

ANNUAL REPORT ON EVALUATION 2025 AND WORK PLAN 2026

Independent Evaluation Office

Additional documents for this item: Evaluation Policy (UNAIDS/PCB (44)/19.17); Annual Report on Evaluation; and 2024–2025 Evaluation Plan (UNAIDS/PCB (53)23.29).

Action required at this meeting—the Programme Coordinating Board is invited to:

- *Recall* decision 7.5 of the 53rd meeting of the Programme Coordinating Board approving the UNAIDS 2024–2025 Evaluation Plan, as well as decision point 8.7 of the 55th meeting of the Programme Coordinating Board requesting the next annual report to be presented to the Programme Coordinating Board in December 2025;
- *Take note* of the 2025 Annual Report and the summary of the main findings from the evaluations undertaken in 2025;
- *Take note* of the management response to the 2025 annual report on evaluation;
- *Approve* the 2026 Evaluation Plan (UNAIDS/PCB (57)/25.33) endorsed by the Expert Advisory Committee on evaluation;
- *Recall* decision point 9.3 of the 47th session of the Board on the importance of adequately resourcing and staffing the evaluation function in accordance with the evaluation policy approved by the PCB in its decision 6.6 of its 44th session, taking into account the financial situation of the organization;
- Recalling decision 7.7 from the 55th PCB meeting, *agree* that the Expert Advisory Committee on evaluation approved by the PCB in 2025, as detailed in Annex 1 of the 2025 annual report on evaluation and evaluation plan 2026 (UNAIDS/PCB (57)/25.33), is reappointed for a second term;
- Recalling decision 8.6 from the 55th PCB meeting, *take note*, in accordance with provision 73 of the evaluation policy, that the UN Evaluation Group peer review will be postponed to 2026;
- *Look forward* to the annual report on evaluation to be presented to the Programme Coordinating Board in December 2026;

Cost implications for the implementation of the decisions: *Included in UNAIDS Budget and Workplan for 2026 approved by the Programme Coordinating Board at its 57th session in December 2023 (decision point 6.7).*

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Executive summary

1. This document presents an overview of the implementation of the UNAIDS Evaluation Plan for 2024–2025 (UNAIDS/PCB (53)/23.29), as well as the UNAIDS Evaluation Plan for 2026.
2. Six of the nine planned evaluations were implemented under the Evaluation Plan 2024/2025. Two evaluations were completed in 2025: a joint evaluation with the System-Wide Evaluation Office, concerning the contribution of the Joint Programme to UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks, and an Evaluation of Multi-Country Offices and HIV advisors as alternatives to UNAIDS Country Offices. A third evaluation, of the role of the Joint Programme in sustaining the response to HIV, is in the drafting stage and is expected to be finalized by the end of December 2025.
3. Two evaluations could not be initiated because of budget constraints. In response to those constraints, the Evaluation Office integrated questions from them (pertaining to the UNAIDS partnerships with the Global Fund and the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, and sustaining impact on HIV through community systems) into the evaluation of the role of the Joint Programme in sustaining the response to HIV.
4. Expenditure on evaluations versus allocated budget amounted to 94% of the budget allocated for 2025.
5. To ensure follow-up to evaluations, the Independent Evaluation Office supported the development of management responses to evaluations and tracked the implementation of recommendations. The UNAIDS website was regularly updated with the latest evaluation reports and management responses.
6. Interagency collaboration included active engagement in the United Nations Evaluation Group, which brings together the evaluation offices of 50 United Nations entities, to exchange information and experiences.
7. The Professional United Nations Evaluation Peer Review could not be completed in 2025 for various reasons which included the fact that the Peer Review Group was temporarily hampered by logistical and scheduling constraints, ongoing restructuring of the UNAIDS Secretariat, and limited financial resources and capacity within the Evaluation Office in 2025.
8. In spite of these circumstances, and to address these constraints proactively, the Evaluation Office initiated an independent external analysis. This was designed to recalibrate and reinforce the focus, relevance and strategic alignment of the UNAIDS evaluation function, including through supporting real-time decision-making and a focus on efficiency and value for money of programme, thus contributing to the sustainability and capacity of other organizations.
9. The 2026 Evaluation Plan covers the Joint Programme evaluations, Secretariat evaluations and other activities, based on four strategic elements for adaptation to the transition mode which the organization has entered (Global AIDS Strategy 2026–2031; joint work with UNAIDS Cosponsors; sustainability of the response; and evidence-based decision-making).

Introduction

10. At the 44th session of the Programme Coordinating Board (PCB) in June 2019, the Board approved the UNAIDS Evaluation Policy (decision point 6.6). This formalized the establishment of the UNAIDS Evaluation Office as a structurally and functionally independent unit of the UNAIDS Secretariat, positioned independently from management functions and reporting directly to the PCB. The Evaluation Policy (UNAIDS/PCB (44)/19.7) directs the Independent Evaluation Office to prepare a biennial Evaluation Plan through a consultative process and to present it to the PCB for approval. An annual report is to be presented to the PCB and a semi-annual update is to be presented to the PCB Bureau.¹
11. At the 53rd meeting of the PCB in December 2023 (agenda item 5), the Board took note of the management response to the annual report on evaluation and the Evaluation Plan 2024–2025 (UNAIDS /PCB (53)/23.30), and approved the 2024–2025 Evaluation Plan (UNAIDS/PCB (53)/23.29)
12. In October 2025, a semi-annual update on the implementation of the 2024–2025 Evaluation Plan was presented to the PCB Bureau. This annual report on evaluation, which is being presented to the 57th session of the PCB in December 2025, is accompanied by the work plan of the office of Independent Evaluation.
13. Three reports will be presented and will be available on the UNAIDS website:
 - Multi-Country Offices and HIV advisors as alternatives to UNAIDS Country Offices;
 - The role of the Joint Programme in sustaining the response to HIV; and
 - The contribution of the Joint Programme to UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks (System-wide evaluation on progress towards a "new generation of United Nations country teams").

Overview of the 2024–2025 Evaluation Plan

Context

14. Responsibility for the development and implementation of the Evaluation Plan rests with the UNAIDS Evaluation Office. The UNAIDS 2024–2025 Evaluation Plan includes evaluations of the work of the Joint Programme, which are conducted jointly with Cosponsors and UNAIDS Secretariat evaluations.
15. The evaluations focus on generating evidence in areas where UNAIDS Cosponsors and the Secretariat can support and sustain achievement of the targets set out in the UNAIDS 2021–2026 Global AIDS Strategy and in the 2021 Political Declaration on HIV and AIDS. The evaluations cover the work of Cosponsors and the Secretariat at global, regional and country levels.
16. The strategic priorities in the Global AIDS Strategy and the outputs and core functions of the UNAIDS Secretariat in the 2022–2026 Unified Budget, Results and Accountability Framework (UBRAF) provide the overall framework for the Evaluation

¹ UNAIDS evaluation policy. UNAIDS/PCB (44)/19.7. Geneva: UNAIDS; 2019 (https://www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/media_asset/UNAIDS_PCB44_UNAIDS-Evaluation-Policy_EN.pdf).

Plan. All evaluations conducted in 2024–2025 were mapped against and contribute towards those priorities.

