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LESSONS LEARNED IN MDG-FUND THEMATIC WINDOW DEVELOPMENT AND PRIVATE SECTOR

Providing Valuable Knowledge to Future Interventions in Developing Countries

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Cover: Horticulture work in Egypt. Photo by UNIDO.

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Acronyms

DPS	Development and Private Sector
ICI	Inclusive Creative Industries
ILO	International Labour Organization
JPs	Joint Programmes
JPC	Joint Programme Coordinator
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MDG-F	Millennium Development Goals Achievement Fund
MSMEs	Micro, small and medium enterprises
NTOs	National Tourism Organisations
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
SMEs	Small and Medium Enterprises
TOT	Training for Trainers
UNCTAD	The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDP	The United Nations Development Program
UNIDO	The United Nations Industrial Development Organization

Introduction

The Millennium Development Goals (MDG) Achievement Fund is an international cooperation mechanism whose aim is to accelerate efforts at country level to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and to improve cooperation and cohesion across the UN system.

The Fund was established in 2006 with a contribution of US\$ 780 million from the Government of Spain directed to joint programmes (JPs) with the purpose of encouraging partnerships among UN Agencies and national/local actors using innovative approaches to development. Over twenty UN agencies have been involved in the formulation and implementation of MDG Fund joint programs, with an average of six agencies participating in each programme. Moreover, MDG-F joint programmes are meant to be led by national and local partners including national and local governments, as well as civil society organizations, supported by multiple UN Agencies.

The MDG-F supports innovative projects with the potential for large-scale impact and replication in key countries and sectors within the framework of the Millennium Declaration's Global Partnership for Development, and the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness. Its approach guarantees national and local ownership, alignment with national development strategies and sound coordination with other donors, results-orientated objectives and mutual accountability.

The MDG-Fund was designed to provide financial support to 'windows' linked thematically to the 8 MDGs. The Joint Programmes are coordinated through UN Country Teams to harmonize and increase the coherence between UN interventions in partnership with national counterpart institutions. USD\$ 63 million was allocated to support the MDG-Fund work on extreme poverty eradication (MDG1) through 12 programmes in 12 countries with a specific focus on Development and Private Sector (DPS). This thematic window features case studies from Bolivia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Panama, Peru, Serbia, Turkey and Vietnam. The programmes in this window also aim to help achieve other MDGs, notably tackling the gender gap and women empowerment (MDG3), and developing a Global Partnership for Development (MDG8).

As the convener agency for development and private sector under the MDG-F initiative, UNIDO has supported local and UN partners with DPS programmes. These focus on increase the participation and benefits of the poor in productive activities.

Countries all around the world are striving for increased economic growth and productivity, yet for the most part it does not always translate into benefits for the majority of the population. A dynamic private sector is a driving force for sustainable economic development and therefore, fundamental to moving people out of poverty while creating jobs. Through the Development and Private Sector window, the Spanish Government together with the United Nations addresses the urgent need for supporting a vibrant and responsible private sector in development processes in order to achieve agreed development goals. Interventions in this thematic window seek to bolster economic sectors where the poor are strongly represented.

Ranging in focus from competitive tourism to agro industry and value chain enhancement, these 12 Joint Programmes on DPS constitute a significant source of knowledge, lessons and good practices that once standardized can further contribute to refine and improve the planning and implementation of pro-poor growth strategies in the future.

This study constitutes a valuable opportunity for information and experience sharing among UN agencies and JPs supported by the MDG-F. Its purpose is to provide knowledge and substantial insights to future interventions in developing countries regarding the design, management and implementation processes of private sector development-related programmes.

Knowledge exchange and dissemination facilitated by this report are expected to enable future joint programmes to capitalize on the experiences and lessons learned from the MDG-F Development and Private Sector window and add increasing value to UN agencies coordination and country specific programmes. The Secretariat also wishes to make recommendations for future multi-disciplinary, multi-country programmes.

The primary objective of this review is to examine the joint private sector development programmes to:

- a) Examine the strategy and implementation approaches taken by the 12 Joint Programmes from the thematic window “Development and Private Sector” of the MDG-Fund by looking at successes as well as challenges faced by each one of them at different programme stages.
- b) Outline the benefits and limitations of the programmes’ multi-sectoral approach and their effects on managing inter-agency relationships and accountability issues.
- c) Determine the added value of DPS specific programmes into country level (national and local) efforts towards achieving MDG-related development goals.
- d) Formulate a set of lessons learned drawn by JPs’ experiences that can guide cooperation partners and sponsors on future private sector development actions.

The review has drawn on direct contributions provided by joint programme coordinators of all JPs; through questionnaires and telephone interviews specifically designed for this purpose. Further knowledge and insights were captured by discussion exchanges via virtual meetings with programme coordinators in Viet Nam, Cuba, Egypt, El Salvador, Dominican Republic and Panamá to invigorate the findings. Monitoring reports, mid-term evaluations, final evaluations (where available), and websites’ materials produced by and about programmes were also consulted.

Scope and limitations of this report: the volume of questionnaires completed by joint programme coordinators as well as their participation in telephone interviews and virtual discussions did not allow for a full review of all 12 JPs, which may reflect some uneven in-depth information from very specific programmes. The rate of returned questionnaires and the quality of responses were not as high as desired. Time also restricted the exercise of reporting sustainability achievements for most programmes still running or about to conclude during the elaboration of the report. Donors may need to accept that sustainability takes longer than a typical programme funding cycle.

The review is not in any sense an evaluation of the programmes, since each of them is in charge of preparing its own final evaluation, but it rather focuses on key success factors worth replicating in the future, important trends to be further considered and analyzed, as well as challenges emerging from

the programmes that need greater efforts in order to be overcome. The focus is therefore on common shortcomings experienced and shared strategies of success.

1. Overview of MDG-F Joint Programmes to strengthen Private Sector Development

Micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) are a fundamental part of the economic fabric in developing countries, and they play a crucial role in furthering growth, innovation and inclusive development. They are also generators of a country's industrial base expansion and promoters of a competitive business environment. Nonetheless, a number of factors affect their sustained growth. Unfortunately, private sector in developing countries is not likely to be able to realize its rightful and key place contributing to economic and social transformation and growth as long as they continue to face difficulties regarding ineffective regulatory environments, inadequate physical infrastructure, restricted access to financial products and services, limited market information and lack of knowledge and skills of labor force.

As shown in Box 1, the 12 programmes supported the development of inclusive, pro-poor growth policies that increase the participation of and benefits to the poor in private sector development. Out of the total, 7 programmes targeted agriculture, 3 handicrafts, 2 tourism, 2 manufacturing, and 1 housing. Each intervention addressed sectors and regions where the poor are strongly represented, mainly rural areas. In many of the interventions, there has been a strong component on gender and women's empowerment as a strategy to promote local economic development and contribute to creating jobs in rural areas that are lagging behind in terms of social and economic development. Some programmes also included green industry objectives. In general, the programmes focused on low value-added but highly job-generating sectors.

The average programme of the Private Sector and Development Window is considered as medium-scale, with a total budget of around US\$5.25 million, aiming at approximately 5,000 beneficiaries, where this was identified. In most cases, the interventions targeted multiple types of beneficiary (associations, individuals and households) in multiple localities. Nonetheless, some programmes varied substantially in their scope. In Cuba the target reached 10,000 beneficiaries while others like El

Salvador and Serbia were more tightly focused. Bolivia and Panama had the largest budgets, while Ethiopia and Turkey the smallest.

Box 1. List of MDG-F Joint Programmes on Private Sector and Development

Country	Title
Bolivia	<i>The Integration of Indigenous Andean Producers into New National and International Value Chains</i>
Costa Rica	<i>Developing Competitiveness for the Brunca Region in the Tourism and Agro-industry Sectors, with emphasis on creation of green, decent employment for reducing poverty</i>
Cuba	<i>Support for New Decentralization Initiatives and Production Stimulation in Cuba</i>
Dominican Republic	<i>Strengthening the Banana Value Chain through the Growth of Inclusive Markets</i>
Egypt	<i>Salasel: Pro-poor Horticulture Value Chains in Upper Egypt</i>
El Salvador	<i>Urban and Productive Integrated Sustainable Settlements</i>
Ethiopia	<i>Edible Oil Value Chain Enhancement</i>
Panama	<i>Entrepreneurial Opportunities Network for Poor Families</i>
Peru	<i>Inclusive Creative Industries: an innovative tool for alleviating poverty</i>
Serbia	<i>Sustainable Tourism for Rural Development</i>
Turkey	<i>Harnessing Sustainable Linkages for SMEs in Turkey's Textile Sector</i>
Viet Nam	<i>Green Production and Trade to Increase Income and Employment Opportunities for the Rural Poor ('Crafting out of Poverty')</i>

Policy reform was an important factor in some joint programmes, like in El Salvador. Regardless of having identified 750 potential beneficiaries on a relatively small scale in La Cruz shanty town, its policy-oriented intervention achieved one of the most significant impacts among all programmes. It succeeded in capturing the attention of senior policy-makers with a carefully targeted set of reforms for the housing sector.

There was no single methodology applied by the programmes. In Bolivia, Dominican Republic, Egypt and Ethiopia, the projects defined their focus on value chains' strengthening and development, while others like Viet Nam undertook detailed value chain analyses as part of the programme.

The programmes engaged a multiplicity of national counterparts as well as UN agencies, an approach clearly defined in the interventions' multi-sectoral strategy. Coordination of activities was typically between 4 and 5 UN agencies participating in each joint programme, with a minimum of 3 in El Salvador and Ethiopia, and a maximum quorum of 7 in Bolivia and Dominican Republic. In addition, specific emphasis was placed on the level of ownership of the JPs by the leadership and representatives of national partners.

Common strategies of joint private sector development programmes to overcome some constraints often experienced in target sectors and countries usually addressed issues of: 1) Adaptation of products and processes, 2) Investing in removing market constraints, 3) Leveraging the strengths of the poor, 4) Combining resources and capabilities with others, and 5) Engaging in policy dialogue with government.

2. Challenges and Best Practices

All of the joint programmes included in this report experienced multiple challenges. Addressing these challenges meant having to adapt the programme design, knowledge management tools as well as implementation timetables. While a detailed listing of the challenges experienced by these programmes is beyond the scope of this paper, the key common challenges and how these were confronted have been identified and categorized as follows.

Programme Design

In the evaluation reviews, factors that were considered having an impact on the design and efficiency-effectiveness of programme implementation were usually directly related to the investment of time and resources during the planning and start-up stages of the programmes.

Specific programmes have shown some caveats on their design and strategy that would have assisted their own effectiveness, regardless of the generally well framework they provided for implementation. Programmes experienced a number of practical challenges linked to designing, coordination and implementation of planned approaches.

-Managing distribution of roles and responsibilities. Programme design was considered not specific enough to enable a smooth implementation of the work programme right from the start; as it was noted in Viet Nam, Turkey and Egypt's respective programmes. In Egypt, the lack of a specific timeframe for the inception phase of the programme affected significantly its startup stage, delaying it for several months and currently challenging its closing. The multi-sectoral approach posed some challenges especially during the startup phase of the project, where relationships and accountability, roles and responsibilities were vague and undefined in the strategy. Similarly, the role of the private sector and the government were too not clearly defined in the programme design, which limited and delayed their role in implementation and expected results, specifically the preparation and adoption of policy briefs and recommendations as was the case in the JP for Bolivia and Egypt.

With more on ground experience during implementation and clear definition of roles of agencies and governmental relationships, synergetic effects were generated based on the comparative advantage, knowledge and experience of each stakeholder, allowing for more efficient implementation. For example, while UNIDO focused on improvement of production practices and introduction of value adding techniques and technologies, UNDP focused on capacity building of beneficiaries and market linkages and access allowing for better market integration of producers, while ILO worked on entrepreneurship, integrating other rural dwellers into the value chain with complementing services and business, UN Women, focused on rural women, empowering them through productive asset transfer, formalizing the group business.

