also linked national ownership to the need of having a good understanding of all the current programmes, policies and strategies, in which they may have to assume and feel a high level of responsibility. There is a need of having a sense of belonging to the programme and a feeling that the goals they are trying to achieve are relevant so that they assume their roles with responsibility and become accountable for their actions.

Only very few respondents (UN agencies, Ministries and NGOs) mentioned that national ownership needs to be linked to the sub-national level as local authorities and local implementing partners would also need to understand and be involved in all processes so they can easily feel that the programme belongs to them and that they can also perform their roles responsibly and successfully.

One interviewee mentioned the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the Accra Agenda for Action as the framework for defining national ownership.

Partnership is also highlighted by government and civil society organisations as part of the national ownership understanding. Working in partnership and using the joint programming form, capacity building assistance and budget support may contribute to an improvement of knowledge, avoid duplication of work and prevent clashes among partners.

As UN partners said, national ownership is something that people started talking about among themselves and an idea of ownership started to bloom. The current question is if the ownership is there and if it has been applied. In the UN context, all partners talk a lot about national ownership and want to promote it, but on a daily basis there are always challenges to fully support that ownership process.

“The national partners do things on their own without our support, even if it means to make mistakes because you learn from your mistakes and even if it means delays because they might not have the same resources as we do to make it a speedy process. I think we support ownership to a large extent but at the same time we also get impatient and we want to meet the objectives of the programme. We are focusing on meeting the outcomes and outputs of the programme in a timely manner because we have to report back to our donor and we want to prove that we can deliver. (...) So we tend sometimes to take over and to do the work on their behalf, even though we should step back and allow them do it in their terms.” (R30)

Even if the understanding of national ownership is better now than at the beginning of the joint programme (i.e. there are more people feeling that they own some of the interventions within the joint programme), there are still different degrees of feeling the sense of ownership. This is particularly evident in a context where actors have their own rhythm and capacity which impact on the speed and effectiveness of the interventions of their responsibility, whether individual or joint activities.

“National ownership is about the Timorese attitude in doing this joint programme with their hearts and minds, with full responsibility.” (R6)

Involvement in the JPs’ planning process

A vast majority of stakeholders were not part of the design phase. Most of the stakeholders have no information on how that process was organized. UN partners said that they were not yet in country. Exceptions are WFP, UNFPA, UNICEF and WHO.

UN agencies who were involved during the design phase said that when they designed the programme which was before the submission of the technical concept paper, there was very little interaction or consultation with the government due to the internal crisis in 2006 which may have limited the involvement of the government at least until 2008.

The UN had to submit the concept note in a very short period of time. This process was only among and led by UN Agencies. For example, for the Joint Programme on Supporting Gender Equality and Women’s Rights a consultant was recruited by UN Women to head up and oversee the drafting process and to make sure that the funding for the joint programme was secured. Each of the five UN Agencies was requested to nominate a focal point.

Once the concept note was approved by the MDG-F Secretariat (by end of 2009), a detailed proposal had to be developed. At that time, UN Agencies started discussions with government partners and initiated some assessments and consultations.

Regarding the JP-GEWR, UN partners said that there was a field mission around August 2009 to the districts of Baucau, Viqueque, Same and Manufahi to assess the current state of the *Bolsa da Mãe* (BdM) programme. The idea was to talk with MSS staff working at the district level, social animators at sub-district level and the chiefs of villages in order to assess the strengths and weaknesses of the programme. Also, some consultations related to specific interventions, such as Gender Responsive Budgeting (SEPI with UN Women) and Gender Based Violence (SEPI with UNFPA), were conducted.

Although the JP-GEWR started its planning in 2008, it was reported by UN partners that only in 2010, with UN Women as lead agency, a detailed work plan was developed. During that time, the Country Programme Manager of UN Women was taking the role of acting Programme Manager. A full time Joint Programme Manager joined in mid-December 2010.

UN established a results framework and every year there was an annual work plan which was developed and agreed among all partners. This plan was discussed and scrutinized with the implementing partners at PMU level.

Concerning the JP-FNS, UN agencies conducted consultations with relevant ministries, particularly MoH and MAF. There was an inception workshop held in Dili in March 2010. The workshop tried to identify and define the coordination mechanisms and structures at district level, establish the criteria for selection of beneficiaries and provision of service package and refine the M&E framework for the joint programme. Relevant ministers, government staff, organisations of civil society and key people from the government district offices attended the workshop. Key staff from state departments at district level were invited to participate. It seems that some of the government partners (e.g. MAF) only became more involved since that time. This was followed by district inception workshops in the Joint Programmes four districts.

It was also reported that the Programme Manager for the JP-FNS came on board later than planned (March 2011) which may have had an impact in terms of planning and coordination of stakeholders until then.

Participation in the JPs' implementation process

Partners were pretty much all involved in the implementation process although at different degrees. It was reported by UN partners that they were the ones who received the money and had to turn up the funding, as well as being ultimately accountable for that. After the funding approval, UN Agencies received proposals from the government or NGO counterparts. Then, after the proposals approval by the UN, the implementing partners were ready to start the implementation of the interventions. It was still predominantly the UN leading the process although UN Agencies couldn't implement without agreement and support from the government counterparts.

Some government partners mentioned that they always had to work in two parallel systems, i.e. UN System in terms of financial proposals and reporting formats and Government in terms of work

procedures. They said that they had been able to minimize the risks of duplication through the joint meetings before moving to the implementation of the programmes. For example, there were always preparation meetings with the relevant partners before the implementation of anger management training, gender based violence training or socialization of laws.

Focal points from each UN agency communicate with each other and are normally the ones who make the link with the JP programme manager. They also coordinate with the government and NGOs counterparts regarding the implementation of the programmes. Programme Managers of the Joint Programmes are accompanying the course of overall activities and mainly the reporting process, as well as providing technical assistance and other needed advice to UN Agencies in terms of implementation. Programme Managers also worked as the main focal points for coordination among UN Agencies. However, it was reported that some of the advice hasn't had many followers. For example, it was suggested that all the activities and related materials should have the MDG-F logo for advocacy purposes which has never been practiced.

It was also reported by government partners that the MDG National Secretariat has followed the process of implementation through the participation at PMC meetings and reports.

Government and NGOs partners said that they have implemented the planned activities based on the approved project documents. The majority of these partners were very much involved in the implementation of the activities they were responsible for. They said that, at the central level, initially focal points from each ministry or NGO communicated with their respective focal points from UN and then they proceeded through the involvement of directors and/or officers at sub-national level. Partners at sub-national level supported the implementation according to instructions provided by central level.

Home Gardening and School Gardens Programmes

“FAO coordinate with MAF and MoE regarding the implementation of Home-gardening and School Garden Programmes. Firstly, the basis of planning in terms of what will be done during the next 3 months is discussed between MAF and FAO. After that, FAO coordinate and share the plan with the extension workers at district and village levels. But with MoE has been a bit more difficult. FAO coordinate with MoE at national and district level, but MoE don't have enough staff at village level. So, FAO coordinate with schools so they are part of it but there is a person from district level coming with us so that they don't feel it's a UN project but a government project. This does not happen all the time but at least in the first time we introduce the intervention, because we don't want them to feel that this is not their project.” (R23)

Nutrition Education Training

“WFP coordinates with colleagues to get their technical inputs for the organisation of the one-day training programme. The training is focused on nutrition, including nutrition for children development, hygiene, basic notions of cooking nutritious food and key aspects of a healthy diet. The programme assistant also leads the training at district level. The Chief of Department of School Feeding, the Nutrition Coordinator in each district, staff from Department of Health Promotion and staff from Department of Health Environment support the delivery of the training. Teachers, students between 9 and 14 years old and parents are invited to attend the training”. (R10)

Gender-based Violence

“We have contact persons and facilitators in all districts. There are also different organizations promoting women and women’s rights. So our approach is to have our own staff who are working at that level as our focal points. We come together to design and coordinate things. (...) If the implementation is at the district level, the ones in the districts will participate. If it’s at the national level we involve only national level staff. The same applies for sub-districts and villages.” (R14)

Food Security Information and Early Warning System (FSIEWS)

“In the beginning, WFP supported and accompanied training on the FSIEWS conducted at district level. In practice, WFP gives money to the MAF for the implementation of the FSIEWA and WFP receives reports from MAF which normally arrive late and are very limited in terms of contents.” (R28)

Influence of sub-national levels in the decision-making process

Overall partners referred to the decision-making process under the Joint Programmes in terms of setting priorities, planning activities, allocating funds or implementing activities as being very much centralized.

However, there were some consultations to the sub-national levels during the planning phase. As it was mentioned before, under the Joint Programmes there were some inception workshops and some field visit assessments to receive feedback from key people at the district level before moving to the implementation stage.

“We went there and met them, interviewed and asked them what the problems are, what needs to be improved and then we channeled that information between sub-national and national levels.” (R25)

A vast majority of government partners said that the overall governance structure is very top-down authority based. This means that people at district, sub-district or village levels haven’t had much opportunity to participate in the whole process.

“I think we are not yet at that stage, even though some programmes were made in consultation with districts regarding to what they need and what is most relevant for those districts. (...) For example, if we want to implement this programme in four districts, we choose those districts based on the existing available data. Then we just communicate to them that we will go there to implement the programme.” (R9)

Nevertheless, it was reported by some partners (government, NGOs and UN) that there are specific cases where sub-national authorities helped during the planning activities. For example, school and home gardens initiatives where local leaders helped in choosing the target populations.

“An assessment to identify the most vulnerable households of villages/sub-villages and which households should be part of the programme was made. The chiefs of villages identified the most vulnerable. So they were very involved in that stage.” (R30)

Consultations to the local authorities on nutrition training activities are another situation. *“We do the consultation regarding the nutrition education so they can authorize their teachers and students, as well*

as cooks, to participate in this process of learning. They decide which schools and who else should participate in this process. This decision comes from the Ministry of Education as well.” (R28)

Sub-national levels may also have had some influence in terms of designing the social mobilization campaign.

“The Child Protection District Officers get some ideas on how to carry out meetings and get the priorities from the national level, but they can look into specific contexts and identify certain protection risks that they want to respond to. They design a little bit the social mobilization campaign according to their priorities. We don’t sit there and has to be all uniform.” (R20)

Consultations under the law against domestic violence were conducted with key districts informants to help develop the annual action plan. This provides another example.

“SEPI led consultations at national and district levels and established thematic groups which helped to gather and collect information to be used in the annual action planning. Everyone particularly from the districts participated in the process. So I want to say that this programme is not something that people from other countries brought and done it but Timorese people did it themselves and people from outside just provided technical assistance through training and ideas.” (R17)

Most of the NGOs reported that they have officers at sub-national levels. During the planning phase, national staff went to the districts, sub-districts and villages to bring information and ideas to be revised at national level and then to contribute for the proposal of activities to be submitted to the financing partners.

Furthermore, as it was reported by UN, government partners occasionally bring some district partners to the PMC meetings or quarterly meetings in which they provide feedback in terms of the implementation of the activities.

Reform towards national ownership

The reform towards national ownership was not established as one of the main objectives under the Joint Programmes. However, partners said that the process of the Joint Programmes have helped partners to raise the concept of national ownership and make them more aware of what is needed to achieve that ownership. But, this is something that has occurred more in the third and last year of the programme according to most of the partners’ opinion.

Reform is probably an inappropriate word to use, particularly in a context where a majority of the interventions were part of the UN Agencies annual work plans before the formulation of the Joint Programmes. However, there is some evidence of contributions to national ownership reported by the different partners, such as the following:

- Partners are keen to implement some activities jointly (E.g. home gardens by MAF; social mobilization on child protection and gender-based violence by MSS and SEPI).
- Local government partners are motivated to carry out activities on their own after receiving training (E.g. FSIEWS at district level; Database of BdM at district level).

- Government counterparts are part of the recruitment processes carried out by UN agencies and oversee contracts and payments (E.g. every time UNDP had to recruit staff at district level). So government counterparts have the opportunity of managing them using their own systems and structures.
- SEPI and UN Women are co-chairing the PMC meetings of the JP-GEWR.
- UNICEF and MAF are co-chairing the PMC meetings of the JP-FNS,
- UN agencies and partners are sitting together at PMC meetings, in which government counterparts are addressing issues and trying to find solutions.
- Government staff supported by several NGOs, are conducting advocacy campaigns to achieve the objective they want. This is particularly the situation of the law against domestic violence.
- Community groups have been established to facilitate the implementation of several activities at village and sub-village levels (E.g. mothers support group).

Nearly everyone from the NGOs said that the Joint Programmes have to some extent promoted Timorese people becoming the owners although they are concerned about the sustainability of certain activities which may have a negative impact on what has been achieved until now and on what is planned from now on. This is the case of shelters for the victims of gender based violence at community level. They said that it's difficult to own the initiatives when there is no sustainability plan in place as the Joint Programmes are approaching the end.

It is generally agreed by all partners that ownership is something that takes times to occur and requires a lot of conditions and resources in place, including sustainability of the interventions taking into account in any future strategic plans.

Expression of political will by top leadership

Overall respondents said that the Joint Programmes were not formulated due to an expression of political will by top leadership. The Joint Programmes were designed because the UN received funds from the MDG Achievement Fund. It was a process very much driven by UN.

"I think they were quite happy to accept the programme, but I don't think they were particularly pushing the programme. I don't think it was the case that they heard about it and then came to the UN and asking for support. I think it was the other way around. The Resident Coordinator Office understood this as an opportunity to get through the gender window and get funding." (R11)

A majority of partners said that the Joint Programmes were completely designed according to government priorities. Only few respondents from government said that the Joint Programmes should have been more adjusted to the MDGs priorities in Timor-Leste.

"I didn't know what happened three years ago, but in April last 2011 there was a MDG Steering Committee meeting chaired by the Ministry of Finance where there was a presentation made by the MDG National Secretariat on the country's progress on MDGs indicators. It came up three main challenges that Timor-Leste faces which should be a focus for any future government intervention or any

donor's intervention. The first one was nutrition, the second one was maternal mortality and the third one was sanitation.” (R32)

It is commonly accepted by all partners that the Joint Programmes have contributed to push some of the issues up to the political front, but it would be very difficult to say that Joint Programmes were the only contributing factor to bring issues to the political agenda and contributed for improvements in the situation of the country.

There were some signs of political movements towards both areas of the Joint Programmes. In the area of nutrition, six ministries (MAF, MoH, former MTCl⁹, MoE, former MED¹⁰ and MSS) signed the Declaration of Comoro on 18 of October 2010. Based on the statement of “Putting an end to hunger and malnutrition”, the joint declaration voiced the political will to bring to an end hunger and malnutrition in Timor-Leste.

In the area of gender equality, a draft Law against Domestic Violence was developed in 2004 although it hadn't developed any further until the approval of Penal Code in March 2009. Also, “an agenda for GRB in Timor-Leste was initiated in 2008 with a short statement in the government's budget documents, which proposed the integration of a gender perspective into performance indicators. While the origin of this statement in the Ministry of Finance remains obscure, women in parliament and the women's machinery in government were quick to 'own' its agenda. An agreement to implement GRB was signed by representatives of government, parliament and civil society as part of the International Women's Day celebrations in March 2008¹¹. This agreement, termed the 'Dili Declaration', received further support in a special International Women's Day sitting of parliament.”

Concerning the modes of leadership which have driven the JPs' process, a majority of partners mentioned that they had the opportunity to take the leadership formally through meetings, namely the NSC, PMC and ERG meetings, nutrition working group, specific consultation meetings, as well as other specific technical meetings. Nearly everyone recognized that they weren't really involved or interested in the programme during the first year and half or until the PMC of the Joint Programmes was established¹² and the NSC had started moving at the very top level.

As it was reported by UN, the Minister of Economy and Development¹³, who co-chaired the NSC with the Resident Coordinator Office, has shown interest since the beginning of the process. However, it was also reported by some government partners that the participation of that Minister and other Ministers does not mean that they discuss issues among themselves or share information with other people regarding the JPs.

⁹ MCIE under the current 5th Constitucional Government.

¹⁰ MED doesn't exist under the current 5th Constitucional Government.

¹¹ Costa, M., Sharp, R. and Elson, D. (2009), 'Country Profile: Timor Leste', available at www.unisa.edu.au/genderbudgets.

¹² In the JP-GEWR the first NSC meeting was held on 6 of May 2009 endorsed the recommendation of nominating SEPI as Co-chair of the PMC and the first PMC meeting was held on 17 Dec 2009.

¹³ Under the 4th Constitutional Government as the MED doesn't exist under the current Government.

According to some respondents (Government, UN and NGOs), SEPI who is co-chairing the PMC of the JP-GEWR with UN Women is showing a very positive degree of leadership. *“When you look at the PMC and NSC meetings the way SEPI presents itself so they provide a good leadership and they show that it’s not just an initiative by UN Agencies but that they become part of that one. Also the counterparts have always something to say when we have meetings to discuss specific issues.” (R20)*

From a UN perspective, UN Women and UNICEF are seen as the two leading UN agencies which have played a constructive role in bringing partners together and building synergies under the umbrella of the RCO. Furthermore, these agencies have created space for government to take the lead, particularly by allowing them to co-chair the PMC meetings.

Programme Managers are recognized by a majority of partners as crucial points of contact which coordinate rather than to lead. Within the UN, the Programme Managers in coordination with each of the leading agency focal points are seen as the driving force behind the scenes.

“In fact government is not always leading that forum. We are the ones providing all the background information to the PMC meetings and what decisions should be made. We are even writing the talking points, but we do that because we are requested to do so. We are getting better at not stuffing this down their throat, but in many cases we are asked if we can lead the discussions if they are chairing the meeting. So substantially in many cases we are still leading from behind.” (R30)

Externally, each UN agency has its own key partners and focal points. Some of them are the ones who are actively driving the process. For example, UNDP is in close contact with the National Director of Social Reinsertion at the Ministry of Social and Solidarity or UNICEF with the Head of Nutrition Department at the Ministry of Health.

But beyond the formal meetings, some respondents found it difficult to generalize whether or not there is leadership or to understand what is really happening in terms of discussing priorities included in the JPs’ work plan at ministry level.

Nevertheless, several respondents said that there is some evidence of political will which was more pushed up by the MDG-F Joint Programmes. In terms of gender equality and women empowerment, the National Action Plan against Domestic Violence was approved on May 2012. During the development of the Plan, a Technical Drafting Committee comprised of several government and non-government institutions and led by SEPI took the initiative of drafting the plan.

“For the Joint Programme on Supporting Gender Equality and Women’s Rights, I feel that the ministries involved in the Joint Programme have good leadership and they are aware of the programme and they follow the programme’s implementation. For example, at policy and political levels, SEPI, Ministry of Social Solidarity, Ministry of Health and Ministry of Justice are all aware of the Joint Programme, but this does not mean that they attend every technical meeting such as the PMC meetings. However, SEPI attends the PMC meetings to provide all the information and progress reports.” (R9)

In terms of food and nutrition security, the Food Security Information and Early Warning System has been led by MAF. Although the establishment of the system was very slow, government staff rather

than WFP are the ones who have conducted the training at sub-national level and implemented the programme.

Concerning the fortified blended food called Timor-Vita, targeted for children under the age of five and pregnant and lactating women, the former Vice-Minister of MoH strongly supported the Timor Vita's production and advocated for improvements in production to increase the benefit for the country. In fact, the former Vice-Minister, Prime-Minister and Minister for Finance discussed about how to integrate efforts to improve national production rather than to continue importing. They are aware that production can be improved in a way that can also help the national agriculture.

Participation and achievement of consensus among civil society

UN and government partners said that civil society organizations have been actively involved, particularly since they've started participating in the PMC meetings.

NGOs said that the JPs gave them an opportunity to work together with other partners in the phases of planning, implementation and M&E. NGOs reported that it has been a very interesting process in terms of learning from each other and building up a network towards the improvement of the services delivery. NGOs are the ones who have been working with certain groups of vulnerable people who haven't yet received much attention or been taken into account through public policies.

"We refer cases to each other (Casa Vida, FOKUPERS, JSMP, PRADET) and we also have a memorandum of understanding about transferring cases to each other. If we have the cases where victims have trauma and they do not want to return home for safety reasons, we can refer victims to FOKUPERS to take them into a safe house such as the one in Suai (Salele shelter) or in Oecusse (FPVO) or in Baucau (Uma Paz) by using the lines of coordination among groups working in the area of gender." (R17)

Some respondents from UN mentioned that they faced difficulties in terms of making staff available to participate in all meetings and also of being able to communicate in English. In fact, this is pointed out by NGOs as a constraint to communication and, consequently for achievement of consensus with NGOs when they have to work with UN.

"Civil society organisations are basically service providers for the area of gender based violence. They are providing services and, at the same time, they have to find time to follow the processes. It's difficult for them because they have dual roles and they simply don't have the time for all these meetings. I would say from second and third years onwards they have been doing their best and have attended the PMC meetings." (R11)

Some government partners see NGOs as important implementing partners, particularly during the implementation and monitoring. *"I think that our partners from civil society have particularly made a contribution and have had given maximum collaboration as they are closer to our communities. Communities are the ones who get the impacts or effects of the activities or programmes that have been conducted. I don't know if they were involved in the planning, but in the process of implementation and monitoring they have participated." (R12)*

From the perspective of some NGOs, it's much easier to work in partnership with multiple partners rather than only with government. As they said, under the JPs' process there's much more flexibility and openness for them to contribute with ideas and provide suggestions.

Furthermore, some UN respondents also see civil society organizations as the ones who really 'own' the activities, especially those projects and activities implemented by them. Representatives of NGOs attend PMC meetings at national level, but they are much more involved at the ground level with responsibilities in terms of implementation.

Capacity to exercise ownership supported by donors

All the respondents said that the MDG Achievement Fund has respected country leadership or at least they haven't seen any objection. Partners said that the MDG-F has been flexible regarding the work plan and any modifications as long as decisions are approved by the PMC and the NSC. For example, there have been some changes to the results framework and extensions of the programmes which have been agreed to by the MDG-F.

Some partners from government said that they don't have much contact with the MDG Achievement Fund as normally UN Agencies are the ones answering all the requests and submitting the required reports. The only contact they have is through the PMC meetings where the AECID is invited to come and participate.

However, from the government point of view, the country capacity to exercise leadership has occurred gradually in the country and the MDG Achievement Fund has indirectly contributed and has given enough space to all partners to decide on what components should be included to strengthen that country capacity.

"The Fund is focused more on the programme implementation rather than on the management capacity or leadership development. This is a programme implementation fund. This is not an advocacy leadership fund. That is a different level. The money that we are using is focused on the technical leadership." (R27)

Some UN agencies said that the country capacity to exercise leadership is improving very slowly. This seems also linked to an existing tension between UN and Government in a sense that UN wants to have capacity of government partners strengthened and at the same time it burdens them and actually makes their life more stressful.

"I don't know how many people are trying to strengthening the director capacity, but at times when the director is overloaded and extremely stressed I'm sure it's because other donors are also putting pressure on her to do something. And I don't think that's really helping her. I think is blocking her from doing more and I think that's something that really needs to be addressed, actually." (R25)

From the NGOs perspective, it was reported by the majority of partners that MDG Achievement Fund doesn't take into account the existing human resources capacity. This brings limitations on how the activities and the processes are owned by the key actors. However, the investment in training targeting people at different levels may have a positive impact on country capacity in the future.

According to some partners (Government, UN and NGOs), the exercise of leadership is probably more reflected in some specific activities implemented at the sub-national level such as the Mothers Support Group or the Food Security Information and Early Warning System.

“We established the Mothers Support Group in the community with the intention that the leaders of these community activities would share information about the importance of mothers and children’s health in their villages and sub-villages” (R34)

“The food security village level monitoring system has been conducted on a monthly basis and training for extensions workers and food security officers was provided. When we go to the districts and into the field we also go with extensions workers to conduct monitoring and evaluation of the progress of programmes. What kind of challenges they are encountering and how they can resolve them and find solutions were discussed. As such, this is a kind of capacity building for our staff at the village level which is implemented within this process and it is very good.” (R12)

Ownership and its implications for relationships and effectiveness

A majority of respondents (53%) said that ownership within the JPs is a matter of organizational development and individual commitment, followed by some respondents (36%) who considered ownership as an organizational development issue. Very few (6%) mentioned individual commitment.

Within UN, most of the respondents (56%) answered that ownership is both a matter of organizational development and individual commitment while the remaining respondents said that ownership is a matter of organization development (44%). Within Government, most of the interviewees (56%) stated that ownership is both a matter of organizational development and individual commitment, followed by individual commitment (22%) and organizational development (11%). Concerning NGOs, half of respondents referred to ownership as a matter of organization development. The others said that ownership is both, i.e. organizational development and individual commitment.

From another point of view, ownership was seen as an issue of organizational development at national level and as a matter of individual commitment at village level. *“We have clear cases that suggest ownership is related to an individual commitment. Some of the extension workers are great even though they don’t have motorbikes and have to go on their own because they are responsible for the activities. This applies to just few of them. Others are not committed. (...) The organization has more weigh at the national level rather than at the village level. At the national level, organizations and structures are stronger because maybe there is a commitment with UN to jointly participate. So maybe, at national level, it is more organizational and, at village level, it is more individual.” (R23)*

In terms of who has been the owner of the Joint Programmes, most of the interviewees are divided between the ones who believe that the owner of the Joint Programmes has been UN and Government (31%) and Timorese people (22%). Only few respondents believe that it has been Government (8%) or all partners (6%).

From another perspective, half of the UN partners said that the owner has been both UN and Government, while the other respondents are divided between UN (22%) and Timorese people (11%). Within the Government interviewees, 22% pointed out Government as the owner and another 22%

referred Timorese people. The other ones are equally divided between three options: UN; UN and Government and; Government and Timorese people. Regarding NGO's opinion, 50% of the respondents said that Timorese people are the owners while 25% referred to all partners and 13% mentioned UN.

In terms of who should be the owner of the Joint Programmes, 50% of the respondents said that Government should be the owner, followed by Timorese people (25%), UN & Government (3%) and Government and Timorese people (3%).

Taking into account only the UN respondents, a vast majority (78%) said that Government should be the owner. Considering the Government opinion, 44% of respondents said it should be Timorese people while 33% answered that it should be the Government. From the NGOs perspective, all of them said that the owner should be Timorese people.

A model of the attributes of national ownership was drawn up based on the categories proposed by the respondents. Core categories of 'national ownership' referred to by UN, Government and NGOs are shown in the Figures below.

