



Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS

UNAIDS

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Resource Guide for UN Theme Groups on **HIV/AIDS**

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UNAIDS/05.02E (English original, March 2005)

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WHO Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data

UNAIDS.

Resource guide for UN theme groups on HIV/AIDS.

1.HIV infections – prevention and control 2.Acquired immunodeficiency syndrome – prevention and control 3.United Nations 4.Focus groups 5.Resource guides I.Title.

ISBN 92 9 173408 X

(NLM classification: WC 503.6)

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Table of contents

List of Acronyms	4
Foreword	5
1. Introduction	7
1.1 About this <i>Resource Guide</i>	7
1.2 How to use this <i>Guide</i>	8
2. Operationalizing a strengthened UN System response to HIV/AIDS at country level	9
2.1 The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS)	9
2.2 The UN Theme Group on HIV/AIDS	11
2.3 UN Technical Working Group	12
2.4 A key triad	13
2.4.1 UN Resident Coordinator	14
2.4.2 The UN Theme Group Chair	14
2.4.3 The UNAIDS Country Coordinator	15
3. Tools to strengthen UN system support to country responses on HIV/AIDS	17
3.1 Global frameworks and instruments	17
3.1.1 The <i>Millennium Declaration</i> and <i>Millennium Development Goals</i>	17
3.1.2 The UNGASS <i>Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS</i>	18
3.1.3 The <i>Global Strategy Framework on HIV/AIDS</i>	19
3.1.4 The <i>UN System Strategic Plan for HIV/AIDS</i>	20
3.2 Country-level frameworks and instruments	21
3.2.1 The “Three Ones”—coordination and harmonization	21
3.2.2 National Development Plans and Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers	23
4. Tools for joint UN programming and joint UN action on HIV and AIDS	27
4.1 CCA and UNDAF	27
4.2 UN Implementation Support Plan on HIV/AIDS (UN-ISP)	30
4.3 UNAIDS Programme Acceleration Funds	33
5. The UN Learning Strategy on HIV/AIDS	35
Annex I: Strategic Functions of UNAIDS	39
1. Leadership and advocacy for effective action on the epidemic	39
2. Civil society engagement and partnership development	40
3. Strategic information required to guide efforts of partners	41
4. Tracking, monitoring and evaluation of the epidemic and actions responding to it	42
5. Financial, technical and political resource mobilization	44
Annex II: UN Theme Group on HIV/AIDS Generic Terms of Reference	45
Annex III: Technical Working Group Generic Terms of Reference	47
Annex IV: UN Theme Group Chair Generic Terms of Reference	49
Annex V: UNAIDS Country Coordinator Generic Terms of Reference	51
Annex VI: Tool for a Theme Group Self-Assessment	53



List of Acronyms

ARV	Antiretroviral (drug)
CCA	Common Country Assessment
CCM	Country Coordinating Mechanism
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
PCB	Programme Coordinating Board
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
RC	Resident Coordinator
TG	United Nations Theme Group
UCC	UNAIDS Country Coordinator
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNGASS	United Nations General Assembly Special Session on HIV/AIDS
UN-ISP	United Nations Implementation Support Plan
UN TWG	United Nations Technical Working Group



Foreword

Since UNAIDS issued the first *Resource Guide for Theme Groups—Working Together on HIV/AIDS* in 1998, much has changed both in terms of the epidemic and the response.

The new Millennium is witnessing an unprecedented—and most welcome—shift in the urgency of the global response to the AIDS pandemic. It is an urgency that the *United Nations General Assembly Special Session on HIV/AIDS* of June 2001 punctuated, and that the establishment of the *Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria* and other global initiatives are sustaining.

These all bear testimony to the growing commitment and engagement of governments and the international community. They are also part of a changing environment around the AIDS response, one that offers tremendous opportunities but, equally, presents enormous challenges for all.

The UN Secretary-General, through his agenda for further change has renewed his calls for the UN system to strengthen its “capability for collective action and thus forge a common destiny in a time of accelerating global change”. In this regard AIDS, more than any other single issue, has underlined the imperative for UN organizations to work better together. The new political and financial environment within which the AIDS response is now nested merely reinforces that imperative.

It is an environment that puts the spotlight even more firmly on the Joint UN Programme’s contribution to the AIDS effort at the country level, and hence on the functions and performance of UN Theme Groups on HIV/AIDS. What is the UN system’s role on an AIDS stage that is ever more crowded? What can it specifically contribute that ensures optimal use of resources as well as ethically and technically sound responses? How does all this relate to the broader UN reform agenda?

This new Resource Package seeks to pull together a number of elements—global and country frameworks, planning and management tools and instruments, good practices—that hold the key to enhancing the contribution of UN Theme Groups on HIV/AIDS to effective national responses. It is therefore an integral part of the *UN Learning Strategy on HIV/AIDS* now being implemented. As such, it should remain a “living” document and stimulate ever more fruitful exchanges between countries.

I thank all the Resident Coordinators, Theme Group Chairs, Theme Group members and UNAIDS Country Coordinators and Focal Points who have contributed to the development of this Resource Guide.



Peter Piot
Executive Director
Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS



1. Introduction

“We need leaders everywhere to demonstrate that speaking up about AIDS is a point of pride, not a source of shame. There must be no more sticking heads in the sand, no more embarrassment, no more hiding behind a veil of apathy... Leadership means daring to do things differently, because you understand that AIDS is a different kind of disease. It stands alone in human experience, and it requires us to stand united against it.”

— UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, 15th International AIDS Conference, July 2004

Since the publication by the UNAIDS Secretariat in 1998 of the *Resource Guide for UN Theme Groups—Working together on HIV/AIDS* the environment in which the responses to the epidemic are taking place has changed considerably, with significant technical, political and financial advances. This new environment presents major opportunities for the UN system to contribute meaningfully to effective country responses but, equally, huge challenges. Concurrently, the Secretary-General’s UN reform agenda has gathered momentum, with renewed calls for strengthening collaboration and joint action among UN organizations.

In this context, the need has never been greater for UN organizations at country level to work better together and focus on areas where they can contribute optimally to the overall HIV/AIDS effort. UN Theme Groups on HIV/AIDS (TGs) are central to achieving and guiding a strategic and coordinated UN system response.

1.1 About this Resource Guide

The *Guide*’s main purpose is to provide clarification on what are now acknowledged to be the roles, functions and expected outputs of UN Theme Groups. It is designed at the same time to assist UN Theme Groups to locate and utilize resources that may serve to enhance the capacity of the UN system to better support country responses.

The *Guide*’s intent is to provoke reflection, to stimulate adaptation and application by the UN system of approaches and strategies that are best suited to specific contexts, and to maximize the UN system’s contribution.

The *Guide* does not address any specific thematic HIV and AIDS issues directly; rather it focuses on key frameworks and instruments for a coordinated and strategic UN system response, on critical elements and principles for effective UN Theme Groups, and on the core cross-cutting functions that make up the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) strategic support to the national response.

