

Joint Evaluation on Joint UN Programmes in Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

Draft Concept Note

Context

The increased focus on joint programming and the recent creation of UN Women, as well as the 10th anniversary of the Millennium Summit, linked to the celebration of Beijing Platform for Action +15, confirm the need to critically assess the conditions and results deriving from UN joint programming to generate evaluative evidence on what works best to advance gender equality.

The commitment of UN Women to evaluate joint programmes in the area of gender equality and women's empowerment emanates from UN Women's mandate to lead and coordinate the overall efforts of the UN system to support the full realization of women's rights and opportunities. Together with the UN Development Group (UNDG), UN Women is preparing a system-wide coordination strategy on gender equality in the first half of 2011, to promote greater coherence in line with existing agencies' mandates and priorities.¹ This is further reinforced by UN Women's principles of leading and promoting coherence in UN system work on gender equality;² and acting as a global broker of knowledge and experience, aligning practice with normative guidance.

Joint evaluations are defined as evaluations that are managed in partnership with other organizations³. These evaluations represent many potential benefits: they enable agencies to learn from each other and to share different evaluation techniques and approaches; they should allow participation of developing country institutions and facilitate alignment with national needs and ownership of the findings; they may increase the objectivity, transparency and independency of the evaluation process and make the follow up on recommendations more likely; they can address broader evaluation questions and limit the number of messages and foster consensus on upcoming priorities and, of course, when conducting joint evaluations transaction costs should clearly be reduced.

Preparation of Evaluation

In 2010, the UN Women Evaluation Office conducted a scan of JGPs to identify the universe of programmes where former UNIFEM had participated. The results of the scan were presented to the agencies identified as the main UN partners of UN Women in the implementation of JGPs. These include: UNDP, UNICEF and UNFPA and the MDG-Fund. The three agencies and the

¹ UN Women: Vision and 100-Day Action Plan: A Summary Briefing.

² Michelle Bachelet, "Statement to the First Regular Session of the Executive Board, United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women", January 24, 2011.

³ United Nations General Assembly Resolution 62/208, "Triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system", 2008

MDG-Fund confirmed their interest on partnering with UN Women in the joint evaluation of JGPs.

In 2011, the UN Women Evaluation Office conducted a portfolio analysis studying all JGPs implemented by UN agencies. The report includes an analytical overview of the policy environment that underpins the rationale for the future joint evaluation, and a quantitative and qualitative analysis of the JGPs looking at the key issues, concerns and information needs that are associated with these programmes. It also discusses the scope, evaluability and methodological approach options for the future joint evaluation. The portfolio analysis report provides the elements for the future terms of reference of the Joint evaluation of JGPs.

The results of the portfolio analysis are being presented to the UNDG Gender Task Team, UN Women staff and the Joint Evaluation Reference group (composed of UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA and the MDG-Fund) to gather comments for drafting the Joint evaluation of JGPs terms of reference and define the roles of the different agencies in the process and management of the joint evaluation.

Apart from the UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA and the MDG-Fund, some bilateral contributing countries have expressed interest in participating in the joint evaluation of JGPs. Discussions are underway to consolidate the management structure of the joint evaluation.

The preliminary general objectives of the joint evaluation of joint gender programmes (JGPs) in the UN are stated below. However, these objectives are being revised based on the results of the portfolio analysis of JGPs recently finalized.

1. Assess the relevance of strategies and methods applied in joint programmes to address Gender Equality and Women's Human Rights needs and interests at the country level;
2. Assess to what extent the JGPs have been effective in contributing to national development results on gender equality –including the MDGs – and have achieved their respective specific objectives established in their formulation.
3. Analyze the coherence and efficiency of the different programming approaches and cooperation modalities used in interagency coordination in joint programming and the extent to which the UNCT and Non-Resident Agencies are able to work together to achieve greater results on gender equality.