Figure 1: Attributes of 'national ownership' by the UN partners

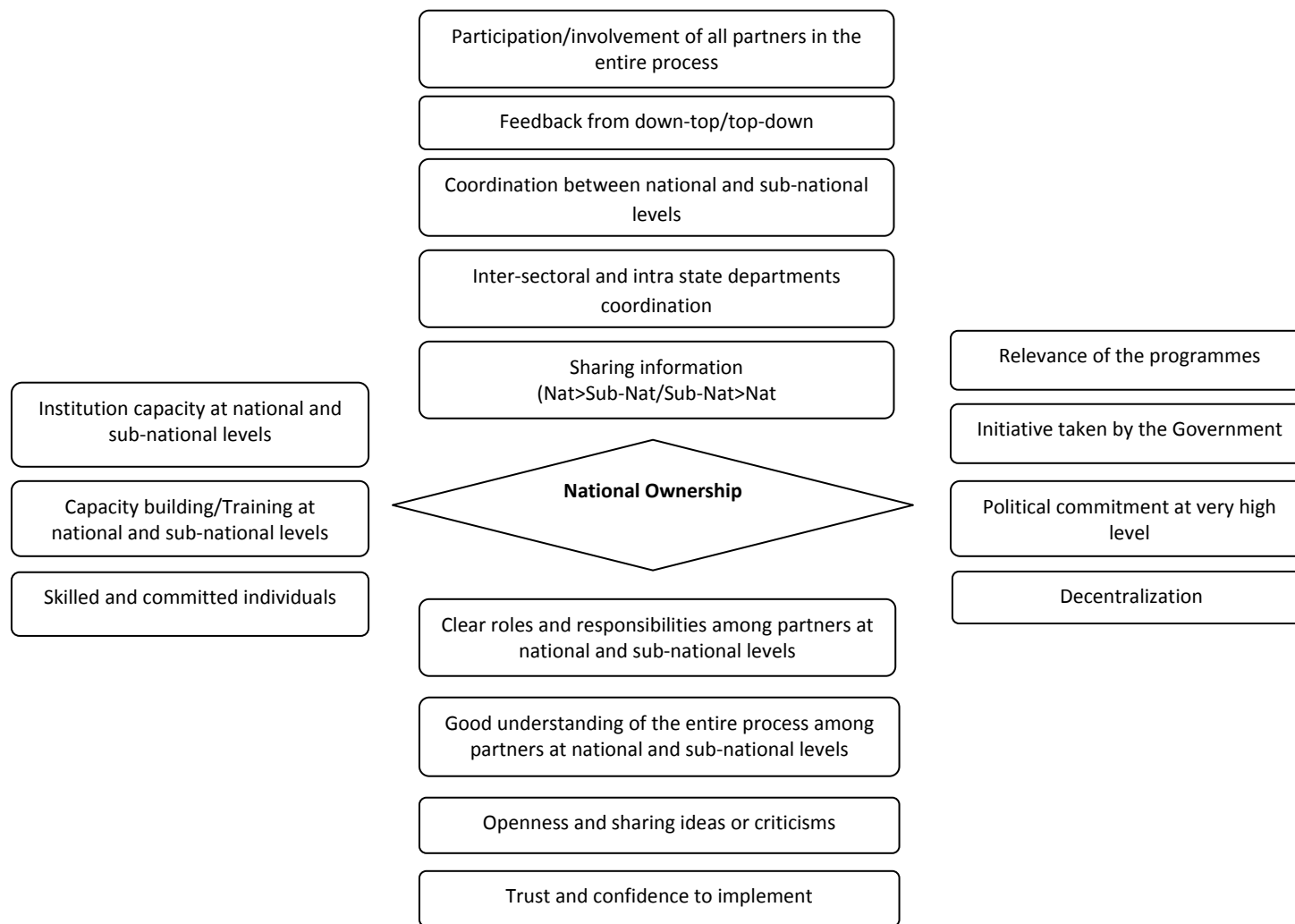


Figure 2: Attributes of 'national ownership' by the government partners

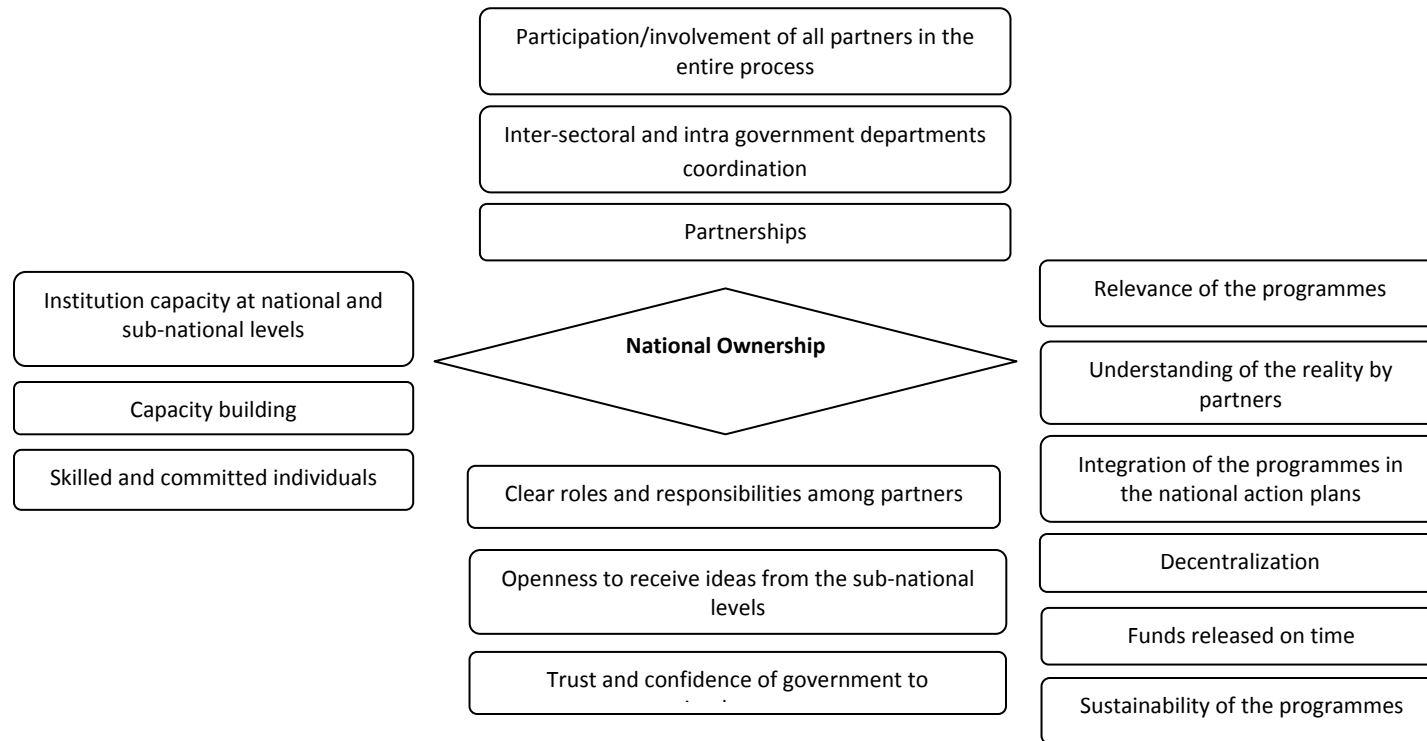
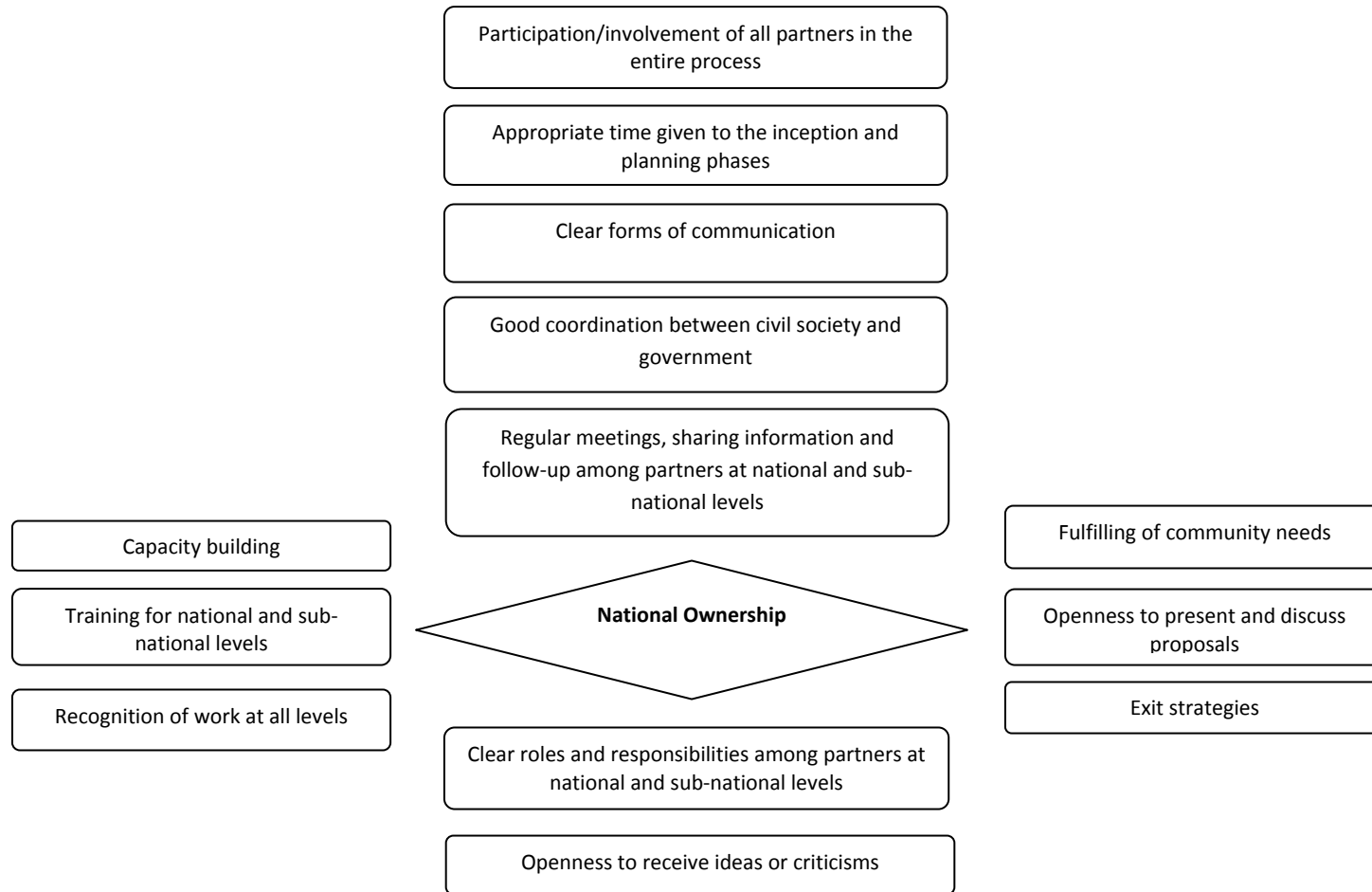


Figure 3: Attributes of 'national ownership' by the NGOs partners



Benefits or positive impact of the JPs in national ownership

Overall, partners said that a more holistic, broader approach has been created with the JPs by involving all of the partners. Partners are more aware of the core attributes that strengthened national ownership in the areas of the JPs (GEWR and FNS) and they are actively taking steps towards national ownership such as the proposal submitted to the parliament regarding the allocation of budget to the implementation of the law against domestic violence or the consultation concerning the national strategy for nutrition.

However, partners seem to have a better understanding of what the JPs were about, the rules to be followed and the idea of ownership during the last year of the JPs.

Most of the partners agreed that the JPs gave them the opportunity to work together, to increase their awareness on what each partner was doing in different areas, as well as learn from each other which rarely would have happened through different approach of programming.

It was reported by some government partners that the JPs processes helped UN Agencies to avoid duplicating programmes and facilitated Government to lead the agreed activities. It also allowed them to integrate the activities in their annual work plans. This is what occurred, for example, with SEPI regarding the Law against Domestic Violence and its related activities such as socialization and dissemination of information.

Government decided to extend and take responsibility for certain activities such as the FSIEWS which started in four districts and then extended to all districts, or the BdM where the focal points in all districts are now supported by the government.

There are also situations where all of the activities supported by a UN Agency will continue after the JP finishes. This is the case of social mobilization campaigns and activities in the areas of child protection, gender based violence, as well as activities conducted under the child protection network at district level. However, it's important to highlight that these interventions had started before the MDG-F support which means that there was probably enough time to strengthen the activities and give the opportunity for government to take over some of them.

NGOs stated that through the JPs they have become stronger in terms of organizational and individual capacity, as well as more supportive. Training received may have had a very positive impact in terms of increasing individual knowledge and capacity to manage and implement programmes. They also reported that it was easier to submit and discuss proposals with partners, as well as to involve the community in the activities.

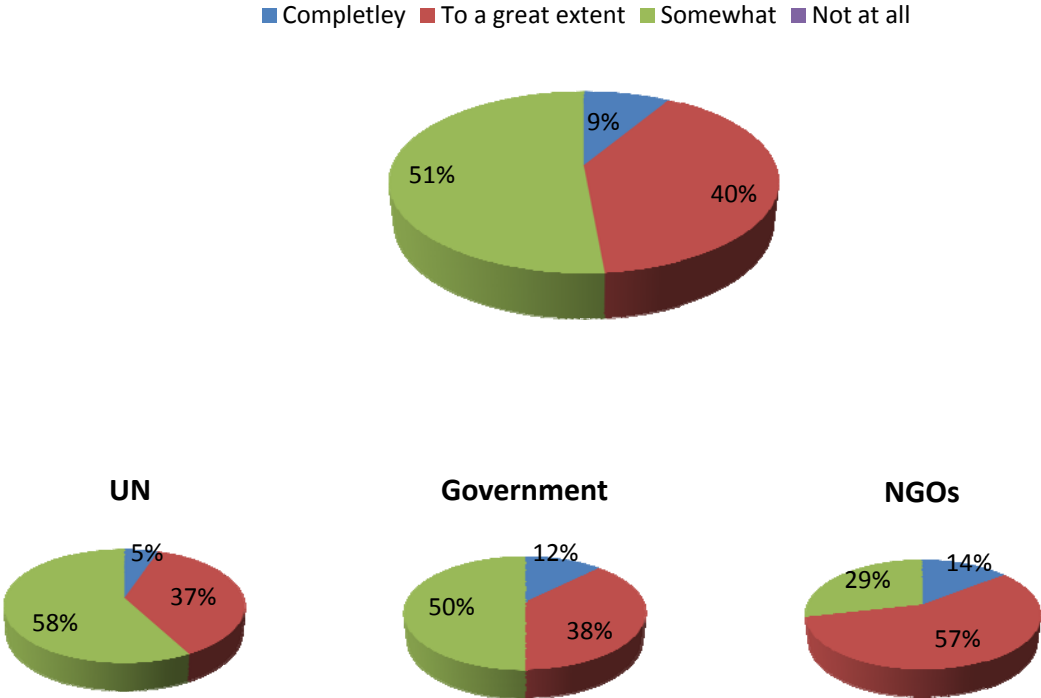
Some UN Agencies and NGOs reported that certain communities developed a sense of ownership of the activities, particularly the ones who received more intensive training and were more actively participating in activities, such as the ones related to school gardens, home gardens, mother support groups and training on gender based violence.

UN agencies said that a better understanding of ownership by government throughout the process seems to have highlighted the need to improve coordination and communication at different levels.

Finally, the majority of partners said that the JPs have strengthened ‘somewhat’ national ownership, followed by ‘to a great extent’.

From the Government and UN perspectives, at least half of the respondents stated that JPs have strengthened ‘somewhat’ national ownership while from NGOs’ opinion the majority of the respondents said ‘to a great extent’.

JPs strengthen of national ownership



Challenges in national ownership

One of the biggest challenges referred to by most respondents from UN was the set-up of a management team at the beginning of the Joint Programmes which would be immediately responsible for the management of the programme and the coordination of partners. Consequently, UN took leadership of the process at that time.

UN respondents mentioned that another huge challenge came later on in terms of involving stakeholders and having government engaged and leading the process. Respondents said that it was a big challenge to change the relationship between government and UN agencies, as it started with limited dialogue.

Although there was an opportunity to create and involve all partners in a holistic broad approach, UN reported that ownership in terms of strategic thinking is still a challenge. This seems to be partially related to the challenge of understanding some relevant issues, such as the ones related to human trafficking.

Then, it's also very challenging to put in practice the policies that have been formulated jointly with other partners and implement that on the ground. Two examples are the implementation of the Law against Domestic Violence and the finalization of the legislation for human trafficking.

UN partners also recognized that there are so many other simultaneously and on-going processes that ownership needs time to occur. There are processes, such as the ones internally UN (UNDAF, Country Programmes, Evaluations) or externally UN (Bilateral projects and other institutions), which may put pressure on the government partners, as they have to attend several meetings and read documents and/or provide inputs in a limited time. Key partners can easily become overloaded with work/responsibilities and are unable to address all of the requirements.

Also, it's a big challenge to ensure that all of the government partners at national level have the same understanding of the programmes and that the messages are taken from the central to sub-national levels in such a way that the key informants from the sub-national level receive the appropriate information.

UN respondents also added that the level of institutional development is always challenging as most of the institutions and government structures didn't exist or were very weak when the JPs started. The country was trying to recover from the 2006 crisis.

At the same time, the lack of individual commitment over the processes is another factor to take into account. A respondent from the government said *"At the start many people participate but then disappear one by one maybe because there is a need for continuous follow-up."*(R4)

This links with another challenge related to coordination, roles and responsibilities, mentioned mostly by government partners. A majority agreed that there is a lack of coordination, particularly between ministries, which sometimes raises a kind of competition in terms of who is taking maximum responsibility. There is also a lack of understanding of roles and responsibilities which, consequently, may have an impact on people's commitment over the activities and processes. This has not been facilitated due to the bureaucratic systems of government and UN agencies.

It was generally accepted by the majority of partners that there is a need to decrease the over dependency of government on UN. There is also a need to reduce the dependency of government on international advisers to do key functions with ministries or at least guarantee that there is a proper handover between advisers and line ministries, so that the new appointed person will have the same understanding with her/his predecessor. This happens quite often in the area of legislation.

A vast majority of interviewees recognized that a challenge occurs when government has to allocate the necessary resources (budget and staff) within the line ministries to actually do the work. It's very challenging to find enough qualified human resources. For example, in the area of nutrition, there are few nutritionists available in country and it's difficult to retain them in the ministries as there is always opportunity for them to move for different reasons; either because they receive scholarships or move around between ministries or to some other position at other organization/institution.

Government and UN partners also pointed out that communities who developed a sense of ownership over certain activities, such as the ones under the home and school gardens, don't have enough capacity

to continue the activities by themselves or they just don't have enough resources to sustain the activities.

Budget continuity was mentioned by most of the NGOs as a real challenge to ensure all the programmes will continue in the future. For example, Government has to allocate resources to conduct activities that were not completed during the Joint Programme timeline, such as the case of gender sensitive budgeting. A failure in gaining budget support means that they will lose the feeling of their ownership to the programmes.

Finally, some NGOs and government partners also pointed out language as one the major challenges. *“Timorese people who participate in the meetings are not able to express their ideas about the programme in English. (...)That’s why people are not very active during the meetings.” (R18)*

6.1.2. Sub-national ownership

6.1.2.1 Districts

Understanding of ownership

<p><i>Oecusse</i></p> <p>Timorese people are involved in the process, working together to achieve common goals regarding the improvement of their lives. Timorese people have to be involved in the organization, management, implementation and evaluation processes even if they are receiving support from international donors.</p>	<p><i>Baucau</i></p> <p>Timorese people are involved in the design, implementation and evaluation of programmes. Funds can come from the Government or international donors, but most importantly the Timorese people lead and manage the programmes.</p>
<p><i>Covalima</i></p> <p>Staff from the central level, districts, villages and sub-villages participate in the planning. They are the ones who have to implement and monitor the programmes and its related activities in partnership with counterparts. Communities have to have a role in that process. Everyone involved needs to be well informed, understand the programmes and its objectives, as well as to ensure the programmes are adjusted to the reality.</p>	<p><i>Manatuto</i></p> <p>There is a joint effort to develop, implement and evaluate programmes in order to achieve common objectives. Timorese people have to believe those objectives are reachable. Timorese people have to have enough knowledge and capacity to participate in the entire process.</p>

Initiative for programme formulation and implementation

Occasionally, respondents from districts were invited to participate in the planning of programmes. Government partners in Oecusse participated in meetings and training conducted at the national level, such as the meetings of the gender working group, a workshop on nutrition conducted by MoH, training on FSIEWS conducted by MAF and consultations about BdM by MSS.

NGOs partners said that they were involved in the design of the nutrition and human trafficking interventions as they attended meetings in the beginning to develop an action plan for the district of Oecusse and establish a network of key people (government departments from health, agriculture, education and NGOs) to be involved in the process.

Partners from Covalima participated in the planning of specific activities, such as the ones related to the establishment of the victims support network and the child protection network in which NGOs and MSS were working together and mobilizing other partners.

Respondents from Manatuto who have been involved in the school and home gardens said that they attended a workshop at national level to prepare the implementation of the programmes together with UN and NGOs.

Concerning the implementation of programmes, all partners have been involved although at different degrees and rhythms.

In Oecusse, district government authorities invited local leaders and their counterparts for information sessions when authorities needed to explain any issues regarding the plan of implementation. For example, regarding health projects, government departments, such as agriculture and education, UN agencies such as WFP and NGOs such as Alola Foundation were all requested to join the preparation meetings organized by the Department of Health in Oecusse. Concerning home and school gardens, extension workers have worked directly with UN agencies, such as FAO, and with local leaders at sub-district and village levels, as well as with local NGOs. On the opposite, it was reported that the Department of Education has had minimal involvement with education-related projects, such as the school gardens.

From NGOs' opinion, the JP of FNS is the priority in Oecusse and NGOs work together with UN agencies to implement activities, such as home gardens, in which the community seems to be very keen to participate as a way to improve the nutrition situation. Regarding the JP of GEWR, it has been constantly delayed. In the area of child protection, there was some work done in the past by UNICEF. In the area of human trafficking, activities are on-going by using a well established network and benefiting from training provided to the local leaders and to the community.

In Baucau, regarding child protection, relevant partners organize the implementation together through the child protection network which includes MSS, SEPI, Uma Paz-shelter, Alola Foundation, VPU and some local orphanages. They sit together and make a plan of action based on their knowledge and identification of areas of higher risk.

Concerning CMAM, a socialization and advocacy campaign is organized to introduce the programme to the community and local authorities. After that, activities are implemented through the Health Centres,

Health Posts and SISCA. In relation to Mother's support group, health posts and SISCA's have been used to facilitate the intervention of the programme.

In terms of school and home gardens, community groups were established with the support of extension workers. These groups received training and other required tools to put the activities into practice.

Most of the partners reported that they were invited to participate in meetings or training at national level. For example, district offices of MoE and MAF attended a workshop on nutrition in 2010, VPU participated in training on domestic violence in 2009 organized by PRADET and another one on gender based violence in 2008 organized by JSMP.

In Covalima, district government staff receives instructions from the central level and sometimes they are also invited to attend training at the central level and then they can proceed with the activities at sub-national level. They normally invite village leaders and other key people from communities to come to the capital of district to attend training and/or meetings.

From NGOs point of view, every time they implement activities they normally consult chief of villages and community leaders on how they would implement the activities and identify the potential target groups.

In Manatuto, partners are involved at different degrees. For example, extension workers work with UN agencies in the school and home gardens in three sub-districts (Soiabada, Laklubar and Laklo). One or two community groups were established in each sub-district. FAO directly implement the programmes through the community groups and support from the extension workers while the food security focal point provides the required data and accompanies the process, as well as the joint monitoring. Another example, the Department of Education is consulted every time a school garden is proposed and then the selected school is informed. After that, the UN agency coordinates directly with the school and community leaders. Concerning other activities regarding nutrition, the Department of Health normally do the coordination between the district and the sub-districts and, in specific cases, directly with the community such as during the SISCA activities.

Influence in the decision-making process

All partners said that they don't have autonomy or much influence in the process of making decisions as the process is very centralized at the national level. However, there are a few exceptions which are important to highlight.

In Oecusse, it seems there were some opportunities for district authorities to raise issues, verify data, assess conditions and contribute with proposals through consultations and meetings at central and district levels before implementing the programmes. Also, local staff from the NGOs are always working very close with the national office with opportunities to lift issues up, make proposals such as their proposals to form the Mother's support groups.

In Baucau, although district offices implement activities according to instructions from the central level, they are the ones who generally organize the planned activities and mobilize people to support the implementation. NGOs respondents seemed to be much more engaged during the setting of priorities,

planning and implementation of activities. Nevertheless, final decisions and allocating funds are the responsibility of the national level.

In Covalima, some people mentioned that there were opportunities to influence decisions throughout the process in areas such as child protection or gender based violence, particularly when they find issues and problems that need to be solved. So they normally report and submit proposals to the national level.

In Manatuto, it was reported that there were opportunities to submit proposals or make recommendations throughout the process of drafting an annual action plan and during meetings at district level among government and non-government partners.

Efforts towards consensus-building among key stakeholders

In general, district government partners said that they just follow the central level guidelines in terms of planning and then they implement the activities. However, in some cases no instructions were given by the central level. For example, regarding the school gardens and nutrition training initiatives in Oecusse, partners said they never received any information from the central level or participated in any coordination meetings to agree on activities.

In Oecusse, any type of influence or consensus is normally achieved through coordination meetings with key local partners. But most of the meetings are conducted in a very informal way at district level to put into practice the planned activities. Civil society has very much participated in the JPs' meetings by agreeing with the local authorities on the best way to implement the activities. Concerning the Mother's support groups, there is always a consensus between Alola Foundation and the Ministry of Health. The same occurs with SISCA activities in which there is an agreement on when and how to share information about breastfeeding, maternal and child health or nutrition.

In Baucau, civil society represented by national and local NGOs (Alola Foundation, Fokupers, PRADET Uma Paz –shelter, Uma Mahun-shelter, Victim Support Service, Edukasaun Comunidade Matebian, Centro Feto Haburas Desenvolvimento, Centro Desenvolvimento Comunitario) is partially involved in the process of setting of priorities, planning and implementation of their own activities in partnership with local authorities and UN agencies.

For example, there is a recent MoU among MoJ, MoE, MoH, Alola Foundation, World Vision, JSMP, Fokupers and PRADET to accompany and solve issues about child protection, particularly related to people living in shelters. Another example is VPU works with Edukasaun Comunidade Matebian, Victim Support Service and Alola Foundation in the area of advocacy for victims of violence, as well as with Uma Mahun to ensure victims get the assistance needed. Also, FAO is working with the Community Development Center and Kailalo regarding home gardens, as well as UNICEF working with Alola Foundation in the Mother's Support Group.

In Covalima, district government authorities said that civil society is very involved in the implementation. There are opportunities for them to participate mainly through the referral network meetings led by MSS where the plan of activities is discussed and decisions are made in terms of identifying the target groups and locations to carry out the activities, such as social mobilization

campaigns and dissemination of information about child protection. Also, a MoU among district authorities (MSS, MoE, MoH, SEPI, Court, VPU Police and District Administrator) and non-government partners regarding child protection has facilitated their work.

NGOs mentioned that there's a group of national and local NGOs (Alola Foundation, FOKUPERS, JSMP, Community Centre, Youth Centre, Uma Mahun Salele, Holly Spirit, Graca Suai) working together with MSS, VPU and MJ in the area of gender based violence. Every month a joint meeting takes place and NGOs also participate in the referral network meetings to share information and reports about cases of violence which were not yet reported. They also use the meetings to agree on aspects related to the joint monitoring which occurs every month.

In Manatuto, it seems that there is at least a monthly meeting among relevant partners to share information and address problems. District authorities also said that NGOs such as Oca Moris Foun and Alola Foundation have assisted home gardens and mother's support groups, respectively. School communities and families have the opportunity to get involved and participate in the decisions related to the school gardens through the parent's teacher association. However, partners said that others NGOs, such as Child Fund, have provided support in the area of nutrition and food security although they are not involved in the joint programme.

