

Second Independent Evaluation of UNAIDS  
Oversight Committee

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**Stakeholder Consultation Document on Preliminary Findings (May 22, 2009)**

**SUMMARY**

**Q (c) RESPONSE TO RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE FIVE-YEAR  
EVALUATION**

**TOR QUESTIONS**

Assessing the extent to which UNAIDS has been able to respond to the recommendations and proposed activities that emerged from the Five Year Evaluation based on the PCB decisions.

Review of factors which may have facilitated or limited UNAIDS' implementation of these recommendations such as national capacities, availability of resources and resource gaps.

**Hypothesis:** UNAIDS responded satisfactorily to recommendations from the Five Year Evaluation and has improved performance within the framework of its ECOSOC objectives

**Finding:** Most recommendations have been implemented in full or in part. Less progress has been made a) with those dealing with governance and financial management and b) in implementation at country level.

**Detailed Findings:**

1. Most recommendations dealing with objectives, governance and management were not implemented.
2. Recommendations that were under the direct control of the Secretariat and for which resources were available have mostly been implemented.
3. Implementation of the recommendations has been less effective at country level.

# **HOW UNAIDS IS RESPONDING TO THE CHANGING ENVIRONMENT**

## **Q (a) EVOLVING ROLE OF UNAIDS**

### **TOR QUESTIONS**

Given the changing global, regional and country environments, the evolving role and priorities of the Joint Programme needs to be clearly defined, especially concerning working relationships with institutions like the Global Fund, PEPFAR, UNITAID, bilateral donors, private sector, civil society, regional organizations and others, all of which have grown in importance since the Five Year Evaluation.

To what extent does UNAIDS generate and take advantage of synergies with its partners including HIV vaccine and other appropriate technologies, advocacy, and development partners and organizations of vulnerable populations and people living with HIV?

A special focus will be placed upon the role of UNAIDS in monitoring and evaluation of different interventions, policies and strategies implemented across many partners.

**Hypothesis:** UNAIDS has evolved in response to the changing global environment and has remained relevant and effective

**Finding:** UNAIDS has evolved in response to the changing patterns of global finance and has generally been effective at developing relationships. Some examples of synergy can be found. Evaluations are undertaken but tend not to be planned systematically across the cosponsors.

### Detailed Findings (changing financial environment):

1. UNAIDS has adapted to a new funding environment and developed strong and positive relationships with the Global Fund and PEPFAR
2. UNAIDS has been effective at developing relationships with partners
3. Synergies have been developed in the field of research and resource tracking.
4. Synergies have been generated among development partners and organizations of vulnerable populations and people living with HIV

### Detailed Findings (configuring response to the national epidemic)

1. UNAIDS needs to clarify its role as a proactive source of technical support to countries

2. Synergies have been developed in the field of research and resource tracking.
3. Synergies have been generated among development partners and organizations of vulnerable populations and people living with HIV.
4. Whilst there has been good support to develop national M&E capacity (see findings under Question j), there is little evidence of a systematic and good quality approach to evaluation different interventions, policies and strategies implemented across many partners.

## Q (e) STRENGTHENING HEALTH SYSTEMS

### TOR QUESTIONS

To what extent have the secretariat and cosponsors strengthened health systems through their work; and to what extent has others' work on health system strengthening supported the achievement of UNAIDS' objectives?

**Hypothesis:** UNAIDS has taken a constructive approach to incorporating health system issues in overall strategy and in the support it provides at country level

**Finding:** No significant added value of UNAIDS as a joint programme as yet. Increased funding of health systems strengthening by major HIV donors and inclusion of health systems issues in national AIDS strategies is difficult to attribute to UNAIDS.

### Detailed Findings:

1. UNAIDS approach to health systems strengthening and role vis-à-vis global initiatives is not clearly articulated
2. UNAIDS has not had a substantial influence on HIV and health systems strengthening at country level.
3. Health system issues are, by and large, included in national HIV strategies.
4. Major HIV donors have increased allocation of funds for health systems strengthening.
5. UNAIDS has not had a substantial influence on HIV and health systems strengthening at country level.

