



UNAIDS PCB Bureau meeting

DATE: Thursday, 4 November 2021

TIME: 11:00-14:00 (Geneva time)

VENUE: Virtual (TEAMS meeting)

PARTICIPANTS:

PCB Bureau: Dr. Theo-Ben Kandetu and Ms. Julieth Karirao (Namibia: representing the Chair); Dr Thaksaphon Thammarangsi, Ms Cha-aim Pachanee, Mr Natee Vichitsorasatra (Thailand: representing the Vice-Chair); Ms Julia Martin (United States of America: representing the Rapporteur); Mr Alexander Pastoors and Mr Jumoke Patrick (representing the PCB NGO Delegation); and Ms Meg Doherty and Mr Andy Seale (WHO: representing UNAIDS Cosponsors).

Mr Morten Ussing, Director, Governance and Multilateral Affairs; Ms Samia Lounnas, Senior Governance Advisor, Governance and Multilateral Affairs; and Ms Maggie Lemons, Governance Officer, Governance and Multilateral Affairs

MEETING DRAFT AGENDA

1. Update, Regular Segment at the upcoming PCB meeting

The Bureau will receive brief updates on key items of the regular segment at the upcoming Board meeting.

2. Update, Thematic Segment at the upcoming PCB meeting: *What does the regional and country-level data tell us, are we listening, and how can we better leverage that data and related technology to meet our 2020 and 2030 goals?*

3. Establishment of the Selection Panel for the Independent External Oversight Advisory Committee (IEOAC)

The Bureau will receive a brief update on the composition of the Selection Panel and preparations for their upcoming work.

4. Any other business

The PCB Chair welcomed participants to the final planned PCB Bureau meeting to prepare the 49th PCB meeting, to be held on 7-10 December 2021. The focus of the meeting was to provide

Bureau members with an update on the preparations of the PCB49 agenda items by the relevant focal point.

1. Update, Regular Segment at the 49th PCB meeting (7-10 December 2021)

Relevant focal points provided the updates on the preparation of agenda items as follows:

Agenda item 1.2: Report of the Special Session of the PCB: PCB Chair

- The report of the previous meeting is a summary of the presentations and discussions held. The report is reviewed and cleared by the PCB Bureau.
- As agreed in the modalities and procedures paper for virtual PCB meetings approved intersessionally, the report includes a summary of all interventions made in plenary as well as written statements submitted through the secure platform.
- The Chair recalled that, further to the posting of the Report, PCB participants may request the PCB Bureau to consider changes to the report, as had been done at the two most recent PCB meetings. The Chair reminded the Bureau that it is their responsibility to ensure that the report is a balanced and fair representation of the events of the meeting.
- The Bureau received the report of the Special Session two weeks prior to this meeting for review and comment with a final deadline to submit any comments by Friday, 5 November 2021. The paper would then be finalized and posted on the PCB webpage in accordance with the Modus Operandi.
- This agenda item will be the subject of the pre-meeting held on Tuesday, 23 November 2021.

Agenda items 1.3 & 2: Report of the Executive Director and Leadership in the AIDS response: UNAIDS Secretariat

- The report of the Executive Director is expected to focus on significant achievements in the AIDS response since her previous report and the work of the Joint Programme.
- As is practice, an outline of the report will be posted in advance of the meeting. The report of the Executive Director in its entirety will be posted following delivery at the PCB meeting.
- The Executive Director agrees with the Bureau that the leadership in the AIDS response agenda item will be an important opportunity to provide hope and forward thinking for a reenergized AIDS response. The Executive Director is in the process of selecting a speaker.

Agenda item 1.4: Report by the NGO Representative: NGO Delegation representatives

- The NGO Delegation representatives provided the updated. The report is in its final stages and will be posted shortly.
- The title of the report is: Left Out: The HIV Community and Societal Enablers in the HIV response. The subject of the report was chosen to underline the importance of societal enablers as part of the HIV response. The report will build on the targets laid out in the Global AIDS Strategy 2021-2026 and the Political Declaration, and will focus on case studies of societal enabler work related to education, employment, and healthcare.

Agenda item 3: Follow-up to the thematic segment from the 48th PCB meeting: UNAIDS Secretariat

- The Follow-up to the thematic segment from the 48th PCB meeting is a summary report of the presentations and discussion from the thematic segment held on COVID-19 and HIV.