Ownership and implications for relationships

In Oecusse, all government and non-government partners affirmed that ownership within the JPs is a matter of organization development. Half of them also included individual commitment as an important component because individuals must take responsibility and they are the ones who are close to the beneficiaries and can induce the change of mentalities, although changes will take time to occur.

In Baucau, about half of the respondents said that ownership is a matter of organizational development and individual commitment because it's necessary to gain a commitment from both sides and an organization has to have clear guiding principles to inspire individuals. Another half of respondents mentioned ownership as organizational development because individuals just have to follow its strategy and rules.

In Covalima, a majority of partners said that ownership within the JP is a matter of individual commitment and ownership as an issue of organizational development as the organization has to manage towards objectives and individuals have to ensure the implementation of activities to achieve those objectives.

In Manatuto, respondents were divided between the idea of ownership as an individual commitment and an issue of organizational development. For some people, moving projects and ideas forward depends on individuals' commitment and willingness to make changes as they are aware of the benefits for the Timorese people. For others, organizations must provide the overall guidance, take initiative and motivate individuals.

Overall, communities and Timorese people are seen by district partners as the owners. Oecusse partners said that interventions must be designed to address beneficiaries' needs and therefore they are the

ones who must benefit from the interventions even if they are not yet full participating in terms of programme design, implementation and evaluation.

However, a few exceptions should be highlighted. In Baucau and Manatuto, it was reported that ownership varies according to the type of intervention. Home gardens, school gardens and training on nutrition are owned by UN. In Baucau, regarding programme BdM and in the training on child protection and gender-based violence, the Government is seen as the owner. In other interventions that have been implemented mainly by NGOs and led by communities, such as mother’s support group, communities are seen as the owners.

The critical elements that can create ownership as described by respondents are highlighted in the table below.

Oecusse	Common elements
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continuous monitoring. ▪ Coordination among all local partners. ▪ Dialogue between communities and local leaders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Participation in the design and planning of the programmes by local partners, including citizens, communities and chiefs of villages. ▪ Responsibility. ▪ Commitment. ▪ Working in partnership. ▪ Strong component of training and capacity building for implementers, including in programme management.
<p style="text-align: center;">Baucau</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Leadership ▪ Qualified human resources. ▪ Sufficient financial resources. ▪ Strong and transparent management process. ▪ Groups formed and trained at community level. ▪ Enough time for people to learn and put into practice. 	
<p style="text-align: center;">Covalima</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Joint implementation. ▪ Joint monitoring. ▪ Knowledge of laws, rules and procedures. 	
<p style="text-align: center;">Manatuto</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Programmes designed based on the community needs. ▪ Believable objectives. ▪ Transfer of knowledge and sharing of experiences. 	

Benefits in ownership

One of the greatest benefits reported by overall partners at district level is that the JPs helped people to improve their understanding and knowledge in different areas during the implementation of programmes.

Government partners in Oecusse pointed out the areas of nutrition, health, child protection and gender equality as areas of improvement. Linked to that, it was reported that the community started to make small changes, such as in the specific issue of breastfeeding. *“According to our Timorese customs, children are born and for four nights they are not given breast-milk to take colostrums away from the baby, but when the nutrition breastfeeding program was implemented they had already given a lot of information so that they started abandoned the custom and now they are aware of what should be done.”*

NGOs from Oecusse reinforced the idea that small changes have occurred due to the information communities have received since the beginning of the programmes which consequently has empowered them with useful knowledge.

Government partners from Covalima mentioned child protection, the law against domestic violence and women’s rights as areas of improvement. It has particularly empowered women to recognize and report situations of violence and other incidents. Since 2008, local authorities have realized that the prevalence of domestic violence in rural areas has increased significantly. In fact, this also means that people are more confident to report incidents because they are more aware of women rights and the legal procedures to complain.

NGOs said that people now have a better understanding about violence against women and children, as well as about the legal actions that need to be taken to ensure their rights. In general, everybody is more aware of the principle of non-discrimination between men and women which has improved the gender balance in several situations such as women’s participation in meetings and decisions taken.

Furthermore, respondents from Oecusse and Manatuto pointed out the value added brought about by school and home gardens. It seems that communities and other people involved in these programmes see them as an opportunity to lead a process that can improve their lives in terms of daily diet and additional income. In Oecusse, it was reported that school gardens have contributed to school communities and families thinking more about providing alternative meals for students by adding nutritional value through the vegetables from the garden.

The table below shows how the JPs have strengthened the ownership according to respondents’ opinion by district.

<i>Districts</i>	<i>Completely</i>	<i>To a great extent</i>	<i>Somewhat</i>	<i>Not at all</i>
Oecusse		√√	√√	
Baucau			√√√	
Manatuto			√√√	
Covalima		√√√		

Note: Respondents’ answers: √ Few; √√ Half; √√√ Majority; √√√√ All

Challenges

Most of the challenges highlighted are the same in all districts. To have suitably qualified and a sufficient number of human resources in the areas of health, agriculture and social protection as well as programme management is seen by the local leaders from Oecusse, Baucau and Manatuto as a huge challenge for people to feel a sense of ownership. This has imposed difficulties in conducting all the programmes related activities.

For example, local leaders from Manatuto said that the extension workers have limited technical skills and management capacity to implement the programmes. Leaders said that the extension workers are keen to study more, but unfortunately there are no schools in the area of agriculture where they could improve their skills.

Linked to that, another challenge is to ensure that staff are provided with appropriate conditions of work mainly in terms of sufficient budget, available transport and sufficient materials/equipment to implement the activities within the timeframe agreed (Oecusse, Baucau, Manatuto and Covalima). The conditions of roads and long travel distances that people have to face to attend meetings and trainings are also very challenging and it's often an obstacle for partners to be completely engaged in the activities and ensure the services are delivered (Baucau and Covalima).

For local leaders in Oecusse, it's very challenging to ensure that there is a sufficient budget, for example, to extend home gardens to other villages or to guarantee that all malnourish children have been identified and treated. For local leaders in Manatuto, the budget limitations have also hampered or delayed meetings that should occur every three months or have just impeded continuous monitoring and follow-up of the activities.

From another perspective, it's also very challenging for local leaders in Manatuto to maintain the required stock of supplies needed for the programmes, for example vitamins for children of 6 to 23 months or 24 to 59 months.

Local leaders from Covalima added that it's difficult to ensure that there are basic facilities available, such as computer, printer, internet and generator for partners to write reports and submit it to central level.

Other major challenges stated by local leaders from Oecusse, Baucau and Covalima are related to the need to make sure people and communities understand the importance of the programmes, recognize the relevance of attending meetings or trainings and participate in the activities. For example, local leaders from Oecusse said that parents, teachers and students are not completely aware of the importance of the links between children nutrition and school gardens and/or the nutrition programmes at school and community levels, which limits their motivation to support the interventions. Local leaders from Baucau said that volunteers in several activities haven't shown much interest due the insufficient conditions offered.

Additionally, it was reported by local leaders from Covalima that it's very challenging to ensure the commitment of participants during the implementation because people see that most of the activities haven't been implemented in an integrated way. Local leaders from Oecusse mentioned that it's difficult to avoid competition in terms of implementation of activities in the area of gender and it is also not very clear who is doing what.

Furthermore, leaders from Baucau and Covalima said that it's becoming very challenging to mobilize communities. People start asking for money every time someone asks them to participate in activities.

Finally, there are other challenges which are important to highlight, namely: (a) make sure enough time is given to the beginning of the processes as communities need to understand the objectives of the programmes (Oecusse); (b) have a proper monitoring system to accompany the projects at community level and ensure a high level of confidence for community to manage activities (Oecusse) and; (c) allocate some funds directly to the districts offices (Baucau).

6.1.2.2 Villages

Understanding of ownership

<i>Villages</i>		
<i>...near to the capital of district</i>		<i>...far from the capital of district</i>
<p><i>Nipani</i></p> <p>Local leaders lead the initiatives and have a high responsibility in sharing information and mobilizing community.</p>	Oecusse	<p><i>Bene-Ufe</i></p> <p>Timorese people work together and track the progress of the activities implemented.</p>
<p><i>Trilolo</i></p> <p>Timorese people understand the programmes and the process of implementation. They work together and establish partnerships. They hear each other and they are open to learn.</p>	Baucau	<p><i>Baguia</i></p> <p>Timorese people develop, manage and implement the programmes.</p>
<p><i>Cribas</i></p> <p>Timorese people take the initiative to organize and implement the programmes.</p>	Manatuto	<p><i>Manelima</i></p> <p>Everybody is involved in the development and implementation of programmes. The results of the programmes benefit the ones who are involved and all the community.</p>
<p><i>Debos</i></p> <p>Timorese people take the initiative to implement the programmes.</p>	Covallima	<p><i>Fatululik</i></p> <p>Timorese people coordinate with each other and make a plan of activities to be implemented by them.</p>

Initiative for programme formulation and implementation

None of the village leaders were involved in the formulation and planning of programmes. They just support the implementation of the programmes and related activities. Chief of Villages are the ones who are invited by districts and sub-district authorities to participate in trainings and other activities.

In Nipani (Oecusse) the village leaders are responsible for the dissemination of information related to several activities. Every time Chief of Nipani attends training, he shares the information with the Chiefs of Sub-villages. Village leaders also work together with Alola Foundation to facilitate integration of activities, for example to include counseling for pregnant women through SISCA activities. As soon as they know the schedule for SISCA, they start sharing the information and mobilizing people living in sub-villages, in particular pregnant women, so that they can participate. Regarding school gardens, village leaders also talk with the school director and then chiefs of sub-villages share the information with communities.

In Bene-Ufe ຈຸ່ງ the Chief of Village participated in socialization campaigns and dissemination of information about human trafficking. Sometimes, other village leaders participate in training activities such as the ones regarding gender and domestic violence and, after that, they share the information received with communities living in the village and sub-villages. Occasionally, village leaders organize meetings or trainings at village level and invite the communities to participate.

Concerning home gardens, each Chief of Sub-villages selected a group of people from the communities and provided the Chief of Village with a list of people. Then, the Chief of Village invited those people to attend training provided by FAO. During that time, they had the opportunity to decide where the home garden would be set up and what would be needed for the implementation.

In Trilolo (Baucau) ຈຸ່ງ the Chief of Village supports the implementation of programmes by identifying and mobilizing participants, as well as sharing information through the Chiefs of Sub-villages and community meetings. Village leaders have also promoted the coordination between the mother's support group and staff who are working at the Health Posts, Health Centers and SISCA. Occasionally, village leaders or at least the Chief of Village attends trainings in Dili, such as a training session on gender organized by SEPI in Dili.

In Baguia ຈຸ່ງ the village leaders support the implementation of SISCA activities, PSF and school gardens. They also accompany the extension workers during the implementation and monitoring of school gardens.

In Cribas (Manatuto) ຈຸ່ງ the local leaders assisted Alola Foundation to select a coordinator for the mother's support group in 2010. They also supported the SISCA programme to find a mid-wife and a counselor in 2011. Furthermore, they have assisted health posts and extension workers in the data collection required by the Department of Health and Department of Agriculture, respectively.

In Manelima ຈຸ່ງ the village leaders have accompanied the implementation of school gardens, home gardens and mother's support group, as well as SISCA's activities. Leaders work close with NGOs, UN agencies and Ministries to implement all the activities.

In Debos (Covalima) ຈຸ່ງ the village leaders have participated in several training sessions and received information about child protection, domestic violence, violence against women, gender-responsiveness budget and human trafficking. As part of the child protection network, the Chief of Village participated in training about child protection promoted by MSS in 2011. The Chief of Village also attended training on gender-responsive budgeting in March 2012 and training on human trafficking in June 2012. Based on that, information was shared and provided to many people, including children, from the communities.

In Fatululik ຈຸ່ງ the village leaders were invited by the district authorities to attend meetings and training on gender issues at the district level. They were also involved in the process of change of the BdM programme by participating in discussions and information sessions when national staff went to the district, sub-districts and villages.

Influence in the decision-making process

Village leaders from villages of Nipani and Bene-Ufe in Oecusse have been involved in the implementation of activities. In Nipani, leaders participate in terms of decisions about when the activity should start, where it should take place and who should be involved. In Bene-Ufe, local leaders participate in the decisions about home gardens, except in the budget allocation which is decided by FAO. Leaders also share with authorities from the sub-districts and district the most relevant community issues that should be taken into account by PSF and SISCA activities.

Village leaders from the villages of Trilolo and Baguia in Baucau haven't had any influence in the decisions of the programmes as everything is centralized at district and national level. They just implement activities according to the instructions from the district authorities. Village leaders from Cribas and Manelima in Manatuto and village leaders from Debos and Fatululik reported exactly the same.

Participation of civil society

In Nipani (Oecusse), the Alola Foundation has been working with the village leaders and communities while in Bene-Ufe they didn't mention any civil society participation.

In Trilolo (Baucau), communities involved in the mothers support group have been working together with nurses, mid-wives and PSF-SISCA volunteers in identifying malnourish children. Also, WFP has supported in terms of providing corn flour and Timor Vita. The national NGO Belun has provided training on domestic violence. In Baguia, village leaders didn't mention any civil society participation.

In Cribas (Manatuto), village leaders said that NGOs such as Alola Foundation, Child Fund, Red Cross and others have supported the village while in Manelima the Alola Foundation has assisted communities to form groups such as the mothers' support group and has trained them to ensure that they are able to share information and assist communities in several areas. Furthermore, it was mentioned that FAO together with the extension workers have organized communities and provided training for them on school and home gardens.

In Debos (Covalima), national NGOs (Alola Foundation and FOKUPERS) together with local NGOs (Graca, Forum) have been involved in the programmes of gender-based violence. There are also other international NGOs that have supported the programmes such as OXFAM and CARE. For example, OXFAM provided transport when FOKUPERS organized visits to the sub-districts. The Church also provided support in terms of monitoring situations of domestic violence and other gender-based cases. Also, village leaders, FOKUPERS and Uma Mahun Salele-shelter have worked together in terms of implementation of activities. However, in Fatululik, village leaders said that there were some NGOs which went to the village but never shared any information about their intended plans.

Ownership and implications for relationships

In Nipani and Bene-Ufe (Oecusse) ownership is seen as a matter of individual commitment and organizational development. Village leaders from Nipani said that individuals and organizations have a commitment and responsibility. Each organization has to provide the main guidelines for individuals to

implement activities effectively. Village leaders from Bene-Ufe said that individuals need to be involved and responsible under organizational rules. Otherwise, participation of individuals will be dependent of their willingness.

In Trilolo (Baucau) village leaders said that ownership depends on both, individuals and organizations, highlighting organizational development as a relevant aspect of an individual's motivation. In Baguia ownership is seen as an organizational development. Organizations must provide all the required information about the programmes and its rules.

In Cribas (Manatuto) ownership is understood by village leaders as an individual commitment although they recognize that an organization is required to develop the programmes and provide guidelines for a successful implementation. In Manelima ownership is seen as an organizational development because programmes are proposed and led by organizations.

In Debos (Covalima) ownership is an issue of organizational development because village leaders feel that the programmes are proposed by UN agencies and then they just try to find Timorese people to implement it. On the contrary, in Fatululik ownership is seen as an individual commitment because any initiative is carried out by individuals, including the village leaders who have obligations to share information with communities.

Concerning the owners of the programmes, answers varied between the respondents who said that people involved, including the beneficiaries, are the owners (Nipani) and respondents who referred to communities and Timorese people as the owners because they are the ones who benefit from the results (Bene-Ufe, Trilolo, Cribas and Debos). Few other respondents from Cribas and Fatululik included also Government and Organizations as the owners.

The main aspects that enable an environment for local ownership are pointed out as the following:

<p style="text-align: center;">Nipani</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Groups formed at community level ▪ Trust in others. ▪ Open for discussions. ▪ Willing to share information. ▪ Everything within the programme has to belong to the community. ▪ Continuation of the programmes. 	Oecusse	<p style="text-align: center;">Bene-Ufe</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Groups formed at community level. ▪ Willing to work together. ▪ Concrete guidelines/ orientations.
<p style="text-align: center;">Trilolo</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Capacity building. ▪ Sufficient budget to organize and mobilize communities. 	Baucau	<p style="text-align: center;">Baguia</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Relevant programmes for the communities. ▪ Training. ▪ Sufficient budget to support implementation of the programmes.

<p style="text-align: center;">Cribas 𐄂𐄃𐄄</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Relevant programmes for the communities. ▪ Involvement of community. ▪ People share a common interest. ▪ Training. 	Manatuto	<p style="text-align: center;">Manelima 𐄂𐄃𐄄</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Relevant programmes for the communities. ▪ Involvement of all implementer’s partners in the whole process.
<p style="text-align: center;">Debos 𐄂𐄃𐄄</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Training. ▪ Capacity building. 	Covalima	<p style="text-align: center;">Fatululik 𐄂𐄃𐄄</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(No answer provided)</p>

Benefits in ownership

One of the greatest benefits mentioned by the leaders from Nipani 𐄂𐄃𐄄, Trilolo 𐄂𐄃𐄄 and Cribas 𐄂𐄃𐄄 is the increased discussion about nutrition within communities, including schools, and an increased access to information about health and nutrition. It was also mentioned by leaders from Trilolo 𐄂𐄃𐄄 that it had increased the awareness and knowledge of communities in terms of infant and child feeding.

Another benefit referred to by leaders from village of Debos 𐄂𐄃𐄄 is related to the opportunities people have had in terms of improvement of their knowledge and understanding about gender issues. Interventions may also have contributed to the opening of a training centre which leaders believe can help building capacity in many other areas.¹⁴

The table below shows how the JPs have strengthened the ownership according to respondents’ opinion by village.

<i>Villages</i>	<i>Completely</i>	<i>To a great extent</i>	<i>Somewhat</i>	<i>Not at all</i>
Nipani 𐄂𐄃𐄄			√√√√	
Bene-Ufe 𐄂𐄃𐄄			√√√√	
Trilolo 𐄂𐄃𐄄		√√√√		
Baguia 𐄂𐄃𐄄			√√√√	
Cribas 𐄂𐄃𐄄			√√√√	
Manelima 𐄂𐄃𐄄		√√√√		
Debos 𐄂𐄃𐄄			√√√√	
Fatululik 𐄂𐄃𐄄			√√√√	

Note: Respondents’ answers: √ Few; √√ Half; √√√ Majority; √√√√ All

Challenges

The biggest challenges mentioned by all the village leaders are related to the understanding of people and communities to get them involved in the activities and the existing capacity to implement and manage activities in order to decrease the overdependence of external assistance.

¹⁴ All the other villages (Bene-Ufe 𐄂𐄃𐄄, Baguia 𐄂𐄃𐄄, Manelima 𐄂𐄃𐄄 and Fatululik 𐄂𐄃𐄄) provided no detailed answer.

Village leaders from Bene-Ufe said that it's very challenging to ensure the commitment and participation of communities and convince them of all the benefits, rather than just money. Leaders from Manelima added that illiteracy is very high in the village which impedes communities' ability to understand some of the objectives of the activities proposed.

Linked to that is the necessity of making sure that the programmes provide people with the minimum required conditions for them to be involved and participate. It was reported by leaders from Cribas that it's difficult to have community involved in volunteer activities as they normally don't see any advantages. Besides that, some of the village leaders (Nipani, Manelima) also said that transport for people to participate in the different activities or communities to get together is always an enormous challenge. Furthermore, leaders from Trilolo and Cribas mentioned that it is always difficult to have a sufficient amount of money to support the organization of the necessary meetings and training.

Another challenge referred to by some leaders from the villages of Nipani and Baguia is related to the transparency of the entire process. People who are involved in the activities should know where the money is planned to be used and where it was really spent.

Finally, village leaders from Bene-Ufe said that it's very challenging to ensure that those people who initially go to the villages and/or districts to provide guidelines and training for the participants or implementing partners will continue coming for follow-up and monitoring the implementation of activities, as well as for providing feedback.

6.2. Joint Programmes Coordination

6.2.1. National coordination

Understanding of coordination

Overall UN respondents understand coordination as something that includes several aspects, such as the following: people work together in a harmonized way to reach common goals; partners are involved in the entire process; partners are well informed and share information; people meet regularly; people listen to each other, understand and are aware of what each partner is doing; someone takes the lead; partners avoid duplication and overlap of activities; people have a common understanding of the programmes' objectives; people's responsibilities and roles are clearly defined and; partners are able to manage relationships between individuals and institutions.

“Coordination has many different levels. First level is amongst UN Agencies. We need to make sure that we are speaking the same language, doing the same thing and understanding each other. Second level is between government and UN Agencies by ensuring that government understands or has identified the needs to be addressed and UN Agencies have provided a good response to those needs and are working together in the design and formulation of the required interventions. Third level is the coordination in loco (on-site) and coordination between the three (UN agencies, central government and local government) by ensuring all of them are work well together. There are three main implicit aspects:

understanding, talking and moving forward. You can talk and understand but if you don't do anything it won't help.” (R29)

For government partners, coordination is mostly understood as communication and cooperation among partners, sharing information and working together to address issues. *“Coordination is about working together and understanding on how to share responsibilities, do an adequate follow-up regarding the implementation of activities and consult with each other on things that needs to be done and solved.” (R5)*

NGOs' opinion is not much different from the other partners as it includes aspects such as: working together towards common goals; talking to each other; sharing information; transferring knowledge and; collaborating and cooperating systematically. *“Coordination means that people are sharing and exchanging information with each other about what needs to be done so that they are able to participate maximally.” (R31)*

Management of relationships between levels of government

Most of government respondents said that the coordination mechanisms between levels of government within the Joint Programmes, i.e. horizontal and vertical inter-ministerial and intra-ministerial are pretty good. On the contrary, there's an overall feeling by UN partners that those coordination mechanisms are very weak. At the same time, most of the NGOs affirmed that the degree of coordination between levels of government varies according to the key focal point in each ministry.

A vast majority of partners (UN, Government and NGOs) stated that the PMC meetings are the main mechanism of coordination through which relevant ministries talk to each other, share concerns, address issues and find solutions.

“The PMC meets once every three months, so there are four meetings in one year. This is the formal mechanism we have. I feel that this mechanism is already good enough, but parties need to maximize their participation. The PMC meetings are not just to attend, but to come and discuss issues or problems. But what happens often is that each party comes to the meetings to provide just an update in terms of implementation and financial execution.”(R9)

Programme Managers at PMUs are reported as the ones who normally take the initiative to schedule the meetings, prepare an agenda and organize the meetings in consultation with the co-chairs from the government.

Beyond the PMCs meetings, respondents are divided between the ones who said that there is no coordination at all or there is coordination when needed and the ones who mentioned that there are some technical working groups established. Government partners also said that they normally coordinate with each other via telephone or e-mail.

“The SEPI leads the Advocacy and Strategy Working Group at high level. Under this Working Group there is another one about services providers led by MSS. There are mechanisms, but often these working groups at policy level have confused strategies and unclear roles.”(R20)

“In health sector there are working groups for particular areas. Some of the areas are better coordinated than others. For example, there is a good functioning working group for nutrition, but it helps significantly to have an active Head of Department for Nutrition leading that group. However, for other sectors it’s still very challenging.” (R27)

A majority of respondents (UN, Government and NGOs) see the existing mechanisms of coordination within the JPs based on a top-down (from central to local level) rather than a bottom-up (from local to central level) coordination approach.

“The coordination under the Joint Programmes is top-down as the decisions are always coming from the national level to the sub-national level. The decision is made at the top level and sent out to the districts and sub-districts authorities.” (R10)

“The coordination mechanisms take place between partners at national level rather than at district level. We see the district partners as implementing partners who can help to prepare and organize the implementation of the programmes. During the implementation, we can bring experiences and issues reported by them to be discussed at the PMC meetings or at other coordination meetings, but we normally don’t invite or involve them directly.” (R9)

Furthermore, UN respondents said that in the beginning of the JPs, a more top-top level approach was used to get everybody on board. *“During the first two years of the programme, we worked more at top level, even if partners weren’t understanding what was happening. We had to go through the programmes and related activities together, raise awareness and explain the objectives and main benefits.” (R11)*

Nevertheless, some respondents from the Government and NGOs said that the JPs have also helped to establish focal points and set up working groups at sub-national level. It seems that these little steps promoted the communication between national and sub-nationals levels.

“What we’ve done at the programme level was to fill the gap in the districts through the appointment of focal points for the programme BdM. Before, the social animators were covering BdM and other programmes such as the ones in the area of child protection. Coordination was improved in both directions by having people so dedicated to BdM and alleviating the burden of the social animators. Their voices have easily reached Dili. Now, there is always someone to bring the messages from Dili to the districts and then feed it down to other local levels.” (R25)

“We have colleagues/focal points in the districts. So whatever information or obstacle is encountered there is always someone to bring it to us at the national level, at least once a month. (...) Furthermore, the JP has contributed to the establishment of the child protection officers. Information through them can easily be distributed from the districts to the central level and back again.” (R17)

Management of interdependent programmes across state administration

Overall partners agreed that the JPs created some opportunities for government staff to talk to each other regularly and work together towards the common objectives. These opportunities seem to have been created under many areas, such as the National Action Plan on Gender Based Violence National,

the Strategy for Nutrition, the Food Security Information and Early warning System and in the area of human trafficking.

“Since the JP started and with the signature of Comoro Declaration in 2010, the lines of coordination have improved if we compare with 2008 and 2009. We have tried to bring people from various sectors together to one table. This includes people from high/top level and technical staff. At the MAF we established a food security and nutrition team. Every three months we produce a report based on the contributions from the six ministries involved (MAF, MoH, MSS, MoE, former MTCl¹⁵, former MED¹⁶) to update the progress of what is happening.” (R12)

“Within the FSIEWS, information has to be collected from several ministries which force them to come together, discuss and share information. It is a perfect excuse to coordinate. Although I don’t know exactly how they have worked together, this is probably one of the best aspects in the whole programme.” (R23)

“Regarding salt cleaning, this project was approved by key line ministries (MoH, former MTCl¹⁷ and MoE) and allowed them to come together and discuss issues at policy level. Concerning the national strategy for nutrition, the JP improved the understanding of nutrition and food security and it has particularly strengthened the dialogue between MAF, MoH, MSS and former MED¹⁸.” (R16)

“The action plans and the components with other agencies have been really important for enhancing coordination. Things like the National Action Plan on Gender Based Violence have brought together different ministries to discuss the issues. So in general I think it has been really good.” (R25)

“Now we have people from the Department of Environment and Department of Health who are involved and working with schools in the training about nutrition. They realized the importance of establish these links and they are starting giving more priority to schools in their programmes. Also, the MoH and MAF are talking more now than before. It’s not perfect, but it’s one little step meaning that, at least, they are starting to know each other better.” (R28)

“The inter-agency trafficking working group is an inter-ministerial group established in 2007 funded by the American government and it continued due to the MDG-F support. We put all the questions on the table and if there’s one ministry that didn’t take action on some issue we will discuss it and try to find a solution.” (R29)

Relationship between Government and society

A vast majority of the respondents (UN, Government and NGOs) said that citizens and groups of people have mainly participated or have a voice on decisions through the NGOs which are part of and participate at the PMC meetings. These national NGOs bring concerns and issues from the sub-national

¹⁵Under the 4th Constitutional Government.