In a similar account, the intervention design did not indicate clearly enough what needed to be done by the respective agencies in order to address the various constraints for the 5 selected value chains in Viet Nam. The first project year therefore contained, as planned, many studies, surveys, assessments by the UN agencies concerned. Only upon consolidation of this list, the baseline surveys could be initiated, whilst the interim results of the baseline surveys had to be awaited to fine-tune and finalize the detailed project interventions.

In Peru and Panama the joint programmes also faced deep shortcomings during their early stages due to the lack of a clear and effective organizational structure. In connection with the execution of Peru JP itself, the first year showed little progress due to the mismatch between the recruited coordinator's profile and the programme's actual needs. Likewise, the joint programme in Panama did not have an empowered Manager and Implementing Unit during its first phase which significantly impacted the provision of managerial guidance and coordination of activities among the five agencies and their counterparts involved in the field. The lack of strategic and consolidated vision of this Unit meant that several unilateral approaches were taken depending on the agency. The programme went under a first and second strategic reformulation until it finally strengthened the role of the Manager and the Implementing Unit and managed to refocus the program, leading to improved relations between partners. Due to a clearer framework and regular meetings at technical and management levels, the accountability process was highly improved not only between agencies and institutions, but also against the donor. On the other hand, the JP showed the reactivation of joint work between some ministries and agencies which worked together in the past, and also the consolidation of new partnerships between state agencies and institutions. Before the second strategic reformulation took place, the JP was perceived by many as an aggregate of disjointed actions of various agencies alongside partners at national and / or local level.

-Involvement of all stakeholders at design phase. Turkey's experience in engaging local stakeholders proved to be limited, causing relatively low level of local ownership at meso and micro level at the beginning of the JP. Nonetheless, a satisfactory degree of ownership was achieved during its implementation stage and by the end of programme, it reached a significant degree of ownership by the SME's at the local level, which compensated to some extent the lack of involvement of meso/micro levels at the design stage. As noted by Viet Nam's experience, beneficiary participation and assessment before implementation of interventions has definitely proven to be a best practice in this programme.

In the same way, Ethiopia's 'Edible Oil Value Chain Enhancement' succeeded in engaging local actors and improving national ownership of the programme. Translating existing policies into pilot initiatives ensured full government support which is why it is important to have programs strongly supported by Government from the beginning.

-Meeting expectations for strategy implementation. Eight of the programmes (Egypt, Cuba, Costa Rica, Viet Nam, Panama, Bolivia, Peru and Serbia) faced moderate inefficiencies related to the identification of objectives and expected results at early stages of the interventions. Most of the problems and needs identified in their design phase were rather challenging in the sense that they could neither be fully solved in the short-term nor with the contribution of a single JP.

The fact that Egypt's 'Salasel' in real terms surpassed by far the stated objectives of the project document and the strategy indicates that there was a discrepancy and an understatement of expected results. Meanwhile with regards to the gender component, cultural aspects of implementation were not fully addressed or considered in the strategy. To a great percentage realistic in terms of strategy and expected results, some issues with regards to cultural aspects and implementation were challenging, especially with regards to the integration of women into the value chain. Also, the programme aimed at an income increase of 30 percent for raw material growers and craft producers. However, what was not sufficiently realized during its designing is that many crops, namely rattan, bamboo and lacquer, need several years before they can be harvested. This means that economic benefits from planting new seedlings for households concerned would not materialize during the programme's duration, but in the years after.

In a similar account, the design of a complex JP such as Cuba's 'New Decentralization Initiatives and Production Stimulation' due to its inter-agency and inter-sectoral approach, and the scale of local ownership envisaged would have required a preparatory period before the actual start of the program, meaning that more time or a second phase was needed in order to show and measure actual results. Moreover, the use of specific mechanisms for acquisition and distribution of resources as part of the program's activities could have mitigated the delays and difficulties faced all along these processes.

Box 2. Additional challenges faced by Egypt's 'Salasel' in programme designing

The MDG-F funded joint programme initiated by UNDP, UN Women and ILO to promote horticultural development in Upper Egypt aimed at linking farmers to markets by assisting them in enhancing efficiency and productivity, building profitable partnerships with private sector investors and advocating necessary policy changes.

While highly efficient and effective with regards to investment of resources, the programme initial design that limits the intervention in three years' time only has proven to be rather short sighted. For a project that included a number of major interventions along the value chain and worked in 6 Governorates in Upper Egypt, in some of the poorest villages in the region, the time span was considered unrealistic. Notably, the programme was addressing production of horticultural crops, which are seasonal; there is at least six months where the farmers are planting strategic cereal crops, followed by horticultural crops for the next 3 to 4 months. Realistically, the intervention should have been planned for a longer life span in order to capture multiple crop cycles, work on assessing problems in production, addressing them and evaluating, then based on the evaluation update the techniques as well as get access to a wider base of beneficiaries.

Similarly, in the marketing and entrepreneurial component establishing initial links and helping farmers to get access to wholesale markets was planned along the initial phase of improving the production techniques, with often delays in implementation first because of farmers' response, and second because of the seasonal nature of horticulture crops.

Despite the short life span, the programme did succeed by the end of its first year in establishing two farmers owned shareholding companies. By the end of its second year the programme supported more than 1000 farmers in marketing high quality crops to high end markets at 40 Million EGP (Around 6 Million dollars). Still, it is not enough to establish essential links, currently the programme is struggling in a fairly short period of time to root in the region a culture of contract farming and to establish permanent links between farmers' associations and major processors and exporters in the region.

The design of Costa Rica's JP, despite its relevant and intended focus on the regions' needs, proved to be too ambitious in relation to the expected outcomes versus allocated resources and timeframe for implementation. Using a local consultation process that focused on a broad participation of local stakeholders, the proposed programme centered its attention towards 5 key issues being faced in the region: i) inadequate competitive conditions provided by the local environment for doing business and private investment; ii) little or no ability of local governments to formulate and implement public policies to promote competitiveness; iii) the existence of little or no public-public and public-private partnerships for the development of entrepreneurial organizations and promotion of competitiveness; iv) the limited possibility for companies, particularly MSMEs, to improve their productivity, business intelligence, innovative capacities and comparative advantages and v) the little or no accessibility of technical and financial support towards available to companies, particularly MSMEs. However, as mentioned, implementation such as creating employment for 1000 locals, improving capacity for innovation and establishing an improved environment for the development of competitive businesses in the Brunca region proved to be too ambitious and often required a redefinition of indicators and targets for the programme. These changes were usually directed at aligning products with public policy strategies, national development and annual institution plans.

Moreover, the JP had originally set their aims in achieving approval for processes in training and development in at least 6 Costa Rican municipalities, but eventually, due to indisposition of local authorities and municipal staff, the programme had to re-evaluate their priorities and strategies against those established by the National Development Plan (NDP) as well as annual institutional plans. With regards to creating and strengthening of organizations to promote and support competitiveness, the programme underestimated the territorial competitiveness of the private sector in their original designs, and had to redirect efforts and resources (from the ILO) in order to allocate these to further mature the environment for the emergence of new and the improvements of existing businesses.

Box 3. Alignment between the joint programme and the public policies in the Brunca Region, Costa Rica

In Brunca there are six local government authorities (Perez Zeledón, Corredores, Buenos Aires, Golfito, Coto Brus and Osa), none of which had the capacity to combine the challenge of competitiveness with the exercise of decentralization proposed and demanded by themselves.

In addition, Brunca is the Costa Rican region most assisted through international cooperation, due to its low human development indicators. In order to make the desired impact, there had to be an alignment between the policies of the international organizations and agencies and the policies and strategies at national level.

One of the objectives of the JP was to prioritize the needs and resources of the region in order to achieve the enhancement of its business competitiveness, as the business sector of the region was the most affected by the lack of competitiveness. The Joint Programme worked closely to the public authorities at local and national level by creating a series of rounds of negotiations that included relevant stakeholders from both public and private spheres (tourism, agribusiness, municipal stakeholders, as well as government agencies). Each of the sectors designated spokespersons expounding their respective needs, while the Government committed to undertake a realistic approach to the issues being discussed.

This first round of negotiations paved the way to a basic protocol of what would become the agenda of competitiveness for Brunca, reflecting the priorities of each sector, and looking at short-, medium and long term scenarios.

The process finalized with the creation of a Competitiveness Council, which is a tool for decision-making that allows the government bodies to have a single interlocutor representing stakeholders in generating the competitiveness of the region, with the fundamental premise that increased competitiveness can positively impact its socio-economic environment, leading to tangible results in entrepreneurship development, economic democracy and poverty alleviation.

The Competitiveness Council consists of 120 regular members, 70 per cent of which are from the private sector.

Viet Nam's 'Green Trade: Crafting out of Poverty' envisaged numbers of household beneficiaries for some value chains were also not realistic, e.g. for hand-made paper it was envisaged to target 250 households in one village while about 20 households were working on hand-made paper in the village at the time. Even though the programme managed to reach out to many more people and engage additional people in the value chain, the number of 250 proved unattainable. Also, the programme design proved to be very ambitious, including 4 provinces and 25 communes, close to 5,000 beneficiaries and a total programme area the size of Haiti. In addition, the programme intervened in 5 value chains, but in reality there were 7 value chains involved and 27 communes. This made the implementation of activities somewhat scattered and difficult to manage.

In Panama, 'Entrepreneurial Opportunities Network for Poor Families' also faced the challenge of a poorly defined focus of the intervention regarding local development from an early stage. Had this been defined from the onset, the strategy for combining agency-specific techniques and adapting them to a joint programme context would have been more clearly delineated and easier to implement.

Sound identification of target beneficiaries at an early stage is a fundamental aspect of programme designing since it leads to the elaboration of consistent and satisfactory impact evaluations due to its essential use for measuring results against desired objectives. As it was noted by the JPs, it may also mislead the development of planned activities, delaying coordination and implementation, and wasting valuable resources.

Also in this line, the programme in Upper Egypt predicted to build capacities of 440 growers of seagrass. However, following the baseline survey and participatory rapid assessment, FAO concluded that the seagrass farmers basically needed investment support for irrigation, which was out of the scope of the programme. FAO support then remained limited to Training for Trainers (TOT) for about 20 people. Also, a planned study of the implication of WTO membership on the craft sector, which was included in the programme design, was not deemed necessary and subsequently dropped. Even though, this outlines a faulty identification of areas needed to be covered by different agencies of the programme, it most importantly praises the key role of on-going and systematic assessments during

all stages of a programme's development in order to allow justification and/or restructuring of interventions by each implementing partner.

Box 4. Panama's joint programme under deep restructuring

The original Programme Document faced significant difficulties and inaccuracies in its design so it had to be reformulated twice during the life of the JP. Despite the importance of the program's objective, the original design was not relevant to help alleviate poverty in the selected target population. In this sense, some mistakes regarding the formulation and structure of the original program included: (i) territory coverage too extensive and lacking focus, (ii) profiles of expected beneficiaries hindered the possibility of taking them out of poverty within the established program period; (iii) lack of a strategic framework for economic development activities from agencies at a local level, (iv) fragmentation and little integration of work among the agencies involved in the JP, (v) lack of a clear and active participatory process of government in the development and implementation of the JP.

In order to address the challenges of the original design, the first of the two reformulations came after a monitoring mission conducted by the MDG-Fund Secretariat in February 2011. The program's strategic redefinition that emerged after the visit aimed to revise the original design: to better focus the scope of the program in terms of territory and profile of beneficiaries, to improve the participation of national counterparts in decision making and the linkage with public policies and regulations, as well as the establishment of an Implementation Unit with integral leadership for the coordination of actors and interventions.