- The report is drafted by an independent report writer and submitted to the PCB Bureau for review and clearance. The PCB Bureau had received the report prior to the meeting and were requested to submit any feedback by Friday, 5 November 2021 at which point the paper would be finalized and posted on the PCB webpage.
- The Follow-up to the thematic segment from the 48th PCB meeting will be the subject of a pre-meeting session held on Tuesday, 23 November 2021.

Agenda item 4: 2022 UBRAF Outputs and Indicators and revised 2022-2023 Workplan: UNAIDS Secretariat

- George Farhat, Director, Planning, Finance and Accountability, UNAIDS Secretariat and Marie-Odile Emond, Senior Advisor, PFA, UNAIDS Secretariat, provided the update on the agenda item, recalling that, at the PCB Special Session in October, the PCB agreed on the following decision points:
 - o *3.2 Approves the 2022-2026 Unified Budget, Results and Accountability Framework (UBRAF) and requests the Joint Programme to provide clear outputs and associated indicators for the Joint Programme for each of the Results Areas for consideration at the 49th Programme Coordinating Board meeting;*
 - o *3.3 Approves the core budget for 2022-2023 and the budget allocation of the Cosponsors and the Secretariat at a base of US\$187 million per annum up to a threshold of US\$210 million per annum with clear delineation of allocation of funds above the base;*
 - o *3.4 Welcomes the 2022-2023 Workplan, and requests the Joint Programme to incorporate two-year targets and outputs for the Joint Programme for each of the 10 UBRAF Results Areas in the 2022-2023 UBRAF Workplan and present the revised version for approval at the 49th PCB meeting;*
- To meet those PCB request, the following 2 documents were being prepared for submission to the December PCB: 1) Annex of the UBRAF 2022-2016 including outputs and indicators; and 2) revised version of the 2022-2023 Workplan & Budget including 2y targets and outputs for the 10 UBRAF results areas.
- Building on the consultative process for the UBRAF, those documents were being developed both internally across the Joint Programme (through the Joint Programme Steering Group, Secretariat intra departments consultations) and externally (through the already established UBRAF Working Group and with updated to also be provided to the PCB Bureau, a mission briefing and other request for updates as needed as per usual practice before PCB).
- Intense work was ongoing across the Joint Programme to define the specific Joint Programme outputs for 5y and related indicators and 2022-2023 outputs and targets. A draft of those outputs would be shared this week with the UBRAF Working Group for its guidance next week
- Building on the PCB's feedback at the Special Session, the Joint Programme aimed to demonstrate high level of accountability noting however the tight timeline and complex nature of the Joint Programme in an uncertain environment.
- Two main challenges were identified: 1) some indicators are dependent on the Global AIDS Monitoring/National Commitments and Policy Instruments whose timeline for reporting is later than the annual Performance Monitoring Report and 2) some of the information such as baseline, milestones by 2023, 2025, 2026 would not be available as this requires consultation with about 90 countries
- The UBRAF agenda item will be the subject of a pre-meeting session held on Thursday, 25 November 2021.

Agenda item 5: Evaluation: UNAIDS Evaluation Office

- Joel Rehnstrom, UNAIDS Evaluation Office Director, provided the update on the agenda item.
- The document includes two parts: i) an **annual report** on evaluation, and ii) an **evaluation plan** for 2022–2023. A draft of the document was shared for comments with the Cosponsors and Secretariat Senior Leadership Team.
- The annual report on evaluation provides an overview of the implementation of the 2020–2021 evaluation plan and was prepared in accordance with decision 11 of the 45th meeting of the PCB which approved the 2020-2021 evaluation plan and requested annual reporting on the plan.
- The evaluation plan for 2022–2023 was prepared through a consultative process involving staff of the Secretariat and Cosponsors, including the evaluation offices of the Cosponsors. The evaluation plan was reviewed and endorsed by UNAIDS Expert Advisory Committee on evaluation.
- Key messages from the document include:
 - o The PCB considered progress against the 2020–2021 evaluation plan in December 2020, welcomed the establishment of the independent Evaluation Office and thanked UNAIDS for keeping the evaluation plan on-track during a challenging year and for completing an impressive range of work, especially in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.
 - o Progress in implementing the 2020–2021 evaluation plan has continued to be steady and an ambitious evaluation plan has been developed for 2022-2023, which will require additional capacity in the Evaluation Office and/or Cosponsors taking the lead on some of the joint evaluations with HIV potentially a component and not the main focus.
 - o A strong Evaluation Office is needed given the important role of evaluation in i) enhancing accountability and transparency, and ii) contributing to knowledge management and organizational learning by informing policies, programmes and decision-making.
- A semi-annual update on evaluation was presented to the PCB Bureau at its July 15 meeting at which the Bureau was requested to consider extending the terms of the members of the Expert Advisory Committee for a two-year period 2022-2023 and the Bureau agreed to a two-year extension for all Committee members who had engaged actively in the work of the Committee.
- Where this was not the case, a call for nominations of evaluation experts was issued and by the deadline two nominations were received from the concerned region, Eastern Europe. Following a review by the PCB Bureau of the technical expertise of the nominated candidates as well as the gender balance of the Committee, the Bureau is expected to communicate the names of the Committee members for agreement by the PCB. While this is traditionally done intersessionally, given the upcoming PCB meeting, this will be tabled as part of the agenda item and included in the report.
- The Evaluation agenda item will be the subject of the pre-meeting session held on Thursday, 25 November 2021.