¹⁶Ibid.

¹⁷Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.

to the national level. They are the implementing partners who work very close with the community. Partners recognize NGOs as the best source to collect the real issues from the ground level.

“Through the meetings we have been able to express the voices from the people regarding what is not proceeding well. Similarly other NGOs always express their voices and advocate on particularly issues concerning nutrition and gender programmes.” (R19)

UN partners mentioned that any kind of influence or voice on decisions will come easier after the implementation or during the monitoring rather than through the inception and planning phases in which NGOs and Government were not really much involved.

However, it's important to highlight a few exceptions reported by the different partners such as the inception workshops conducted at district level in the beginning of the JP-FNS, consultation with chiefs of villages to select the beneficiaries of home gardens, consultations with community to collect inputs about child protection to be incorporated into the sectoral national strategic plan. It was also reported by UN the system of complaints within the BdM programme which allows direct contact between the beneficiaries and staff from the central government.

Coordination between UN Agencies and Government

A vast majority of partners (UN, Government and NGOs) agreed that the JPs have in some extent strengthened the coordination between UN agencies and government as well as other national counterparts in the sense that it built a culture of regular meetings where all partners have equal opportunities to talk to each other, share ideas and concerns, as well as be proactive. This has had probably more implications in terms of involvement in the discussions and improvement of the dialogue between UN and Government within the context of the JP rather than establish an external strong mechanism of coordination with a multiplier effect on the national existing mechanisms.

“I feel that it has definitely strengthened the lines of coordination when we compare with 2009. At that time, the lines of coordination were not good yet. Everyone was proceeding in their own and it was also difficult to come together to discuss any issues, but since March 2011 I have been really active in the PMC and I have seen that the lines of coordination are already good between the UN agencies, Government and NGOs who have been involved in this process.” (R12)

“Previously we had no relationship with UN Women and UNFPA or with Government. But now we have a very good relationship with UN and Government, as well as with other NGOs like PRADET, JSMP and some of the shelters.” (R31)

As it was referred by all partners before, coordination between UN, Government and NGOs was primarily done through the PMC and the NSC meetings which have facilitated coordination at a technical level and political level, respectively.

“These multi-stakeholder meetings have allowed us to work together and realize that each of us has a role to play on the same agenda of promoting gender equality. Small steps on how to work together but constructive ones have brought good results.” (R8)

There are also other relevant technical meetings as reported by some UN respondents. However, some other interviewees said that those meetings organized by UN rarely involve people from the government.

Additionally, some of the respondents from the NGOs said that government partners are not always aware of what's going on because they don't attend meetings regularly even when they are the ones leading the meetings.

It seems that the joint implementation of activities has reinforced to some extent coordination between UN agencies, Government and NGOs, particularly in the context of some interventions, such as home and school gardens, mothers' support group and training on nutrition.

"The implementation of home gardens involves FAO and Alola Foundation. The Home Gardens involve the Mothers Support Group which is facilitated by Alola Foundation. So the products would be ideally consumed by children from the MSG rather than to be sold. There are also school gardens implemented by FAO and training on nutrition at school level provided by WFP. This is something new. Before no one was going to schools to talk about nutrition" (R3)

Another relevant aspect that has reinforced the coordination among partners is the joint monitoring, although it's something very recent and only available within the JP-FNS as reported by UN and government partners. The PMU developed the monitoring tools and has coordinated partners to make sure they go to the field together and collect information about the progress of activities.

"PMU and FAO went together with extensions workers and members from the mother support group to monitor the implementation of activities. It would be good if this had started in the first year of the programme's implementation." (R3)

"Those NGOs that support the implementation of the MSG are actively participating in the meetings and in the joint monitoring organized by the PMU. I think there is a strong linkage between the three partners (UN, government and NGOs)." (R10)

Contribution to promote national dialogue and commitment

A majority of UN respondents mentioned that the JPs' coordination mechanisms have to some extent promoted and strengthened national dialogue and commitment.

Most of the Government respondents also said that the JPs' coordination mechanisms, mainly through the stakeholders meetings, had an important role for them to talk with counterparts and engaged them in the joint activities. They reported that it has worked much better when compared with other types of programmes, even if most of the interviewees recognized that this process had just started and had moved very slowly.

"I think coordination mechanisms have worked well through the PMC. Once it was set up the PMC meetings certainly got the people who have benefited, especially the ones at the mid technical level, by getting them together which they normally wouldn't do. They had the opportunity to come together and coordinate which also allowed a better understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Also, the PMC has created a forum to raise and discuss issues." (R11)

Nevertheless, there are a few examples where the ministries took the opportunity to promote the dialogue by involving key government local staff, such as BdM programme. *“We brought all the social animators and focal points together to Dili. So 75 people come to discuss how the data collection was conducted with the families and households. Problems and concerns were raised regarding the questionnaire implemented. After that, the questionnaire was amended by taking into account the suggestions in terms of what worked and what didn’t work.” (R25)*

In terms of the NGOs perspective, most of the respondents mentioned that stakeholders took the opportunity of the JPs to increase debate. This occurred mainly during the meetings within the Joint Programmes rather than a national dialogue. However, for example, each year there is a follow-up to the Dili Commitment in terms of prevention of violence against women and children. For some others interviewees, the national dialogue and commitment are still very weak and decision makers rarely sit together and discuss the issues of gender and nutrition.

UN partners to ‘Deliver as One’ (DaO)

According to the majority of UN partners, the JPs have strongly encouraged them to attempt to ‘Deliver as One’. One funding source brought people together to discuss and plan what they were going to do to achieve the common goals, taking into account that each UN agency has its own expertise so that they could avoid duplication.

Most people (UN, Government and NGOs) recognized that the PMC meetings have been one of the most relevant mechanisms to strengthen UN agencies to deliver as one although it started a bit late.

“It’s a shame that PMU was stalled for a while because of not being able to get the human resources on board quickly enough, but certainly the model of the PMU and PMCs and the PMU housed in one agency and hosting the quarterly meetings has been excellent. I think it’s been good to galvanize and bring people together at these quarterly meetings to discuss issues and coordinate. It’s a good mechanism although it’s just started a little late.” (R11)

UN agencies see this experience as a good exercise but they cannot compare this to a ‘One UN’ country. Each UN agency has its own parcel and follows their mechanisms and modalities, although there was one source of funding and they were working together.

“‘Deliver as One’ has many things that need to be acquired: one plan, one monitoring and one budget. We are not one UN country to start with and the joint programme is good in the sense that it brings different parts of UN together to work on nutrition and gender. But each of us has our respective plans, mandates and budgets. So it has been a good exercise, but I don’t know if we can compare ourselves to a One UN country.” (R8)

Some UN and government partners also reported that the exercise worked better at the planning stage rather than at the implementation phase. *“For example, WFP separately provide funding to MoH while UNICEF does the same. Another example, WHO, UNICEF and WFP work together for CMAM in an integrated approach, but each agency still has their own funds which mean that if one agency does not go, the other one still go.” (R3)*

“They are planning together but in the implementation they aren’t together. FAO conducts its activities separately. UNICEF and UNFPA do the same. They always talk about delivering as one during the plan when they sit together, but during the implementation I don’t see it.” (R32)

Some UN respondents see the Resident Coordinator Office as having a relevant role in the process of encouraging UN agencies to speak with one voice and try to engage the right people and align the activities to make best use of the existing resources.

Furthermore, some of the NGOs interviewees highlighted that they understand the concept of ‘Deliver as One’, but they said that the concept should be applied to all stakeholders rather than only UN. They think that all stakeholders need to be completely informed and act according to the same rules and procedures even if that system is very bureaucratic or sometimes hard to follow.

Contribution to strengthen aid effectiveness and efficiency

Overall UN respondents agreed that there was a little improvement in efficiency and effectiveness through the JPs’ model, but most of the answers were quite vague and failed to provide a very detailed picture of what has really happened.

However, certain aspects reported showed that the JPs may have had a positive influence on efficiency and effectiveness as stakeholders started to discuss and plan together by using the joint meetings to avoid duplications, do joint monitoring to avoid overspending, use common guidelines, report jointly to the PMC, use a harmonized budget and revise budget execution jointly and regularly.

“We much less duplicated activities through the referral meetings and coordinating activities which has been considerably strengthened aid effectiveness. But as I said I think it could have been strengthened more because a lot of times we do activities of our own goals. We could have shared much more. For example, every time we pay DSAs to the participants, we could have saved costs and delivered more training to more people.” (R20)

According to some of the Government respondents, aspects such as a better management, an improvement of technical support, knowledge and experience sharing, as well as an increase of the technical resources, particularly from UN, were key to improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the JPs.

At the same time, there were some issues reported by the government partners which may have had exactly the opposite effect. This included the lack of transparency in allocating the funds, a low level of socialization, duplications of activities, UN policies and procedures are not conducive to the reality planned by partners and activities that are spread out according to each agency mandate.

“The MDG Fund reinforced a good system of working together but there should be transparency and socialization. If there is no transparency of work then it will be very difficult because some agencies say they allocate funds to this and that, based on the concept of ‘One plan, One budget, One monitoring and One coordination’, but we don’t know where the funds were really allocated to.” (R4)

“The activities were spread around a lot of actors because they wanted each agency to have its role, but in the end the resources they had were different and the results achieved were not the same. In future, I

think there's no need to have many actors. It should be focused and specific so that it would be easier for us to oversee the distribution of resources by the different partners and achieve the common goals.” (R32)

From the NGOs point of view, the JPs have contributed to some extent to aid efficiency and effectiveness, particularly because people were working together and combining efforts to achieve common goals. Nevertheless, some respondents said that the management model didn't really help, particularly because a huge amount of money was going to operational activities and UN bureaucracy was making certain tasks (e.g. budget transfers and reporting) a time-consuming and non-practical process.

Gender sensitive coordination mechanisms

A majority of the UN respondents said that there were no specific mechanisms of coordination to address and integrate gender issues during the inception phase, such as supporting the mainstreaming of gender and equity objectives into planning and budgeting.

“There haven't been any special measures taken to promote women's participation because each agency and ministry participates with the person who's responsible for the programme. So if they take the decision to put a woman or a man in that position, it's an individual decision. I think though there's a quite big participation of men and women in the joint programme, but it's not been deliberated.” (R23)

In fact most of the people (UN, Government and NGOs) reported that women are well represented at the management and technical levels under the JPs. *“I see that the gender programme at the policy leadership level mainly involves women and there is also participation of men. So there is more or less a balance between men and women. The involvement of women has been very decisive by showing that there has been a progress in terms of leadership by women at the policy level.” (R9)*

As it was reported by UN *“promoting gender equality is not about numbers. Quality is definitely the first step and that is why the quota systems and the special temporary measures do such as affirmative action to have more parliamentarians' women in parliament. But to make sure that there will be an agenda and a national development process that is gender responsive, a qualitative approach needs to be taken into account. This message has been repeated in several occasions at the PMC meetings and throughout individual programme activities. So I think it has been useful.” (R8)*

“I'm impressed with how many women that are actually engaged in this programme in terms of people that I deal with here. At district level, I don't know, but here at the central level there are a lot of women involved and we should keep promoting that.” (R30)

Some NGOs and UN respondents highlighted that men are not involved as much as they should be under the JP-GEWR. *“Under the gender programme, most of the people in the programme were actually overwhelmingly female even from the government departments' level. I think it should have been exactly the opposite, i.e. we should have had more men involved in the programme because obviously we're doing work on gender based violence, human trafficking and BdM and also gender responsive budgeting. In these areas women have been more involved. (...) The issue is more a lack of male participation.” (R11)*

Benefits or positive impact of the JPs in coordination

UN partners affirmed that there is a better understanding of the purpose of the JPs and recognition of the effects of these programmes. UN partners also reported that they have become more aware that they cannot work in certain areas in an isolated way or use an individual approach.

A vast majority of partners recognized the benefit of the establishment of the PMU and PMC within the JPs as a crucial mechanism of coordination among all partners. Through the PMC meetings partners were able at least to share information, receive updates, discuss issues, learn from what others have done and find solutions together in a regular basis.

“The structure of the Joint Programmes gives us a form to share what has been working and what can be improved. It gives us the possibility to participate and bring ideas to improve implementation. The structure has also provided us with good opportunities for coordinating the implementation of activities.” (R23)

In general, partners also mentioned that the JPs brought benefits for the coordination in a sense that it stimulated other potential links and encouraged people to know each other better and, consequently, fostered the team work and brainstorming.

“We increased our efforts to meet each other often, to share more things among ourselves and to know each other better. UN helped to establish links and open windows for potential coordination mechanisms and generate ideas, as well as to create closer relations.” (R28)

According to some NGOs, this included coordination with local key partners as well. *“We created a good coordination with local NGOs and state departments at central and district levels where previously we didn’t have any relation. For example, we established links with MAF, MoH and MSS, as well as with village leaders.” (R34)*

Linked to that, it was reported by UN partners that the JPs have facilitated the different government sectors to talk to each other and, consequently, give them an opportunity to plan, implement and monitor activities jointly and in an integrated way.

“One of the benefits is the programme convergence. Now we have a M&E framework and that is because of mechanisms of coordination within the joint programme. Now we have joint monitoring field visits and a joint action plan. If you go to a particular community you will see them trying to have an integrated convergence in the areas of nutrition, agriculture and food security.” (R27)

UN respondents added that coordination through the JPs created opportunities for government partners to own the programmes and, in certain cases, lead interventions and related processes. *“The coordination mechanism have facilitated and worked well overall, meaning that concrete decisions were made whenever we have meeting. I think the coordination mechanisms have given an opportunity to promote greater ownership by our government counterparts.” (R30)*

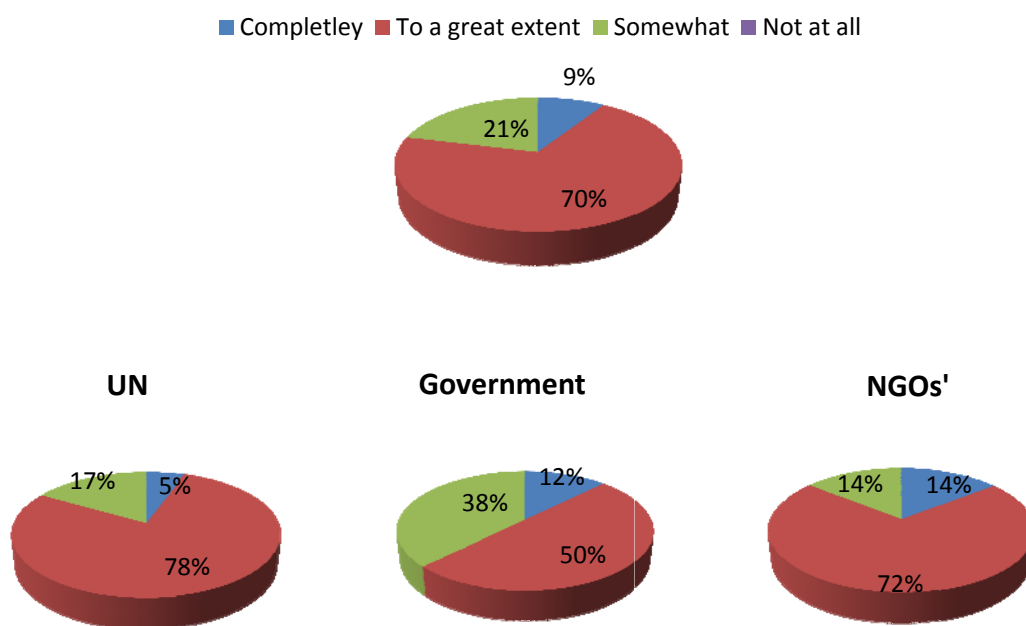
From the NGOs perspective, the JPs have increased knowledge in terms of programme’ management and have improved skills in the area of monitoring and evaluation.

According to UN, it also created an opportunity for partners to clarify and strengthen roles and responsibilities.

As a final point, some partners from the Government emphasized the establishment of good lines of coordination among all partners within the JPs rather than to the improvement of coordination between ministries or state departments. However, partners acknowledged the importance of the focal points established under the JPs as crucial to keep the information flowing among partners.

To conclude, most of the respondents (70%) said that JPs strengthened ‘to a great extent’ coordination, followed by somewhat (21%) and completely (9%). From another perspective, within a vast majority of UN partners (78%) and within most of the NGOs respondents (72%) JPs strengthened ‘to a great extent’ coordination. Within government partners, at least half of government partners share the same opinion.

JPs strengthen of coordination



Challenges in coordination

From UN opinion, in the beginning of the JPs there was a huge challenge in terms of making all partners aware that the joint programme “*was not just a funding programme, but it required more than that, particularly coordination*”.(R11)

Coordination placed at a very high level was identified by the UN as one of the biggest challenges. It seems that the NSC which usually occurred once a year was not enough to address that or some potential overlaps.

Another challenge is to make sure that the right people, i.e. the decision-makers, attend the coordination meetings, including PMC and other technical meetings, as well as ensuring they have all the information required for meetings or to carry out any activities.

“I realized when the lower level junior officers come to the coordination meetings then noting happens after the meetings. But when we have the decision-makers attending the coordination meetings, they make decisions and coordinate effectively after the meetings.” (R8)

Some people from UN said that when they coordinate, i.e. talking with each other during and after the PMC meetings, it seemed that it was all done well, but afterward people do not act as they agreed before. *“If I look back we have done few activities together but in the end each UN agency looks at their own programme and activities and we just find things at PMC meetings. (...) Between ministries themselves, for example, between SEPI and MSS there is not a clear role between them in terms of who is going to deliver the strategy or who is going to implement it. Maybe they already came up with something, but it looks like there is a bit of competition.” (R20)*

“People are competing for the same scarce resources and people work within bureaucratic and administrative systems which means that it’s not always compatible. You have UNICEF with one set of rules and regulations while UNDP has another one. So bringing them together you would probably have problems in coordination”. (R24)

From UN perspective, beyond the PMC meetings it’s very challenging to understand which mechanisms really allow people to make the right links and facilitate the achievement of common goals.

Aspects such as information being shared on time and continuously throughout the process, as well as having partners talking with each other regularly rather than just when needed, are also considered as challenges by most of UN partners.

“Coordination is essentially about information sharing, but if we are going to share information post-facto there is no constructive retribution. We just share information, but we don’t allow anybody else to bring inputs or contribute to the process.” (R8)

UN said that to get all partners together has been very demanding as most of them have multiple roles and responsibilities, as well as they are normally overloaded with work by trying to coordinate with several other partners. *“People from the ministries who are really good in their jobs are totally overloaded with everybody trying to coordinate with them. Often they can’t actually schedule appointments with people.” (R25)*

Furthermore, another challenge identified by some UN partners is to have proactive people willing to coordinate and be coordinated, as well as to maintain high professional standards without taking any suggestions or criticisms personally. *“There’s a challenge at inter-personal relationships, i.e. with people you are coordinating with. The idea is to do everything to decrease hostilities as people in general tend to take everything personally”. (R28)*

“You can coordinate if there are people who want to be coordinated. We love talking about coordination, but in many cases people don’t want to be aligned with other people’s plans or ideas. So the challenge is to find a compromise which is not always possible.”(R30)

From a Government perspective, another challenge is the need to continue having partners linking with each other after the JPs finished. There will be other issues that need to be continued, addressed and supported by partners, for example in the areas of gender based violence, law against the domestic

violence, gender responsive budgeting, law against human trafficking and law for the protection of children rights.

“These things have not been finalized as the process is long and need continuity. The national institutions, Government or NGOs need to continue to place some of these programmes in their action plans without budgets dependent from donors. We need to develop the coordination mechanisms between the Government, local NGOs and international partners, i.e. among partners who have implemented programmes jointly.” (R9)

Most of government partners said that it’s very challenging to find the best mechanism to coordinate. It’s very demanding to sit together, discuss things, share information and ensure that some actions will happen according to the priorities. At the same time, *“each party wants to do things according to their own priorities or competitive priorities which make coordination to proceed poorly and it has also become a major obstacle for the government.” (R32)* It seems that some people don’t take initiative to coordinate due to a lack of knowledge on how to establish the most appropriate relationships among partners.

From NGOs perspective, there is a lack of responsibility and willingness from some of the national counterparts due to several factors, including the use of English to communicate. Also, it was mentioned that having available time and human resources to attend meetings are major challenges.

Overall, partners (UN, Government and NGOs) referred to the channels of communication as a major challenge, especially the internet as it is not yet used by all partners, making the sharing of information more difficult. At the same time, the use of cell phones in remote places is still a problem as there’s no signal. Also, the lack of transport and/or the conditions of basic infrastructures impose a lot of difficulties.

“Often some villages we work with are quite far away and we cannot reach them because telecommunication is always a problem and the road, as you know, especially in the rainy season, can be a bit difficult. Even if we agree to go on a certain date, a landslide can happen and then we cannot go. Then, communities get angry because we didn’t go. It’s not always easy because of several conditions of this country.” (R23)

6.2.1. Sub-national coordination

6.2.1.1 Districts

Understanding of coordination

<p><i>Oecusse</i></p> <p>Coordination means the several links or connections at different levels that people establish among themselves to conduct the work in order to achieve objectives. It involves talking</p>	<p><i>Baucau</i></p> <p>Coordination is when partners communicate with each other regarding the issues they want to address. Partners talk and agree on who will be part of the implementation and involve key</p>
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<p>to each other, sharing information, addressing problems together and close collaboration during the implementation of activities.</p>	<p>people in the process from all the different local levels. It also implies willingness to share information, discuss issues and find solutions throughout the entire process, as well working with a common management system to improve the delivery of services.</p>
<p><i>Covalima</i></p> <p>Coordination means that people talk to each other, share information, meet with relevant partners, discuss issues and try to find solutions together. It also includes the link that partners establish among local levels and between the district and central level.</p>	<p><i>Manatuto</i></p> <p>Coordination is understood as something that allows people to work together, sit together, talk, consult and understand each other, as well as share information.</p>

Mechanisms of relationships between levels of government

Meetings are considered the main existing coordination mechanism between various levels of government and between government and counterparts. All districts authorities said that they hold various regular meetings such as the quarterly meetings at district level. Local leaders from Oecusse gave two examples of meetings which involved all the relevant counterparts: meetings about gender issues organized by MSS and meetings about food security led by MAF.

Local leaders from Baucau stated that representatives of state departments, UN agencies and NGOs participate in the meetings to update information, share concerns and find solutions.

In Manatuto it was reported that the meetings normally involve relevant state departments, at least the ones which signed the Declaration of Comoro. But it also involves authorities from the sub-districts and villages, as well as local counterparts.

Although there are regular meetings which normally take place on a monthly basis as reported by local leaders from Oecusse (meetings amongst the extension workers) and from Covalima (amongst all partners, including NGOs), the majority of partners said most of the time they coordinate by using a more individual approach and according to the programme needs. Telephone, letters and visits are the main mechanisms of coordination. Internet use was reported as one complementary mechanism of coordination by a number of partners from government and NGOs in Baucau. Also, police radio is used for urgent situations as reported by some of the partners from Covalima.

In general, respondents said that coordination under the JPs takes place from national to sub-national levels and vice-versa. However, the success of coordination between district and sub-districts, villages and sub-villages varies from district to district. For example, the district authorities from Manatuto said that there is an effective coordination between district and the other local levels while district authorities from Covalima mentioned that it's still very difficult to coordinate with villages and sub-villages due the lack of basic conditions and infrastructures.

Coordination across policy areas

Overall, respondents said that the existing coordination mechanisms have improved the dialogue across many areas of interventions. In Oecusse, from a NGO point of view, the coordination between the Department of Health and Department of Agriculture under the JP-FNS and the coordination between MSS, the Police VPU and Department of Education under the JP-GEWR are good examples of the improvement in relationships among programmes across state departments.

The district authorities from Oecusse said they are coordinating better with each other at district level. It seems they have solved some issues without assistance from the national level. For example, through the child protection network, partners have addressed and solved several problems as the network has allowed all the institutions from different areas (social protection, health, justice, police, etc) to work together. Another example is the advocacy activities surrounding Community Based Malnutrition Assistance Management in which social solidarity, education, health and agriculture have worked together.

In Baucau, NGOs and government partners mentioned that the improvement in dialogue across programmes has mainly occurred through the quarterly meetings among ministries, in which NGOs and other partners are invited to participate. For example, under the interventions of home and school gardens, MAF has organized and led several meetings. At district level, there is a meeting every month which involves partners such as MSS, MoH, MoE and Infrastructures, as well as NGOs and representatives of UN. There is another meeting every three months which also involves people from the national level. Weekly, there is a meeting between villages' leaders and sub-district authorities. Under the area of gender based violence and child protection, MSS is in a continuous dialogue with other ministries (MoH, MoE and MJ) and leads monthly and quarterly meetings with all counterparts.

In Manatuto, respondents pointed out that there is coordination between MoH and MAF concerning issues of food security and nutrition and between MoH and MoE in terms of reproductive health and HIV. It was also reported that the MoH coordinates with the District Administrator regarding SISCA's activities.

In Covalima, respondents said that working in partnership has helped to improve coordination across policy areas, namely during the implementation of gender based violence and social protection activities. For example, in the programme BdM, MSS coordinates with MoE and MoH to make sure that children attend school and get all the required vaccines. Another example, in the identification of cases of gender based violence, police works closely with MoH, MSS, SEPI, MJ, MoE and if required with local shelters.

Coordination between local partners and UN agencies

Most of local partners said that the most important coordination with UN agencies is done mainly at the central level. However, they also mentioned that there are several opportunities for them to coordinate with UN agencies during the implementation phase.

In Oecusse, a majority of respondents from government departments noted that the coordination with UN agencies has been good. District authorities said that SEPI has been supported by UNFPA, UN Women and UNICEF; MSS has been assisted by UNICEF in the area of child protection and by UNDP for BdM programme; MoH has worked with UNICEF concerning management of community malnutrition and with WFP on the assessments of child malnutrition, as well as Timor Vita and; MAF has been assisted by FAO.

In Baucau, respondents from the NGOs said that they have worked with UN agencies. Alola Foundation has worked closely with IOM regarding training on human trafficking to local authorities and with UNICEF on child protection and monitoring of the mother's support group. District authorities also provided a few examples of coordination with UN agencies. MAF has worked closely with FAO and WFP in the area of food security and nutrition. MSS has worked in partnership with UNICEF in terms of social mobilization and UNICEF has provided supporting materials and equipment. MSS has also worked with UNFPA in the establishment of the referral network, with IOM regarding the training on human traffic and with UNDP concerning training on the database for the BdM programme. MoH has coordinated with WFP in terms of preparing and distributing corn flour (*batar u'ut*). MoE has received information from FAO regarding the school gardens, but this does not necessarily means that they have worked together.

In Manatuto, it was reported by most of the partners that UN agencies came directly to talk with the district authorities regarding the implementation of activities. MoH has coordinated with WFP regarding *batar u'ut* since 2009. MAF has worked closely with FAO, WFP, UNICEF and WHO in relation to home gardens and other health and food security issues.

In Covalima, district authorities said that they have received support from UN agencies occasionally. MSS has received support from UNICEF about training on child protection and from UNDP about training on the programme BdM. MSS has also coordinated with UNMIT Human Rights Section on human rights advocacy. From the NGOs point of view, shelters have coordinated directly with UN Women, UNICEF and WFP in terms of getting support for training and necessary equipment.