However, despite this first redefinition, the mid-term evaluation conducted in February 2012 found that it would be required a second and more profound reformulation of the JP to further focus the actual intervention of the program, in the light of the results achieved by that time and the limited time remaining for execution.

The second strategic reformulation was widely agreed upon by all partners which led to a significant increase in the coordination between agencies and counterparts, and a clear and unique vision of the roadmap. Moreover, this radical twist could exceed the challenges of the original design which have persisted after the first shift and scaled back expectations that while still ambitious, were more realistic and achievable than before.

As noted in Bolivia's joint programme and particularly in that of Serbia's 'Tourism for Rural Development', the joint management and joint funding arrangements included in the design of the programme were neither the most effective nor most efficient approaches for implementation of the UN's joint programmes. Sometimes coordination among agencies left a lot of space for improvement but it was not reserved exclusively to knowledge sharing. Such issues originated from management structures that were set prior to the beginning of the project and showed a number of flaws in many aspects. The inability of joint programme management to actually manage staff and other resources, and the cumbersome nature of planning/ thinking/ strategizing processes which lead the implementation team away from innovative solutions and forward thinking, are listed as the most challenging ones. According to the programme's final evaluation, some of the management and governance 'inefficiencies' of the programme have been identified as related to the fact that this JP was not really of sufficient size and scope to be called a 'programme' originally. While the variety of agencies participating can imply such a scope, the relatively small budget, relatively limited number and complexity of outcomes and relatively short timeframe, leave room for arguing that this was indeed a project, not a programme.

Regardless of the effectiveness of Dominican Republic programme's designed strategy in terms of reaching small producers through partnerships strengthening, it required the departure from original strategies at a later stage in order to effectively deliver specific products, such as access to credit which suggested that members of the supply chain would assume formal commitments with financial institutions; and for which the programme did not have the mechanisms to reach the participation of the Dominican banking system. On-going monitoring and evaluation at all stages of a programme proved to be crucial in this sense.

In conclusion, investment of time and resources devoted to the design and start-up stages of a programme is identified as essential for the efficiency and effectiveness of the interventions, especially given the complexity and interdisciplinary nature of all JPs on the private sector

development window, as they require greater coordination and planning efforts due to the diversity of players and levels of action involved. Programme design should set clear and sound timeframes and parameters by capturing the context's reality and making it consistent and as well-informed and realistic as possible with the programme's objectives and scope, in order to keep in check avoidable delays and re-formulation of activities. This would have a direct contribution over the overall success of the programme.

However, programmes must also remain as flexible as possible to accommodate themselves to unexpected changes and unforeseeable circumstances, as it was the case for the Egypt JP due to the surprising political turmoil that hit the country in 2011 causing a significant delay of the policy component of the programme. This flexibility must rely on the successful ability to adjust their activities progressively as different needs and conditions are identified on a regular basis.

Implementation and Performance

Efforts by joint private sector and development programmes varied in terms of their scope, methodology and management. Some interventions focused on institutional strengthening and regulatory advocacy requiring a longer period before showing concrete results while others engaged directly with beneficiaries and the overall community, providing more immediate achievements. Programmes including Serbia, Panama, El Salvador, Turkey and Egypt combined both approaches at multiple levels.

-Engaging policy with governments, agencies and local communities. Despite that all programmes faced the complexity of engaging an inclusive relevant group of stakeholders in their interventions, they devoted considerable efforts to overcome related constraints and challenges, reaching national and community ownership and mutual accountability, at different levels of accomplishment.

A joint programme implies the intervention of different agencies, members of staff, decision-making processes, financial reporting and budgeting systems, mind sets, forms of coordination and agendas. This proved to be one of the most difficult challenges to overcome for the totality of JPs, mainly when considering the scale and wide scope of each particular programme, and the variety of problems that arose.

For Bolivia's JP, the challenge came in the participation of too many agencies in the programme, some of which could not prove to be providing significant value added. According to the programme, the greatest difficulties faced were not technical but managerial and of coordination, usually common in working with a) state agencies that are still in early stages of their administrative development and that face difficulties for receiving and making use of financial resources quickly and effectively, b) UN agencies that have diverse administrative capacities and high staff turnover in the field, c) formal governance mechanisms which are difficult to make run.

Peru's case faced similar difficulties due to the vast range of actors involved in the process. Being a program ran by six agencies with the participation of 6 ministries demanded substantial efforts of coordination and harmonization among stakeholders in order to identify common ground on which they could start building up. In this regard, one of the most effective practices taken to overcome this specific matter and speed up specific processes was to depart from consensus-based decision making to simply majority rule. This practice allowed to progress in the development of Terms of Reference for the recruitment of consultants. Another measure highly used was the establishment of *Petit Comités* for certain processes, ie, instead of requiring the presence of the twelve members of a Task Force, three of them –those closest to the respective industry- were designated to participate in interviews, assessments and decision making related to recruitment.

As it was proved by Cuba and El Salvador's JPs, the convergence of key local actors and alliances with other institutions, including the private, social, academic and public sector; contributed significantly to the sound and effective development of any local initiative. In all municipalities covered by the Cuba programme it has been strengthened the synergies between state and non-state institutions and expanded horizontal relationships between actors. It is worth mentioning the inclusion of the non-state sector as an active player during different phases of the program, from the formulation of local diagnoses and strategies to its prominence among program beneficiaries. It was also necessary to increase the sensitivity of decision-makers and to train local stakeholders in project formulation and regulations, to better exploit the spaces given by national strategies and programs in support of decentralization.

In Dominican Republic for example, banana producer associations, state institutions and other links of the productive chain (such as input suppliers and financial institutions) were successfully incorporated as part of the programme and participated actively in decision making activities to be later executed at

different stages of the interventions. In a similar line of strategy, Cuba's programme on supporting new decentralization initiatives and production stimulation was developed in a context in which the non-public sector was recognized as key in the design and implementation of national policies, in particular those related to food security and the development of the agricultural and livestock sectors.

Box 5. Addressing Vietnamese 'green value chains' through strong multisectoral partnerships

As the implementation processes, the programme developed working modalities to improve the sharing of information between PMU and UN agencies, as well as between central and province levels, ensure greater coordination, and synergies and complementarities between the works of all agencies. The working modalities, however, were not always followed systematically and repeated attention needed to be called for it. Following the mid-term evaluation, at PMC level agencies (re)affirmed their commitment to a stricter adherence of the working modalities. Some agencies also indicated a willingness to explore establishing internal procedures within their respective organizations imposing that no contract could be issued without showing the evidence (e.g. e-mail trail) that PMU has been consulted.

At province level, provincial coordinating teams were established to help define priorities, assess the relevance of JP activities, lead and coordinate field-level support activities. In order to make the JP planning process more participatory (as recommended by the mid-term evaluation), putting the provincial coordinators more in a central role, in December 2011 the JP arranged consultations between the provincial coordinators and all five UN agencies to discuss and finalize the 2012 Annual Work Plan (AWP). These meeting clarified the proposed AWP to all the provincial coordinators, comments and suggestions were seriously considered and adopted when possible, improving the understanding and ownership by the provincial coordinators. In December 2011 and June 2012 the PMU also conducted field visits to all 4 provinces to seek synergies, ownership, interdepartmental coordination at province level, and integrate JP activities in their provincial work-plans. The results were very positive.

All four provinces indicated their support to allocate provincial funding, e.g. from the New Rural Development Programme and Fund for Vocational Skills Training, to complement JP activities. Support was also promised to cover local training costs and planting/cultivation of raw material.

Additionally, provincial Advisory Boards were established in Nghe An and Thanh Hoa provinces to sustain results/achievements of Joint Programme upon its completion by the end of June 2013. Following the decision to establish the board in Nghe An province, the provincial authorities developed a decision from the Provincial People's Committee to develop the bamboo/rattan and sericulture value chains. Objectives include the creation of 5,000 permanent and 8,000 part-time jobs by 2015 and 8,000 permanent and 30,000 part-time jobs by 2020. Furthermore, the decision aims to generate income of VND 3,500,000 / month for regular employees and 2.5 million VND / month for casual labor in 2020.

In Ethiopia, one success factor has been the national ownership reached by the programme. Translating existing policies into pilot initiatives ensured full government support which is why it is important to have programs strongly supported by Government. The innovative methodology implemented merging the value Chain and Cluster Development approach has been regarded as a best practice among other Joint Programmes and has been documented. UNIDO, FAO and ILO also used an innovative approach in the joint management and coordination arrangements among agencies to overcome managerial and technical constraints. For instance, the agencies were resourceful to overcome the lack of improved seeds and adopting the sector clustering approach through common facilities; while these were risky solutions, they had the full support of the champion Ministries, so results were driven by common commitment.

In this line, many JPs were successful in engaging governments to implement policies and interventions that supported their respective programmes. In some JPs, such as El Salvador, Turkey and Serbia, closer interaction with governments led to a better ability to participate in national policy formulation whilst others as were the cases with Bolivia, Cuba, Vietnam and Costa Rica, to a certain extent were in fact required to strengthen government capacity toward government policies and regulations that supported the needs of SMEs.

An important practice for implementation identified by Peru's 'Inclusive Creative Industries' was the establishment of permanent communication channels through constant meetings between members of the technical team. One of the benefits stated by national and subnational counterparts in this matter was that it created a space in which actions undertaken by other government entities were reported and shared. However, in the final stage of implementation these meetings reduced their frequency and electronic communication means gained greater importance. Another best practice according to Peru's JP included the creation of interagency missions. Although it was always difficult to arrange all different agendas, the presence of two or more agencies provided a comprehensive overview on all different interventions and allowed to gather the opinion and views of professionals from different specialties which significantly enriched the proposals.

-Ensuring that objectives for private sector development were consistent with national/regional priorities/plans was acknowledged as a priority by all joint programmes.

The entirety of joint programmes placed local governments and all their leadership at the center of the JPs architecture as to ensure detailed and committed involvement of national partners and therefore, the sustainability of achieved results.

Regarding the JP of Costa Rica, the original structure of programme activities and resources were not clearly defined during the design. This resulted in the underestimation of regards to budget and activities implemented. Numerous re-structuring/approaches occurred for a multitude of implementations at different points during the executive time frame. These 'modifications' were necessary in order to align public policy strategies and products with those enacted by the National Development Plan and annual institutions. This delay and re-evaluation of approaches could have most likely been avoided with more in-depth and comprehensively thought out programme design prior to initiation.

Similarly, Egypt's horticultural development programme was in line with Government of Egypt (GOE) announcements to increase public agro investments targeting enhanced value chains and inclusion efforts. It is also in-line with the strategy of the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Industry to increase exports. In addition it contributes to several goals of the strategy of the Ministry of Agriculture 2030 to improve the agricultural sector by increasing small farmers' contribution to value added, agricultural

workers' and small farmers' incomes, the competitiveness of small producers of horticultural products, and the entrepreneurial awareness of small farmers in Upper Egypt.

Correspondingly, the 'Crafting out of poverty' programme was based on Viet Nam's crafts sector export strategy, approved by the Government in 2007. Additionally, it proved to be in line with the top Government priorities for rural industries development (Decree No. 61) and on Government's Resolution No. 30a for a speedy and sustainable poverty reduction program for the 62 poor districts in Vietnam. Finally, the JP considered under its framework the country's 10 year Socio-Economic Development Strategy and five year Socio-economic Development Plan 2005-2010 (SEDP). Similarly, the JP Banana in Dominican Republic was conceived within the framework of two national development strategies on increasing productivity, competitiveness, environmental and financial sustainability of agricultural production chains; as well as the Systemic Competitiveness National Plan aiming at sustainable competitive growth to promote integral human development of Dominicans and higher level of income per capita.

