UN WOMEN
United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women

Analytical Overview of Joint UN Gender Programme Portfolio

Final Report

Evaluation Office

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Acronyms

CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women
CEE-CIS	Central & East Europe and Commonwealth of Independent States region
CCA	Common Country Assessments
CSO	Civil society organisation
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DAO	Delivering as One
DFID	UK Department for International Development
EC	European Commission
ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
ECSOC	United Nations Economic and Social Council
EVAW	Eliminating violence against women
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organization
GEWE	Gender equality/Women's Empowerment
GRB	Gender responsive budgeting
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IOM	International Organization for Migration
ILO	International Labour Organization
JGPs	Joint Gender Programmes
JPCs	Joint Programme Coordinators
LAC	Latin American and Caribbean region
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MDG Fund	Millennium Development Goal Achievement Fund
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
MDTF	Multi-donor trust fund
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
NSGE-DV	National Strategy for Gender Equality and Domestic Violence
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OSCE	Organization for Cooperation and Security in Europe
RBA	Rights Based Approach
RC Office	Resident Coordinator Office
SIDA	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
SMART	Specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and timely

TCPR	Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNCDF	United Nations Capital Development Fund
UNCT	United Nations Country Teams
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDG	United Nations Development Group
UNDG/DOCO	United Nations Development Operations Coordination Office
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UN-Habitat	United Nations Human Settlements Programme
UNHCR	Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
UNFT EVAW	United Nations Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence Against Women
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
WHO	World Health Organization
WHR	Women's human rights

STUDY BACKGROUND AND APPROACH

This report is a pre-study to support the scoping process for the future Evaluation of Joint Gender Programmes (JPGs) in the UN system, which will evaluate the UN's joint programmes in the area of gender equality, women's rights and women's empowerment. It provides the drafters of the terms of reference for the future JGPs evaluation with qualitative and quantitative analytical overview of the JGPs portfolio and reflections on the emerging strategic priorities, evaluability and methodological options.

According to UNDG's *Guidance Note on Joint Programmes* (2003), a joint programme involves two or more UN organisations and (sub-) national partners that have jointly signed a programme document. JGPs have been defined as those that have an explicit objective of: empowering women; and/or promoting gender equality at the strategic level; and/or women and/or girls may constitute the main beneficiaries/programme partners. Thus, joint programmes that may mainstream equality between men and women (which in theory are all joint programmes) but have other overall goals, have not been included in the portfolio.

The authors have established a database that maps out the characteristics of 113 JGPs from 2001 to 2010 according to nine main characteristics. The data for JGPs that were initiated before 2006 are incomplete, but the data for the JGPs initiated between 2006 and 2010 generally have high reliability.

The most significant challenge for the study was obtaining reliable data since none of the agency databases have systems to allow for straightforward searches of joint programmes. They frequently lack consolidated and systematic information, contain errors and are not regularly updated. While the team has used innovative search tactics and an extensive number of hours trying to identify JGPs, it is possible that the database does not contain all existing JGPs. The JGP database is furthermore limited to information provided by the signed programme documents – thus any changes since the signing of programme documents may not have been captured by the database.

The gathering of qualitative data focused on obtaining an overview of key issues and information needs. The data were acquired through consultations and interviews with over 30 key stakeholders and the analysis of 20 evaluations/reviews that were located. While some useful information has been gleaned from these, it has been relatively limited since the level of quality is often inconsistent and most are weak on the joint aspect of joint programming. To provide an analytical overview of the policy environment that underpins the rationale for the future evaluation, a review of dozens of relevant policy documents, reports and strategies was also conducted.

KEY FINDINGS

Findings from the quantitative desk analysis: Characteristics of the JGPs portfolio

In the beginning of the decade, at most, a couple of JGPs were initiated each year. The budgets were also modest, with a median size of US$ 320,000. The second part of the decade saw a rise in the median budgeted programme size to US$ 2 million, with a dramatic rise in the total number of JGPs in 2008 and 2009. This can partly be explained by the addition of MDG Fund resources. However, the largest average size of JGPs was in 2010 (US$ 7 million), which was after the MDG Fund contributions were distributed. From 2006 to 2010, the total *planned* value of the JGP portfolio was US$ 463 million and the total *funded* value at the time of signing of the programmes documents was US$ 274 million.

Twenty-four different UN entities have participated in at least one JGP, with UNFPA, UNDP, former UNIFEM and UNICEF participating in over 60 JGPs

each. UNDP, UNFPA and former UNIFEM were also by far the most prevalent in the role of lead agency. The specialized agencies WHO, ILO, UNESCO and FAO are the second most frequent participants. The majority of JGPs are made up of three to four participating UN agencies, while one-third of JGPs have five or more participating UN agencies – some have over 11.

Africa has the greatest number of JGPs and accounts for the largest portion (55%) of the total planned financial value of the JGP portfolio from 2006 to 2010. The Asia/Pacific and the LAC regions account for 14% each of the total planned financial value of the JGP portfolio, but in LAC the individual JGPs are much smaller in size.

Multi-sectoral JGPs are few, but they have large budgets that account for 33% of the aggregated planned financial value of the JGP portfolio. In terms of number of JGPs, the eliminating violence against women (EVAW) thematic area is the largest – roughly accounting for just less than one-third of all JGPs and one-third of the aggregated planned financial value of the entire JGP portfolio. JGPs in the governance area are almost as numerous as EVAW JGPs. However, they have much smaller budgets that amount to only 13% of the aggregated planned financial value of the JGP portfolio – which is similar to the value of the health (13%) and economic empowerment (9%) JGPs. The number and value of the education, trafficking and HIV/AIDS JGPs represent only a few percent each of the total budget. Only five JGPs representing four thematic areas have objectives with a conflict-related angle.

Core funds from the participating UN agencies are the most important source of funds – benefitting 62% to 72% of the JGPs from 2006 to 2010. The aggregated core funding from UN agencies is the largest source of funding overall (over US$ 98 million). The MDG Fund is the largest non-core source of funding (around US$ 90 million). Other trust funds provide funding to at least 16% of the JGPs from 2006 to 2010. Bilateral, OCED-DAC country contributions to JGPs at the inception of the programme have been made by Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Ireland, Italy, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the UK. Other national governments have also provided resources – financial or in-kind – for at least 13 JGPs.

Findings from the qualitative desk analysis: Convergence on strategic priorities

This study has demonstrated that there is considerable concurrence among stakeholders, evaluations/reviews and policy documents regarding the overall priorities for the evaluation. First, there is a common perspective on the use of the evaluation. While it will be used to *render judgment about the overall merit or worth* of JGPs, the principle uses will be to *facilitate improvements* and *generate knowledge*. These uses should guide the scope and approach of the evaluation.

Second, the analysis reveals that the priorities for the evaluation's strategic scope converge on three areas. In relation to these areas, the data suggest that effectiveness, sustainability and possible impact are the dominant evaluation criteria to assess the JGPs. Relevance issues are less prominent but still pertinent. Efficiency and operational effectiveness issues were generally considered less important for learning from and improving JGPs. While the data reveals many challenges in this area, stakeholders all agreed that these were not unique to JGPs, but common to many or most joint programmes. It was a concern that this evaluation maintains its focus on the effectiveness of joint programmes and not be taken over by systemic operational efficiency issues that relate to all joint programmes in all sectors.

The first area of convergence relates to whether JGPs are **effective in producing results** and how / whether **collaborating together adds value** to these results. The call for inquiry into this area comes from a combination of UN policy directives, UN Women's mandate, the lack of evaluative evidence and several types of information needs that stakeholders consulted by this study have expressed the following:

- There are several General Assembly resolutions that urge the UN development system to **enhance accountability** in the area of gender

equality and women's empowerment.

- Policy directives have recommended that the UN develop improved guidance on the **nature, quality and effectiveness of joint programmes** in support of gender equality and the empowerment of women.
- There is a relative **paucity of strategic level assessments** of specific UN efforts to address women's empowerment, women's rights and gender equality.
- There is a **lack of evaluative evidence** relating to JGPs.
- With its mandate being to lead and coordinate the overall efforts of the UN system to support the full realization of women's rights and opportunities (by promoting coherence and acting as a global broker of knowledge and experience), **UN Women needs evidence** to inform its policy development.
- Stakeholders consulted by this study express a strong need for information on the *degree* and *nature* of collaboration amongst participating UN partners in JGPs and how joint programmes **add value to gender equality / women's empowerment results**.
- Stakeholders prioritise the analysis of JGP design and design processes because (i) stakeholders consider **JGP design and design processes** as determinants of successful results and (ii) the JGP evaluations/reviews have identified several JGP design problems.
- Stakeholders desire information on effectiveness in relation to **several types of effects** include: (i) gender equality, women's empowerment and human rights results; (ii) capacity development among duty-bearers and rights-holders; (iii) advocacy effects; (iv) process results from an right-based approach perspective; (v) intangible effects; (vi) synergetic effects and (vii) good practices.

This area of convergence could be captured by an overall aim of ***assessing to what extent and in what ways collaborating in a JGP has enhanced the gender equality / women's empowerment effects achieved by the participating UN agencies and their partners.*** This would place effectiveness in terms of gender equality / women's empowerment results in the centre of the evaluation and would link it with the concept of collaboration or "jointness". It would require the study of the nature and degree of jointness (in design processes, implementation processes, governance, resource mobilisation, communication, knowledge management) and what kind of collaboration contributed to better results. The evaluation would need to examine the strengths and weaknesses of JGPs in relation to producing effects; how the UN could improve JGPs so that they are more effective in producing results and whether there are good practices to learn from.

The second area where priorities converge relates to **sustainability** and how the JGPs interact with and support stakeholders at the country level. It involves **national ownership, people-centred approaches** and **UN partnerships with government**. There are a number of policy level documents that are concerned with these aspects and the question is to what extent JGPs are successful at addressing them. Discussions with stakeholders and analysis of the evaluations/reviews also reveal similar concerns:

- UNDG's *Guidance Note on Joint Programming* states that joint programmes aim to enhance the UN contribution in the current context of international development assistance, with a focus on **self-reliance and capacity building.**
- The Aid Effectiveness principles of the Paris Declaration and the Accra Agenda for Action place **ownership** at the centre of development co-operation.
- The High Level Panel on UN System-wide Coherence's report *Delivering as One* stated that reform to improve the coherence of the UN development system must be underpinned by the principles of **national ownership** *and* **people-centred approaches.**
- UN's commitment to **mainstreaming human rights** in all of its development work requires an approach of strengthening the accountability of duty-bearers and supporting rights-holders in demanding their rights.
- The UNDG *Guidance Note on Joint Programmes* states that joint programmes are specifically intended to strengthen how the UN

organizations **programme jointly with governments**.

- Stakeholders require more analysis of what JGPs mean for ownership and joint processes in the partnerships that the agencies enjoy with **governments and civil society**.
- The evaluations/reviews of JGPs concluded that **sustainability** of JGPs was low while stakeholders require information and analysis of how **sustainability can be improved**.

This area of convergence could be captured by an overall aim of ***assessing to what extent and in what ways JGPs have contributed to governments meeting their commitments to the Beijing Platform for Action and fulfilled their obligations towards women's and girl's human rights; while also supporting rights-holders demand their rights.*** This would set the UN's national level partnerships with duty-bearers and rights-holders at the heart of the evaluation. It would cover the issues of national ownership, how effectively and sustainably the UN agencies programme jointly with governments and the extent to which JGP approaches are people-centred.

The third and much smaller area of convergence relates to **synergies** between JGPs and other UN efforts:

- Reform of the UN development system to promote effectiveness and sustainability focuses on coherence, coordination and collaboration – not only *within* programmes but also ***among programmes***.
- Many stakeholders show a very high degree of interest in understanding whether and how a JGP in a country can result in **synergetic effects** with other UN programmes at country level. They want to know whether JGPs have an **influence** on the UN's overall gender equality mainstreaming efforts.
- Mainstreaming gender equality into all UN programmes presents significant challenges for most agencies. JGPs are seen by many stakeholders as **resources for mainstreaming**.
- Most of the JGP evaluations/reviews do not report on synergies and the few that did found there were **missed opportunities** to create them.

This area of convergence could be captured by an overall aim of ***assessing to what extent and in what ways JGPs have contributed to improved gender equality mainstreaming and women's empowerment in other UN programmes and efforts at country level.*** The focus here would be on synergetic effects with other UN efforts. It would require studying to what extent JGPs affected increased collaboration, coordination and information exchange within the UNCT in relation to gender equality and women's empowerment.

EMERGING PRIORITIES & REFLECTIONS FOR THE FUTURE EVALUATION TERMS OF REFERENCE

The study has identified evaluability, methodological and scoping issues to be taken into consideration during the drafting of the terms of reference for the future Evaluation of JGPs in the UN system. To begin with, programmes addressing gender equality and women's empowerment are inherently difficult to evaluate since they concern challenging and changing complex societal norms and dynamics. Because of the complexity and fluidity of development processes and the fact that JGPs usually have suboptimal log frames, indicators and monitoring systems, assessing effectiveness and determining causality in the case of intermediate outcomes will be challenging for the evaluators. There is a desire to obtain knowledge of a *range* of effects – synergetic effects, intangible effects and effects related to capacity development, human rights and empowerment. Identifying, analysing and assessing these different effects will require a number of different techniques and approaches.

Based on the findings of the qualitative portfolio analysis, the report makes a number of recommendations with the aim of helping to support implement the future evaluation of JGPs:

Recommendation 1: The terms of reference should stipulate that the evaluation team is required to demonstrate how it will assess the different types of JGPs effects in its methodology.

Recommendation 2: The terms of reference should request that the evaluation team consider ways to assess the added value of "jointness" in its methodology.

Evaluating to what extent "jointness" enhances results, would ideally require that control programmes be identified so that pairs of gender equality / women's empowerment programmes – one joint and the other "single" – be compared. Unfortunately, it is unlikely that two comparable programmes can be found in the same country, being implemented at the same time in the same thematic area. However, by drawing on the knowledge and experience of UN staff and partner organisations, it would be possible to reconstruct how a single programme might have been different from a joint programme. Participatory techniques – such as collective analysis could be useful in this regard.

Recommendation 3: The terms of reference should request that the evaluation team present how it will integrate human rights in its methodology.

It appears that a significant proportion of the portfolio may have medium or high evaluability for integrating human rights and gender equality. To address the evaluability challenges in terms of integrating human rights, a human rights-based stakeholder analysis will be critical. A global evaluation spanning 60 countries will entail limitations to the amount of stakeholder participation that is practically possible. It will, however, be possible to ensure an acceptable level of participation in the country case studies.

Recommendation 4: The evaluation time scope should include JGPs from 2006 to 2010 to ensure data reliability and usefulness.

The data reliability for the programmes from 2001 to 2006 is low since more than half lack programme documents. Most of the earlier JGPs are small-scale and thus less likely to produce effects that are identifiable years later. Institutional memory for this period may also be low. On the other hand, the authors have obtained programme documents for nearly 90% for the JGPs that were initiated between 2006 and 2010. The JGPs that were initiated in the latter half of the decade are also more relevant to learn from since they were conceptualised and implemented in the context of a number of institutional changes affecting joint programmes (greater harmonisation of operational practices; further alignment of UNDAFs to national processes, the piloting of the Delivering as One initiative and the creation of the MDG Fund).

Recommendation 5: The agencies should ensure that the country offices supply the necessary programme reports and data to complete the database and document repository.

Except for 20 evaluations/reviews, the JGP database currently does not contain reports related to the JGPs. A considerable effort would be needed to ensure that country offices supply the necessary reports and data to complete the database.

Recommendation 6: The evaluation should include a desk review of the whole JGP portfolio and an in-depth portfolio analysis of a sizeable proportion of the JGP portfolio.

The JGP database that has been established by the study and the analysis that has already been undertaken constitute significant resources for

the evaluation team. These existing products will allow the team to "hit the ground running." Nevertheless, while the database contains a range of data that can allow further analysis and comparisons, to be fully utilised, the database would need to be updated to include up-to-date funding information.

It would be important for the evaluation team to begin by reviewing all 94 programme documents and the 20 available evaluations. For both practical and resource reasons, it would make sense to undertake a more in-depth desk study of around one-quarter to one-third of the JGPs. The evaluation team would need to provide criteria in the inception phase on how to select these JGPs. Some of JGPs for which there have been reviews – such as the Albanian JGPs and some of the MDG Fund programmes – would constitute good candidates for further desk study.

Recommendation 7: The evaluation should include 4 to 6 case studies that involve country visits. The evaluation should also include desk-level case studies. All case studies should be carefully chosen by purposeful sampling taking into to consideration the sampling criteria provided by this report.

To obtain a deepened understanding of what results JGPs are achieving and whether collaboration among agencies is contributing to this, it will be critical that the evaluation undertakes case studies. Visiting four countries is likely to provide the data required, especially if (i) countries with more than one JGP are prioritised and, (ii) field studies of JGPs are complemented with in-depth desk studies of other JGPs. UN concerns to ensure regional representation for political reasons may require that six case studies be undertaken.

The case studies would most appropriately be selected by purposeful sampling to ensure that a number of variables are covered and that the cases are "information rich" and illuminative. While the sampling should be biased towards JGPs that are considered by stakeholders to be innovative, have developed good practices and/or are successful, the sampling should also consider JGPs that have struggled to produce results. The priority criteria to consider for sampling include a mix of different themes, agencies, a range of numbers of participating agencies, countries with different human development and gender equality indexes, regions, budget sizes and levels of programme maturity. Conflict-related JGPs should also be included in the sample.

Recommendation 8: The terms of reference should call for a team with strong skills and in-depth knowledge and experience in the range of relevant areas listed above. Planning should take into consideration the lead-time that busy high quality consultants may require.