Gender sensitive mechanisms

All the respondents said that a large number of participants, beneficiaries and facilitators of activities are women. Respondents from Oecusse mentioned that gender equality is one of the priorities when they ask the community to choose people to participate in the activities. Women are highly involved in the activities conducted under the interventions PSF, SISCA, home and school gardens as reported by respondents from Oecusse and Manatuto.

Respondents from Baucau, Manatuto and Covalima said that there are enough opportunities for women to make decisions along the process as some of the key focal points are women and they are normally well represented during meetings where decisions are made. However, some of the other respondents said that the decisions made by local authorities are predominantly dominated by men.

Benefits in coordination

One of the major benefits reported by all partners is the strength of the links among partners which have allowed them to understand each other, work together, share information and be more collaborative throughout the entire process of implementation.

In Oecusse, respondents from the NGOs highlighted that the JPs have contributed to an improvement of the learning process in terms of sharing financial and human resources. Local authorities said that people and institutions have improved coordination among themselves. For example, victims of gender based violence now feel more confident to report their cases as they know that they will get support from several institutions, such as Police, MSS, MoH and NGOs.

In Baucau, partners said that dialogue has improved mainly through the meetings conducted under the JPs. This has also created the opportunity to address many issues in a harmonized way.

Respondents from Oecusse and Baucau pointed out that the JPs process has facilitated the establishment of community groups which have significantly improved the links between the villages and sub-villages, as well as the dialogue between villages, sub-districts and districts. These types of groups may have encouraged other people to create new groups and, consequently has increased coordination amongst them.

Furthermore, it was mentioned by partners from Oecusse and Baucau that the JPs have provided for an improvement in conducting joint monitoring.

In Manatuto, respondents said that there are few changes when they compare the coordination before and after 2009. It seems that the MDG Fund and the commitment under the Declaration of Comoro have allowed district authorities to improve the conversations across state departments, establish links with other non-governments partners and strengthen work in partnership. Consequently, it has improved the dialogue between the district authorities and the central level. For example, it seems much easier for MAF to check data with local authorities and produce reports at national level. It looks also much easier to organize campaigns on nutrition and mobilize partners at the different levels.

In Covalima, the major benefit reported by district partners was the establishment of the referral network which has created the basic requirements for relevant partners to work together and address the main challenges.

The table below shows how the JPs have strengthened coordination according to respondents' opinion by district.

<i>Districts</i>	<i>Completely</i>	<i>To a great extent</i>	<i>Somewhat</i>	<i>Not at all</i>
Oecusse		√√ √		
Baucau		√√ √		
Manatuto		√√ √		
Covalima		√√ √		

Note: Respondents' answers: √ Few; √√ Half; √√ √ Majority; √√√ All

Challenges

One of the main challenges reported by all local leaders is to ensure that the key people from the different sectors and levels, including sub-districts, villages and sub-villages, can attend and participate in the regular meetings.

This major challenge includes other ones related to the conditions that enable people to attend the meetings, i.e. availability of transport, road conditions and budget, particularly for people who live in remote places. It was mentioned by partners from Oecusse that every time they are invited to go to Dili, if travelling via land, the process is very bureaucratic and time consuming. Leaders from Baucau, Manatuto and Covalima said that technical staff normally have difficulties in implementing programmes in remote villages and sub-villages due the lack of transport or the bad road conditions.

Linked to that, it's also very challenging to communicate with people from the sub-districts, villages and sub-villages because most of time there is no mobile phone signal or people don't have access to a telephone or they just don't have enough money to purchase telephone credit to call each other.

Another major challenge reported by partners from Oecusse, Manatuto and Covalima is to make sure that there is always enough money to facilitate the organization of meetings.

Furthermore, local leaders from Oecusse and Baucau mentioned that it is very challenging to guarantee there is always someone to accompany all the projects and attend all the required meetings because there is a lack of staff to cover all the priority activities. At the same time, it was reported by leaders from Oecusse that it's also difficult to keep the same group of people which were chosen in the beginning to be part of the implementation of the activities at village level.

In addition, it was said by leaders from Oecusse and Covalima that it's difficult to ensure that the people who attend the meetings and agree on the decisions will act accordingly later on. Furthermore, it also seems difficult to have a unique common approach as there are always sectoral interests and priorities which do not necessarily converge to the same objectives and do not allow people to cooperate with each other.

6.2.1.2 Villages

Understanding of coordination

<i>Villages</i>		
<i>...near to the capital of district</i> ຈັດ		<i>...far from the capital of district</i> ຈັດ
<p><i>Nipani</i></p> <p>Coordination is about working together towards common objectives.</p>	Oecusse	<p><i>Bene-Ufe</i></p> <p>Coordination means the links people need to establish with each other. It also means there is joint work to achieve common objectives. It implies having focal points who share the information with others.</p>
<p><i>Trilolo</i></p> <p>Coordination means that everyone shares information and implement activities with the relevant people from the different levels.</p>	Baucau	<p><i>Baguia</i></p> <p>Coordination implies working together.</p>
<p><i>Cribas</i></p> <p>Coordination is the process of having everyone sharing information.</p>	Manatuto	<p><i>Manelima</i></p> <p>Coordination means joint work and it requires talking to each other.</p>
<p><i>Debos</i></p> <p>Coordination means that local authorities talk to each other and, every time there is a meeting, they have the responsibility to set up the necessary links to have everybody participating. It also means that everyone who works in the same programme talks to each other and share information.</p>	Covalima	<p><i>Fatululik</i></p> <p>Coordination means that people sit together, talk and share information.</p>

Management of relationships between levels of government

Meetings, letters, telephone calls and visits are seen by a vast majority of the local leaders as the main mechanisms of coordination between different levels of local government.

In Nipani (Oecusse) ຈັດ and Bene-Ufe ຈັດ the Chief of villages and Chiefs of sub-villages visit people from one neighborhood to another neighborhood and from house to house to share information or to

mobilize people for implementation of activities. It was highlighted that this mechanism has been particularly relevant in the area of health where community groups were formed.

In Cribas (Manatuto) ¹⁰, when activities need to be coordinated, village leaders are the ones who mobilize the communities. In Manelima ¹¹, village leaders said that, for example with the extension worker, they visit him at his home because the extension worker lives there. A similar strategy is used to talk with health staff. Also, when the sub-district or district needs information from the village, for example data on education, health or agriculture, village leaders prepare it and bring it directly to them.

Coordination across policy areas

In Nipani ¹² village leaders said that communication between the different areas has worked well as they always promote coordination among key people. For example, extension workers from MAF together with FAO coordinate with school communities or whoever necessary. In Bene-Ufe ¹³, coordination across areas of intervention, such as agriculture, health or social protection, varies strongly from programme to programme. Village leaders intervene when it's necessary.

In Trilolo (Baucau) ¹⁴, village leaders said that coordination at district level between SEPI and MSS regarding gender based violence has improved and, consequently, district offices have shared more information with village leaders and invited them to attend trainings. In Baguia ¹⁵, it was reported that coordination between agriculture (through the extension workers) and health (through the volunteers and health staff) has worked well.

In Cribas (Manatuto) ¹⁶, it was mentioned that some coordination has occurred, particularly between the areas of health and education. In Manelima ¹⁷, village leaders pointed out an improvement of the dialogue across agriculture and health sectors.

In Debo s (Covalima) ¹⁸, village leaders said that the coordination across the areas of social protection, health and justice has strengthened particularly since 2011. The different sectors have made efforts to address issues and find solutions. However, it seems the closest coordination they have is with Alola Foundation and FOKUPERS. In Fatululik ¹⁹, village leaders coordinate when is needed and this is the method they have always used.

Gender sensitive coordination mechanisms

Village leaders said that women are significantly involved in the activities as participants and beneficiaries. However, there are no specific gender sensitive coordination mechanisms.

Local leaders from Nipani ²⁰, Trilolo ²¹ and Manelima ²² said that women have participated in many activities at the community level. Leaders from Bene-Ufe ²³ stated that women are also represented at the Council of Villages so that they can always present their ideas. On the contrary, local leaders from Debo s ²⁴ highlighted the fact that women do not yet have much influence in the decisions even if they have actively participated in several activities. The other village leaders from Baguia ²⁵, Cribas ²⁶ and Fatululik ²⁷ did not provide any answer.

Benefits in coordination

One of the greatest benefits reported by most of local leaders was that people have worked together, shared information, created new links and/or strengthened new relations across several areas at different levels.

Local leaders from Nipani ພື້ນ ພື້ນ said that that the establishment of community groups and training provided to the members of those groups, have contributed to an improvement in people's confidence and hope to implement and coordinate activities towards the achievement of common objectives.

Leaders from Trilolo ພື້ນ ພື້ນ and Manelima ພື້ນ ພື້ນ also pointed out that information has flowed much easier between communities and the villages and vice-versa, particularly information in the area of domestic violence and related legal procedures (Trilolo) and information about health, nutrition and agriculture (Manelima). For example, when people from the sub-villages or villages need to clarify any issues related to health they can easily get support from the members of the mother's support group or when they need to clarify any doubts concerning agriculture they can also ask the extension workers.

In addition, village leaders from Debos ພື້ນ ພື້ນ reported the establishment of a common platform of communication as another benefit. This has enabled people work in a collaborative and interrelated system. This has also increased the coordination among different partners (Fokupers, Alola Foundation, Police and MSS) in the area of gender.

The table below shows how the JPs have strengthened coordination according to respondents' opinion by village.

<i>Villages</i>	<i>Completely</i>	<i>To a great extent</i>	<i>Somewhat</i>	<i>Not at all</i>
Nipani ພື້ນ ພື້ນ		vvvvv		
Bene-Ufe ພື້ນ ພື້ນ			vvvvv	
Trilolo ພື້ນ ພື້ນ		vvvvv		
Baguia ພື້ນ ພື້ນ			vvvvv	
Cribas ພື້ນ ພື້ນ			vvvvv	
Manelima ພື້ນ ພື້ນ		vvvvv		
Debos ພື້ນ ພື້ນ		vvvvv		
Fatululik ພື້ນ ພື້ນ			vvvvv	

Note: Respondents' answers: v Few; vv Half; vvv Majority; vvvv All

Challenges

A vast majority of village leaders (Baguia, Manelima, Cribas, Fatululik and Debos) said that telecommunications and transport are very challenging when people want to coordinate. The lack of mobile phone signal or telephone or credit to make phone calls and the lack of transport linked to the bad conditions of roads have brought a lot of constraints when people have to contact each other or to attend meetings and trainings.

It was also reported by leaders from Trilolo and Debos that it's very challenging to keep communities interested in the programmes and make sure they are aware of the purposes, as well as ensure they participate in the activities according to what was agreed in the beginning.

Linked to that, village leaders from Trilolo, Baguia and Cribas said that there is a need to have a sufficient amount of money to be allocated to the organization of meetings and trainings. Otherwise communities will not be very motivated to participate in the activities due to the enormous challenges they face when they want to attend and participate in all the activities.

In addition, leaders from the villages of Nipani pointed out that one of the biggest challenges they face is to have one voice regarding the implementation of programmes as there are always several opinions which normally differ from what has been proposed by the programmes guidelines. Leaders from Bene-Ufe acknowledge the same challenge and said that this happens quite often when communities have to decide for example where the home gardens should set up.

Leaders from both villages also mentioned that it is very difficult to ensure a continuous follow-up and monitoring during the implementation that will allow communities to feel confident about implementation by themselves.

Finally, two other important points were stated by village leaders from Fatululik. First, it's very challenging for village leaders to understand what coordination should look like and what the best mechanisms are. Second, it's very difficult to prevent non-government organizations visiting local leaders and communities without any previous notice.

6.3. Overall Joint Programmes' benefits and challenges

6.3.1. National level

Benefits

UN agencies said that the JPs increased awareness about gender issues, but particularly on food and nutrition and its related links which have never received such attention before. It also contributed to lever more resources, improve systems and capacity.

"It has increased the awareness of malnutrition in the country. As I said before, the fact that it is a joint programme with many actors it has contributed more than one as an individual programme or one actor would have contributed." (R23)

"The MoH just allocated two more additional millions for nutrition and that is because of the JP. All agencies and all ministries are talking about nutrition." (R27)

The majority of partners (UN, Government and NGOs) stated that the JPs provided an example of joint work proving that this type of work is possible and can bring benefits such as the combination of multiple resources towards the achievement of common goals.

“I think it has allowed the various UN agencies to realize that we may have our respective mandate and programmes but within the country context it make sense to support key elements that requires everybody’s efforts. So within gender equality and woman’s rights you’ll see that each of the agencies have done different things but they all contribute towards strengthening gender equality. All of these activities actually work like little cogs in the wheel. If you don’t have the cog the wheel will not turn. It’s not just one cog that’s important. Each and every cog is important.” (R8)

Most of the partners (UN, Government and NGOs) also mentioned that the JPs brought a common understanding which was missing before due to a lack of dialogue and common platforms for discussion and planning together. So the JPs’ mechanisms of coordination have facilitated numerous things, including the ability to share ideas, address problems, find solutions, improve knowledge and strengthen networks.

It was referred by UN that the JPs facilitated some interventions being scaled-up. *“We were able to scale-up some of the packages such as the treatment of acute malnutrition. Now this is nationwide because of the JP resources.” (R27)*

Some respondents from UN also reported that one major benefit of the JPs is to have partners making efforts to target the same beneficiaries as was recommended by the mid-term evaluations. At least for home gardens and mothers’ support group they are trying to follow that recommendation.

According to UN partners, JPs facilitated the introduction of a few new initiatives. The one mentioned is the Micronutrient Powder (MNP) supplementation to young children. *“We introduced some of the interventions like MNP supplementation. We just launch the programme last week with MoH.” (R27)*

Most partners (UN, Government and NGOs) affirmed that the JPs have also opened the door for rethinking programs at the local level. JPs have contributed to pilot some interventions in schools and communities, such as home and school gardens.

“Home gardens have been implementing through the JP and already increased the household incomes where some products are for consume and others for sale. (...) Another one is the school garden which can also provide benefits for the students and community in terms of nutrition although it will be a slow and gradual process.” (R12)

“At community level, the activities have had their own impact. For us the promotion of nutrition through food-based approaches through home gardens and school gardens is very positive. As we already know, the diet of Timorese is very unbalanced and vitamins are often lacking. So promoting the importance of including vegetables in a daily diet has been quiet a success and we would like to extend to all the districts as a key element on food based nutrition.”(R23)

It was also reported that the JPs have contributed to increasing participation of the most vulnerable, especially women. Benefits appear to be more visible at community level and within specific interventions. For example, the Food Security Information and Early Warning System has *“captured the nutrition and food security of Timor-Leste through a detailed analysis that provide a better idea of the situation of drought, rain, food shortage and support the advocacy to the relevant ministries so they can intervene.” (R10)*

Shelters are another example as it is described. *“Now we actually have two or three additional shelters built in the regions where three or four years ago I couldn’t imagine that would have happened. It had a knock-on effect. For example, for the MSS shelters there was an opportunity to see what can be achieved in a short space of time. It has given an inspiration to continue with new ideas of how we can get things moving quickly even though they move slowly in Timor.” (R11)*

Some respondents also mentioned some positive accomplishments within BdM programme. *“We now have a social protection scale for women headed households. This is in law which means whatever changes of government the law will not be lost. It has now transparent eligible criteria. There is a monitoring so we can now ensure that these people are getting the social protection. There is a database in place that the ministry now can use to check that with.” (R25)*

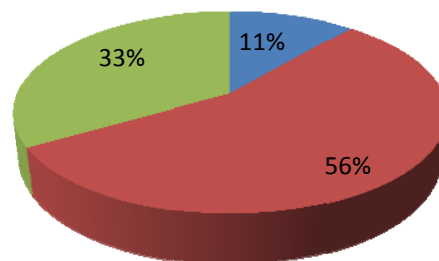
In the context of Law Against Domestic Violence, some respondents referred to the national action plans, socialization and campaigns to reduce violence against women as important steps in moving forward in the area of gender.

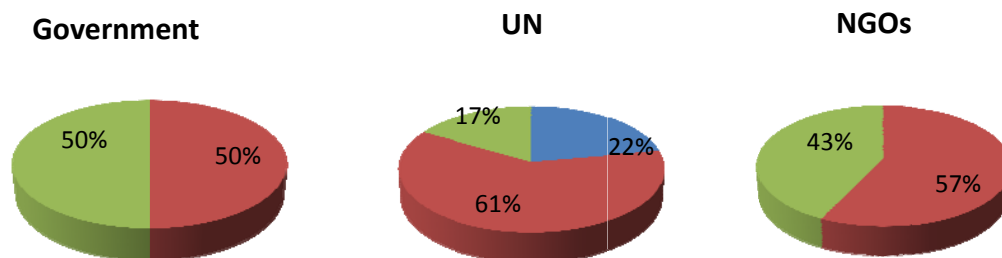
“The greatest benefits have been in the area of gender based violence, socialization and campaigns to reduce violence against women.(...) Programmes and activities have occurred at national and districts levels. (...) With the support from UNFPA through the MSS we have been providing shelters services together with NGOs such as PRADET and JSMP which have helped from a legal perspective. (...) There are other benefits such as the increased capacity of human resources and institutions through several workshops conducted with our partners to get a deeper understanding and to learn on how to develop a better service delivery.” (R9)

According to the majority of respondents, the JPs answered ‘to a great extent’ the needs and priorities of Timor-Leste. Analysing from each partner point of view, half of government respondents said that JPs answered ‘to a great extent’ to the needs and priorities and another half said ‘somewhat’. A vast majority of UN interviewees are divided between ‘to a great extent’ and ‘completely’ while the NGOs respondents affirmed mostly ‘to a great extent’ and ‘somewhat’.

JPs' answers to the needs and priorities of Timor-Leste

■ Completely ■ To a great extent ■ Somewhat ■ Not at all





Challenges

One of the major challenges reported by some UN respondents is to strengthen the links between activities. It seems that there is a weak correlation between some of the activities to facilitate the achievement of common goals. *“The activities individually are good, but I don’t see that there is a link between the three programmes, i.e. food security, health and nutrition.” (R28)*

Another challenge relates to ensuring the continuity of certain interventions in the gender dialogue and all the policies related and developed until now, as well as some of the pilot interventions, such as home and school gardens, ensuring that there will be sufficient resources to continue and to extend to other districts.

“In the council of ministers and in parliament they are discussing it, but I am not sure how much they were discussing this before. I think that’s a really important step to turn things like gender based violence. The real concern now is what happens next. We have all this legislation and policies, but it’s important to implement it.” (R25)

“This joint programme seems good if we could continue with this kind of approach because now we are all together with the same understanding. It would help to continue with the same focus so that we can continue to motivate more people at community level. We will see the changes later on, but again, going back to the start, if we don’t keep the structures to coordinate then it will become more difficult to have ownership.” (R23)

Linked to that, most partners highlighted the need to ensure resources from other funds, whether public or not, for those interventions which were totally dependent of the MDG-F, namely the shelters and legal services provided to victims of gender based violence.

“Overall, we have to look more in terms of sustainability as it was mention in mid-term review and internal evaluation. I am a bit worried regarding shelter services for victims of domestic violence. I don’t see how they can really continue if government does not take ownership.” (R20)

A very few respondents from UN also pointed out the investment in the prevention of domestic violence and gender violence at an earlier stage as a big challenge. Until now, most of the initiatives have focused in terms of response.

Finally, a point was made by a government partner regarding the challenge of measuring the contribution of the JPs for the MDGs as the objectives of the JPs are not directly linked with the MDGs targets for Timor-Leste, particularly in the area of gender.

6.3.2. District and village levels

A vast majority of partners at district level said that one of the major benefits of the JPs is the raised public awareness regarding gender-based violence, women rights, human trafficking, food security and nutrition.

In Oecusse, from a government point of view, it was mentioned that there has been some knowledge transfer on nutrition, particularly through the groups formed at community level such as school gardens, home gardens, PSF and in the course of SISCA activities. The community has also started to establish links between nutrition and environment, as well as see the advantages of using modern agricultural techniques to increase household income and improve families' daily diet.

Furthermore, it seems that the BdM programme allowed women to become more respected by men as women are the ones who manage the subsidy received.

In Baucau, it was reported by NGOs that people living in the remote areas have improved their knowledge about domestic violence and other gender issues. Community women groups have had a significant role in the information sharing about gender issues, as well as about health and nutrition. Consequently, the community has become more aware of the need to go to health facilities for prevention and treatment.

From a government angle, in addition to the positive process of learning and improvement of knowledge in the different areas already mentioned, the BdM programme was pointed out as a benefit because it has given opportunities for households to send kids to school.

In Manatuto, the government partners said that the JP has contributed considerably to an improvement in food security and nutrition, mainly through the home gardens. It has also raised awareness in these areas through all the activities within school and home gardens. At the same time, the JP has significantly contributed to the identification of the malnourished children and has provided them with treatment. Furthermore, health officers have improved their knowledge and experience due to all the training sessions conducted.

In Covalima, it was highlighted by all partners that the information and knowledge that people, in particular woman, gained through the several programmes on gender equality has empowered them to understand situations of violence and the existing procedures for asking for help or making a complaint.

In addition, one of major benefits reported relates to the improvement of knowledge and skills of the victims of violence (children and women) who are in temporary shelters which have allowed them to return to their communities and their houses with a different understanding, attitude and role.

Finally, it was also reported that the BdM programme has helped the most vulnerable women by supporting them financially. With that support, women were able to send their children to school with the required materials such as notebooks, pens and pencils.

The table below shows how the JPs have answered to the needs and priorities of the districts according to the respondents' opinion by district.

<i>Districts</i>	<i>Completely</i>	<i>To a great extent</i>	<i>Somewhat</i>	<i>Not at all</i>
Oecusse		√√√√		
Baucau		√√	√√	
Manatuto			√√√√	
Covalima		√√√		

Note: Respondents' answers: √ Few; √√ Half; √√√ Majority; √√√√ All

According to the majority of the village leaders, one of the greatest benefits of the JPs is the training provided to the local leaders and communities during the implementation of activities which have contributed to an improvement in knowledge and a rise in general awareness.

Nipani (Oecusse) village leaders said that the training on gender and domestic violence has provided communities with essential information which has started to alert households to these inter-related issues. On the other hand, the mothers' support group and SISCA related activities have increased people's awareness on what they can do to prevent malnutrition, particularly for pregnant women and children. For example, since the mother's support group started, children are breastfed since the time they are born while before mothers didn't feed them immediately as they thought the colostrums was not good for them.

Village leaders from Trilolo (Baucau) mentioned that training on domestic violence has increased community awareness to understand what the crime is, and if it occurs, the legal procedures that can be taken. Training on human trafficking has allowed people to understand what human trafficking is and to be more aware of situations in which it may occur. Mothers' support group and SISCA activities have allowed communities to be more informed about health issues, particularly about breastfeeding, family planning and child nutrition.

Baguia village leaders said that the main benefits are the ones that come through the school gardens, SISCA activities, programme of BdM and training on domestic violence. School gardens have called for the attention from the school community and families to the need of improving students' school meals. SISCA activities have helped communities to improve their knowledge about nutrition and have called attention to the need of preventing child malnutrition. At the same time, the links between SISCA, health posts and health centres have improved. This has facilitated the identification of the malnourished children and has helped in their treatment.

Furthermore, the BdM programme was referred to by the leaders from both villages as a programme that has facilitated mothers to buy the required materials and clothes to send their children to school.

In Cribas (Manatuto) 𐄂𐄂, local leaders noted that one of the main benefits is related to the monitoring of activities. It has provided a good idea of progress in terms of malnutrition. It was also reported that people have benefited in terms of information access and assistance from the community support groups such as the PSF and those supporting SISCA activities.

Village leaders from Manelima 𐄂𐄂 affirmed one of the greatest benefits is the increased knowledge and experience through the home and school gardens. People have increased their understanding of nutrition and have learned some of the basics of a modern agriculture. At the same time, the mothers' support group and the work they have been doing with the health centre, PSF and SISCA has contributed very much to the communities' access to basic information on health and nutrition.

One of the major benefits reported by village leaders from Debos (Covalima) 𐄂𐄂 is the information that programmes on gender brought to the local authorities and communities so that they have had an opportunity to improve their knowledge and understanding, as well as hopefully to start changing their mentality. Furthermore, people are more aware of the legal procedures available in the event of gender based violence occurring, particularly domestic violence.

Village leaders from Fatululik 𐄂𐄂 stated that the approval of law against domestic violence and its understanding by local authorities and communities is one of the main benefits. Another benefit is the BdM programme which has also helped some families to send their children to school.

The table below shows how the JPs have answered to the needs and priorities of the villages according to the respondents' opinion by village.

<i>Villages</i>	<i>Completely</i>	<i>To a great extent</i>	<i>Somewhat</i>	<i>Not at all</i>
Nipani 𐄂𐄂		vvvvv		
Bene-Ufe 𐄂𐄂			vvvvv	
Trilolo 𐄂𐄂			vvvvv	
Baguia 𐄂𐄂			vvvvv	
Cribas 𐄂𐄂			vvvvv	
Manelima 𐄂𐄂		vvvvv		
Debos 𐄂𐄂			vvvvv	
Fatululik 𐄂𐄂			vvvvv	

Note: Respondents' answers: v Few; vv Half; vvv Majority; vvvv All

6.4. Other Joint Programmes initiatives

Timor-Leste is one of the MDG-F focus countries with additional support for monitoring and evaluation and for advocacy and partnerships. This section presents a brief analysis in terms of achievements of objectives and effects on national ownership and coordination concerning the activities implemented in both areas during the period of 2009-2012.

MDG-F advocacy and partnerships initiative

Half of the respondents said that activities implemented in the area of advocacy and partnerships¹⁹ increased 'somewhat' the awareness and support for the MDGs among policy makers and among government staff. The other respondents are divided between 'completely' (21%) and 'to a great extent' (21%), except a few group of people reported 'not at all'.

Most of the people (57%) mentioned that the activities increased engagement with and appreciation of the MDGs among Timorese citizens 'somewhat', followed by some people who mentioned 'to a great extent' (29%) and 'completely' (14%).

Considering all the activities where partners have been involved, directly or indirectly, half of the respondents referred that the activities have strengthened 'somewhat' national ownership. The other ones said 'to a great extent' (21%) and 'completely' (21%), except a few respondents who reported 'not at all' (7%).

Furthermore, respondents seemed to be divided between the ones who affirmed that the activities implemented have improved coordination among all the partners 'somewhat' (43%) and the ones who said 'to a great extent' (43%). Only some of the respondents (14%) answered 'completely'.

MDG-F monitoring and evaluation initiative

The majority of respondents (54%) said that the activities implemented in the area of monitoring and evaluation²⁰ improved 'to a great extent' the evidence-based quality of the Joint Programmes, followed by some other respondents stated 'somewhat' (27%) and 'completely' (12%). While a minority said 'not at all'.

A similar opinion was given when respondents were asked about individual/organizational learning and strengthening capacities. The majority of the respondents (54%) said that activities contributed 'to a great extent' to individual and/or organizational learning and strengthen the capacities.

Taking into account all the activities where partners have been involved, either directly or indirectly, respondents are virtually divided between the ones who affirmed that national ownership was strengthened 'somewhat' (46%) and 'to a great extent' (42%). Only a few of them said national ownership was strengthened 'completely'.