## Q (g) DELIVERING AS ONE

### TOR QUESTIONS

Assess the impact of UN Reform, Global Task Team (GTT) and the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness on how UNAIDS is viewed (by countries, co-

sponsors donors and staff) and on how it works to meet its mandate (particularly in countries). Implications and choices for the future should be identified.

**Hypothesis:** The broader UN reform process and implementation of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness has fostered greater acceptance of UNAIDS' approach both within the UN and by the wider range of stakeholders at country level.

**Finding:** Neither UN reform nor commitments made under the Paris Declaration have significantly affected the way UNAIDS works, though some benefits have arisen through joint teams at country level.

#### Detailed Findings:

1. UN reform has not significantly affected the rules and conventions that dictate how the ten cosponsors and secretariat interact with each other and collectively with external stakeholders at the global level. This is partly because the major focus of reform has been at the country level.
2. The Regional Directors' Team (RDT) approach did not significantly affect the effectiveness of coordination mechanisms at country level during the evaluation period.
3. Reform at country level has fostered new working methods in joint teams but a lack of institutional incentives has held back progress.
4. There is little evidence to suggest that the implementation of the Paris Declaration has directly affected, or enhanced the effectiveness, of the work of UNAIDS at country level.

## **HOW UNAIDS WORKS**

### **Q (b) GOVERNANCE OF UNAIDS**

#### **TOR QUESTIONS**

A review of the governance and accountability structures of UNAIDS (Program Coordinating Board, Committee of Cosponsoring Organizations and the Unified Budget and Workplan), and its relationships with the cosponsors and other UN bodies.

Progress on recommendations of the Global Task Team (GTT) review and the Review of NGO/Civil Society Participation in the Programme Coordinating Board

**Hypothesis:** Governance of UNAIDS has responded to the recommendations of analytical reports, and has enabled the development of improved

accountability and performance in line with the objectives of UN Reform.

**Finding:** Governance of UNAIDS has not improved during the evaluation period.

Detailed Findings: (Effectiveness of the PCB and CCO as a governance mechanism)

1. The PCB concentrates on policies and priorities for future action rather than reviewing past performance and linking that to future plans.
2. There is no formal provision to track performance of either the UNAIDS Secretariat or the Executive Director.
3. Members of the PCB believe it is managed efficiently and there is little interest in reforming the process.
4. Influence of the NGO Delegation is not undermined by not having voting rights; voice is undermined more by other arrangements in the PCB.
5. The PCB has tracked implementation of some GTT recommendations but not the degree to which PCB decisions, as opposed to GTT recommendations, have been reflected in the work programmes of the Cosponsors and Secretariat.
6. The Heads of Agencies of the Cosponsors are increasingly disengaged from the work of UNAIDS and the CCO does not perform the function for which it was created
7. Neither ECOSOC nor the PCB has authority over the Cosponsors.
8. The influence by the PCB depends on the extent to which Cosponsor boards act on PCB decisions.

Detailed Findings: (UBW as a tool for coordination, consistency and compatibility of activities and strategies at the global and regional level)

1. The UBW process lacks transparency and does not influence the programming intentions of the cosponsors.
2. The UBW process does not significantly change what cosponsors intend to do but rather the way that they do it.
3. There is some evidence that the UBW has enhanced coordination, consistency and compatibility of activities, but the transaction costs have been high.
4. Resource allocation of UBW funding is not based on a transparent set of criteria, including past performance and results delivered.

## Q (d) THE DIVISION OF LABOUR BETWEEN THE SECRETARIAT, COSPONSORS, AGENCIES AND COUNTRIES

### TOR QUESTIONS

Evaluating the efficiency of the Joint Programme in terms of coordination, consistency and compatibility of activities and programmatic strategies and, how the 'Division of Labour' (DOL) has affected working relationships in country, taking into account the perspective of national governments.

Does UNAIDS fulfill its global coordination role on AIDS?

**Hypothesis:** Division of Labour has led to a more focused relationship by the secretariat and cosponsors and reduced duplication and overlap of activities and functions

**Finding:** There is evidence of some minor reduction in duplication between agencies at the global and country levels, but little evidence that this is due to the Division of Labour. Being a member of UNAIDS doesn't change *what* UN agencies do so much as *how* they do things.

