

UPDATE ON PROGRESS ON IMPLEMENTATION OF JIU RECOMMENDATIONS

Additional documents for this item: UNAIDS/PCB (47)/CRP5

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

- *take note* of the update and welcome progress on implementation.

Cost implications for the implementation of the decisions: none

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Executive summary

1. UNAIDS provided its response to the UN Joint Inspection Unit's (JIU) Review of the management and administration of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) (JIU/REP/2019/7) at the 45th meeting of the Programme Coordinating Board in December 2019 (UNAIDS/PCB(45)/19.30). In its decisions, the PCB noted with appreciation the management response and requested the Executive Director "to respond, in close collaboration with the cosponsors as relevant, to the JIU recommendations directed at the Secretariat and the Joint Programme as part of a single programme of change, and provide an update on progress made in this regard to the 47th meeting of the Programme Coordinating Board in December 2020".
2. The present report provides a summary overview of work to date to implement the JIU's recommendations as part of the broader UNAIDS transformation. Key elements of the UNAIDS transformation, and corresponding JIU recommendations, include the:
 - development of the next UNAIDS Strategy (corresponds with JIU Formal Recommendation 1);
 - management response to the Independent Evaluation of the UN System to AIDS 2016–2019 and development of the next Unified Budget, Results and Accountability Framework (corresponds with Formal Recommendation 2, Informal Recommendation 4); and
 - UNAIDS' culture transformation and organizational alignment (corresponds with Informal Recommendation 8 on delegation of authority; Informal Recommendation 9 on the Management Action Plan; and Formal Recommendation 7 on human resources Strategy).
3. Similar to the overall findings of the JIU, the overall findings of the recent Independent Evaluation affirm that the experience, diverse partnerships and people-centered, data-driven approaches of the Joint Programme are helping drive country progress. These are needed now more than ever, especially in the face of the unprecedented social and economic implications of the COVID-19 pandemic. The unified programme of change that is underway will ensure that capacities, structures and working methods of the Secretariat and Joint Programme keep evolving to be relevant and fully responsive to the opportunities and challenges which countries will face in the next decade of the HIV response.
4. As part of UNAIDS' transformation, the JIU's recommendations are informing the strengthening of key management and governance systems and practices. Included in this is the implementation of the Management Action Plan for a healthy, equitable and enabling workplace for all UNAIDS staff. The Management Action Plan is helping to ensure that all staff enjoy safety, dignity and wellbeing at work, thereby maximizing the collective impact of UNAIDS staff around the world.
5. A more detailed summary overview of actions, by recommendation, is provided in an accompanying Conference Room Paper. A PCB Working Group has considered the recommendations directed towards the Board and has reported separately on its deliberations and views (UNAIDS/PCB(47)/20.39).

Introduction

6. UNAIDS provided its response to the UN Joint Inspection Unit's (JIU) Review of the management and administration of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) (JIU/REP/2019/7) at the 45th meeting of the Programme Coordinating Board (PCB) in December 2019. In its decisions, the PCB took note with appreciation of the management response and requested the Executive Director “to respond, in close collaboration with the cosponsors as relevant, to the JIU recommendations directed at the Secretariat and the Joint Programme as part of a single programme of change, and provide an update on progress made in this regard to the 47th meeting of the Programme Coordinating Board in December 2020”.
7. At the 46th meeting of the PCB, the Secretariat provided an update on implementation of the Management Action Plan for a healthy, equitable and enabling workplace for all UNAIDS staff (UNAIDS/PCB (46)/20.16). Given the linkages between some of the MAP deliverables and the recommendations of the JIU inspectors, the MAP update report included a brief update on some related/cross-over items, in the spirit of the PCB’s decision point and to reflect a cohesive approach to change. Among other things, the updates notes the creation of a stand-alone PCB agenda item on accountability topics; a strengthened Ethics Office; and strengthened capacity to address risk management, compliance and corporate legal needs.
8. Implementation of the JIU’s recommendations is contributing to UNAIDS’ transformation. A unified programme of change will ensure that capacities, structures and working methods of the Secretariat and Joint Programme keep evolving to be relevant and fully responsive to the opportunities and challenges which countries will face in the next decade of the HIV response, including the unprecedented social and economic implications of the COVID-19 pandemic. The JIU’s recommendations are furthermore informing the strengthening of key management and governance systems and practices.
9. The current paper provides a progress report on implementation of JIU recommendations that were directed towards the Joint Programme’s management, in the broader context of the UNAIDS transformation and key workstreams:
 - development of the next UNAIDS Strategy (corresponds with JIU Formal Recommendation 1);
 - management response to the independent evaluation of the UN System response to AIDS and next UBRAF (corresponds with Formal Recommendation 2, Informal Recommendation 4); and
 - UNAIDS’ institutional transformation and culture change (corresponds with Informal Recommendation 8 on delegation of authority; Informal Recommendation 9 on the Management Action Plan; and Formal Recommendation 7 on Human Resource Strategy).