Implementation of the Evaluation Plan

17. Evaluations are designed and carried out in accordance with the UNAIDS Evaluation Policy (paragraph 22), which requires the highest standards of professional integrity, ethics and respect for beliefs, customs and social norms, human rights, gender equality and the "do no harm" principle.
18. Table 1 provides a summary status of the evaluations carried out during 2024 and 2025.

Table 1. Status of Evaluation Plan 2024–2025

Evaluations	Year	Status
1. Independent Joint Evaluation of the Global Action Plan for Healthy Lives and Well-being for All (SDG3 GAP).	2024	Completed
2. Review of the UNAIDS joint evaluations and assessments (2020 – 2024)	2024	Completed
3. The Mid-term Evaluation of the Cooperative Agreement (2021–2026) between U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS	2024	Completed
4. The contribution of the Joint Programme to UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks	2025	Completed
5. Multi-Country Offices and HIV advisors as alternatives to UNAIDS Country Offices	2025	Completed
6. Global-, regional- and country-level work	2025	Completed
7. The role of the Joint Programme in sustaining the response to HIV	2025	In progress
8. UNAIDS partnership with the Global Fund and the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR)	2025	Included in (7)
9. Sustaining impact on HIV through community systems	2025	Included in (7)

19. The Independent Evaluation Office underwent significant changes in 2024. It was relocated from Geneva to Bonn, and a new Director of Evaluation was appointed in August 2024, following the retirement of the previous director. Throughout most of the year, the unit operated with the support of a senior evaluation advisor.
20. In 2025, the Joint Programme and its Secretariat underwent a comprehensive restructuring process, significantly impacting the organization. A new operating model has been implemented, with six "lead" Cosponsors, and the restructuring of the Secretariat has resulted in a drastic decrease in the budget and a 55% reduction in staff. Consequently, the Evaluation Office saw the abolition of one of its two positions (the senior evaluation advisor post).
21. These changes have limited the capacity of the Evaluation Office to conduct all planned evaluations for 2025 and have altered the timeline for completing one evaluation.

Evaluations and financial status

22. Evaluations and other activities approved in the 2024–2025 work plan, as well as their budget allocations for 2024 and 2025, are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Implementation of the budget in 2024 and 2025 (US\$)

Categories of expenditure 2024	Amount Allocated	Expenditure in 2024	% Amount budgeted vs Expenditure
Staff cost	472,000	432,663	91%
Joint Programme Evaluations	100, 000	71, 257	71%
Secretariat Evaluations	206,153	157,929	77%
Capacity and Governance	15,000	11, 050	74%
Effective Management	5,000	3, 426	69%
Total	798,153	676.325	84%

Categories of expenditure 2025	Amount Allocated	Expenditure in 2025	% Amount budgeted vs Expenditure
Staff cost	549, 000	508,386	92%
Joint Programme Evaluations	183, 000	182,527	99%
Secretariat Evaluations	35, 000	35,000	100%
Capacity and Governance	2, 000	1, 853	92%
Effective Management	-	-	0%
Total	769 000.0	727 766.6	94%

23. Five evaluations were initially planned for 2025. However, budget constraints allowed for only three evaluations to be conducted:
- Contribution of the Joint Programme to United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks;
 - Role of Multi-Country Offices and HIV Advisors as alternatives to UNAIDS Country Offices; and
 - Role of the Joint Programme in sustaining the response to HIV.
24. In response to these constraints, the Evaluation Office integrated questions from the two remaining evaluations (pertaining to UNAIDS partnerships with the Global Fund, the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, PEPFAR, and sustaining the impact on HIV through community systems) into the evaluation of role of the Joint Programme in sustaining the response to HIV.
25. As of 2025, two evaluations have been completed:

- a joint evaluation with the System-Wide Evaluation Office concerning the contribution of the Joint Programme to UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks; and
 - an evaluation of Multi-country Offices and HIV advisors as alternatives to UNAIDS Country Offices.
26. A third evaluation, focused on the role of the Joint Programme in sustaining the response to HIV, is in the drafting stage and is expected to be finalized by the end of December 2025.
27. The next section of the report provides a summary of the two completed evaluations and updates on the third evaluation in progress.

Summary of completed evaluations

The contribution of the Joint Programme to UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks: system-wide evaluation on progress towards a "new generation of United Nations country teams"

28. This system-wide evaluation delved into the progress of the UN Development System's efforts to create a "new generation of country teams". This initiative, driven by UN General Assembly resolution A/RES/72/279, aims to enhance coherence, effectiveness and accountability in UN support to Member States in achieving the 2030 Agenda. The evaluation was conducted by the UNSDG System-Wide Evaluation Office from 2019 to 2025 and encompassed all entities in the UN Sustainable Development Group (UNSDG) and the Resident Coordinator system. Major findings of the evaluation are presented below:
29. UNAIDS Secretariat Country Offices are fully integrated into the Resident Coordinator system. As the chair of the country-level Joint UN Teams on AIDS, the UNAIDS Country Director leads and ensures that the joint UN effort to support the national AIDS response is aligned with, derived from, and contributes to the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) efforts.
30. The five-year UBRAF is synchronized, to the maximum extent possible, with the planning cycles of cosponsors and other UN funds, programmes and agencies, in line with the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review and PCB recommendations.
31. Plans, results and related budgets are included in the UN-INFO system and are tagged as "joint" in UN-INFO for reporting. While the evaluation affirmed the ongoing relevance of the strategic vision and acknowledged certain improvements and the establishment of foundational elements, it revealed a critical gap between aspirations and reality. Cooperation frameworks, envisioned as the cornerstone of UN planning and implementation, have not yet significantly influenced actual programming decisions or assumed their intended role as the primary guide for UN activities at the country level. Moreover, UN Country Team configuration exercises have yielded limited tangible outcomes.
32. Underlying this is a combination of factors, including cumbersome implementation approaches and structural barriers such as weak incentives for collaboration, fragmented governance structures, and persistent issues with funding quality.
33. The evaluation recommends several strategic shifts targeting the UNSDG, the Development Coordination Office (DCO), and Member States to rectify the situation.

UNSDG entities are also called upon to ensure alignment with proven approaches and systems in global AIDS programmes.

34. The following action areas were identified:

- Streamlining the cooperation framework cycle. The evaluation calls for a recalibrating the Cooperation Framework cycle, with a focus on simplification, strategic prioritization and enhanced transparency during implementation.
- Revising UNCT configuration. The evaluation proposes transitioning towards a more needs-based and tailored country presence to ensure that the UN has the necessary capacity at delivery levels.
- Strengthening development coordination. The evaluation urges a rebalancing of support systems to facilitate effective implementation at country level, with greater integration of reforms.
- Enhancing accountability and incentives. The evaluation highlights the need to overhaul internal accountability structures within UNSDG entities, emphasizing collective action and results.
- Removing institutional obstacles. The evaluation stresses the importance of harmonizing business operations and processes to eliminate barriers and disincentives to collaboration.
- Improving funding quality. The evaluation advocates for increased flexible, core and pooled funding to better support national priorities.
- Reinforcing Member State oversight. The evaluation encourages enhanced oversight and guidance from Member States to ensure effective delivery.

35. In conclusion, while recognizing notable progress, the evaluation underscores the necessity for a strategic realignment to address fundamental challenges that hinder the full realization of a new generation of UNCTs. This requires focused efforts towards streamlining processes, strengthening accountability, promoting collaboration and overcoming key systemic limitations to better achieve the UN's development goals.