This updated version will refer therefore to pertinent **declarations and instruments** that have emerged since the first resource package was published. On a global level, the *Millennium Development Goals* and the *UN General Assembly Special Session on HIV/AIDS Declaration of Commitment* have set targets, while the *Global Strategy Framework* and the *UN System Strategic Plan on HIV/AIDS* offer an overarching framework and roadmap for UN action. And, following the external evaluation of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board (PCB) has endorsed five cross-cutting functions that are applicable at all levels of the Programme and reflect strategic niches for the Joint Programme.



At the country level, new guidelines for Common Country Assessments (CCA)/United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAF) and for joint programming have been issued, complementing the decision by the UNAIDS PCB to request UN Country Teams to develop and implement joint UN work plans on HIV/AIDS (UN Implementation Support Plans or UN-ISPs) in support of national priorities.

This new *Guide*, like the previous one, is primarily aimed at:

- UN Country Teams;
- UN Theme Groups and Technical Working Groups on HIV/AIDS;
- UNAIDS Country Coordinators; and
- UNAIDS Focal Points and other dedicated HIV/AIDS UN programme staff.

In addition, it may serve as a reference for all national and international partners with whom the UN system works at country level, including:

- government entities (e.g., National AIDS Councils);
- nongovernmental and civil society organizations;
- associations of people living with HIV and AIDS;
- Country Coordinating Mechanisms;
- the private sector; and
- bilateral and international donor agencies.

1.2 How to use this *Guide*

Though this *Guide* can be a stand-alone document, it is being introduced as one of the tools for the implementation of the *UN Learning Strategy on HIV/AIDS* (see section 5) which is now being rolled out. Therefore, it refers, where relevant, to learning activities and approaches described in the *Facilitators' Guide to Implementing the UN Learning Strategy on HIV/AIDS*. The contents of this *Guide* will help Theme Groups, Technical Working Groups and Professional Officers meet the minimum standards for supporting national responses to HIV/AIDS, as described in Unit IV of the *Facilitators' Guide*.

Each section contains one or more of the following features:

- **a brief introduction** to the topic;
- a list of **key points** which address commonly asked questions related to the topic;
- a list of **key related documents** that can be found on the CD-ROM Reference Library using the reference number listed in the format (CD#123);
- where possible, a list of **related learning activities** from the *Facilitators' Guide*;
- where relevant, **examples of related best practices or lessons learned; and**
- where appropriate, **a checklist** that the Theme Group can use to gauge its work or progress.

Every effort has been made to keep each section brief. The key points are thus intended to provoke reflection while the key related documents provide detailed or complementary information on each topic. The exercises in the *Facilitators' Guide* are intended to relate each topic to practical applications by individuals or groups and will help to create larger communities of practice.

2. Operationalizing a strengthened UN System response to HIV/AIDS at country level

“[The UN System’s]...effectiveness will be judged by the extent to which assistance from the UN is strategic, substantive and results-driven. It would be hard to overestimate the significance of achieving concrete results, which are relevant, measurable and attributable to our support for the national effort.”

— Cover letter from UNDG Excom Principals, UNAIDS Executive Director and WHO Director-General “UNDG Guidance Note on HIV/AIDS”, August 2001

2.1 The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS)

The AIDS pandemic and responses to it continue to grow in scale and complexity. The last few years have witnessed major political, technical and financial changes to the AIDS “environment”. With many more actors on the AIDS stage and a significant increase in resources available for AIDS programmes, the UN is being increasingly challenged to define strategic niches or areas where it can add value and contribute to more effective national responses. Following the five-year external evaluation of UNAIDS in 2002, the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board (PCB) in December 2002 has defined five cross-cutting functions for the Joint UN Programme (see Key Points below).

The PCB also reiterated the critical coordination, facilitation and brokering roles of the UNAIDS Secretariat at the country level. These roles at the country level assume even greater daily significance as the pandemic and the response continue to grow in scale and complexity, with an ever-increasing array of actors and partners and an increased flow of resources.

It is critical that these roles and functions be translated into “results” that are adapted to specific country situations and contexts. The “results” serve to focus the work of the Secretariat, as well as of the Cosponsors and other UN organizations, on those approaches and areas where they can add value and contribute strategically to an effective and efficient national response.

UNAIDS has thus developed **a framework for action** (*Unifying and Intensifying Country Support*) that translates the five cross-cutting functions into five strategic objectives and 13 attendant key results for the Secretariat.

These results are to be prioritized according to different situations. They are all informed by concerns over ensuring national leadership and ownership, focusing on national priorities and needs, and mobilizing and making the best possible use of resources. As such, they are congruent with the “Three Ones” principles (see section 3.2.1) for effective national-level coordination of the response to HIV and AIDS.

Key Points

- The financial environment of the response to HIV and AIDS has changed dramatically.
- The technical environment has also evolved, including the improvements in antiretroviral (ARV) therapy and, with it, the challenge of ensuring equitable access to treatment.



- The political environment likewise has changed, especially with the United Nations General Assembly Special Session on HIV/AIDS (UNGASS on HIV/AIDS) having now shifted the emphasis from mere advocacy to accountability of political leadership.
- In this dynamic environment, the UN system organizations must define what constitute strategic contributions on their part. These are reflected in the Decisions, Recommendations and Conclusions adopted by the Thirteenth meeting of the UNAIDS PCB in Lisbon, December 2002; they are:
 - leadership and advocacy for effective action on the epidemic;
 - strategic information required to guide efforts of partners;
 - tracking, monitoring and evaluation of the epidemic and responses to it;
 - civil society engagement and partnership development; and
 - financial, technical and political resource mobilization.

Annex I provides an overview of these five cross-cutting functions, with examples of UNAIDS key results.

- As part of its strategic response, the Joint Programme is strengthening the capacity of the Resident Coordinator system in specific areas as recommended by the PCB in December 2002. Additional staff are being assigned to fulfil the following critical core functions of the Joint Programme: monitoring and evaluation; social mobilization and partnerships; resource mobilization and resource tracking.
- Pivotal to the effectiveness of the Secretariat's contribution is the UNAIDS Country Coordinator (UCC). Working from a strong UN platform, one of the UCC's key roles, along with the UN TG Chair and the Resident Coordinator, is to strengthen the links between UN system organizations, government, civil society and people living with HIV and AIDS.

Key Documents

- (CD#206a) *UNDG Guidance Note on HIV/AIDS—UN RC system: Country-level action in support of the UNGASS Declaration of Commitment.* (Aug 2001).
- (CD#401) *A Joint Response to HIV/AIDS.* UNAIDS, 2003.
- (CD#402a) *UNAIDS Five-Year Evaluation,* UNAIDS (8 October, 2002).
- (CD#403a) *Future Directions, Responding to the Five-Year Evaluation* (December 2002, Lisbon)
- (CD#403b) *Letter from UNAIDS Executive Director, and Summary of PCB Decisions and Recommendations,* (15 January 2003).
- (CD#404) *Directions for the Future: Unifying and Intensifying Country Support,* (UNAIDS-CRD, 2003)

Activities

- **Unit IV, Section 2.3** “Background Reading and Reflection: Understanding the Joint UN Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS)”
- **Unit IV, Section 3.2-B** “Prioritization of Issues for the UN-ISP”. Analyse gaps and achievements in the current response based on the five strategic objectives.