Update on the implementation of formal recommendations

10. This report provides an overall summary of actions to date, focusing on implementation of formal recommendations and highlighting how these are strengthening UNAIDS for the future. It is accompanied by a Conference Room Paper which provides a more detailed status update by recommendation, including vis-à-vis informal recommendations and noting linkages with other processes.
11. The JIU issued 8 formal recommendations, of which 3 recommendations were addressed to the PCB and 5 were addressed to the UNAIDS Executive Director. A PCB

Working Group has considered the recommendations directed towards the Board and has reported separately on its deliberations and views (UNAIDS/PCB(47)/20.39).

Recommendation 1 to the PCB: Beginning in 2020, PCB should develop a long-term strategy for achieving UNAIDS' 2030 Agenda targets and goals.

12. UNAIDS is fully committed to supporting countries to achieve the goal of ending the AIDS epidemic by 2030 as part of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. UNAIDS has carried out extensive stakeholder engagement and a deep review of available evidence and data to inform the development of the next UNAIDS strategy, in line with the request of the PCB and under the leadership of the Executive Director and Cabinet.¹ The global data review assessed the implementation of the current strategy and the results obtained, organized around themes that arise from the 2016 Political Declaration commitments and the strategic results areas of the UNAIDS 2016–2021 Strategy. A global online survey conducted during May–August 2020 received over 8300 responses from 163 countries, across all regions, providing inputs on priorities as well as barriers and gamechangers in the future of the global AIDS response.
13. As requested by the PCB, UNAIDS organized a multistakeholder consultation on 16 September 2020 to present the findings of the review of the current UNAIDS Strategy and the implications for the strategic priorities beyond 2021, along with the findings of the Independent Evaluation of the UN System Response to AIDS 2016–2019. The Executive Director is discussing the Strategy process to date, as well as the independent evaluation and the management response, with the Committee of Cosponsoring Organizations at their November 2020 meeting. At the time of submitting this report, it is anticipated that the PCB will adopt the next Strategy in March 2021.
14. The next Unified Budget, Results and Accountability Framework (UBRAF) will be the key tool for operationalizing the next UNAIDS Strategy, by leveraging the diverse knowledge, partnerships and experience needed in countries as they advance towards the goal of ending AIDS as a public health threat. The Joint Programme has studied and developed its management response to the recently completed Independent Evaluation of the UN System Response to AIDS 2016–2019. The evaluation is another important input which will help the Joint Programme evolve—by informing the development of a new UBRAF with clearer alignment between roles, accountabilities and resource levels—and deliver ever greater value for the communities and countries we work with, ensuring they attain their 2030 goals.

Recommendation 2 to the Executive Director: By the end of 2022, the Executive Director should present to the Programme Coordinating Board operational plans, together with defined timelines and targets, that reflect the long-term strategy of UNAIDS, including with regard to secretariat structures, staffing, financial resources and field presence.

15. The independent evaluation of the UN system response to AIDS in 2016–2019 (UNAIDS/PCB (47)/20.32) affirmed that the experience, diverse partnerships and people-centered, data-driven approaches of the Joint Programme are helping drive country progress and are needed now more than ever. It is also recognized, however, that planning and programming can be strengthened. As noted in the management response to the evaluation (UNAIDS/PCB (47)/20.34), the Joint Programme will continue to refine the strategic focus of support to countries and their HIV, health and development strategies and plans; align to updated HIV and related targets; support inclusive community and stakeholder engagement; and ensure the necessary actions

¹ The Cabinet comprises the Executive Director; Deputy Executive Director, Programme; Deputy Executive Director, Management and Governance; Chief of Staff; and Special Adviser, Transition.

for an effective HIV response are fully resourced. It will do so through domestic investment and by leveraging the important support of the Global Fund and bilateral programmes, including the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR).