Multi-Country Offices and HIV advisors as alternatives to UNAIDS Country Offices

36. Following consultation with UNDCO, the UNAIDS Evaluation Office commissioned an evaluation to assess the primary and potential secondary effects of: (i) placing HIV advisors in selected Resident Coordinators' Offices; and (ii) establishing UNAIDS Multi-Country Offices as alternatives to stand-alone UNAIDS Country Offices in countries. This evaluation examined how such alternatives affected UNAIDS's contribution to the work of UN Country Teams. Major findings of the evaluation are presented below.
37. There is currently no systematic approach guiding how UNAIDS should adapt its presence and engagement across different contexts. In the absence of a corporate framework, both the multi-country office and HIV adviser models have evolved organically, often shaped by individual initiative rather than institutional strategy.
38. As the organization moves toward fewer Country Offices and more Multi-Country Offices, it must adopt a more strategic and differentiated approach. Country and multi-country structures need to be supported to identify what can realistically be delivered with available capacities, and priorities must be clearly communicated to partners.
39. The evaluation found significant variation in how Multi-Country Offices and HIV advisers operate. Where expectations are clear and systems are in place to manage

workload and partner relationships, effectiveness and staff well-being appear to be stronger. However, the overall lack of guidance, clarity and systematic support limits consistency and performance.

40. The HIV adviser model remains relevant as a mechanism to ensure that HIV remain on national and UN agendas, but its function requires redefinition. Advisers embedded in Resident Coordinator Offices need clearer mandates, structured induction, predictable resources and sustained links with UNAIDS systems to function as strategic connectors rather than as small-scale Country Offices.
41. Similarly, UNAIDS must develop clear typologies of presence—ranging from Multi-Country Offices and single-person offices to co-location arrangements within Resident Coordinator Offices, Cosponsors or national institutions. This diversity of models would allow greater flexibility and adaptation to country contexts, while maintaining alignment with the Joint Programme.
42. Across all typologies, UNAIDS's heavy reliance on individual staff commitment is not sustainable. Without clear role differentiation, strategic prioritization or predictable resources, performance currently depends on personal effort rather than institutional systems.
43. More broadly, the organization has not yet positioned itself to operate effectively within the “new reality” of the 2030 horizon, which is defined by constrained funding, shifting geopolitical priorities, emerging health challenges and shrinking civic space. The future relevance of UNAIDS will depend on its ability to move from operational delivery to strategic influence—acting as a convener, connector and advocate for the integration of HIV across health and development agendas. In that regard, it has great potential to continue to act as a model for coordination and collaboration, as well as becoming a model for integration in the UN80 landscape.
44. Finally, the evaluation found no systematic mechanism for institutional learning or knowledge exchange across Multi-Country Offices or adviser placements. While isolated examples of peer collaboration exist, there is no structured platform to capture, document and share lessons learned. Strengthening internal knowledge systems are essential to sustain coherence, accelerate learning and replicate good practices across contexts.

The evaluation on the role of the Joint Programme in sustaining the response to HIV

45. During 2024, the Independent Evaluation Office completed a review of 21 evaluations and assessments commissioned in the previous four years. The review brought together the evidence on achievements, challenges and lessons learned against the Joint Programme's mandate and six programmatic objectives that serve as a basis for the evaluation to be conducted during 2025. This synthesis was guided by four questions addressing the programme's success, challenges and opportunities, aligned with UNAIDS's six programmatic objectives established by the UN Economic and Social Council Resolution 1994/24.
46. The review assessed the effectiveness of Joint Programme structures and their value in sustaining the HIV response. It included 21 reports covering multiple regions and countries, with a focus on three UBRAF periods (2012–2015, 2016–2021, and 2022–2026). The review also identified information gaps that can be filled through the current evaluation.

47. At the 55th PCB session there was agreement to conduct a second phase of the evaluation which would build on the recent High-Level Panel report and its recommendations for ensuring a resilient and fit-for-purpose operating model for the Joint Programme.
48. The evaluation has adopted a mixed methods approach, using qualitative and quantitative methods and triangulating data from a range of different sources. The conceptual basis for this includes an analytical framework or evaluation matrix and a reconstructed theory of change.
49. Moreover, the evaluation has a deliberately forward-looking approach to make it as useful as possible for learning—given that the context has shifted dramatically. Nevertheless, some attention to the recent past is required to hold the Secretariat and Cosponsors accountable for the results achieved with funding received previously.
50. The evaluation seeks to add value by avoiding duplicating analysis already conducted or revisiting decisions already taken or pending from the High-Level Panel, Cosponsors and the Secretariat. It also seeks to generate findings to inform the operationalization of the new operating model.
51. The evaluation commenced with a detailed inception phase to establish a shared understanding of needs and expectations for quality, relevance and utility. This phase included an initial meeting with the UNAIDS Office of Evaluation, 26 interviews with UNAIDS Secretariat staff, PCB members and Cosponsor focal points, as well as attendance by the evaluation team at the 56th PCB meeting in June 2025.
52. Based on the inception phase, the evaluation team refined the evaluation questions in the terms of reference, examined the theory of change, and developed an evaluation matrix as a central framework. The evaluation questions were influenced by the changing context of UNAIDS and were designed to be as useful as possible.
53. The evaluation finalized the data collection phase based on a mixed-methods approach, gathering both qualitative and quantitative data from diverse sources. Data collection was context-adapted, balanced and representative across gender, population groups and geographic areas. Cross-cutting themes like human rights, community-led responses and multisectoral action as per the UBRAF were considered. Data collection methods included document reviews, direct observation at field level, more than 255 key informant interviews and six country case studies.
54. During November 2025, the evaluation conducted an analysis of the data. Drafting of the report which was scheduled to be completed in December 2025.

Conducting and following up on evaluations

55. Evaluations are conducted in a participatory and consultative manner and are primarily carried out by external consultants to enhance the independence of the evaluations. The Evaluation Office ensures quality throughout all phases of the evaluations, along with the effective utilization of resources and the presentation and dissemination of evaluation findings and recommendations.
56. The UNAIDS Evaluation Office publishes evaluation reports and management responses on the UNAIDS website and facilitates the development and tracking of management responses and the implementation of evaluation recommendations. In 2024–2025, additional resources will be invested for identifying, synthesizing and disseminating recurring, systemic or cross-cutting issues and lessons learned from

evaluations, as well as for developing innovative products that contribute to UNAIDS knowledge management and that draw on but also go beyond evaluative evidence.

57. The Evaluation Plan includes follow-up activities on evaluations to translate findings and conclusions into organizational learning and strengthen evaluation culture and capacity. This includes monitoring the implementation of recommendations for recent evaluations. The status of evaluations conducted in 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024 and 2025 is presented in Annex 2.