Cuba's JP also demonstrated its relevance and alignment with national and local priorities, particularly with initiatives that support decentralization and the achievement of food security and sovereignty, the latter having been declared a national priority. The Economic and Social Policy's guidelines approved in 2011 by the highest political and government spheres ratify the strategic importance of both issues for the country's development. This text addresses a priority related to granting more powers to territorial governments for effective management. In this regard, 'Support for New Decentralization Initiatives and Production Stimulation in Cuba' stimulates the increase of leadership by five municipal governments in coordinating and promoting territorial development through integrating different actors to implement local development strategy. It was designed to support national strategies and policies such as the Municipal Initiative for Local Development (IMDL) promoted by the Ministry of Economy, as well as the re-ordering of the agricultural policy by the Ministry of Agriculture. Both processes determine a very fertile ground for innovation and introduction of new instruments and local management tools.

In a similar account, Serbia's Rural Development programme has been successful to a certain large extent because national partners (The Ministry of Finance and the Economy and the National Tourism Office of Serbia particular) treated the joint programme as their own. In owning the programme, its activities and outputs, as well as its governance, the joint programme achieved the coherence and

force needed to be successful. The overall design of the JP at outcome level had strong support across national and local partners in Serbia, and national partners expressed and demonstrated a high level of ownership of design and implementation. The processes of involvement of national partners, from design through implementation and follow-up, can be complex and time-consuming; nonetheless, such efforts allow all subsequent processes to be much more effective. Local product providers, Local Tourism Offices and Municipalities all specified networking outcomes as the most important achievement of the programme, and the organization and linking achieved through the interventions seems likely to be of long-term significance.

Panama's 'Entrepreneurial Opportunities Network for Poor Families', Peru's 'Inclusive Creative Industries' and Costa Rica's 'Developing Competitiveness for the Brunca Region' also made efforts to frame their activities into the national strategies set by the government. Although the objectives outlined in the original design of the JPs were developed hand in hand with institutional partners, the programmes went through changes of regional and local governments from their approval and startup phases to their mid-term execution which resulted in some adjustments of focus and prioritization. Even though the overall objectives remained unaltered, it was necessary to realign some intervention strategies in line with adjustments in priorities, strategic plans and national development plans. Despite of the changing political environment in Peru during the development of its respective JP, it succeeded in conceiving a design flexible enough that allowed it to suit different local political styles and adapt its original proposals to new national guidelines.

-Coordinating geographically scattered joint programmes. As it was experienced in Costa Rica and Turkey, the efficiency of information flows were affected by the geographically scattered nature of the programmes. This represented a major challenge for the latter as the day-to-day management of the JP was based on electronic communications complemented by infrequent meetings at the technical level due to difficulties to arrange convenient timeslots for all. Costa Rica's JP faced similar challenges given the distance (about 6 hours) from the country's capital to the target Brunca region. In this regard, the programme took the decision to locate the implementation unit in Brunca with the consequent establishment of the required offices and management of interagency agreements for remodeling physical spaces, procuring equipment and recruiting a local professional team.

In Panama's JP, the fact that the Coordination Unit had its own and separate office is considered a good practice, which in this case also facilitated a workspace for consultants linked to non-resident agencies, contributed to joint coordination in the spirit of *Delivering as One*. Additionally, it provided a neutral meeting point for all discussions undertaken between all stakeholders involved in the JP, particularly for consensual planning and decision making purposes.

It is also noted that although the offices of the Coordination Unit, agencies, and partners did not have a strong presence in the provinces due to their location in Panama City, they frequently moved to the areas of intervention to discuss and coordinate directly with local partners

-Networking toward achieving expected results. In Dominican Republic, producer associations were incorporated as part of the programme management committee and participated actively in decision making activities to be later executed. Moreover, other entities were integrated as part of the banana value chain, the Cluster and ADOBANANO institutions that agglutinate all industry associations, in order to raise credibility and visibility. Networking among multiple actors was highly encouraged toward achieving the JP's expected results through the promotion of better relationships between producer associations, making the programme's activities more efficient; such as the joint purchase of productive technologies at better prices. Also, joint work contributed to the expected outputs of the JP being delivered on time. The good relationship between the associations involved led to the formation of a joint marketing company "Banana Trading and Export, COMEXBAN".

Another good practice in this line is Costa Rica's Competitiveness Council which constituted a forum for dialogue and promotion of political, social and economic inclusion -via partnerships- widely represented by different sectors in the region, including the historically excluded: indigenous, small producers and their regional MSMEs organizations.

-Addressing cultural resistance. Cultural resistance constituted one of the primary challenges usually faced during the implementation of most joint programmes. In the particular case of Egypt, integrating small farmers into horticulture value chains proved difficult as these expressed a natural tendency to resist new practices. Cultural differences such as tradition, as well as the fear and distrust towards risk, new methods and most importantly, donor agencies and governments were linked to a long history of malpractices in the past. Therefore, one of the initial aims of this programme was to

acquire the trust of farmers in order to introduce a variety of new best practices, new crops and new agricultural methodologies and integrate them throughout the value chains.

-Overcoming market constraints. In order to implement and develop best practices in any JP, it was first necessary to provide extensive training and capacity building in the local community as a substantive base in order to involve business plans, models and linkages with high end markets and obtain credibility with the private sector at later stages. However, entrepreneurship from both the private and public sectors were often greatly impaired due to market constraints such as ineffective regulatory environments, availability of financial products and services, limited market information as well as inadequate physical infrastructures that were also closely linked to cultural resistances.

-Marketing the programmes' activities became difficult in a number of countries due to the participation of several stakeholders and the diversity of activities by multiple UN agencies. As noted in Turkey's 'Harnessing Sustainable Linkages for SMEs in the Textile Sector' and regardless of the programme's very positive perspective related to cooperation between the beneficiary and the UN agencies, the concept of a UN Joint Programme was rather difficult to be perceived by the stakeholder and especially the target beneficiaries. The use of the single MDG-F logo was a visible example of this. As the SMEs were the primary and major target group, it was a challenge to be able to convey such concept. Due to the fact that the activities were usually divided according to the mandate and expertise of the respective UN agencies, some groups worked more extensively with one specific agency. Therefore, the name of this particular agency with whom closer collaboration was achieved, was directly associated with the JP as a whole.

Moreover, and as recognized by Peru's JP, some agencies have different approaches regarding similar issues, such as partnerships, consortia, etc. however, the joint programme was unsuccessful in reaching agreements between the participating agencies in this regard which led to each maintaining its own standpoint and method, proving to be confusing for most counterparts and beneficiaries. The impact of the interventions in this particular aspect was considered negative.

Box 6. Serbia's strategy to overcome branding challenges

Very few developments occurred in rural tourism in Serbia in general, particularly in the private sector, before 'Tourism for Rural Development' was introduced in December 2009 and certainly, never before in joint programming format. One way the participating UN agencies (UNDP, UNICEF, FAO, UNEP, UNWTO) disseminated knowledge and promoted local engagement was through joint organization of and participation in several public events. The result was synergy that enhanced, enlarged the programme's reach among national and local stakeholders.

Public appearances are considerably more effective if organized properly – advocacy activities and dissemination of messages, tools and knowledge clearly and measurably benefit with joint approach. But planning of these events must include financial as well as resource planning. If it is not the case negative effects for cooperation between agencies can diminish otherwise positive programmatic effect.

A good example is participation of the programme in Belgrade Tourism Fairs 2010, 2011 and 2012. In the first year, project team organized the event itself, the second year it was outsourced to a professional marketing agency and, the last time it was organized by the project team, National Tourist organization of Serbia (national partner) and several beneficiaries of the project (local partners). The first two attempts were rather weak but the third one proved to be a winning combination. All three sides could contribute in their own area of 'expertise' and the financial and other obligations were clearly defined in advance. From quite poorly organized event, the project progressed to well accepted, recognized and appreciated by the general public, partners and the donor.

However, experiences in Egypt, Serbia and Cuba were slightly different:

- Egypt's programme achieved the sound branding and unified image necessary for addressing the ambitious scope of its interventions;
- In Serbia, efforts were made to raise the acceptance and recognition of the programme by the general public, donors and partners;

- Cuba's Stimulation of the Non-Public Sector has successfully promoted the advantages of the multi-sectorial approach at the local coordination mechanisms and within the agencies and national counterparts. Although this approach has been complex it has also been an advantage for allowing the programme to deal with all challenges in a comprehensive manner, take advantage of the strengths of every local and national agency and institution, avoid the duplicity of actions in order to be more efficient and share knowledge.

Box 7. Branding horticultural development in Upper Egypt

While integrated in the strategies of the Ministry of Industry and Foreign Trade and complementing the strategies of the Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation, Salasel's original formulation and structuring was basically organized with regards to activities and resources, but required some adjustments during implementation for a more suitable on ground execution. During the mid-term a review reformulation of programme outputs, activities and indicators was seen necessary in order to better report and demonstrate project interventions and their effects. Changes were made in a collaborative manner, in participation of relevant UN agencies as well as representatives of the Government of Egypt.

Furthermore, instead of being seen as four organizations each with a different set of goals and training activities, the programme succeeded in creating a unified image and in branding itself as one body with well-planned and connected activities towards one major goal, which was helping farmers to get better integrated into the market with higher quality products and equitable relationship. The programme is widely known in UE as 'Salasel' the Arabic word for Chains in reference to value chains; this gave it a good standing and credibility in the different farmers' communities in all 6 governorates.

More fundamentally, the programme stimulates private investment trends that are taking place. Several private investors realized the comparative advantage of running agri-businesses in Upper Egypt and the new developments in infrastructure and started integrating their businesses with Upper Egypt supply chains. Some of the investors started sourcing exportable products from medium size farms or from farmers' associations in Upper Egypt.

Knowledge Management and Sharing

The MDG-F Private Sector and Development Programmes have shown that there is significant potential for the effective management of information and knowledge among several actors and sectors involved in joint programming, regardless of the numerous hurdles constantly faced, and not always overcome, by most programmes.

- *Inter-disciplinary knowledge.* All programmes developed knowledge products that were used for capacity building, advocacy and awareness-raising. These activities were strengthened by the multi-sectoral participation from stakeholders and implementing partners, which contributed to a base of inter-disciplinary knowledge that will support future development projects and government interventions. As noted in Cuba, knowledge sharing and transfer of technologies and methods from UN agencies to national counterparts, including government officials as well as associations of beneficiaries, in areas related to agriculture, handicraft development and tourism constituted a critical component of the programme.

In this line, Egypt's 'Salasel' addressed the needs of farmers to effectively market their produce and introduce these to high end markets and develop advanced plantation nurseries. This could be achieved through the synergistic cooperation and inter-disciplinary knowledge of various engaged agencies. In order to develop viable business models, advice from agencies ranged in the fields from legal, marketing, planning and feasibility (UNDP) to providing capacity building and harvest training to local farmers (UNIDO) and women (UN Women), providing these with access to micro credits and introducing them to business and financial management (ILO); all these factors assisted in facilitating onsite sustainable development.

Box 8. Harnessing Sustainable Linkages for SMEs in Turkey's Textile Sector

Corporate Social Responsibility awareness rising in Turkey required a multi-sectorial, integrated approach, therefore another method where UN agencies contributed by their knowledge individually would not have been appropriate, adequate and certainly not efficient.

Similarly, individual efforts for supporting clustering activities of the SMEs would be incomplete if not supported by the IT tools of value chain management, given that the programme benefitted from the lessons learned of the UN agencies for operationalizing a sustainable competitiveness platform, SCC, based on the local needs of the textile sector in the country, for which a dynamic and flexible model was used.

This tool proved to be an important mechanism which is expected to ensure continuity and sustainability, not only for establishing networks for the textile sector but for providing training and consultancy on CSR related issues and clustering as well as manufacturing, marketing and management related topics as well.