Emerging trends from the portfolio analysis of Joint Gender Programmes

Quantitative findings

The portfolio analysis includes a quantitative analysis based on a database with 113 JGPs identified in the UN system dating from 2001 to 2010. For each JGP, information relating to nine main parameters has been gathered. These are:

1. Budget: Planned budget; and funded as per signing of the programme document
2. Partners: UN, multilateral, donor and national level partners
3. Geography: country, sub-region and region
4. Lead agency
5. Thematic area
6. Timeframe: start date, end date and duration
7. Fund management modality
8. Funding Source

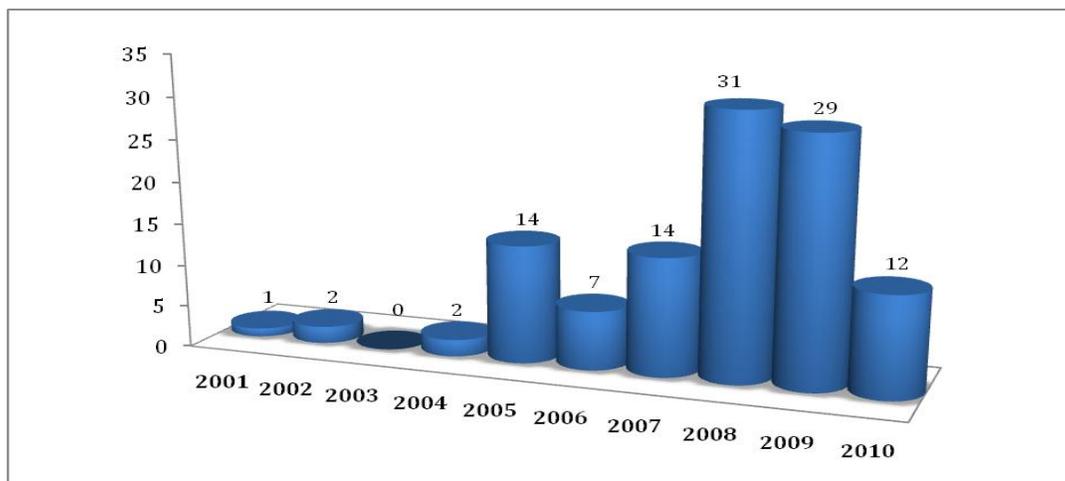
The database constitutes the most complete of its kind for joint gender programmes, and perhaps for any kind of joint programme. The data pertaining to 94 programmes starting from 2006 onward is reliable *in relation to the signed programme document* for each JGP. However, since many programmes develop as they are implemented, it is not necessarily accurate or up to date. Most importantly, the funded budget of a programme may increase as it mobilises resources during the implementation period. Likewise, the fund management modality and timeframe could change along the way.

For the 19 programmes that started in 2001 to 2005, the data is much less reliable because the signed programme documents have not been located for more than half JGPs. Due to the unreliability of the data from before 2006, the following graphs that rely on budget figures mainly use data from 2006 to 2010. It is important to note that the budget figures that are used are indicative – unless a programme is fully funded from the start (which is the case for 54% of all JGPs that started between 2006 and 2010), a JGP will in reality be better resourced after the programme has initiated, but may still have a funding gap. The team has not been able to gather data on actual level of funding in cases where there was a funding gap from the start.

The following 6 graphs show main trends of the JGPs during the period under study.