Agenda item 6: HIV in prisons and other closed settings: UNODC

- Ehab Salah, Advisor, HIV and prisons, UNODC, provided the update on the agenda item.
- In December 2017, the 41st meeting of the Programme Coordinating Board (PCB) of UNAIDS discussed the issue of HIV in prisons and other closed settings. At that meeting, the PCB requested the Joint Programme to report on progress and concrete actions taken on this topic at a meeting of the Programme Coordinating Board in 2020.

- Due to challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and to support the timeliness of the reporting, this agenda item was postponed to December 2021.
- This paper is a Joint Programme update on the 2017 report on HIV in prisons and other closed settings. Within the Joint Programme, UNODC as the lead agency on HIV in prisons and other closed settings led the drafting of the report and incorporating inputs from co-sponsors.
- The paper presents the most recent data on the epidemiological situation in prisons and other closed settings in relation to HIV, tuberculosis (TB), viral hepatitis B and C (HBV/HCV), and COVID-19, as well as describing the impact of COVID-19 on the sustainability of comprehensive HIV services in these settings.
- Key messages of the paper include:
 - Prison populations have been systemically left behind in the global response to HIV and continue to face severe inequalities that limit their access to HIV services.
 - Compounding this situation is the shift in focus to preventing and controlling COVID-19 in prison settings. The Joint Programme stresses the importance of ensuring that quality, non-discriminatory HIV services are available and sustainable for people in prison, in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.
 - Gender- and age-responsive policies, strategies and services (for women including young women and adolescent girls, juveniles, LGBTI, and children accompanying their mothers) are limited or altogether lacking in some countries and need to be implemented or scaled up.
 - Excessive use of incarceration and pre-trial detention leads to overcrowding and other challenges for ensuring quality HIV and other healthcare services for people in prison. Legal, policy and criminal justice reform is needed to address these issues. Using non-custodial measures as an alternative to imprisonment contributes directly to the reduction of the prison population and better supports the rehabilitation and reintegration prospects of offenders, which in turn results in long-term alleviation of prison overcrowding.
 - Partnering with CSOs, has emerged as a potentially powerful, though underutilized, option for reaching hard-to-reach populations such as people in prison and other closed settings with HIV and other health services. Although the pivotal roles of communities are recognized in HIV governance, their meaningful engagement in national systems for health as leaders, decision-makers and partners remains limited.
- Key asks/recommendations from the paper include:
 - Ensure the achievement of the 95%-95%-95% in prisons and closed settings and develop mechanisms to track and measure this progress.
 - Increase political commitment to address HIV and related health conditions in prison settings, in the context of the challenges posed by the health and economic effects of COVID-19 including through as preventing the use of custodial sentence for minor offences, reducing prison overcrowding, and implementing measure for alternatives to imprisonment.
 - Ensure domestic funding for HIV services in prison by integrating them into the public health system.
 - Develop national strategies and guidelines for comprehensive health care that are tailored to the prison context, considering the specific needs of various populations in prison including PLHIV.
 - Establish linkages with public health facilities for ensuring uninterrupted HIV services during stay, transfer and after release from prison, and for improved data collection and monitoring of service provision in prison settings.

- Ensure meaningful engagement with civil society to build their capacities and improve their resources, as essential partners in addressing HIV in prison.
- The HIV in prisons and other closed settings agenda item will be the subject of the pre-meeting session held on Tuesday, 30 November 2021.