Another knowledge management strategy used by 'Salasel' to raise awareness of practices involved the media. A number of short video workshops were organized in collaboration with a leading online televised news website (Al Masry Al Zom TV) were hosted and aired short documentaries containing advice on best practices. These documentaries aimed at helping rural communities to voice their problems and advocate change. As part of the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) component, it aimed to advertise Upper Egypt as a region of high potential with focus on agri-businesses.

The wide variety of trainings and capacity building initiatives between the different UN agencies and counterparts also represents a fundamental tool for knowledge sharing within these programmes.

Box 9. Strengthening Capacities for Stimulation of the Non-Public Sector in Cuba

Alliances among the UN agencies involved (UNDP, FAO, UNESCO, UNIDO) and local and national actors were promoted in order to provide technical and methodological support for the development of individual, social, technical and institutional capacities. As a result, 6768 producers (2405 women) have been trained in production and food processing techniques as well as 2180 cooperative leaders and producers (506 women) in business management and cooperativism.

Today, there are Multi-Sectorial Local Groups on Training and Cooperative Management in four municipalities that assist more than 25 cooperatives. 1485 cooperative workers (288 women) have been trained in the issues covered by the Training Programme. This initiative was initially promoted by another UNDP project in Cuba and the experience was transferred to these four municipalities of the Joint Programme.

Reports, best practices and bulletins have been published in the internet and in publications of the respective UN agencies and of national institutions. Today, the 5 beneficiary municipalities advice other territories of the country with regards to methodologies and ways of stimulating the non-public sector.

-The transfer of methodologies and experiences at the national and local levels; through trainings, accompaniment of beneficiaries as well as internships and exchanges with other countries in the region, represented an important element of Panama's 'Entrepreneurial Opportunities Network for Poor Families'. The more in-depth accompaniment focus of these processes, rather than a series of isolated shorter-term trainings, also increases the likelihood that beneficiaries have internalized and are able to put effectively into practice the methods being transferred by the agencies. At the local level, the various trainings and accompaniment processes carried out by the joint programme have led to an increase of around 70 percent to 120 percent in income for certain groups of beneficiaries in the handcraft and touristic sectors.

It is noted that Egypt's JP succeeded in improving farmers' knowledge and capacity on good agricultural practices, improving productivity up to 25 percent for targeted crops and increasing

efficiency of use of inputs reducing the use of nitrogen fertilizers up to 50 percent, while linking them to input suppliers as well as buyers and other supply chain members with more than 2000 small producers generating over 40 million EGP (US\$6 million) in revenues, through contract farming and supply contracts, improving their value chain integration on a long term basis. In order to sustain knowledge and assure access to it, its documentation through manuals, guidelines and other resources as well as the capacity building of local agronomists and farmers association was accomplished.

In a similar account, the programme in Dominican Republic achieved to elaborate several relevant documents for the national banana sector by successfully integrating the inputs of the 7 participating UN agencies in the programme (UNDP, FAO, ILO, PAHO, WFP, UNFPA and UNAIDS), and consolidating their knowledge products as a reference library for producer associations along with the Cluster, ADOBANANO, and other public sector institutions. Data collected and analyzed by the joint programme is currently a key source of information for different stakeholders, making it the sector's most comprehensive library nationwide. The compilation of these documents is expected to be accessible from the Dominican Republic's UN website in the near future.

In terms of achievements for Cuba's JP, the greatest has been the degree of knowledge management existing in all stages of the programme. More than 55 courses benefited about 2000 people including producers, technicians and decision makers from specialized institutions, particularly from the Ministry of Education, at a municipal level.

In order to encourage better prospects for appropriation of knowledge and skills by household beneficiaries in Viet Nam, its PMU strengthened impact-oriented monitoring in the field to feedback monitoring data back to UN agencies and urge these to take measures to provide proper follow-up. In-depth interviews with beneficiaries resulted in a lot of qualitative evidence for achievements.

Regardless of the visible benefits of knowledge creation and dissemination by the combined participation of multiple specialized agencies to tackle complex issues of poverty reduction and social development through productive activities, it might also bring along great hurdles to be overcome by some interventions. As it was the case in Panama, the lack of a single reporting cycle and format used by the agencies and their counterparts, plus the storage, usage and update of large amounts of

information to be further processed and shared became a cumbersome challenge for addressing fundamental knowledge management issues.

Box 10. The challenging role of Knowledge Networks in Panama's 'Entrepreneurial Opportunities Network for Poor Families' Programme

In order to facilitate the organization and sharing of large amounts of information and knowledge produced by the programme, it facilitated a web-based portal called SIMON (Spanish acronym for 'Monitoring System'). This tool, developed for several joint programmes in Panama, not only allows for inter-agency information sharing, but sharing with national counterparts as well. In addition to centralizing information, as its name denotes, it also is a useful programme monitoring tool. Another feature of the programme has been requesting that all agencies provide the Coordination Unit with a copy of information (reports and data on areas of interventions, for example) and products (methodologies utilized, information gathered, trainings, etc.) related to the programme.

The centralization of material, both in SIMON as well as the Coordination Unit, would ensure all relevant information can be easily access by agencies as well as counterparts.

However, in practice, it has been difficult to promote the efficiency and standardized use of this tool for several reasons: a) given its scope, institutionalizing its use from the beginning of the project was necessary; b) harmonization of the presentation of certain information in order to adhere to the different reporting formats used by donor, different agencies, and counterparts proved a cumbersome process; c) as a consequence of the lack of human resources to continually upload and update information, SIMON is often out of date or lacking information.

Generally speaking, methods for technology transfer from UN agencies to counterparts included: 1) assistance and training, directed at mid-level officials; 2) short courses in training centers throughout Latin America; 3) in case of local development, working together on the development of local plans (also including final beneficiaries) with the assistance of international consultants.

With SIMON, the effort needed to achieve full buy-in from the actors, as well as the difficulties in maintaining the system up to date, are hurdles yet to be overcome by the programme.

In the case of Viet Nam, assuring that knowledge was sustained and accessible on a local level through locally trained agronomists, field offices, and technical material was one of the best practices implemented by the programme to ensure knowledge transfer and sustainability of project interventions. Other best practices by the JP involved: i) the inclusion of media through a number of partnerships and civic engagement and effective reporting of programme activities in different broadcasts and print outlets had strong empowerment effect on the beneficiaries and accelerated their positive response to the different interventions ii) the communication and reporting among agencies allowed for a wider perspective and more comprehensive overview of project scopes.

In similar lines, positive practices identified in Egypt's JP included the documentation and dissemination of success stories, e.g. "Taking a Value Chain Approach Towards Local Economic Development and Women's Economic Empowerment"; and the provision of Training of Trainers (TOT) to local experts and service providers as an approach to strengthen the capacity of local institutions to further provide support to local women and men, and to transfer key technical knowledge and skills to reinforce the local enterprises and promote gender equality. Staff of provincial institutions, including the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, the Cooperative Alliance, the Department of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs, and the Women's Union was empowered to become trainers on key topics. This contributed to the availability of good quality service provision in the target provinces.

More successful exercises on knowledge and information sharing took the form of systematization of experiences during the implementation of the JP in Cuba according to key focal points such as the convergence of state and non-state sectors, and the Credit Facility introduced as a pilot experience to promote import substitution also contributed to strengthen the management of the programme and

therefore, the achievement of its objectives through diverse learning experiences; as well as similar future efforts in the field.

Common concerns

The diversity of the 12 programmes is reflected by the fact that seven projects involve agriculture, while three involve handicrafts, two projects involve tourism and one involves housing. Many programmes state their focus on value chains in their titles while others introduce detailed value chain analysis as part of the programme. In this regard, the programmes share a set of common concerns and interest that will be analyzed in the following section.

- Value chain and pro-poor small business
- Capacity-building and entrepreneurship
- Innovation and improved production

Value chain and pro-poor small business

Governments and development agencies increasingly use value chain development as a key element in their development strategies. Frequently such strategies aim at improving the income of poor groups of the society through value addition. Pro-poor value chain initiatives often make use of lead firms to build up supplier networks among poor population, helping them gain access to knowledge and production technologies. Thus, a value chain approach to development puts at the centre the interrelatedness of actors in the value chain who gradually add value to products and services as they pass from one link in the chain to the next.

To function properly, value chains require some sort of coordination and depend on services such as transport infrastructure, electricity and water supplies, finance, management support and accounting services, knowledge providers, research laboratories and information services. A segment is a vertical part of a value chain that relates to a certain function, e.g., primary production, first-level processing or marketing.

- Market linkages

The Joint Programmes of the MDG-Fund 6th thematic window targeted large numbers of beneficiaries. They have done this in distinct ways. Some focused on individual businesses, associations and cooperatives, while others targeted individuals and households. Most programmes targeted beneficiaries in multiple localities. In this regard, the JPs have substantial multipliers, provided the programme strategies and tools replicated across sectors that provide a substantial share of national employment and that policies become embedded region-wide.

Table 1 Market linkages created by JPs

Market Linkages	
Ethiopia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved access to markets (processors) via cooperatives and cooperative unions, including Memorandums of Understanding. Some of the target primary cooperatives have employed staff such as a cashier and a grain purchaser to aid the proper functioning of their marketing activities The supply of linseed has been improved in quality and quantity as a result of the created market linkages
Egypt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tripling productivity per unit area Linkages to processing industry Export potential High value produced, marketed to Individuals and Supermarkets
Viet Nam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support in product design and the development of craft collections. Advice in products design provided by agencies (ITC/UNIDO) and company support to participate in trade fairs (ITC), thus adding significant value to the products. Marketing prospecting “missions” and study tours for enterprises (Laos, China, USA). Match making between ethnic minority groups and fair-trade exporters. Establishment of export marketing guidelines
Turkey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An online Value Chain Management Platform (VCMP) activated by the Istanbul Textile and Apparel and Exporter Associations (İTKİB) and used by T/A value chain actors The capacity of national SME support and advisory institutions in the field of clustering and business linkages development are enhanced

The development of good marketing and distribution interventions enables better prices to be obtained by producers (leading to higher incomes) and improves the availability of competitively

priced produce to consumers. Considering this, in Ethiopia the marketing and distribution of oil seeds in these areas have traditionally been done by small and medium scale traders with poor marketing facilities, especially for collection, storage and transportation, which causes high post-harvest losses. The marketing chain is long, with many intermediaries adding little value to the final product, as well as high transaction costs being incurred. Lack of access to packaging services, poor access to financial services, and poor vertical and horizontal collaboration within, as well as external to the chain, all negatively impact on the industry

The initial concept for the Programme was modeled on the value chain development approach as a common element to all UN agencies (UNIDO, FAO ILO). A Cluster Development component was subsequently integrated based on an innovative methodology that combines the best features of Japan's 'One Village One Product' (OVOP) model for community economic development and UNIDO's Cluster and Business Linkages (CBL) methodology to generate strong pro-poor growth in developing countries through the support of small and medium enterprises (SMEs)

Table 2 Impact of the Ethiopian JP on the edible oil value chain

Prior to the JP	As a result of the JP
<p>Limited farmer knowledge of seeding, cultivation and harvesting of oil seed.</p> <p>Traditional farming practices for oil seed.</p> <p>Oil seed not seen as a key cash crop.</p> <p>Poor quality seed stock available to farmers.</p> <p>Limited, and poor quality land selection for crop cultivation.</p>	<p>Improved access to improved seed stock.</p> <p>Improved knowledge of oil seed planting, cultivating and harvesting.</p> <p>Demonstrated improvements in practice, by farmers, in oil seed cultivation and harvesting.</p> <p>Demonstrated improvements in oil seed production quantities.</p> <p>Improved quality of product supplied to the market (processors).</p> <p>Improved sales prices for oil seed production.</p> <p>Improved attitude of the target farmers in production of oil seed, with a perspective of oil seed as a major crop being developed.</p> <p>Expressed and communicated need for an expansion of growing areas, and for an improvement in selection of land for cultivation.</p>
<p>Limited or no support to farmers from primary cooperatives and/or cooperative unions in farming practices.</p>	<p>Development of the relationship between cooperative unions/ primary cooperatives and farmers in support of improved farming practice.</p> <p>Improved access to quality seeds for farmers.</p>
<p>Limited support to farmers from regional governments in farming practices.</p>	<p>The Amhara region has prepared an extension package for edible oil crops.</p>