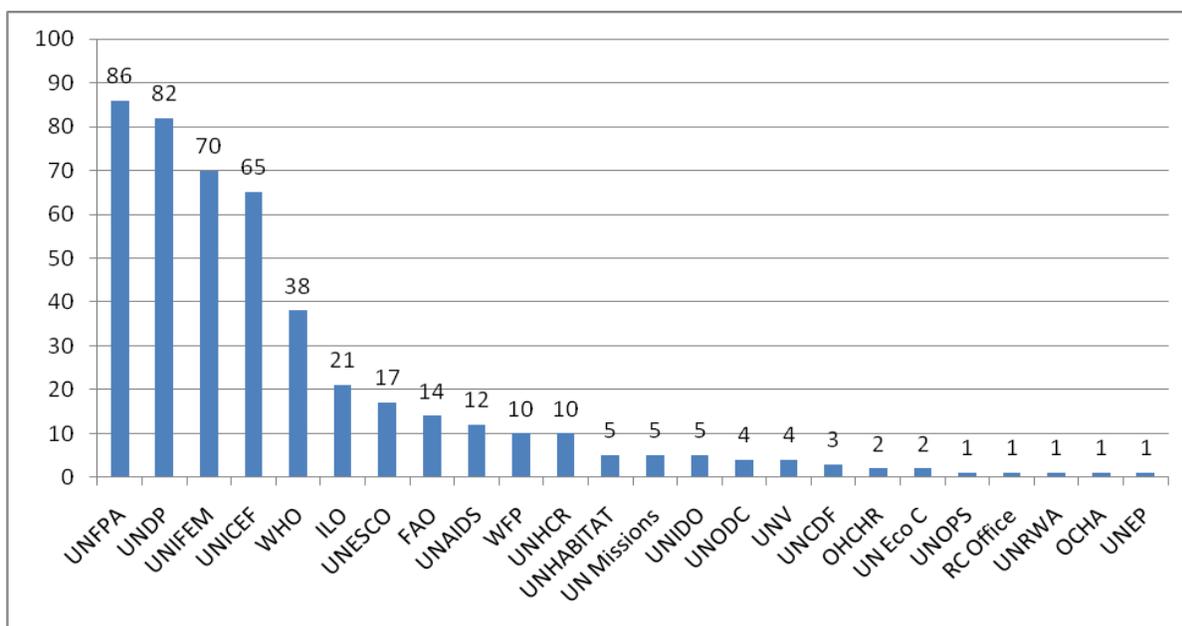
1. Total Number of JGPs Initiated in Each Year from 2001 to 2010

The graph below shows that while a few JGPs existed in the start of the decade, the number of JGPs have increased, but not linearly.



2. Frequency of participation of UN organizations in JGPs 2001-2010

Since 2001, there have been over 24 UN entities that have participated in JGPs. UNFPA followed by UNDP, UNIFEM and UNICEF are by far the largest actors, participating in over 60 JGPs each. WHO has participated in 37, resulting in a medium-large actor. Three specialised agencies – ILO, UNESCO and FAO – are the largest actors in the medium-small bracket (participating in 10 to 21 JGPs). In this bracket they are joined by two comparatively large UN agencies – UNHCR, and WFP; and UNAIDS. Among the agencies that have participated in 5 or less JGPs are a mix of smaller agencies, UN missions, an RC Office and a couple of UN regional economic commissions.