- **Unit IV, Section 3.2-A** “UNAIDS: Past and Present”. Focus on UN relevance and what has changed over the last five years in the HIV and AIDS environment, then analyse the impact of those changes on the current operational strategy.

2.2 The UN Theme Group on HIV/AIDS

“...it is widely accepted that the Theme Groups on HIV/AIDS have been by far the most successful of the UN Theme Groups addressing cross-agency issues.”

— PCB, in its Decisions and Recommendations, following the five-year evaluation (December 2002).

Although there has been progress in ensuring effective coordination and joint action on HIV/AIDS among UNAIDS Cosponsors and other UN organizations, much more remains to be done. The five-year external evaluation of UNAIDS in 2002 highlighted the need for specific improvements in the overall UN response and in UNAIDS functioning at country level.

Subsequently, in December 2002 the UNAIDS PCB recommended that the modus operandi of UN Theme Groups be clarified and that particular attention be paid to improving vertical and horizontal accountability for HIV/AIDS efforts within the UN Resident Coordinator system, as well as enhancing collaboration between the UN Theme Group and government and other partners.

In July 2003, the Executive Committee of the UN Development Group and UNAIDS Executive Director met in Maputo, Mozambique and endorsed key operating principles for UN Country Teams and UNAIDS. In November 2003, the Administrator of UNDP, in his capacity as Chair of the UN Development Group reaffirmed these principles in a Guidance Note on *Operationalizing a Strengthened UN System Response to HIV/AIDS at Country Level* addressed to all UN Resident Coordinators and Heads of UN system agencies and organizations.

These principles are articulated around the UN Theme Group (UN TG) mechanism as the major instrument for UN coordination and leadership on HIV/AIDS at the country level. The *Note* spells out the key roles and responsibilities of the UN Resident Coordinator, the UN Theme Group Chair and of the UNAIDS Country Coordinator. It also underlines the importance of strengthening accountability and for the UN Theme Group to focus on results.

Annex II provides the generic Terms of Reference for a Theme Group. These can be adapted to suit different country contexts.

Key Points

- Country Representatives of Cosponsors and other UN agencies make up the UN Theme Group on HIV/AIDS. In settings where HIV/AIDS is a national priority and is an issue that cuts across the work of all UN entities, UN Country Teams and UN Theme Groups will often be one and the same.
- The Committee of Cosponsoring Organizations has recommended that the contribution of Country Representatives to the effective work of UN Theme Groups be part of their performance appraisal.
- The UN Theme Group is the forum to plan, manage and monitor a coordinated UN system response. Country representatives of UNAIDS Cosponsors as well as other concerned UN entities are expected to meet regularly as members of the UN TG.



- The purpose of the UN Theme Group is to ensure optimal UN support to country responses to HIV/AIDS.
- That support will be captured in a UN Implementation Support Plan or UN-ISP (see [section 4.2](#)), representing the UN Theme Group’s Annual Work Plan on HIV and AIDS.

Key Documents

- (CD#302) *Letter from UNDG Chair: Guidance Note on Operationalizing a Strengthened UN System response at Country Level.* (19 November 2003).
- (CD#305) *“Maputo Declaration”: Accelerating Country and Regional Action on HIV/AIDS in Eastern and Southern Africa* (9 July 2003).
- (CD#402a) *UNAIDS Five-Year Evaluation* (October 2002).
- (CD#403b) *Letter from UNAIDS Executive Director, and Summary of PCB Decisions and Recommendations,* (15 January 2003).

Activities

- Theme Group Formative Evaluation, see [Annex VI](#) to this Resource Guide for a suggested methodology.

2.3 UN Technical Working Group

To assist the UN TG/UN Country Team in defining the UN system’s policies and strategies, there is usually a UN Technical Working Group (UN TWG). The UN TWG will normally consist of the respective UN agencies’ programme officers or focal points with responsibility for HIV/AIDS-specific or HIV/AIDS-related programmes.

The UN TWG’s primary purpose is to enable the UN Theme Group to define policies and strategies for optimal UN system support to the national response through providing inter-agency technical inputs and, in particular, identifying and exploiting opportunities for complementary and joint UN action on HIV/AIDS. Participation in, and contribution to, the work of the UN TWG should be formally acknowledged and included in staff members’ key assignments and performance appraisal.

The UN TG Chair may chair the UN TWG. However, this is a role that is entirely congruent with the responsibilities and functions of the UNAIDS Country Coordinator (UCC), and one that is usually delegated to the UCC by the UN Country Team.

[Annex III](#) provides the generic Terms of Reference for a Technical Working Group. These can be adapted to suit different country contexts.

Key Points

- A major role of the UN TG /UN TWG is to promote and provide spaces for broad-based, multisectoral partnerships on HIV/AIDS led by government and including civil society, people living with HIV and AIDS, private sector and other key stakeholders. The UN Technical Working Group in particular has provided the impetus for, or been the nidus of, such “expanded” partnership forums in many settings.

- A functioning partnership forum, however, does not negate the need for UN entities to meet regularly as members of a UN Theme Group on HIV/AIDS or UN Technical Working Group.
- Another key role for the UN TG/UN TWG on HIV/AIDS is to ensure the implementation of the *UN Learning Strategy on HIV/AIDS* (see section 5) and of the *UN Personnel Policy on HIV/AIDS*.

Key Documents

- (CD#302) *Letter from UNDG Chair: Guidance Note on Operationalizing a Strengthened UN System response at Country Level*, (19 November 2003).
- (CD#206b) *UNDG Guidance Note on HIV/AIDS: Cover Letter*, (29 August 2001).
- (CD#403b) *Letter from UNAIDS Executive Director, and Summary of PCB Decisions and Recommendations*, (15 January 2003).

Facilitating policy and programme dialogue through "expanded" forums

Benin

In Benin, in the absence of a national Partnership Forum, both the UN Theme Group and the Technical Working Group have been "expanded" to include, besides the Government, civil society organizations, international and national nongovernmental organizations, groups of people living with HIV and AIDS and bilateral donors. The expanded Technical Working Group, for example, includes a technical focal point from UN agencies as well as their national government counterparts, programme managers from NGOs and bilateral donors, people living with HIV and AIDS association representatives as well as the private sector. The Group provides a forum for addressing in depth issues and themes that are national priorities (e.g., access to care, prevention of mother-to-child transmission, HIV prevention for young people, sex work). It is the operational arm of the Theme Group and is convened by the national AIDS programme authorities. The UCC works closely with and supports the national programme in this task.

2.4 A key triad

An effective UN Theme Group on HIV/AIDS is one that makes the best possible and strategic use of the individual and collective resources of the Cosponsors and other UN organizations. For this to happen, a commitment to collaborative and joint UN action by the country representatives of all the Cosponsors and other concerned UN entities is essential.

In this regard, the following have particularly critical and complementary leadership and facilitation roles to play:

1. the UN Resident Coordinator;
2. the Theme Group Chair; and
3. the UNAIDS Country Coordinator.