Limited support to farmers from primary cooperatives and/ or cooperative unions with market linkages.	<p>Improved access to markets (processors) via cooperatives and cooperative unions, including Memorandums of Understanding.</p> <p>Improved seed cleaning capacity and systems for farmers and primary cooperatives at the cooperative unions.</p> <p>The supply of Noug and linseed in quality and quantity has been improved as a result of the created market linkages.</p> <p>The quality of oil seeds supplied to the processors has been improved as a result of the 2% price incentive provided as per the contractual agreement and after the post-harvest handling and storage management training was delivered.</p> <p>Processors express an interest in the purchase of oil seeds from the target cooperative unions/ primary cooperatives due to the supply of quality products. This has created trust among cooperatives and traders.</p> <p>Some of the target primary cooperatives have employed staff such as a cashier and a grain purchaser to aid the proper functioning of their marketing activities.</p>
No linkages, no cooperation with oil seed processors or with other stakeholders	<p>Two Regional Steering Committees, comprising members representing all relevant stakeholders, formed and meet regularly. Acts as governing body for cluster activities.</p> <p>MOUs signed between Nile PLC and Right PLC and Primary Cooperatives in the project area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Processors purchasing directly from primary cooperatives. • Prices agreed directly that are to the advantage of farmers. • Producers providing unadulterated seeds direct to processors – better quality in larger quantities. • Middle men (brokers/ traders) no longer a factor in supply or pricing. • Trust and friendship is developing between producers and processors. • Farmers have good reasons and motivation to cultivate more oil seed.

The Programme resulted in an increase in income for edible oil seeds farmers and processors deriving from the improvement in technical and managerial capacity and supported by the linkages that now exist among value chain/cluster actors (including processors, farmers, traders, Universities, Regional Bureaus and Administrative organs and business development services providers) within the two regions. Access to finance has also been facilitated as the changes in the sector capacity have eradicated the misconceptions in financial providers that the sector is not bankable and financial institutions are now willing to consider requests from oil processors for loans. The innovative methodology implemented merging the value chain and Cluster Development approach has been regarded as a best practice.

In Turkey the Joint Programme aimed at strengthening productivity and innovation capacities of the SMEs in the Turkish textile and apparel industry especially in poor and vulnerable areas through

enhanced collaboration and networking for increased competitiveness. The JP supported the creation of an online Value Chain Management Platform (VCMP) which was activated by the Istanbul Textile and Apparel and Exporter Associations (İTKİB). The platform had by the end of 2012 217 accounts (members), compared to targeted 3500 members. The JP monitoring framework annexed to the inception report had the following target “1000 SMEs registered in the platform at the end of the third year, 50% being from RCOP region”. In comparison to the target, set out during the Inception Phase, the 3500 VCMP users signals a high level of effectiveness (350%). Another important indicator of success is the level of satisfaction (80%) of the VCMP users that completed online courses (32). The VCMP will contribute to strengthening the linkages between the SMEs and large scale companies (including global clothing retailers). At the local level, clustering initiatives will also harness economic linkages.

On the other hand, in Viet Nam, the programme intervened to address constraints and develop better integrated, pro-poor, and environmentally sustainable value chains (bamboo, rattan, sea grass, sericulture/silk and hemp), lacquer and hand-made paper). The JP identified a good opportunity to capitalize on the combined strengths of five participating UN agencies (FAO, ILO, ITC, UNIDO and UNCTAD) to contribute towards one objective using a single methodology and, unlike many similar projects, achieved to cover those seven value chains entirely and strengthened the supply and demand sides in parallel.

This process started by introducing better agricultural practices, including reduction in the use of harmful pesticides, and the introduction of high-yielding varieties for raw material such as rattan and mulberry. Moving along the value chain, craft producing households increased their productivity through healthier and safer working conditions, but also vocational skills training and equipment and tools needed for processing the raw material concerned. Producers were also supported to enhance their business skills and the organization of the group or cooperative, which instilled better business planning and enabled access to microcredit. Craft producers were furthermore assisted to develop new products, linked to exporting companies and taken to domestic trade fairs to expand their client base. Similarly, export-oriented companies expanded their product range with new sustainable product designs to meet global market trends and were supported to attract new buyers through participating in national and international trade fairs.

With regard to an increase in the average cultivation area per household, an impact can only be observed in the sericulture/silk value chain, where the average area per household doubled from 0.55 ha/household to 1.13 ha/household in the beneficiaries group, while the control group remained more or less at the same level as before. While there is no important change in the area under cultivation/harvesting per household (except in sericulture), the number of trees planted has been significantly increased with support from the JP. Bamboo & rattan households planted on average 1,414 bamboo & rattan seedlings per household, which is nearly two times more than in the control group. For the 104 bamboo & rattan households surveyed in the sample group, this makes a total of 147,056 new plants. In sericulture, sea grass and handmade paper, the sample group planted a large number of high-quality and new hybrid variety seedlings as well (average of 2,156 mulberry trees per farmer, 1005 sea grass seedlings per farmer, 1,579 trees for handmade paper production per farmer), while no new planting activities were observed in the control group. The planting activities undertaken by the farmers are long-term investments and can be a stable source of income from which the households and communes can benefit in future.

In Egypt the programme has succeeded in improving farmer knowledge and capacity on good agricultural practices, improving productivity up to 25% for targeted crops and increasing efficiency of use of inputs reducing the use of nitrogen fertilizers up to 50%, while linking them to input suppliers as well as buyers and other supply chain members with more than 2000 small producers generating over 40 million EGP (Egyptian Pounds) in revenues, through contract farming and supply contracts, improving their value chain integration on a long term basis. In order to sustain knowledge and assure access to it, its documentation through manuals, guidelines and other resources as well as the capacity building of local agronomists and farmers association was accomplished. While farmer association owned post-harvest centers were upgraded in terms of infrastructure as well as management systems, certified with ISO22000, overcoming technical barriers to trade and improving market access integrating them in local value chains, operating an average of more than 1000 tons of fresh produce annually.

While functional value chain analysis provides information regarding technical and business issues, they also produce impacts at social level as value chain development is never neutral and affects the world surrounding it. In this regard, also in Egypt, the JP addressed the empowerment of women across the value chain as a cross-cutting theme by not only building capacities of women workers working in harvesting of produces such as green beans, onions or tomatoes, but also by qualifying

more than 200 women workers to work in post-harvest centers, abiding by international quality and food safety management systems.

As we can see, some of the programmes are targeted at agricultural value chains, some other targeted at sectors including tourism, housing or handicrafts, some of them adopted a multi-sectoral approach to the value chain and some others tackle multiple value chains. There is no single methodology used by the programmes as every value chain requires a specific approach according to its specific needs. Value chains develop quickly and value chain documents can rapidly become outdated. New players enter the market, others drop out. It is in this context that experiences, lessons learned and good practices from the 12 Joint Programmes should be explored in order to be used and replicated following a certain pattern, one that provides a higher degree of effectiveness and efficiency to all the actors involved in the value chain.

Capacity Building and Entrepreneurship

UNDP (2003) defined capacity building as a long-term continual process of development that involves all stakeholders; including ministries, local authorities, non-governmental organizations, professionals, community members, academics and more. Thus, capacity building in the context of development implies a dynamic process which enables individuals and agencies to develop the critical social and technical capacities to identify and analyze problems as well as provide solutions to them, including planning for people to acquire knowledge and advanced skills that are critical to a country's economic growth, its standard of living and individual empowerment.

Given this context, capacity building activities in the 12 JPs from the 6th thematic window are in most cases based on surveys and prior evaluations on the main needs in their specific fields of development and the dynamics of the trainings differ depending on the specific needs of every target.

A good example of capacity building activities component oriented to train decision-makers is the Joint Programme on Sustainable Tourism for Rural Development in Serbia, which was very successful organizing training programmes for decision-makers in the finance sector at both national and local level. The JP supported eight Public-Private Partnerships (PPP) initiatives through the grant scheme and this support went to Municipalities, local tourism offices (LTO) and to rural tourism providers and partnerships between public, civil and private sectors in four regional stakeholder groups.

Some other experiences are focused entirely on SMEs training, as in the case of the Turkish programme that aimed to transform the Turkish textile sector into a competitive industry. The JP was to develop capacities of 25 experts and 4 business support organizations. As per the final JP monitoring report some 95 people received training on cluster development. Some 101 SMEs participated to the cluster diagnostic studies and another 26 to network analysis. Cluster development agents, mobilized within the scope of the JP reached out to 40 SMEs as opposed to targeted 65 as of end of 2012.

Capacity building and entrepreneurship are inextricably linked activities when discussing industrial development and, as soon as these activities are well-designed and implemented, usually this results in the inclusiveness of traditionally excluded social groups. The JP in Egypt addressed, among others, rural women, promoting entrepreneurship and linkages to financing sources, enabling more than 80 women to start their own businesses and group businesses in cattle raising through productive asset transfer. Furthermore the project has drafted policy briefs for improved inclusion of women in agricultural value chains and has promoted traditional male jobs for women through info graphics.

Usually, Joint Programmes aimed at creating an impact at local and national level and sometimes the only way to achieve this goal is by improving the development of local and national capabilities. In El Salvador the Joint Programme, aimed at creating sustainable inclusive urban settlements, adopted a capacity-building approach based on a “learning-by-doing” method. All the activities undertaken by the JP are defined by a principle of sustainability and, even more importantly, appropriation. All the local and national activities have been implemented by the men and women who received the trainings and who are actually leading actors of the implementation of the programme. Furthermore, all the investments in infrastructures funded by the programme have been made by local workers previously trained and strengthened. All the workshops and trainings were held in non-working hours to support participation. In this regard, it is very interesting to note that in El Salvador more that USD 500,000 have been directly managed and implemented by local civil society associations (asociaciones comunales), which required that the social management capabilities were strengthened and increased. 6 Agreements with civil society associations were signed.

Table 3 Improvement in capacities and capabilities produced by selected Joint Programmes

Capacity Building	
Dominican Republic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1,200 banana producers received technical training to improve their productivity by promoting the use of hand-protectors then increasing 30% productive capacity • 460 producers trained on labor law, with a particular focus on child labor • 456 workers trained to read and write
Cuba	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2,657 participants in the 80 thematic training courses (agriculture, gender, local development etc) • Technical training provided to 11,224 producers (3,792 women) in food processing • 33 women trained in a workshop to strengthen their empowerment and technical skills in the farming sector
Serbia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 500 men and women trained via 20 workshops representing 50 different tourist and rural stakeholders entities trained on organizational subjects • 300 men and women trained via 12 workshops, representing at least 100 different tourism stakeholders in sustainable resource management • 300 men and women trained via 12 workshops, representing at least 100 different organizations, architecture & engineering firms, construction firms, and public officials trained on energy efficiency and alternative energy technical matters and funding opportunities • Local tourism stakeholders trained via 15 workshops on product development issues, marketing and promotion • 600 producers, farmers and processors trained via 25 workshops in agriculture quality production and standards
Turkey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 95 experts trained on the UNIDO cluster methodology in Kahramanmaraş and Gaziantep • Improved capacity of the regional development agencies, helping them assess competitiveness of 77 clusters across the country • Training of core project staff and training of trainers programmes were held with the participation of 58 persons

Serbia and Viet Nam

We can take a look and compare the different methodological approaches undertaken by two JPs in regards to capacity-building activities undertaken, the one in Serbia on sustainable tourism for rural

poor and the one in Viet Nam focused on creating opportunities for rural poor in order to check the similarities but also the differences between both of them.