Important qualities of the future evaluation team include knowledge and experience in:

- Gender equality, women's empowerment and women's rights movement
- Development co-operation processes and policies
- The UN development system, the UN reform process and UN development programmes
- Rights-based approaches
- Evaluation methods, participatory approaches and data collection
- Developing countries, conflict-affected countries, regional and cross-regional experience
- Assessing capacity development

The team will need strong analytical, writing and facilitation skills and a range of language skills. The team should represent diversity and consist of both women and men. National consultants should be included on the case study missions.

This report is a pre-study for the future evaluation of Joint Gender Programmes (JGPs) in the UN system, which will evaluate the UN's joint programmes (JPs) in the area of Gender Equality, Women's Rights and Women's Empowerment (GEWE). To support the scoping process, this report provides the drafters of the terms of reference for the future JPE evaluation with the following:

1. An analytical overview of the policy environment that underpins the rationale for the future evaluation;
2. An analytical overview of the JGP portfolio – including a quantitative analysis and an analytical overview of key issues, concerns and information needs that are associated with JGPs;
3. Reflections on the emerging strategic priorities, evaluability and methodological options.

To undertake this study, two other products have been produced by the team. They are:

1. A repository of relevant documentation – programme documents, evaluations, reviews, policy documents and tools – that relate to the JGP portfolio;
2. A database outlining the characteristics of the JGPs according to nine main categories.

The remainder of this chapter provides information on the methodology used, its limitations and the definitions applied by the study. The final section includes an overview of the report's structure.

APPROACH

Quantitative Data

In 2010, the Evaluation Unit (EU) of the former UNIFEM began collecting information on JGPs from 2001 to 2009 in which UNIFEM was a participating agency. The EU relied on information gathered from the UNIFEM online Annual Report tracking system, the UNDG database, the MDG-Fund (MDG-F) database, the UNDG/DOCO database of Resident Coordinators (RCs) Annual Reports and direct follow up and feedback from field staff. The former UNIFEM EU developed a first scan and a database with all the information gathered and established a preliminary repository of programme documents and evaluation reports.

In February 2011 the current study team expanded the search to take account of JGPs which UNIFEM did not participate in and included all JGPs from 2010. This consisted of searching a number of databases – the UNDG/DOCO database of RCs Annual Reports, the MDG-F database, UNDG database, UNFPA's database of JGPs from 2009-2010, UNDP's Atlas Executive Snapshot, the Multi-Donor Trust Fund database and country office websites. Wider searches on the Internet were also undertaken.

The searches on the Internet and of the various databases helped the team to uncover potential JGPs. However, since much of the information was proven to be unreliable or partially incorrect (please see section 0), it was important to triangulate data and give high priority to locating *signed* programme documents. Contact was made with the gender experts and/or evaluation offices of UNDP, UNICEF, UNESCO, UNFPA, WHO, FAO and UNESCO to verify and confirm data and obtain programme documents (which several agencies were helpful in doing). Contact was also made in some cases with country offices to verify and confirm data and obtain programme documents. All programme documents were filed electronically according to region.

A total of 113 JGPs were eventually identified. These were entered into a more elaborated version of the initial database that was established by the EU in 2010. The updated database maps out the characteristics of 113 JGPs from 2001 to 2010

according to nine main characteristics:

1. **Budget:** The database contains both the planned budget of each JGP and the funded budget *at the time the programme document was signed.* Since just over 50 percent of the JGPs were fully funded from the start, these figures are the same for many JGPs. The difference between these two figures (the funding gap) differs from JGP to JGP but is on average 28 percent. It is important to note that unless the programme is fully funded, both figures are *indicative.* The team has not collected data on the current funding situation of the JGPs.
2. **Country/region:** The regions used are Latin America and the Caribbean, Sub-Saharan Africa, Central and Eastern Europe and Commonwealth Independent States, Asia and the Pacific and the Arab States.
3. **Theme:** The thematic areas were derived from the Secretary General's 2010 report on the implementation of Beijing Platform for Action. They are Elimination of Violence against Women (EVAW), Education, Health, Trafficking, Economic Empowerment, Governance, HIV/AIDS and "Integrated." The latter refers to JGPs that have more than one *main* thematic area of work.
4. **Timeframe:** The start date, end date and time frame as stated in the programme document have been entered. However, preparation time and time extensions have not.
5. **UN Partners:** Apart from UN funds, programmes and specialized agencies, UN missions (for instance to Haiti), regional economic commissions, RC Offices (when they have contributed funding) and certain Secretariat offices (OCHA) have been included.
6. **Other Partners:** The database has categories for multilateral partners (e.g. World Bank, International Organization for Migration, regional development banks, etc.); bilateral partners and national partners.
7. **Lead Agency:** This has been entered when agencies mention a lead agency in the programme document.
8. **Fund Management Modality:** These are parallel, pass-through, pooled or combination of any of the three former – as per the UNDG *Guidance Note on Joint Programmes* from 2003.
9. **Funding Sources:** Funding sources include recipient governments; bilateral donors; different types of trust funds and core funding from the UN agencies themselves. The amounts provided by the different sources have not been entered.

The data for JGPs that were initiated before 2006 is incomplete – the team has not been able to locate programme documents for over half of the 19 JGPs identified from this period. Regarding the JGPs initiated between 2006 and 2010, the data is much more reliable – only 10% of the JGPs in the database from this period are missing programme documents. For JGPs without programme documents, some data from other less reliable sources of information (e.g. draft programme documents and information from databases) have been tentatively entered into the database. The list of programmes for which the Evaluation Unit is seeking the programme documents is included in Annex 3.

Qualitative Information

The gathering of qualitative data focused on obtaining an overview of key issues and information needs. The data was acquired through consultations and interviews with key stakeholders and a review of documentation.

Interviews were held with over 20 people working at headquarters level that were either gender experts, evaluation specialists or engaged in one way or another in JPs. Interviews and/or discussions were

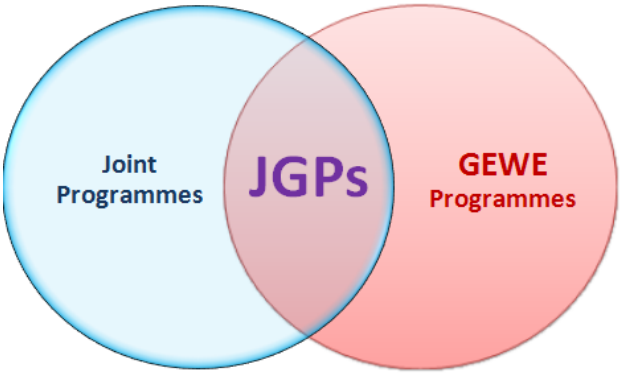
held with staff representing UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA, UN Women, WHO, MDTF, MDG-F, UNDG/DOCO and the UN Trust Fund to Support the Elimination of Violence Against Women. Furthermore, the team consulted with 11 field-based staff including Resident Co-ordinators, UN Women Country Representatives and Joint Programme Coordinators (JPCs). Jointly they represented Asia, Africa, Arab States, Eastern Europe and Latin America.

The documentation review was relatively comprehensive. At a minimum all programme documents in the database were skimmed through – some were studied in more detail. Dozens of relevant General Assembly resolutions, ECOSOC Resolutions, reports of the Secretary General, reports to executive boards, Ministerial Declarations and the Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review (TCPR) have been reviewed. Evaluations and reviews have been searched for in the evaluation databases of UNDP, UNEG, UN Women and UNFPA. In addition, Internet searches for evaluations have been undertaken. While only 20 evaluations/reviews that specifically covered JGPs were located, the team also studied significant evaluations/assessments regarding gender mainstreaming and GEWE, JPs and UN reform.

The draft findings of this study were presented and discussed in three different fora – i) the UNDG Task Team on Gender Equality; ii) representatives from thematic and geographical sections of UN Women; and iii) gender equality and/or evaluation specialists UNDP, UNICEF and MDG-Fund as well as representatives from Spanish Agency for International Development Co-operation and the Government of Norway.

LIMITATIONS

The most significant challenge for the study was obtaining reliable data. None of the agency databases have systems to allow for a straightforward search of JPs – let alone JGPs. The available databases frequently lack consolidated and systematic information, contain errors and are not updated on regular basis. The poor and inconsistent data required diligent verification and triangulation. While the team has used innovative search tactics and spend hundreds of hours trying to identify JGPs, it is possible that the database does not contain all JGPs.



Second, the JGP database is limited to information provided by the signed programme documents. Since the programmes often develop after signing – they may have amassed more funds, entered into partnership with new donors, the timeframe or fund management modality may have changed. Such changes will not have been captured by the database.

Third, the JGP database has not been fully validated by the country offices. While some offices have been contacted individually for information, given the very early stage of this evaluation process, it was felt that it would be premature to officially enlist the Resident Co-ordinator system. This means it is possible that there may be a few JPs that the team has not yet found.

Fourth, consultations held with stakeholders were relatively limited and represented just UN stakeholders. It was beyond the scope of the study to interview national level partners. Nevertheless, the information gathered from the stakeholders converges, providing a relatively clear picture of information needs.

Fifth, only 20 evaluations/reviews have been undertaken of JGPs. While some useful information has been gleaned from these, it has been relatively limited. The vast majority are actually reviews or mid-term evaluations. The quality is often inconsistent and most are weak on the joint aspect of joint programming.

Defining the JGP Portfolio

"Joint Gender Programmes" (JGPs) are the intersection of JPs and programmes that promote gender equality and/or women's empowerment. What qualifies as a JP and GEWE programme is discussed in the following sections.

Joint Programme

According to UNDG's *Guidance Note on Joint Programmes* (2003), a JP involves two or more UN organisations and (sub-) national partners. The objectives, strategy, work plan and related budget form part of a JP document, which will also detail roles and responsibilities of partners in coordinating and managing the joint activities. The JP document is signed by all participating organisations and (sub-) national partners. A coordination mechanism or "Joint Programme Steering Committee" ultimately governs a JP. It includes senior personnel of all signatories to the JP document, each with a similar level of decision-making authority. The fund management modality options for JPs are pooled, pass-through, parallel or a combination of two or all of these options.

Thus, a programme in which one agency does not sign the programme document but acts as a sub-contractor ("implementing agent") for another, does not represent a JP. Nor are joint events – such as conferences or campaigns – recognised as JPs in this study.

While the UNDG definition for JPs makes it relatively simple to distinguish whether a programme is joint by analysing the programme document, how joint a programme is in practice can only be determined by analysing each JP more closely. This is discussed further in section 4.2.1.

Gender Equality/Women's Empowerment (GEWE) Programmes

To promote gender equality, all joint UN programmes in theory mainstream equality between men and women. Because of the ability to produce wide-scale results for men and women in a whole range of different sectors, effective mainstreaming of gender equality in all UN efforts undoubtedly has immense potential in fulfilling the rights of both women and men, enhancing their wellbeing and increasing prosperity.

However, the persisting inequalities between men and women and boys and girls create an unlevel playing field that undermines the rights of women and girls. Therefore, in addition to the mainstreaming of gender equality, there is a compelling need – as recognised not least by MDG 3 – to undertake programmes with the specific objective of empowering women and girls, promoting women's rights and establishing legislative, policy and institutional frameworks for gender equality. Thus, JGPs have been defined as those that have an explicit objective of empowering women and/or promoting gender equality at the strategic level and/or women and/or girls may constitute the main beneficiaries/programme partners. Thus, JPs that may mainstream equality between men and women (which is theory are all JPs) but have other overall goals, have not been included in the portfolio.

The thematic areas that the JGP portfolio falls into include education, economic empowerment, governance, health, violence against women, trafficking and HIV/AIDS.[1] In addition, some JGPs address more than one thematic area and are defined as "multi-sectoral". The thematic areas are broad and some could be further broken down into

[1] The names of these thematic areas are based on the 2010 Report of the Secretary General entitled "The Review of the Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action, the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly and its contribution to shaping a gender perspective towards the full realisation of the Millennium Development Goals".

sub-themes. There are also five programmes that have a conflict angle in their objectives. However, thematically they are a good fit with the categories used and have therefore not been grouped into a separate category.

To determine which themes the programme fall into, the team has examined the overall objectives of the programmes. Thus, if there are JPs that have not spelt out its gender focus in the objectives but during implementation has developed a strong GEWE character, it would not be included. For certain sectors, it has been slightly challenging to distinguish whether a programme mainstreams gender equality or focuses directly on empowering women and girls. This has been particular true for sectors such as education, governance and HIV/AIDS. In these cases, the objectives, expected outcomes and logical frameworks have been studied to determine the extent to which the programmes promote *strategic*[2] gender equality efforts and/or aim to empower women and girls directly.

In agreement with UNFPA and WHO, all JPs in maternal, sexual and/or reproductive health that the team has uncovered have been included in the JGP portfolio. These programmes meet the criterion of women and/or girls constituting the primary beneficiaries. In theory, these programmes offer an opportunity to promote the empowerment and rights of women.

STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT

The report has four chapters in addition to this introductory chapter. Chapter 2 provides a background to and rationale for the future JGP evaluation. It includes a brief on JPs as part of UN reform and a summary of the effectiveness of promoting gender equality and women's empowerment within the UN. Chapter 3 renders a quantitative analysis of the JGP portfolio. Chapter 4 analyses the issues, concerns and the information needs that have been raised by the different sources of qualitative information. Chapter 5 presents emerging priorities for the future evaluation and discusses evaluability and methodological considerations.

[2] Promoting gender equality at the strategic level, would, for instance, be to promote gender responsive budgeting or gender equality in legislative reform processes. Meanwhile, a JP that aims to enhance economic security among rural poor men and women would be considered a programme that mainstreams gender equality with economic security as an overall aim.

This chapter provides a short background to UN reform and how JPs were conceived as part of this process. A summary of the effectiveness of promoting gender equality and women's empowerment within the UN development effort is also briefly outlined in section 2.2. By highlighting relevant policy directives and commitments, the final section provides the rationale for the evaluation.

BRIEF BACKGROUND TO JOINT PROGRAMMES AS PART OF UN REFORM

After the UN Secretary General launched the UN reform process in July 1997[3], the UN Development Group was formed (UNDG), Common Country Assessments (CCAs) and UN Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAFs) were introduced and prepared for a number of countries. From the start, it was hoped that UNDAFs would promote joint programming amongst the UN agencies. The Joint Nordic Independent Assessment of the CCA/UNDAF process studied the progress of JPs three years later, in 2001. It found that where attempts of establishing JPs had been made, efforts were impeded by the different administrative systems of each individual organisation. Other barriers faced by JPs included lack of clarity and guidance on how to proceed. The report concluded that:

> *...until harmonisation efforts are underway and the various headquarters give the field the solid backing it needs, collaborative and joint programming efforts are likely to face uphill struggles, risking that at least short-term benefits and outcomes of joint programming initiatives will be offset by high preparatory and management costs.*[4]

The Secretary General's report "Strengthening the United Nations: an Agenda for Further Change" (A/57/387) in 2002 brought greater impetus to the reform agenda. Joint programmes were specifically mentioned as means of further enhancing the effectiveness and efficiency of the UN system. UNDG was requested to prepare an implementation plan by 2003 to strengthen the effectiveness of the Organisation's presence in developing countries. As part of this effort, the UNDG *Guidance Note on Joint Programmes* was drafted, and in its original form is the main guidance document for JPs today. The *Guidance Note* stated that the reform agenda:

> *"...calls for increased joint programming and pooling of resources to further enhance the effectiveness of the United Nation's system in developing countries, and to ensure the system's combined resources are put to best use. These measures are intended to maximize UN's effectiveness, reduce transaction costs for governments, donors, and the UN, and strengthen how the UN organizations programme jointly with governments. They also seek to respond to donors' and programme countries' concerns to enhance the UN contribution in the current context of international development assistance, with a focus on self-reliance and capacity building."*[5]

In 2005, in the Secretary General's report "In Larger Freedom,"[6] greater system coherence, result-based management and strong leadership by the Resident Co-ordinator system was emphasised. As part of the reform effort, the SG subsequently established the High Level Panel on UN System-wide Coherence to examine how the UN system could work more coherently and effectively across the world in the areas of development, humanitarian assistance and environment.

In the meantime, UNDG commissioned an

[3] Secretary General Report *Renewing the United Nations: A Program for Reform: Measures and Proposals* 1997.
[1]4Ljungman, C et al. *Laying the Keystone of UN Development Reform: the Joint Nordic Assessment of the CCA/UNDAF Process.* COWI A/S 2001.
[5]UNDG *Guidance Note on Joint Programming*, 2003.
[6] UN Secretary General, *In larger freedom: towards development, security and human rights for all Report of the Secretary General, 2005*

assessment to enhance efficiency and effectiveness of JPs. The report was finalised in the spring of 2006. It reviewed 160 JPs and undertook case studies in 14 countries covering 21 JPs. It concluded that JPs were not fully exploiting their potential to mainstream thematic priorities – such as human rights and gender equality – that are not exclusive to any one UN agency. It furthermore highlighted "gender" an as an area that can be more deeply integrated into implementation when UN agencies work together. The report also provided a number of recommendations on how to improve JPs (the review is further discussed in section 4.1.2).

Some of the recommendations from the report were never fully acted upon – such as the recommendation to update, and continually update, the UNDG guidelines for JPs. Nor was the subsequent plan to conduct a full-scale joint evaluation of JPs ever fulfilled – although a draft terms of reference was prepared. A reason maybe that attention shifted as a result of the two new related developments discussed below.

