

## NOTES FOR THE RECORD

**26<sup>th</sup> GIST meeting**  
**September 11 - 12, 2008**  
**Toronto**

### **Attendance**

**Chair:** Steve Kraus (UNFPA), **Vice Chair:** Elmar Vinh-Thomas (Global Fund), Pradeep Kakkattil, Luiz Loures (UNAIDS), Nadia Fuleihan (UNDP), Elizabeth Benomar (UNFPA), Thilly De Bodt (UNICEF), Jonathan Brown (World Bank), Teguest Guerma, Brad Hersh (WHO), Cornelius Oepen (GTZ), Colin McIlff, Jason Wright, (US Government), Paul McCarrick (International AIDS Alliance), Michael O'Connor (ICAD), Richard Burzynski, Natalia Ciausova (ICASO), Carlos Passarelli (ICTC), Sandii Lwin (Global Fund).

**Coordinator:** Shona Wynd (UNAIDS)

**Apologies:** Fareed Abdullah (formerly of International AIDS Alliance)

**Day 1: Thursday, September 11, 2008**

### **Item 1: Welcome (Lead/presenter: GIST Chair)**

The meeting was opened with a welcome and introductions from the GIST chair.

### **Item 2 & 3: Review of GIST Work Plan**

#### **GIST STUDIES (Lead/presenter: UNAIDS Secretariat)**

##### **Update & Discussion**

The group was updated on progress made with the study on *Access To and Quality and Effectiveness of Technical Assistance to Global Fund Grant Implementation at Country Level*.

Nine countries have been identified for the study: India, Cambodia, Vietnam, Zambia, Ethiopia, Senegal, Peru, Haiti and Ukraine. UNAIDS Secretariat confirmed that the RSTs had been informed, and the importance of having all country representatives well informed and supportive of this effort was stressed. It is expected that findings of the study will be used to inform GIST preparations for the Thematic Session of the PCB.

Some of this information may already be available, for instance from the Global Fund's 5 Year Impact Assessment Evaluation, as well as data compiled by UNAIDS and GTZ (summary information available and shared with the GIST members) will be taken into account during the desk review.

#### **Summary of discussion points and decisions re. process (for action):**

UNAIDS Secretariat will manage the contracting of consultants and develop a timeline to ensure completion of the study in time for the next GIST meeting. It

was agreed that it was important that feedback on the process was given immediately to ensure that the study was on the right track.

It was agreed that although the findings presented to the meeting in December would not be finalised, the Working Group will ensure that findings inform GIST'S preparations for the PCB.

**Action Points:**

1. GIST Secretariat to coordinate the process.
2. All GIST members to contact country offices to request cooperation, engagement and support on study implementation.
  
3. A smaller working group (drawn from the existing working group) comprised of US, Global Fund, UNAIDS Sec, UNDP and ICTC, with additional support from WHO, to work with the GIST Secretariat on the analysis of preliminary data gathered from the study.

**CoATS (Lead/presenter: UNAIDS Secretariat)**

**Update & discussion**

An update was given on the procedure needed to access the CoATS site, with relevant links.

User rights need to be requested through UNAIDS CoATS Focal Point. All TSFs already have access. The need for a focal point in-country to ensure regular input and to ensure country-level ownership and transparency was discussed.

UNAIDS Secretariat were requested to put the CoATS link on the GIST web site as a launch method, that the UCCs act as key focal points, and that countries be informed so as to be prepared to support the process.

It was also suggested that a select number of countries should be supported to start populating the database, and that for the second generation/phase, a mechanism be developed that would allow for feedback from the recipients/clients to strengthen its role as a knowledge management tool.

**Action Points:**

1. That five to ten countries are identified to roll out CoATS, and that the nine countries identified for the GIST Study be included in this list of countries.
  
