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UNAIDS

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Update on the development of the Global Strategy Framework and UN System Strategic Plan 2001-2005

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This paper responds to the request of the PCB at its 1999 session for an update on the development of the UN System Strategic Plan for HIV/AIDS for the years 2001-2005 in advance of the full discussion planned for the PCB thematic meeting to be held in December 2000. It reviews progress to-date and actions underway that respond to PCB recommendations related to the development of:

- a Global Strategy Framework;
- the UN System Strategic Plan for HIV/AIDS for the years 2001-2005;
- efforts to provide more systematic support to the strategy development efforts of key partners at national and international level, as they develop or refine their own plans to address the epidemic.

ACTION REQUIRED AT THIS MEETING

The PCB is invited to review the attached paper and provide further guidance to the UNAIDS Secretariat and Cosponsors in preparation for the December 2000 PCB Thematic Meeting.

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I. Background

1. This paper responds to the request of the PCB at its 1999 session for an update on the development of the UN System Strategic Plan for HIV/AIDS for the years 2001-2005 in advance of the full discussion planned for the PCB thematic meeting to be held in late 2000.

2. At its 1999 session, the PCB encouraged:

- Cosponsors and the Secretariat to intensify their efforts towards developing a UN System Strategic Plan for HIV/AIDS, detailing how the UN system will articulate a global strategy and support countries to intensify their national responses;
- Cosponsors to develop their institutional strategies, with balanced emphasis on priority regions, and to articulate their specific objectives, targets and plans to achieve those objectives;
- Cosponsors and the Secretariat to make use of planned regional fora, global conferences and governing bodies to consult broadly with governments and NGOs in the development of the UN System Strategic Plan for HIV/AIDS. The PCB further encouraged interested countries to actively support and facilitate the consultation process.

3. The Fourteenth Meeting of the CCO, 6 October 1999, New York, committed to finalizing the Global HIV/AIDS strategy before the end of 2000. Continuing efforts will be required over the course of the next six months by the UNAIDS Cosponsors, the Secretariat and other partners to:

- build consensus around a **Global Strategy Framework**, to influence further strategy development;
- develop the **UN System Strategic Plan for HIV/AIDS** for the years 2001-2005;
- ensure that the **UNAIDS Unified Workplan and Budget for 2002-2003** reflects the strategic priorities identified;
- provide more systematic **support to the strategy development efforts of key partners** at national and international level, as they develop or refine their own plans to address the epidemic.

II. Global Strategy Framework

4. The purpose of a Global Strategy Framework is to provide a common basis for the many independent actors in the response to the AIDS epidemic from which to formulate and re-evaluate their strategies. It is intended to better enable the efforts of these multiple actors at local, national, and international level to be more synergistic with each other and more relevant to action at the community level.

5. The Global Strategy Framework is comprised of:

- common goals
- common objectives
- common principles
- explicit strategic assumptions
- common operational framework.

6. The Global Strategy Framework is intended to influence the development of the many thematic, sectoral, geographic and institutional strategies which, taken together, constitute a global strategy process. The Framework itself should be regularly updated based on experience and feedback on its use and applicability within the global strategy framework process.

7. A “working draft” Overview Strategy Framework was developed by the Secretariat in early 1999. This provided an overview of indicative goals, key strategies, and a strategy process for the UN System response to the AIDS epidemic as background to the consultations of the CCO Working Group in preparing the Unified Workplan and Budget for the current biennium.

8. To advance these efforts, the Secretariat established an interdepartmental task team on global strategy framework to identify and harmonize strategic priorities emerging from regional and thematic strategy processes and partner programme reviews. The Task Team has further developed a **draft Global Strategy Framework** to serve as the basis for a strategy retreat for Cosponsors planned for June 2000. The Framework, as revised through the Cosponsor strategy retreat, will be submitted for approval to the thematic meeting of the PCB to be held in December 2000. The Framework will serve to further structure and guide the finalization of inputs from the Cosponsors and other UN System partners into the UN System Strategic Plan for 2001-2005.

