

## Conclusions and summary of recommendations

21 Evaluation against any objectives begs the question how realistic those objectives are? The ECOSOC objectives are loosely worded as activities and there is no sense of the time-scale involved. That said, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS has been fully successful in one of the six ECOSOC objectives and made progress towards all the others. It is probably realistic that achievements have been greatest at global level and in those areas under the direct influence of the Secretariat. With support from the UN system, countries have developed multisectoral programmes and achieved broad-based political and social mobilisation. There has been less progress in formulating a joint response by the cosponsors to help countries develop capacity and implement their strategies.

22 Conclusions are presented firstly, against the ECOSOC objectives, secondly, by UNAIDS functional areas and thirdly, in the context of expectations of the joint programme. A summary of recommendations follow, with full details in Chapter 8.

### *Progress towards the ECOSOC goals*

23 Six goals were set out in ECOSOC resolution 1994/24. The performance of UNAIDS is summarised against each of these in turn.

**To provide global leadership in response to the epidemic. Successful.** A broad constituency of stakeholders find leadership in UNAIDS. The personal performance of the Executive Director, response by development agencies to the global strategy and endorsement by political and business leaders after UNGASS, all support this judgement.

**To achieve and promote global consensus on policy and programme approaches. Mostly successful.** Advocacy about the need to strengthen and increase response has been effective. The global strategy framework is widely accepted outside the UN agencies. But more work is needed to clarify the operational meaning of an expanded response, over the handling of issues such as MTCT and ART and to tackle sensitive issues such as MSM and IDU.

**To strengthen the capacity to monitor trends and ensure that appropriate and effective policies and strategies are implemented at the country level. Partly successful.** Good progress has been made with statistics of prevalence, but much less on behavioural change and knowing what interventions work and under what circumstances. A new system to monitor country response shows potential, but it needs developing to provide objective measures of the nature and scale of response.

**To strengthen the capacity of national governments to develop comprehensive national strategies and implement effective HIV/AIDS activities. Partly successful.** National level strategies have been developed, but their translation into meaningful plans at sectoral and sub-national level needs more attention. The diverse and often sensitive nature of the changes that HIV/AIDS mainstreaming involves, and the difficulty of

budgeting for such fluid changes, have been underestimated. Where new institutional structures were created specifically to deal with HIV/AIDS the process has been complex, and therefore slow. The UN does not yet demonstrate added value in this role. Integrated work plans reveal a lack of clarity about the UN support role alongside that of OECD donors.

**To promote broad-based political and social mobilization to prevent and respond to HIV/AIDS.** Partly successful, although this process is one that needs continual emphasis and renewal. The work of UNAIDS to bring civil society, PLWHA and the private sector into dialogue with government has been an outstanding achievement. Efforts to support social mobilisation of important groups such as the churches have only recently started.

**To advocate greater political commitment at the global and country levels including the mobilization and allocation of adequate resources.** Mostly successful at global and partly successful at country levels. Advocacy has been a strength of the Secretariat in particular. Global commitment has come via UNGASS and the UN Security Council. Commitment at national levels can be fragile and needs constant renewal. Tangible examples of local good practice have helped, and can be promoted more. A substantial commitment of global resources has been achieved, possibly seven-fold on previous levels, but mainly during the past eighteen months. This has the potential to re-establish spending per HIV-infected person at levels not seen since the 1980s but depends, crucially, on country capacity to scale-up and implement.

#### *Relevance of ECOSOC goals*

24 In general the ECOSOC goals remain relevant. But their structure and phrasing are counter-productive to efforts to improve performance and accountability. The goal should be revised, to create a simple, clear and measurable objective that will drive the work of the programme and towards which roles and functions can be defined. A proposed new wording forms the first recommendation from this evaluation.

#### *Achievements in the functional areas*

25 The advocacy work of UNAIDS has been innovative, flexible and adaptive. New types of partnerships have been formed, horizontal learning has been developed into a powerful tool and diverse groups such as PLWHA, NGOs and businessmen have been brought into the process. Success at consolidating and presenting the epidemiology of the disease underpinned a strong policy narrative about the scale and threat to development. Relatively little emphasis has been given to sponsor research to evaluate the relevance and effectiveness of HIV/AIDS interventions. Prevention and control efforts are constrained by lack of evidence of effectiveness of interventions.

26 The Best Practice Collection of information about HIV/AIDS has extensive visibility and 'name recognition' around the world. Good though the material is, there remain limitations in language availability and the logistics of distribution hinder dissemination. Users would like more texts that tackle the response from a 'how to' perspective, in ways that will support scaling up. The programme has not yet met the challenge of understanding and disseminating how to stimulate behaviour change and

develop effective implementation. Prevention programmes face the very difficult challenge of having to change sexual behaviour. Why such programmes rarely succeed is not well understood. This is a major area for work in the future.

27 Direct technical support to countries is criticised as less accessible than under the GPA. Capacity building has a strong ‘project’ orientation and the evidence is that it has been hard to extend to a wider audience. Support for national strategic planning is more visible than to help country implementation. Because so much implementation hinges on the skills and resources of grass-roots organisations, clear analysis during formulation of UNDAF or integrated workplans is needed to understand how UNAIDS can give support at that level. This will become an over-arching priority as the newly committed funds become available to scale-up the response. A challenge for UNAIDS is to find a new balance between its advocacy role and its functions in information provision, capacity building and technical support.