2.4.1 UN Resident Coordinator

The UN reform agenda of the Secretary-General reaffirms the Resident Coordinator System as the lynchpin of coordination of development activities at country level. It is by the same token the foundation of an effective joint UN response to HIV/AIDS at country level. The adoption of the UNGASS *Declaration of Commitment* further underlines the critical roles of the UN Resident Coordinator and the RC system in supporting countries to implement the *Declaration* and, ultimately, to achieve the *Millennium Development Goals*.

UN Resident Coordinator's roles

With regards to HIV/AIDS, the UN Resident Coordinator:

- provides leadership for a strong and coordinated UN system response on HIV/AIDS;
- ensures the establishment of a UN Theme group on HIV/AIDS; and
- monitors, and reports on, the UN Theme Group's performance through the Resident Coordinator's Annual Report.

Key points

- The UN Resident Coordinator is ultimately responsible and accountable for the overall functioning and effectiveness of the UN Theme Group on HIV/AIDS.
- The UN Resident Coordinator ensures a Theme Group Chair is designated through a collegial process from among the country representatives and delegates the responsibility for the Theme Group's effective functioning to the Chair.
- The UN Resident Coordinator ensures the mainstreaming of HIV/AIDS into all development programmes, notably through the UNDAF (see [section 4.1](#)) and the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) (see [section 3.2.2](#)).
- The UN Resident Coordinator reports on the Theme Group functioning and its performance through the Resident Coordinator's Annual Report.

2.4.2 The UN Theme Group Chair

Given the challenge that HIV/AIDS represents in many situations and the growing complexity and scope of the response, not least the number of partners involved, the task of ensuring an effective UN response in support of countries is one that demands more and more time and energy. This is a task for which the UN Resident Coordinator remains ultimately responsible, but, given the Resident Coordinator's other responsibilities, he/she delegates that authority to a Theme Group Chair.

Theme Group Chair roles

With the Resident Coordinator's support and that of the UCC, the Theme Group Chair:

- ensures effective functioning of the Theme Group;
- provides leadership and guidance for joint UN action, especially through the development and implementation of a UN-ISP;
- advocates for and mobilizes effective action by all partners;
- supports the UN Learning Strategy on HIV/AIDS; and
- represents the Joint UN Programme as and when needed (as do also the Resident Coordinator and the UNAIDS Country Coordinator).

Key points

- The Theme Group Chair is chosen by the UN Country Team through a collegial process and appointed ideally for two years and on a rotating basis.
- While rotation every two years is recommended, the choice of the Chair should be guided first and foremost by individuals' proven commitment, capacity and availability.
- Given the critical roles and functions of the Theme Group Chair, these should be taken into account in the individual's institutional appraisal and be reflected accordingly in her/his work plan.

Annex IV provides the generic Terms of Reference for the Theme Group Chair. They may be adapted to suit different country contexts.

2.4.3 The UNAIDS Country Coordinator

The five-year external evaluation of UNAIDS stated that "UNAIDS performance in countries hinges on the presence and quality of the Country Programme Adviser/UNAIDS Country Coordinator (UCC) and their support to Theme Groups". The evaluation team also noted that Resident Coordinators and Theme Group Chairs alike strongly endorsed the need for UCC-type support to Theme Groups, not least to promote joint action.

Recognizing the crucial contribution that UCCs make to effective joint action and to country efforts more generally, the PCB has now endorsed the deployment by the Secretariat of more UCCs. Furthermore, additional staff will be assigned to priority countries to fulfil critical core functions of the Joint UN Programme in monitoring and evaluation, social mobilization and partnership building, and resource mobilization.



UNAIDS Country Coordinator key roles

Together with the TG Chair and working from a strong UN platform, the UCC supports the UN Theme Group in delivering on the five cross-cutting functions that have been endorsed by the PCB as the Joint UN Programme's strategic niches.

Specifically, the UCC supports and facilitates the Joint UN Programme's provision of:

- leadership and advocacy for effective action;
- social mobilization and partnership development;
- strategic information to guide policy and action of all partners;
- tracking, monitoring and evaluation of the epidemic and the response; and
- financial and technical resource mobilization.

Key points

- The UNAIDS Country Coordinator (UCC) operates within the Resident Coordinator system and is a member of the full UN Country Team.
- The UCC's primary roles are to facilitate joint UN action and optimal UN support to the national response, but also to support and strengthen the links between the UN system, government, civil society, people living with HIV and AIDS and other development partners.
- Together with additional staff recruited for that purpose, the UCC also facilitates UNAIDS fulfilling its core functions in monitoring and evaluation, social mobilization and partnership building, and resource mobilization.
- The UCC promotes and supports in the process the consistent application of the "Three Ones" principles—one National AIDS Authority, one agreed HIV/AIDS Action Framework, one agreed country-level Monitoring and Evaluation system. (See also [section 3.2.1](#)).
- In countries where there is no UCC, resident agencies may pool resources to fund a full-time Focal Point or Programme Officer to fulfil the functions of a UCC.

Annex V provides the generic Terms of Reference for a UNAIDS Country Coordinator.

Key Documents

- (**CD#302**) *Letter from UNDG Chair: Guidance Note on Operationalizing a Strengthened UN System response at Country Level*, (19 November 2003).
- (**CD#403b**) *Letter from UNAIDS Executive Director, and Summary of PCB Decisions and Recommendations*, (15 January 2003).

3. Tools to strengthen UN system support to country responses on HIV/AIDS

“Global goals must be translated into nationally agreed targets that balance ambition with realism. Over-ambitious targets are not likely to trigger action; non-challenging targets are unlikely to mobilize resources or foster pro-poor policy reforms.”

— UNDG, Country Reporting on the Millennium Development Goals, Second Guidance Note, October 2003

3.1 Global frameworks and instruments

In the last five years, a series of world summits and conferences have spelled out a comprehensive agenda for human development and for addressing HIV and AIDS, including selected goals, time-bound targets and quantifiable indicators. Together, they provide a road map and milestones for countries and offer UN system organizations and all development partners a framework for optimal support. They are also key instruments for leadership and advocacy.

They include:

- a) the *Millennium Declaration* and *Millennium Development Goals* (Sept. 2000);
- b) the United Nations General Assembly Special Session *Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS* (UNGASS Declaration of Commitment, June 2001);
- c) the *Global Strategy Framework on HIV/AIDS* (UNAIDS, June 2001);
- d) the *UN System Strategic Plan for HIV/AIDS* (UNAIDS, June 2001, and *Update* of June 2003).

In addition, HIV and AIDS has been addressed by the UN Security Council as an exceptional global challenge and a threat to peace and security, most notably in Resolution 1308 from July 2000 (CD#210).

3.1.1 The *Millennium Declaration* and *Millennium Development Goals*

In September 2000, Heads of State and Government representing 191 nations endorsed the *Millennium Declaration*, addressing global challenges related to peace, security, and development, and including the environment, protection of vulnerable groups, human rights, HIV/AIDS and governance. The *Millennium Declaration* consolidates a set of inter-connected development goals into a global agenda with specific, measurable targets to be completed by 2015. These goals are designated as the *Millennium Development Goals* or *MDGs*.