### Detailed Findings: (global coordination role):

1. There is little evidence to suggest that the DoL has had a significant impact on coordination at global level.
2. Being a Cosponsor has stopped some agencies from downgrading their focus on AIDS and kept it as a policy priority across the cosponsors.
3. The evaluation period has seen a growing prominence of the global coordinators and their role as policy champions within their own organizations.
4. The present approach to performance monitoring and reporting doesn't pick up on the added value of having UNAIDS at a global level.
5. There has been a significant increase in the capacity dedicated to work on AIDS at central and regional country level, which has often depended upon the availability of UBW funding.
6. The role of the Executive Director as an AIDS champion within the UN has been vital.

#### Detailed Findings (Country Level):

1. There is little evidence from the case study countries that the DoL is known and understood by stakeholders external to the UN or has been useful to them.
2. There has been little oversight of the quadrupling the Secretariat's staffing in six years.
3. Evidence from the case study countries is that the DoL is known about by the AIDS Joint Teams and they would claim that it is being applied.
4. There is little evidence from the case study countries that the DoL has significantly impacted on programming intentions of the individual UN Cosponsors.
5. There is no evidence from the case study countries of the joint team approach or the Division of Labour influencing staffing decisions across the agencies.

#### Detailed Findings: (The impact of the Division of Labour and Joint Team concept as mechanisms for enhancing coordination and coherence at country level.)

1. There is little evidence that the expected benefits of the joint team approach have been captured yet.
2. There is evidence of UN staff working together effectively at country level.
3. There is no evidence from the case study countries of the joint team approach or the Division of Labour influencing staffing decisions across the agencies.
4. Incentive systems across the UN and in the wider environment still do not reward joint working.
5. Case studies suggest variable implementation of GTT recommendations on the operation of the joint teams and little evidence that these recommendations have eased operationalisation, or enhanced effectiveness, of the joint team concept..
6. There is evidence of UN staff working together effectively at country level
7. Incentive systems across the UN and in the wider environment still do not reward joint working.
8. Case studies suggest variable implementation of GTT recommendations on the operation of the joint teams and little evidence that these recommendations have eased operationalisation, or enhanced effectiveness, of the joint team concept.

## Q (f) THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE JOINT PROGRAMME

### TOR QUESTIONS

How the administration and business practice of the UNAIDS Secretariat has evolved since its creation, including its institutional relationships with WHO and UNDP, and whether it has been flexible and creative enough to keep up with the changing pace and types of demands that have emerged over time, including transfer of resources to countries.

Patterns and processes of staff deployment and management will be examined.

**Hypothesis:** The Joint Programme has evolved to take account of the changing environment and developed improved ways of managing its institutional relationship with the cosponsors

**Finding:** Systems have slowly improved over the period of the evaluation but do not yet meet adequate standards of efficiency

Detailed Findings: (Efficiency and effectiveness of administration and management within the Secretariat)

1. In general, both WHO and the Secretariat interviewees agree that the relationship works relatively well, and that a productive *modus operandi* is in place, which has allowed the Secretariat to maintain independence, despite it legally remaining part of the WHO.
2. Staff working for the Secretariat have to deal with three differing administrative systems.
3. A revised MOU in 2008 has solved most practical problems but there is still no service agreement specifying standards of support to be provided by UNDP.
4. Multiple administrative system bring inefficiencies.
5. Efficiency of administration of PAF funding has improved but it is still weak.
6. Expansion of staff numbers, which was recommended in the 5-year evaluation, has taken place with little formal planning, weak human resource management and no oversight by the PCB.
7. New arrangements should result in improved human resource and financial management system in place by the end of 2010.

# HOW UNAIDS IS FULFILLING ITS MANDATE

## **Q (h) INVOLVING AND WORKING WITH CIVIL SOCIETY**

### **TOR QUESTIONS**

The extent to which UNAIDS has been able to support, include, engage and incorporate in a meaningful and measurable way the concerns and capacities of civil society, and what types of functional relationships and partnerships have evolved at different operational levels

**Hypothesis:** Inclusion of civil society has improved the orientation and effectiveness of the national response and helped guide regional and global policy-making

**Finding:** Civil society involvement in policy, programming and M&E has increased and UNAIDS, in particular the secretariat, has played an important role in support for this. Limited evidence makes it difficult to assess systematically the impact of civil society inclusion on national responses.