Later that year, the High Level Panel issued its report "Delivering as One" which raised the bar and set out a programme of reform that focused on four main principles: One Leader, One Budget, One Programme and One Office. In 2007, eight developing countries agreed to pilot Delivering as One to increase the UN system's impact through more coherent programmes, reduced transaction costs for governments, and lower overhead costs for the UN system. While JPs remain a feature of this approach, Delivering as One is a more far-reaching and comprehensive initiative.

At the same time, in December 2006, the Spanish government established the MDG-F with $US 700 million to improve UN effectiveness in developing countries. One rationale for the Fund was that fact the funding structures and institutional incentives for joint UN interventions were not well enough resourced – nor especially conducive in their design – to allow for coherent support by the UN for the MDGs at the country level. Thus the Fund was from the start specifically geared to supporting JPs. One of the eight programmatic areas that is supported by the Fund is GEWE (the "Gender Window"). The Fund contributed to increasing the total number and aggregate financial size of new JGPs in 2008 and 2009.

EFFECTIVENESS OF UN DEVELOPMENT EFFORT IN GEWE

The Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995 signalled a clear commitment to international norms and standards of equality between men and women. It stipulated that measures to protect and promote the human rights of women and girl-children were to constitute an integral part of universal human rights and must underlie all actions. Institutions at all levels were to be reoriented to expedite implementation. This required that Governments and the UN committed to promote the "mainstreaming" of a gender perspective in policies and programmes.

In the last decade, several significant initiatives have been undertaken to assess the progress in this area. In 2006 Norad commissioned an independent review that synthesised the conclusions of the gender mainstreaming evaluations.[7] It included the UN gender mainstreaming evaluations of UNDP (2006), ILO (2005) and Habitat (2003) and concluded:

> The findings in the evaluations all point in the same direction. Work on institutionalising the empowerment of women and gender equality have had low priority, there have been insufficient resources to implement policies and strategies, the focus has shifted to other areas, and there is no systematic reporting of results in this area. The mainstreaming strategy has been unsuccessful.

In the same vein the High Level Panel on UN System-wide Coherence was appointed by the Secretary

[7] Norad. *Lessons from Evaluations of Women and Gender Equality in Development Cooperation, Synthesis Report, 2006.* It also reviewed evaluations of the World Bank, Sida, DfID, Norad, DAC and EC.

General in 2006 (as mentioned above.) After further deliberations with different stakeholders it came to the conclusion that:

> While the UN remains a key actor in supporting countries to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment, there is a strong sense that the UN system's contribution has been incoherent, under-resourced and fragmented.

The Panel stated that for human rights and development effectiveness reasons, the UN needs to pursue GEWE "far more vigorously." Furthermore, it held that a much stronger voice on women's issues is needed "to ensure that GEWE are taken seriously throughout the UN system". It concluded that while the commitment to gender equality is and should remain the mandate of the entire UN system, a *gender entity*—based on the principles of coherence and consolidation— would need to be created to advance this key UN agenda. This led to the creation, in 2011, of UN Women.

Corporate level gender mainstreaming evaluations continued to be conducted by UN agencies after 2006, but a synthesis of their results have not yet been undertaken. These include UNICEF (2007), WFP (2008), IFAD (2010) and the UN Secretariat (2010) – with one evaluation of FAO and UN Habitat that are currently ongoing. The conclusions of the first three of these evaluations are slightly less negative than the evaluations from 2000-2006. In fact, the evaluators of each evaluation claim that the organisation is better at mainstreaming gender equality than other organisations have been in the past. Nevertheless, gaps in monitoring and evaluation, policy coherence, knowledge management and leadership were highlighted. Meanwhile, the first ever evaluation of the UN Secretariat, conducted in 2010 by the Office for Internal Oversight Services, was unable to draw definitive conclusions about the overall outcomes of gender mainstreaming or its effectiveness in advancing gender equality because the link between the structures, processes and their results was weak or missing. It did conclude, however, that lack of alignment between policy and practice poses "a risk to the reputation of the UN, which has committed to and has promoted gender mainstreaming as a strategy for achieving gender equality."

What is notable from the above corporate-level evaluations in the last decade, is that while they have assessed gender mainstreaming in UN agencies, **less emphasis has been given to evaluating** the results of specific efforts to address women's empowerment, women's rights and gender equality at the strategic level.

RATIONALE FOR THE JGP EVALUATON

At the policy level, there have been several directives to enhance accountability in the area of gender equality and women's empowerment. For instance, the General Assembly took resolutions in 2009 and 2010 that state:

> *Encourages* increased efforts by Governments and the United Nations system to enhance accountability for the implementation of commitments to gender equality and the empowerment of women at the international, regional and national levels, including by improved monitoring and reporting on progress in relation to policies, strategies, resource allocations and programmes...

The Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review (TCPR 62/208) from 2007 recommended that in the effort to improve the effectiveness of advancing national priorities and international commitments, the UN development system should develop improved guidance on "the nature, quality and effectiveness of JPs in support of gender equality and the empowerment of women." In response, the General Assembly resolution GA62/208 that responded to urged the UN organisations "to take a coherent and coordinated approach in their work on gender-related issues and to share good practices, tools and methodologies." Reflecting this, UNIFEM's Strategic Plan 2008-2013 underlined the organisation's commitment to "generating concrete evidence and knowledge on the "how to" of gender equality."

The specific commitment of UN Women to evaluate

JPs in the area of GEWE emanate originally from former UNIFEM's mandate to engage in JPs which "offer key entry points to stimulating greater overall UN effectiveness, while simultaneously generating significant benefits for gender equality." It also stems from the former UNIFEM's commitment to assessing the concrete benefits that emanate from JGPs "both in terms of their results in advancing gender equality and in building gender equality capacity and commitment amongst UN partners."

This commitment was reinforced by the creation of UN Women and its mandate to lead and coordinate the overall efforts of the UN system to support the full realisation of women's rights and opportunities. Together with the UNDG, UN Women is preparing a system-wide coordination strategy on gender equality in the first half of 2011, with clear deliverables for UN Women and the UN System, to promote greater coherence in line with existing agencies' mandates and priorities.[8] Given that UN Women is guided by the principles of leading and promoting coherence in UN system work on gender equality;[9] and acting as a global broker of knowledge and experience, aligning practice with normative guidance; an evaluation of the JGP portfolio in the UN has become all the more pertinent.

A Joint and Rights-Based Evaluation

Taking into consideration the collaborative nature of JPs; the common stake that UN agencies have in them; and the mutual effort that is required to improve them, it would be rational and advantageous for an evaluation of JGPs to be undertaken jointly with the other main UN agencies involved in JGPs. This would also cohere with GA resolution 62/208 and the SG Report from 2002, which both specifically promote that the UN agencies engage in collaborative approaches such as joint evaluations.

To cohere with the UN's commitment since over a decade to mainstream human rights in all of its development work, an articulated human rights perspective throughout the evaluation would be appropriate. For several years, the UNEG has been developing and piloting a guide for integrating a rights (and gender equality) perspective in all UN evaluations. It will be published in the coming months and can be applied to this evaluation.

[8] UN Women: Vision and 100-Day Action Plan: A Summary Briefing.

[9] 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.

The quantitative analysis is based on a database of the 113 JGPs from the period of 2001 to 2010 that the team has located. For each JGP, information relating to eight main parameters has been entered. These are:

1. Budget: Planned budged and funded budget as per signing of the programme document
2. Actors and 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

JGP Repository

The study team has developed a virtual repository containing al the documents reviewed during the analytical overview fo the JGP portfolio. This includes all the signed joint programme documents, relevant evaluations, guidelines, background documents and policy documents. The repository was built using the D-Groups platform at http://dgroups.org/library. The repository will be made available to the evaluation team and ultimately be incorporated in UN Women's Knowledge Management systems.

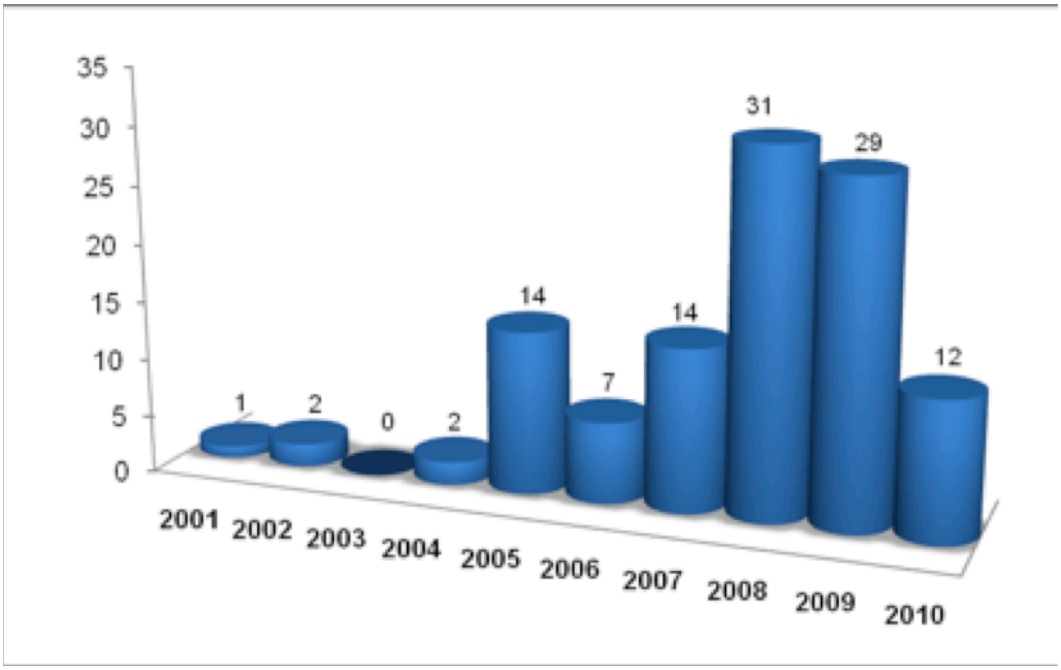
The database constitutes the most complete of its kind for JGPs, and perhaps for any kind of JP. The data pertaining to 94 programmes starting from 2006 onward is reliable *in relation to the signed programme document* for each JGP. However, since many programmes develop as they are implemented, it is 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. It is even conceivable that some of these JGPs in this database were never initiated as JPs.

Due to the unreliability of the data from before 2006, the tables in this report 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.

Using the data collected on the 113 JGPs that were initiated between 2001 to 2010, the following sections provide a quantitative analysis. The areas covered include evolution of the JGP portfolio size over time; the number and type of participating UN agencies; regional differences; the thematic spread; the duration of the JGPs and the funding of the JGPs.

Figure 3.1: *Total number of JGPs Initiated in Each Year from 2001 to 2010*



EVOLUATION OF THE JGP PORTFOLIO OVER TIME

Figure 3.1 above shows that while a few JGPs existed in the start of the decade, the number of JGPs have increased, but not linearly. In terms of numbers of JGPs, however, since JGPs can be as small as $US 26,000 or as large as $US 43 million, the number of JGPs is only half the story.

This range of sizes makes it helpful to study the median size of JGPs. Figure 3.2 shows that JGPs between 2001 and 2005 were relatively small, but more or less in line with the size of other JPs of that period. In the second half of the decade, the median size grew to $US 2.1 million. The sections that follow analyse the evolution of the JGP portfolio from 2001 to 2005 and 2006 to 2010.

Figure 3.2: *Median of JP and JGP Budget Sizes*

	Median Size of Programme Budget
JGPs from 2001-2005	$US 320,000 (planned)
All JPs from 1999-2005	$US 300,000
JGPs from 2006-2010	$US 2,100,000 (planned)
All JPs from 2006-2010	No data

2001-2005

Before 2005, there were only five JGPs – three of which pre-date the UNDG guidelines for JPs – and all but one had planned budgets that were around one to two million dollars in size – which is relatively large compared to the JGPs that followed in 2005. However, the team did not have the signed programme documents to verify this information.

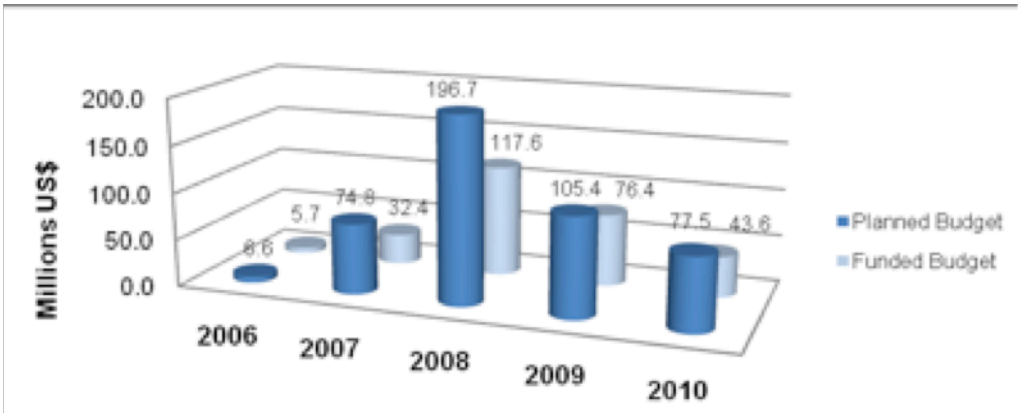
In 2005, there was a large hike in the number of JGPs with 14 being initiated. Nine of these had planned budgets that were smaller than $600,000 – of which four were smaller than $130,000. The development of the UNDG *Guidance Note on Joint Programmes* could be one reason that country offices launched more JPs. Furthermore, at the time that the *Guidance Note* was prepared, the UN agencies had a new means of transferring funds legally amongst one another. Considering the large number of fairly small programmes, this increase could represent a few programmes that more resemble a fund transfer for e.g. an activity of common interest. One JGP from this period is the support to the Gender Facility for Research and Advocacy in China, in which five UN agencies have partnered with DFID in a JGP fully funded at $US 2.7 million. It is unique since it runs for a 10 year period – with an end date in 2015.

2006-2010

The database has two budget figures for most[10] 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.[11] 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.

Figure 3.3 shows a peak in 2008 in both planned and funded budgets. Around $62 million (seven JGPs) in 2008 and $24 million (four JGPs) of the total value of new JGPs in 2009 originated from the MDG-F. However, the peak in 2008 cannot wholly be explained by the addition of resources from the MDG-F since the increase from 2006 is $US 122 million. Meanwhile, the value of the JGPs that were started in 2009 are roughly equivalent to the 2007 levels, with the extra addition of $US 24 from the MDG-F.

Figure 3.3: *Total Value of Planned Budgets and Funded Budgets* of JGPs Initiated Each Year from 2006 to 2010*



**At the time of the signing of the Programme*

[10] 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: Accéleration de la reduction de la mortalité maternelle, néonatale et infantile.

[11] 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-F and virtually all JGPs in the LAC region.

Figure 3.4: *Average Planned Financial Size of JGPs Initiated Each Year from 2006 to 2010*

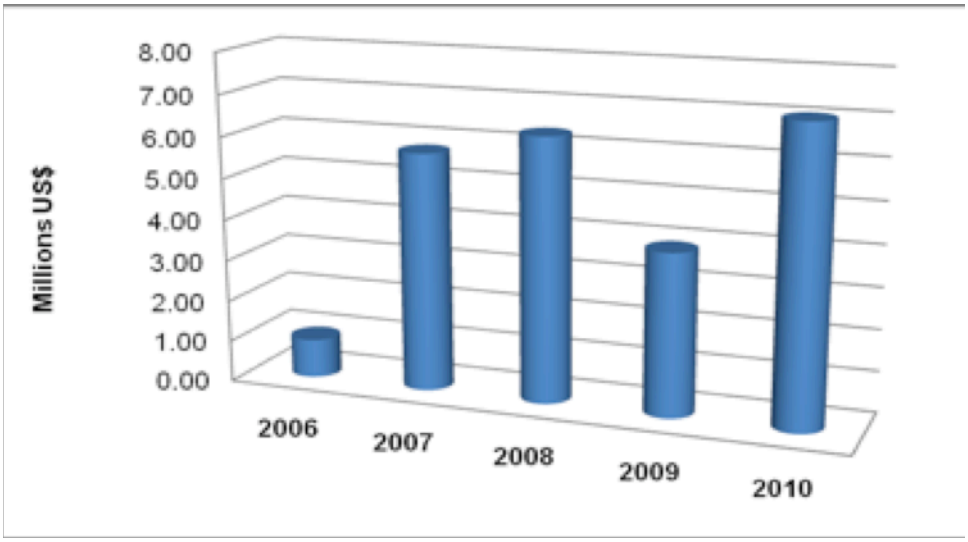


Figure 3.4 above shows a different angle of the evolution by providing the average planned financial size of JGPs each year. Like the previous graph, it depicts a steep climb in between 2006 and 2007. However, from then on the figure follows a very different pattern. While the average planned financial size in 2007 and 2008 were similar, there was a steep fall in 2009, only to be recovered in 2010, which represents the peak in average size at $US 7.04 million. The team has not identified an explanation for this trend.

PARTNERS

Since 2001, there have been over 24 UN entities that have participated in JGPs. A UN entity is defined as participating when it has signed the programme document. It most cases a participating entity also contributes some core funds. UNFPA followed by UNDP, former UNIFEM and UNICEF are by far the most frequent actors, participating in over 60 JGPs each. WHO has participated in 38, making it a medium-large actor. Three specialised agencies – ILO, UNESCO and FAO – constitute 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 UN organizations that have participated in five or less JGPs are a mix of smaller agencies, UN missions, and a couple of UN regional economic commissions.

Number of Participating UN Partners

The data reveals that 38 percent of the JGPs from 2001 to 2010 have three or four partners. The second most common size is two partners, which make up 28 per cent of the JGPs. There are nine JGPs that have nine or more partners – three of which have 11 or more. These include JGPs in Kenya (13 partners, planned budget of $US 56.5 million with a budget gap of $28 million); Vietnam (12 partners, planned budget of $US 4.7 million fully funded by the MDG-F); and Uganda (11 partners, planned budget of $US 24.6 million with a budget gap of $6.4 million).