III. UN System Strategic Plan for the Period 2001-2005

9. Following the June 1999 PCB Recommendation encouraging the Secretariat and Cosponsors to intensify their efforts towards developing the UN System Strategic Plan, the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) urged Cosponsors and other organizations of the United Nations system “*to submit to their governing bodies*

their proposed contribution to the United Nations System Strategic Plan for HIV/AIDS for 2001-2005” (E/1999/36/INF/2/Add.2/9c).

10. Efforts are underway within the Cosponsors to respond to these recommendations. In advance of the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) head of agency level meeting in April 2000, the UN System organizations prepared summaries of their:

- current global level institutional priorities addressing HIV/AIDS;
- current global level institutional strategy addressing HIV/AIDS;
- governing board actions;
- priority regions for HIV/AIDS efforts;
- priority actions to strengthen country level action.

11. The Secretariat has begun working with the UN System organizations on a further elaboration of these summaries that will form the basis of the UN System Strategic Plan for 2001-2005.

- A working draft of agency summaries will be made available as a conference room document at the time of the **May 2000 PCB Meeting**.
- A working draft of the elaborated UN System Strategic Plan will be available for discussion at the **December 2000 PCB Thematic Meeting**.
- A UN System Strategic Planning retreat in early 2001 will finalize the plan which will be submitted to the **2001 PCB Meeting**.

IV. Institutional Strategies of the Cosponsors and other UN System Partners

12. Efforts are underway to respond to the June 1999 PCB recommendation that UNAIDS Cosponsors “*develop their institutional strategies, with balanced emphasis on priority regions, and to articulate their specific objectives, targets and plans to achieve those objectives*”. Cosponsors are refining their institutional priorities through a variety of processes, including internal dialogue and debate, development of regional strategies, development of thematic strategies, institutional reviews, governing body directives, and interagency meetings. For example, working closely with the Secretariat:

- WHO has developed and approved its overall institutional strategy for addressing the AIDS epidemic.
- UNFPA continues to produce its annual “*AIDS Update*” which details work supported at country level. In addition, it has recently concluded and published a report on a thematic workshop on HIV/AIDS, which included all of its Country Support Teams in Africa, and has plans underway for similar efforts in other regions.
- The World Bank has published its strategy for “*Intensifying Action Against HIV/AIDS in Africa*”, as a part of its major scale-up of efforts there.

- Through a series of workshops and consultations, the UNICEF Regional Office in Eastern and Southern Africa has developed new guidelines for intensified support to country programmes.

13. The Secretariat was undertaking a series of Partner Programme Reviews with key partners, as inputs to the Global Strategy and the UN System Strategic Plan 2001-2005. The purpose of the reviews is to further improve planning and collaboration across the UNAIDS partnership based on periodic structured dialogue between the individual Cosponsors and other partners, and to document and share the contributions of major UNAIDS partners in the response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic. Taken together, the series of Partner Programme Reviews will contribute to a more panoramic view of the synergy created by the UNAIDS partnership.

14. As a part of its knowledge clearinghouse function in support of the entire UNAIDS partnership, the UNAIDS Secretariat has initiated the Partner Programme Review process which will include UNAIDS Cosponsoring organizations; other UN agencies and organizations that have either entered formal agreements with UNAIDS or are working towards common HIV/AIDS-related goals; several bilateral development agencies, and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) with formal relationships with UNAIDS.

15. Reviews have already been completed with UNDCP, UNFPA and a number of the major foundations supporting international work. They are also under active preparation with UNICEF, UNDP and the World Bank.

V. Ongoing Strategy Development

16. The UNAIDS Cosponsors and Secretariat have continued to make substantial progress in the area of thematic, sectoral, and regional strategy development.

A. Thematic Strategy Development

17. Providing support to partners in the area of thematic strategy development remains the mainstay of the work of the UNAIDS Secretariat Department of Policy, Strategy and Research (PSR). As a step towards making thematic strategy development more inclusive, the Secretariat has recently undertaken to intensify its support to Interagency Task Teams in priority areas including access to drugs, education, MTCT, and VCT. It is anticipated that these Teams will be a primary vehicle for the harmonization of thematic priorities and strategies of UNAIDS Cosponsors and Secretariat as well as other partners.