### Detailed Findings:

1. UNAIDS Secretariat leads on civil society engagement.
2. There is no common UNAIDS vision or strategy for civil society involvement.
3. Advocacy for civil society representation has been very effective.
4. UNAIDS has facilitated resource mobilization for civil society.
5. UNAIDS has provided important support for civil society capacity building.
6. Impact of involvement on national responses is difficult to determine.
7. Representation and accountability is a challenge.
8. Some civil society organizations have received less attention.
9. Resources do not reflect the rhetoric about civil society.

## **Q (i) GENDER DIMENSIONS OF THE EPIDEMIC**

### **TOR QUESTIONS**

The degree to which UNAIDS has supported countries in their efforts to address the gender dimensions of the epidemic. Work on gender norms, work with sexual minorities, including men who have sex with men and transgender communities, should also be examined

**Hypothesis:** UNAIDS has identified gender issues and worked to respond to gender dimensions in programming and relations with countries

**Finding:** The evidence only partly supports the hypothesis. Support to countries has been provided by the secretariat and cosponsors, but there is little evidence of a strategic joint programme approach

Detailed Findings:

1. UNAIDS global leadership on gender has been weak.
2. The roles of UNDP, UNIFEM, UNAIDS Secretariat and GCWA are unclear.
3. Engagement with organizations working on gender has been limited.
4. UNAIDS support to countries to address the gender dimensions of the epidemic is not strategic.
5. There is a need to improve UN capacity for gender analysis and policy guidance.
6. Progress has been made in disaggregation of data by sex.
7. Work on gender norms and sexual minorities has received little attention until relatively recently.

## **Q (j) TECHNICAL SUPPORT TO NATIONAL AIDS RESPONSES**

### **TOR QUESTIONS**

The outcome of the technical support rendered by UNAIDS through an examination of activities in, and the needs and priorities of affected countries, and the quantity and quality of support rendered, including transaction costs, accessibility of funding, coordination mechanisms such as Joint UN Teams and others designed to enhance service delivery. To what extent does UNAIDS allow for flexible procedures that are adaptable to different national or regional situations? To what extent does UNAIDS provide effective and efficient support to countries to strengthen the Three Ones including to develop national HIV/AIDS M&E systems

**Hypothesis:** UNAIDS has provided appropriate and timely technical support and enhanced service delivery by all cosponsors in the Joint Programme

**Finding:** UNAIDS Secretariat and Cosponsors have provided appropriate, timely and valued technical support. There is limited evidence of the added value of the joint programme. joint teams have improved information sharing, but have not functioned as an entry point for, or noticeably strengthened coordination of, technical support.

Detailed Findings:

1. UNAIDS Secretariat and Cosponsors individually have provided a wide range of technical support.
2. Capacity to respond to requests for technical support has expended.
3. There is scope to improve planning and coordination of technical support.
4. Technical support is valued but is not systematically evaluated.

## **Q (k) HUMAN RIGHTS**

### **TOR QUESTIONS**

Have UNAIDS programmes and policies contributed to strengthening the rights of vulnerable populations, addressed issues of gender inequality, stigma and discrimination, empowerment of vulnerable populations among its priorities, and ensured that programme objectives reflect the priorities expressed by vulnerable populations. This should include mechanisms to enable meaningful participation of vulnerable populations in policy and programme development

**Hypothesis:** UNAIDS has incorporated a rights-based perspective in policies and programmes and has acted in response to rights issues

**Finding:** UNAIDS, in particular the secretariat, has provided strong global leadership on HIV and human rights issues. Evidence of UNAIDS action to reflect the priorities of and empower vulnerable populations and to support their meaningful participation is mixed

Detailed Findings:

1. Globally, the Secretariat has played a critical role in highlighting HIV and human rights issues.

2. There are concerns about the respective roles of UNDP and the Secretariat.
3. UNAIDS has been inconsistent in addressing human rights at country level.
4. Leadership concerning key populations could have been stronger.
5. Support for involvement and networks and organizations of key populations has been mixed.