It would be logical if the average and median size of the planned budgets of the JGPs generally grows with the number of UN partners. This is generally true for JGPs. Programmes with two UN partners have a median planned budget size of $US 678,500 (the average budget size is more than double due to six programmes that are $US 3.3 to 10 million in size). The JGPs that have 11 UN partners or more have an average/median planned budget that is around $US 30 million. However, whether a JGP is made up of five to six UN partners or seven to

Figure 3.5: *Frequency of Participation of UN Organizations in JGPs 2001 to 2010*

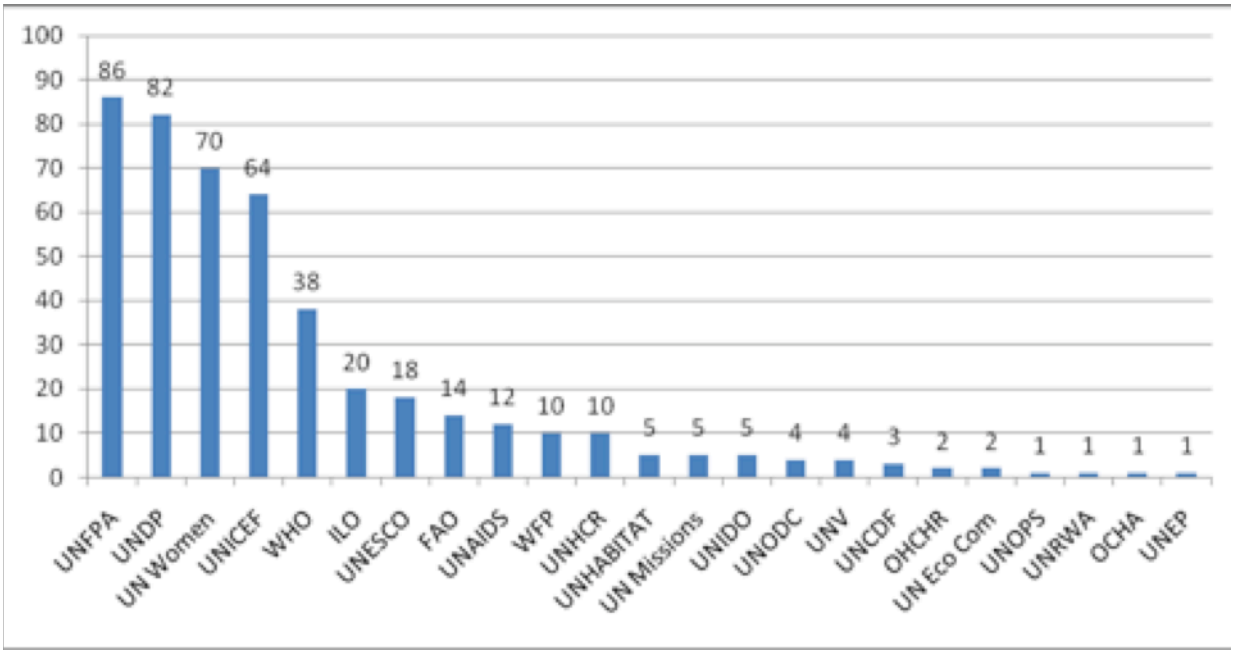
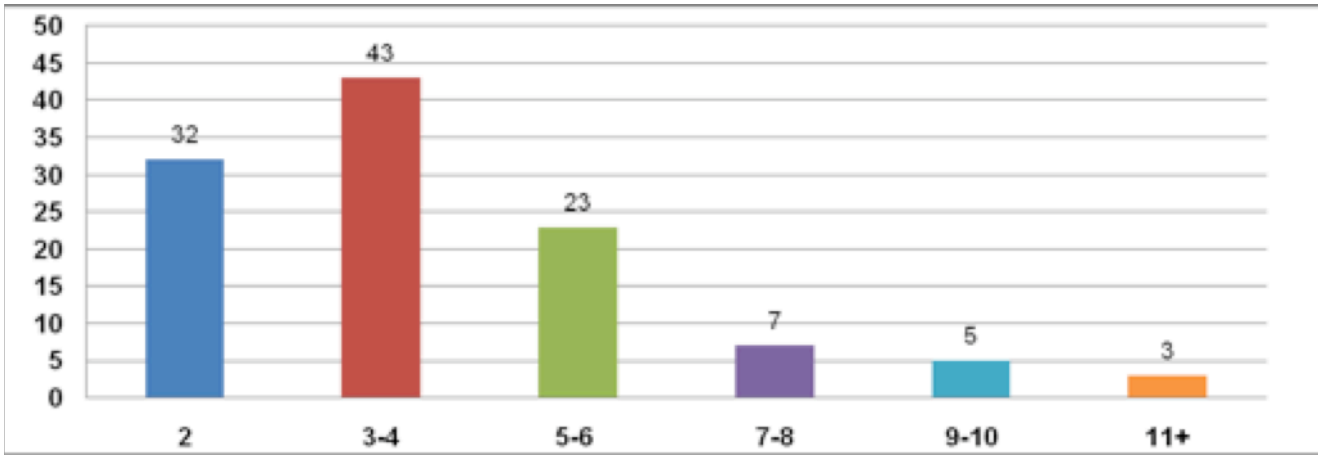


Figure 3.6: *Number of Participating Agencies in JGPs 2001 to 2010*



eight UN partners does not make a substantial difference in the budget size. In fact, the median size is virtually the same for these two groups.

It would be expected that the number of JGPs with a relatively small planned budget would decrease as the number of UN partners grow. Indeed, such a pattern exists between two to six UN partners: 38% of the JGPs with two UN partners are worth less than $US 350,000. When the number of partners is increased to three to four UN partners, there is a 12-point drop to 26%. There is another 12-

Figure 3.7: *Average and Median Size of Planned Financial Value of JGPs Per Number of Participating Agencies 2001 to 2010*

	Average	Median
2 Agencies	$ 1,782,728*	$ 678,500
3-4 Agencies	$ 2,776,805	$ 1,099,000
5-6 Agencies	$ 4,988,120	$ 3,638,888
7-8 Agencies	$ 4,093,399	$ 3,640,222
9-10 Agencies	$ 8,811,441	$ 8,000,000
11+ Agencies	$ 30,778,849	$ 31,106,657

point drop when a JGP consists of five to six agencies. JGPs that have nine or more partners are never under $US 350,000. However, an astounding 43% of JGPs with seven to eight UN partners are under $US 350,000.

Figure 3.8: *Percentage of JGPs with Planned Budgets Under US$ 350,000 per Number of Participating Agencies 2001 to*

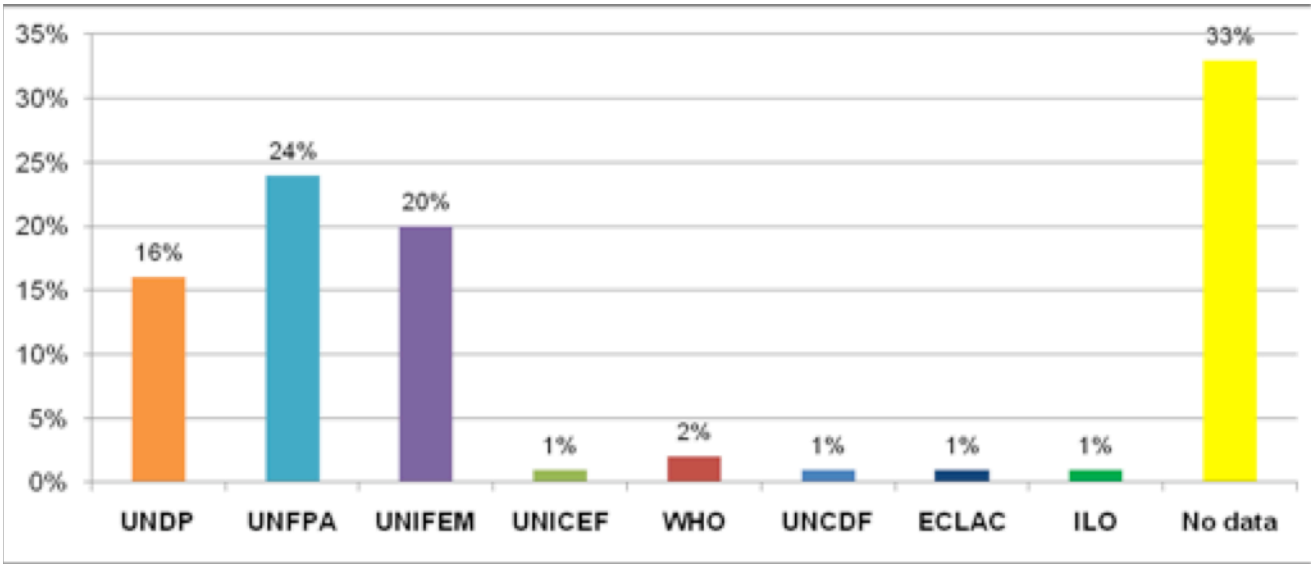
	Percentage of JGPs under $350,000
2 Agencies	38%
3-4 Agencies	26%
5-6 Agencies	14%
7-8 Agencies	43%
9-10 Agencies	0%
11+ Agencies	0%

Lead Agency

The 2003 *Guidance Note for Joint Programmes* does not recognise the concept of "lead agency" – an agency that plays the central coordinating role in the programme. In one-third of the JGPs from 2006-2010, there is either no lead agency specified in the programme document or the data is missing on this aspect. However, two-thirds of the JGPs that were initiated between 2006 and 2010 have designated a lead agency in the programme document. At least eight different agencies have served as lead agencies for JGPs. At 24% UNFPA is the most common lead agency for JGPs. It is followed by former UNIFEM (20%) and UNDP (16%). WHO acted as lead agency in two JGPs. UNCDF, UNICEF, ECLAC and ILO have each lead one JGP.

The most common multilateral partner outside of the UN system is the International Organisation for Migration (IOM). The IOM is involved in nine JGPs, which means it is a more common JGP partner than 12 of the UN partners included in Figure 3.9. The World Bank, the African Development Bank and OSCE have each participated in one JGP.

Figure 3.9: *Percentage of JGPs by Different UN Lead Agencies 2006 to 2010*



GEOGRAPHY

Sixty-one countries have had at least one JGP in the years 2006 to 2010. Seventeen countries had two or more JGPs during this period. Argentina stands out by having had four JGPs in this period, but all were 12-month programmes with relatively small budgets. Egypt, Morocco, Nepal and the Philippines each had three JGPs, which all overlapped in time. In all cases but Nepal, the thematic area of each JGP was different – Nepal had two different EVAW programmes – one with a conflict-related focus. Twelve countries had two JGPs – with each JGPs covering a different thematic area from the other. In half the cases the timeframes overlapped.

When analysing the JGP portfolio from 2006 to 2010 by geographic region, Africa leads with the greatest *number* of JGPs (29). 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 four 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 six countries. The CEECIS region has the smallest number of JGPs, with eight in total. The Arab States region has five less JGPs than CEECIS, but the planned financial value amounts to more than four times that of the CEECIS region.

Figure 3.12 below illustrates the results of analysis of 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.

Africa accounts for over half the planned financial value of JGPs (although there is a 55% gap between the funded budget at inception and the planned budget). The budgets for the LAC JGPs were almost fully funded from the start (the only region where this is the case). Meanwhile, the average funding gap in the CEE/CIS and Arab States regions is around 20%. The Asia-Pacific region has an average funding gap of 39% at inception.

Figure 3.10: *Countries with JGPs with More Than One JGP 2006 to 2010*

No. Of JGPs	Region	Country	Time Overlap of JGPs	No. Of Thematic areas
4 JGPs	LAC	Argentina	2 overlapped – all under 12 months	3
3 JGPs	Arab States	Egypt	Yes	3
		Morocco	Yes	3
	Asia/ Pacific	Nepal	Yes	2
		Philippines	Yes	3
	LAC	Uruguay	Yes	1
2 JGPs	Africa	Comoros	No	2
		Eritrea	Yes	2
		Lesotho	No	2
		Liberia	Yes	2
	Arab States	Iraq	Yes	2
		Tunisia	Yes	2
	LAC	Bolivia	Yes	2
		Ecuador	No	2
		Haiti	Yes	2
		Venezuela	No	2
	Asia/ Pacific	Bangladesh	Yes	2
		Mongolia	No	2

Figure 3.11: *Number of JGP and their Total Planned Value Per Region 2006 to 2010*

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

Figure 3.12: *Number of JGPs and Planned Financial Value of JGPs per Region Respectively as a Percentage of the Numeric Size and a Percentage of the Financial Size of the JGP Portfolio*

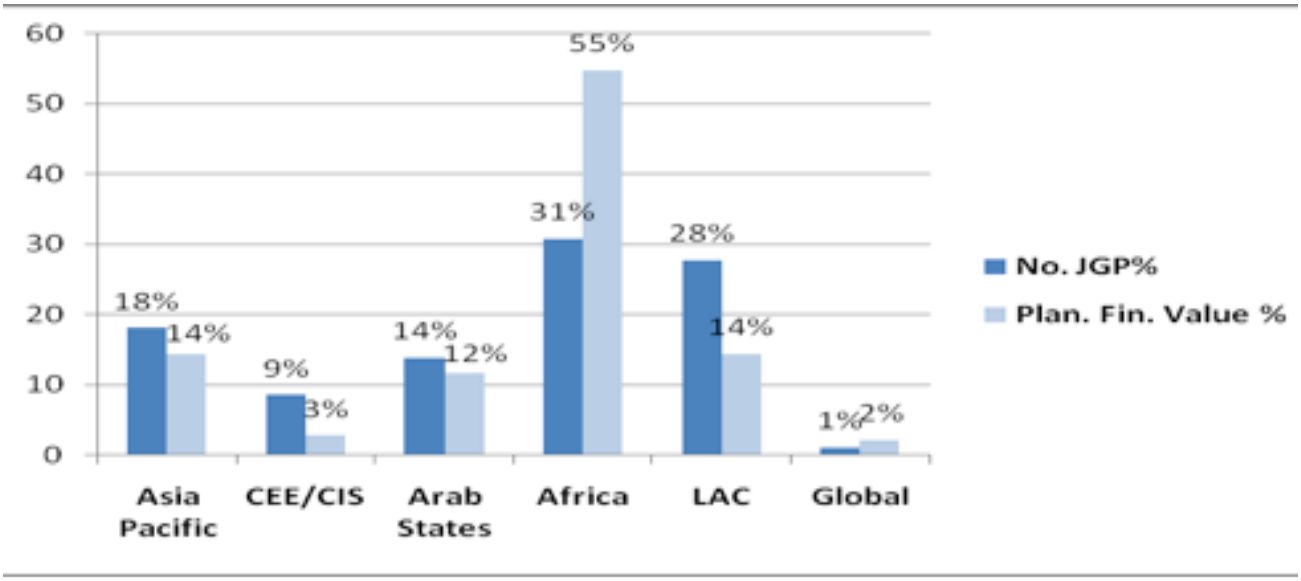


Figure 3.13: *Difference Between Planned and Funded Financial Budgets of JGPs per Region*

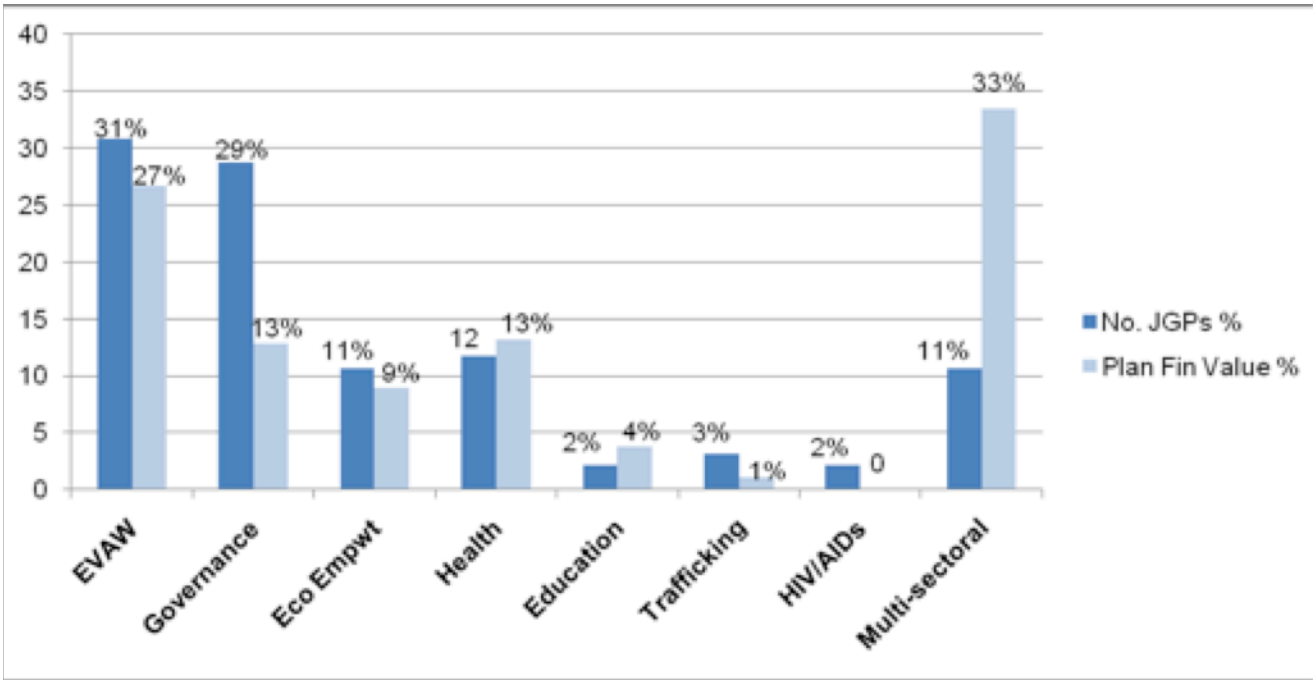
	Funded	Planned	Difference	% Difference
Africa	114,632,435	253,598,293	138,965,858	55
Arab States	43,349,903	54,268,704	10,918,801	20
Asia Pacific	40,664,938	66,186,117	25,521,179	39
CEE/ CIS	9,738,941	12,695,524.03	2,956,583	23
LAC	65,119,151	66,259,871	1,140,720	2
Global	1,030,000	9,830,000	8,800,000	90

THEMATIC AREA

Within JGPs eight thematic areas have been identified. As discussed in sections 00, these include Governance, Human Trafficking, Economic Empowerment, Elimination of Violence Against Women (EVAW), Education, Health, HIV/AIDS and multi-sectoral programmes. While several JGPs have elements of more than one theme, the JGPs that are included in the latter 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 chunk of the overall aggregated planned budget (28%). Meanwhile, the multi-sectoral 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%). There are 5 JGPs (1 in Sierra Leone and 2 JGPs in Liberia and Nepal each) that specifically mention "conflict" in the title and/or objectives. Their thematic focuses are the areas EVAW (2), Health, Governance and Economic Empowerment. In addition, there are 8 other JGPs in countries currently or recently affected by violent conflict that do not have a conflict angle in the objectives.

