UN MDG Joint Programme
Concept Brief

Joint Programme: UN support to Developing Capacity for Pacific’s implementation of MDG-based National Sustainable Development and Poverty Reduction Policies.

Region: Pacific Islands

UNDAF Outcome: Outcome 1 - Equitable Economic Growth and Poverty Reduction

UNDAF Output: Enhanced national capacity¹ to incorporate MDG, pro-poor and gender-responsive approaches in national and sectoral policy, planning, budgeting, monitoring and reporting (including MDG costing).

A. Situation Analysis
The 14 PICs are at various stages of development and MDG achievement to date. The progress towards the MDGs varies significantly across the region and in many cases within countries as well. Greater disparity occurs in MDGs 1, 3 and 6, where most countries are below the targets. A number of countries have undertaken activities to integrate the MDGs into their national planning frameworks, while others have embarked on a range of advocacy initiatives and the preparation of national reports. These various activities are illustrative of the growing commitment to MDGs in the region.

3 LDCs (Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, and Kiribati) and 2 Non-LDCs (FSM, RMI) are furthered away from achieving their MDG targets. Therefore the geographical focus of the Joint Programme should be on these countries. There is a need for further attention in specific thematic areas (especially MDGs 1, 3, 6), including collection of time series data and the strengthening of national systems of data collection. It is also clear that there is a greater need to address a broader range of issues than just poverty (e.g. Gender, HIV AIDS, Child Mortality, Youth unemployment and Water & Sanitation). Within the context of the MDG framework analysis, countries require additional support in planning and monitoring mechanisms at the national level to measure progress on the attainment of the MDGs.

To achieve the Goals on time, PICs will need to make significant investments to build capacity in human resources, infrastructure and institutions as well as to mobilize resources to bridge the financial gap. Current constraints, can be overcome between now and 2015 to meet the Goals. To do so, however, requires a systematic and long-term plan for investing across all sectors, as well as sufficient international/regional support. This presents an opportunity for the United Nations which brings special strengths or “comparative advantages” to capacity development. It is also envisaged that local institutional capacities are also affected by the Joint Programme.

B. Recommendations on Strategy
The strategy should select MDG priority areas which meet the specific needs of countries consistent with Pacific Framework for Action, UNDAF and Pacific Plan. Such priorities should address the gaps amongst countries in implementing national MDG goals (Annex 1)

The new UNDAF (2008-2012) supports, as one of its goals, the enhancing of national capacity for policy analysis and programme development for Human Development. Hence the Joint Programme is in broad alignment with the UNDAF and with the national strategy of the participating governments. As such the Joint Programme process can start as a natural need. The national partners can use the Joint Programme as the basis to develop capacity for implementing poverty reduction and national development strategies through MDG based planning & budgeting in specific areas.

The Joint Programme is aligned with the goals and objectives of the Pacific Plan, specifically regional priorities for immediate implementation under the Sustainable Development theme. The programme will also provide mechanism for achieving the region’s longer term priorities under Economic Growth, Good

¹ National capacity includes government, civil society and the private sector.
Governance and Security. Additionally, the joint programme will involve CROP agencies, especially the Pacific Island Forum (PIF) Secretariat and the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC), in their areas of strengths and previous involvement. The PIF will be actively engaged in the alignment of NDS to localized MDG targets, while the SPC in addressing data gaps.

**RECOMMENDATION 1:** It is recommended that a bottom up approach to the development of the Joint Programme, as opposed to the top down approach should be adopted. The national authorities, under the leadership of the Ministry of National Planning and Finance should be engaged from the beginning in the JP process. The inclusion of such ministries in Joint Programming including relevant line ministries have proved to be an effective way of enhancing implementation and coordination and ensuring the success of MDG implementation in the country.

Additionally, at the early stage of formulation the Joint Programming should include an MDG-focused needs assessment to validate actual in-country MDG situation and localised MDG based indicators. The following will be the key focus of the national needs assessment:

- Provide data gaps, priorities of other development partners and specific gaps in the country’s development strategies;
- Identify country based capacity development requirements to meet the MDGs;
- Relate national gaps to specific UN agency assistance to governments to meet the key needs as identified in the NA.

**RECOMMENDATION 2:** The objective of the joint programme should be:

*To enhance national capacity to incorporate MDG, pro-poor and gender-responsive approaches in national and sectoral policy, planning, budgeting, monitoring and reporting (including MDG costing) for MDG implementation in PICs.*

Capacity development offers long term opportunity for implementation of national development goals. Addressing gaps in specific MDG goals will only lead to short term achievement of these goals, and leaving weak capacity to report and plan in the longer term. As such the JP will aim to develop capacity in the areas of data analysis, planning, budgeting and forecasting, gender mainstreaming, monitoring and evaluation rather than addressing attainment of specific goals in PICs. For individual targets, it is best to ‘repackage’ existing programmes and align to weak targets (and not necessarily create new ones).