2. The following criteria be applied to the selection of CoATS roll-out countries:
  - That there is an effective joint UN team in place
  - That partners are present in-country
  - That some sort of Technical Support plan is already in place
  - That there a sense of an interest to support the initiative
  - That a UCC be present in the country

3. That the UCCs at country level are informed of the decision.
4. UCC, working with Joint UN Teams on AIDS, requested to act as focal points for CoATS roll out, and ensure that this is done in an inclusive manner with all country level partners.
5. CoATS to be presented and demonstrated at the December 2008 PCB.
6. A field for the names of the focal points be added to the database.

### **Technical Support (TS) Principles (Lead/presenter: UNAIDS Secretariat)**

Feedback on the TS principles has been overwhelmingly positive. Principles have been posted to several list-serves and were made available at the Mexico International AIDS conference.

Criticism received noted that the Principles were too generic, which made it hard to *not* agree with them. UNDP noted that it had shared the Principles with all countries it was in, and that they had received a request for the different language versions. GIST was also informed that the TS principles had been presented to the joint UNDP and UNFPA Board meeting, and that they had been acknowledged by four Member States.

#### **Action Point:**

1. UNAIDS, WHO and Global Fund toolkits to include links to the TS Principles.
2. Report back by the next GIST meeting on actions taken to share and promote use of Principles of Technical Assistance internally, and with other agencies and partners.

### **GIST REVIEW: (Lead/presenters: GIST Chair and Co-Chair) Update & discussion**

It was agreed that the Toronto meeting would constitute a 'mid-term review' of the implementation of the PCB approved work plan. The GIST worked through the targets, and key measurable deliverables, budget line by budget line, looking at expenditure and progress to date.

The overall finding was that most work as delineated in the work plan was on target. One or two items are slightly behind the target dates but will be accelerated for the remainder of the year. The additional member foreseen was put on hold pending the decision regarding continuation of GIST. However, there was agreement to include a rotating invitation to individual GIST meetings e.g., to countries of the GIST studies, knowledge centers etc.

## Action Points:

1. That the findings of this internal mid-year review be written up.
2. World Bank volunteered to help synthesize the information relevant to the response to HIV and AIDS from the High Level Forum held in Accra.
3. A report should be commissioned to summarize the analysis of studies/reports related to technical support already existing or currently under way. Analysis should include studies noted by GIST members including: GTZ BACK-Up review (available), WHO review on WHO Collaborating Centers, the Global Fund evaluations (not yet in the public domain), TSF reviews, CS reviews, etc. It is envisaged that findings be presented orally at the PCB in December and that a draft of the *State of the Art* report (within the context of the study and review) be prepared for publication.
4. To the extent possible, 'staff time' should be quantified, analyzed and added to the end-of-year-review.
5. On the issue of broader Southern representation, representatives from the countries identified for the GIST Study (all in the South) are invited to participate on a rotational (and interim) basis. Consideration will also be given to similar invitations to institutions (e.g., collaborating centers). GIST Secretariat to pursue.
6. A small group (International AIDS Alliance, ICASO, GTZ, US Government and the GIST Secretariat with UN partners) lead the process on the end-of-the-year review. Specific individuals within these organizations to be identified before the 26<sup>th</sup> GIST meeting in November.
7. Given the intensive external review of the GIST that culminated in the revised TOR and current work plan, the year-end review to be managed internally. The process will be more rigorous than the mid-term review of the work plan, and will be completed in 2 components: 1) direct analysis of the progress against indicators for each work plan item and, 2) inclusion of inputs from the broader community, e.g., through an electronic survey.

### **Item 4 & 5: Key Events**

#### **PCB Thematic Session on UNAIDS-GF Partnership and International Technical Support Architecture and PPPs (Lead/presenter: GIST Chair)**

The draft concept note was cited as being ambitious with perhaps need to sharpen the focus. Importance of stewardship of technical support and life cycle of grant support were put forth as examples. The wide disparity of comments

received from various stakeholders was acknowledged. The Thematic Session Steering Committee will take these into account in any revision. GIST agreed that the mid-December PCB thematic session should be used as an opportunity to discuss policy, bearing in mind that this is also a meeting during which actionable and operational points will be on the table.

