



Second Independent Evaluation of UNAIDS
Oversight Committee

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Stakeholder Workshop on Preliminary Evaluation Findings
3-4 June 2009
Geneva Switzerland

Proceedings: Closing Plenary Session

June 4 (14h00) Reports from the Study Groups:

On the basis of the [Study Group Guide discussion topics](#), Rapporteurs presented [results of the Study Group Sessions](#), in accordance on four designated questions:

- i) Do the findings and statements in the document resonate with your own experience?
- ii) If not, how do they differ and what evidence can you direct to the Evaluation Team to review?
- iii) Which of the findings offer scope for practical recommendations that can be implemented? and
- iv) What is the burning issue on the discussion topic.

Study Group Session A: How UNAIDS is responding to the changing environment

SGA1: The Evolving role of UNAIDS in a changing financial environment

Rapporteur: J. Wittebrood (CSO)
Highlights of the discussions, noted on the attached slide.

SGA2: The Evolving role of UNAIDS in configuring response to the national epidemic

Rapporteur: J. Smith (Member State)
Highlights noted on the attached slide.

SGA3: Response to the 5-Year Evaluation/Assessment of UNAIDS performance against the ECOSOC mandate

Rapporteur: R. MacInnis (CSO)
Highlights noted on the attached slide.

SGA4: Strengthening health systems (HSS)

Rapporteur: Dr P. Sirinirund (Member State)

Dr Petchsri noted that the group focused on the issues of defining health systems in broader terms, complexity for UNAIDS in addressing HSS, how funding HIV affects HSS, and whether UNAIDS adds value as a joint program.

There was group agreement on the importance of defining health systems in broader terms to include FBOs, CSOs and the private sector.

Complexity of addressing HSS: There is diversity among countries and the report does not reflect this. There is a wide range of dissimilar country experiences. Factors contributing to differences include level of country income, types and severity of the epidemic, conflict-non-conflict countries, and national health systems.

Moving targets on HSS: This is due to advanced technology, changes in health systems due to reform, decentralization, and public-private mixes. This leads to the questions: does UNAIDS engage well in HSS given the complexity of the task; how does the funding for HIV affect HSS; and did UNAIDS add value as a joint programme to HSS.

Recognized contribution from UNAIDS: Based on the broader definition of health systems, which include FBOs, CSOs, and private sector, UNAIDS has contributed to HSS and produced new models of health services. The MOU with the Global Fund should be reviewed, and more documents from WHO and UNAIDS Secretariat made available for the Evaluation Team to review.

In areas for recommendations, the group suggested defining the roles of UNAIDS as a joint program on HSS, which also required clarification of the roles of other UN agencies and the Cosponsors. They also recommended clearer articulation of non-health HSS such as Division of Labour, education, social welfare and CSOs.

The burning issue for the group was to focus on prevention as well as care in health systems. The policy on universal access to ARV (3x5) has raised the issue of HSS, which results in emphasis of HSS in care, but it now needs more focus on preventions, which in broader terms requires strengthening the non health sector as well.

SGA5: The effects of UN reform at country level on UNAIDS

Rapporteur: E. Van der Munnik (Member State)

Highlights noted on the attached slide

Discussion on Study Group Session A:

With regard to SGA3/6, the issue was raised on whether or not the Terms of Reference for the Evaluation would go beyond the ECOSOC mandate. The Oversight Chair noted that the PCB had set out a broader scope than the ECOSOC mandate in the terms of reference, in particular in the context of the changing environment, and these broader considerations would be taken into account without being restricted by the ECOSOC mandate review.

The issue of comparing conflict with non-conflict countries was raised. The ET indicated this was part of the country studies. The approved selection of 12 country studies was to provide for such a comparison. It is useful to reflect the difference, which is a relevant issue for UNAIDS to consider.

Study Group Session B: How UNAIDS Works

SGB1: Effectiveness of the PCB and CCO as a governance mechanism

Rapporteur: P. Blais (Member State)
Highlights noted on attached slide.

SGB2: UBW as a tool for coordination, consistency and compatibility of activities and strategies at the global and regional level

Rapporteur: M. Good (UNAIDS Secretariat)
Highlights noted on attached slide.

Additional points noted include the 2010/11 criteria for resource allocation took into account performance and resource allocation and outlook for resource mobilization; the UBW is a simple tool but reflects a complex environment; and the language of the consultation document reflects half-empty rather than half-full and should have more balance.