18. It is also anticipated that the Task Teams will serve as the primary vehicles for the translation of those priorities and strategies into the development of the programme support activities of the Cosponsors and Secretariat to be included within the UNAIDS

Unified Budget and Workplan for 2002-2003. The Interagency Task Teams will operate "virtually" for the most part, increasingly supported by Secretariat efforts to develop WEB-based discussion forum and library functions.

Examples of recent progress in the area of thematic strategy development include:

19. **Care:** The primary objective for this biennium is to shift the focus in care and counselling from technical development activities to strong support of national efforts. Towards this objective, the UNAIDS policy and strategy for care and support of PLHA was presented in draft form to the Cosponsors in February 2000. To support national level strategic planning, a UN working group has been established to work on access to drugs for HIV and HIV-related conditions. The working group is expected to advise governments on therapeutic equivalence possibilities and assist in the development of guidelines for care and management of PLHA.

20. **Voluntary Counselling and Testing:** An interagency technical working group on VCT was established in 1999, to better coordinate the activities of the various agencies around VCT. The main objective is to develop a coordinated workplan around which all the VCT activities will take place. A draft workplan for the year 2000 was developed in February which included items to establish processes for formulating the year 2001 workplan and coherent planning up to the year 2005.

21. **HIV Vaccine activities:** A joint WHO-UNAIDS vaccine initiative was launched at the beginning of the year to boost the international effort in this area. The Vaccine Advisory Committee formed by leaders of the major AIDS vaccine research agencies in industrialized and developing countries meets every year to review progress and make recommendations for future activities. New activities this year include two new initiatives: the development of regional networks for AIDS vaccines, especially in Africa, and preparation of specific strategies and plans to make future vaccines available after the successful completion of Phase III trials.

B. Sectoral Strategy Development

22. UNAIDS Cosponsors, the Secretariat and other UN partners have also initiated strategy development work in several key sectors including:

- **Education Sector:** Following the June 1999 PCB, the Interagency Task Team on Recommendation of School-Based HIV/AIDS Programming has initiated an education sector strategy development process, which is described further in the current PCB submission *Agenda Item 6, PCB(9)/00.3*.
- **Health Sector:** WHO has initiated efforts with ministries of health, other Cosponsors and additional international partners in a systematic review of health sector strategy development relating to AIDS.

- **“Emergencies Sector”**: Following the United Nations Security Council Meeting in January 2000 on AIDS in Africa, efforts have been intensified together with the UN Inter-Agency Standing Committee on Emergencies to develop a more comprehensive strategy for addressing AIDS in emergencies and conflict situations.

23. Further strategy development work is in the preparatory stage in the corporate and labour sectors, emphasizing workplace area and community outreach strategies, and in the finance sector, focusing debt relief strategies as they relate to AIDS.

C. Regional Strategy Development

24. The UNAIDS Secretariat Department of Country Planning and Programme Development (CPP) has taken the lead together with the Cosponsors in mobilizing other partners through regional strategy development processes. A series of regional meetings have been undertaken to identify strategic priorities for concerted regional or intercountry action and to encourage better definition of the role, function and responsibilities of Cosponsors and other partners with respect to thematic and cross-cutting priorities.

Major efforts have included:

25. **Africa Region.** The International Partnership against AIDS in Africa (IPAA) continues to have a major influence on the mobilization of partners and the harmonization of strategic approaches in Africa. All of the UNAIDS Cosponsors have intensified their efforts in Africa. Progress within the IPAA is described further in the current PCB submission *Agenda Item 7, PCB(9)/00.4*.

26. **Asia Region.** In both South and South-East Asia, the Secretariat is facilitating regional consultative processes aimed at strengthening regional action in support of national responses.