The PCB meeting is a strategic opportunity for GIST to make a positive contribution, providing insights as perhaps the only mechanism addressing global technical support architecture. It was also recognized that the GIST may be called to make an initial recommendation regarding its value added and continuation or dissolution.

**Action Points:**

1. Any comments on the concept paper for the thematic session should be communicated as soon as possible.
2. GIST would focus on a number of key topics for inclusion in its presentation at the thematic session of the PCB:
  - CoATS
  - GIST 9-country study
  - GTZ study
  - CSAT: the importance of civil society providing TS
  - Knowledge and experience of TSFs
  - Funded and un(der)-funded mandates: Analysis to include the GTT recommendations which had received funding: GIST, ASAP, UNDP/PRSP and TSFs

**GF Partnership Consultation process: update on response  
(Lead presenter: Global Fund)**

**Update & discussion**

The update on the response included a description of the consultation process: five bilateral consultations, six multilateral consultations, two CSO, three country level and 110 individual consultations. Key events were: the partner consultation meeting and forum and the Board retreat. Three e-forums also contributed to the process. The consultation process is ongoing and one of the key topics under discussion is technical assistance.

**GF Round 8 (Lead/presenter Global Fund)**

**Analysis of Round 8: Early Information on Applications Received**

**Update:** The update included information on the TRP composition for Round 8; the TRP review criteria (country snapshots); Round 8 proposals received and who applied and who used the new policies. In summary, the number of eligible disease proposals was 173 HIV, Tuberculosis or Malaria proposals. Inside these proposals, there were also 46 requests for cross-cutting Health Systems

Strengthening. Of the 117 different applicants: 31% indicated an interest in grant consolidation (n = 33) and 73% submitted proposals with dual track financing: (n = 77). The information was preliminary at this point, and had not been fully analyzed, which meant that the more complex questions could not be definitively answered, e.g. the findings were early, and although the TRP had finished the consultation, it was not yet known who had made it or not.

### **GF Round 9 (Lead/presenter WHO/UNAIDS Secretariat) Update & discussion**

**Support action carried out for Round 8**, included an ad hoc working group created in January 2008; a selection and prioritization of countries; coordination of TS needs (with Regions, with other departments/clusters, with others UN & Civil Society partners- 70% partnership and weekly teleconference); development of technical guidance materials (resource kit); regional orientation workshops ("road shows"); responding to country requests; ongoing tracking of progress/gaps; "Peer review" (at regional level- Physical meeting and at global level- Virtual meeting); preparation TRP briefings; and review of Round 8 actions and lessons learned ("Friends of Africa" (GTZ funding)).

**On planned actions for Round 9 it was noted that:** prioritization of countries from R8 (cat 2 and 3) and new applicants for R9; review of technical resources kits, dissemination of resources kits at country level (web based and CDs); regional/sub-regional workshops design/review of proposals in line with TRP comments, implement recommendations from R8 assessment report on coordination with regions and partners; and dissemination of Priority Interventions Package.

The WHO guide, **Priority Interventions: HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment and care in the health sector**, was presented as a 'one-stop shop' designed to help countries, donors and other stakeholders expand and improve their response to HIV/AIDS. It will be periodically updated with new recommendations based on the rapidly-evolving experience of health-sector scale up.

#### **Action Point:**

1. The World Bank, and any additional GIST members that may wish, to participate in the next 70% Partnership teleconference.
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**Day 2: Friday, September 12**

#### **Item 1: Recap of Thursday**

**Item 2: How can civil society Technical Support be harmonized?  
(Lead/presenter ICASO and International AIDS Alliance)**

## **ICASO – CSAT UPDATE (Lead presenter: ICASO)**

### **Update and discussion**

With seed funding from GIST, CSAT was launched in March 2008 to bring civil society organizations together to contribute their experience and support proposal development and implementation through brokering technical support and coordinating advocacy for technical support to civil society. CSAT currently has one international coordinator (hosted in ICASO) and six regional coordinators (hosted in local organizations) located in Middle East and North Africa; West and Central Africa; East and Southern Africa; Eastern Europe and Central Asia; Asia-Pacific; and Latin America and the Caribbean.