Key Points

- The *MDGs* provide an overarching operating and accountability framework for all development partners, including the UN system.



- *Millennium Development Goal 6*—to combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases—and its related target (to have halted and begun to reverse the spread of HIV by 2015) are HIV/AIDS-specific.
- However, HIV/AIDS cuts across or impacts upon all the other MDGs, not least the goals related to poverty eradication, the achievement of universal primary education, gender equality and women’s empowerment, child mortality reduction, and improving maternal health.

Key Documents

The *Millennium Declaration* and MDG Documents: <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/>

- (CD#201) *Roadmap towards the Implementation of the Millennium Declaration, UN General Assembly*, (6 September 2001).
- (CD#202) *The UN and the MDGs: A Core Strategy*, (June 2002).
- (CD#203a) *UNDG Guidance Note: Reporting on the Millennium Development Goals at the Country Level*. (October 2001).

Activities

Unit IV, Section 2.2-A “Background Reading and Reflection: HIV/AIDS and the MDGs”

3.1.2 The UNGASS Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS

At an extraordinary United Nations General Assembly Special Session (UNGASS) in June 2001, 189 Member States adopted the *Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS*. The UNGASS *Declaration of Commitment* addresses global, regional and country-level responses to prevent new HIV infections, expand access to care, and mitigate the impact of the epidemic.

Key Points

- The *Declaration of Commitment* of the United Nations General Assembly Special Session on HIV/AIDS (UNGASS DoC) provides a framework for an expanded response to the global AIDS epidemic.
- It defines a series of goals and targets based on human rights and gender equality dimensions including around prevention of new infections; provision of care, support and treatment; reduction of vulnerability; and mitigation of the social and economic impact of the epidemic.
- The targets will facilitate monitoring and accountability of Governments as well as of the UN system and all national and international partners engaged in the national responses to the epidemic.
- The UN General Assembly will monitor and review progress in realizing the UNGASS goals once a year.

Key Documents

- (CD#204) United Nations General Assembly Special Session on HIV/AIDS (2001), *Declaration of Commitment*.

- (CD#205) *Action Guide for Country Teams: Implementing the Declaration of Commitment.* (October 2002).
- (CD#206a) *UNDG Guidance Note on HIV/AIDS—UN RC system: Country-level action in support of the UNGASS Declaration of Commitment,* (August 2001).
- (CD#207) *Monitoring the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS: Guidelines on Construction of Core Indicators,* (UNAIDS, August 2002).

Activities

Unit IV, Section 2.2-B “Background Reading and Reflection: UNGASS *Declaration of Commitment*”

Unit IV, Section 2.2-C “Relating UNGASS *Declaration of Commitment* actions to a specific country context.” Inventory the current UN agency activities relative to the UNGASS *Declaration of Commitment*, and the indicators that are currently being monitored through those activities.

Unit IV, Section 3.3-A “Reporting on the UNGASS *Declaration of Commitment.*” Prepare the framework for a reporting schedule that includes the content of reports, timing and responsible parties.

3.1.3 The Global Strategy Framework on HIV/AIDS

The *Global Strategy Framework on HIV/AIDS* (June 2001) provides a common strategic approach for achieving the global targets spelt out in the UNGASS *Declaration of Commitment*. As stated by UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, the Framework “draws on lessons from the past to map out the path for the future... and calls on all sectors of society to show leadership in galvanizing the response to HIV/AIDS.”

Key Points

- The *Framework* spells out, among others, guiding principles and a series of leadership commitments and core actions that are key to an effective and comprehensive AIDS response.
- The leadership commitments are addressed not only to national leaders and policy-makers, but also to leaders and activists in community, religious, private sector, and social movement settings.
- The principles and commitments are universally applicable and should guide the development and implementation of strategies tailored to different settings and contexts.

Key Documents

- (CD#208) *Global Strategy Framework on HIV/AIDS.* UNAIDS (June 2001).

Activities

Unit IV, Section 2.2-D “Background Reading and Reflection: Global Strategy Framework on HIV/AIDS”



3.1.4 The UN System Strategic Plan for HIV/AIDS

The *UN System Strategic Plan for HIV/AIDS for 2001–2005 (UNSSP)* was developed within the overall context of the *Global Strategy Framework on HIV/AIDS*. Twenty-nine UN organizations participated in the process. When approving the *UNSSP* in 2001, the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board (PCB) requested UNAIDS Cosponsors, other UN system participating organizations and partners, and the UNAIDS Secretariat to strengthen and update the *UNSSP*. In keeping with this direction, and in response to the *UNGASS Declaration*, new strategies and activities resulting from the UNAIDS five-year evaluation, and current realities with the epidemic, the original *UNSSP 2001–2005* was updated in 2003 with a new update due in 2005.

Key Points

- The *UNSSP* identifies the key functions of the UN system, sets out operational areas of work and describes the approach and priorities of the participating UN system organizations in a coordinated UN system response.
- The strategic objectives articulated within the *UNSSP* link the work of UN individual organizations with the overarching objective of the UN system to provide leadership and support to the work of national governments and partners in achieving agreed goals.

Key Documents

(**CD#209a and b**) *UN System Strategic Plan for HIV/AIDS, 2001–2005*, (UNAIDS, 2001) and the *Update of the UNSSP* (UNAIDS, June 2003).

Activities

Unit IV, Section 2.2-E “Background Reading and Reflection: UN System Strategic Plan”.

Unit IV, Section 2.2-F “Operationalizing the UN System Strategic plan”. Conduct a SWOT analysis of the UNSSP objective: “*Working together as individual agencies towards systemically defined goals requiring combined efforts.*”

Global Frameworks and Instruments

Checklist

- ✓ The Theme Group is working with national partners and international financing institutions to ensure that national development instruments, especially Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers, integrate the *Millennium Development Goals* within the priorities, policies and resource allocation.
- ✓ The Theme Group is committed to measuring progress towards the *Millennium Development Goals* through joint outcome evaluations of the UNDAF, inputs to Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers reviews and *Millennium Development Goal* reports.
- ✓ The Theme Group is applying the principles that guide UN system support to implementation of the *UNGASS Declaration*, including: promotion of national leadership; response to national needs; building national capacity; respect for human rights; addressing gender equality, young people and people living with HIV and AIDS concerns; supporting broad-based social mobilization.
- ✓ The Theme Group consistently uses the *Millennium Development Goals* and *UNGASS Declaration* as part of its advocacy and communications strategies, whereby each agency focuses on their operational area of work as set out in the UN System Strategic Plan.

3.2 Country-level frameworks and instruments

As mentioned already, global frameworks and instruments are intended to inform country-level action and be adapted to country-specific situations. In this regard, there needs to be a particularly strong linkage with the following country-level instruments and frameworks:

- a) the “Three Ones” principles for ensuring effective national-level coordination of the response, including one agreed AIDS Action Framework;
- b) National Development Plans and Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers.