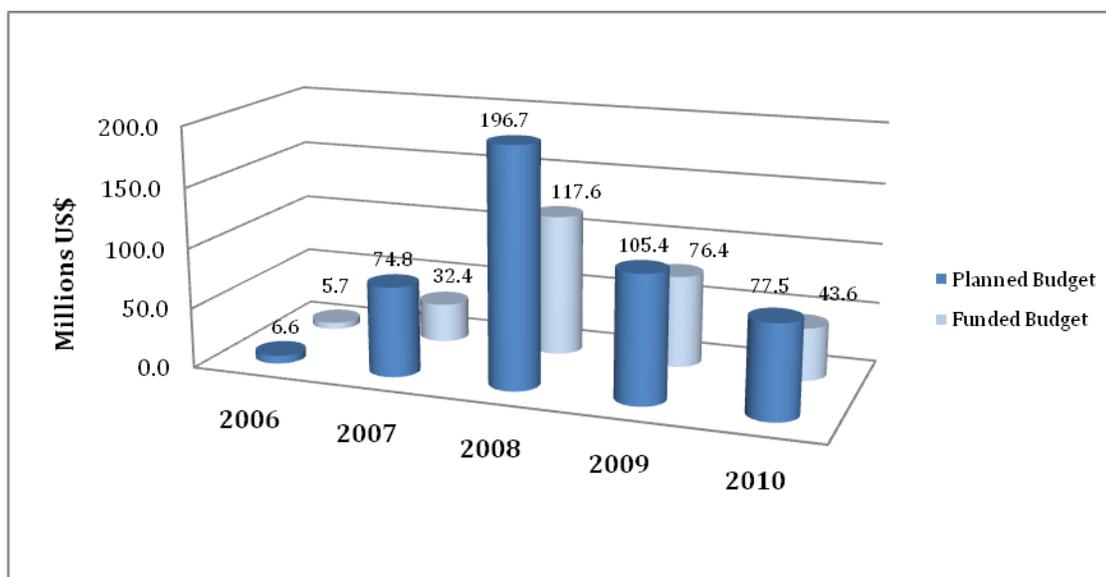


3. Total Value of Planned Budgets and Funded Budgets* of JGPs Initiated Each Year from 2006 to 2010

The database has two budget figures for most⁴ JGPs from this period – one is the planned budget for the programme, the other is the funded budget at the time of signing the programme document.⁵ The difference between the budgets is illustrated in the figure below. On average, there is a 28% difference between the planned and funded budgets (funding gap) at inception for JGPs at country and regional level. However, regardless of whether the planned or initially funded budget figures are used, the trend remains the same over time: since 2007, the total value of new JGPs each year has been above \$US 70 million.

⁴ The database contains a planned budget figure for all but 5.3% of the JGPs from 2006 to 2010 and does not have the status of the funded budget for 14.9% of the JGPs. The aggregate data for planned budgets is therefore more complete. The planned budget is furthermore arguably a better reflection of the size of the programme as it was conceived. However, it is important to treat the budget figures as indicative. There are 5 JGPs that have not been included in the graphs with budget figures due to lacking data. These are i) Sao Tome and Principe: Strengthened capacity of national and local institutions to advance gender equality; ii) JP on Rapid Reduction of Maternal and Neonatal Mortality in the Philippines; iii) Guinea Bissau: Egalité de genre et renforcement des moyens d'action des femmes; iv) Zambia: Joint Programme on Trafficking; v) Comoros: Accélération de la réduction de la mortalité maternelle, néonatale et infantile.

⁵ In 54% of the cases, the JGP is fully funded from the start and these two budget figures are the same. This is the case for e.g. the 12 JGPs funded by MDG Fund and virtually all JGPs in the LAC region.



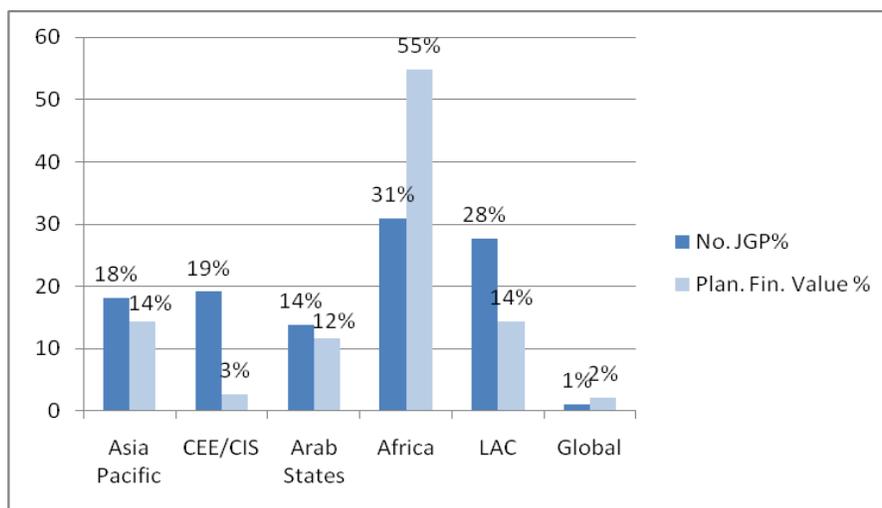
4. Number of JGP and their total planned value per region 2006-2010

