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PROGRAMME COORDINATING BOARD

Fifteenth meeting
Geneva, 23–24 June 2004

Provisional agenda item 2:

Coordination and Harmonization **(The ‘Three Ones’)**

Summary

On 25 April 2004, UNAIDS, the United Kingdom and the United States co-hosted a high-level meeting at which key donors reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening national AIDS responses led by the affected countries themselves. They endorsed the ‘Three Ones’ principles, to achieve the most effective and efficient use of resources, and to ensure rapid action and results-based management.

The agreement by partners which emerged from this meeting is attached.

A summary of specific follow-up actions to be undertaken by UNAIDS to promote the realization of these principles in countries is proposed.

Action required at this meeting

It is requested that the Programme Coordinating Board (PCB):

- i) endorse the agreement on Commitment to principles for concerted AIDS action at the country level, which emerged from the donor meeting held on 25 April 2004, in Washington, DC, and undertake in their capacities as governments, donors and partners to strive towards the realization of these principles in their work; and
- ii) endorse specific action by UNAIDS to realize the application of the ‘Three Ones’ at the country level, including planning for continued actions in this area in the next biennium’s Unified Budget and Workplan.

Background

There has been a marked shift in the global response to the AIDS crisis and a new acknowledgement of the urgency for action. As the number of funding and implementing partners increases, there is a need to deal immediately with the risk of duplication, overlap and fragmentation of the response, particularly where the coordinating capacity is weak.

Donor governments and other external partners have a major responsibility in ensuring that their funding and support policies enable a nationally owned and led AIDS response. The 'Three Ones' principles for coordination serve as a guide to enhance effectiveness, speed and sustainable results to the extent there is active support from donor partners.

The call for better coordination of the AIDS response is fully in line with the statement adopted by Development Cooperation Ministers and Agency Heads at the recent meeting in Paris on 15–16 April 2004, of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), with its promise to 'turn the principles of harmonization and alignment—agreed at the Rome High Level Forum in 2003—into reality on the ground.'

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The agreement that emerged from the meeting co-hosted by UNAIDS, the United Kingdom and the United States on 25 April 2004, is reproduced below. Programme Coordinating Board members are requested to acknowledge and endorse this document of commitment, and undertake in their capacities as governments, donors and partners to strive towards the realization of these principles.

The role of UNAIDS in implementing the 'Three Ones'

With momentum for the realization of the 'Three Ones' principles established at the April meeting, UNAIDS is now shifting its work on this initiative to the country level. In particular, UNAIDS will:

- Recruit partners—especially key donors—to champion efforts in 'showcase' countries; Advocate national ownership of the "Three Ones" in all countries with all partners— government ministries, parliamentarians and political leaders from districts and municipalities, civil society including service providers, the private sector, communities and vulnerable groups;
- Build consensus on methods of operationalization, in particular with critical multi-lateral partners including the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, the World Bank and other Cosponsors;
- Link the "Three Ones" efforts to global tools such as the Millennium Development Goals and OECD processes;

- Develop tools, in particular communication pieces and best practices or models, and provide technical assistance to assist countries with the implementation of the ‘Three Ones’;
- Facilitate and track country level progress and produce an annual status report.

It is requested that the Programme Coordinating Board endorse the above actions by UNAIDS, including planning for continued actions in this area in the next biennium’s Unified Budget and Workplan.

Commitment to principles for concerted AIDS action at the country level

The AIDS epidemic is a complex global crisis, which continues to worsen. At the same time, the world is responding more effectively than ever before. National responses are broader and stronger, and have improved access to financial resources and commodities.

We, bilateral and multilateral donor agencies meeting with national leaders dealing with the spread of AIDS, reaffirm our broad and sustained commitment to supporting national AIDS responses. We endorse the ‘Three Ones’ or key principles for concerted AIDS action at country level, with a view towards achieving the most effective and efficient use of available resources and ensuring rapid action and results-based management. These principles—detailed in the conference papers¹—are:

- One agreed HIV/AIDS Action Framework that provides the basis for coordinating the work of all partners;
- One National AIDS Coordinating Authority, with a broad based multisectoral mandate;
- One agreed country level Monitoring and Evaluation System.

The ‘Three Ones’ are not prescriptive global blueprints. We acknowledge that their application will result in adaptations appropriate to each country and the situations and the institutions concerned, and we commit ourselves to maximizing their realization through a process that includes all stakeholders.