28 Coordination activities of the Secretariat at global level have been effective and were instrumental in bringing consensus over policy and programming. At country level the influence of the UNAIDS Secretariat is less, is dependent on the talent of the CPA and his or her colleagues in the UNAIDS country office, and the disposition of the cosponsors’ representatives. In this setting, coordination has been less effective. A number of institutional features contribute to this judgement: the uncertain accountability of the theme groups, both as UN entities and in their expanded form; the absence of objectively monitorable targets for the theme groups; the limited influence of the PCB over country-level activities and the lack of any incentives for the cosponsors to develop a genuinely integrated approach.<sup>1</sup>

#### *Meeting expectations*

29 An indication of expectations can be gained from the results of a WHO-led working group to examine the creation of the joint programme, reported in 1993. The driving imperative behind the creation of UNAIDS was to reinforce national capacity to respond to the epidemic. Expectations were that the joint programme would:

- a) reduce duplication of effort and ensure consistency among organisations of the UN system, with regard to strategic, policy and technical matters.

*The assessment is that duplication of effort is being overcome and consistency among organisations of the UN system has greatly improved. Yet the negotiating approach of the present arrangements is not effective. Greater coherence is still to be achieved through better integration with the expanded response at country level.*

- b) provide governments with a clearer, more comprehensive view of the financial and technical support available from UN organisations.

*Very little progress has been made towards a clearer view of support available from the UN. The mechanisms that do exist, the Integrated Workplan and UN Development Assistance Framework, are judged to lack strategic perspective and are not responsive to country needs. Financial information is opaque and very*

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<sup>1</sup> The interpretation of coordination and integration used in this report is given in Annex 1.

- difficult to access. But visibility of financial assistance was found to have improved in countries that participate in the Multi-Country AIDS Programme (MAP).*
- c) strengthen national capability to determine and coordinate a multisectoral response.  
*National capability to coordinate a multisectoral response has been strengthened. However the difficulty of strengthening capability across sectors requires more attention.*
- d) assist governments to coordinate the activities and support of bilateral agencies, which would probably follow the technical and policy consensus of the UN system.  
*The extent to which governments and OECD bilateral donors look to the UN to provide coordination varies among countries. Donors do welcome national HIV/AIDS strategies as an organising framework for their support, and governments acknowledge UN facilitation in their preparation. Governments prefer their own forums for donor relations, and so do donors.*
- e) ensure the joint formulation of and resource mobilisation for a single global appeal and coordinated fund-raising at country level.  
*The institutional structure set up for UNAIDS prescribed fund-raising at country level to be undertaken by existing fund-raising mechanisms of the cosponsors .*

### *Summary of recommendations*

30 The recommendations made by the evaluation are set out in full in Chapter 8. Each recommendation includes a brief preamble to explain the context and for most there is a cross reference to the analysis in the main report. All are directed to the PCB, with specific mention when addressed to other parties. They are grouped under a number of headings dealing with strategic vision, governance and functions.

#### *Strategic vision*

- 31 Four recommendations deal with high level issues concerning the overall role of the programme.
- *To replace the six current ECOSOC objectives by a single goal*
  - *To redefine the roles of the programme with more specific allocation of responsibility*
  - *To establish a clear relationship with the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria*
  - *For the UN Secretary General and UNDG to build on the lessons of UNAIDS when framing proposals for further UN reform*

#### *Governance*

- 32 Five recommendations deal with issues of governance. Two are major:
- *For the PCB to examine proposals in Annex 7 to this evaluation for a model of 'expanded governance' and implement proposals, particularly changes to transform the CCO into a management board*
  - *To draw up a new Memorandum of Understanding for the Secretariat and cosponsors with clear and monitorable objectives for each party*

33 Three deal with procedural aspects concerning PCB operations, including the voting status of NGOs, links to the governing bodies of cosponsors, and PCB meetings.

*Functional aspects – global advocacy, strategy and resource mobilisation*

34 Five recommendations address functions at the global level. One is to maintain the essential and successful role of UNAIDS in global advocacy. A second is a major expansion of emphasis:

- *For the Secretariat to expand current work on information management as part of its core coordination service to all actors dealing with HIV/AIDS*

35 The other three deal with features to support the information role: to promote more evaluation and research studies into behavioural change and impact; to develop the Country Response Information System to more closely match the elements of an expanded response and to continue to develop the UBW, with improved data about plans at country level.

*Functional aspects – regional and cross border*

36 One recommendation is given to continue to support regional initiatives that are demand-driven by the needs of countries in the region.

*Functional aspects – country humanitarian response, management of UNAIDS and capacity building*

37 Shifting the focus of effort onto the country level is the primary message from this evaluation. Thirteen recommendations are constructed to help this change. The first is to recognise the crisis levels of infection being reached in some countries and start to prepare for a humanitarian response under which the UN may be able to give more effective support. Four recommendations deal with complementary issues of financial management:

- *For the cosponsors to adopt high standards of transparency and reporting for budgets and expenditure to set a standard for government and help all stakeholders engage in policy debate*
- *For HIV/AIDS to be reviewed under medium-term expenditure frameworks*
- *For a more explicit link by both OECD bilateral spending and that of the cosponsors to the national strategic plan*
- *To continue with the PAF facility*

38 Three recommendations support the continuation of the CPAs and expanded theme groups. Two recommendations are designed to foster more and better evaluations at country level, including the idea of holding joint reviews that look at performance in terms of national outcome objectives.

39 To support the substantive work of the programme three recommendations argue for expanded advocacy, adoption of a more facilitatory role in capacity building and increased support to help countries plan for and implement scaling-up.

*Future evaluation*

One final objective is addressed to the MERG to develop a programme of evaluation studies as part of a structured process leading to a second evaluation of UNAIDS after five years.