Interagency collaboration

58. The UNAIDS Evaluation Office is an active member of the UN Evaluation Group, and it participates in system-wide and joint evaluations, working groups and meetings of the Group. There has been close collaboration and sharing of knowledge, expertise and experience with Cosponsor evaluation offices, which has made it possible to tap into the resources of the Cosponsors and promoting joint evaluations related to HIV.
59. The UNAIDS Evaluation Office will continue to engage actively with Cosponsor evaluation offices to ensure their active participation in HIV-related evaluations and in sharing lessons learned from other evaluations. UNAIDS will remain an active member of the UN Evaluation Group, and it will participate regularly in relevant meetings, working groups and task forces

Peer review of the UNAIDS evaluation function

60. The 55th PCB meeting, during consideration of agenda item 6 pertaining to the evaluation processes, formally acknowledged, with due appreciation, the decision to undertake a peer review conducted by the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) in 2025, pursuant to provision 73 of the existing evaluation policy.
61. The UNEG peer review group was temporarily hampered by logistical and scheduling constraints during the initial months of 2025. Specifically, availability of the UNEG peer review team was limited, a constraint which was further compounded by competing priorities and financial constraints across multiple UN agencies.
62. Adding to the complexity was the ongoing restructuring of the UNAIDS Secretariat, which introduced additional layers of organizational change and uncertainty. This dynamic environment rendered it unfeasible to undertake a peer review, as the evolving organizational structure and shifting priorities could undermine the accuracy, relevance and validity of the review outcomes. A stable and predictable operational environment is a fundamental prerequisite for meaningful peer evaluation.
63. Furthermore, the limitations posed by constrained financial resources and capacity within the Evaluation Office necessitate a phased approach for implementing the peer review process.
64. To address these constraints proactively and to lay the groundwork for a successful peer review, the Evaluation Office initiated an external prospectus analysis that was designed to recalibrate and reinforce the focus, relevance and strategic alignment of the UNAIDS evaluation function.
65. This external analysis served multiple purposes. Firstly, it provided critical insights into different strategic pathways that could optimize the efficacy of the evaluation function within the broader organizational context. Secondly, it generated a strategic resource that will inform ongoing and future resource mobilization efforts, ensuring sustainable

support for evaluation activities in line with organizational needs and priorities. In addition, the prospectus brief formed the basis for the development of the terms of reference for a peer review, clearly delineating scope, objectives and methodologies. Major findings and guidance from the external analysis of the evaluation function are included in the next section of the report.

Adaptation of the evaluation function to the new organizational context

66. UNAIDS has entered a transition phase, characterized by substantial staff reductions, consolidation into Multi-Country Offices and a narrowing of strategic functions. At the same time, expectations for accountability, learning and efficiency remain high among Member States, civil society and Cosponsors, even as resources shrink. Evaluations need to respond to this reality and demonstrate both prudence and purpose. They must provide credible and usable evidence for decisions that contribute to the sustainability of the response and they must document the long-term institutional legacy of UNAIDS as a joint UN programme.
67. The 2019 Evaluation Policy emphasizes independence, credibility and utility. These principles remain valid but must now be reinterpreted for a leaner structure and period of change. This means prioritizing use over coverage, formative over summative approaches, and knowledge capture over new evidence generation.
68. Evaluation should be harnessed as a strategic tool for adaptive management and , accountability. Its purpose is to assess performance and provide rapid, actionable insights during transition.
69. Priority focus areas to develop and during the transition are:
 - Adaptive learning. Support real-time decision-making during restructuring, staff transition and the potential transfer of programmes to other agencies;
 - Efficiency and value for money of programmes. Demonstrate cost-effectiveness and relevance to retain donor confidence in individual activities/programmes;
 - Sustainability. Transfer valuation knowledge and capacity to other organizations and partners; and
 - Use technology and partnerships to maximize reach and reduce costs.
70. Use should be the core test of quality. Evaluations must be designed for uptake and must be concise, visually clear and aligned with decision-making. Every evaluation or lessons learned should include a one-page action summary and should prompt a management response, ideally within one month (to reflect the pace of change).
71. Joint evaluations with Cosponsors offer cost-sharing opportunities and greater legitimacy. Such partnerships must preserve UNAIDS's distinctive human rights voice.
72. The Evaluation Office should also explore partnerships with academic institutions, regional evaluation associations and networks. UN agencies such as UNITAR or the UN Volunteers can be approached to provide personnel or resources to augment UNAIDS staff.
73. In the current phase, UNAIDS should use evaluations as a disciplined tool for legacy and wider lesson-learning and as a provider of evidence for decision-making. A light, credible and well-communicated evaluation system can help ensure that UNAIDS's

insights, partnerships and human rights leadership continue to influence the global HIV response.

The 2026 Evaluation Plan

74. Traditionally, the UNAIDS Evaluation Plan was designed on a bi-ennial basis. However, this year the Evaluation Office is submitting a one-year plan to align with organizational changes as well as remain adaptable and responsive to the organizational context.
75. The annual plan includes evaluations of the work of the Joint Programme, which are conducted jointly with Cosponsors, UNAIDS Secretariat evaluations and other key activities. The evaluations focus on generating evidence in areas where UNAIDS Cosponsors and the Secretariat can support and sustain the achievement of the targets in the UNAIDS 2026–2031 Global Strategy and the simplified UBRAF.
76. The UNAIDS Evaluation Office adopted a participatory approach to develop the 2026 Evaluation Plan. The process involved consultations to identify relevant evaluation topics, define their scope and formulate key questions. Priority was given to topics for joint evaluations. As with other evaluation offices within the UN System, UNAIDS faces the challenge of balancing the need for independence with the utility of evaluation findings. Achieving this balance requires engaging staff across different programmatic and operational areas to identify existing knowledge gaps and select evaluation topics that are both relevant and strategic. This collaborative effort aims to ensure that evaluations produce actionable insights that inform decision-making and support the implementation of knowledge-based practices.
77. The development of the Evaluation Plan was guided by principles outlined in the UNAIDS Evaluation Policy (paragraph 13), which emphasizes meaningful engagement of key stakeholders—including communities, civil society, people living with HIV, women, youth and key populations. A core focus was on assessing how well the Joint Programme responds to the needs of those groups and to ensure that evaluations contribute to strengthening programming that is inclusive, responsive and aligned with the priorities of vulnerable populations.
78. When identifying potential evaluation topics, the following considerations, in accordance with the Evaluation Policy, were thoroughly assessed:
 - The strategic significance of each topic, including the level of investment, potential risks, and the necessity for evidence to support decision-making;
 - The importance of addressing knowledge gaps, the potential for fostering learning within staff and institutions, as well as opportunities for innovation, replication or scaling-up successful approaches; and
 - Practical organizational factors, including the feasibility of conducting the evaluation within available resources and timeframes.
79. All the factors mentioned in this section, as well as the report and organizational context (restructuring and High-Level Panel recommendations), informed the prioritization of topics within the Evaluation Plan. As a result, the evaluations proposed for 2026 are more selective compared to previous cycles, with increased emphasis on translating and transferring evaluation findings into capacities, knowledge and learning processes. This strategic focus aims to enhance the use of evidence to inform decision-making and sustainability of the HIV response.

80. An on-line consultation was circulated in UNAIDS and among the evaluation offices of Cosponsors and senior leadership of the Secretariat. The process included discussions with the evaluation offices of the Cosponsors, exploring opportunities for joint evaluations and collaborative efforts. Following the consultations, the draft was presented to the Expert Advisory Committee, which provided additional input.