As donors, we have a variety of comparative strengths allowing for different entry points for supporting effective AIDS action, such as focusing on the emergency nature of the AIDS crisis or mainstreaming AIDS within the broader development context. The ‘Three Ones’ implies a mutual recognition of these different approaches and seeks to make them complementary within a nationally driven AIDS response that can achieve results and sustain them. The principles are fully compatible with the Rome Declaration on Harmonisation done in Rome on 25 February 2003, and the work of Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) on aid effectiveness and donor practices².

Inherent to these principles is our shared recognition of the urgent need for responding to AIDS in an exceptional way which supports inclusive national ownership and clearly defined accountability³.

? ¹ Conference Paper 1: ‘Three Ones’ key principles

? ² DAC Guidelines and Reference Series: Harmonising Donor Practices for Effective Aid Delivery

? ³ Conference Paper 2: Report of the consultation process: Clearing the common ground for the “Three Ones”

On the basis of the ‘Three Ones’ principles, bilateral and multilateral agencies that met with national leaders on 25 April 2004, in Washington, DC, agree to take the following steps to apply these principles for concerted AIDS action at the country level:

I - One agreed HIV/AIDS Action Framework that provides the basis for coordinating the work of all partners

1. In coordination with national leadership, engage with other stakeholders to review and affirm the existing national AIDS action plans, updating them where necessary and adapting programmes and projects.
2. Design assessments and programming visits in ways that support the national AIDS action plans, undertake them jointly with partners where possible, ensure the inclusion of national stakeholders and maximize the use of national capacity and competence.
3. Engage with national stakeholders in action-oriented policy dialogue to analyse and overcome barriers to an effective AIDS response, and to achieve an enabling policy environment in areas such as macroeconomic policy and human resource policies.
4. Participate with other stakeholders to coordinate complementary strategies between expanded AIDS action and health sector support, maximizing synergies, expanding access and delivery options and coordinating Technical Assistance to the extent possible.

II - One National AIDS Coordinating Authority, with a broad based multisectoral mandate.

5. Support country-based inclusive reviews of existing coordinating bodies related to AIDS, in order to achieve common agreement on one broad based national AIDS coordinating authority with features and functions consistent with the ‘Three Ones’ guiding principles, including its relationship to other partnerships, funding arrangements and institutions.
6. Contribute to the capacity of the national AIDS coordinating authority to set priorities and policies, and monitor progress fully, inclusively and transparently.
7. Support broad partnership forums where all stakeholders, including NGOs and people living with AIDS, can channel policy and programme recommendations to the national AIDS coordinating authority.

III - One agreed country level Monitoring and Evaluation System.

8. Support nationally led efforts to establish a single, functional Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) system at the country level which links various data collection and analysis efforts to meet the needs of donors and programme implementers.
9. Support the capacity of national institutions to track, monitor and evaluate programme results and contribute to the policy dialogue on AIDS.
10. Review individual agency programmes to harmonize the M&E indicators with internationally accepted HIV indicators as adapted by the national system in order to minimize additional management and reporting burden on stretched national capacity.

Follow Up

The dynamic and exceptional nature of the global HIV/AIDS crisis calls for a response involving country-specific adaptation and application of the 'Three Ones' guiding principles and systematic follow-up and support, problem-solving and learning.

We, bilateral and multilateral donor agencies meeting with national leaders, are committed to respond in concert to various needs and roles in support of the country level "Three Ones" platform, as being requested by the national AIDS coordinating authority and based on our comparative strengths.

Further, we affirm and support the role for UNAIDS at the country level as a facilitator and mediator between stakeholders in country-led processes for following up these commitments, including tracking country level progress in implementing the 'Three Ones,' and helping integrate an assessment of the efficacy of coordination arrangements and the application of the 'Three Ones' into existing national reports.

We also recommend that UNAIDS produce an annual report and facilitate action-oriented policy dialogue on progress towards the 'Three Ones' principles for concerted AIDS action at the country level and issues arising from implementation and coordination of country programmes.

At the global level we, as bilateral and multilateral agencies meeting with national leaders, note the need for further dialogue, with international organizations and financing institutions such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the World Bank, the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, on ways to effectively connect a sustainable AIDS response with poverty reduction frameworks and general aid harmonization procedures.