SGB3: Division of Labour, UBW and the Inter-agency Task Teams as tools for allowing UNAIDS to fulfill its global coordination role

Rapporteur: M. Bartos (UNAIDS Secretariat)
Highlights noted on attached slide.

SGB4.1/4.2: Division of Labour and Joint Team concept as mechanisms for enhancing coordination at country level

Rapporteur: C. McIlff (Member State)

Highlights noted on attached slide.

Additional points in regard to recommendations: Cosponsors should be encouraged to take the lead; need to ensure that DoL does not silo the work; incentives are needed for joint programming; will be a difficult issue while there is no harmonization in UN planning systems.

SGB5: Efficiency and effectiveness of administration and management within the Secretariat

Rapporteur: V. Crisostomo (CSO)

The Rapporteur noted that the discussion group had little or no representation from civil society nor Cosponsors.

Highlights noted on the attached slide.

Discussion on Study Group Session B:

It was noted that the DoL concept was very new and had not time to mature. With regard to SGB2, the group considered the term “transparency” inappropriate as it implied something hidden or secretive and this was not the case. For DoL (SGB4.2) there is a challenge to donors not to fund projects separately and a need for more effective communication to eliminate duplication. The ET requested evidence to challenge the findings on whether the UBW has made a difference (SGB2).

Study Group Session C: How UNAIDS is fulfilling its Mandate

SGC1: Addressing the gender dimension

Rapporteur: Z. Woods (CSO)
Highlights noted on attached slide

SGC2: Involving and working with civil society

Rapporteur: J. Backory (UNAIDS Secretariat)

Highlights noted on attached slide.

Additional points include: need to look at “scope” of civil society and what Cosponsors are doing, for example the ILO where there is a constitutional mandate to work with civil society. Evaluation is looking primary at Secretariat. The issue of representation and accountability should be addressed by the CSO. Within UNAIDS, the issue should be related to the role of the Programme Coordinating Board (PCB). Numbers and dollars are not necessarily indicators of engagement.

SGC3: Supporting meaningful involvement of PLHIV

Rapporteur: J. Cornell (Cosponsor)

The Rapporteur noted that the group had only four participants. There were no representatives from Member States nor civil society organizations.

Highlights noted on attached slide.

SGC4: Promoting and strengthening human rights

Rapporteur: J. Sigurdson (USSA)

Highlights noted on attached slide.

SGC5: Monitoring and Evaluation

Rapporteur: J. Kovsted (Member State)

Highlights noted on attached slide.

Additional points: For DoL at country level, there is a need for data, capacity, and a framework. Looking forward is useful, but there is also a need to consider what has been accomplished. M&E merits more attention in the Evaluation Report.

SGC6: Providing technical support for national AIDS responses.

Rapporteur: B. Hersh (Cosponsor)

The Rapporteur noted there was a broad cross-section of representative stakeholders in the group.

Highlights noted on attached slide.

Additional points included the need for technical support to be evaluated on a regular basis.

Discussion on Study Group Session C:

The findings on gender (SGC1) were fair and valid, but it is important to have detailed findings at country level. The consultation document looked at directed demand for technical support (SGC6), but needs to address the question of whether it makes a difference. In general, it is necessary to clearly distinguish between UNAIDS and the UNAIDS Secretariat.

16:00 Closing Session: Response from the Evaluation Team

The ETL noted the daunting challenge given to the Team from a rich discussion of challenging and wide-ranging views. There was guidance on gaps and new sources of evidence, but the ET does not necessarily agree with all the Study Group Reports. Additional written comments are very welcome.

On specific points:

- i) The ET has been asked to present a picture over time and how things have changed. There is always pressure on an ET to look at recent developments and not just the period of the evaluation (2002-2008).
- ii) The tone of the consultation document was intended to provide a balanced approach, although some participants thought it was too negative, i.e. “the glass is half empty”.
- iii) The cut-off date for more review, synthesis, and new evidence is a few more weeks at which point the final drafting of the Report will be underway.
- iv) The Final Report will likely be structured differently. The ET structured the consultation document on the evaluation framework showing the 12 questions of the terms of reference, but there is considerable overlap. The Final Evaluation Report will also include more information on the methodology and background.

Discussion:

The Global Fund representative noted its evaluation had the same time frame and they should continue to work together with the UNAIDS Evaluation Team. Benchmarking is important for putting issues in perspective. The ECOSOC mandate is useful as reference.