**Agenda item 7: Update on actions to reduce stigma and discrimination in all its forms:
UNAIDS Secretariat**

- Luisa Cabal, Special Advisor, Human Rights, UNAIDS Secretariat, provided the update on the agenda item.
- At its 45th meeting, the PCB recommended that the Joint Programme supports Member States, civil society, networks of key populations and other partners to accelerate and scale-up actions to end HIV-related stigma and discrimination.
- Specific recommendations to the Joint Programme included support for setting national targets and programmatic indicators to track progress; coordinate and increase technical assistance and synergies with bilateral and multilateral donors and other stakeholders; and continue to strengthen capacities of civil society, women and adolescent organizations, networks of people living with HIV and key populations to demand discrimination-free services and participate in the design, implementation and tracking of programmes to end discrimination.
- The PCB further requested that the UNAIDS Joint Programme to report back on the progress made on reducing HIV-related stigma and discrimination. This report follows-up on the PCB's recommendations at its 45th meeting. It was prepared by the Secretariat and UNDP, in consultation with all cosponsors.
- Key messages of the paper include:
 - HIV-related stigma and discrimination remain among the major obstacles blocking the achievement of the goal of ending AIDS by 2030. For example, we know that HIV-related and overlapping forms of discrimination contribute to putting people who inject drugs at 35 times greater risk of acquiring HIV infection than people who do not inject drugs; transgender women at 34 times greater risk of acquiring HIV than other adults; female sex workers at 26 times greater risk of acquiring HIV than other adult women; and gay men and other men who have sex with men at 25 times greater risk of acquiring HIV than heterosexual adult men. Gender-based violence, and egregious form of gender discrimination that disproportionately affect women and girls, also increases vulnerability to HIV infection and undermines access to HIV services.
 - The *Global AIDS Strategy 2021-2026 – End Inequalities. End AIDS* (the Global AIDS Strategy) continues to send a strong message on imperative to tackle stigma and discrimination; and lays out targets dedicated to the societal enablers of the HIV response, including programmes to reduce/eliminate HIV-related stigma and discrimination,
 - Targets related to these societal enablers of the HIV response are that by 2025:
 - less than 10% of people living with HIV and key populations will experience stigma and discrimination;
 - less than 10% of people living with HIV, women and girls and key populations will experience gender-based inequalities and gender-based violence; and
 - less than 10% of countries will have punitive laws and policies that result in denying or limiting access to HIV services.
 - The report shows how in the period 2020-2021 the Joint Programme leveraged its catalytic role to support countries across the globe to tackle HIV-related stigma and

discrimination, particularly in the settings where these occur most frequently. These settings are the healthcare, the employment, the educational, the justice, the household and community and the emergency and humanitarian settings.

- The work of the Joint Programme has supported country efforts, with communities and networks of people living with or affected by HIV, on training of judges and law enforcement agents, access to justice and reforms of HIV-related discriminatory laws and policies. Most recently, for example, Angola and New Zealand lifted all remaining travel restrictions based on HIV status.
 - Efforts to tackle HIV-related stigma and discrimination in healthcare, education and employment settings should be intensified, as well as efforts in emergency and humanitarian settings are starting to grow in scale.
 - The leadership of communities and networks of people living with or affected by HIV in tackling HIV-related stigma and discrimination has been critical, including, including, for example, with community led monitoring through the Stigma Index 2.0 or the engagement of communities in the country certification of triple elimination of vertical transmission of HIV, Hep B and Syphilis.
 - It was through the call of PCB NGO delegation that The Global Partnership for Action to Eliminate HIV-related Stigma and Discrimination was created. It has emerged as a platform to accelerate and translate State commitments to tackle HIV-related stigma and discrimination into measurable policy changes and programmatic interventions in the 28 countries that have joined. To the founding convenors --- the Global Network of People Living with HIV (GNP+), UN Women, UNDP and UNAIDS Secretariat, the Global Fund to fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria formally joined as a co-convenor of the Global Partnership.
- The stigma and discrimination agenda item will be the subject of the pre-meeting session held on Tuesday, 30 November 2021.

