



MAKING
Joint Gender
Programmes
WORK



**Guide for design, implementation,
monitoring and evaluation**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This publication has been developed by the UNDP BDP Gender Team, as convener of the Knowledge Management Initiative for the MDG-F Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Window, in partnership with the Gender Practice Area of UNDP Regional Service Centre in Panama (RSC-LAC), and the MDG Achievement Fund Secretariat, under the coordination of Raquel Lagunas, Policy Advisor of the UNDP BDP Gender Team.

The partners would like to thank international consultants Tony Beck (lead author of the Guide) and Gayle Lee Nelson for their commitment and expertise. The team that conceptualized and contributed to produce this publication included: Lucio Severo, Ivonne Urriola, Kirsten Peirens, Benjamin Kumpf of UNDP, in collaboration with Paloma Duran, Regina Gallego and Patricia Fernandez-Pacheco of the MDG-F Secretariat.

The UNDP Gender Team and the Gender Practice Area of the UNDP RSC-LAC would further like to express their warm gratitude to all the colleagues who participated in the consultation phase and at a workshop held in Panama to validate the Guide. Their contributions and experiences improved the quality and user-friendliness of the Guide: Shelly Abdool, Maria Acosta, Christine Arab, Ingrid Arno, Pervez Assan, Andrea Balzano, Liudmila Barcari, Neus Bernabeu, Marianne Berner, Jennifer Cooper, Upala Devi, Flor Diaz, Luis Fujiwara, Janneke Kukler, Berhanu Legesse, Jonna Lundwall, Diana Ofwona, Adriana Quinones, Siham Rashid, Shravanti Reddy, Michele Ribotta, Ana Luisa Rivas, Isabel Suarez and Yuki Suehiro.

Concept and Design: [Green Communication Design inc](#)

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FOREWORD

While gender equality is a human development goal in its own right, it is also crucial to the achievement of all other development goals. Supporting national capacity development for advancing gender equality and the empowerment of women is central to the UN system's development work towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and other internationally agreed goals. From 2009 to the present, the Millennium Development Goals Achievement Fund (MDG-F) made investments for this purpose, allocating US\$90 million to support thirteen joint country programmes that focused on gender equality and the empowerment of women (MDG-3).

The experience of the MDG Fund makes it clear that, by consolidating funding and technical assistance for gender equality and women's empowerment, joint programmes in these areas foster innovation and secure impact. By facilitating holistic responses to the complex institutional, social and cultural dynamics perpetuating gender inequality, joint gender programmes have helped transform gender relations by changing institutions, legislation, policies, behaviors, attitudes and social norms.

We hope that the publication of this Guide will help the UN system, including UN Country Teams, Gender Theme Groups, UN entities and national stakeholders to improve the development, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation of joint gender programmes. In this Guide we have compiled best practices and lessons learned from recent experiences in this area of programming to support the UN system in addressing gender equality challenges.

The Millennium Development Goals envision a world where all women and men have equal access to the opportunities and resources, freedoms and choices to forge their own life aspirations and destinies. By leveraging the UN's system-wide experience and expertise, this Guide should help renew and strengthen commitment for coordination, advocacy and action on gender equality and women's empowerment.

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INTRODUCTION



1.1 Background, purpose and users

First, here are important details about the role of the UN to contextualize what you will find in this Guide. The UN has an intergovernmental mandate to promote gender equality and women's empowerment as an area of human rights. This is based on international agreements on gender equality and women's empowerment in the [Convention of the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women \(CEDAW\)](#) and the [Beijing Platform for Action](#). These agreements provide the mandates and overall frameworks within which all of the UN's work, including Joint Gender Programmes (JGPs), operates. JGPs are the intersection of joint programmes and programmes that promote gender equality and/or women's empowerment.¹

The overall goal of JGPs should therefore be to support gender equality and women's empowerment. The implications of JGPs for the UN's mandate on gender equality are that achieving greater equality between women and men will require changes at many levels, including: changes in attitudes and relationships; changes in institutions and legal frameworks; changes in economic institutions; and changes in political decision-making structures.