Contents of the Plan for 2026

81. The 2026 plan covers the Joint Programme evaluations, Secretariat evaluations and other activities. The plan emphasizes four strategic elements for adaptation to the current transition phase of the organization (Global AIDS Strategy 2026–2031, joint work with UNAIDS Cosponsors, sustainability of the response, and evidence-based decision-making).
82. The first element considers the Global AIDS Strategy as the central unit of analysis to be supported by evaluation evidence through feedback loops. That will entail conducting a series of evaluations and assessments that will contribute to accountability and learning during implementation of the Strategy. The evaluations will accumulate into a body of evidence that will support final assessment of the Strategy in 2031.
83. The second element galvanizes the synergies of the Joint Programme by aligning the work of Cosponsors and the Secretariat. The decision to undertake an evaluation focused on the sustainability of the response to HIV among key populations served by the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), specifically people who inject drugs, victims of human trafficking, and people in prisons and other close settings. The goal will be to analyze and identify the key elements necessary for ensuring the long-term sustainability of those interventions, which are increasingly important during the transition period and the implementation of the new operating model.
84. The third element entails conducting short, focused independent reviews on emerging issues of strategic importance for the Joint Programme. These reviews will provide the elements that can ensure that strategic decisions are informed by evidence. The plan includes conducting an analysis of lessons learned regarding the Joint Programme's efforts to advance access to the long-acting injectable antiretroviral, Lenacapavir.
85. The fourth element involves contributing to the sustainability of the HIV response. It entails conducting an evaluation of the design and implementation of the HIV Sustainability Roadmaps at country level in the context of community-level work.
86. The envelope of the evaluations and activities for 2026 has decreased from previous years, reflecting the new financial situation of the organization, and the focus and scope of the evaluation's activities are adapted to the transition process of 2026.
87. Based in the four pillars described above and the mixture of evaluations, independent assessment and activities for 2026, the evaluation office strives to continue providing Accountability, learning and knowledge generation during 2026.

Table 3. Evaluations in 2026

Evaluations 2026	Year	US\$
Joint Programme evaluations		
Evaluability assessment of the translation of the Global AIDS Strategy into country programmes	2026	30 000
Joint Evaluation on the sustainability of the response to HIV in key populations: people who inject drugs and people in prisons and other closed settings	2026	50 000
Preliminary Assessment on the role of the UNAIDS Joint Programme in the use of Lenacapavir for HIV prevention	2026	30 000
UNAIDS community systems at country level in the context of sustainability roadmaps.	2026	40 000
Secretariat evaluations		
Lessons learned from the Organization's transition process	2026	15 000
Other activities		
Evaluation coordination activities and dissemination	2026	10 000
Total		175 000

Expert Advisory Committee on Evaluation

88. In approving the UNAIDS Evaluation Policy in June 2019, the PCB agreed to the establishment of an Expert Committee as an independent, external body to provide advice and guidance on evaluation. The role of this Expert Advisory Committee within the architecture of UNAIDS evaluation function and its membership and terms of reference are presented in Annex 1.
89. In 2025, two virtual meetings of the Expert Advisory Committee were held. In these meetings the Evaluation Office presented the implementation of the workplan, ongoing evaluations, budget status, summary of findings, and recommendations of all completed evaluations. The Committee has provided advice on several issues, including engaging in joint evaluations and capitalizing on the evaluation structures of Cosponsors for implementation of the UNAIDS Evaluation Plan.
90. Moreover, the Committee provided advice on the adaptations needed to design a future of independent evaluation, emphasizing the importance of demonstrating the value of the evaluation function in contributing to the reform process and in providing evaluative evidence to support decision-making.
91. At the second meeting, held on the 5 November 2025, the Expert Advisory Committee on Evaluation provided a range of advice.
 - It took note of the annual report of findings from evaluations undertaken in 2025 and requested that the evaluations become part of the decision-making process at all levels of the organization, including at senior level. The Committee also requested that evaluative evidence and advice be part of the assessment of the organization to be conducted during 2026.

- It advised that a complete presentation of the evaluation on the role of the Joint Programme in sustaining the response to HIV be prepared and delivered.
- It welcomed the adaptations of the evaluation function to the transition period and looked forward to seeing innovations and collaborations with other partners, including communities and civil society. It proposed participatory approaches to evidence-based organizational feedback loops and supported the production of briefs and other specific documents which can contribute to the decision-making processes in "real time".
- Regarding the peer review of the evaluation function, it suggested reconsidering the need to conduct such an intensive exercise in a context of limited resources and organizational uncertainty.
- On the annual workplan for 2026, it advised and requested that sufficient resources be made available to complete the plan and to ensure that high quality is maintained.
- All current members of the advisory board indicated that they wished to continue for a second mandate.

Conclusions

92. Until 2019, an effective and independent evaluation function was a missing piece in UNAIDS's efforts on accountability, transparency and organizational learning. In June 2019, the PCB approved the UNAIDS Evaluation Policy and formalized the establishment of the Evaluation Office as a structurally and functionally independent unit, independently from management functions and reporting directly to the PCB.
93. In 2025, UNAIDS entered a transition phase, characterized by substantial staff reductions, consolidation into Multi-Country Offices and narrowed strategic functions. Member States, civil society and Cosponsors, and expectations for accountability, learning and efficiency remain despite decreasing resources. Evaluations need to respond to this reality and demonstrate both prudence and purpose by providing credible, usable evidence for decisions, thus contributing to sustainability of the HIV response. They also have to capture and document the long-term institutional legacy of UNAIDS as a joint UN programme.
94. The UNAIDS Evaluation Policy calls for an independent review of the policy every four years. A review of the policy could not be conducted in 2025. However, responding to the speed and the scale of organizational changes brought by revision of the organization's operating model and the restructuring process of the organization. The Evaluation Office commissioned an external analysis for adaptation of the Office (prospectus) to the transition period during 2026.
95. The UNAIDS Evaluation Policy remains valid but must now be reinterpreted for a leaner structure and the many changes that are underway. This means prioritizing use over coverage, formative approaches over reviewing ones, and knowledge capture. Evaluation should be harnessed as a strategic tool for adaptive management, accountability and legacy. Its purpose is to assess performance and to provide rapid, actionable insights during a period of transition.
96. An annual report on the implementation of the Evaluation Plan is routinely presented to the PCB, and semi-annual updates will be presented to the PCB Bureau as requested. The Cosponsors and the Secretariat's senior leadership team are engaged in evaluations related to their areas of work and are regularly informed of progress in implementing the evaluation workplan.

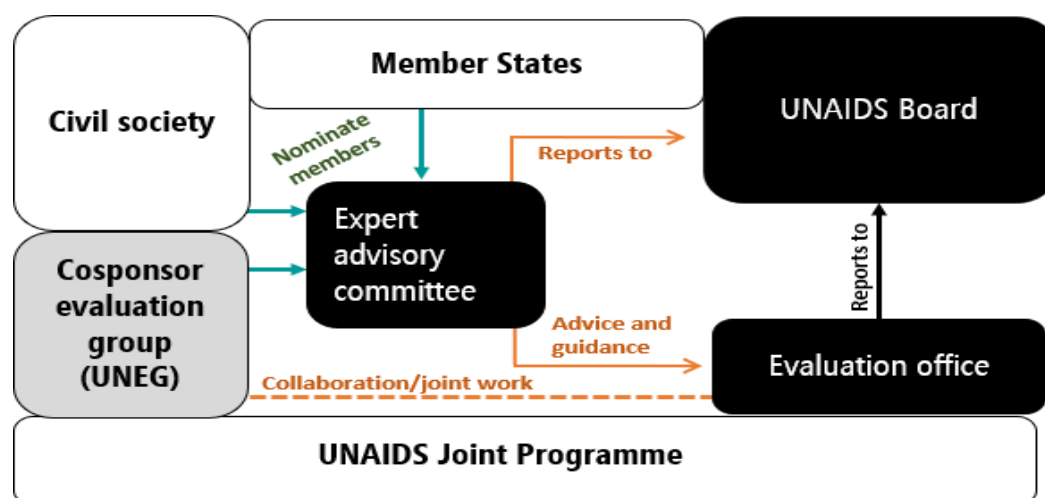
Proposed decision points

The Programme Coordinating Board is invited to:

97. *Recall* decision 7.5 of the 53rd meeting of the Programme Coordinating Board approving the UNAIDS 2024–2025 Evaluation Plan, as well as decision point 8.7 of the 55th meeting of the Programme Coordinating Board requesting the next annual report to be presented to the Programme Coordinating Board in December 2025;
98. *Takes note* of the 2025 Annual Report and the summary of the main findings from the evaluations undertaken in 2025;
99. *Takes note* of the management response to the 2025 annual report on evaluation;
100. *Approves* the 2026 Evaluation Plan (UNAIDS/PCB (57)/25.33) endorsed by the Expert Advisory Committee on evaluation;
101. *Recalls* decision point 9.3 of the 47th session of the Board on the importance of adequately resourcing and staffing the evaluation function in accordance with the evaluation policy approved by the PCB in its decision 6.6 of its 44th session, taking into account the financial situation of the organization;
102. Recalling decision 7.7 from the 55th PCB meeting, *agrees* that the Expert Advisory Committee on evaluation approved by the PCB in 2025, as detailed in Annex 1 of the 2025 annual report on evaluation and evaluation plan 2026 (UNAIDS/PCB (57)/25.33), is reappointed for a second term;
103. Recalling decision 8.6 from the 55th PCB meeting, *takes note*, in accordance with provision 73 of the evaluation policy, that the UN Evaluation Group peer review will be postponed to 2026;
104. *Looks forward* to the annual report on evaluation to be presented to the Programme Coordinating Board in December 2026;

[Annexes follow]

Annex 1. Evaluation function and advisory committee



Programme Coordinating Board

Approves the Evaluation Policy, Evaluation Plan and budget, considers annual reports on implementation and draws on evaluations for decisions.

Cosponsor Evaluation Group

Brings together and leverages the resources of the Cosponsor evaluation offices for HIV-related evaluations and promotes system-wide and joint evaluations related to HIV.

Expert Advisory Committee

External body which provides advice on evaluation consisting of seven members—nominated by Member States (5), the PCB NGO delegation (1) and Cosponsor evaluation offices (1).

Current Committee members

1. Dr Muhammad Bakari, Professor of Internal Medicine, Muhimbili University of Health and Applied Sciences, Tanzania (Africa);
2. Dr Sarah Faisal Alawi, Head of AIDS Office, Public Health Administration, Ministry of Health, Kuwait (Asia-Pacific);
3. Dr Nikkiah Forbes, Director of the National HIV/AIDS and Infectious Disease Programme, Ministry of Health, The Bahamas (Latin America and Caribbean);
4. Ms. Alice M. Kayongo Senior Associate, O'Neill Institute for National and Global Health Law, Georgetown University (NGO Delegation).
5. Mr Guy Thijs, Director of Evaluation, International Labour Organization (Cosponsor Evaluation Group).

6. Mr Theo van de Sande Expert, Open data and OECD/DAC reporting, The Netherlands (Western European and Other Countries);

Terms of reference: Expert Advisory Committee on Evaluation

Background

UNAIDS efforts to lead the collective response to HIV and AIDS—bringing together the UN system with other partners—has been successful in many respects. However, AIDS remains a global challenge and evaluation needs to be a critical element in defining the way forward to ensure the HIV epidemic does not rebound and the goal of ending AIDS as a public health threat by 2030 can be achieved.

At its 44th meeting, 25–27 June 2019, the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board approved UNAIDS revised evaluation policy [PCB (44) 19.7] which formalizes the establishment of an independent evaluation function reporting directly to the Board. This is an important milestone in efforts to strengthen evidence-based decision making, learning and accountability.

The new institutional architecture for the evaluation function includes an Expert Advisory Committee of evaluation experts, nominated by Member States, civil society and UNAIDS Cosponsors. The Committee is an independent, external body which reports to the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board.

These terms of reference are based on paragraphs 55 and 57–60 of the UNAIDS evaluation policy.

Scope of work

The Evaluation Expert Advisory Committee advises the Director of Evaluation and the Executive Director on the implementation of UNAIDS evaluation policy and the development and implementation of UNAIDS evaluation plan to enhance the use of evaluations, organizational learning and alignment with UNAIDS Strategy, the Unified Budget Results and Accountability Framework, as well as UNEG norms and standards for evaluation.

The Committee has a critical role in providing guidance and advice on the evaluation function and ensuring its independence. A summary of the work and recommendations of the Committee is presented annually to the Board.

Qualifications

All members of the Advisory Committee shall be technical experts in the field of evaluation and have:

- in-depth knowledge and understanding of evaluation and performance measurement, collection, analysis and use of quantitative and qualitative data;
- extensive experience of evaluation of complex programmes and organizational performance to improve relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact;
- good understanding of HIV, public health and/or related development and human rights issues and familiarity with the work of UNAIDS Cosponsors and/or Secretariat at country, regional or global levels; and
- good understanding of UNAIDS existing evaluation tools and mechanisms.

Composition

The process of constituting the Expert Advisory Committee draws on the experience of the establishment of sub-committees of the PCB. Accordingly, the membership of the Evaluation Advisory Committee shall be geographically representative and gender balanced. To ensure efficiency, the Advisory Committee shall include a maximum of seven members comprising:

- Five evaluation experts nominated by Member States;
- One evaluation expert nominated by the PCB NGO Delegation; and
- One evaluation expert nominated by the Cosponsor Evaluation Group.

Selection

PCB Member States, the PCB NGO Delegation and the UNAIDS Cosponsor Evaluation Group are invited to propose experts as members of the Advisory Committee. Member States are encouraged to agree on nominations within their regional groups.

Nominations shall be submitted to the PCB Bureau, which ensures that the Committee has the required technical expertise and is geographically representative and gender balanced.

If the number of nominations exceeds the number of places on the Committee for that constituency, the PCB Chair will contact all the members of the constituency represented on the Board for further discussion and agreement.

Once the proposed composition of the Committee has been confirmed, the PCB Bureau will communicate the names of the experts to all Member States, the PCB NGO Delegation and Cosponsors. The PCB Bureau propose the membership of the Committee, for agreement by the PCB.

Members of the Expert Advisory Committee shall appoint a chair from within its membership. Members shall serve for a term of two years and cannot be reappointed more than once.

Working modalities

The Committee meets once a year face-to-face, possibly in connection with a multi-stakeholder consultation on evaluation; other meetings are virtual. UNAIDS will pay for the travel and per diem of Committee members. Members who are self-employed will additionally be paid an honorarium. The UNAIDS Evaluation Office serves as secretary of the Committee.

A summary of the work and recommendations of the Committee is prepared and shared annually with the Board. The role and relevance of the Committee shall be reviewed at the time UNAIDS Evaluation Policy is reviewed and any changes shall be reflected in a revised policy submitted to the Board for approval.