Agenda items 8 & 9: Election of Officers and Next PCB Meetings: UNAIDS Secretariat

- The Next PCB meetings and Election of Officers papers are standing agenda items for the December PCB meeting.
- The Next PCB meetings paper includes the dates for 54th and 55th PCB meetings in 2024. It will also outline the thematic segment proposals for the PCB meetings in 2022.
- The Secretariat issued a call for thematic segment proposals on 20th July 2021 for the thematic segments in 2022. 11 proposals were received. The Bureau received these in their materials in advance of this meeting.
- Out of the eleven, 6 have already been covered by previous thematic segments:
 - The proposal “CSOs/NGOs and HIV for 2030- Involvement in Care and treatment practices” (Guyana) was covered at the June 2016 PCB thematic segment “The role of communities in ending AIDS by 2030”.
 - The proposal “Sustain effective AIDS response in COVID-19 pandemic, lessons learned and good practice” (China) was covered at the June 2021 thematic segment this year: “COVID-19 and HIV: sustaining HIV gains and building back better and fairer HIV responses”.
 - The proposal “Impact of Covid-19 on the accessibility of mental health services for People Living with HIV” (Namibia) – ibidem.
 - The proposal “HIV, adolescents and youth” was covered at the December 2019 PCB during the thematic segment of the same title.
 - The proposal “Halving HIV among people who inject drugs” was covered at the December 2014 PCB thematic segment.
 - The proposal “Combination Prevention Strategy” was covered at both the June 2012 and June 2017 PCB thematic segments.

- 5 proposals are new or suggest a new angle of discussion:
 - o HIV and men, in all their diversity, how can we get our responses back on track? (WHO, supported by UNESCO, UNDP, World Bank, UNFPA, UNICEF, UN Women, UNODC)
 - o Positive Learning: harnessing the power of education to end HIV-related stigma and discrimination and empower young people living with HIV (UNESCO, supported by PCB NGO Delegation, UNFPA, UNICEF (the UNAIDS DoL co-conveners on young people) among other Cosponsors)
 - o HIV and Primary Health Care (UNICEF, supported by WHO and World Bank – with more informal support)
 - o Innovative Use of Technology for HIV Prevention and Care (Guyana, supported by Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Belize, Barbados, Jamaica)
 - o Alternative approaches to HIV care and treatment services (Guyana supported by Guyana local NGOs, Suriname, Barbados, Belize, Trinidad and Tobago)
- The Chair recalled that the PCB Bureau needed to select 2 of these proposals for the thematic segments to take place in 2022 on the basis of: relevance, responsiveness, focus, and scope for action. In addition, we must recommend at which PCB meeting the thematic segment should take place. The Bureau's recommendations would be included in the Next PCB Meetings paper for consideration by the wider PCB.
- The paper, Election of Officers, includes the PCB composition for the upcoming year, the NGO Delegation nomination process, and the election for the PCB Bureau for the next year. As of the meeting, the Secretariat had not received any expressions of interest for Vice-Chair and Rapporteur for the upcoming year.

The Bureau thanked the agenda item focal points for their comprehensive presentations and looked forward to the posting of the final papers and the discussions to be held at the PCB meeting on these important topics.

Regarding the proposals for the thematic segments for 2022, the PCB Bureau noted the strength and relevance of all submitted proposals. Bureau members expressed consensus on proposing the thematic segment on *HIV and men, in all their diversity, how can we get our responses back on track* and noted that there could be space to incorporate elements of the proposal on *innovative use of technology* in this theme. Bureau members also expressed support for the theme *Positive Learning: harnessing the power of education to end HIV-related stigma and discrimination and empower young people living with HIV* and noted that there could be space to incorporate elements of the proposal on *HIV, adolescents, and youth*. It was agreed that the Secretariat on behalf of the Chair and the Bureau would revert back to the submitters for consideration on incorporation. The combined submissions are included in annex 1 below.

The Bureau also discussed potential dates for the selected thematic topics. In view of the rapidly changing context, the Bureau supported proposing that the thematic segment topic for the 50th PCB meeting be on the combined topic on HIV and men. The Bureau would then propose that the thematic segment topic for the 51st PCB meeting be on the combined topic on education to end HIV-related stigma and discrimination for young people living with HIV.

2. Update, Thematic Segment at the upcoming PCB meeting

- The UNAIDS Secretariat provided the update on the upcoming Thematic Segment topic: does the regional and country-level data tell us, are we listening and how can we leverage that data and related technology to meet our 2025 and 2030 goals?