3.2.1 The “Three Ones”—coordination and harmonization

Most major donors and international multilateral financial institutions have committed themselves (through the February 2003 *Rome Declaration*) to harmonization and alignment of their institutional aid policies and practices with those of partner country systems. The overall objective is to ensure the most effective and efficient use of resources towards achieving the *Millennium Development Goals* by minimizing transaction costs for countries while strengthening national ownership and leadership.

It is an objective that resonates particularly strongly in the HIV and AIDS arena. National responses to HIV and AIDS have grown in intensity but also in complexity. With many more actors and partners on the HIV/AIDS stage, an increasing and diverse flow of resources and, at times, competing agendas and priorities for different stakeholders, the need for effective coordination of the response at country level is self-evident.

At the International Conference on AIDS and STIs in Africa (ICASA) held in Nairobi, Kenya, in September 2003, officials from national coordinating bodies and relevant ministries of African nations, major funding mechanisms and bilateral agencies, nongovernmental organizations and the private sector reviewed principles for effective national-level coordination of the HIV/AIDS response. A strong consensus emerged around three key principles now known as the “Three Ones”. One of these is “one HIV/AIDS Action Framework”, such is the obvious importance of nationally defined priorities to focus the efforts of all partners. But, besides the need for sound national strategic plans, the “Three Ones” also underline the imperative in the current HIV/AIDS environment for strong national coordinating entities and for a harmonized monitoring and evaluation system.

Crucially, in April 2004, all major donors and financial institutions have reaffirmed in a meeting in Washington their commitment to supporting and strengthening nationally-led AIDS responses within the “Three Ones” framework.

The “Three Ones”

UNAIDS advocates and supports three principles that are key to ensuring effective coordination of national responses to HIV and AIDS. They are the “Three Ones”:

One agreed HIV/AIDS Action Framework that provides the basis for coordinating the work of all partners

One National AIDS Coordinating Authority with a broad-based, multisectoral mandate

One agreed country level Monitoring and Evaluation System



Key Points

- The “Three Ones” is not an initiative or a project.
- The “Three Ones” are fundamental principles to be upheld consistently by all partners for effective and efficient HIV/AIDS responses at the country level.
- The major objective is to ensure the most effective and efficient use of resources in support of national needs and priorities.
- The “Three Ones” are not universal blueprints. Their successful application will require adaptation to different country situations and institutional contexts.
- Underpinning the “Three Ones” are fundamental elements for sustainable, effective, long-term responses, including: support for national leadership and ownership, inclusion and participation of those who are most vulnerable in policy making.
- The “Three Ones” also serve as an instrument for mutual accountability for all national and international partners, not least bilateral donors and the UN system.
- Major roles for UNAIDS and the UN system at country level are: promoting approaches that translate the principles into practice; facilitating country-led processes that adhere to the “Three Ones” principles; supporting their consistent application; and tracking and reporting on progress made.

Key Documents

- (CD#303) *Coordination of National Responses to HIV/AIDS—Guiding principles for national authorities and their partners*. April 2004.
- (CD#304a & b) *Commitment to principles for concerted AIDS action at country level; Clearing the common ground for the “Three Ones”*, Washington, April 2004.
- (CD#306) *The Rome Declaration on Harmonization*, (February 2003).

**Useful website on coordination and harmonization: <http://www.aidharmonization.org>.
Additional information on the “Three Ones” can be found at: www.unaids.org.**

Applying the “Three Ones”—One National Coordinating Authority Barbados

In 2001 the Prime Minister Owen Arthur assumed responsibility for the coordination of the national HIV/AIDS programme and established a broad-based National HIV/AIDS Commission (NAC). This high-level commitment has led to a strong national coordinating body and a clear mandate to coordinate the national response across all sectors. In addition, while the capacity and infrastructure of the NAC were established, 85% of Ministry personnel were educated in HIV awareness. Overall support for this process was provided by UNAIDS from both the regional and global level.

The commission is chaired by the Special Envoy to the Prime Minister on HIV/AIDS related matters. It manages the Comprehensive Program for the Management, Prevention and Control of HIV/AIDS 2001–2005. This national programme was approved by the Government Cabinet and has three key areas of focus.

1. Prevention and Control.
2. Treatment, Care and Support.
3. Management and Institutional Strengthening.

The strong political commitment and the clear mandate of the National HIV/AIDS Commission have led to good results. In 2001 the Barbados Government pledged US\$ 50 million over five years, and in 2002 negotiated a US\$ 15.1 million loan from the World Bank to help fund the national programme, specifically to provide treatment for AIDS patients. The latter has resulted in a 40.8% reduction in inpatient costs post-HAART with a 59.4% reduction in total annual hospital days. The results indicated a cost shift from inpatient to outpatient care in the first year of HAART. To date funds have been used to build capacity for treatment and care resulting in a state of the art treatment centre and a treatment monitoring laboratory.

3.2.2 National Development Plans and Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers

“The imperative of UN engagement [in the PRSP process] follows the highest priority being given by the international community to poverty reduction, and the role of PRSPs as a partnership-based approach to the challenge of reducing poverty.”

— UNDG Guidance Note on UN Country Team Engagement in PRSPs,
December 2003

As mentioned above, a key prerequisite for sustainable national responses—and one of the “Three Ones”—is adherence by all partners to one agreed HIV/AIDS framework. Besides specific HIV/AIDS frameworks, such as national strategic HIV/AIDS plans, broader development instruments offer equally critical entry points for addressing HIV/AIDS “upstream”. National Development Plans and Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers are two such instruments. Indeed, in the more heavily affected countries the two are effectively one and the same.

The poverty and HIV/AIDS nexus is undeniable. As such, strategies to address and reduce poverty in countries are inseparable from, and complement HIV and AIDS prevention and impact mitigation efforts. Eradication of poverty is one of the prominent *Millennium Development Goals*, namely to have halved the proportion of people living in extreme poverty by 2015. The process initiated by the World Bank and International Monetary Fund in low-



income countries of developing Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers provides a major entry point and opportunity for mainstreaming HIV/AIDS in the broader development agenda.

Insofar as it sets priorities and defines strategies for human development and poverty reduction, the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers is one of the more critical instruments for ensuring the integration of the *Millennium Development Goals* within the policies and resource allocation decisions taken by governments. This is particularly important in settings where the impact of AIDS is greatest, given the linkage between AIDS and poverty. However, it is no less important in countries with low HIV prevalence, where maintaining low prevalence will also depend on tackling poverty.

Key Points

- National ownership and leadership of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) process is critical. Broad-based participation is essential.
- For over 70 of the poorest countries, the PRSP constitutes the primary strategic and implementation vehicle for reaching the *Millennium Development Goals*, the PRSP equating with a National Development Plan.
- The PRSP is the ‘national roadmap’ for reaching longer-term *Millennium Development Goal* targets through short/medium-term policy reforms and budget restructuring.
- The UN system’s role is to provide coordinated support to the PRSP process. One of the key roles of the UN is to promote civil-society participation and advocate for pro-poor policy reforms and services.
- The potential for PRSPs to draw out and address the links between AIDS and poverty is evident. Doing so provides a basis for making decisions about AIDS funding and generally for mobilizing resources.