In the case of the Serbian JP, capacity building programmes were organized based on surveys carried out with stakeholders as well as on an assessment of the main capacity needs of the rural tourism sector, focusing on:

- Marketing and promotion of rural tourism;
- Conceptualization and formulation of the project proposals for funding by donors and banking/financial institutions (so as to have access to funds to improve the quality of rural tourism services and facilities), and;
- Development and implementation of a voluntary scheme for upgrading quality services in rural tourism with the introduction of a labelling mechanism.

All these training programmes resulted in the production of Manuals/Guidelines in Serbian and English which are posted on the website of the Minister of Finance and Economy of Serbia (MFE) and National Tourism Organizations (NTOs). Technical and capacity building assistance was also provided to NTOs on the development of selection criteria to showcase rural tourism best practices through an informative brochure. Approximately 160 stakeholders from local tourism organizations, municipality representatives, government officials, rural households, rural tourism service providers and NGOs participated in a series of six trainings which were based on the draft versions of the Manuals/Guidelines.

The participants provided valuable inputs which were integrated in the final versions of the Manuals/Guidelines on marketing and promotion and formulation of project proposals. In the case of the capacity building programme for project formulation, the training was provided under a Train-the-Trainer programme so as to build up a pool of national expertise which can replicate this training under the overall framework of the Rural Tourism Task Force. All training was organized during the second half of November and the first half of December 2012.

The marketing training achieved that participants could:

1. Enhance awareness on the importance of creating partnerships to carry out promotional activities;
2. Understand the importance of promoting products that are in line with the expectations of the demand, such as authentic products and experiences;
3. Enhance capacities to undertake “low cost” marketing actions (such as on line marketing and social media), to negotiate with tour operators and to participate at tourism fairs, etc.

Participants at the training on project proposals formulation have strengthened their knowledge of EU funds and improved their skills for preparing project proposals for EU funding within the framework of the new phase of pre-accession funding (2014-2010), as Serbia becomes a candidate country. It is expected that opportunities for funding will be available in the field of regional development, human resource development and rural development.

Those who participated at the trainings on quality services have enhanced knowledge on the existing European best practices and quality criteria for rural accommodation providers. They are also fully aware that upgrading the quality of services is a continuous and voluntary task and look forward to participating in a voluntary scheme for upgrading quality that could enable them to obtain a label and thus enhance their marketing opportunities.

In the case of Viet Nam, the design of the JP was based on a careful strategic needs assessment, and this design included entrepreneurship trainings for SMEs. The key feature of the JP is its integrated approach that provided holistic support through promoting sustainable production and entrepreneurship along the entire value chain, starting from crafts raw material producers and collectors in four selected provinces until export-oriented SMEs.

The JP adopted the UNCTAD-Empretec Entrepreneurship Training Workshops method, which were adapted to the local context. This training basically consists of encouraging individual entrepreneurs to focus on their roles as entrepreneurs and challenge them to critically examine their personal strengths and weaknesses and learn how to sustain and expand their businesses.

Standard “training packages” were being adapted to the particular context. The evaluators noted a gradual shift from an initially rather supply- to a more demand-driven service approach, especially after provincial coordinators were appointed. Capacity building through Empretec courses was of

particular use to the more advanced, larger among the targeted SMEs. Interviews at the end of the JP revealed that for smaller companies, cooperatives, know-how built through such training was probably of less practical applicability.

In May 2013 the Viet Nam Trade Promotion Agency (VIETRADE) signed a memorandum of understanding with UNCTAD officials to set up an Empretec centre in the country, thus expanding the Empretec trainings to all provinces in Viet Nam.

Consequently it can be concluded that success factors in capacity-building activities from the DPS window include collaboration among organizational partners and good management. But it should be noted here that responsibility and ownership are critical elements here, and the JP in El Salvador is a very good example of the latest. All activities undertaken by the JP, from local to national spheres, have been implemented following a principle of sustainability and ownership, that is, all the activities have been implemented by local people who have been trained according to these criteria, thus creating a sense of responsibility among local stakeholders that, otherwise, it is very hard to achieve.

Innovation and productivity improvement

The OECD defines innovation as the “implementation of a new or significantly improved product (good or service), or process, a new marketing method, or a new organisational method in business practices, workplace organisation or external relations.” (OECD, 2005, p. 46). There are many other definitions for innovation but, in the end, they all refer to the creation of an added value and, in the particular case of the 12 Joint Programmes from the Development and Private Sector window, to create a positive impact through the creation of innovative initiatives that help to achieve the proposed targets.

In Perú, the JP on Inclusive Creative Industries (ICI) used its processes and structures to create innovative activities able to create linkages between them and with other activities in the region then creating inclusive industries. This is quite relevant considering that former initiatives in the region traditionally had adopted a more “patronizing” approach regarding development, creating dependence on resources, goods and consumables in communities and organizations. The JP innovated with a different proposal to put into practice access market for organizations to become autonomous. This included the support of the regional coordination units from the JP. In Lambayeque the local Chamber of Commerce acted as a strategic partner for inclusive and creative industries in order to create linkages among different actors from the private sector in the region.

Figure 2: Thousands of Peruvians strive to earn a living from producing handicrafts



In this regard, a series of activities were promoted in order to strengthen the partnerships such as internships with craftsmen, craftwomen and entrepreneurs, in which participants could learn the current trends in the field of craftsmanship, particularly in regards to marketing innovation. This process allowed the JP to identify potential gaps related to technology and access market. Additionally, the JP has created partnerships with the European Union, the Regional Office for Foreign Trade, the Gallo University, Municipalities and Craftmen Associations in order to establish synergies in support of the Inclusive Creative Industries in the Peruvian region of Lambayeque.

Table 4 shows the diversity of the innovative mechanisms created by some of the JPs.

Table 4 Innovation mechanisms in selected Joint Programmes from the DPS thematic window

Innovative Initiatives	
El Salvador	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Designing and implementation of the National Programme to guarantee social housing• Promotion of a Memorandum of Understanding with BCR, SSF and BMI on Banca Movil and social inclusiveness. 50% of the approved loans to women• Improvement of support services to financial institutions on innovative financial tools for the building sector (Programa Nacional de Garantías VIS: Banco de Desarrollo de El Salvador BANDESAL and

	<p>promotion of financial inclusiveness through Banca Móvil)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreements signed with 26 financial institutions (banks and microfinances) providing microcredits with a 10% rate to support access to housing by families.
Cuba	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Channeling of external resources. The funds come from <i>JP donations</i>, thus avoid international loans • The role of Banco Comercial (BANDEC) which is focus in funds for loans and credits. • Under the new plan, the terms and conditions of the amortization of the loans are determined by a study of the viability of the project to be implemented, not by the Bank itself.
Dominican Republic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction of underleaf spray irrigation systems • Use of cell phones as a tool to obtain information about national and international market prices of banana • Introduction of the use of a plastic cover called “cuello de monja” to handle banana • Development of a pilot initiative to track the banana exports itinerary from the production plants to the port of loading • Support of banana producer SMEs lead by women specialized in manufacturing products derived from banana, such as jam, flour or compote

In El Salvador the programme innovated in the shape of an efficient model for reducing poverty, labeled “Transformation of poor Settlements in Sustainable and Productive Communities”.

The Programme made a methodological systematization focused on the transference of the knowledge acquired and the methodology used.

The model develops an activity that is articulated simultaneously in 3 complementary actions, namely:

1. Social cohesion
2. General improvement of the district
3. Local economic development

These 3 actions are established and materialized in 2 different levels:

- a) Local Plan (settlements and Municipalities)
- b) National Plan (focused on the development of a political agenda on these issues and the creation of a work-plan with national institutions specialized in local economic development.

The systematization consists of identifying the good practices developed and the success factors found and used in them in order to contribute to the formulation of a comprehensive economic development model for improved housing. This is articulated in:

- Value chain diagnostics of the building sector
- Public-private partnerships consisting of strengthen the capabilities of the providers who belong to this value chain through capacity-building activities and access to micro-credits
- Adding materials and needs, according to the supply and demand, for the improvement of the settlements

In Cuba the JP contributed to the strengthening of ongoing national initiatives by applying a mechanism for credit that includes three dimensions and that it works as follows:

- The first dimension refers to the channeling of the external resources. The funds come from donations from the JP so international loans are avoided. This resource provides funds to initiatives to finance the imports substitutions thus diminishing the negative effects on food imports. On the other hand this mechanism innovate the process by measuring the effect of imports substitution development model.
- The second level relates to the work of the *Banco Comercial* (BANDEC). This Bank is focused on the administration of the Credit Funds adding the Bank's experience as trustee. Considering that the primary focus is not located in financial efficiency, some other economic and environmental criteria appear thus stimulating local development, which create better conditions for producers and local governments to create and support new productive initiatives
- The third dimension involves terms and conditions of the loans. The new plan guarantees profitability and effectiveness of the projects as the interests of the loans are adjusted by a study of viability and Business Plans. This stimulates the promotion of import substitution and the development of new initiatives.

In summary, some of the Joint Programmes from the DPS thematic window do take a narrow, single commodity approach (eg Dom Republic, Ethiopia) and a standard value chain approach. Innovation is

not advisable for its own sake. Adopting a multi-commodity approach (as in Viet Nam, Bolivia or Egypt) or even a multi-sectoral approach (as in El Salvador) certainly complicates the coordination task. But the disadvantages have been outweighed by synergies and cross-learning.

Conclusions

Despite the relevance of the challenges addressed in the previous section, the quality of joint private sector development programmes is not exclusively determined by the practical aspects related to the functioning of programme teams, logistics, sound harmonization of roles and timeframes, and even the success of the activities per se; but they are most importantly dependent on the scale and degree of the impact they cause, linked to more conceptual and substantive issues including transformational change induced by the intervention that make social and economic structures more inclusive for the disadvantaged micro and small entrepreneurs, contributions to innovative knowledge creation and development for production value chains and marketing linkages for SMEs, and the degree of sustainability and replication achieved in the process.

In terms of impact, neither inputs from joint programme coordinators nor final evaluations of each particular JP can provide sufficient evidence to develop a conclusion, mainly because of the fact that their effectiveness, specially transformational impact, would only be visible in the mid/long-term rather than immediately after the conclusion of the programmes. However, the contributions documented in this report show strong potential for many of the joint programmes to be up-scaled and replicated, largely due to the efforts in which these JPs engaged to overcome some of the biggest practical and substantive challenges of their development and identify lessons learned to be further addressed and shared in future private sector development initiatives:

-Meeting expectations toward social and economic inclusion. All joint programmes were conceived as the sum of various agricultural, touristic, craft and productive initiatives, hand in hand with public and private actors that succeeded in organizing and integrating themselves towards promoting local economic development in the areas of intervention.

Moreover, they have intervened to address constraints and develop better integrated, pro-poor, and environmentally sustainable value chains. By moving along the value chain, craft and food producing

households have increased their productivity through healthier and safer working conditions, but also vocational skills training for producers were supported to enhance their business skills and organization of the group or cooperative, which instilled better business planning and enabled access to microcredit. When companies increase their export sales, employment is created for household craft producers as well as raw material growers. Through their many activities a positive degree of local leadership and empowerment were promoted and stronger relationships with public institutions were forged.

The creation of public-private partnerships for the development of productive sectors and the creation of conditions to improve the competitiveness of MSMEs as well as of the specific areas of intervention, are expected to lead to the achievement of goals related to local economy stimulation in the mid-term: employment rates and income increases for poor households.

Financial inclusion was also sought through some of the joint programmes. Access to finance elements inserted along these interventions contributed to eradicate some of the misconceptions of financial providers about the SME sector as not bankable and financial institutions in the target areas are now more willing to consider loan requests.