This Guide sets out how to improve the design, implementation and monitoring and evaluation of JGPs. It will also support you in addressing some of the less tangible areas that are often constraints to JGP success, such as power dynamics and the need for coordination, negotiation, leadership, and accountability. It also provides you with a wide range of examples from JGPs that have achieved positive results.

i **HERE IS SOME
BACKGROUND INFORMATION
ABOUT HOW THE GUIDE
WAS DEVELOPED.**

As convener of the MDG-F Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Window, the UNDP Gender Team coordinates

the MDG-F Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Knowledge Management Initiative. The Knowledge Management Initiative completed a portfolio analysis of the MDG-F Gender Window. Highlighting the value added of JGPs² and building on findings from the analysis, UNDP has produced this Guide to support you in making your JGP work. Development of the Guide included a desk review summarized in an Inception Report, which set out the work plan and broad outlines for the JGP process. The review focused in particular on the portfolio analysis, MDG-F publications, UNDG reviews, and the interim findings of the Joint JGPs Evaluation³ (see Annex 1 for references). This was followed by interviews with 20 current and past JGP Coordinators, MDG-F staff, the UN Development Operations Coordination Office (UN DOCO), the UN Women Evaluation Office and Coordination Unit. The development and dissemination of the Guide has also been integrated in the workplan of the UNDG Task Team on Gender Equality. A first draft of the Guide was validated at a workshop in Panama in early June 2013, attended by past and present JGP coordinators, UN Regional Offices, and HQ staff from UN Women, UNDP, MDG-F and UNFPA. Comments received during the workshop were incorporated into a final draft that was again circulated for input before finalization.



YOU MIGHT ASK – HOW IS THE GUIDE RELEVANT TO THE CONTEXT I AM WORKING IN?

Country contexts vary widely, as do the nature and scale of JGPs, and we have tried to develop a Guide that is applicable to a wide range of contexts, in particular by drawing on many country examples, as well as larger and smaller JGPs. But please be aware that a short guide such as this cannot take into account all of the specifics of programming nor the different management and coordination structures under which JGPs function. Another point to note is that, while this is a guide to JGPs, some of the information is relevant to all other types of joint programmes. The reason for this is that there are generic issues that all joint programmes face, such as those related to management, design and coordination. However, we have done our best to bring out specific gender equality and women's empowerment elements throughout the Guide.



WHY DID WE DECIDE TO PRODUCE A JGP GUIDE NOW?

Good question, glad you asked!

There are several important reasons:

- **The scale of funding and reach of JGPs.** From 2006 to 2010, funding for JGPs was US\$274 million. Twenty-four UN entities participated in at least one JGP, with UNFPA, UNDP, UNIFEM (now part of UN Women), and UNICEF participating in over 60 JGPs each.
- **No systematic inter-agency guidance on JGPs exists;** however, there is now enough knowledge of what works with JGPs, so it is now time to consolidate this knowledge into practical guidance.⁴
- **JGPs can be significantly strengthened.** A number of reviews dating back to 2001 have shown that JGPs are not always fulfilling their potential.
- **Requests from UN Country Teams (UNCTs), Gender Theme Groups and JGP coordinators for additional support.**



YOU PROBABLY NOW WANT TO KNOW WHO SHOULD USE THE GUIDE.

OK, we'll tell you.

Gender mainstreaming is the responsibility of all UN staff, but levels of engagement differ. We see the main users and uses of the Guide as:

- **Gender Theme Groups.** The whole Guide will be relevant for these theme groups, which are usually the main drivers behind JGPs.
- **Other inter-agency theme groups.** As there is some generic guidance on joint programmes here, other inter-agency theme groups will find Sections 2 and 3 of interest and they can also use the Guide to make their programmes more gender-responsive.
- **Resident Coordinators** may find Section 1.2 on the importance of JGPs and Section 3.3 on

- **National Women's Machinery** (NWM) and **civil society organizations** (CSOs) involved in JGPs, who may find the whole Guide useful.
- **Ministries of Planning and Finance and other sectoral ministries,** who should find Section 1.2 on the importance of JGPs noteworthy.
- **UN Regional Office staff** responsible for input into JGPs, who can use the Guide to support country-level staff.

1.2 The importance and value of Joint Gender Programmes

Given our experience so far, we now know a lot about why JGPs are important and what they can achieve. Here's a summary from recent analyses (see Annex 1 for sources), which we hope you will find useful in understanding the overall results of JGPs so far and in explaining the advantages of JGPs:

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