¹⁹ Please see Annex 5 for the activities considered under this evaluation.

²⁰ Ibid.

Concerning coordination, a vast majority (65%) believed that activities have reinforced coordination among all partners 'to a great extent'. Some of the respondents said 'somewhat' (23%) and 'completely' (12%).

M&E training package

The development and delivery of the M&E national training package was one of the activities conducted under the MDG-F M&E training initiatives in 2011. After testing amongst UN agency staff, the package was implemented by a training team (3 national M&E officers from UNICEF, UNFPA and UNDP) with support from an international MDG-F M&E consultant in two phases of training workshops for government staff. The first phase of workshops was implemented in September 2011 for government staff in the MSS, MoH and SEPI – in their capacity as key partners of the MDG-F Joint Programmes. The second phase started in June 2012 with all counterparts having already received training.

This training package was kindly welcomed by government partners and has generated a demand for further M&E training amongst government staff working with programme implementation and monitoring. It was particularly acknowledged the fact that training team conducted the workshops in Tetum and that all the materials produced are in Tetum and English.

The first and second phases of the workshops were very participative, dynamic and interactive. Based on the first round of workshops, a vast majority of participants said that the workshop training was very useful, relevant and significantly improved their skills, while highlighting that they will use the knowledge gained in the future. At least half of the participants said that they were relatively prepared to transfer what they learned to other colleagues.

There is not yet feedback from the participants who attended the second phase of the training. According to the national trainers, workshops were participative and useful. However, trainees who attended the second phase of the workshop were not the same people who participated in the first phase of the training, except the case of MoH. The invitations were sent out inviting the same trainees who participated in the first training, but SEPI and MSS decided to change the list of participants without any previous consultation. This may bring limitations to the initial objectives of strengthening capacity of key government counterparts.

7. Conclusions

National Ownership

The relevance of the JPs' national ownership is relatively high with the programmes goals and objectives and the promotion of national ownership being taken into account during all stages of the programmes cycle.

It hasn't been easy to devise a definition of national ownership that is empirically relevant. For the government officials to own the programmes it doesn't require officials to think up the programmes alone or design programmes regardless of conditionality. What it does require is for the owner to recognize the relevance and the benefits of the programmes and to accept responsibility for them throughout their formulation, design, planning, implementation and evaluation.

This recognition has to be based on an understanding that the objectives of the programmes are achievable and are the country's own interest. But if a programme intervention is not carried out by government despite commitments to do so, weak ownership is one of the multiple causes. Key partners and institutions may not have the technical and management capacity to implement the interventions, key partners may not have understood their roles and responsibilities, political preferences may have changed, governance structures may be very centralized or many other causes may have arisen preventing the government from acting.

Although theoretically the promotion of national ownership has been taken into account in all stages of the programmes cycle, there has been a gap between the understanding of national ownership and to make it fully operational. It's clearly recognized that this gap is inversely proportional to the commitment and involvement of the stakeholders, particularly in new interventions. The gap has slightly reduced during the implementation of the Joint Programmes even without the best conditions in place.

National ownership is not directly observable. Hence, conclusions are reached on the basis of knowledge of facts related to the initiative for programme formulation and implementation, level of intellectual conviction among key policy-makers, expression of political will by top leadership, efforts towards consensus-building among key stakeholders and capacity to exercise ownership.

Most of the stakeholders were not involved in the design phase. Due to the short time to submit concept notes and proposals, the UN led the process of the programmes formulation. As soon as the planning stage started, the UN carried out minimal consultations to prepare detailed work plans, even if this occurred nearly one year later. The fact that the Programme Managers came on board later than planned may have had a negative impact in terms of creating linkages among the stakeholders and involving them in the entire process from the beginning.

It is also important to highlight that the Joint Programmes were designed during a period of time of instability and recovery in which government supported by the international community was trying to solve the 2006 crises and related humanitarian and transitional justice issues. This challenge included many other difficulties related to an environment where informality prevailed, governance structures and institutional capacities were weak or almost non-existent.

Under such challenges, the joint programmes designed were aligned with the priorities of the Government at that time and to the plans and goals set by the UN system in Timor-Leste. There is also a broad consensus that the JPs pushed some of the issues on gender, food security and nutrition up to the political front. However, it seems that they could have been more adjusted to the country MDG priorities by establishing more interrelated and integrated interventions within each JP.

There was an opportunity for government counterparts to lead the programmes formally through the co-chairing of the NSC (MED and RCO) and the PMC meetings with the UN leading agencies (UN Women and UNICEF). On one hand, a constructive role was played by the two leading UN agencies and by the programme managers in bringing the partners together and building synergies under the umbrella of the RCO, which was acknowledged very positively in terms of counterparts' leadership. On the other hand, due to time constraints and the need for quick results, the UN has been the driving force behind the scenes. Therefore it limited government partners' ability to take the leadership at their own pace.

All the stakeholders have been involved in the implementation of programmes although UN partners are the ones who received the funds and are ultimately accountable for the budget. All the other stakeholders had to follow the MDG-F guidelines along the phases of the programmes cycle. Again, it's a process that is very much led by UN. For government partners, this means that they have to add one more system, for example in terms of financial and general reporting. Any misinterpretation has been minimized mainly through the joint meetings and clarifications with UN focal points from each UN agency and the Programme Managers. NGOs see the process as very bureaucratic and formal, but at the same time it brought much more openness and flexibility for them to contribute with suggestions, mainly concerning some of most vulnerable groups of people who haven't been taken into account by public policies.

The MDG Achievement Fund has always been very flexible and supportive of any modifications without imposing their agenda or opinions to the stakeholders as long as the decisions were approved by the stakeholders. It seems that they have accompanied the process mainly through the meetings and reports.

Implementation has been carried out based on a top-down approach in which the national stakeholders provide the main guiding principles and rules to the sub-national stakeholders. This approach applies to all the decision-making processes under the Joint Programmes including setting priorities, planning activities and allocating funds.

This also means that a vast majority of partners from the sub-national level never had an opportunity to voice their opinions during the planning phase. They don't have autonomy or a great influence on the process of making decisions, as the process is very centralized at national level.

However, it's important to highlight a few exceptions. This includes the consultations and inception workshops undertaken before the implementation phase and the interventions proposed by national NGOs which have worked closely with their sub-national offices.

There are specific interventions where government and non-government partners, mostly at the district and village levels, assisted during the planning of activities, such as the identification and mobilization of the target populations (school gardens, home gardens, mother's support group), adapting the contents

of campaigns (social mobilization campaign), providing inputs for action plans (national action plan on gender based violence) and the identification of key actors (establishment of the referral network and others support networks).

Any kind of decisions towards consensus-building among key stakeholders at the district level have normally been made through the quarterly and monthly coordination meetings and meetings under the established networks.

Conversely, there are a few cases where some of the key district authorities didn't follow any of the guidelines because they just didn't receive any instructions from the central level. This is the case of school gardens and the nutrition training initiatives for schools.

At the district level, ownership is strongly seen as the degree of control local authorities are able to exercise over the implementation and the design of programmes. It also includes a strong component of partnership, where there are mutual interests for working towards common objectives.

On one hand, district authorities are aware of the difficulties involved with influencing programmes design due to the very centralized system and, on the other hand, understand that the power required for execution of the programmes is linked to the capacity to deliver on the ground.

It seems that there is a gap between the capacity to act and the will to act, which may influence peoples level of commitment. This commitment within the JPs may be related to the type of interventions that have been implemented and the conditions provided, namely the quality and frequency of training, the technical and management capacities built, adequate budget, sufficient materials and equipment, transparency, as well as a more dynamic cooperation between resources at the central level and resources at the district level.

At the village level, ownership is largely seen as the degree of control village leaders and communities are able to exercise over the implementation of activities. Ownership is also related with strong partnerships at community level. The gap between the capacity to act and the will to act seems to be smaller than gap identified at the district level which may induce a higher level of commitment. This commitment at village levels seems to have a strong positive link with several main aspects: (i) high relevance of the interventions to the communities; (ii) good understanding of the programmes objectives (iii) relatively high intensity of interventions in a specific place; (iv) integrated and multi-sectoral approach; (v) community-led activities; (vi) regular follow-ups with the implementers; (vii) the continuous monitoring of the activities by the interventions implementers and; (viii) feedback for possible improvements to the existing activities.

The villages of Manelima (focused only on the JP-FNS), Debos (focused on the JP-GEWR) and Trilolo (focused on both JPs) showed great potential to increase the level of commitment through the combination of some of those main aspects which may foster the successful implementation of some of the activities.

Coordination

New coordination structures were set up at national level based on the MDG F guidelines. The architecture of governance of the JPs includes a NSC and two PMCs which didn't function regularly

before the reception of the Funds and until the PMU was in place. The JP-FNS has used an existing working group which has clearly contributed to strengthened efficiency of governance and to avoiding the proliferation of multiple structures.

Broadly speaking, partners agree that the JPs have had some positive effects on coordination. JPS have widened stakeholders participation and engagement by involving several ministries, secretaries of state, UN and NGOs throughout the process and by allowing them to participate primarily through the NSC and PMC meetings. JPs have also increased multi-sectoral participation and occasionally sub-national offices participated in the national structures.

In particular, the JPs have improved multi-sectoral decision making over the implementation process as different government departments and non-government actors together with UN were able to dialogue more often, share information and, concerns and find solutions.

Despite these developments, overall levels of participation and/or engagement of government sectors and nongovernment actors have probably improved the coordination between the UN and the Government and NGOs, rather than establish a strong mechanism of coordination with a multiplier effect on the existing government mechanisms.

Beyond the meetings under the JPs, it seems that there is weak coordination between government departments, between the different levels of government and poor internal coordination/communication within some government agencies. One of the main reasons is related to the fact of having coordination entrenched on an individual-based approach rather than on specific positions and/or working groups with clear roles and responsibilities, as well as the lack of sufficient and qualified human resources at the state departments.

Again, it's important to highlight that since independence and mostly after the country experienced a political, security and social crisis in 2006, Timor-Leste has made considerable progress in moving from post-conflict reconstruction to sustainable peace as a foundation for the consolidation of democracy. In light of country progress, government with international support has been trying to put government structures in place. However, the establishment of a robust government system based on solid structures with adequate resources as a key aspect to good governance remains challenging.

The NSC and the PMCs are relatively manageable and are recognized as good platforms for discussion. However, the levels of engagement of government sectors and non-government actors could have been better if Tetum had been used in meetings and in the documents shared among stakeholders. Additionally, vulnerable groups never played any roles in the coordination mechanisms, except through the voices of the NGOs as they work closer to the ground level.

It's also important to mention that the coordination structures under the JPs are rarely seen under country ownership which means that any decisions taken may be ignored by other relevant government decision makers. This will continue to occur if programmes keep on setting priorities outside of national (and sub-national) structures and if the stakeholder's participation in such structures was seen as a formality. This may also lead to limited engagement with the sub-national coordination structures.

Within the UN system, the JPs represented a great opportunity for UN agencies first attempt at 'Deliver as One' as there was one funding source which brought people together to discuss cross-cutting issues and plan the implementation of several interventions in a more coherent way towards common goals. UN RCO had a significant role in encouraging UN agencies to speak with one voice and to work together as much as possible in order to make the best use of existing resources.

Despite the progress and efforts made by UN staff and RCO, the DaO concept remains a challenge. There is still a high number of small scale activities and M&E is not yet able to capture development results from 'jointness' or participation in DaO. UN agencies had their own funds parcel, mechanisms and modalities, although they followed the regulations and harmonized rules established by the MDG-F. Also, operational costs remain quite high. Furthermore, sustainability of available funds is in question for some of the interventions. Therefore, it seems that the exercise of DaO worked better at the planning stage rather than at the implementation phase.

Gender sensitive mechanisms of coordination were not taken into account during the inception phase. No gender or equity objectives were integrated during the formulation, planning and budgeting phases. However, a greater participation of women (as implementers, facilitators and/or beneficiaries) was ensured across multi-sectoral interventions at national and sub-national level.

As mentioned earlier, there was limited decision-making and lack of resource allocation power within sub-national structures as they have worked mostly as implementers of programmes determined at the national level. At the district and village levels, coordination mechanisms within the JPs appear to be largely incorporated in the existing mechanisms of coordination.

At the district and village levels, it seems they have very minimal to no information on the MDG-F and how the funds have been allocated and spent in their districts. However, a vast majority of the local authorities are aware of the interventions, as most of the activities are not new and they are part of the current local work plans. This does not necessarily means that they substantially improved the coordination across policy areas. But, at least local authorities and NGOs recognized that some of the interventions under the JPs have fostered dialogue and a very close relationship with some of their counterparts, government and non-government, at the different levels, i.e. between central and districts and between districts and villages. This is clearly shown in interventions such as home gardens, mother's support group, SISCA activities, shelters, law against domestic violence, the child protection network and the referral and service mechanism for the victims of gender based violence, child abuse and human trafficking.

In the area of nutrition, the Declaration of Comoro signed at the national level seems to be another reason for some of the relevant ministries to work and sit together, to talk to each other and share information. Nevertheless, a multi-sectoral integrated approach, for example between the area of nutrition and food security, remains a big challenge.

Government district departments have had mostly a technical/coordination role through the regular meetings they conducted among themselves and with counterparts whether local/international NGOs or with representatives of UN agencies. There is a kind of tension between sectoral approaches and common interests and trying to address them together in a harmonized way during the meetings.

Furthermore, the low capacity of the local government officers in terms of number of available staff, technical skills, equipment, transport and limited precision about roles and responsibilities of the coordination mechanisms and its members may have undermined the working of partners throughout the process of implementation. Also, the fund didn't allocate funds specifically for coordination structures.

Coordination at village level appears to be very integrated in the existing traditional and government structures which mean that village, sub-villages and community leaders know their roles and operating procedures to communicate with each other. Community-led groups were recognized as one of the key aspects that strengthened coordination 'to a great extent' within the JPs' interventions in the villages (Nipani, Trilolo, Manelima and Debos).

Nevertheless, some obstacles to full and effective engagement by the village leaders and communities remain very challenging. This includes: (i) communities' competition for resources creates distrust between people and so there is a substantial disincentive to engage in the coordination structure; (ii) several contradictory opinions or a narrowed understanding of the purposes and benefits of some of the interventions; (iii) limited financial resources to organize/commit to meetings including costs of travelling; (iii) limited mobile phone signal or credit to make phone calls and; (iv) lack of transport and bad roads conditions for people to travel long distances.

Overall

In general, the JPs increased awareness about gender issues and raised responsiveness in the areas of nutrition and food security and its related links which have never received such attention before.

It contributed to lever more resources, improve national systems and build technical capacity of national staff. It also proved that joint work is possible and can compensate in terms of costs-benefits towards the achievement of common goals.

At the national level, most of the partners reached a common understanding through the JPs which was missing before due to a lack of dialogue and a common platform for discussion. The JPs' mechanisms of coordination facilitated that improvement in communication and knowledge.

The JPs facilitated some interventions being scaled-up such as the treatment of acute malnutrition or the introduction of new ones such as the Micronutrient Powder supplementation to young children.

New windows for rethinking interventions were opened at national and sub-national levels, such as the idea of targeting the same beneficiaries or improving the monitoring systems proposed by the mid-term evaluations.

Additionally, the JPs contributed to addressing the needs of some of the most vulnerable groups, especially women, which were rarely taken into account by the national public policies and programmes.

At the sub-national level, the JPs raised public awareness mainly regarding gender-based violence, women rights, human trafficking, food security and nutrition. The JPs also contributed to knowledge improvement as well as some knowledge transfer, particularly through the groups formed at community level and the training/awareness campaigns conducted. Consequently, communities became more

aware that investing in prevention is better than waiting for them to occur and then treating them, at least regarding situations that can actually be prevented.

However, two major overall challenges remain and need to be taken into account in similar future programmes. One of the biggest challenges is to ensure that there are logical links between interventions and related activities. Otherwise, the efforts to achieve the established common objectives will hardly have an impact on the achievement of the MDGs.

Another challenge is related to the sustainability of certain interventions whether to continue or to extend. There's a need to ensure that adequate resources (human and material) will be allocated equitably in future to support the continuing implementation, management, monitoring and to guarantee that there would be no backsliding.

Other MDG-F Initiatives

In terms of achievements of objectives, the MDG-F M&E initiatives improved 'to a great extent' the evidence-based quality of the JPs and contributed 'to a great extent' to individual and/or organizational learning and to strengthening capacities. Concerning the effects on national ownership, the MDG-F M&E initiatives relatively strengthened national ownership. Opinions are divided between the respondents who said the activities have strengthened national ownership 'somewhat' and 'to a great extent'. Regarding coordination, it seems that the M&E initiatives reinforced coordination among all partners 'to a great extent'.

Relating to the MDG-F communication and partnerships initiatives, evidence shows that the activities increased 'somewhat' awareness and support for the MDGs among policy makers and among government staff and improved 'somewhat' engagement with and appreciation of the MDGs among Timorese citizens. In relation to the effects on national ownership and coordination, the communication and partnership initiatives enhanced national ownership 'somewhat' and improved significantly coordination among all the partners, i.e. strengthened 'somewhat' and 'to a great extent' according to the majority of partners.

8. Lessons learned

There are a number of broad lessons that can be drawn from the case study evaluation. However, the lack of a systematic monitoring and evaluation strategy and the limited information available to back up the institutional memory drawn from the interviews and focus groups mean that these lessons remain both brief and broad.

The case study evaluation generated seven lessons learned which could be used for enhancing national ownership in future Joint Programmes in Timor-Leste.

Lesson learned 1: The delay in the establishment of the Programme Management Unit for both Joint Programmes had implications for commitment over the joint programming, planning and implementation.

The delay in the establishment of the Programme Management Units and getting the international Programme Managers on board affected the Joint Programmes opportunity to start off a commitment to ownership and set up the necessary coordination mechanisms at the inception and design phases.

At the same time, if appropriate government partners rather than only international programme managers had been assigned as part of the PMUs, the coordination between Government, UN agencies and NGOs could have been better which may also had a positive effect on the delivery coordination at the different levels.

Lesson learned 2: A participatory process of interaction and dialogue between the donor and stakeholders and among stakeholders from the very beginning of the process impacts the Joint Programmes' national acceptance and potential success.

The lack of a participatory process of interaction and negotiation dialogue between the donor and stakeholders and among stakeholders at the inception phase of the Joint Programmes due to many constraints, including the period of instability in the country at that time, weakened the required commitment by government over the programmes' design and planning. This process also compromised somewhat the programmes' implementation. An effective dialogue among all stakeholders across policy areas and supportive public information from the very beginning of the Joint Programmes could have helped to build and sustain a sense of ownership.

Lesson learned 3: A permanent and pervasive pressure for quick results had implications for decision-makers and civil servants across policy areas in terms of enhancing their commitment over the programmes implementation.

Under the requisites of the MDG-F Secretariat, UN agencies led the process to deliver quick results as the releasing of funds was strongly dependent of the joint delivery rate. This increased the pressure for fast delivery without taking into account the capacity of the government implementing partners to deliver on the ground.

Lesson learned 4: A top-down approach within the decision-making process within the Joint Programmes affected the level of conviction/confidence among key partners at sub-national level.

The decision-making process within the Joint Programmes (in terms of setting priorities, planning activities, allocating funds or implementing activities) was overall very centralized at national level. At sub-national levels, this created some power struggle between top and bottom and commitment gap as will and capacity to act varies according to sovereignty.

Lesson learned 5: The commitment by the local authorities was partly dependent on the involvement of the relevant government national partners in the process.

Although the local government actors' didn't have a strong influence during the decision-making within the Joint Programmes processes, they have had a strong power over execution under clear instructions from the central level. When those instructions do not exist or are not totally clear, they don't see themselves with power to execute or legitimacy to interfere. Consequently, their will and capacity to act may be largely reduced which also may affect any kind of sustainability achievement.

Lesson learned 6: The levels of ownership at community level are strongly related to the conditions offered within interventions.

Power, accountability and commitment over the implementation of the interventions by the communities are strongly linked to some basic requirements. These include: (i) consultations during the formulation of the programmes to assess the relevance of the interventions and to make appropriate adjustments; (ii) a strong awareness and advocacy campaign before and throughout the implementation of the programmes; (iii) an integrated and multi-sectoral approach with a high intensity of interventions; (iv) a continuous follow-up and feedback process carried out together with the stakeholders and end-beneficiaries as part of the monitoring and evaluation phase to ensure improvement and sustainability of the initiatives.

Lesson learned 7: The effective commitment and participation of communities, women and men, are very dependent on the gender sensitive mechanisms within interventions.

In general, the Joint Programmes, in particular the Joint Programme on Supporting Gender Equality and Women's Rights offered several training sessions that created gender awareness and sensitivity to most of the stakeholders and beneficiaries, as well as guaranteed a high participation of women or at least a gender balance during the implementation of activities.

However, during the formulation of the Joint Programmes, no gender sensitive mechanisms were designed by taking into account the features of each intervention within the Joint Programmes. Gender dynamics play a key role in shaping programmes effectiveness and needs to be taken into account at the design and planning phases. Programmes, for example, could have been designed to tackle some of the challenges women face in engaging in productive activities or gender considerations, as well as the effect of gender socialization on culture and social values been included into the assumptions and risks.

The next seven lessons emerged from the case study evaluation for strengthening coordination in future Joint Programmes.

Lesson learned 8: The NSC and the PMCs as the main governance mechanisms had an effect on the multi-sectoral coordination within the Joint Programmes at national level.

The NSC at the higher level and the PMC at senior management level had a very positive effect on the multi-sectoral coordination within the Joint Programmes as platforms of dialogue among stakeholders were created at the national level. The government and non-government partners across sectors shared information, concerns and tried to find solutions throughout the process of implementation.

Lesson learned 9: The coordination mechanisms within the Joint Programmes had an effect on the existing government coordination structures.

The coordination mechanisms within the Joint Programmes had small effect on the existing government coordination mechanisms. This means that some of the coordination problems embedded within the government structures prevail, such as the ones related to unclear roles which allow people to coordinate based on an individual approach and the programme' needs. There was little attempt to fit the coordination mechanisms under the JPs within the national coordination structures which may have strengthened the national capacities.

Lesson learned 10: The use of Tetum during coordination meetings matters.

Translations were provided most during the NSC and PMC meetings at the national level. However, it could have been improved if all the documents had been shared in Tetum and in an advance. This would have allowed time enough for partners to prepare the meetings and be confident to discuss any issues. At the sub-national level, translations were rarely provided during coordination meetings.

Lesson learned 11: Opportunities for UN Deliver as One were created.

The UN DaO exercise under the Joint Programmes showed that the UN agencies were able to adjust their expertise in country to respond to the priorities of the Joint Programmes in a more coherent way. It also raised the profile of the UN system in those areas which required several UN agencies to work together. However, it could have been more effective if that approach was more integrated at the formulation phase to more adequately address cross-cutting issues and with the benefit of enhancing its ability to support the Government on other multidisciplinary issues such as local governance. It also could have been more cost effective throughout the implementation process.

Lesson learned 12: Missed opportunity for developing an integrated information management system to track progress.

Given short deadlines and limited stakeholders involvement due to the post-conflict and instability period, a weak monitoring and evaluation system was developed at the inception and formulation of programmes. After the mid-term and internal reviews the Joint Programmes improved the results M&E framework although huge challenges remained in terms of measuring the programme outcomes. In country-resources and coordination among partners and across sectors could have been used to reinforce statistical capacity at national and sub-national level.

Lesson learned 13: Partnerships had an effect on coordination at sub-national level.

Coordination between government and non-government partners, as well as among government sectors at sub-national level improved through the national and local partnerships, but still remains very challenging. A strong communication strategy, clear coordination guidelines and transparency of the processes, including budget allocations and expenditures, as well as a continuous follow-up could have helped substantially.

Lesson learned 14: The budget allocation for coordination purposes affected the improvement of coordination at the different sub-national levels.

Budget constraints continue to be very challenging when key local partners want to coordinate with each other and with communities, as well as among communities during the implementation, monitoring and evaluation phases. For example, this includes budget limitations for local partners to organize or attend meetings, as well as related to travel and phone call costs.

9. Key recommendations

The case study evaluation proposes some seven recommendations focused on the national ownership and eight recommendations on coordination, as well as some overall recommendations.

National Ownership

Recommendation 1: Ensure the involvement and participation of all key stakeholders during the inception and design phases of the Joint Programmes' to enhance national recognition and leadership by the Government.

- A clear vision should be expressed by the Government about where the country is going and about the contribution of the Joint Programmes to achieving those outcomes.
- A participatory process should be promoted by involving the local authorities. Consultations with local authorities during the formulation of the programmes should be done to assess the relevance of the interventions and to make appropriate adjustments.
- Programme management units should be established at the inception phase and should include at least one programme manager from the government to enhance the authority the structure can exercise.
- Supportive public information and communication strategy should be in place to sustain a sense of national ownership.

Recommendation 2: Support institutions and capacity building.

- Capacity assessments of the implementers should be carried out during the programme design phase.
- Enough time should be given to country bureaucracies to initiate and develop policies and plans through national political and administrative processes.
- International technical assistance to ensure the quality of programmes should take into account the morale of the civil service and confidence from other available human resources in country. Technical assistance should be demand-driven and support the Government needs.
- International consultants should be integrated into government structures and accountable through both authority lines, national and international.

Recommendation 3: Strengthen domestic accountability.

- Government and other non-government partners within the Joint Programmes should report to national institutions, such as parliaments and audit institutions on the use of the MDG-F, and then UN would continue leading the reporting to the MDG-F Secretariat.
- The MDG-F should gain a better understanding of the context in which Government operates and adjust their norms and expectations accordingly.

- Domestic dynamics should be taken as the basis for successful development of the Joint Programmes processes and accountability.
- Enough time should be given to allow Government and Non-government actors to come up with their own proposals and solutions.

Recommendation 4: Improve communication and advocacy campaigns before and throughout the implementation of the programmes at national and sub-national levels.

- The MDG-F logo should be used in all activities conducted and materials produced.
- Community-based awareness on the specific areas of the interventions should be reinforced.
- Information dissemination and sensitization should make use of community radios and TV.
- Referral guidelines and a 'step by step' comprehensive procedure, such as the one aimed at child protection, should be developed for other groups of people within other interventions.

Recommendation 5: Ensure an integrated approach is implemented at the local level to create opportunities for synergies amongst interventions and build strong local capacities.

- Relationships between several of the components of the programmes should be ensured and synergies should be created amongst interventions. In particular, interactions between food security and nutrition, with the sectors of education and health playing a central role.
- Interventions should be implemented in the same locations and if possible at the same time, so that synergies amongst activities can be built.
- Activities should all be integrated in the work plans of local government.
- The delivery of outputs on the ground level should reinforce the capacities of the local stakeholders, including the beneficiaries, throughout a strong process of learning that allows them to take actions further.

Recommendation 6: Ensure a continuous follow-up is carried out together with the stakeholders and end-beneficiaries as part of the monitoring and evaluation phase to ensure improvement and sustainability of the initiatives.

- Joint guidelines and procedures, including key contacts, for follow-up across interventions should be developed.
- Timely and regular follow-up during the implementation of the activities should be ensured.
- Include feedback throughout the process of monitoring and evaluation, feeding back information on the interventions to the local implementers and beneficiaries.
- Support and enhance the use of any existing country owned follow-up and feedback systems, such as the follow-up system for beneficiaries within the BdM programme.