Every region has its own particular challenges – no one easier than the other. Some of the challenges noted included:

- criminalization and stigma prevent some groups from organizing making regional proposals as a means to reach out to these populations excluded from national proposals
- potential instability of network which currently depends on one person per region and the need for a multi-tiered structure
- work needed on an accountability mechanism for civil society (CSAT currently working on appropriate indicators)
- PR and SR relationship and competition among NGOs

Points for discussion included:

Some successes of collaboration were noted, e.g. in Bolivia, with UNAIDS and CSAT worked closely on the country's proposal. It was noted that this is an important initiative, which should be strengthened at regional level.

## **International AIDS Alliance – TS HUBS**

### **Update & discussion**

The TS hubs were working through intermediary (linking organizations) to provide TS to CBOs, NGOs and network, and thereby supporting community action. It was a growing alliance, with new linking organizations, e.g. the recent merger with HDN. Challenges remain to manage some of the grants, with a particular issue noted of the gap between grant approval and grant signature and negotiation with CS.

### **Decisions arising from the discussion:**

1. Coordination needs to be more systematized (using CoATS.)

2. Colleagues at the country level that have influence with the CCM or sit on the CCM to better ensure that civil society support and voices are part of the agenda.
3. Work done by civil society should feature in the December PCB thematic session.
4. Ensure that Civil Society contributions to technical support be adequately captured in the GIST study.

**Item 3: Status of revitalization of WHO Collaborating Center Network and Knowledge Hubs: Building Institutional Capacity for TS.**  
**(Lead/presenter WHO/GTZ)**

**Update & discussion**

The concept's origin was summarized under the following headings:

Opportunities (effective technologies for HIV prevention and treatment exist and are paired with unprecedented global commitment and funding to accelerate access to HIV services), Challenges (large technical, managerial and human resource capacity gaps paired with dependence on limited (mostly international) providers for training and technical support) and BACKUP Initiative, in partnership with WHO, which emerged to increase institutional capacity through regional HIV Knowledge Hubs (*Health training institutions to set up national and regional HIV capacity building programs designed to increase human resource and institutional capacity for comprehensive health sector responses to HIV and AIDS.*)

The idea was to offer a regional solution to regional needs. And although there were many examples of successes and highlights, there were also many challenges – clearly, one model did not fit all.

**GTZ Backup Initiative:** It was noted that there needed to be a balance between openness to respond to country needs (country and GF request) and a focus on key thematic areas and priorities of German Development Cooperation. Key thematic areas were: gender, human rights, civil society support. In addition, there was a need to adapt the concept to the changing landscape of international TS architecture, and the need to identify mechanisms to embed Capacity Development and implementation support measures in medium- and long-term TS frameworks (i.e. bilateral cooperation, other TS providers.) Capacity development on gender-responsive HIV programmes focusing on women and girls and CSOs (BACKUP gender component) was also crucial.

In the follow-up discussion it was noted that while funding for HIV was increasing, support for TS was not. There was a need for an innovative approach.

TSFs and GSM are two mechanisms that deal with the weaknesses that PRs can draw on, but other options should be considered, such as those offered by the

private sector (e.g. private business schools that offers seats in management courses.)

**Item 4: A.O.B**

Thanks were expressed to Beth Richardson from CIDA and especially to Richard Burzynski and ICASO for hosting the meeting and arranging the reception at City Hall. Special thanks and recognition for their contributions to GIST were given to Richard Burzynski, who will be moving on to new and different challenges, to Jonathan Brown, who will be retiring, and to Cornelius Oepen, who will be taking up a new GTZ assignment in Senegal.

**Overall Decision:**

1. Next meeting: 24-25 November 2008 at UNFPA Headquarters, NYC.
2. Status of preparations for the December PCB meeting will be key agenda item for the November meeting.