-Consolidating technical and managerial capacities of small producers through knowledge development and innovation. Training and technical assistance offered within the framework of the JPs have provided specific techniques and skills to the beneficiaries that have enabled them to break into local markets, and in some cases internationally. The operating capacities created and/or reinforced through “training of trainers” programmes are also an assurance of sustainable impact. Providing support to create organizational structures and associations in rural or underserved communities through innovative methodologies involving Value Chain and Cluster Development approaches has served to increase the comparative and competitive advantage of these groups in the market. In some cases these trainings and technical assistance have been translated into additional income sources for the families involved. In this point is key to note the role of the JPs in supporting and strengthening new technical, managerial and negotiation skills of beneficiaries.

-Promoting synergies with other projects. During the development of various JPs other projects were also identified as complementary and strategic alliances were created with diverse international

development organizations. Similarly, state institutions were strengthened in relation to providing support services for producers and productive means.

-Assuring financial sustainability through co-financing. The models and methodology designed and developed by these 12 joint programmes were successful at consolidating sectoral agreements and partnerships with the UN agencies involved in the programmes which have increased the probability of sustained impact and replication potential of JPs' results in the fields of social, environmental and entrepreneurial behaviour. Nonetheless, financial sustainability of clustering initiatives by some programmes is likely to become an issue at the local level, if the clusters, stimulated within the scope of these JPs cannot obtain funding from diverse support schemes of governments and other financial partners.

-Strengthening government capabilities in public policy formulation toward supporting the productive development of the non-state sector. The private sector and development window of the MDDG-F focus importantly on strengthening national capacities in public policy formulation and programme management for regional productive development; encouraging coordination between high value-adding initiatives and certification, technology and trade services; promoting innovative financial mechanisms to facilitate access to new domestic and foreign markets, as well as channeling surpluses towards production diversification.

Also, the expansion of services provided by government entities to the private sector was boosted; starting from the introduction of new techniques and technologies to various sectors such as farming, crafts and tourism has had a positive impact on the growth and diversity of the production the target areas. At the national level, this is expected to generate policy level sustained impact.

These processes have also supported local governments and institutions to analyze the value of rural tourism, value chain management and consortia as important elements to bring additional resources to the communities in the areas of intervention. In some cases, this has been translated in the creation of a number of public policy instruments (decrees, agreements, inter-institutional cooperation, changes in regulations), that benefit and strengthen the competitive capabilities of target areas. In others, this has resulted in the inclusion of such issues into the budgets of local governments, national institutions or local academic institutions. In others, community associations

created and empowered through the joint programmes, consisting of mainly humble and artisan producers of goods and services, contributed with their own resources to purchase land for the construction of production and touristic facilities. This last example reflects a radical positive change in the culture of rural families benefited by the JPs.

In relation to the key challenges, the sustainability of productive increases by the beneficiaries is identified as the main test. Yet, the capacities already created and strengthened in the municipalities constitute pillars of sustainability. Also, the fact that local development coordinators are institutionalized within the local governments is a key factor for sustainability.

Key Lessons Learned and Recommendations

The challenges that have been experienced by programmes and identified in detail in the previous section, offer significant information about gaps that need to be filled or adjustments that can be made to improve both strategic and practical aspects of joint programme design and implementation. The MDG-F Private Sector and Development Window constituted an important opportunity for well-resourced programmes to invest in development of multi-sectoral/inter-disciplinary initiatives that provide key lessons on improved development effectiveness for private sector development.

Mid-term evaluations and final observations on the programmes provide additional inputs into how well planning is critical for successful integration of all the multifaceted components included to address poverty reduction through productive activities into future collaborative development interventions. Examples of the elements of success demonstrated by the joint programmes include:

-Clear visioning and definition of roles and responsibilities between national and UN partners at an early inception stage of the programme could significantly accelerate its implementation and improved coordination among agencies for joint programmes, as experienced mainly in Panama, Egypt, Vietnam and Serbia.

The complexity of these programs and the number of actors directly involved in the implementation of activities implied the need for an induction and organization period at the beginning of the program in order to align the technical and managerial team. In that sense there must be some centralization in

the design, planning and management. Moreover, the dispersion of activities and initiatives in the areas of intervention does not always allow focalizing joint actions in certain areas.

Recommendation: Greater accuracy of the interventions and in identifying the target beneficiaries during the formulation and planning processes of the program must be assured. A previous discussion on what each actor understands as the thematic of the intervention and how resources will be distributed along the course of the program is highly desirable.

- ***Simplification of administrative processes.*** The administrative arrangements of the participating agencies often dilate some processes and do not allow a clear understanding of investments and activities planned and implemented.

It is also important to closely address the fact that each participating agency in joint programming has different reporting and financial reporting systems that often cause duplication of work and substantial delays.

Recommendation: In order to facilitate timely processes, coordination units should have autonomy in the management of funds and administrative processes. The role of agencies should focus on providing specialized technical support. For this it is necessary to have a clear administrative structure and joint coordination based on results.

- ***Value Chain Approach,*** improved value chain efficiency and integration of all stakeholders in interventions. Its focus on upgrading the small producers' skills to advance further in the value chain and reach investors, processors, and traders is significantly valuable in laying down a human foundation of people and enterprises that will continue further to nurture a culture of business and entrepreneurship. This approach also seeds a new culture of business practices that are expected to gradually grow to be a trend.

Recommendation: It is important to note that in the specific case of crop cycles, addressing grains and fodder crops that alternate with horticultural crops would be a more holistic approach, assuring support to beneficiaries all year long and giving them support to better plan and run their small farms.

On a different account, supporting rural women's enterprises at different stages of the value chain is particularly meaningful and effective in empowering women and promoting local economic development while contributing to job creation in rural areas that are lagging behind in terms of socio-economic development. In order to ensure that value chain upgrading activities contribute to gender equality and women's empowerment, gender analysis should be conducted at the beginning of a programme. Findings from the gender analysis need to be fully considered when developing and implementing a strategy to strengthen a value chain so that inequalities in terms of opportunities, decision-making, workload and income can be addressed in the process.

- **Participation and inclusive management** of the joint programme alongside different stakeholders, both executors and beneficiaries, contributed directly to the smooth implementation and delivery of planned activities. The inclusive and active participation of beneficiaries and implementing partners from the initial design and planning stages of the program is key to increase the sustainability of the expected results and construct solutions.

All MDG-F joint programmes were catalyzed by the active participation, knowledge and interest of a wide range of stakeholders, the aligned profile of the programmes with national development strategies, and the related availability of adequate financial resources. Designing interventions in a way that engages all relevant actors and is in line with project stakeholders' strategy assures success and sustainability. In addition, it allows collective awareness of all activities performed by the programme, which also facilitates accountability.

Recommendation: It should be considered additional time for the formulation of program and for the subsequent starting stage so a shared action strategy, objectives, expected results and working modality can be defined with national partners and the beneficiaries themselves, and incorporated them into the planning of interventions to be further developed. Additionally, it is recommended to periodically carry out a participatory feedback and to ensure that the planning is flexible enough to change the work plan if it needs to adapt to particular circumstances within the context of the country.

- As it was proven by most joint programmes, the appropriation of the national/municipal governments, the leadership of key actors and the motivation and participation of the beneficiaries based on their diversity guaranteed the effectiveness and sustainability of **knowledge management**

tools that were designed and implemented for the development of the private sector at national and local levels.

The support of the UN agencies and of the national institutions in the development of private sector capacities at the local level is more effective if: a) the need for knowledge recognized by the very same actors is taken into account; b) formal coordination mechanisms between the agencies and the national institutions are promoted to guarantee the use of their value added and their complementary; and c) exchange opportunities with and among the local actors are promoted and lessons learned are systematically generated.

-A vision towards the sustainability of the initiatives. The pressure to implement and show results in a short time usually makes it difficult to maintain a perspective aimed towards sustainability of the priority initiatives.

Recommendation: In that sense it is suggested to consider longer timeframes for implementation, since programs often involve complex processes to reduce poverty and improve the quality of life of beneficiaries and other partners. That said, it should be considered medium-term results in the monitoring strategy. Additionally, it should be contemplated agreements with partners, where applicable, in order to generate ownership and establish further actions once the program is completed.

-Sufficient timeframes for development interventions. Paving the way for the generation of significant changes in development processes is a complex issue that requires programs and projects of medium to long term.

For example, some qualitative results regarding the agriculture sector have only been measurable for certain groups, as the agro sector's 'responsive time' is slower than other sectors. For three year programmes, like in Panama and Egypt, a lesson learned was to refocus the aims, goals and methods to achieve durable results for agro sector beneficiaries. Given the time necessary for some of the processes involved, it will be difficult to quantify by the end of the programme the potential reduction of poverty and improvement of quality of life in the beneficiaries of all areas and sectors.

Recommendation: For programs with high aspirations for transformational changes, it should be considered timeframes of not less than five years to achieve the desired objectives.

-Continuity of officers and staff. High turnover of institutional officials and other staff hampers decision making and implementation of activities given the need to rebuild the whole memory of the JP for the newcomers.

Recommendation: To allow the continuity of understanding and a collective vision, it is necessary to keep information updated at technical and management level. It would be convenient to generate memory mechanisms and also electronic systems to keep history of the program, which can also serve for monitoring and evaluation purposes, to mitigate the rotation of technical officers in the program.

-An efficient monitoring and results-based management. The lack of monitoring strategies and plans established since the beginning of the program, and the little active participation of stakeholders involved in the development of results frameworks, led to a monitoring more focused on programmatic and operational ('activitis') aspects for donor's accountability instead of a results-based management which contributed to strategic decision making.

Recommendation: To ensure effective monitoring, it is suggested including a schedule of monitoring and the allocation of financial resources in the program design. Additionally, for joint monitoring is recommended to clearly define the roles and responsibilities of agencies, institutions and other stakeholders. Finally, it should sensitize stakeholders on understanding monitoring as a central element for the success of the program and not as an additional task at the time of reporting.

-A reasonable number of major players. A large number of key players often delays decision making about the development of work plans and the implementation of set activities given their different priorities, the lack of time available to devote for collective meetings, multiple views on how to achieve the expected results, among others.

Recommendation: During the design phase of the program, a detailed analysis of the key players who will be participating in the program should be conducted in order to ensure a homogeneous view on how to achieve overall objectives and to reduce the risk of dispersion. It is also recommended that key

stakeholders, especially governmental organizations, assign a permanent representative to the programme.

- *Management team should be located in the same region.* This contributes to a greater ownership and empowerment at the local/rural level of all initiatives implemented under the framework of a joint program as it gives the opportunity to speak directly with agencies and partners to define the work to be done, change strategies, make decisions based on close monitoring, etc; without restricting themselves to communicate with consultants hired only for a very specific activity.

Recommendation: The implementing team of a joint programme should ideally be located in the same area. Despite the advance in electronic communication means, being physically close still has many benefits all of which are absent when a JP is tried to be managed from different locations.

-*Involving local stakeholders at design level.* A demand driven programme and ownership at meso and micro levels are fundamental aspects of any programme, achievable through local involvement from an early stage.

Recommendation: Field surveys and consultations implemented both at design and process stages may contribute to the programme's sound identification of local needs and expectations, and increase ownership of results.

-*Unifying recruitment criteria among UN agencies.* One of the greatest challenges of joint work is the effective unification of criteria for hiring consultants and technicians aimed at finding the right standard of skills and fees for similar employees among the participating agencies. Usually, the terms of the contracts for similar responsibilities differ significantly from agency to agency, being as diverse as from U.S. \$ 600 to U.S. \$ 4,800. (as experienced in Peru JP). This might cause a certain level of discomfort among staff of the same joint programme.

Recommendation: This issue (and other administrative, travel and DSA aspects) may be addressed and agreed upon by the UN System in order to make efforts toward unifying the criteria for JPs.

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