**RECOMMENDATION 3:** As noted through the UNDAF Results Matrices, the results that UN system organizations plan to achieve to contribute to each UNDAF Outcome are common in the area of MDG achievement. Hence the key interventions should focus (Annex 1):

- **Policy dialogue**
  - Support to evidence-based planning and budgeting
  - Localisation and decentralisation of MDG targets
- **Data analysis**
  - MDG-based data collection and analysis
- **Public outreach**
  - Advocacy of national MDG agenda

C. Stakeholder Collaboration

The key stakeholders in the UN MDG Joint Programme will comprise of the following (but not limited to):

- **UN Agencies:** UNDP, UNIFEM, UNICEF, UNFPA, FAO, UNESCAP, WHO, ILO and UNESCO
- **CROP Agencies:** PIFS, SPC, SOPAC, SPREP, SPTO and FFA
- **Development Partners/Donors:** NZAID, AUSAID, EU, JICA, ADB
- Pacific Island Governments - Targeted national government ministries, departments, CSOs and NGOs of Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, Kiribati, FSM and RMI

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2 National capacity includes government, civil society and the private sector.
3 This matter is now of some urgency since the Leaders in the Pacific Plan (Initiative 12.4) have agreed to upgrade and extend country and regional statistical information systems and databases across all sectors by 2008.
## ANNEX 1

### Context of Pacific MDG Joint Programme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>JP Focal Area</th>
<th>Focal Countries</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Specific Interventions[^1]</th>
<th>Partners</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Outcome 1: Data Collection &amp; Analysis</strong></td>
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</table>
| A. Addressing data gaps | SOI, VAN, KIR, RMI, FSM, TUV | # of national and regional statistical information systems and databases showing disaggregated data and poverty indicators | A. Stocktake & analyse existing national level MDG data (identify gaps)  
B. Create Pacific database for MDG related information in collaboration with SPC and other partners  
C. Develop capacity of National Statistics Offices (HIES, Census, DHS etc.) & improve regional/national (sectoral) coordination for collection of time series data | All agencies, |
| | | | | |
| B. Monitoring & Reporting | SOI, VAN, KIR, RMI, FSM, TUV | # national MDG reports published (post 2004) | A. Assist countries in reporting and updating National MDG & M&E frameworks  
B. Update Regional MDG Report | UNDP |
| | | | | |
| **Outcome 2: National & Sub-regional Policy & Planning Dialogue** | | | | |
| A. Planning | SOI, VAN, KIR, RMI, FSM, TUV | National effort to link NDS, MDG and other related global commitments | A. Aligning NDS to localized MDG targets (pro-poor & gender sensitive) for short to medium term needs | UNDP, UNESCAP, UNICEF |
| | | | | |
| B. Budgeting & Forecasting | SOI, VAN, KIR, RMI, FSM, TUV | # of NDS & policies linked to financial resources and national budget mechanisms  
Formulation of budgets informed by clear national priorities | A. Assess and establish country specific training requirements for MDG based planning & budgeting | UNDP, UNESCAP, UNICEF |
| | | | | |
| C. Gender Mainstreaming | SOI, VAN, KIR, RMI, FSM, TUV | # National reports reflecting gender specific data  
# of existing national and regional database | A. Collate sex disaggregated data on the 8 goals to establish current situation | UNIFEM, UNAIDS, UNICEF, UNFPA, ILO |

[^1]: These interventions coincide with the demand and supply analysis data collected for PICs.
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<th><strong>Outcome 3: Capacity Development for MDG Implementation</strong></th>
<th><strong>Outcome 4: Behaviour Change Communication &amp; Advocacy</strong></th>
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<td>Develop and assess existing capacity</td>
<td>Targeted advocacy at all levels (National, Provincial &amp; Local Governments, NGOs, CSOs) for MDG implementation and linking national policy and community practice</td>
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<td>SOI, VAN, KIR, RMI, FSM, TUV</td>
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<td>Optimum use of local skills and capacity both within and outside government # multi-stakeholder processes initiated</td>
<td>#national MDG &amp; stakeholder communications strategies</td>
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<td>A. National workshops &amp; stakeholder consultations on national MDG targets (national reports, HIV, MDGs-Human Rights) B. Assessing capacity for implementation of national MDG targets C. Strengthening national mechanisms &amp; developing capacity at all levels, to include local governments, NGOs</td>
<td>A. Common budget for standard advocacy packages &amp; monitoring material B. MDG goals advocated at all UN workshops (general &amp; specific) at all levels C. Media campaigns for MDG based awareness</td>
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