## Q (I) THE GREATER AND MEANINGFUL INVOLVEMENT OF PLHIV

### TOR QUESTIONS

The extent to which UNAIDS has enabled the active and meaningful engagement of people living with HIV through the: transparent and democratic selection processes and choices of representatives; involvement in the design of policy making; involvement in the implementation of programmes; involvement in the M&E of UNAIDS programmes

**Hypothesis:** UNAIDS has created an efficient process by which people living with HIV have become engaged in efforts to combat the disease

**Finding:** UNAIDS, in particular the secretariat, has championed PLHIV involvement and contributed to increased global and national involvement in policy, implementation and M&E. There is less evidence that UNAIDS has created an efficient process for engagement or transparent and democratic representation

### Detailed Findings:

1. UNAIDS Secretariat has advocated effectively for PLHIV involvement.
2. The Secretariat has been most active in engaging with PLHIV organizations.
3. UNAIDS Secretariat has provided important support for national PLHIV networks and organizations.
4. Despite progress, involvement is still often tokenistic and representation is a challenge.
5. The impact of PLHIV involvement is difficult to determine.

## Assessment of UNAIDS performance against the ECOSOC mandate

ET Findings: (web survey results)

About 580 people responded to the web survey question “How effective has the UNAIDS Joint Programme (secretariat and cosponsors) been in meeting its ECOSOC objectives?” Respondents were asked to categories performance as:

- Very effective
- Fairly effective
- Not very effective
- No opinion

There are six objectives, listed here:

- 1. To provide global leadership in response to the epidemic**
- 2. To achieve and promote global consensus on policy and programme approaches**
- 3. To strengthen the capacity to monitor trends and ensure that appropriate and effective policies and strategies are implemented at the country level**
- 4. To strengthen the capacity of national governments to develop comprehensive national strategies and implement effective HIV/AIDS activities**
- 5. To promote broad-based political and social mobilization to prevent and respond to HIV/AIDS**
- 6. To advocate greater political commitment at the global and country levels including the mobilization and allocation of adequate resources**

- Most respondents thought that UNAIDS has been fairly effective or even very effective at making progress towards objectives 2, 3 and 4 with consistent views held by staff of the UNAIDS Secretariat, the cosponsors, NGOs, PLHIV and other groups.
- Objectives 1, 5 and 6 revealed a greater diversity of views, particularly for objective 1. Most respondents from UNAIDS (Secretariat and Cosponsors) staff, the private sector, bilateral donors and charitable foundations all rated the programme as ‘very effective’ at providing global leadership. The majority of other UN staff, national government staff, NGOs, FBOs and PLHIV felt that performance was only ‘fairly effective’.
- Few respondents felt that the programme has not been very effective at objective 1. Around 20% or more of NGO, PLHIV, bilateral donors and researchers rated performance of objective 2 as ‘not very effective’. And a significant minority overall (around 15%) rated performance as ‘not very effective’ for objectives 3, 4, 5 and 6.

## **Monitoring and Evaluation:**

**Q (a) The evolving role of UNAIDs in a changing environment**

**Q (j) Technical Support to National AIDS response**

ET Findings (pp 10,-11; pp 60-61):

Q(a) *Evaluations are undertaken but tend not to be planned systematically across the cosponsors.*

Q (j) *UNAIDS Secretariat and Cosponsors have provided appropriate, timely and valued technical support. There is limited evidence of the added value of the joint programme. joint teams have improved information sharing, but have not functioned as an entry point for, or noticeably strengthened coordination of, technical support*

### **Discussion Topics**

1. UNAIDS has provided important support to strengthen the Three Ones and technical support for M&E.
2. Whilst there has been good support to develop national M&E capacity, there is little evidence of a systematic and good quality approach to evaluation of different interventions, policies and strategies implemented across many partners.
3. Progress has been made in disaggregation of data by sex.

### **Additional points from the text are:**

4. UNAIDS has provided important support for national AIDS coordinating authorities, national strategic plan development and national M&E frameworks.
5. Secretariat M&E Advisors have played a critical role in developing national HIV and AIDS M&E systems in many of the countries visited for the evaluation.
6. M&E capacity across cosponsors and the calibre of M&E Advisors appears to be variable.
7. UNAIDS has been less successful in addressing challenges related to the existence of parallel M&E frameworks and indicators and the interface between health management information systems and HIV and AIDS M&E systems, and in assisting countries to reconcile different advice from different sources, for example, from UNAIDS, World Bank GAMET and PEPFAR.