Figure 3.14: *Number of JGPs and Planned Financial Value of JGPs per Thematic Area Respectively as a Percentage of the Numerical Size and a Percentage of the Financial Size of the JGP Portfolio*



PLANNED TIMEFRAME

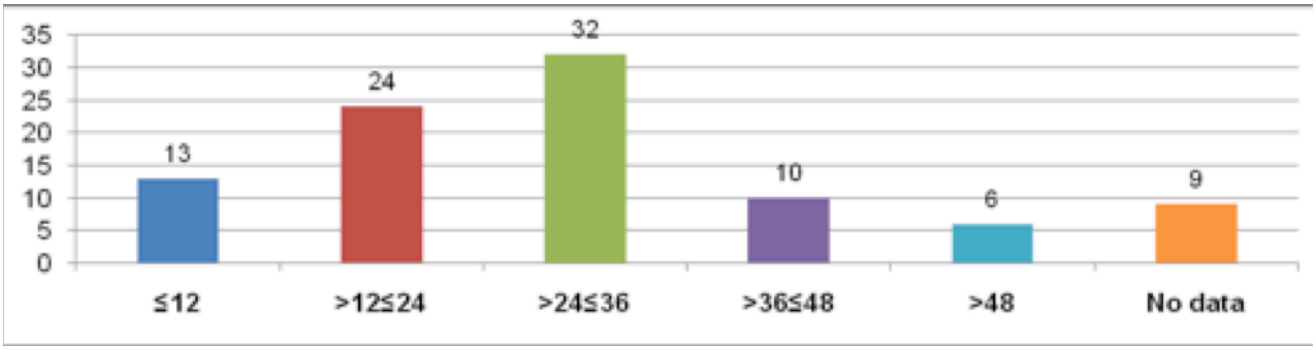
The average planned timeframe for JGPs has increased over time from around 25 months to 30 months. Since most JGPs seem to face implementation delays, it is probable that the actual duration is longer – in some cases, considerably longer.

At least 17 percent of the programmes are planned to last longer than three years, while at least 14% are 12 months or less in duration.

Figure 3.15: *Average Duration of JPs and JGPs*

	Average Duration
All JPs from 1999-2005	26 months
JGPs from 2001-2005	25 months (36 months)*
JGPs from 2006-2010	30 months
All JPs from 2006-2010	No data

Figure 3.16: *Number of JGPs from 2001 to 2010 by Duration in Months*



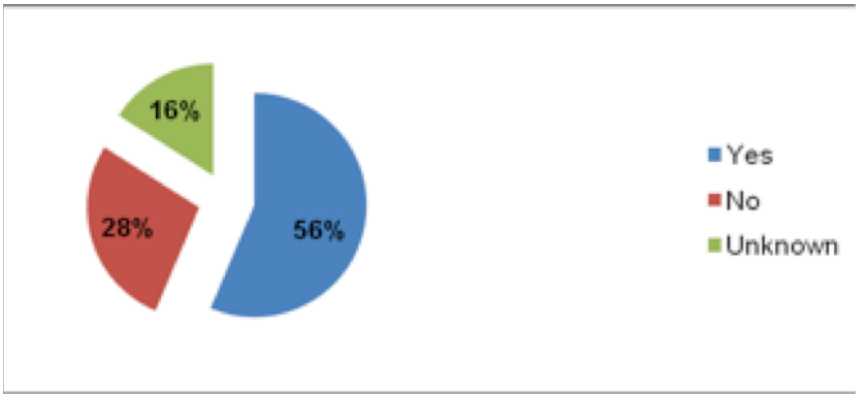
FUNDING

From 2006 to 2010, the total *planned* value of the JGP portfolio was $US 463 million and the total value that was *funded* at the time of signing of the programmes documents was $US 274 million. The sources of funding include core funds from the agencies, 16 different trust funds, one regional development bank, one multilateral agency (IOM), 13 recipient governments and 15 donor governments. More data gathering and research is needed to be able to determine exactly what source contributed what amount to this portfolio. Nevertheless, some interesting facts can be gleaned from the current data.

core funds. The UN core contributions for these JGPs ranged from $US 140,000 to over $US 28 million, with an average of about $US 3 million making up between 22% to 90% of the planned budget. In total, UN agencies have contributed over $US 98 from their core resources to the JGP portfolio, making the combined UN core funds the largest source of funding for JGPs.

In the 25 cases where participating UN agencies have not contributed to the JGPs, they have in most cases been fully funded from the start by a trust fund. The MDG-F is the most frequent single non-core source of funding with 14 JGPs or 15% being

Figure 3.17: *Percentage of JGPs from*



The illustration above shows that at least more than half of all JGPs were fully funded from the start. While we do not have figures for 16% of the JGPs, we know that at least 28% faced a funding gap at inception.

Between 62% to 72% of the JGPs from 2006 to 2010 have benefitted from core funding from the participating UN agencies. At least 17% of the JGPs were *fully* funded by core funds from UN agencies. These JGPs ranged in financial size from $US 27,000 to nearly $US 5 million in size, with an average size of about $US 1 million. At least another 17% were not fully funded to start off with, but at the time of signing, their budget was *only* made of UN agency

fully funded by it, amounting to about $US 90 million. The UN Trust Fund for the Elimination of Violence against Women has supported six JGPs. JGPs have also received financial support from One UN funds (4), the UN Trust Fund for Human Security (2), the UN Peace-Building Fund (2), the UN Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking and the UN Democracy Fund (1). In total, at least nearly 40% JGPs have received support from trust funds.

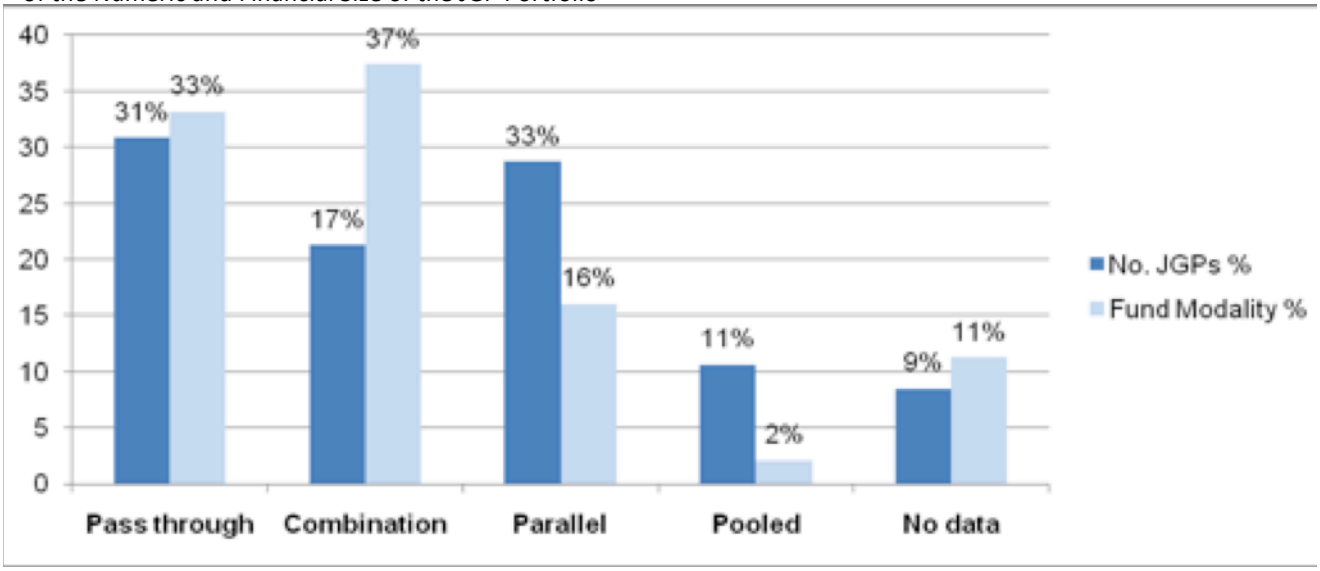
Since some of the strongest bilateral supporters of gender equality (and the multilateral system) prefer to provide voluntary core funds to agencies, and since core funds make up a significant part of the JGP portfolio, listing the donor countries that have

provided non-core resources to JGPs gives an incomplete picture of how supportive donor countries have been to JGPs. Nevertheless, the countries that have provided funds to between one to three JGPs at the programme's inception include Australia, Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Canada, Ireland, Italy, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland and the UK. In addition, the European Commission has supported one JGP. Including the support from the MDG-Fund, Spain is the most common non-core supporter of JGP. In addition to the 14 large MDG-funded JGPs, it has supported small JGPs in Latin American region (3) and in Equatorial Guinea (1). More data will need to be gathered to establish the exact financial value of the non-core support, particularly since in many cases bilateral support will have been granted after the programme documents were signed.

National governments have provided resources – financial or in-kind – for at least 13 JGPs. For 10 JGPs, the funding sources are unknown.
There are three main fund management modalities[12] for JPs. These are parallel, pooled and pass-through. These modalities can also be combined.

There are only 10 JGPs that use the pooled fund management modality and they are typically small – 40% are worth under $US 350,000. About one-third of the JGPs are managed through parallel arrangements and another third by the pass-though funding modality. However, the total financial value of the 17% of JGPs that are managed through a combination of modalities is greater than the total financial value of the JGPs managed by either the pass-through or parallel fund management modalities.

Figure 3.18 Number of JGPs and Planned Financial Value of JGPs per Fund Management Modality as a Percentage of the Numeric and Financial Size of the JGP Portfolio



SUMMARY

In the beginning of the decade the JGP portfolio was small – with at most a couple of JGPs being initiated each year. The budgets were also modest – the median size was $US 320,000. In 2005, there was a surge of 14 JGPs – probably as an effect of the UNDG Joint Programme Guidance Note having been circulated the year before and the UN reform process moving ahead. The second part of the decade saw a rise in the median budgeted programme size to $US 2 million and the total

[12] Please see Annex 7 for UNDG's definitions of fund management modalities.

number of JGPs rose dramatically in 2008 and 2009. This can partly be explained by the additional of MDG-F resources. However, the largest average size of JGPs was in 2010 ($US 7 million), which was after the MDG-F contributions were made.

Twenty-four different UN entities have participated in at least one JGP and UNFPA, UNDP, UNICEF and former UNIFEM have been the most frequent agencies, participating in over 60 agencies each. UNDP, UNFPA and former UNIFEM were also by far the most prevalent in the role of lead agency. The specialized agencies WHO, ILO, UNESCO and FAO are the second most frequent participants. The majority of JGPs are made up of three to four participating UN agencies. One-third of the JGP have five or more participating UN agencies – some have over 11. Generally, the size of the planned budget grows with the number of UN actors. However, a significant number of JGPs with seven or eight participating UN agencies have an inexplicably small budget (under $US 350,000).

Africa has the greatest number of JGPs and accounts for the largest portion (55%) of the total planned financial value of the JGP portfolio from 2006 to 2010. The Asia/Pacific and the LAC regions account for 14% each of the total planned financial value of the JGP portfolio, but in LAC the individual JGPs are much smaller in size.

Multi-sectoral JGPs are few, but they have large budgets that account for 33% of the aggregated planned financial value of the JGP portfolio. In terms of number of JGPs, the EVAW thematic area is the largest – roughly accounting for just less than one-third of all JGPs and one-third of the aggregated planned financial value of the JGP portfolio. JGPs in the governance area are almost as numerous as EVAW JGPs. However, they have much smaller budgets that amount to only 13% of the aggregated planned financial value of the JGP portfolio – which is similar to the value of the health (13%) and economic empowerment (9%) JGPs. The number and value of the education, trafficking and HIV/AIDS JGPs are only a few percent each. Only five JGPs representing four thematic areas have objectives with a conflict-related angle.

Core funds from the participating UN agencies are the most important source of funds – benefitting 62% to 72% of the JGPs from 2006 to 2010. Meanwhile, the MDG-F is the most important single source of non-core funds during 2006 to 2010 (13%). Other trust funds – UN Trust Fund for the Elimination of Violence against Women, One UN funds, the UN Trust Fund for Human Security, the UN Peace-Building Fund, the UN Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking and the UN Democracy Fund – account for the funding to 16% of the JGPs from 2006 to 2010. Bilateral, OCED-DAC country contributions to JGPs at the inception of the programme have been made by Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Ireland, Italy, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the UK. Other national governments have also provided resources – financial or in-kind – for at least 13 JGPs.

As many as 56% JGPs have been fully funded from the start. The pass-through and parallel funding modalities are the most common – amounting to about a third each of the total number of JGPs from 2006 to 2010. However, the parallel funded JGPs are smaller in financial size – making up only 16% of the planned financial value of the JGP portfolio. Pooled JGPs are less common (11%) and financially very small – 2% of the planned financial value of the JGP portfolio. JGPs funded through a combination of modalities make up 17% of the JGPs but 37% of the aggregate financial value.

This chapter documents the qualitative findings of the portfolio overview. It is based on information that has been gathered from evaluations/reviews, other assessments, documents and consultations with over 20 stakeholders. The first section discusses the qualitative sources – stakeholder informants, evaluations/reviews and other documents. The second part of this chapter outlines the issues, concerns and the information needs that have been raised by the different sources of qualitative information.

SOURCES OF QUALITATIVE INFORMATION

Three sources for qualitative data were used in the analytical overview of the JGP portfolio. Each is discussed in the sections that follow.

JGP Evaluations/Reviews to Date

There appears to be very few evaluations and reviews of JGPs from 2001 to 2010. The team has only uncovered four evaluations and 16 reviews/mid-term evaluations – including the 11 mid-term evaluations of the JGPs that are funded by the "gender window" of the MDG-F. There are three assessments covering programmes that were initiated in the period 2001 to 2005. The evaluations and reviews are of varying quality – many of which are found to be lacking in quality. Most do not analyse the joint aspect of the JGPs. Since most are reviews, there is considerable focus on the programming process. Although a number of the programmes analysed by the evaluations/reviews have a human rights perceptive in the overall goal and outcomes, the evaluations/reviews have tended to be been very weak in assessing the rights based approach.

Figure 4.1: *Table of JGP Reviews and Evaluations*

Country	Assessment type	Name of programme	Timeframe	Theme	Assessed
1. India	Review	Coordinated HIV/AIDS and STD response through capacity-building and awareness (CHARCA)	2003 - 07	HIV/AIDS	2006
2. DRC	Review	La prévention et la réponse aux violences sexuelles faites aux femmes, aux jeunes et aux enfants	2005 - 08	EVAW	2007
3. Angola	Review	Joint Gender Programme	2005 - 08	Multi-sectoral	
4. Mauritania	Final evaluation	Support to involve women in decision making process	2006 - 07	Governance	2007
5. LAC regional	Final evaluation	Engendering Budgets	2006 - 08	Economic empowerment	2008
6. Albania	Mid-term evaluation	NSGE-DV – Advancing Democratic Governance -	2008 - 10	Governance	2009
7. Haiti	Final evaluation	Supporting Women's Political Participation –	2007 - 08	Governance	2009
8. Bangladesh	Review	Joint Programme on Maternal and Neonatal Morbidity reduction - REVIEW	2007 - 10	Health	2010
9. Timor Leste	Mid-term evaluation	Supporting gender equality and women's rights in Timor Leste –	2008 - 11	Governance	2010

10. Morocco	Mid-term evaluation	Fight against gender-based violence through the empowerment of women and girls	2008 - 10	EVAW	2010
11. Jordan	Final evaluation	Support to effective women's participation in public life at the local municipal level	2008 - 10	Governance	2010
12. Namibia	Mid-term evaluation	Setting things right -towards equality and equity -	2009 - 12	Multi-sectoral	2010
13. Bolivia	Mid-term evaluation	Productive patrimonial assets building & citizenship programme for women in extreme poverty	2008 - 11	Economic empowerment	2010
14. Brazil	Mid-term evaluation	Inter-agency Brazil - Programme for the Promotion of Gender and Ethnic-Racial Equality	2008 - 10	Governance	2010
15. Colombia	Mid-term evaluation	Integral strategy for the prevention and awareness of gender-based violence	2008 - 11	EVAW	2010
16. Guatemala	Mid-term evaluation	Fortaleciendo la Institucionalidad de las mujeres en Guatemala	2008 - 11	Governance	2010
17. Nicaragua	Mid-term evaluation	Promoting Women's Participation and Gender Responsive Budgeting	2008 - 11	Economic Empowerment	2010
18. Occupied Palestinian Territories	Mid-term evaluation	Gender Equality - Social, Political and Economic	2008 - 11	Governance	2011
19. Ethiopia	Mid-term evaluation	Leave no women behind	2009 - 12	Integrated	2011
20. Vietnam	Mid-term evaluation	Gender Equality in Vietnam	2009 - 11	Governance	2011

Other Relevant JP Documents

The team tried to locate other studies, reports and assessments that could be of relevance to this study. This has been challenging and yielded limited results.[13] Nevertheless, the following documents have been used:

- A significant assessment effort of JPs was the cross-sectoral review[14] that was commissioned by UNDG in 2006 to enhance efficiency and effectiveness of JPs (please see section 0).[15] Covering 160 JPs from 1999 to 2005 and including case study reports from 14 countries, this report offers the most comprehensive and analytical assessment of the effectiveness and efficiency of JPs to date.
- In 2004 UNICEF's Executive Director prepared a report to the Executive Board concerning UNICEF experience in joint programming.
- In 2006, UNDP, UNICEF and UNFPA prepared a report to their executive boards on the implementation experience of joint

[13] Others have found documentation on JPs to be difficult to come by. The 2009 review of the Gender Programme in Albania mentioned that attempts were made to search for other evaluations on other JPs to build on the experience, but little was found.
[14] UNDG. *Enhancing the Effectiveness and Efficiency of Joint Programmes: Lessons Learned from a United Nations Development Group Review.* 2006.
[15] In the last chapter, this study provided data that allowed comparisons for data on median size of JPs and their duration.

programming and JPs by UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF since 2004.