27. **South Asia.** A consultation of national governments, UN Theme Groups, regional Cosponsors and bilateral donors, took place in Nepal in October 1999. The meeting identified priority areas requiring collaborative action at the regional level, including advocacy, trafficking and drug use as well as information exchange. A follow-up meeting took place in Delhi last March. Originally intended to focus specifically on advancing the political advocacy agenda, the meeting's scope was enlarged to include an appraisal of the status of all the issues raised in Nepal. The Delhi consultation had additional NGO, bilateral and government representation and confirmed political advocacy as the overarching priority area for regional action. The Secretariat with support from DFID, the World Bank, UNICEF and others will now be working over the next year on the development of advocacy packages to target different political constituencies.

28. **In South-East Asia,** a consultation of the regional Cosponsors took place in Thailand in August 1999 and agreement was reached on a set of key issues and areas for individual and collaborative action by the Cosponsors in countries of the region. A

follow-up meeting bringing together the UN system at country and regional level, national governments, bilateral donors as well as international NGOs, is taking place in Thailand in April 2000. The ASEAN Secretariat and ASEAN AIDS Task Force will also advocate for the inclusion of AIDS on the agenda of the next summit of ASEAN Heads of State and the development of the ASEAN's own regional programme on AIDS.

29. **Latin America and the Caribbean Region.** The regional and sub-regional strategies for addressing HIV/AIDS in Latin America and the Caribbean have been in the process of design and development through an ongoing dialogue with all the key stakeholders in the Region (including the regional offices of the UNAIDS Cosponsors, regional inter-governmental bodies such as CARICOM and SICA, inter-country partners such as the Horizontal Technical Cooperation Group, UNAIDS regional collaborating centres, the Caribbean Regional Task Force on HIV/AIDS, key regional NGOs and PLHA Associations) as well as through country prioritization. The strategy development process clearly builds upon existing initiatives, opportunities and inter-country mechanisms and draws upon the regional technical networks which facilitate the exchange of information and expertise on specific technical areas (including the Regional Network on Strategic Planning, the Regional Epidemiology Network and the IDU Harm Reduction Network).

30. Each of the UNAIDS Cosponsors has already established portfolios of regional activities on AIDS. The analysis of regional programmes of the Cosponsors has highlighted the need for common work in the areas of advocacy, youth and communication/IEC. The strategy development process is now moving towards developing an integrated, coordinated UN regional AIDS plan in support of country-level responses. The Cosponsors are also working jointly on common initiatives such as HIV Prevention among young people and adolescents (leading up to the Ibero-American Summit of Heads of State on Infancy and Adolescence, to be held in Panama in November 2000, and thereafter defining the agenda and priorities for children and youth to be presented to the UN General Assembly in 2001).

31. **Eastern Europe Region.** A strategy meeting to better coordinate regional support for national responses to AIDS in Eastern and Central Europe was organized by the UNAIDS Secretariat and UNICEF and held in Geneva in November 1999. It brought together representatives of UNAIDS Cosponsors, bilateral agencies and international nongovernmental organizations working on AIDS in the region. Recognizing the closing window of opportunity to prevent large-scale epidemics of AIDS in Eastern Europe, participants agreed on urgent joint action to support and strengthen national responses to AIDS in Eastern and Central Europe. Participants identified three regional strategic priorities: (i) expanded coverage of HIV prevention targeting injecting drug users, (ii) prevention and control of sexually transmitted infections, and (iii) needs of vulnerable young people. UNDCP, together with DFID, USAID, the Finnish Government, MSF, the Soros Foundation and the World Bank are intensifying efforts to reduce HIV risk from drug abuse across the region. WHO is leading regional work on STD prevention and

treatment, and UNICEF is working with UNFPA and WHO to better coordinate the work of the UN around young people.

VI. Conclusions

32. Over the last two years, and the last year in particular, there have been substantial intensification and harmonization of the institutional, thematic, sectoral and regional strategy development work of the UNAIDS Cosponsors and Secretariat as well as other partners. In addition, significant progress has been made towards putting in place the mechanisms required to maintain and expand this strategy dialogue on an ongoing basis among the many partners who are key stakeholders in the “global strategy process”. This work will need to be further intensified in the coming months and will provide the basis for a more relevant and strengthened UN System Strategic Plan for HIV/AIDS for the years 2001-2005 as well as the UNAIDS Unified Workplan and Budget for 2002-2003.