16. The new UBRAF will reflect the Joint Programme's commitments and indicate the human and financial resource requirements, in order to guide the deployment and leveraging of staffing and financial resources towards the targets of the next Strategy. Building on the systems and practices implemented under the Joint Programme's refined operating model since 2018, UNAIDS will update and further hone the tools that guide coordination and prioritization across the Joint Programme.
17. The Joint Programme is committed to and will work to strengthen the operational planning and performance monitoring systems to better capture contributions and results at all levels of operation. The results framework will reflect UNAIDS' role to facilitate, support and enable development and implementation of policies and strategies that are nationally owned and led. The updated UBRAF monitoring framework and indicators will reflect two levels:
 - progress in national and global responses towards achievement of HIV targets and commitments; and
 - implementation of Joint Programme commitments and actions to support national, regional and global responses, capturing UNAIDS' contributions to country results, regional advancement and global progress.

Recommendation 3 to the PCB: By the beginning of 2021, the Programme Coordinating Board should revise its Modus Operandi to clarify its roles and responsibilities and imbed oversight and accountability mechanisms in the oversight of UNAIDS and its secretariat.

18. The Report of the PCB Working Group on the JIU Management and Administration Review of UNAIDS (UNAIDS/PCB (47)/20.39) addresses this issue and proposes that the PCB approve an annex to the Modus Operandi that clarifies the Board's roles and responsibilities with respect to oversight and accountability of the Joint Programme. Please refer to paras. 11-13 of the Working Group's report, and Annex 2 (proposed annex to the Modus Operandi).

Recommendation 4 to the Executive Director: The Executive Director should consider setting up an in-house legal advisory function that reports to the Executive Office and centrally coordinates legal matters.

19. As noted in the update on implementation of the Management Action Plan (UNAIDS/PCB(46)/20.16), the Secretariat has reviewed its corporate legal service needs and intends to strengthen internal capacity, as well as revise its arrangements with the WHO Office of Legal Services. A proposed job profile has been developed for an in-house legal advisory function. This will be considered further as part of the broader institutional review and alignment of the Secretariat. As noted in previous reports to the PCB, Human Resources Management's legal and policy capacity was strengthened in 2019.²

Recommendation 5 to the PCB: PCB should consider creating an independent and external oversight committee that provides independent expert advice to PCB and to the Executive Director in fulfilling their governance and oversight responsibilities.

² See for example "Progress update on the implementation of the Management Action Plan for a healthy, equitable and enabling workplace for all UNAIDS staff" (UNAIDS/PCB(45)/CRP2). Available online: https://www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/media_asset/06122019_UNAIDS_PCB45_Progress-update-impl-MAP_EN.pdf

20. The Report of the PCB Working Group on the JIU Management and Administration Review of UNAIDS (UNAIDS/PCB (47)/20.39) addresses this issue and recommends that the PCB create such an independent, external oversight committee. The Working Group has invited the PCB to consider the draft terms of reference it has proposed for this committee. Please refer to paras. 14-16 of the Working Group's report, and Annex 3 (draft terms of reference).

Recommendation 6 to the Executive Director: By the end of 2020, the Executive Director in consultation with the PCB Bureau, should establish a regular stand-alone agenda item at a session of PCB that covers internal and external audits, ethics and other accountability topics presented by the appropriate independent functions in their respective reports to PCB.

21. As noted in the update on implementation of the Management Action Plan (UNAIDS/PCB(46)/20.16), the PCB now has a stand-alone agenda item to address audit and accountability topics, and directly engage with independent offices and functions that support oversight (such as Internal Oversight Services and the external audit).