Recommendation 7: Develop gender sensitive mechanisms to ensure an effective participation and empowerment of women and to allow them to recognize that their involvement by ‘spending expensive time’ in the different activities is worthwhile.

- A gender sensitive approach during the planning should identify the numerous obstacles to women’s participation and set up mechanisms for lifting those obstacles. For example in activities such as the Mother Support Group or Home Gardens, the interventions should take into account that women have multiple responsibilities at home, such as activities related to family planning, child care, gardening and other income-generating activities. Therefore, alternative support and/or the creation of gender-sensitive assets could support households’ immediate needs and improve their participation and empowerment.
- Women should be involved in identifying the main problems and finding solutions that can help them to understand the issues and value their own experiences, skills, knowledge and increase their self confidence. These are crucial elements of women’s empowerment.
- Strong and well-coordinated linkages between interventions and complementary services should be ensured as these are more likely to have an important impact on women’s practical gender needs and strategic gender interests by tackling their vulnerabilities in a holistic approach. Good linkages could be established, for example, between home gardens and agricultural practices through training and the creation of public assets such as irrigation systems and wells. Other linkages could also be established between mother’s support group and child care, as well as health services.

Coordination

Recommendation 8: Ensure that any joint coordination mechanism such as the NSC and the PMU is established and performing its roles from the inception phase onwards.

- A representative of the government partners should be part of the PMU to improve coordination between Government, UN agencies and NGOs at the different levels.
- A M&E Officer at the PMU should be in place since the inception and design phases to ensure a result-based M&E framework and all the requirements are well established and coordinated with key M&E focal points from each counterpart.

Recommendation 9: Enhance the multi-sectoral coordination approach to all areas of the Joint Programmes.

- Relevant ministers and at least one senior adviser should be part of the NSC. Education and Health should play a central role in particular on nutrition.
- The senior technical adviser with senior management government staff should be part of the PMC to ensure decisions taken are coordinated and have political legitimacy.
- UN agencies should present a more integrated approach at the formulation phase to adequately address cross-cutting issues aligned with the MDGs country priorities.

- UN agencies should support the governments on other multidisciplinary issues such as local governance.

Recommendation 10: Support and enhance the use of any existing country mechanisms or structures to improve coordination.

- Existing working groups such as the working group on nutrition should be supported as they also helped to set up and improve coordination mechanisms at the sub-national level.
- Guidelines on coordination should be provided to all the stakeholders at different levels.
- Roles and responsibilities should be clarified.

Recommendation 11: Ensure official languages are used in all coordination mechanisms and local languages may also be used for producing supporting materials to facilitate learning processes at sub-national level.

- Tetum should be the language used in all the coordination meetings at the national and sub-national levels.
- Tetum should be supported by local languages, particularly when specific materials, such as referral guidelines and procedures, are distributed to the communities who don't speak the official languages.

Recommendation 12: Reinforce UN inter-agency coordination to enhance an integrated approach and improve coherence of programmes towards the improvement of 'Deliver as One'.

- A coordinated and integrated approach should occur in all the aspects of programming, funding, management and accountability in an interlinked package. This may include innovative and strong strategies to develop UN as a whole. For example, new ways of dealing with joint monitoring systems, joint procurement, joint advocacy campaigns and common communication strategies.

Recommendation 13: Include an integrated information management system to track progress of the programmes results.

- In country-resources such as the development of DevInfo may be used as a database system for monitoring the programmes.
- DevInfo training on how to organize, store and present data in a uniform way should make use the example of the Joint Programmes to facilitate data sharing at national and sub-national levels across government departments, UN agencies and NGOs.
- Joint monitoring of the interventions should be enhanced so that could feed a database system and allow partners to disseminate the information in a faster way.
- The database should be established and co-managed at the PMU by a Government and UN M&E Officer.

Recommendation 14: Increase transparency of funds flow to create a better environment for local partners to improve coordination among themselves and, consequently, for local government partners to use such information for their accountability.

- Budget allocations and expenditures should be presented at the meetings amongst local partners at the quarterly meetings at district level.

Recommendation 15: Ensure a sufficient budget allocation for coordination purposes at the sub-national levels.

- Enough money should be allocated for the organization of meetings amongst local partners at the local level (Districts, Villages and Communities), including travel and phone call costs.
- Local partners should be provided with clear guidelines and procedures to report back the expenditures linked to the results achieved.

Overall

Recommendation 16: Locate coordination structures within the wider public administration system as this may hold important implications for levels of country ownership and the authority a structure can exercise. For example, the NSC could be under the Prime Minister's Office to give structures political legitimacy and demonstrate political commitment.

Recommendation 17: Make sure the Donor(s) and the Government acknowledge and address the problems at national level coordination and focus more attention and resources on strengthening sub-national coordination, if the gap between intent and practice is to be narrowed.

Recommendation 18: Ensure lessons learned are taken into account in the process of drafting the new UNDAF and future Joint Programmes. This case study evaluation and all the evaluations carried out under the Joint Programmes are important resources, which should be used as a basis for discussion among key stakeholders.

Recommendation 19: Make sure lessons learned are shared with other development partners and influence other coming programmes or funds such as the EU MDG Initiative on Infant and Young Child Nutrition Security: Expanding High-Impact Nutrition Package in Timor-Leste for sustainable achievement of MDG1, target 1c.

ANNEXES

Annex 1: Background/Context

The Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste is one of the world's newest nations of the 21st century. Timor-Leste became an independent country in 2002 after a long history of colonization, first as a colony of Portugal and then under Indonesian occupation. The country declared independence from Portuguese rule on November 28 of 1975, but it was invaded by Indonesian military forces nine days later on December 7 of 1975.

Between 1975 and 1999, there were an estimated 102800 conflict-related deaths (approximately 18600 killings and 84200 'excess' deaths from hunger and illness), the majority of which occurred during the Indonesian occupation.²¹ On August 30 of 1999, under an UN-sponsored referendum, a majority Timorese people voted for independence from Indonesia. Following a period of violence and an UN administration for three years, Timor-Leste was internationally recognized as an independent country on May 20 of 2002.

The process of rebuilding the country started under many challenges and fragile circumstances. A crisis occurred in 2006 due mainly the fragile existing relationship between the armed forces and the police which as immediate consequences for the economy and for people living conditions. By the time an estimated 150,000 people were displaced as their homes and property in the capital Dili were seized or destroyed during the violence²².

In August 2006, the UN Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) was established. A new government was also established after elections in April-June 2007 and the IDPs was one of the first priorities for the government. Since that, all development partners have made an important contribution to the immediate post-crisis stabilization and for the process of development in Timor-Leste.

The initial response of the government supported by the international community to the displacement crisis was focused entirely on the provision of humanitarian aid targeted at IDPs living in camps. However, while significant contributions for providing humanitarian assistance to internally displaced populations were made, last camps were closed in May 2010.

Timor-Leste has seen a strong economic recovery since 2007 with a growth rate of non-oil GDP of 7.4% in 2011, reaching its peak of 12.8% in 2008²³, but economic growth hasn't been enough to address the situation of poverty and unemployment. It was reported that 49.9% of the Timorese lived below the national poverty line, estimated at US\$0.88 per capita per day, in 2007.²⁴ According to \$1.25 a day income poverty line and \$2.00 a day line, 37.4% and 72.8% of Timorese are poor, respectively.²⁵ Timor-Leste's Human Development Index for 2011 is 0.495, which gives the country a rank of 147 out of 187

²¹ Wikipedia (2012) History of Timor. Available: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_East_Timor

²² <http://www.internal-displacement.org>

²³ UNDP (2011). "Human Development Report", Figure 11, New York.

²⁴ The World Bank and DNE-MoF (2008), Poverty in a Young Nation, The World Bank and the Directorate of National Statistics: Dili.

²⁵ The World Bank (2011). "World Development Indicators." Washington, DC.

countries. Timor-Leste is also below the regional average of the HDI for East Asia and the Pacific as a region (0.671).²⁶

Over the last 15 years, Timor-Leste's population increased by 24%. It is currently estimated at 1066409 million, showing a growth rate²⁷ of 2.4% since the last 2004 census.²⁸ As a result of the very high fertility rates in Timor-Leste (5.7 births per woman in 2009)²⁹, the younger age groups account for the bulk of the population. Children (aged 0-14) represent 41.4% and youth (aged 15-29) represents 27% of the population. Women constitute also a significant proportion of the total population (49%).³⁰

Children and women are two of the most vulnerable groups. Children in poor households account for 49% of the poor population, while the youth account for 18% of the poor. Although this reflects their large share in the population, it also reflects the fact that larger households with relatively more children tend to be poorer. Regarding women, female-headed households tend to be poorer than male-headed ones.³¹

The Timorese people which have been facing large gaps in well-being have been depending largely on subsistence economy.. The Timorese are mainly agricultural people, with 63 per cent of the households being engaged in agriculture production and 80 per cent rearing any kind of livestock.³² Due mostly people's dependence on such subsistence economy, rural poverty (46%) is more evident than urban poverty (26%).

Out of the employed population aged 15 and over (252,000 persons) 69.9% are in 'vulnerable employment'. There's a clear difference between males and females on all the indicators. The labour force participation rate for females (26.9%) and the employment to population ratio (25.7%) is only half that of males, while females are much more likely than males to be in informal employment (26.5% compared with 13.5%) or in vulnerable employment (78.5% compared with 65.9%) or in unemployment rate (3.1 for males and 4.6% for females). Finally, the female rate of inactivity (72.2%) is very much higher than the corresponding rate for males (43%). Unemployment remains one of major blocks to the economic growth.³³

When situation is focused on the living conditions of women and children, there are many issues that need to be addressed. The Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) shows that 68.1% of Timorese people are poor and denotes nutrition, child mortality and school attendance as the major determinants of poverty.³⁴

²⁶ UNDP (2011). "Human Development Report", Statistical Table 1, New York.

²⁷ This is linked to a high level of fertility. Currently, women in Timor-Leste have an average of 5.7 children although a two child decline from 7.8 in 2003 (2009-10 Timor-Leste Demographic and Health Survey).

²⁸ National Statistics Directorate (NSD) Timor-Leste (2010), Results from the 2010 Census, Dili, Timor-Leste: NSD.

²⁹ Data from the 2009-10 Timor-Leste Demographic and Health Survey.

³⁰ National Statistics Directorate (NSD) Timor-Leste (2010), Results from the 2010 Census, Dili, Timor-Leste: NSD.

³¹ The World Bank and DNE-MoF (2008), Poverty in a Young Nation, The World Bank and the Directorate of National Statistics: Dili.

³² National Statistics Directorate (NSD) Timor-Leste (2010), Highlights of the 2010 Census Main Results in Timor-Leste, Dili, Timor-Leste: NSD.

³³ National Statistics Directorate (NSD) Timor-Leste (2010), Labour Force Survey 2010, Dili, Timor-Leste: NSD.

³⁴ UNDP (2011). "Human Development Report", Statistical Table 1. New York.

Timor-Leste is one of the countries with highest rates of maternal, new born, infant mortality, child mortality and under-nutrition. Under-5 mortality rate has decreased from 83 to 64 per 1000 live births³⁵. Although still stands high, it has already achieved the target settled for 2015 (less than 96 per 1000 live births). This is due mainly a reduction in the infant mortality rate from 60 per 1000 to 45 deaths per 1000 live births.³⁶ This means that Timor-Leste already reached infant and under-5 mortality targets for Millennium Development Goal (MDG4)³⁷. Maternal mortality is still very high (557 per 100000 live births) and is off track to what was established as a target (less than 252 per 100000 live births) under the MDG 5.³⁸ This is related to all female deaths and pregnancy as well as childbearing.

Timorese women attribute their poor health and high mortality rates to aspects such as the persistence of too many births, too short interval between births, too late to be taken to a clinic and too long to be taken to the clinic, which are strongly related to cultural practices.³⁹

Under-nutrition is a key factor in maternal and child development. There has been a slight increase in the level of stunting, wasting and underweight over the last years. Stunting increased from 49% to 53% while wasting rise from 12% to 17% and underweight grew from 46% to 52%. Prevalence of underweight children under five years old shows that this is off track and it remains a big challenge under the MDG1. 27% of women were found to be malnourish with BMI less than 18.5 which shows that malnutrition among women is a serious concern in country.⁴⁰ In addition to that 15% of women are shorter than 145 cm, particularly in rural areas.⁴¹ Women and young girls often got pregnant first time early on around 13 years old and give birth around under serious condition of malnourish.⁴²

Various factors contribute towards a high malnutrition and under-nutrition status of Timorese people, namely food insecurity, poor knowledge on dietary practices, prevalence of infectious illnesses, inadequate access to health and nutrition services and inappropriate child caring practices.⁴³

Food insecurity is very high particularly during the lean season months (October to March), particularly for those people living in highlands, among farmers whose main subsistence mean is the agriculture, for female-headed households and households that experiences sudden shortages. 72.9% of all households experienced at least one month of low food consumption and the average number of months with low food consumption is about 3.2 months during a year.⁴⁴ Others factors such as the lack of access to food grains and quality seeds, inadequate and poor knowledge about food production and storage, as well as

³⁵ Data from the 2003 DHS and 2009-10 DHS survey results.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Less than 96 per live births (under-5 mortality rate) and less than 53 per 1000 live births (infant mortality rate) in 2015.

³⁸ Data from 2009-10 DHS survey results.

³⁹ UNDP (2011), Timor-Leste Human Development Report 2011, Timor-Leste.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Data from 2009-10 DHS survey results.

⁴³ GOTL and MDG Achievement Fund (2009), *Joint Program Promoting Sustainable Food and Nutrition Security in Timor-Leste*, Timor-Leste.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

unbalanced household food distribution and consumption are contributing to food insecurity.⁴⁵ All of these factors are critical for Timorese living conditions or lack of it (poverty).

Infant and young child feeding practices have been strongly influenced by traditional beliefs.⁴⁶ Although breastfeeding is nearly universal in Timor-Leste (97% of children breastfed at some time), only about half of children under age 6 months are exclusively breastfed.⁴⁷ There are high proportions of children 0-5 months receiving food other than breast milk. A pressure to follow those traditional beliefs and communities practices with a lack of knowledge about the importance of breastfeeding, as well as a lack of adequate advice from health workers were identified as the key factors for low exclusive breastfeeding.⁴⁸

Prevalence of infectious diseases, particularly acute respiratory infection, malaria and diarrhea reflects a combination of absences or deficiencies in different aspects. Lack of knowledge on how to prevent diseases by families, communities and health workers, availability and difficult access to health services and essential drugs are some of the key determinants.⁴⁹ Although access to health services has been improved over the last years, there are still evidence showing the need to strengthen a primary health care system that addresses the needs of Timorese people, particularly women and children, and enables them to easily access to information, prevention and treatment. For example, childhood full vaccination coverage remains very low (53% in 2009) although nearly tripled (18% in 2003). Girls are less likely to have full immunization than boys (50.8% for girls and 54.3% for boys in 2009).⁵⁰ Similarly, girls under-five with malaria are less likely than boys to receive medicine before being taken to a health facility, respectively 31.5% and 17.6%.⁵¹

Although the progress, the school system still has a long way to go as the number of children and young people is growing. Improvements in physical infrastructure have been made but access and quality remains a challenge. Data from 2009 shows that the net primary enrollment rate remains low: 83% (82% for girls and 84% for boys).⁵² It also shows that primary school drop-out and repetition rates is high: 39.7% (18.7% for girls and 21.5% for boys) and 10.2% (9.6% for girls and 10.7% for boys).⁵³ The situation changes at the secondary level with more girls remaining in school than boys.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Details can be found at Health Alliance International (HAI) Timor-Leste (2007), Review of traditional beliefs and how it affects pregnancy, birth and postpartum.

⁴⁷ Data from 2009-10 DHS survey results.

⁴⁸ GOTL and MDG Achievement Fund (2009), *Joint Program Promoting Sustainable Food and Nutrition Security in Timor-Leste*, Timor-Leste.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Data from 2009-10 DHS survey results.

⁵¹ Data from the 2007 TLSLS taken from the UNDP (2011), Timor-Leste Human Development Report 2011, Timor-Leste.

⁵² Data from the Annual Statistical yearbook 2010 based on the EMIS 2008-2009. The data from 2010 Census shows a lower net primary enrollment rate: 70.6% (69.9% for girls and 71.3% for boys) while the net pre-secondary is about one third of that and the net secondary enrollment is much lesser than that.

⁵³ Data from the Annual Statistical yearbook 2010 based on the EMIS 2008-2009.

On the other hand, literacy for the 15-to-4 year age group has risen from 72.5% in 2004 to 79.1% in 2010. Men achieve higher levels of literacy than woman, respectively 80.1% and 78.2%.⁵⁴

As outlined below, gender inequalities in each of some main areas such as health, employment, education are a reality in Timor-Leste. This is a result of the prevailing traditional patriarchal values, norms and practices together with a long history of colonization, conflicts and more recently a fragile peace.⁵⁵

Gender-based violence is also an issue that needs to be addressed. A combination of deprivations enables women to be more vulnerable to situations of abuse. Data from 2005 shows 47% of women have suffered physical, psychological or sexual violence at the hands of their partners.⁵⁶ Domestic violence was the most prevalent crime reported in 2009, with 218 of the 283 reported crimes.⁵⁷ Furthermore, women and girls are vulnerable to domestic and international trafficking. Their well-being deprivations may motivate them to accept job offers in country or overseas and, consequently, become victims of trafficking. On the other hand, Timor-Leste has been reported as one of the destinations for sex trafficking of women from other Asian countries.⁵⁸ Although there are some initiatives, the opportunities for women to obtain justice within the legal system have been very limited. Also, there's a lack of sufficient resources to prevent and support the victims.

Besides, women are less likely to participate in political life than men although significant changes have been identified since independence, particularly in terms of promoting gender equality and strengthening the roles of women in decision-making and public life in Timor-Leste. One positive sign is the recently amendment of the parliamentary election law to increase the quota of women on parliamentary candidate lists to a minimum of 1 out of 3 candidates has to be women while before was 1 out of 4. However, women are under-represented in the civil service and most of them assume mid to lower positions.

Additionally, gender mainstreaming in public policies still has a long way to go. Although there has been some progress in terms of developing guidelines and conducting training to staff from key ministries in gender analysis, many other challenges exists such as the one in terms of gender responsive budgeting which will strength the ability of government to make gender-sensitive plans and budgets in an effective way.

Government of Timor-Leste has recently approved the Timor-Leste Strategic Development Plan (TLSDP) for 2011-2030 which set out strategies and actions to allow the transition of Timor-Leste from a low income to upper middle income country with a healthy, well educated and safe population by 2030. It comprises a package of strategic policies which aims to accelerate progress across the multiple sectors

⁵⁴ National Statistics Directorate (NSD) Timor-Leste (2010), Highlights of the 2010 Census Main Results in Timor-Leste, Dili, Timor-Leste: NSD.

⁵⁵ GOTL and MDG Achievement Fund (2008), *Joint Program Supporting Gender Equality and Women's rights in Timor-Leste*, Timor-Leste.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Data from the Vulnerable Persons Unit of the PNTL taken from the UNDP (2011), Timor-Leste Human Development Report 2011, Timor-Leste.

⁵⁸ GOTL and MDG Achievement Fund (2008), *Joint Program Supporting Gender Equality and Women's rights in Timor-Leste*, Timor-Leste.

to improve infrastructures, education, health and other basic needs for the country while also ensuring sources of sustainable economic development.⁵⁹

However, over the last years the Government led a National Priorities Process which was the most relevant Government's socio-economic development planning and programming. A group of national priorities was agreed for each year since the beginning of the process in 2008. Each of the National Priorities is linked to a working group chaired by a Government lead ministry, with support from one or more development partners acting as lead assistants or co-leads. Gender was included in key program areas and civil society organizations are also represented in all National Priorities Working Groups.

This National Priorities Process has improved development partner coordination, particularly in areas such as justice, security, food security, social protection and social services. UNICEF, WHO, UNFPA and UNDP has been co-leading the working group on social services and social protection while WFP and FAO have been co-leading the working group on agriculture and food security.⁶⁰

Several line ministries have started to utilize the National Priorities process for developing their own strategic plans. The current Health Sector Strategic Plan (HSSP) 2008-2012 prioritizes the reduction of malnutrition through improving maternal and child nutrition services as part of a package of basic services which should be implemented through a community based integrated service delivery (SISCA) and health posts. A Nutrition Strategy exists since 2004 and stress, on one hand, maternal and child nutrition, and in another hand, food security, as essential dimensions. Also, it aims service delivery at central and community/family levels. Regarding food security, the 2004 Policy and Strategic Framework established by the Ministry of Agriculture states set out five priorities, including improving food security and raise self-reliance.

Since Timor-Leste gained independence, the Government has moved forward to ensure that gender equality is taken into account in all spheres of life. Gender equality and principles of non-discrimination are guaranteed in the Constitution of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste (Article 17 and 50). This has been reinforced by many other legal instruments such as the Millennium Declaration and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). The Secretary of State for Promotion of Gender Equality (SEPI), which was established in 2008, established certain priorities under the Strategic Plan for 2010-2015 in which it is expected the following national action plans: i) the Law Against Domestic Violence; ii) UN Security Council Resolution 1325 and iii) Anti-Human Trafficking. These are supposed to be developed in partnership with other relevant ministries, civil society and with the support of Development Partners. ILO is providing support to adopt and implement Labour Code Reform and various ILO Conventions. This is also part of the implementation of Timor-Leste Decent Work Country Programme (2008-2013).⁶¹

The goals of the SEPI strategy consist of: i) building internal capacity in gender mainstreaming; ii) advocating for gender responsive policies and laws at national and local levels; iii) making institutions gender responsive through gender mainstreaming in policies, programs, processes and budgets; iv)

⁵⁹ Government of Timor-Leste (2011), *The Timor-Leste Strategic Development Plan*, Timor-Leste.

⁶⁰ GOTL and MDG Achievement Fund (2009), *Joint Program Promoting Sustainable Food and Nutrition Security in Timor-Leste*, Timor-Leste.

⁶¹ SEPI (2010), *Strategic Plan 2010-2015*, Timor-Leste.

raising the level of gender awareness among the stakeholders and the general public in order to drum up public support for gender equality promotion.⁶² Gender focal points in line ministries and districts have been advocating for gender mainstreaming across sectors, namely education, health, agriculture and justice.

Through the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), the UN Agencies, Funds and Programs together have supported the achievement of the MDGs in the context of Timor-Leste's development strategies. UNDAF established three main priority areas: i) Democratisation and Social Cohesion; 2) Poverty Reduction and Sustainable Livelihoods; and iii) Basic Social Services. The third priority includes the issues of maternal, neonatal and child survival seeking to achieve primarily the MDG 4 and 5. At the same time, the first and second priorities give particularly attention to vulnerable groups such as children and women, contributing to achieve the MDG1 and MDG3.

⁶² Ibid.

Annex 2: Overview of the MDG-F Joint Programmes

Program Title	The Joint Programme Promoting Sustainable Food and Nutrition Security			The Joint Programme Supporting Gender Equality and Women's Rights		
Thematic Window	Children, Food Security and Nutrition			Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment		
Total Budget	USD 3,500,000			USD 4,955,000		
Participants/Entities	FAO UNICEF WFP WHO	MAF MoE MoH MSS MCIE	Alola Foundation Pastoral da Criança Timor Global	IOM UN WOMEN UNDP UNFPA UNICEF	SEPI MoE MoF MoFA MoH MoJ MSS	Alola Foundation Fokupers JSMP PRADET Rede Feto
Start Date	13 November 2009			15 December 2008		
End Date	31 March 2013			31 August 2012		
Disbursements						
First	USD 1,741,960 (17 December 2009)			USD 1,733,740 (15 December 2008)		
Second	USD 1,143,432 (13 April 2011)			USD 1,489,230 (16 June 2010)		
Third	USD 614,608 (10 January 2012)			USD 1,732,030 (26 May 2011)		
Expected Outcomes						
Outcome 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved health and nutritional status of pregnant and lactating women and under-five children in 4 selected districts. 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved protection of women and girls through the establishment of legal frameworks and mechanisms to uphold their rights. 		
Outcome 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 20 % more children access and 25% more children complete, free compulsory quality basic education in 4 selected districts. 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduced vulnerability of women and girls through improved outreach mechanisms and services and the establishment of a social protection scheme. 		
Outcome 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Food security and nutrition surveillance systems established and functioning at all sub-districts in 4 districts. 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved social and economic situation of women and girls through a fair allocation of resources using gender-responsive budgeting. 		
UNDAF	Outcome 2; Outcome 3			Outcome 1; Outcome 3		
MDGs	MDG1C; MDG2A			MDG2A; MDG3A		
Beneficiaries						
Direct	Children under 3 years; Children from 2 to 6 years; Children at primary school; Pregnant and lactating women; Women and Men in general; Communities.			Men and Women; National institutions; Local institutions		
Indirect	Health Centers and Health Posts; Food producers; Schools; Local institutions.			Men and Women; National institutions; Local institutions		
Areas of Interventions	Districts of Aileu, Baucau, Manatuto and Oecusse			National level and Districts of Dili, Baucau, Bobonaro, Covalima and Oecusse		

Annex 3: The total number of interviewees or focus groups participants by district

Districts	Interviews/Focus Groups (Number of people)
Oecusse	MSS (3); MoH (1); MAF (3); MoE (1); SEPI (1); Alola Foundation (1);
Covalima	MSS (3); SEPI (1); Alola Foundation (1); VPU (1); Uma Fohan Salele (1)
Manatuto	MAF (2); MoH (2); MoE (1)
Baucau	MAF (2); MSS (3); MoE (1); MoH (2); Alola Foundation (2); VPU (1)

Annex 4: Terms of Reference for the Case Study Evaluation

MDG-F FOCUS COUNTRIES PARTICIPATORY CASE STUDY EVALUATIONS (Timor-Leste) TERMS OF REFERENCE

January 2012

1. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

In December 2006, a major partnership agreement was signed between the United Nations and the Government of Spain in the amount of €528 million with the aim of contributing to progress on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and other development priorities through the United Nations (UN) System. On 24 September, 2008, Spain pledged an additional €90 million towards the launch of a thematic window on Children and Nutrition. The MDG-F supports Joint Programmes that seek replication of successful pilot experiences and impact in shaping public policies to improve people's lives by accelerating progress towards the MDGs and other development priorities globally.

The MDG-F⁶³ operates through the UN teams in each country, promoting increased coherence and effectiveness in development interventions through collaboration among the various UN agencies. The Fund uses a joint programme mode of intervention and has approved 128 Joint Programmes in 49 countries. These programmes, in eight thematic windows, contribute in a variety of ways to the Fund's three pillars of development cooperation -- making progress on achieving the MDGs, implementing the principles of the Paris Declaration, and supporting UN reform.

Moreover, two cross-cutting issues define the Fund's programming in all thematic windows – mitigating inequalities in achievement of the MDGs by targeting socio-economically marginalized groups, and ensuring the needs of women are addressed in all of its programmes, both within set objectives and planned results.