When analysing the JGP portfolio from 2006 to 2010 by geographic region, Africa leads with the greatest *number* of JGPs. The aggregation of all of the value of planned budgets in Africa during this period gives a total of \$US 254 million – which is more than 4 times that of the Asia/Pacific and LAC regions. The LAC region is right behind Africa with the total number of JGPs with 26 – 14 of which have been implemented in 6 countries. The CEECIS region has the smallest total number of JGPs – eight. The Arab States has five more JGPs than CEECIS, but the planned financial value amounts to more than four times that of the CEECIS region.

Region	Number of JGPs	Total Value of Planned Budget MUS\$
Africa	29	254
Arab States	13	54
Asia & Pacific	17	66
CEECIS	8	13
Latin America & Caribbean	26	66
Global	1	10

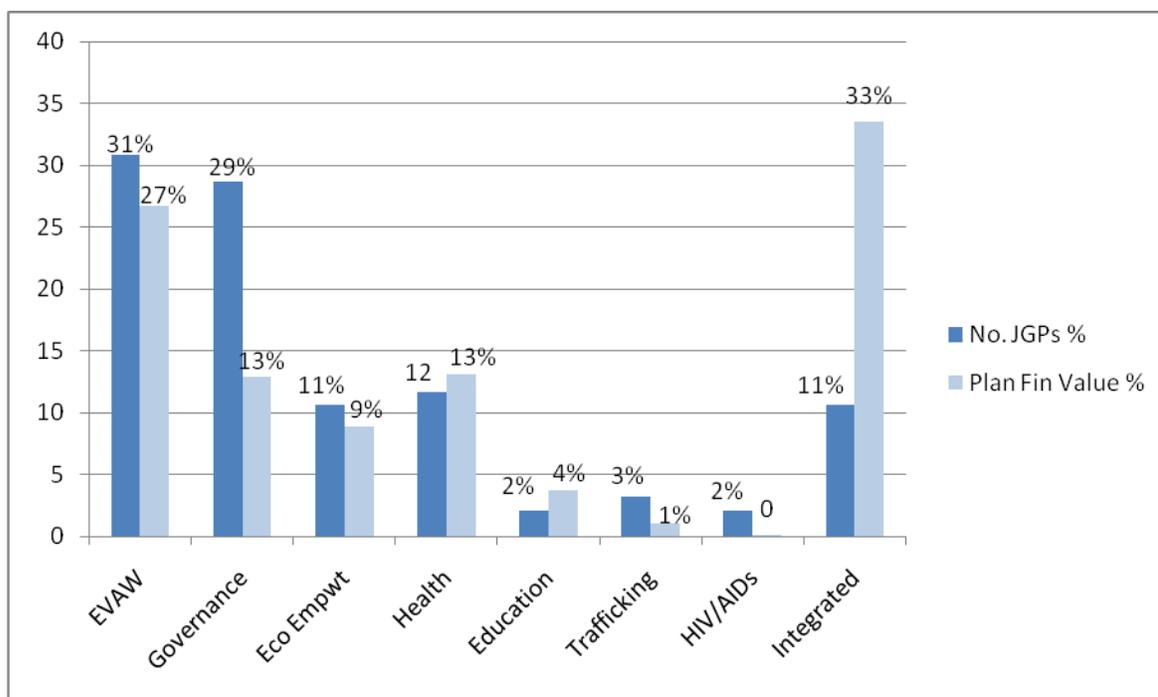
5. Number of JGPs and Planned Financial Value of JGPs per Region as a Percentage of the Size of the JGP Portfolio

When analyzing the regions using the number of JGPs as a percentage of all 94 JGPs and the planned financial value of JGP as a percentage of the total planned value of \$ US 463 million, the results can be seen in the figure below.