- Among the Delivering as One evaluations undertaken in 2010 – Cape Verde, Albania, Mozambique, Vietnam, Uruguay and Rwanda – assessed GEWE efforts to some degree.
- The mid-term evaluations of the MDG-F covered dozens JPs in a range of sectors. The Fund has prepared aggregate analyses for three other sectors that provide an overview. Meta-analyses of the evaluations are currently under way. A meta-evaluation of the 11 JGPs resourced by the MDG-F is expected to be ready later this year.

Stakeholders

As discussed in section 0, this study has identified information needs issues by consulting with a range of stakeholders from within the UN system. These include HQ staff concerned with gender equality, JPs or evaluations; and field level staff including RCs, JP coordinators and UN Women country representatives. While there is a general coherence among the interviewed stakeholders on what information is needed and what the challenges are that the JPs face, the weight given to different issues is typically a function of each stakeholder's specific area of work and position. For a rights-based stakeholder analysis for this evaluation, please see Annex 4.

ISSUES AND INFORMAITON NEEDS

This section documents the issues and information needs raised by stakeholders who were consulted for this study and the evaluations, reviews and other documents that have been examined. The issues and needs have been divided into five thematic areas – the quality or nature of the JGP's "jointness"; the design and design processes of the JGPs; the effectiveness of JGPs in terms of results; national level partnerships, national ownership and people centred approaches of JGPs and, efficiency an operational effectiveness of JGPs. The aim of this section is to provide a well-rounded and analytical account of the issues and information needs. While the sources of the information for this section are provided in the text, the text is not necessarily organised by the different sources (stakeholders, evaluations, reviews). Furthermore, although efforts have been made to draw upon as many evaluations/reviews as possible, you will find that some evaluations/reviews feature more frequently in the text. This is because they have offered more reflections and/or raised issues and needs more clearly. Meanwhile, some evaluations/review have offered no or minimal insights for this study. The UNDG 2006 review of JPs is referred to in several sections as a means of illustrating concurrence with more recent assessments – which suggests that certain issues have remained important throughout the decade.

Quality of Jointness

The definition of a JP (rendered in section 1.3) provides a basic set of criteria that need to be met for the programme to be recognised as a JP. As pointed out in a number of evaluations, it is fairly easy for a programme to pass as joint. However, stakeholders and evaluations hold that JPs vary considerably in terms of their "jointness" and therefore determining the **degree of jointness** is a pertinent question.

A number of stakeholders mentioned that some JPs could be joint in name only. For instance, it was pointed out that since JPs offer one of the few means of transferring funds legally between agencies, some JGPs may, upon closer inspection, be more of an inter-agency arrangement than a true JP: to boost its disbursement rate at the end of the year, an agency could join a pooled JP.

JPs that are actively joint in all possible ways – design, governance, implementation, monitoring, reporting, co-operation with government actors, resource mobilisation and advocacy – appear to be rare. The evaluations/reviews reveal that most programmes seem to lie somewhere in between "joint by name" and "fully and actively joint". The 2006 UNDG Review held that while joint "data gathering and dissemination exercises present an excellent platform to introduce and benefit from a well coordinated joint programme", only to a certain degree had UN country teams in the period 2001-2005 recognized the opportunities and perceived benefits of working together in this manner. Thus, it concluded, "joint programmes have yet to optimally exploit the UN's partnership potential."

This conclusion strongly resonates with the more recent JGP reviews and with many of the stakeholders' perspectives, suggesting that the UN development effort has yet to address the issues raised by the 2006 UNDG review. Several evaluations point out that JGPs often resemble a loosely connected set of outputs (e.g. programmes in Vietnam, Guatemala, Namibia and Mauritania.)

The JGP that appears to operate with the highest degree of jointness is in Albania. The review of this JGP noted that working collaboratively and the internal coordination of agency activities permits the four UN agencies involved to have more synergies and a greater combined effect. Not only was the coordination between UN agencies much improved, but also it was moreover having the side effect of improving coordination and collaboration between line ministries. Nevertheless, the Review recommended that the UN partners should constantly consider "how to make the synergies function most effectively, and create the most snowball effect."

The mid-term evaluation of the JGP in Timor-Leste (MDG-F) provided a tool to analyse the degree of jointness based on the structure of the results framework. This has been adapted and included in Box 1.

A fundamental advantage of JPs is that, in theory, they **reduce duplication**. With a couple of exceptions, this was not discussed in most of the review/evaluations. However, the UNDG JP Review from 2006 found evidence of duplication being avoided. It stated that "features unique to joint programmes, such as joint needs-assessment, joint monitoring and evaluation, collaborative decision-making, streamlined government dialogue and or enhanced government participation in key multi-agency decision making bodies have facilitated a reduction in duplicative activities across UN agencies as well as between UN agencies and their development partners." Following this logic and given that some of the other reviews and evaluations maintained that many of these features were not consistently part of the JGPs, some duplicative efforts may indeed be happening – although we can deduce that duplicative programmes have probably been reduced.

Some stakeholders reflected on the **nature of "jointness"** in terms of the balance of roles played by the participating UN agencies. One indicator of jointness suggested by stakeholders is the extent that UN agencies participate as equals in the programme.[16] None of the reviews and evaluations analyse this aspect of the partnerships among UN agencies in JPs.

There was a divergence in views concerning the **value of JPs**. Some held that JPs are only of value if they improve efficiency and effectiveness. Others, who regarded JPs as fundamental for UN reform, saw JPs as having a more intrinsic value. Most

stakeholders generally held that once a programme was formulated as joint, the more joint the implementation process, the better. However, there were also some differences in views as to whether maximum jointness was an ideal to aim for in all instances, or whether the circumstances governing each situation would determine the appropriate level of jointness. A useful contribution of the evaluation should be to determine to what extent the level of jointness leads to better results.

The UNDG JP Review stated that JPs **knowledge and expertise sharing,** a common commitment for results and a more open dialogue among UN country team members were an important aspect of jointness. A number of stakeholders held there were gaps in overall knowledge management of JGPs. Until this study, there has not been one comprehensive database containing information of existing JGPs. As this study established, data on JGPs has been scattered in different databases or not entered into any database at all. Likewise, repositories for reports, evaluations and reviews concerning JGPs have not been created for the JGP community. How knowledge is managed jointly at country and regional levels would be useful for the evaluation to examine.

Finally, a top question among stakeholders was to what degree do JGPs **add value to results**: to what degree do JGPs add value to the efforts of strengthening the accountability of duty-bearers and supporting rights-holders in demanding their rights? What added value does the joint programming

Box 1: Determining the Robustness of a Joint Programme

Adapted from Mid-Term Evaluation of the MDG-F Joint Programme of "Supporting Gender Equality and Women's Rights in Timor-Leste"

A Joint Programme involves two or more participating UN Agencies working together to achieve a common result. This common result could, however, be an outcome and/or an output (and even an impact!). One way of determining the robustness of jointness would be from the way a results framework is structured.

At the simplest level, each of at least two participating agencies is responsible for its own outcome (as illustrated by Model 1 below) that is linked to a common UNDAF outcome. Greater jointness is achieved in Model 2, in which at least two participating agencies are each responsible for the delivery of their respective outputs, although these lead to a common outcome.

Jointness is maximised in Model 3 in which at least two participating agencies are responsible for a common output. This means that while the agencies are each implementing their own activities in accordance with their respective expertise and mandates, they are working towards the achievement of a basic result – the output. It follows that the output cannot be achieved if the participating agencies do not complete their activities. While the three models can be considered as joint programmes, it is obvious that the first model is a weaker version compared to the second and the third.

Examples of Jointness: 2 Agencies, 2 Outcomes, 3 Models

Result	*Model 1: Low jointness*	*Model 2: Medium jointness*	*Model 3: High jointness*
Outcome 1	**Agency 1**	**Agency 1 & 2**	**Agency 1 & 2**
Output 1.1	Agency 1	Agency 1	Agency 1 & 2
Output 1.2	Agency 1	Agency 2	Agency 1 & 2
Outcome 2	**Agency 2**	**Agency 1 & 2**	**Agency 1 & 2**
Output 2.1	Agency 2	Agency 1	Agency 1 & 2
Output 2.2	Agency 2	Agency 2	Agency 1 & 2

[16] The JPs financed through pooled funding are by design less joint in management terms, since one agency takes responsibility for management. Nevertheless, in theory, pooled programmes should be joint and equal in their steering structure and in the management of the knowledge gained from the programme.

process bring? What added value does each UN participating agency bring? To what degree do agencies see their role as adding value to the JGP? One stakeholder held that when there is no common leadership in a JP and each participating UN agency follows parallel plans with its traditional counterpart, there is no added value in terms of results and efficiencies – "Thus the JP represents a clear failure, where on 1+1+1 is not =3 but -2".

In sum, stakeholders and evaluations/reviews directly or indirectly identified information needs and a number of questions about JGPs that relate to the degree and quality of the collaboration amongst the participating UN partners and the added value jointness brings to results. These include questions concerning conceptualisation, design, methodology, implementation, accountability, M&E, resource mobilisation, results, knowledge management and partnership relations:

1 To what extent was there a shared vision for each JGP among the participating agencies? To what extent were the **conceptualisation processes** collaborative undertakings? To what extent did the participating agencies jointly conduct underlying analyses?

2 To what extent do the **programme designs** establish coherence between the roles of the agencies? To what extent are the JGPs well thought through and built on the strengths and areas of expertise of each participating agency? For instance, have JGPs capitalised on the added value of specialised agencies? How was the participation by the different UN agencies determined? Were there trade-offs between coherence and inclusion? To what extent were any potential risks borne equally among the participating agencies?

3 To what extent were differences among participating agencies in **methodology and approach** (prioritization of areas and populations, methodology for community mobilization, modality of delivery of technical assistance) identified and resolved?

4 To what extent are/were UN agencies participating as equal partners in the **implementation** processes? To what extent were implementation plans shared and synchronized among the participating agencies? To what extent do participating agencies implement activities jointly? (Or are they a loosely connected set of activities, without coherence?)

5 To what extent is there joint **accountability** of the JGPs? What reporting systems have been used by JGPs? To what extent have they been joint?

6 To what extent is the design and implementation of **monitoring and evaluation** efforts undertaken jointly?

7 To what extent have agencies jointly addressed **knowledge management** needs at country, regional and HQ levels?

8 To what extent has **resource mobilisation** been jointly undertaken, capitalising on each agency's comparative advantages in this area?

9 To what extent the level of jointness leads to better **results**? To what extent do JGPs deliver coherent and joint outputs and outcomes that add up to something greater (such as a combined synergetic effects) than a series of activities? To what extent have **advocacy efforts** been undertaken jointly and to what extent has "jointness" contributed to any successes?

10 To what extent do **partners perceive** the UN as operating differently under the JGPs? What do partners consider as main advantages?

JGP Design

To optimally take advantage of the UN's partnership potential, a JP has to be well designed. As stated in the UNDG Joint Programme Review, a JP's design "should reflect deeper country-level commitment and coordinated assistance on a scale that could not be achieved through a single agency project or collaborative activities."
The JPs that were reviewed by this 2006 study "almost unanimously called for increased education

on the identification and design of JPs through enhanced UNDG guidance and through the RC system at the country level." It found that in some of the earlier JPs, participating agencies even designed their part of the programme in isolation of the others.

The more recent evaluations/reviews also uncovered several problems with design. According to the MDG-F, the formulation phase has been the most common challenge for all JPs, regardless of sector. While the MGD-F evaluations generally confirmed the alignment of the programme goals with government priorities, most had overly ambitious goals; some did not take into consideration available expertise nationally and internationally; some design process were too short, under-resourced or too long (the government priorities in the meantime changed); some had inadequate log frames; some did not take the local situation/developments sufficiently into consideration; and some did not involve government partners sufficiently.

There were good design examples too: the Ethiopia evaluation praised the JGP for its underlying design and conceptualisation. It used simple and direct approaches to address a range of MDG Goals, thereby making a deliberate contribution to the purpose of the MDG-F.

With the exception of the Albanian review, none of the evaluations or reviews commented on the extent the programmes had been designed from a rights-based study; or whether the principles of a rights-based approach had been applied during the design process.

A large majority of stakeholders strongly underlined the importance of analysing programme design and design processes of JGPs. Both stakeholders and evaluators deemed that the design and design process were determinants of how jointly a JP will be implemented in reality and how successful the programme will be in terms of results. As put by one stakeholder: "getting it right, does all start with the right design... the kinds of assistance we are delivering through our joint programmes should be intrinsically different to what we did before. If it isn't, there may be something wrong with the underlying logic and design of the joint programme."

There was a strong desire for greater information on the conceptualisation process: What was the impetus for the JP? Do the complexity of the issues, high ambitions and the expected results warrant a JP approach? Do expected results; the intentions to improve intra-UN coordination or other factors drive the formulation of JGPs? What roles did the different actors play? What analyses were used?, etc. They also called for analyses regarding the extent to which various design characteristics contributed to results.

Questions that were raised that relate to design (some overlap with the former "jointness section") include the following:

1. To what extent are the JGPs' **goals** rights-based and coherent with their respective UNDAF? To what extent are the goals realistic, i.e. in step with the resources, capacities and situation at hand? To what extent were JGPs designed to be based more on the availability of funds as opposed to needs? To what extent did the level of complexity, the ambitions and the expected results warrant a joint programming approach?

2. To what extent has the design process integrated human rights principles? To what extent do JGPs designs and intervention strategies encompass a **rights-based approach**?

3. To what extent are JGP intervention strategies well adapted to the **socio-cultural context**? What actions did JGPs envisaged to respond to obstacles that may arise from the political and socio-cultural background? Were risk assessments conducted in the design phase and were mitigation strategies adopted?

4. What **analyses** were the JGPs based on? Did the JGPs rely on a gender and rights-based analyses? To what extent were JGPs linked to CRC and CEDAW concluding observations? In conflicted-affected countries, were conflict assessments used? Were capacity assessments undertaken?

5. To what extent is **capacity development** of

rights-holders and duty-bearers a central tenet of JGP design? To what extent do JGPs have capacity development plans?

Effectiveness in Terms of Results

The JGP evaluations and reviews report some achievements, but most of these assessments have not been undertaken at the end or final stages of a JGP, when most effects are best assessed. Furthermore, there is little analysis on how the "jointness" may have added value to the results. Would, for instance, five agencies that programmed separately have led to similar results? Give the great paucity of final evaluations of JGPs, stakeholders generally gave top priority to that the future evaluation provides information on results.

The discussion on results with stakeholders and the analysis of effects in the evaluation/review reports have focused on seven types of effects. These are i) gender equality, women's empowerment and human rights effects, ii) capacity-building effects among duty-bearers and rights-holders, iii) advocacy effects, iv) process results from an RBA perspective, v) intangible effects, vi) synergetic effects, and vii) good practices. These seven types are discussed below.

To begin with, based on the unique legitimacy of its universal membership and on its diverse roles as a standard-setter, capacity-builder and advocate; the UN has a unique role to play in promoting GEWE in developing countries. Stakeholders rose the question to what extent JGPs have capitalised on this to produce enhanced effects in relation to **gender equality, women's empowerment and women's human rights**. Likewise, information was sought regarding the extent to which the objectives set out by the Beijing Platform for Action and Millennium Declaration are better addressed when UN agencies collaborate in a JGP.

Capacity development is a core function of the UN development agencies and a central tenet of achieving the MDGs. Capacity development is furthermore vital to the human rights-based approach, which involves building the capacity of duty-bearers to fulfil their obligations towards rights-holders, as well as that of rights-holders to demand their rights from duty-bearers.