- This agenda item is developed through the work of a PCB Working Group.
- The UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board (PCB) agreed at its 47th meeting that the subject for the 49th PCB Thematic Segment would be “*What does the regional and country-level data tell us, are we listening, and how can we better leverage that data and related technology to meet our 2025 and 2030 goals?*”
- PCB members were invited in early September to join a working group to support and guide preparations for the thematic segment, including providing technical inputs and strategic advice on (1) the background paper, (2) collection of country best practice case studies, (3) the agenda, and (4) the speakers for the session.
- Drafts of the background note and agenda have been shared with the working group for inputs. The working group provided its advice during three meetings (held 22 Sept, 15 Oct and 2 Nov), as well as in writing via email.
- A call for submission of country case studies was sent to PCB members and wider stakeholders on 4 Oct. A total of 32 were received and are being compiled into a conference room paper for the session. Summaries of eight of these case studies have been incorporated into the background note.
- Key messages of the background note include:
 - o Data have been the bedrock for progress against the AIDS pandemic over the last two decades. However, effective collection and use of HIV-related data has been uneven.
 - o Sustainable, routine national health information systems should be the foundation for the effective use of data to improve health outcomes. As the groups most affected by HIV are often marginalized, in large part due to the effects of stigma and discrimination, routine national information systems need to be complemented by special, focused surveys that enable data triangulation to develop and implement strategies to reach those being left behind.
 - o Community-generated data are an additional pillar of HIV response information systems that monitor the affordability, availability, acceptability and quality of services, especially for the most marginalized populations.
 - o Inclusive efforts to set national targets for HIV responses promote broad ownership and accountability for achieving those targets. Agreed targets help unite diverse actors and stakeholders in achieving high service coverage and positive impacts for all populations.
 - o UNAIDS support to country monitoring and reporting is critical to global progress and accountability in the HIV response and to maintaining momentum towards global HIV targets and commitments.

The PCB Bureau thanked the Secretariat for the update and looked forward to a robust discussion at the 49th PCB meeting.

3. Establishment of the Selection Panel for the Independent External Oversight Advisory Committee

The UNAIDS Secretariat provided an update on the establishment of the Independent External Oversight Advisory Committee, including the establishment of the Selection Panel.

The applications for the IEOAC closed in October and the search firm has received over 200 applications in total. There has been quite significant interest in the IEOAC and there is a list of highly qualified candidates for consideration. The UNAIDS Secretariat has supported the search firm in identifying disqualifying conflicts of interest in accordance with the PCB Bureau’s guidance

and the terms of reference. The Search Firm is now in the process of identifying the shortlist of 22 candidates for the interview list.

The shortlist will aim to be a gender and geographic balance as far as possible in relation to the applicant pool. While there has been gender parity in the short list, the geographical balance has been harder to strike in two regions:

- Only one applicant from Eastern Europe
- Only three applicants from LAC
- There has also been a relative shortage of French-speaking vs. English speaking applicants.

The call to establish the Selection Panel was circulated in mid-October based on the TOR developed by the PCB Bureau and Secretariat. Nominations were still pending from three constituencies.

The Secretariat recalled next steps for the process:

- Week of 22 November: first meeting of the Selection Panel to discuss ways of working.
- 29 November 2021: Selection Panel receives the final short list from the search firm along with a scoring tool to assess the candidates.
- 10 December 2021: Selection Panel members submit their scoring assessments to the Secretariat who will compile them for the meeting.
- Week of 13 December: Selection Panel meets to discuss their final agreement on 5-7 candidates to suggest for the committee.
- Submission to the PCB Bureau who will send the final composition to the PCB for intersessional approval.

The Bureau thanked the Secretariat for the update and looked forward to the establishment of the Selection Panel.

4. AOB

There was no other business raised and the Chair subsequently closed the meeting, thanking participants for their time and engagement.

[Annexes below]

Annex 1: Thematic Segment Proposals

Theme proposed by: WHO

Title: HIV and men, in all their diversity, how can we get our responses back on track?

Broad relevance: what is the relevance of the theme to the global AIDS response?