Annex 2. Status of evaluations conducted in 2024–2025

Extract from UNAIDS evaluation dashboard

Evaluation title	Status of evaluation	Management response
Evaluations conducted in 2025		
System-wide evaluation on progress towards a "new generation of United Nations country teams"	<i>Published</i>	<i>Under development</i>
The role of the Joint Programme in sustaining the response to HIV	<i>Ongoing</i>	<i>To be developed</i>
Multi-Country Offices and HIV advisors as alternatives to UNAIDS Country Offices	<i>Published</i>	<i>To be developed</i>
Evaluations and reviews conducted in 2024		
Joint evaluation of the Global Action Plan for Healthy Lives and Well-being for All (SDG-3 GAP)	<i>Published</i>	<i>Updated in 2025, implementation completed</i>
Midterm Evaluation of the Cooperative Agreement (2021–2026) between CDC and UNAIDS ²	<i>Completed 2024</i>	<i>Not applicable, by being a review</i>
Review of UNAIDS Joint Programme evaluations and assessments (2020–2024) towards the Joint Programme Evaluation, 2025	<i>Published</i>	<i>Not applicable, by being a review</i>
Evaluations conducted in 2023		
Evaluation of HIV and primary health care integration and interlinkages	<i>published</i>	<i>No update, under implementation</i>
Evaluation of the Joint Programme's work on HIV and social protection	<i>published</i>	<i>No update, under implementation</i>
Evaluation of UNAIDS country envelopes	<i>published</i>	<i>Updated in 2025, completed</i>
Evaluations conducted in 2022		
Evaluation of the UNAIDS Secretariat data hubs	<i>published</i>	<i>Updated in 2025, tracking completed</i>
Evaluation of the work of the Joint Programme at country level in Lesotho and Mali	<i>published</i>	<i>Tracking completed</i>
Evaluation of the Joint Programme's role on efficiency and sustainability	<i>published</i>	<i>No update, tracking completed</i>
Evaluation of the Joint Programme's work with and for key populations	<i>published</i>	<i>Tracking completed</i>
Evaluations conducted in 2021		
Evaluations of the work of the Joint Programme at country level in Brazil, Gabon and the Democratic Republic of the Congo	<i>published</i>	<i>Tracking completed</i>
Evaluation of the UNAIDS Secretariat Gender Action Plan 2018–2023	<i>published</i>	<i>Tracking completed</i>
Evidence review of UNAIDS's contribution to resilient and sustainable systems for health	<i>published</i>	<i>Not applicable</i>
Evaluation of the Joint Programme's work to prevent and respond to violence against women and girls	<i>published</i>	<i>tracking completed</i>

² As the UNAIDS Secretariat will copy edit the final evaluation report to make it compliant with the current US executive orders, the evaluation will become a review therefore a management response is not applicable.

Annex 3. Overview of evaluation topics in 2024–2025

1. Evaluability assessment of the translation of the Global AIDS Strategy into country programmes

UNAIDS Secretariat and Cosponsors

Coverage: Global Regional Countries

Time period: 2026

Content and key questions

The successful translation of the Global AIDS Strategy 2026–2031 into country programmes is a critical step for ensuring that the global strategic objectives are effectively operationalized at national and local levels. As countries adapt the global framework to their specific epidemiological, social and economic contexts, it is essential to understand the extent to which the Strategy has been contextualized, communicated and prioritized within individual programmes.

An evaluability assessment is a systematic process used to determine whether a programme, strategy or initiative is ready for evaluation. This evaluability assessment will analyze the alignment between the overarching Strategy's vision and the actual actions undertaken by country partners, considering contextual factors such as epidemiological, social and economic differences. The process seeks to help ensure that the global ambitions are meaningfully integrated into country-level actions, ultimately enhancing the coherence and impact of responses aimed at ending the AIDS epidemic by 2030.

This assessment is of particular importance to UNAIDS as it seeks to ensure that the Global Strategy's ambitions translate into tangible progress on the ground. It will help identify best practices, gaps and challenges in the implementation process, informing future technical guidance and support to countries. Ultimately, the findings will contribute to strengthening the effectiveness and coherence of UNAIDS's efforts, fostering more tailored and impactful responses that accelerate progress towards ending the AIDS epidemic by 2030.

The evaluability assessment will explore the following questions:

Q1: To what extent are the objectives of the Global AIDS Strategy 2026–2031 clearly articulated and well-defined within country programmes, and how feasible are these objectives to evaluate at the national and local levels?

Q2: How effectively have country partners contextualized, communicated and prioritized the Global AIDS Strategy's objectives within their national HIV responses, considering epidemiological, social and economic factors?

Q3: What is the level of alignment between the global strategic vision and the practical actions implemented by country programmes and are there gaps or challenges?

Strategic significance

The Global AIDS Strategy is a key document for the success of the response in the upcoming years 2026–2031. Increasing the certainty and feedback loop to ensure that country programmes are aligning to the Strategy will yield great benefits for accountability and learning beyond 2031.

Risks associated with the subject of the evaluation

Availability of country programmes, limited days assigned to conduct the assessment, data paucity.

Level of investment in the area being evaluated

The Strategy will indicate the future of the global HIV response to all stakeholders at global level.

Knowledge gap

The Global AIDS Strategy will be approved in December 2025.

Feasibility of the evaluation

High.

2. Joint Evaluation (UNODC and UNAIDS Secretariat) on the sustainability of the response to HIV among key populations: people who inject drugs, and people in prisons and other closed settings

UNAIDS Secretariat and Cosponsors

Coverage: Global Regional Countries

Time period: 2020–2025

Content and key questions

The evaluation will assess the extent to which the Joint Programme has supported sustainability of the response to HIV among key populations served by UNODC: people who inject drugs and people in prisons and other closed settings. The main purpose is to analyse the elements present in programmes and projects which are enablers for sustainability, and to determine which ones would complement and strengthen interventions at country and regional level to ensure sustainability of the HIV response beyond 2030.

For this evaluation, a theory of change will be developed to serve as a framework to understand how sustainability has been ingrained with partners at national and regional level. The evaluation will also develop country case studies of the HIV epidemic and health contexts in countries. It is anticipated that the evaluation will apply forecasting methodologies to develop recommendations and scenarios that are useful for increasing the sustainability of the interventions evaluated.

The evaluation will explore the following questions:

Q1: What are the elements in place that contributed to the sustainability of interventions?

Q2: What are the lessons learned on sustainability identified in the interventions evaluated?

Q3: What are the enablers useful to strengthen the sustainability of intervention in the medium and long term?

Strategic significance

In 2025, UNAIDS entered a transition phase, Expectations for accountability, learning and efficiency remain high even as resources shrink. Evaluation needs to respond to this reality and demonstrate both prudence and purpose—by providing credible, usable evidence for decisions; contributing to sustainability of the response; and documenting the long-term institutional legacy of UNAIDS.

Risks associated with the subject of the evaluation

Data paucity, hard-to-reach key populations, legal and administrative obstacles to access data.

Level of investment in the area being evaluated

The amount of financial and technical support provided by the Joint Programme will increase with time as the response approaches the scenarios envisaged for 2030.

Knowledge gap

Insufficient analysis exists on the role of the Joint Programme in strengthening and sustaining the response beyond 2030. There is also limited information and lessons learned on efforts by the Joint Programme to transfer good practices to sustain the HIV response.