The 2003 *Guidance Note on Joint Programmes* states that JPs should have a focus on capacity building. Nevertheless, the UNDG Joint Programme Review from 2006 founded that of the 21 JPs reviewed, only nine of the JPs explicitly addressed national capacity needs. The JGP evaluations/reviews reveal mixed results in the area of capacity enhancement and monitoring of capacity building efforts. For instance, follow-up of training initiatives has generally been poor. Interviewed stakeholders and the evaluations suggest that a better understanding of what results have been achieved in capacity development is needed.

A **rights-based approach** entails that a person is a subject of his or her rights and an active participant in his or her development. Thus since a rights-based approach aims to contribute to the practicality and active enjoyment of rights, the realisation of human rights is both an outcome goal and a process goal. With regard to the former, it is important for the future evaluation to examine to what extent root causes to gender inequality have been addressed by JGPs. It furthermore pertinent to assess the extent to which globally accepted norms and standards in the area of GEWE have been perpetuated with support from the JGPs in legislative work, statistical work and training efforts.

Human rights process goals involve applying the principles of participation, equality, non-discrimination, accountability and the rule of law throughout the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation processes of JGPs. While some of the evaluations/reviews comment to some extent on results that further the realisation of human rights, none of the evaluations/reviews assess the quality of the rights-based approaches or comment on the attainment of process goals as such, with the exception of the review of the JGP in Albania.

As pointed out by stakeholders, JGPs create space for political dialogue and offer an excellent platform **to jointly advocate** with one voice on the crosscutting issues of GEWE. The question is

whether these opportunities have been fully exploited and whether they have yielded results. The evaluations do not offer enough clues. While a few mention that advocacy efforts have taken place, none analyse whether joint efforts have **enhanced advocacy effects**, except for the Albania evaluation which states: "Advocacy efforts had been strengthened on (domestic violence) thanks to the unifying of the efforts of the four UN agencies, increased information exchange leading to strong and clear advocacy messages."

Both stakeholders and evaluation/reviews considered **intangible effects** of JGPs. The UNDG Review held that:

> Knowledge and expertise sharing, a common commitment for results, and a more open dialogue between UN country team members were often noted in the case studies as significant outcomes of joint programmes. The case studies have revealed a valuable interplay between theme/working group discussions and the development and implementation of joint programmes. The case studies have also demonstrated enhanced learning between government ministries as a result of their participation in joint programme management.

It furthermore noted that at times participating agencies in JP arrangement found value in the partnering process itself, believing that the improved working relationships and collaboration among the UNCT generally enhances the UN's support of national government objectives. Likewise, some of the MDG-F evaluations mention that the JP process has boosted trust among agencies, improved inter-agency knowledge and enhanced communications. Some stakeholders were interested in what types of intangible effects were achieved (improved communication, better collaboration, more information-sharing, cross-agency learning, stronger UN spirit, access to wider networks, etc.) and what benefits they bring. In the context of UN reform, are JGPs contributing to a new culture of collaboration among UN agencies? Some wondered if JGPs sometimes disempowered an agency, thus creating an opposite dynamic.

Reform of the UN development system to promote effectiveness and sustainability focuses on coherence, co-ordination and collaboration. This includes not only *within* (joint) programmes, but also *among* programmes. Many stakeholders were extremely interested in whether a JGP in a country can result in **synergetic effects** with other UN programmes at country level, particularly those in other sectors. They wanted to know whether JGPs have an influence on gender equality mainstreaming in other UN programmes. Furthermore, stakeholders question whether JGPs have affected increased collaboration, coordination and information exchange within the UNCT in relation to GEWE.

The Albania review noted that more attention could be paid to ensuring that the other JPs in the country integrate gender equality concerns and operates in synergy with the JGP. It suggested, for example, that work in the education sector on inclusive education could easily cover the specific issues related to girls highlighted by CEDAW. Work on the social protection system need to be effectively enmeshed with the JGP's work on protecting women from domestic violence.

Stakeholders – particularly those based in country offices – saw a great need for information on **good practices** to be collected. Some of the evaluations (e.g. OPT, Namibia and Ethiopia JGP mid-term evaluations) point out the existence of innovative approaches. Would these innovations have been likely for a single agency programme? Also of interest among stakeholders was the extent to which JGPs have had potential for replication and/or scaling up.

1 To what extent and in what ways are JPs adding value and contributing to the objectives set by the **Beijing Platform for Action**? Is there evidence that JGPs address GEWE more effectively than single agencies?

2 To what extent have JGPs contributed to **capacity development** of both rights-holders and duty-bearers? Have the JGPs been able to offer contextually relevant and high quality

gender equality mainstreaming training to senior policy makers, focal persons and NGO executive staff?

3 To what extent has the UN's role in advocating for the national application of **international norms**, standards and actions on human rights and global issues implied intensified efforts in policy advisory services through JGPs? Do JGPs perpetuate international norms and standards in legislative work, statistical work and training efforts? To what extent have human rights process goals been achieved by applying the principles of participation, equality, non-discrimination, accountability and the rule of law throughout the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation processes of the JGPs?

4 What, if any, joint **advocacy efforts** have JGPs undertaken? What have been the effects?

5 To what extent have **intangible effects** been achieved? To what extent have JGPs contributed to inter-agency networking, informal information exchange, a constructive team spirit, a conscious feeling of being a member of one UN family, etc. among the UN agencies? To what extent have JGPs led to improved communication, synergies, coordination and collaboration among the different national-level implementing partner organisations (including CSOs) and among line ministries? To what extent have JGPs enhanced communication between the UN and governments?

6 To what extent have JGPs achieved **synergetic effects** with other UN programmes in other sectors or areas of work?

7 What **good practices** have been identified? To what extent do JGPs have potential for replication and up scaling? To what extent have JGPs made efforts to promote future up scaling?

Sustainability, National Level Partnerships, National Ownership, & People Centred Approaches

Joint programmes do not exclusively belong to the UN – they also belong to the national duty-bearers and rights-holders. The High Level Panel report "Delivering as One" stated that reform to improve the coherence of the UN system must be underpinned by the principles of national ownership *and* people-centred approaches:

> National sovereignty and national ownership of development plans must remain the bedrock of effective development. The system must be realigned to a demand-driven approach and to programmes delivered as close to beneficiaries as possible.

The Aid Effectiveness principles of the Paris Declaration (ownership, alignment, management for development results and mutual responsibility) and the Accra Agenda for Action further place ownership at the centre of development co-operation.

National ownership is connected with sustainability. Without an adequate level of ownership, a programme's sustainability is likely to be lower. However, as pointed out by one stakeholder, sustainability is not guaranteed by ownership. This section will discuss information needs relating to ownership, sustainability, the UN partnership with governments and people-centred approaches.

The reviews/evaluations provide a mixed picture of **national ownership**. There are reviews that state that national ownership is being "consciously recognized and exercised" (Timor Leste, Colombia) and others (Namibia, Nicaragua and Bolivia) that assessed the level of ownership to be generally insufficient. In Namibia the JGP has created structures that run parallel to the government structures and most government partners felt they had limited ownership and power to influence the key decisions in the programme.

One of the JGP reviews provides some insights on ownership – a concept that it found was often understood to mean something different by different stakeholders. It contemplated ownership as follows:

- Stakeholders felt that there was ownership

because government partners had been involved and consulted from the beginning. However, consulting and involvement does not lead to owning. On the other hand, the report concluded that joint decision-making is an indicator of joint ownership.

- While the JGP was firmly embedded in government strategies and legal frameworks, the review questioned whether this actually represented genuine ownership when budgets were not allocated accordingly.
- Even where there was solid political will, ownership was to some degree limited by capacity and resources. Poorly backed gender focal points in ministries had little motivation and limited capacity – particularly since they have other responsibilities besides gender equality.

To take ownership requires not only commitment but also some **degree of capacity**. In Vietnam, the JGP was designed without adequate attention to the capacities needed to carry its objectives out. The JGP in Timor Leste faced a constraint in balancing the element of national ownership with the management efficiency of the programme.

The issues that lend themselves to being addressed through JPs are horizontal, complex and inter-disciplinary like GEWE. However, these are precisely the issues where governments in the north and south face significant challenges. This has implications for interpreting national ownership and how to approach capacity building. As stated by one stakeholder, "You need to build capacity not only for implementation of the components of the programme in line ministries, but also the national policy and strategy development that needs to bring it all together... so there is this bigger dimension behind every JP – irrespective of the sector – which relates to how governments address complex policy challenges that cut across the cabinet table."

The evaluations and reviews generally assessed the JGPs as very weak in relation to future **sustainability**– although some evaluators saw some potential for sustainability (OPT and Namibia). A number of reviews saw a need for an institutional and financial sustainability plan as well as exit strategies. One stakeholder believed the future evaluation could shine light on the enablers and disincentives for sustainability and to assess to what extent government ownership and leadership make a difference for sustainability. Does, for instance, leadership from a government make a difference for sustainability?

A few stakeholders found it very relevant to study how **people-centred** the JGPs were. To what extent had civil society and rights-holders been involved in the design and implementation processes? Did the JP implementation approach promote civil society? Or, as is feared by a couple of stakeholders, does it detract civil society involvement? The review of the JGPs in, for instance, OPT concluded that while non-governmental actors where involved in the programme, they had not been involved in decision processes and therefore a meaningful participation of non-governmental institutions was an element that could be further improved. Meanwhile, in Namibia, the review found that while civil society actors had been consulted during the design phase, they had been left out during the implementation process.

According to the UNDG *Guidance Note*, JPs are specifically intended to **strengthen how the UN organizations programme jointly with governments**. If the JGP is structured so that the government has a less fragmented interaction with its UN partners, is this conducive to greater ownership? Or is it possible that the opposite occurs in some cases? One stakeholder reported that some governments have realised that since JPs promoted coordination among government agencies and UN agencies alike, it paved the way for effective national leadership. However, this was not the case in many countries, and some national stakeholders may even prefer a fragmented approach. A few reviews commented on that engaging with the UN agencies in a JGP reduced transaction costs for governments, but this was not confirmed by all reviews/evaluations.

The information needs that the evaluation could address in this area are listed below:

1 How strong is government **ownership**? To what extent are the JGPs aligned with government priorities and meeting effective demand? To what extent do governments exercise joint decision-making with UN participating agencies and provide proactive leadership? To what extent have governments been involved in the conceptualisation process and consulted along the way? To what extent have government shown commitment by providing resources (financial and/or in-kind) to the JGPs?

2 To what extent were the **capacities of government** and participating national agencies carefully considered in relation to their respective ability to coordinate, manage and provide inputs (cash, supplies, in-kind or technical expertise)? To what extent have operating capacities been created and/or reinforced in national partners? To what extent have JGPs been faced with balancing national ownership with the management efficiency of the programme?

3 To what extent have the target populations taken active roles in JGP design and implementation processes? What role has **civil society** – in particular women's movements – played in the planning, design, implementation and monitoring of JGPs? To what extent are JGPs conducive/unfavourable with regard to involvement of civil society actors? To what extent have public/private national resources and/or counterparts been mobilized to contribute to JGPs' objective and produce results and impacts?

4 To what extent do JGPs have exit strategies that are geared toward sustainable phase-out of activities? Are the necessary foundations (leadership, commitment, capacities and resources) in place to ensure the **sustainability** of the results of JPs?

Efficiency and Operational Effectiveness

Central to the aim of promoting JPs within the context of UN reform was to reduce transaction costs for all partners (i.e. improve efficiency) and increase effectiveness. Stakeholders and reviews/evaluations often commented on whether in JGPs in fact lower transaction costs. While many held that transaction costs are likely to be reduced in the long run, transaction costs for individual agencies often appear to be higher in a JP, particularly in the beginning. However, several stakeholders pointed out that if five single UN agency programmes are compared with one JGP with five UN agencies collaborating jointly, the total level of transaction costs for the latter would most probably be less than for the former.

There is no doubt that most JGPs have faced a number of challenges that have affected efficiency, timeliness and operational effectiveness. Below are some of the challenges that have been raised at least three times by the different evaluations / reviews and / or stakeholders consulted:

- Insufficient **guidance** to UNCTs (at lease initially) on how to formulate, set up and implement JPs (There are not many more available tools.)
- Long **formulation** process – not lease because of inexperience and insufficient guidance – affected timeliness.
- **Turnover of staff** and time-consuming recruitment process.
- High turnover of **JPCs.** This was sometimes due to the difficult role he or she has been faced with regarding coordinating the different agencies. Insufficient guidance and status vis-à-vis the partners were also mentioned as a problem.
- **Lack of harmonised** reporting requirements, systems and procedures among the UN agencies. This caused slow release of funds.
- Lack of clarity regarding **roles** in the programme – JPCs, programme management

unit, the various coordination mechanisms, RCs.

- **Insufficient leadership** from RCs and the heads of agencies. Sometimes not all of the governance and coordination structures – particularly at the strategic level –have functioned as planned.
- **Sub-standard logframes and indicators**.
- Poor quality **monitoring and evaluation** systems.
- **Accountability** and reporting practices that did not sufficiently capture effects of the programme as required by RBM.

> "The programme is caught in a cycle of delays in reporting and funds disbursement resulting in rushed implementation, rushed liquidation and work overload for staff. There are delays in reporting and in schedule of implementation." – *2010 MDG Mid-Term Evaluation of JGP in Ethiopia*

Stakeholders all agreed that these challenges were not unique to JGPs, but common to many JPs, regardless of sector. Initial reviews of the mid-term evaluations of JPs supported by the MDG-Fund show a substantial level of similarities in relation to the challenges of achieving efficiency and operational effectiveness. The meta-evaluations currently being commissioned by the MDG-F are expected to collate these findings in each sector and present an overview.

Perhaps one feature related to operational effectiveness that may be unique to JGPs is that because gender equality and women's empowerment affords lower status, the UN often relies on its junior staff to work in this area. This was raised by a couple of stakeholders and one review which stated that the JGP "relied from the UN side to a large extent on junior staff, particularly interns and UN Volunteers, among whom there is relatively high turnover, meaning a lack of consistency in dealings with the government" (Vietnam.)

Stakeholders generally gave less priority to efficiency aspects and operational effectiveness for this evaluation, with the exception of a few JPCs who desired more good practice examples on efficient management of JPs. While these aspects were considered important, it was felt that a priority for this evaluation was to focus on results, national level partnerships, design of JGPs and their level of jointness. Furthermore, the issues of efficiency and operational effectiveness would be more relevant to address in a system-wide cross-sectoral study. It was a concern that the evaluation maintains its focus on the effectiveness of JGPs producing GEWE results and not be taken over by systemic efficiency issues that relate to all JPs in all sectors.

Based on the analyses of the previous chapters, this chapter presents the strategic priorities that have emerged. It also discusses evaluability and presents considerations and recommendations for the drafters of the terms of reference.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

It is particularly important for a large-scale, strategic and joint evaluation like this one that significant efforts are made to ensure clear, focused and purposeful terms of reference to guide the evaluation team. This means that prioritisations need to be made. Fortunately, this study has demonstrated that there is considerable concurrence regarding the overall priorities for the evaluation. First, there is a common perspective on the use of the evaluation. While it will be used to *render judgment about the overall merit or worth* of JGPs, the principle uses will be to *facilitate improvements* and *generate knowledge*. These uses should guide the scope and approach of the evaluation.

Second, the analysis reveals that the priorities for the evaluation's strategic scope converge on three areas. In relation to these areas, the data suggest that effectiveness, sustainability and possibly impact are the dominant evaluation criteria to assess the JGPs. Relevance issues are less prominent but still pertinent. Efficiency issues were considered less important. The areas of convergence are discussed in the sections that follow.

Results and Added Value of JGPs

The first area of convergence relates to whether JGPs are **effective in producing results** and how/whether **collaborating together adds value** to these results. The call for inquiry into this area comes from a combination of UN policy directives, UN Women's mandate, the lack of evaluative evidence and several types of information needs that stakeholders consulted by this study have expressed:

- There are several General Assembly resolutions mentioned in section 2 that urge the UN development system to **enhance accountability** in the area of gender equality and women's empowerment.
- The policy directives outlined in section 2 have recommended that the UN develop improved guidance on the **nature, quality and effectiveness of JPs** in support of gender equality and the empowerment of women.
- There is a relative **paucity of strategic level assessments** of specific UN efforts to address women's empowerment, women's rights and gender equality.
- There is a **lack of evaluative evidence** relating to JGPs.
- With its mandate being to lead and coordinate the overall efforts of the UN system to support the full realization of women's rights and opportunities (i.e. promoting coherence and acting as a global broker of knowledge and experience), **UN Women needs evidence** to inform its policy development.
- Stakeholders consulted by this study express a strong need for information on the degree and nature of collaboration amongst participating UN partners in JGPs and how JPs **add value to GEWE results**.

- Stakeholders prioritise the analysis of JGP design and design processes because i) stakeholders consider **JGP design and design processes** as determinants of successful results, and ii) the JGP evaluations/reviews have identified several JGP design problems.
- Stakeholders desire information on effectiveness in relation to **several types of effects** including i) gender equality, women's empowerment and human rights results; ii) capacity development among duty-bearers and rights-holders; iii) advocacy effects iv) process results from an right-based approach perspective; v) intangible effects; vi) synergetic effects; and, vii) good practices.

This area of convergence could be captured by an overall aim of **assessing to what extent and in what ways collaborating in a JGP has enhanced the GEWE effects achieved by the participating UN agencies and their partners.** This would place effectiveness in terms of GEWE results in the centre of the evaluation and would link it with the concept of collaboration or "jointness". It would require the study of the nature and degree of jointness (in design processes, implementation processes, governance, resource mobilisation, communication, knowledge management) and what kind of collaboration contributed to better results. It would also entail studying the different types of effects; the strengths and weaknesses of JGPs in relation to producing effects; how the UN could improve JGPs so that they are more effective in producing results; and whether there are good practices to learn from.