40 years since the first description of cases of what came to be known as AIDS, there is growing recognition that engaging men will be key to reaching the global UNAIDS fast-track targets of 95-95-95 by the end of 2030. The most recent global HIV data through 2020 show that progress towards the targets for men lags behind at 82-83-91 compared to 88-90-91 for women. The gap on the treatment cascade is worse with 82% of men knowing their status, only 68% of those on ART and only 62% of those achieving viral suppression. The 2017 UNAIDS publication “Blind spot: Reaching out to men and boys and recent guidance from the WHO does highlight gender differences in HIV outcomes, including the substantial gap in reaching men with HIV testing services and several recent studies show that, compared with women, men present with more advanced HIV disease and associated higher mortality risk, are less likely to start ART and are less likely to be retained in care. The relevance and use of innovative approaches including digital approaches for HIV prevention and care in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic is significant.

Responsiveness: how is the theme responsive to the interests, concerns and information needs of a broad range of actors in the global AIDS response?

The central theme for the global AIDS strategy 2021-2026 is ending inequalities and ending AIDS. There are still substantial information gaps on the scale of the inequality for men in their diversity as well as a need to better understand ways to reach and engage men in their diversity. ART coverage and viral suppression among MSM in Africa remain much lower than required to achieve global targets. In addition to the challenge of increasing access to HIV services among men in general, there is a need for more evidence to guide interventions to improve uptake and outcomes of HIV services for MSM in low-income and middle-income settings. This theme is therefore in line with the global strategic response on AIDS and will support bridge the information gaps in enhancing uptake of HIV services for men while bridging the gender gaps in the 95-95-95 targets. With the COVID-19 pandemic and the barriers to uptake of HIV interventions, there is an opportunity to explore addressing these challenges innovatively including through digital approaches.

Focus: how can consideration of the theme be focused to allow for in-depth consideration in one day?

An overview of what is currently known, a review of evidence and current gaps would set the scene. Various approaches, promising practices and community examples of engaging men in their diversity from a human rights and gender lens would be explored. Discussions on strategies to engage men and improve their uptake of HIV services and recommendations on global, country and country actions would be explored. An objective based theme is proposed based on:

- Review current evidence and gaps
- Identify approaches including innovative digital interventions, promising practices and community examples of engaging men in their diversity
- Discuss strategies to engage men and improve their uptake of HIV services and recommendations on global, country and country actions would be explored
- Suggest recommendations and next steps

Scope for action: how does the theme address possible and necessary action to be undertaken in the response to AIDS, rather than purely theoretical or academic issues?

In order to enhance uptake, reduce inequalities and engage men, this theme will explore a number of key scopes and actions that would be country and community focussed including on policy

development, including on addressing gender norms and masculinities. Successful and verified best practices in service delivery approaches, community-based interventions and innovative use of digital approaches to engage men living with and affected by HIV and in all their diversity will be highlighted, promoted and shared with a view to adaptation and wider adoption. Gaps in current knowledge on the best approaches on engaging men in their diversity would be addressed.

Theme proposed by: Thailand and UNESCO (combined proposal)

Title: “Positive Learning: harnessing the power of education to end HIV-related stigma and discrimination, empower young people and provide a comprehensive HIV response”

Broad relevance: what is the relevance of the theme to the global AIDS response?

Young people are the heart and the future of the global AIDS response. Yet the data shows that young people continue to be left behind. Globally, HIV continues to disproportionately impact young people, who represent 16 percent of the global population. Young people’s knowledge and awareness of HIV and AIDS and access to and use of essential HIV-related services remain unacceptably low, and condom use is on the decline. Moreover, there are around 3.4 million young people aged 15–24 living with HIV, and approximately 28% of all new infections occur among young people. The percentage of YPLHIV who know their status is much lower than among adults, and adolescents living with HIV have lower viral suppression rates when compared to both adults and younger children, often due to lower adherence to anti-retroviral therapy. In 2020, about 940,000 adolescents 10-19 years, just 54 percent of adolescents living with HIV globally, received antiretroviral treatment.

Most recent data indicate that only 25 percent of adolescent girls and 17 percent of adolescent boys aged 15-19 in Eastern and Southern Africa – the region most affected by HIV – have been tested for HIV in the past 12 months and received the result of the last test. The testing rates in West and Central Africa and South Asia are even lower. If current trends continue, hundreds of thousands more will become HIV-positive in the coming years, and without knowing their status, adolescents will miss-out on life-saving treatment.