In Timor-Leste, two Joint Programmes are implemented with support from the MDG-F. US\$4.955 million was committed for the Joint Programme on Gender Equality and Women's Rights which is implemented since 2009 by five UN agencies (UN Women, UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA and IOM) and key Government counterparts. The Joint Programme on Food and Nutrition Security in Timor-Leste has been implemented since 2010 by four UN Agencies (UNICEF, WFP, WHO and FAO) in corporation with the Government counterparts, with total budget of US\$3.5 million. In addition, as one of the MDG-F focus countries, Timor-Leste has received additional support from the MDG-F for MDG Advocacy and Communication (\$210,000) and Monitoring and Evaluation (\$300,000). Both of the Joint Programmes and the Focus Country Initiatives will be completed in 2012.

⁶³ <http://mdgfund.org/aboutus>

2. THE MDG-F MONITORING AND EVALUATION STRATEGY

The Fund's Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) strategy is results-oriented and has been designed to provide quality assurance to the Joint Programmes as well as to track and measure the Fund's overall contribution to the MDGs and to multilateral development cooperation. The MDG-F M&E strategy is based on the principles and standards of UNEG and OEDC/DAC with respect to the quality and independence of evaluation. The strategy builds on the information needs and interests of the Fund's different stakeholders while seeking a balance between their accountability and learning purposes.

The strategy's main objectives are:

1. To support the Fund's Joint Programmes in attaining development results
2. To measure the overall impact of the Joint Programmes and the focus country initiatives with respect to the Fund's three main pillars: 1) progress towards achieving the MDGs, 2) implementation of the principles of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, and 3) support to the UN reform process, particularly the "Delivering as One" process
3. To gather best practices and lessons learned from the Joint Programmes in order to replicate and scale up successful development interventions.

Monitoring

Each programme team is responsible for designing an M&E system for the joint programme, providing quantitative and qualitative indicators for each result, along with baselines, targets, means of verification, collection methods, and hypotheses. These frameworks are updated by the team on a biannual basis. Programme teams also submit biannual monitoring reports to the MDG-F Secretariat, detailing progress made against planned results and status of budget expenditure. Furthermore, portfolio managers from the Secretariat carry out monitoring missions to the Joint Programmes, providing strategic guidance on management and implementation issues.

Evaluation

As stipulated in the MDG-F M&E strategy, each joint programme also receives a mid-term and a final evaluation. The mid-term evaluations are commissioned by the MDG-F Secretariat and are aimed at improving the Joint Programmes in the second half of their implementation period. The final evaluations are commissioned by the programme teams with the objective of capturing the results of the programme and drawing key lessons and recommendations for development cooperation beyond the lifespan of the MDG-F. In Timor-Leste, the Mid-term Evaluation was conducted for the Joint Programme on Gender and Women's Empowerment in 2010, and for the Joint Programme on Food and Nutrition Security in 2011.

Additionally, the Fund's M&E strategy sets out meta-evaluations of each of its eight thematic windows, to be carried out in 2012-2013. Lastly, a global evaluation of the Fund as a whole is to be undertaken in 2013 to assess its overall contribution to development cooperation and the MDGs from its establishment in 2006 to its completion.

3. MDG-F FOCUS COUNTRIES

Nine countries were selected in 2009 to receive additional financial support for the implementation of Communication and Advocacy (C&A) and M&E strategies at national level. The rationale behind allocating this support is to stimulate creative and innovative interventions related to both C&A and M&E that can be highlighted as exemplary cases of collective action and impact on poverty and the MDGs. These cases will be brought to the forefront of the Fund's work around the world, shared with senior levels of government and amongst other participating countries with the intention of inspiring further action. Each country has elaborated national MDG C&A and M&E plans that are being implemented over a three-year period, from 2009 to 2012.

The nine countries selected are Bosnia & Herzegovina, Colombia, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Honduras, Mauritania, Morocco, Philippines, and Timor-Leste. These countries represent a range of regions in which the Fund is active as well as distinct geographic, political, and social features, such as post-crisis contexts, large indigenous populations, or densely populated land area.

4. THE PARTICIPATORY CASE STUDY EVALUATION: PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

The concept of the participatory case study evaluation (from this point forward, referred to as *case study evaluation*) for focus countries was developed by the MDG-F Secretariat as a way of supporting the countries to assess the cumulative development impact of the Fund's work at national level through the results of its Joint Programmes and to strengthen their own evaluation capacities. The Fund's M&E Strategy stipulates that each focus country is to carry out a participatory case study evaluation during the third (final) year of implementation. The findings, conclusions and recommendations of these evaluations will feed into the Fund's final meta-evaluation of the overall impact of its 128 Joint Programmes worldwide.

Rather than having a summative or formative function, the case study evaluations are *knowledge-generating*, meaning that the evaluation seeks to influence thinking and, indirectly, action on specific issues through the insights generated in the analysis.⁶⁴

Case study evaluations' **main goals** are to:

- a) Assess the Fund's contribution, at national level, to the achievement of the MDGs, the principles of the Paris Declaration, and the UN reform initiative to "Deliver as One" through an in-depth, *explanatory* analysis of cause and effect⁶⁵.
- b) To inform future joint programming for development through the identification of best practices and lessons learned from the experiences of the Fund.
- c) To connect local level programme interventions with national level policy-making processes by highlighting successful pilot initiatives with potential for replication and scale-up
- d) Strengthen evaluation capacity that is gender sensitive among UN partners and national counterparts, particularly through the incorporation of participatory mechanisms, and the development of innovative evaluation tools.

⁶⁴ Quinn Patton, M., 1997. "Utilization-focused Evaluation: The New Century Text," 3rd Edition, Sage Publications.

⁶⁵ Kin, Robert K., 2003. "Case Study Research: Design and Methods." Third Edition, Applied Social Research Methods Series, Volume 5, Sage Publications.

The **specific objectives** of the case study evaluations are as follows:

- a) Taking account of the stated objectives and planned outcomes of the MDG-F Joint Programmes in each country, assess their contribution on achieving the MDGs at national level.
- b) To examine whether the Fund's Joint Programmes in each country have been implemented in line with the principles of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness – particularly those of alignment and national ownership.
- c) To assess whether the Fund has effectively supported the “Delivering As One” UN reform initiative through the inter-agency design and implementation mechanisms of its Joint Programmes
- d) To consider the Fund's contribution to achieving other national development objectives as set out in the country's national development plans and international agreements.
- e) To identify good practices from the MDG-F experience to inform future development programming, ensuring alignment and national ownership, and effectively coordinating joint implementation.
- f) To link MDG-F programme interventions at the local level with policy-making at the national level through an explanatory analysis of the funds achievements and contribution -- not only the identification, but also the explanation of “how” and “why” certain drivers and conditions led to specific outcomes.
- g) To increase the involvement of UN, government, and civil society partners in the evaluation process so as to give citizens a voice and influence on policy-making.
- h) To develop innovative evaluation methods and products with gender sensitivity that can be appropriated by MDG-F partners and transferred to future development programming.
- i) To ensure the sustainability of the Fund's impacts at country level through an action plan for continuation, replication, or scale-up of its programme interventions.

5. SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

The **unit of analysis** is one of the key factors distinguishing the case study evaluation from programme mid-term and final evaluations. The case study evaluation unit of analysis is the combined work of the MDG-F in the country, assessed through the aggregate contributions of each of its individual Joint Programmes. In Timor-Leste, the unit of analysis therefore includes the two Joint Programmes focusing on Gender Equality and Women's Rights and on Nutrition and Food Security as well as the two Focus Country Initiatives on Communications and Advocacy and on Monitoring and Evaluation. Beyond examining the activities, outputs, and outcomes of each joint programme and focus country initiatives, the evaluation considers the overall impacts of the Joint Programmes and initiatives cumulatively at the national level, in relation to the Fund's core pillars of development cooperation – achievement of the MDGs, the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, and support to the UN Reform process. Through an *explanatory* analysis (see Section 3 above), the evaluation assesses not just the joint programme results, but also of its implementation processes. Moreover, the respective socio-economic and political context plays a particularly important role in the analysis, and joint programme impacts are to be assessed taking these factors into account, using *theory of change* and *system analysis*.

The **time frame** to be studied in the case study evaluation corresponds to the periods of design and implementation of all of the Joint Programmes and initiatives in the country -- from the start of the first joint programme to the completion of the last. The start and end dates differ between the Joint Programmes in each country given the varying proposal submission dates and programme time-frames (including extensions granted in some cases). The Fund recognizes the potential limitations posed by the inconsistency across time-frames being examined, as not all programmes will have reached completion at the time of the evaluation. However, the Fund recommends the evaluation begin before completion of the first joint programme, at which point significant results should also already have been achieved in the ones that started thereafter.

Programme stakeholders are involved in the design, data collection and assessment process of the evaluation, including UN partners, national counterparts, and representatives of civil society and programme beneficiaries. Through this approach, the evaluation process builds capacity of MDG-F stakeholders in evaluation methodology and reflects their assessment of the Fund's impacts, thereby giving them ownership over the evaluation conclusions and recommendations. The evaluation is also aimed at empowering vulnerable groups targeted by the Joint Programmes by giving them a voice in the assessment process and thereby strengthening their influence on decision-making at the national level.

The **target audience and principal users** of the case study evaluation include UN agencies active in the country, government counterparts at national and local level, beneficiary communities of the programmes, as well as broader civil society.

6. LEVELS OF ANALYSIS, CRITERIA, AND EVALUATION QUESTIONS

The evaluation questions focus the analysis and define the line of inquiry of the case study evaluation. They are categorized by each of the programme phases (design, process, and results), as well as its five main criteria (relevance, efficiency, impact, effectiveness, and sustainability). The questions are oriented towards assessing the Fund's overall contribution in terms of its core pillars of development cooperation – achievement of the MDGs, the principles of the Paris Declaration, and UN Reform. Moreover, the questions also address the two cross-cutting issues of the Fund's work, including focusing support on marginalized groups and gender mainstreaming across its programmes.

The questions are aimed at assessing the *joint contribution of all MDG-F Joint Programmes in the focus country* rather than of each programme individually. In keeping with the explanatory function of the evaluation, the responses to these questions should explain "to what extent," "how," and "why" an effect was achieved.

Design Level: Relevance

The evaluation questions related to the design phase of the Joint Programmes examine whether the inception process of the programme as well as its formulated objectives were consistent with the three pillars of the Fund.

- a) Were the programme's goals and objectives relevant to the socio-economic context of the country and its main development challenges? Were they in line with the country's stated national development priorities?

- b) Were the goals and objectives clearly linked to one or more of the MDGs and their sub-targets?
- c) Were the goals and objectives aligned with the UNDAF in the country?
- d) Were national counterparts actively involved in the inception and design process of the programme so as to enable national ownership in the implementation stage?
- e) Were all participating UN agencies brought into the programme design, taking their respective value added into account? Did this process help strengthen UN agencies' ability to set common goals, design, and plan programme implementation jointly?
- f) Did the objectives set out for the Joint Programmes attempt to address inequalities among the population in achievement of the MDGs? Did the programme target socio-economically marginalized groups who lack access to the necessary resources and rights to achieve development objectives?
- g) Were the needs and rights of women taken into account in the inception and planning of the programmes?

Process Level: Efficiency

The assessment of the process phase of the programmes looks at implementation - the way in which resources and inputs (funds, time, human resources, etc.) were applied towards the achievement of results. It ultimately seeks to determine whether the implementation mechanisms chosen were the most appropriate for the nature of the programme.

- a) Was the governance structure of the Fund at programme level (PMC) and national level (NSC) conducive to efficient implementation of the programme, in keeping with the main pillars of the Fund? Did it enable effective achievement of results?
- b) Were the allocation/selection criteria at the country level properly defined? How systematic and clear were the Fund's guidance provided regarding content and process? How useful? If there are programme design issues, do they originate from guidance / instruction of the MDG Secretariat or in implementation at country level?
- c) To what extent were the Joint Programmes in the country implemented and monitored jointly by participating UN agencies?
- d) To what extent were the national counterparts involved in the implementation and monitoring of the programme?
- e) Did the joint programme's management model (use of resources, organizational structures, information flows) and implementation methods enable UN partners to "Deliver as One" and actively involve national counterparts?
- f) What type of financial, administrative and managerial challenges did the joint programme face in implementing the programme in accordance with national ownership and joint programming? What actions were taken to address these challenges?
- g) According to the experiences of the programmes in the country, did *joint* implementation lead to more *efficient* implementation than could have been achieved by a single agency, including the transaction cost and time management? Was joint programming the appropriate implementation approach for these programmes?

- h) Was the participation of women promoted in the implementation of the programmes of the Fund? Was the participation of women and men equal?

Results level: Impact

The impact level will focus on the contribution of the JP to the attainment of the the MDGs with equity and to strengthen the principles of the Paris Declaration and UN reform.

- a) Did the Joint Programmes contribute to the achievement of the MDGs at the local and national levels? Which goals did they contribute to, and which specific sub-targets? In what ways did the programmes contribute most – in the formulation of national policy-making, or in local-level impacts in targeted communities?
- b) Did the Fund’s programmes succeed in achieving results at the impact level among vulnerable or marginalized groups (by race, ethnicity, gender, economic class, or geographic location)? Was the Fund able to address socio-economic gaps at a regional or local level by targeting low-income beneficiaries? Did the Fund support beneficiaries in identifying and claiming their rights?
- c) Was the Fund successful in ensuring equal benefit of its programme outcomes among women and men?
- d) Whether these results visibly helped strengthen the principles of the Paris Declaration and UN reform?

Results Level: Effectiveness

The analysis of programme effectiveness considers not only whether the planned results of the joint programme were achieved. It also includes eventual unexpected results.

- a) To what extent did the Joint Programmes achieve results at the various levels of the results chain in line with the goals and objectives defined within their respective thematic windows?
- b) To what extent has the MDG-F fostered national ownership in the programme outcomes (such as through the formulation of national development plans, public policies, etc)?
- c) Do the Joint Programmes show the added value of joint programming and “Delivering as One” in their overall results at the national level?
- d) To what extent did beneficiary communities (both women and men) take an active role in the achievement of programme results? What modes of organization and leadership drove this process? Is there a visible effect of participation in terms of programme results and the Fund’s overall impact in the country?
- e) Is there evidence of unexpected results achieved? Did the programme teams effectively use C&A strategies to publicize the programmes’ impacts and outcomes and to promote greater citizen engagement and dialogue on the MDGs and other development issues?

Sustainability

Lastly, the case study evaluation seeks to determine whether the Joint Programmes of the Fund are likely to lead to sustainability and to lasting impact on the achievement of the MDGs, development cooperation more broadly, and on coordinated UN programming at country level.

- a) Are there evidences that the MDG-F design and implementation is on the right track so as to bring about measurable impact at the MDGs level?
- b) Have the joint programme implementing partners taken necessary steps to ensure continuing impact of programme results on the achievement of the MDGs? What mechanisms have been used to do this (final reports, management responses to the joint programme final evaluations, closing workshops)?
- c) Have clear links been made between the programmes' outcomes and impact and national development strategies aimed at achieving the MDGs?
- d) Have implementing partners developed a strategy to incorporate lessons learned from MDG-F joint programming to ongoing efforts in "Delivering as One"?
- e) To what extent did national and/or local institutions support the Fund's Joint Programmes as well as its general vision and approach to development programming? Have the Fund's programmes helped strengthen their overall capacity? Are they committed to continuing certain programme activities?
- f) Do MDG-F implementing partners, including UN agencies and national institutions, have sufficient financial resources to continue programme activities if planned?
- g) Are there indications of planned replication or scale-up of joint programme interventions, and how will this contribute to progress on MDG achievement?
- h) Are there good practices in terms of development and MDG-related programming?
- i) Are there strategies and mechanisms in place for the continuation or phasing out of the joint programme initiatives including their integration in national development processes?

7. METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

Methodological Principles

The evaluation will follow the methodological approach of a case study. An appropriate combination of quantitative and qualitative methods with gender sensitivity is expected in order to ensure that the various dimensions of the evaluation will be appropriately addressed. Quantitative methods will include necessary surveys at community level; and qualitative methods will include among others, interviews with key informants, focus groups and, to the extent of possible, testimonies.

Preparation

The appropriate time to begin the evaluation process is one year before completion of the focus country M&E plan in each country. The evaluation questions presented in these generic *Terms of Reference (TORs)* have been revised to the specific context of the Timor-Leste.

Inception and Methodology

The inception phase, firstly, consists of a *literature review* based on programme documents, results and M&E frameworks, monitoring reports, mid-term and final evaluations, as well as other relevant information sources.

The literature review is followed the development of the full *evaluation methodology building on the methodological principles stated above*. A key defining feature of the latter is the active engagement of a wide range of programme stakeholders and beneficiaries in the evaluation process. The Evaluation

Reference Group (ERG), for example, which reviews the inception report and the draft evaluation, includes representatives from relevant civil society organizations who are beneficiaries of the programme. However, stakeholders should go beyond the ERG; beneficiaries should also be brought into the inception, data collection, and dissemination phases of the evaluation to voice their opinions and provide input based on their experiences with the Fund's work. As in the ERG, citizens should be represented by leaders of organizations, associations, and beneficiary communities. An example of an innovative approach developed to date is the planned organization of national conferences during the evaluation dissemination process as a means of engaging stakeholders (Bosnia and Herzegovina).

The evaluation team also elaborates the *tools and products* to be used in presenting the final evaluation. The evaluation presents an opportunity for the team to apply creative and innovative approaches to the design, data collection, and final product of the evaluation, building upon or even challenging the methodological principles previously outlined. One example of an interesting tool to be developed for the case study evaluation is an audio-visual instrument which will complement the evaluation report and be used to more easily disseminate its findings (Colombia). Ultimately, the specific tools and products of the case study evaluation will be determined by the evaluation team, according to the nature of the Joint Programmes in Timor-Leste, the social and political context, and the resources available.

The literature review, methodology, and definition of the evaluation tools all feed into the evaluation *inception report*.

Data Collection

For the data collection process, and as mentioned before, the evaluation team combines *quantitative and qualitative research tools*, including, for example, national and local level statistics and survey data on the one hand, and interviews, questionnaires, focus groups, workshops on the other.

Report Writing, Revision, and Finalization

The report writing phase includes a rigorous *quality assurance process*. After internal revision of the first draft of the evaluation report by the evaluation team, it is submitted to the ERG and the Advisory Panel for review. After the second revision by the evaluation team, the Evaluation Commissioner and Advisory Panel approve the finalized report for official submission. The report is disseminated along with a communication plan for the purpose of raising awareness and engagement among the wider public, both in the recipient as well as the donor countries.

8. DELIVERABLES

Inception Report

The inception report is 20 to 30 pages in length. It introduces the national context and development priorities of the country, summarizes the MDG-F Joint Programmes, defines the scope and objectives of the evaluation, and presents the evaluation questions and sub-questions. The report also defines the hypotheses, the data collection protocol, and the methods of analysis (with the incorporation of a participatory approach) of the evaluation. A detailed work plan should also be an integral part of the inception report. Furthermore, the report serves as a statement of consent between the evaluation

team, the ERG, and the Advisory Panel on the overall line of inquiry and work plan for the evaluation. The inception report is shared with the ERG and Advisory Panel for review, and subsequently finalized by the evaluation team.

Draft Evaluation Report

The draft evaluation report is 50 to 60 pages in length, including an executive summary of 5 to 7 pages. The report presents the scope, objectives and methods of the evaluation, the main findings based on the data collection process, conclusions reached, and proposes key recommendations to maximize the knowledge gained from the experience of the MDG-F in the country for future joint development programming. The report is first circulated internally within the evaluation team for an initial quality check. The second draft is then shared with the ERG and the Advisory Panel for a formal review and comments.

Final Evaluation Report

The final evaluation report is submitted to the Evaluation Commissioner and the Advisory Panel for a final approval before official submission. The report is then published and disseminated to all stakeholders, MDG-F partners, and to the wider public in- and outside of the focus country.

9. ROLES AND RESPONSABILITIES IN THE EVALUATION PROCESS

a) The Commissioner of the Evaluation

Resident Coordinator's Office (RCO)

- Leads the evaluation team throughout the main phases of the evaluation; safeguards the independence of the evaluation process
- Selects and recruits the evaluation team
- Ensures the evaluation products meet quality standards (in collaboration with the Advisory Panel)
- Provides administrative support to the evaluation task manager and the rest of the evaluation team throughout the evaluation process
- Takes responsibility for the publishing and distribution of the evaluation report and of the management response.

b) The Evaluation Team

The Task Manager and Lead Author (located within the RCO)

- Leads the adaptation of the evaluation TOR (within the RCO).
- Adapts the work plan in accordance with local conditions and events, such as the upcoming parliamentary and presidential elections, as required.
- Provides overall management of the evaluation and its budget, general oversight, and strategic guidance in the evaluation process.
- Oversees and supervises a national consultant to be recruited to support the evaluation implementation.

- Provides coordination and management within the evaluation team.
- Guides the conceptualization of the evaluation and provides overall intellectual leadership.
- Coordinates communication and information flow between the Evaluation Commissioner, the Evaluation Reference Group, and the Advisory Panel and convenes meetings.
- Acts as focal point of the evaluation to participating UN agencies, national counterparts, NGOs and other partners for the exchange of information and data collection.
- Leads the evaluation drafting process, serving as principal writer of the inception and evaluation reports, and ensures overall analytical cohesion.
- Provides internal quality assurance and leads the revision of the evaluation reports.
- Manages the quality assurance process of the evaluation, including coordination with the ERG and the Advisory Panel.
- Manages the editing, publishing, and dissemination of the evaluation report and coordinates the planned communication activities.
- Manages the evaluation follow-up process (through the RCO), including the development of an action plan by evaluation stakeholders.
- Presents the findings and conclusions of the report to evaluation stakeholders and the wider public.

Evaluation Assistant (External or located within the RCO)

- Supports the Task Manager in the overall management of the evaluation, implementation of the work plan and drafting of the evaluation report.
- Organizes field visits, workshops, meetings and other events related to the evaluation.
- Collects relevant quantitative and qualitative data, conducts portfolio analyses, and produces statistical charts and tables for the evaluation report.
- Conducts background research, assist in document review and develops an annotated reference list.
- Maintains an internal documentation system and manages information flows within the evaluation team
- Writes inception and evaluation report annexes and drafts sections in evaluation report as required.
- Provides translation and interpretation services as required.

c) **The Evaluation Reference Group (ERG)**

Representatives of the National Steering Committee (NSC), Programme Management Committees (PMCs), government counterparts, UN Joint Programme Implementing Agencies, and civil society organizations (Should not exceed 20 people in total)

- Adapts the TOR for the evaluation
- Assists in identifying information needs and providing documentation to evaluation team
- Provides overall strategic guidance to the evaluation team and advisory support in defining the scope, objectives, and methodology
- Reviews and provides detailed feedback on draft inception, preliminary findings and draft evaluation reports

- Develop management response based on the evaluation key recommendations.

d) **Advisory Panel**

The Evaluation Advisor, Evaluation Specialist (MDG-F Secretariat), Evaluation Advisor (UNEG)

- Provides overall strategic guidance to the evaluation team and advisory support in defining the scope, objectives, and methodology
- Reviews and provides detailed feedback on draft inception and evaluation reports
- Ensures quality standards data collection, analysis, and final deliverables

10. EVALUATION PROCESS: TIMELINE AND ACTIVITIES

This timeline includes the main phases and key activities of the case study evaluation process – the entire process of the evaluation will take 11 months. Time frames indicated may overlap and are approximate only; they should be determined independently by the evaluation team. The team is responsible for developing a more comprehensive and detailed work plan as part of the inception report, adapted to their specific methodology and resources.

Table 1: Evaluation Timeline

Evaluation Phase	Activity	Actor	Approximate Time-Frame
Preparation, Inception, and Methodology	Recruitment of team	EC	1 months
	Document review	ET	1 month
	Inception report submission and review	ET, ERG, AP	1 month
Data Collection	Interviews, focus groups, surveys, etc	ET	2 months
	Data analysis	ET	1 month
Report Writing	Submission of zero draft	ET	1 month
	Internal review and revision	ET	1 month
	ERG and AP review of draft	ERG, AP	1 month
Revision and Finalization	Revision, approval, and submission of final report	ET, AP, EC	1month
	Editing and printing	ET, EC	1 month
	Dissemination and communication	EC	1 month

Advisory Panel (AP)

Evaluation Commissioner (EC)

Evaluation Reference Group (ERG)

Evaluation Team (ET)

11. UTILITY OF THE EVALUATION AND FOLLOW-UP

The case study evaluation serves, first and foremost, as a conclusive assessment of the overall contribution of the Fund in the focus countries in relation to its core pillars of aiding progress towards the MDGs, applying the principles of the Paris Declaration, and supporting UN reform, since the begin of

implementation of its Joint Programmes. However, the utility of the evaluation extends far beyond this purpose, and it is ultimately more forward-looking than retrospective.

First, it is up to MDG-F programme partners, including the various participating UN agencies, national counterparts, and civil society, as follow-up to the evaluations, to determine whether and how any programme components are to be appropriated and extended after programmes completion, and how to ensure the sustainability of other programme results in the medium- and long-term. This is already required as follow-up to the final evaluations of the Joint Programmes, but in the case of the case study evaluations requires a broader perspective encompassing the combined result areas of all of the Joint Programmes in the country. Within this framework, partners should also propose plans for potential replication or scale-up of programme interventions. In addition, the evaluation process should also serve to highlight good practices and lessons learned from the Joint Programmes which can be applied to development interventions beyond the lifespan of the MDG-F.

Finally, key to ensuring the utility of the evaluation is to effectively disseminate and communicate its main findings to development partners and the wider public. It is hoped that the evaluation process and conclusions will ultimately generate momentum and stimulate dialogue that will help define future development priorities in the country and shape joint programming for MDG achievement. For this purpose, a management response of the key evaluation recommendations will be developed as the last step of the evaluation.

Table 2: Management Response Template

Key recommendations	Planned Actions	Responsible Partner	Implementation Time-frame	Comments
Recommendation 1				
Recommendation 2				
Recommendation 3				
....				
Actions for the following issues in case it is not included in the evaluation recommendations:				
1. Communication and dissemination of evaluation findings				
2. Consolidation of best practices and lessons learned based on evaluation report				
3. Possible continuation of select programme components after JP completion				
4. Actions to ensure sustainability of programmes' results and impacts				
5. Plans for replication or scale-up of programme interventions				

12. 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.

Annex 5: Activities considered under the MDG-F M&E and Advocacy and Partnerships Initiatives

MDG-F Advocacy and Partnerships Initiatives

- Production and/or distribution of advocacy awareness materials such as brochures, newsletters, human interest stories, TV and radio spots.
- Organisation of sessions and/or discussions on MDGs.
- Support to the UN Communications Group, as a platform for joint communication, advocacy and mobilization.
- Work with civil society in organising events and producing any materials on the MDGs advocacy and communication.
- Organize dialogue sessions and briefings with local leaders at sub-national level.
- Identify and write case studies on MDGs related issues.

MDG-F M&E Initiatives

- Joint monitoring visits of the Joint Programme on Food Security and Nutrition
- Mid-term evaluation of the Joint Programmes
- Final evaluations of the Joint Programmes
- Development and of a M&E national training package (Delivered to Ministry of Social Solidarity, Secretary of State for the Promotion of Equality and Ministry of Health)
- DevInfo training
- Timor-Leste Census Info development and dissemination