Sustainability, National Level Partnerships, Ownership and People-centred Approaches

The second area where priorities converge relates to **sustainability** and how the JGPs interact with and support stakeholders at the country level. It involves **national ownership, people-centred approaches** and **UN partnerships with government**. There are a number of policy level documents that are concerned with these aspects and the question is to what extent JGPs are successful at addressing them:

- UNDG's *Guidance Note on Joint Programming* states that JPs are aimed to enhance the UN contribution in the current context of international development assistance, with a focus on **self-reliance and capacity building.**
- The Aid Effectiveness principles of the Paris Declaration and the Accra Agenda for Action place **ownership** at the centre of development cooperation.
- The High Level Panel report "Delivering as One" stated that reform to improve the coherence of the UN development system must be underpinned by the principles of **national ownership *and* people-centred approaches.**
- UN's commitment to **mainstreaming human rights** in all of its development work requires an approach of strengthening the accountability of duty-bearers and supporting rights-holders in demanding their rights.
- The UNDG *Guidance Note* states that JPs are specifically intended to strengthen how the UN organizations **programme jointly with governments**.

At the same time, stakeholders' information needs and the findings of the JGP evaluations/reviews call for inquiry into this area:

- Stakeholders require more analysis of what JGPs mean for ownership and joint

processes in the partnerships that the agencies enjoy with **governments and civil society**.

- The evaluations/reviews of JGPs concluded that **sustainability** of JGPs was low.
- Stakeholders require information and analysis of how **sustainability can be improved**.

This area of convergence could be captured by an overall aim of **assessing to what extent and in what ways JGPs have contributed to governments meeting their commitments to the Beijing Platform for Action and fulfilled their obligations towards women's and girl's human rights, while also supporting rights-holders demand their rights.** This would set the UN's national level partnerships with duty-bearers and rights-holders at the heart of the evaluation. It would cover the issues of national ownership, how effectively and sustainably the UN agencies programme jointly with governments and the extent to which JGP approaches are people-centred.

Synergies

The third and much smaller area of convergence relates to **synergies** between JGPs and other UN efforts:

- Reform of the UN development system to promote effectiveness and sustainability focuses on coherence, coordination and collaboration – not only *within* programmes but also ***among programmes***.
- Many stakeholders show a very high degree of interest in understanding whether and how a JGP in a country can result in **synergetic effects** with other UN programmes at country level. They want to know whether JGPs have an **influence** on the UN's overall gender equality mainstreaming efforts.
- Mainstreaming gender equality into all UN programmes presents most significant challenges for most agencies. Many stakeholders see JGPs as **a resource for mainstreaming**.
- Most of the JGP evaluations/reviews do not report on synergies and the few that did found there were **missed opportunities** to create them.

This area of convergence could be captured by an overall aim of **assessing to what extent and in what ways JGPs have contributed to improved gender equality mainstreaming and women's empowerment in other UN programmes and efforts at country level.** The focus here would be on synergetic effects with other UN efforts. It would require studying to what extent JGPs affected increased collaboration, coordination and information exchange within the UNCT in relation to GEWE.

EVALUABILITY

Programmes addressing gender equality and women's empowerment are inherently difficult to evaluate since they concern challenging and changing complex societal norms and dynamics. Given that the evaluation scope is global; involves multiple agencies; a range of sectors/thematic areas; and spans 10 years, the subject area presents challenges with regard to evaluability. Low evaluability not only implies difficulties during the evaluation process, it may increase costs because more effort and resources are needed to gather data. This section presents some of the challenges to evaluability and how they can be addressed by the evaluation.

Assessing Results

As with all programmes that aim at results that consist of social change, determining causality and attribution of results beyond direct outputs presents difficulties. To say with confidence that an intervention caused change, evidence has to be produced that shows that the intervention actually caused the change (i.e. nothing would have changed in the absence of the intervention – the intervention was *necessary*), and the intervention was the only cause of the change (nothing else was needed to bring about the change – the intervention was *sufficient*.)

The JGP evaluations/reviews indicate that JGPs usually have suboptimal log frames, indicators and monitoring systems. This is likely to present obstacles to assessing effectiveness and determining causality in the case of intermediate outcomes. However, because of the complexity and fluidity of development processes, causality may be difficult to determine even in the best of circumstance where there is quality baseline information and robust monitoring frameworks. When it is not possible to conclude what outcomes can be directly linked to a JGP, it will be necessary for the evaluation to determine whether there is evidence that suggests that a JGP is contributing to or has the likelihood of attaining longer-term goals; and whether necessary preconditions for successful results exists.

Another issue related to evaluating results is that this study has documented that there is a desire to obtain knowledge of a *range* of effects – synergetic effects, intangible effects and effects related to capacity development, human rights and empowerment. Identifying, analysing and assessing these different effects will require a number of different techniques and approaches.

Recommendation 1: The terms of reference should stipulate that the evaluation team presents how it will assess the different types of JGPs effects in its methodology.

Assessing "Jointness"

Evaluating to what extent "jointness" enhances results, would ideally require that control programmes be identified so that pairs of GEWE programmes – one joint and the other "single" – be compared. Unfortunately, it is unlikely that two comparable programmes can be found in the same country, being implemented at the same time in the same thematic area. However, by drawing on the knowledge and experience of UN staff and partner organisations, it would be possible to reconstruct how a single programme might have been different from a JP. Participatory techniques – such as collective analysis could be useful in this regard.

Recommendation 2: The terms of reference should request that the evaluation team consider ways to assess the added value of "jointness" in its methodology.

Integrating Human Rights

For most of the JGPs, human rights and/or gender equality are the primary focuses of the intervention. Although it is beyond the scope of this study to determine the evaluability of each JGP in detail, based on the intervention logic and goal structure, it appears that a significant proportion of the portfolio may have medium or high evaluability for integrating human rights and gender equality. Nevertheless, some JGPs – such as those from within the health sector –

have not consistently considered human rights dimensions in the design, implementation and monitoring. In these cases it will be more challenging to integrate human rights and gender equality in the evaluation process and analysis.

To address the evaluability challenges in terms of integrating human rights, a human rights-based stakeholder analysis will be critical to ensure that stakeholders who may not have been considered in the intervention are included in the evaluation. The evaluation team may also need to seek informants and documents that have useful information on human rights that may not have been captured by the intervention (e.g. statistics officers, other development agencies, civil society, academia, etc.)

A global evaluation spanning 60 countries will entail limitations to the amount of stakeholder participation that is practically possible. It will, however, be possible to ensure an acceptable level of participation in the country case studies. The evaluation team is likely to require support from the country offices to help organise meaningful participation of duty bearers and/or rights holders in the evaluation process.

Recommendation 3: The terms of reference should request that the evaluation team present how it will integrate human rights in its methodology.

Data and Time Lapse

Fundamental to any evaluation is the availability of data. The team has made a substantial effort to obtain as much data as possible on the JGP portfolio, but some data gaps remain. In particular, there is insufficient documentation about the JGPs that were initiated before 2006.

Just over half the programmes from 2001 to 2006 lack programme documents. It is even possible that some of these JPs were never initiated or changed into something else.

Most of the earlier JGPs are small-scale –80% are under $600,000 and more than one fifth are under $140,000. The time laps since the first part of the decade creates a couple of important challenges. First, small programmes are less likely to produce effects that are identifiable years later. Second, the fact that most of these programmes ended years ago entail that there will be less institutional memory to tap into for data.

On the other hand, the team has obtained programme documents for nearly 90% of the JGPs that were initiated between 2006 and 2010. A future appeal to the country offices is likely to yield more documents.

Since 2001, there have been some changes to the institutional environment of JPs. First, four of the earlier JGPs were designed before the 2003 *Guidance Note on Joint Programmes* were issued. Second, from 2007 onwards the following changes took place:

- Harmonisation of accounting standards, business practices and human resources management as well as further alignment of the UNDAF;
- Further alignment of UNDAFs to national processes;
- The MDG-Fund began funding JPs; and
- Delivering as One was piloted in eight countries.

To maximise the evaluation's utility, it will be important to assess JGPs that were conceptualised and implemented within the context of these changes.

A positive aspect of time lapse is that several of

the JGPs are coming or have come to a close, making it easier to assess end results. For evaluations that were initiated in 2006, there may even be a possibility of assessing medium-term effects.

Taking into consideration the challenges and opportunities related to the time lapse, combined with the issue of higher data reliability of the 2006 to 2010 JGPs, focusing the evaluation on JGPs initiated between 2006 and 2010 would be of greater evaluative worth.

Recommendation 4: The evaluation time scope should include JGPs from 2006 to 2010 to ensure data reliability and usefulness.

A Mixed Method Evaluation

For this evaluation to be considered useful, it must provide credible and valuable findings on how to improve JGPs and how to generate knowledge. This would involve gaining a deepened understanding of JGPs by capturing and communicating their "stories" so that these illustrate the results and relevant processes of JGPs for key stakeholders who make decisions about JGPs. Such inquiry would require a qualitative approach. This implies that data collection is undertaken by, i) document examination, ii) evaluator's observation and measurement, iii) participatory and collective analysis, and iv) interviews. Surveys can also be designed to gather qualitative data.

Quantitative methods would add value to the evaluation process. The JGP database that has been established by the study and the analysis that has already been undertaken constitute significant resources for the evaluation team. These existing products will allow the team to "hit the ground running." Nevertheless, while the database contains a range of data that can allow further analysis and comparisons, to be fully utilised, the database would need to be updated to include up-to-date funding information.

The remainder of this chapter will provide some reflections for the evaluation approach that are worth considering for the drafting of the terms of reference.

Documentation Examination

It would be important for the evaluation team to begin by reviewing all 94 programme documents and the 20 evaluations. For both practical and resource reasons, it would make sense to undertake a more in-depth desk study of around one-quarter to one-third of the JGPs. The evaluation team would need to provide criteria in the inception phase on how to select these JGPs. Some of JGPs for which there have been reviews – such as the Albanian JGPs and some of the MDG-F programmes – would constitute good candidates for further desk study.

Except for 20 evaluations/reviews, the JGP database currently does not contain reports related to the JGPs. A considerable effort would be needed to ensure that country offices supply the necessary reports and data to complete the database.

Recommendation 5: The agencies should ensure that the country offices supply the necessary programme reports and data to complete the database and document repository.

Recommendation 6: The evaluation should include a desk review of the whole JGP portfolio and an in-depth portfolio analysis of a sizeable proportion of the JGP portfolio.

Case Study Approach

To obtain a deepened understanding of what results JGPs are achieving and whether collaboration among agencies is contributing to this, it will be critical that the evaluation undertakes case studies. Visiting four countries is likely to provide the data required, especially if, i) countries with more than one JGP are prioritised, and ii) field studies of JGPs are complemented with in-depth desk studies of other JGPs. UN concerns to ensure regional representation for political reasons may require that six case studies are undertaken.

The case studies would most appropriately be selected by purposeful sampling to ensure that a number of variables are covered and that the cases are "information rich" and illuminative. While the sampling should be biased towards JGPs that are considered by stakeholders to be innovative, have developed good practices and/or are successful; the sampling should also consider JGPs that have struggled to produce results. The following criteria would be the most important to consider in the sampling process of the different case studies (both the in-depth desk studies and the field studies):

1. Mix of different themes: There are eight thematic areas. The most important ones to study at country level would be multi-sectoral JGPs, EVAW JGPs and governance JGPs because of their prevalence and financial value. Health and economic empowerment JGPs should also be studied – preferable at country level. Education, trafficking and HIV/AIDS are much less common but should at least be included for in-depth desk study.
2. Conflict-related JGPs: Conditions, opportunities and issues in conflict-affected countries often differ quite considerable from other developing countries. While the study has chosen not to consider JGPs with a conflict angle as thematically separate, the UN's important role in countries affected by violent conflict would make it pertinent to study JGPs with and without a conflict angle in conflict-affected countries.
3. Mix of agencies: The country case study selection needs to ensure that the JGPs chosen have UNFPA, UNDP, UN Women and UNICEF as participating agencies. This will be relatively easy due to the prevalence of JGPs with these agencies involved. It is important that the selection also includes JGPs in which specialized agencies participate. If the case study selection has already ensured that the thematic areas are covered, then it will automatically ensure a relatively good mix of the most prevalent agencies.
4. Mix of different numbers of participating UN agencies: To analyse the degree of jointness and the collaboration dynamics in JGPs, the selection would need to include JGPs that have the most common number of participating agencies (two, three-four and five-six). It would also need to look at the larger JGPs seven-eight, nine-ten and/or 11+. If possible, the selection should try to include financially large and financially small JGPs with many partners. Including a few JGPs with many UN partners will automatically ensure that there will be a mix of many different agencies represented in the selection as recommended in point 2 above.
5. A mix of countries with different human development and gender equality indexes: The level of capacity in a country and the

extent to which governments prioritise gender equality and women's rights can have implications for the success of a JGP. It is therefore important to include a mix of countries in relation to these qualities.

6. At least two countries with JPs that have expressed gender mainstreaming strategies and/or MDG 3 components: If the aim of assessing JGPs in terms of their synergies with other UN programmes (see section 0) is to be included in the evaluation objectives, this sampling criterion would be important.
7. Mix of different budget sizes: The sample would benefit from having a bias towards JGPs with bigger planned budgets. This will potentially offer a greater range of effects and processes to examine. To examine how agencies conduct resource mobilisation for JGPs, it would be important to include a few JGPs that were not fully funded from the start.
8. Mix of different regions: Because of the substantial value and high number of JGPs in Africa, the sample would benefit from including at least two sub-Saharan African countries.
9. Mix of different levels of programme maturity: To be able to assess results, the selection of case studies needs to include older JGPs that are finalised or near completion. At the same time, it is important to examine newer JGPs that have been formulated in more recent policy environments and which perhaps build on lessons from the past.

Other criteria that would be important in the sampling process of case studies include the following:

10. Lead agency: To the extent possible, the selection should try to ensure a mix of different agencies performing the lead agency role.
11. Mix of different non-core funding sources: The selection should try to include a mix of different funding sources – such as direct bilateral support and contributions from trust funds. It is important to note that the JGP database does not provide the most recent information on this, as contributions provided after the programme document was signed are not included in it.
12. Countries that have more than one JGP: To maximise the number of JGPs that will be examined at field level (and thus meeting more sampling criteria), it would make sense to prioritise – as relevant – among countries with more than one JGP.
13. Type of execution: The current database does not include information on whether JGPs are undertaken through national or direct execution. However, ensuring that the sample has a mix of this could provide interesting results to compare.
14. At least one Delivering as One country: Since the Delivering as One countries are pilots for the UN reform process, examining JGPs in this context could provide important conclusions.

In terms of fund management modalities, the pass-through, parallel and combination modalities will not be difficult to achieve a mix of since they tend to be more numerous. However, there are only a few pooled JGPs – 12 in total – and they are mostly relatively small in size. The dynamics of jointness will be quite different in a pooled programme. In fact, depending on what strategic scope is chosen, leaving pooled JGPs specifically out of the sampling set may be option to consider after the inception phase. Other criteria for sampling may come out of the inception phase of the evaluation. For instance, initial research of the evaluation team could uncover information on

different governance and management set-ups that may be important to compare.

Recommendation 7: The evaluation should include four to six case studies that involve country visits. The evaluation should also include desk-level case studies. Purposeful sampling, taking into to consideration the above sampling criteria, should be use to carefully choose all case studies.

Survey Possibilities

To be cost-effective, a survey should be easy to administer and results need to be easily analysed – which means electronic questionnaires. Short questionnaires with closed questions are more useful since they tend to promote response rates and offer quantifiable data.

Surveying national partners using closed questions and questions that are ranked by the interviewees' judgments could theoretically provide interesting data. However, the need to translate the questionnaire beyond the UN languages; the uneven electronic connectivity of national partners; the risk of a poor response rate and the answers that try to provide "desired" answers would disfavour such a survey.

While still a considerable undertaking, surveying UN staff is more straightforward – staff can all be reached electronically, the survey can be limited to three languages and pressure can more easily be exerted to promote a good response rate. However, it is currently difficult to see a suitable subject area for a survey of UN staff, which includes only closed questions. On the other hand, data on effects could be enriched by obtaining qualitative data through open-ended questions (combined with closed questions). This would involve gathering staff views on and knowledge of different kinds of results achieved, including intangible results, advocacy efforts and synergetic effects achieved with other UN programmes.

Team Expertise

The quality of qualitative data depends to a great extent on the methodological skill, sensitivity, and integrity of the evaluator. Generating useful and credible qualitative findings through observation, interviewing, content analysis and participatory approaches requires discipline, knowledge, experience, creativity and hard work. Moreover, it relies on the ability to take in information by seeing the big picture, focusing on the relationships and connections between facts, identifying patterns and being attuned to seeing new possibilities. Other important qualities of the future evaluation team include knowledge and experience in the following areas:

1. Gender equality, women's empowerment and women's rights movement
2. Development cooperation processes and policies
3. The UN development system, the UN reform process, UN development programmes
4. Rights-based approaches
5. Evaluation methods, participatory approaches, data collection
6. Developing countries, conflict-affected countries, regional and cross-regional experience
7. Assessing capacity development

The team will need strong analytical, writing and facilitation skills and a range of language skills (English, French and Spanish.) The team should represent diversity and consist of both women

and men. National consultants should be included on the case study missions. Skilled and highly qualified consultants are busy and often booked up months in advance. To ensure that consultants with these qualities are available, the evaluation should be scheduled to allow adequate lead-time.

Recommendation 8: The terms of reference should call for a team with strong skills and in-depth knowledge and experience in the range of relevant areas listed above. Planning should take into consideration the lead-time that busy high quality consultants may require.