Key Documents

- (CD#502a) UNDG: *UNDG Guidance Note UN Country Team Engagement in PRSPs*. (December 2003).
- (CD#503) *An Assessment of the role and experiences of UN agencies in PRSPs* (UNDG, August 2003).
- (CD#508) *AIDS, Poverty Reduction and Debt Relief—A Toolkit for Mainstreaming HIV/AIDS into Development Instruments*. (UNAIDS/World Bank: UNAIDS Best Practice Collection, 2001).

Useful websites on PRSPs:

<http://www.imf.org/external/np/prsp/prsp.asp>
<http://www.worldbank.org/poverty/strategies/review/extrev.htm>

Activities

Unit IV, Section 3.1-C “Evaluating UNDAF Commitments”. This activity has been designed to assess the outcomes of your country’s last UNDAF, and identify factors that have led to or hindered success. Determine whether UNDAF outcomes are in line with the PRSP.

Mainstreaming HIV in Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP)

Madagascar

The adoption by the Madagascar government and its key development partners of HIV/AIDS as a key component of PRSP, despite low HIV prevalence, was the result of direct advocacy by the UN Theme Group and the UCC.

UNAIDS had a continuous advisory role with the national coordination body and provided technical input throughout the process. UNAIDS input included the organization of a national sensitization and capacity-building workshop on poverty and HIV/AIDS. This workshop was attended by almost 100 participants, including community leaders, government officials and development partners. This workshop was instrumental in forging a common understanding of the relationship between HIV/AIDS and poverty and reinforcing the acceptance of HIV/AIDS as a key issue to be addressed in the PRSP, despite the invisible nature of the epidemic. Before this workshop there was little agreement among key partners, mainly nationals on the relevance of HIV/AIDS as a priority issue to be included in the PRSP.

One of the main reference documents used during the entire process was the UNAIDS toolkit on poverty and HIV/AIDS [CD#508]. A model provided in the toolkit was used to develop a conceptual framework highlighting the major vulnerability and risk factors to HIV/AIDS in Madagascar. This conceptual framework was included in the PRSP and served also as the bond between the PRSP and the National strategic planning process.

The process was interrupted by the 2002 political crisis in Madagascar and resumed in 2003 with the new government. This second phase of the PRSP process benefited from the input of the Common Country Assessment. The methodology of the new generation of CCA was instrumental as it provided more evidence to linkages between poverty and HIV/AIDS.

The major lessons learned are that:

- The quality of the PRSP depends on the availability of relevant data on social and economic impact of HIV/AIDS and on data showing evidence of relationship between poverty and various factors (vulnerability and risk factors).
- A CCA driven PRSP is likely to yield a strong PRSP as it relies on causal analysis and a participatory process.



4. Tools for joint UN programming and joint UN action on HIV and AIDS

“Whether our objective is to reduce extreme poverty or combat HIV/AIDS, or to ensure sustainable development or prevent armed conflict, the strategies we pursue must rely on coordinated action within the Organization and enhanced cooperation with outside partners.”

— Strengthening the United Nations: an agenda for further change. Report of the UN Secretary-General, UN General Assembly, September 2002

The UNDG *Guidance Note on Joint Programming* (December 2003) reiterated the Secretary-General’s call for the UN system to articulate a coherent vision and strategy for a unified approach towards common development goals at the regional and country levels.

Perhaps more than any other single development challenge or issue, HIV/AIDS underscores the moral imperative for greater collaboration both within the UN and among all development partners, including UN organizations. As the Joint UN Programme on HIV/AIDS, UNAIDS has been at the cutting edge of the Secretary-General’s UN reform agenda, and UN Theme Groups on HIV/AIDS have paved the way for more effective collaboration and coordination for results in support of national development efforts among UN organizations at the country level.

To all intents and purposes, UNAIDS at country level has been, and is, joint UN programming on HIV/AIDS in action. This section looks at the linkages between the key instruments for joint UN programming at the country level, namely the **Common Country Assessment (CCA)**, the **UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF)** and the **UN Implementation Support Plan (UN-ISP)**. Furthermore it describes how the **UNAIDS Programme Acceleration Funds (PAF)** are intended to stimulate joint programming, and the role of the UNAIDS Secretariat.

4.1 CCA and UNDAF

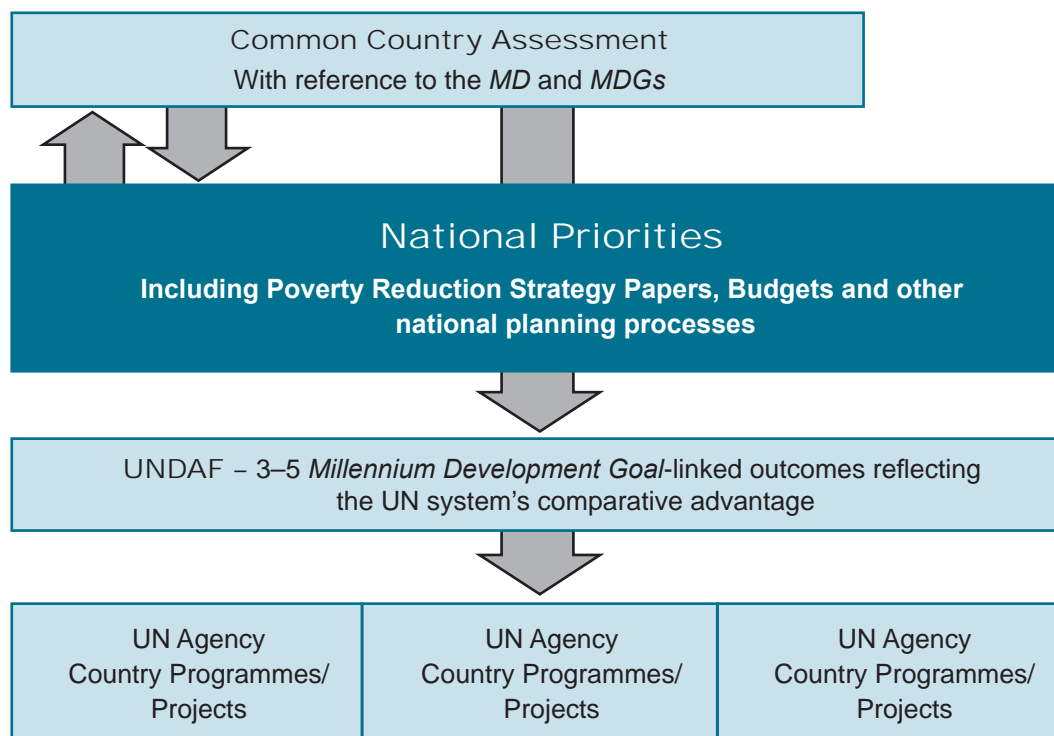
In recent years new programming instruments have been introduced to improve the coordination, effectiveness and efficiency of the UN system at country level. These include the Common Country Assessment (CCA) and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) including the UNDAF Results Matrix. In addition, the Secretary General’s agenda for further UN reform (September 2002) renewed the call for increased joint programming and pooling of resources to further enhance the effectiveness of the UN system and ensure that the system’s combined resources are put to best use.