Kenya expressed thanks to the OC and ET for the extensive consultation process. He suggested better targeting on the issues. UNAIDS seemed in the mire, but it was necessary to move forward and to have a stronger UNAIDS at country level. It will have an impact if it can help national governments do their work better. UNAIDS can bring in strong brokerage, including with donors, to avoid overlapping. The Final Evaluation Report can play an important role in garnering political support for UNAIDS. It can make it clear that investing in UNAIDS is worthwhile. The consultation document was provocative but useful.

On behalf of the NGO delegation and other civil society representatives, the delegate from the Coalition of Regional Networks on HIV/AIDS read a statement on the following: how the SIE reached a different conclusion than the Five-Year Evaluation on voting rights for PCB NGO delegates; the need for greater detail on how UNAIDS is involving and working with civil society at all levels; concern that the current findings seem to evaluate value added of civil society participation per se, rather than UNAIDS effectiveness in working with civil society. He noted the need for caution in making broad generalizations. He noted the lack of civil society representation at the Workshop, but the NGO delegations will send the preliminary findings to their constituents for comment.

In response to voting rights, the Evaluation Team Leader noted that the recommendation is not finalized at this stage, but the Team had looked at organizations that have given voting rights to NGOs, but these organizations had mandates outside the UN. There was a legal consideration for the reviewing the recommendation from the First Five-Year Evaluation, related to UN practice. He added that the issue is not substantive. The voice of CSOs is already strong in the PCB. It is more in the procedures of the PCB that affect the voice, rather than voting rights.

In response to a question on how information from the regional consultation on the Asia Pacific region would be included, the ET responded that the study was structured differently from the country studies, but the information would be factored into the synthesis report, in considerations on regional issues.

Closing Remarks by the Oversight Chair:

She noted that written comments can be submitted up until June 12. The Draft Report will be sent to the Oversight Committee on August 7th for review at their next meeting in early September. The Final Evaluation Report will be sent by the Evaluation Team directly to the PCB Chair on September 30th with copies to the UNAIDS EXD and the Oversight Committee Chair. The Oversight Committee will prepare a report on the quality of the Report and process, and how they have conducted their oversight role. The Final Evaluation Report, UNAIDS response, and Oversight Committee Report will be discussed at the PCB meeting in December 2009.

For general information and in response to some concerns raised on accountability and transparency of the evaluation process, she outlined the role and functions of the

Oversight Committee, and some of the ways in which the Committee have attempted to meet their mandate.. The Oversight Committee was appointed by the PCB and reports directly to the PCB. It consists of independent experts identified in consultation with a broad cross-section of stakeholders. OC members operate independently with a shared commitment to ensuring a forward-looking, quality evaluation build on evidence, and based on the principles of independence, transparency, impartiality, and involvement of stakeholders.

Examples include the efforts made at stakeholder participation, including a website (over 7000 hits have been made), with documentation, reports, messages, and information relative to the Evaluation. In addition, although the PCB did not foresee stakeholder consultations, the Oversight Committee has identified funds within the estimates to fund two workshops at key stages in the process. The Oversight Committee has a dedicated Secretariat to help them carry out their task efficiently and independently. In relation to transparency, the Oversight Committee has attempted to put all the information available on the Evaluation Process into the public domain and summaries of country studies (the rest of the country studies and additional background material will follow soon). Raw data and information from individual interviews is not suitable for publication and will not be in the public domain. The OC has access to data used by the ET and reviews the evidence for evaluation findings with assistance from an evaluation consultant with experience in institutional and UN evaluations. The OC has integrated concerns for quality right through their work – from the development of a sound bidding process and the selection of a competent team right through to the Final Report. The ET itself has a clear quality control process and the OC also organize review of all the intermediate products as well as the Final Report in ensuring the quality of the Evaluation.

The Chair welcomes enquiries and is willing to discuss the issues of process and quality assurance or any other aspects of the work of the OC at any time. She concluded by encouraging participants to visit the SIE webpage. Proceedings and documentation from the Workshop will be posted next week.

Closing Remarks by UNAIDS

Steve Kraus on behalf of the Secretariat and Cosponsors thanked the participants, the OC and the ET, noting that the Workshop was an example of good governance – as a team, we can make a difference.

The Workshop ended at 17:30