6. Number of JGPs and Planned Financial Value of JGPs per Thematic Area as a Percentage of the Size of the JGP Portfolio

Within joint gender equality/women's empowerment programmes there are eight thematic areas. These include Governance, Human Trafficking, Economic Empowerment, Elimination of Violence Against Women (EVAW), Education, Health, HIV/AIDS and integrated programmes that include clear goals in two or more of the previous thematic areas. EVAW is the most common thematic area (29 JGPs or 31%) and accounts for a similar percentage of the overall aggregated planned budget (28%). Meanwhile, the integrated JGPs account for only 11% of the JGPs but because these are all very large financially, they represent 33% of the total aggregated planned budgets. There is also a large discrepancy between the percentage of governance programmes (29%) and the percentage of the total funds planned for these types of programme (13%).



Reflections for the future scope of the evaluation

Preliminary ideas to scope the joint evaluation on JGPs are based on the data presented in the previous section and additional quantitative and qualitative data included in the portfolio analysis. Emerging issues that would need to be further looked at in the future assessment include:

- The quality or nature of the joint gender programmes' "jointness" in different processes such as in cooperation modalities and in achieving better results in gender equality and women's empowerment;
- The design and design process of the joint gender programmes;
- The effectiveness of joint gender programmes in terms of results towards gender equality and the empowerment of women;
- The degree of government ownership in meeting their commitments to the Beijing Platform for Action and fulfilling their obligations towards women's and girl's human rights and people centered approached of joint gender programmes;
- The efficiency and operational effectiveness of joint gender programmes;
- The contribution of JGPs to improve gender equality mainstreaming within the UN.

Results will be studied looking the main evaluation criteria: relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability and impact.

Participatory discussions with different stakeholder groups regarding the geographic, thematic and temporal scope as well as the main evaluation criteria are underway and will be jointly defined shortly.

Process and time frame

This evaluation process will follow the **next steps** throughout 2011/2012:

1. Presentation of JGP portfolio analysis to different stakeholders groups (May-June 2011)
2. Draft Terms of Reference dialogue with sister agencies, definition of the roles of the different agencies in the process and management of the evaluation, tendering process (July/August 2011)
3. ToR development, (August/September 2011)
4. Evaluation inception phase, including field visits and reporting (September/December 2011)
5. Evaluation report and validation process (January-March 2012)
6. Management response (April 2012)
7. Dissemination of the evaluation findings (May-June 2012)

Governance structure

The joint evaluation study team is undertaking an in-depth stakeholder's analysis to identify the relevant stakeholders of this evaluation and to propose a possible governance structure. A preliminary governance structure includes:

- A Steering committee composed of the Heads of UN agencies that have a higher frequency of participation in joint gender programmes (UNDP , UNFPA, UNICEF and UN WOMEN), the MDG-Fund Secretariat⁶ and UNDG-DOCO. The main responsibility of this group is to act upon the evaluation findings and endorse a robust and credible evaluation.
- A Management Group, a decision making body that will oversee the whole evaluation process and in which all partners are equally represented. This body would be composed by designated Evaluation Offices representatives from the different participating agencies.
- A Management Group secretariat, a core group that runs the day to day business of the evaluation and is the primary point of contact for the evaluation team. This body would be composed by designated Evaluation representatives from the different participating agencies.

⁶ Although the MDG-Fund Secretariat is administered by UNDP, given its role as a key partner in the implementation of joint gender programmes, it will invited to be part of the evaluation Steering Committee.

- A Reference Group will be integrated by contributing countries, key rights-holders, UN agencies Gender Focal Points, Joint Programmes Focal Points and UNDG Gender Team members. This body would have a consultative and advisory role in key moments of the evaluation process.
- An external Evaluation Team that will conduct the evaluation study.
- An expert advisory panel.

The global governance structure of this evaluation will have a parallel structure in the field to be determined after selection of the evaluation case studies. UN RCs, UNCT members, UN GTG members and field evaluation focal points will be invited to participate.