Recommendation 7 to the Executive Director: By no later than 2022, the Executive Director should develop and implement a new human resources strategy for the secretariat that aligns with and supports the strategic direction of UNAIDS and sets out initiatives related to workforce planning, position profiling and grading, and appropriate delegation of authority and reporting lines

22. Preparations for an institutional review of the Secretariat have started, with the designation of a senior staff member to serve as Strategic Alignment Coordinator, and publishing of a request for proposals for management advisory and support services. The alignment exercise will take place in parallel with the development of the next UNAIDS Strategy and next UBRAF. It will propose options for addressing capacity gaps and optimizing deployment in order to have a workforce which is appropriately skilled to perform the right functions in the right locations, and which is supported to deliver results, thereby leveraging the full potential of the UN System and fulfilling the Joint Programme's goals. Related to this exercise, and Recommendation 2 above, the new UBRAF will reflect human and financial resource requirements and guide the deployment and leveraging of staffing and financial resources towards the targets of the Strategy.

23. Recognizing that staff are the most valuable asset of the organization, the next UNAIDS Secretariat human resources strategy will set out key actions and initiatives to ensure that UNAIDS is:

- continually developing the skills, learning and collaboration necessary to support countries to achieve their goals; and
- providing a safe, equal and empowering working environment for all staff, thereby maximizing the collective impact of the workforce.

Recommendation 8 to the Executive Director: The Executive Director should include an annex to the 2021 biennial report to the Economic and Social Council, outlining the substantive recommendations that have been made in the areas of governance, oversight and accountability and providing a status update on their implementation.

24. As noted in the management response presented to the 47th meeting of the PCB, UNAIDS agrees with the recommendation to keep ECOSOC informed of the JIU's

recommendations and the status of their implementation. UNAIDS' next report to ECOSOC will be submitted in 2021.

Update on the implementation of informal recommendations

25. In addition to the 8 formal recommendations, the JIU issued 25 informal recommendations—7 of which have been considered by the PCB Working Group, while the other 18 are primarily directed towards the UNAIDS Executive Director. The accompanying Conference Room Paper provides a brief status update on each recommendation.
26. The JIU's recommendations provide impetus and support for the full implementation of the Management Action Plan for a healthy, equitable and enabling workplace for all UNAIDS staff. Full implementation of the Management Action Plan is vitally important for UNAIDS' transformation and for maximizing the collective impact of UNAIDS staff around the world. As reported in June 2020, the Management Action Plan is being augmented with the implementation of a gender-action learning programme, with the support of external expertise. Reinforced internal communications efforts and strengthened support to staff mental health and well-being continue to be of vital importance, especially in the context of the ongoing COVID-19 crisis and its consequences. Noteworthy areas of progress since the previous update include:
 - preparations to launch an externally-administered staff survey focusing on staff engagement, diversity and inclusion and the UNAIDS Secretariat working environment (survey to be conducted in November 2020);
 - review of the revised draft WHO policy on the prohibition of harassment, sexual harassment, discrimination and abuse of authority (the UNAIDS Secretariat will either follow this policy or launch its own by January 2021);
 - discussions on proposed revisions to the Memorandum of Understanding between UNAIDS and WHO Internal Oversight Services, incorporating service levels and time targets;
 - development of compliance and oversight dashboards to enhance internal control and enable more timely and targeted operational support to offices and teams; and
 - development of a common methodology for routine inspection visits.
27. Strengthened capacity in internal control and compliance has enabled increased support to Country and Regional Offices, and departments in headquarters, to act on internal audit findings and recommendations. Since the previous report to the PCB, 115 recommendations (out of 381) have been closed. To reinforce staff awareness on ethics and accountability, the online training course "Preventing Fraud and Corruption at the United Nations" was made mandatory for all UNAIDS Secretariat staff in September 2020.

Conclusion

28. The findings and recommendations of the JIU's review of the management and administration of UNAIDS are among the many inputs which inform UNAIDS' overall transformation. This unified programme of change will ensure that the capacities, structures and working methods of the Secretariat and Joint Programme keep evolving and are fully responsive to the opportunities and challenges which countries will face in the next decade of the HIV response, including the social and economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Proposed Decision Points

The Programme Coordinating Board is invited to:

- *take note* of the update and welcome progress on implementation.

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