Feasibility of the evaluation

Medium. A clear and implementable mitigation plan to address the risks identified may further improve the feasibility of this evaluation.

3 Joint preliminary assessment of UNAIDS Joint Programme in the use of Lenacapavir in prevention

UNAIDS Secretariat and Cosponsors

Coverage: Global

Time period: 2025-2026

Content and key questions

The emergence of Lenacapavir as a novel long-acting antiretroviral offers a significant opportunity to enhance HIV prevention strategies worldwide, particularly among key populations and people with limited adherence to existing regimens. The Joint Programme plays a pivotal role in facilitating coordination, advocacy and technical support to optimize the inclusion of innovative biomedical tools such as Lenacapavir in national HIV responses. This evaluation will provide an overall picture of the lessons learned regarding the Joint Programme's efforts in promoting the integration and scaled deployment of Lenacapavir for prevention, ensuring that the potential benefits of this treatment reach the populations most in need.

Q1: How effectively has the Joint Programme promoted research, policy development and the integration of Lenacapavir into national HIV prevention responses?

Q2: To what extent has the Joint Programme facilitated equitable access to Lenacapavir and supported its scalable deployment in countries most affected by HIV?

Q3: What are the identified barriers, enablers, and best practices in the Joint Programme's efforts to leverage Lenacapavir as an innovative prevention tool, and how can these inform future strategies?

Strategic significance

This evaluation is key for UNAIDS as it seeks to understand the impact of innovative scientific advances on global AIDS mitigation efforts. Assessing the Joint Programme's contributions to fostering policy development, stakeholder engagement and capacity building around Lenacapavir will provide valuable insights into the Programme's role in accelerating access to emerging prevention technologies. The findings will inform strategic adjustments, strengthen global coordination and help ensure that UNAIDS remains at the forefront of advancing innovative, equitable and effective HIV prevention solutions to end the epidemic.

Risks associated with the subject of the evaluation

Limited days and resources assigned to conduct the assessment. Data paucity.

Level of investment in the area being evaluated

It is an emerging area that needs high-level investments.

Knowledge gap

There remains a significant knowledge gap regarding the Joint Programme's role in facilitating its integration into national responses. Specifically, limited information exists on how well the Joint Programme has promoted, policy development, stakeholder engagement and equitable access to this innovative treatment across different contexts. Addressing this knowledge gap through this evaluation will provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of UNAIDS's strategic interventions and will guide future efforts to accelerate access to innovative HIV prevention technologies globally.

Feasibility of the evaluation

Medium. A clear and implementable mitigation plan to address the risks identified may further improve the feasibility of this evaluation.

4. UNAIDS community systems at country level in the context of sustainability road maps

UNAIDS Secretariat and Cosponsors Coverage: Global Countries
Time period: 2020–2025

Content and key questions

The evaluation will assess the extent to which the Joint Programme has supported community systems to be fully recognized, empowered, capacitated and resourced for a transformative and sustainable HIV response in countries. The evaluation will link the work through communities to UNAIDS Sustainability Roadmaps as country-led frameworks that are designed to achieve long-term sustainability of national HIV responses.

A theory of change will be developed to serve as a framework to understand how community organizations work together with other partners and use community-led monitoring as a tool to accelerate progress towards achieving the 2030 targets and sustain the HIV response in countries. The evaluation will examine communities in countries with different HIV epidemic contexts and the role of social contracting, as well as highlight different aspects of community systems for health in countries.

The evaluation will explore the following questions:

Q1: How has the Joint Programme supported communities to accelerate progresses towards the targets for ending AIDS by 2030?

Q2: To what extent have communities supported by the Joint Programme influenced policies, programmes and improvements in interventions, services and systems?

Q3: What have been the main challenges and success factors in strengthening community-led responses, community-led monitoring, the role of community health workers, and social contracting?

Q4: What is the current scale of service delivery through community systems and what role can the Joint Programme play in strengthening and expanding community systems for health?

Strategic significance

Since the beginning of the HIV epidemic, communities have played critical role in the response. More than ever, it is crucial to sustain the gains of the HIV response in countries. Community systems strengthening is an integral part of efforts to achieve the vision and ambition of ending AIDS by 2030.

In this context, it is critical to understand the role of the Joint Programme in supporting the involvement of communities in decision-making related to a multi-sectoral response to HIV in countries, as well as challenges and success factors in strengthening community systems in countries, the scale of community responses in different epidemic contexts, and whether the necessary investments for resourcing and capacity building of community systems are occurring.

Risks associated with the subject of the evaluation

1. Evaluability of community systems in countries; 2. Quality of monitoring and evaluation data available on various aspects of community systems; 3. Insufficient comparability to draw meaningful and generalizable findings from countries.

Level of investment in the area being evaluated

The amount of direct financial support provided by the Joint Programme to civil society is modest. It is important to consider other ways in which the Joint Programme is working to strengthen the role of communities in the HIV response.

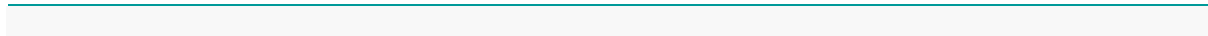
Knowledge gap

While there have been significant efforts by many partners to strengthen community systems in countries, insufficient analyses exist on the role of the Joint Programme in strengthening community systems that are recognized, capacitated and resourced to sustain the HIV response.

Limited information also exists on efforts by the Joint Programme to introduce and support the scale up of social contracting to sustain the HIV response and how community-led monitoring is implemented in countries.

Feasibility of the evaluation

Medium. A clear and implementable mitigation plan to address the risks identified may further improve the feasibility of this evaluation.



5. Lessons learned from a transitional process as an input for 2027 UNAIDS assessment

UNAIDS Secretariat and Cosponsors

Coverage: Global

Time period: 2025

Content and key questions

During the 2025, UNAIDS embarked on two key processes: implementing recommendations of the High-Level Panel and the restructuring the UNAIDS Secretariat. These processes have tested the organization in many ways, including its decision-making processes.

As the organization stabilizes, prepares for yet another assessment in 2027 and works to make the HIV response sustainable, evidence-based decision-making is key to face uncertainty, reduce inconsistencies and improve the success of organizational decisions.

This assessment will revisit the processes of major decisions made during 2025 and extract lessons from past processes and how these lessons will structure decision-making processes in the context which the organization will face in 2026 and 2027.

This assessment will use the methodologies and techniques from UN 2.0 quartet, such as behavioural science, to recommend new ways to develop solid decision-making processes and reduce uncertainty improving its outcomes.

The assessment will explore the following questions:

Q1: What were the elements and processes used in key decision-making during 2025?

Q2: What are the lessons learned on decision-making processes used during 2025?

Q3: What are the improvements that can be incorporated in key decision-making processes in 2026?

Strategic significance

The process of making decisions and its outcomes is essential for the success of an organization. Behavioural science and decision science are key elements to improve decision-making processes.

Risks associated with the subject of the evaluation

Availability of informants, limited days and resources assigned to conduct the assessment.

Level of investment in the area being evaluated

Decisions in 2026 and 2027 will allocate the limited resources of the Secretariat.

Knowledge gap

A systematic reflection on decision-making processes has not yet occurred.

Feasibility of the evaluation

[End of document]