The education sector has a key – and often overlooked – role to play in meeting our 2030 goals of ending AIDS as a public health threat. Whether it be through the formal or non-formal education sector, in-school or out-of-school programmes, we must harness the full power of the education sector in the AIDS response. This means going beyond programmes that focus exclusively on HIV prevention, which don’t address the holistic needs and realities of young people, and can sometimes carry messages about people living with HIV and key populations that risk reinforcing, rather than reducing, stigma and discrimination. Instead, by embracing quality comprehensive sexuality education, countries can equip adolescents and young people with knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that will empower them to realize their health, well-being and dignity; develop respectful social and sexual relationships; consider how their choices affect their own well-being and that of others; and understand and ensure the protection of their rights throughout their lives.

Responsiveness: how is the theme responsive to the interests, concerns and information needs of a broad range of actors in the global AIDS response?

Young people - notably through the leadership of young people living with HIV, young key populations, and young women - have been at the helm of a new wave of activism which has been challenging us to go further in achieving a truly multisectoral AIDS response. The Joint Youth Statement on the 2021 Political Declaration on HIV and AIDS emerging from the recent UN High-Level Meeting praised the Political Declaration’s commitments to education and employment, but called on the global community to go further in its commitment to CSE, which it recognized as “key for reducing HIV and key population-related stigma and discrimination; reducing and ending sexual and gender-based violence, and reducing inequalities.”

Indeed, quality education – both in and out-of-school – can have a transformative impact by not only supporting young people to fulfil their right to education in a safe, supportive and enabling learning environment, but also by:

- Providing YPLHIV with access to the knowledge and skills they need to navigate their status, advocate for their health and well-being, know their rights and build healthy and gender-equitable relationships
- Sensitizing school managers, teachers, staff, students and the broader school community (parents/caregivers) about the rights of learners living with HIV, including with respect to their choices and decisions around treatment and sharing information about their status, as well as the rights of other learners in all their diversity
- Delivering quality comprehensive sexuality education, in and outside of school, that includes accurate information on HIV prevention, treatment, care and support, as well as gender equality, sexual and reproductive health, inclusiveness and human rights
- Providing students with referrals and linkages to health and social protection services, including for sexual and reproductive health, social welfare and psychosocial support
- Ensuring safe, inclusive, healthy learning environments that have policies in place to prevent and address all forms of violence and bullying, including all forms of gender-based violence, stigma and discrimination

Focus: how can consideration of the theme be focused to allow for in-depth consideration in one day?

The thematic day will be led by young activists - including young women, young people living with HIV and young key populations - and will feature perspectives from teachers, Ministry of Education officials and civil society leaders. It will highlight testimonies from young women, YPLHIV and young key populations about their experiences, underscoring the difficult reality that for many, the experience of stigma and discrimination in school settings remains widespread.

The thematic day will also be an opportunity to highlight examples of best practices for creating an inclusive and health-promoting learning environment for young people in all their diversity, through examples of successful programmes and policies for both in-school and out-of-school contexts. In particular, it will spotlight examples of the role that digital media, radio, tv and film can play to complement a high quality education for HIV prevention, testing and treatment and ending stigma and discrimination among young people.

Scope for action: how does the theme address possible and necessary action to be undertaken in the response to AIDS, rather than purely theoretical or academic issues?

The thematic day will underscore the need for national programs that holistically address the needs of young people in all their diversity, especially young women, young key populations and YPLHIV. It will highlight the role of the education sector as an entry point for promoting comprehensive sexuality education – including HIV knowledge and awareness, prevention, testing and treatment, and ending stigma and discrimination - as well as the importance of linkages to youth-friendly sexual and reproductive health services and social protection services. It will also be an opportunity to underscore the need to remove age of consent laws and policies that are a barrier for adolescents and young people to access SRH and HIV services.

The thematic day would take place against a backdrop of renewed mobilization and momentum on this issue, including through the:

- Global Partnership for Action to Eliminate All Forms of HIV-related Stigma and Discrimination, which includes a focus on education settings as one of six priority areas for action
- The “Positive Learning” partnership between UNESCO, GNP+ and Y+ Global, to develop updated recommendations on strengthening the education sector response to the needs of young people living with HIV, through a youth-led approach
- The revised UN International Technical Guidance on CSE, and the 2020 international technical and programmatic guidance on out-of-school CSE, both of which include key guidance on providing CSE that is inclusive of people living with HIV, combats stigma and discrimination, and promotes a rights-based approach.
- The “Education Plus” initiative, which elevates the voices of young women living with HIV and promotes their leadership for change

The thematic day will therefore be intrinsically linked to concrete action and initiatives being led by the Joint Programme in partnership with civil society leaders.

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