These measures are intended to reduce transaction costs for governments, and strengthen how UN organizations programme jointly with governments and other national and international partners. They are in line with the commitment by donors to greater aid harmonization and coordination reflected in the *Rome Declaration on Harmonization* (February 2003). Furthermore they address the concerns that the UN enhances its contribution in the current context of international development assistance, with a focus on self-reliance and capacity building.



The Common Country Assessment provides government, other national and international partners and UN organizations with the **analytical basis to identify priorities** for the UN's contribution to the achievement of national goals. These priorities are in turn reflected in the United Nations Development Assistance Framework.

The following figure (from CD#504) illustrates the relationship between CCA, national priorities, *Millennium Development Goals*, UNDAF and agency country programmes:



Key Points

- The CCA should support and strengthen the national development process, e.g., in the form of a PRSP, and should draw on national monitoring and analytical processes.
- The CCA identifies root causes of major development challenges of a country, focusing on the *MDGs* and other commitments, goals and targets of the *Millennium Declaration* and conferences, summits, conventions and human rights instruments of the UN system. In many settings, one of the major development challenges will be HIV and AIDS.
- The CCA lays the foundation for the articulation of the UNDAF, a common strategic framework for a coherent UN system response to national priorities and needs, including PRSPs and equivalent national strategies. The UNDAF focuses on the synergy to be derived from exploiting each agency's comparative advantage towards common agreed outcomes.
- A key programming tool is the UNDAF Results Matrix which sets out the contribution and commitment of each UN organization to common agreed UNDAF outcomes.

- It is expected that in many heavily affected countries one of the priority areas or UNDAF outcomes will be specifically related to HIV and AIDS. Even if it is not, HIV and AIDS should be addressed as a cross-cutting issue.
- In countries where an UNDAF has not yet been prepared, UN organizations will still coordinate their activities through the work of UN Theme Groups. UN Theme Groups on HIV/AIDS indeed offer one of the best examples of UN coordination.

Key Documents

- (CD#301) The Secretary-General’s Report, *Strengthening of the United Nations: an agenda for further change*, (9 September 2002).
- (CD#306) *The Rome Declaration*, (February 2003).
- (CD#501) *UNDG Guidance Note on Joint Programming*. (19 December 2003).
- (CD#504) *Common Country Assessment and United Nations Development Assistance Framework: Guidelines for Country Teams in Creating a CCA and UNDAF in 2004*, (July 2004, UNDG).
- (CD#505) *UNDAF Results Matrix Note*, (14 January 2003).
- (CD#PP02) Results Matrix PowerPoint Presentation

Activities

Unit IV, Section 3.1-A “Background Reading and Reflection: UNDAF”

Unit IV, Section 3.1-B “Advocating for the inclusion of HIV/AIDS in CCAs for low-prevalence countries”. Develop an inverted problem tree, highlighting the impact of selected development challenges.

Unit IV, Section 3.1-C “Evaluating UNDAF commitments”. This activity has been designed to assess the outcomes of your country’s last UNDAF, and identify factors that have led to or hindered success.

Unit IV, Section 3.1-D “UNDAF Results-based programming”. Review one or more case studies from another country and then practice linking specific activities to country programme outputs and outcomes and to UNDAF outcomes.

Mainstreaming HIV/AIDS into UNDAF

Tanzania

The UNDAF for Tanzania is firmly based on two home-grown national development strategies: the Tanzania Assistance Strategy (TAS), and the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP). At the early stages of discussions with the Government on the Common Country Assessment (CCA) process, the UN System agreed to fully support and participate in the analytical phase of the Tanzania Assistance Strategy (TAS), rather than pursuing a parallel UN-led process. The UN System provided technical and financial support for the development of the TAS and PRSP. In addition, the UN System formed four thematic groups to explore key issues together. These groups “cross-checked” UN System concerns with concerns identified in the TAS/PRSP. In the process, it became clear that the UN concerns were well represented in the two strategies. The two Government-led processes have therefore subsumed the CCA for Tanzania mainland and establish, together with the Zanzibar CCA, the priorities for UNDAF.



4.2 UN Implementation Support Plan on HIV/AIDS (UN-ISP)

The five-year external evaluation of UNAIDS highlighted the dynamics of the pandemic and of the response, emphasizing in the process the need for the Programme to enhance its performance at the country level. Specifically, the evaluation called for substantial improvement in the focus and content of the UN integrated work plans on HIV/AIDS, commenting that “the extent to which (they were) reflective of genuine effective collaboration and coordinated and prioritized action of the UN system is doubtful, and so is their contribution to a more effective national response.”

Subsequently, the PCB in December 2002 decided that “current and proposed support from UN system organizations to the implementation of national AIDS strategies would be presented within fully integrated UN Implementation Support Plans to the national response (UN-ISP), consistent with needs identified in National AIDS Plans”.

More recently, the Chair of the UNDG in a *Note* to all UN Resident Coordinators and Heads of UN system agencies requested that “the UN Country Team’s Joint Programme on HIV/AIDS be captured and periodically updated in a unified UN-ISP based on the UNDAF results matrix and reflecting national needs and priorities.”

The United Nations Development Group Office (UNDGO) and UNAIDS Secretariat have now elaborated a *Guidance Note for developing UN Implementation Support Plans to Country Responses on HIV/AIDS* which is aligned with and builds on the UNDG *Guidance Note on Joint Programming* of December 2003. The *Note* is informed by the PCB decision but also situates the UN-ISP firmly within the context of the UN reform. It draws at the same time on past and ongoing efforts on HIV/AIDS programming from Theme Groups.

Key Points

- The UN-ISP is the Annual Work Plan of the UN Theme Group on HIV/AIDS in support of national needs and priorities as reflected in a National AIDS Plan or national strategic framework.
- The UN-ISP is the outcome of a joint programming exercise by the UN system. It includes all the HIV/AIDS-related activities of Cosponsors, other concerned UN organizations and UNAIDS Secretariat that contribute to a set of common agreed objectives and results, or common outcomes and outputs, in support of national needs and priorities.
- The UN-ISP on HIV/AIDS is an integral part of the overall UN support to national development priorities, including poverty reduction and equivalent strategies, and within the framework of the *Millennium Development Goals* and *UNGASS Declaration*.
- Importantly, the UN-ISP highlights the strategic niches of the Joint UN Programme and its specific value added to an effective response. The ISP will thus preferentially reflect, among others, the five UNAIDS cross-cutting strategic functions endorsed by the PCB and some of the attendant key results described in the UNAIDS Secretariat’s *Directions for the Future—Unifying and Intensifying Country Support*.
- The UN-ISP is an integral part of UNDAF and of results-based programming. Where there is already an UNDAF, the UN-ISP is the strategic contribution of UN

agencies, and of the resultant country programme outcomes, to HIV/AIDS-related UNDAF outcomes.

- The UN-ISP is a management tool and an instrument for UN Theme Group accountability. The UN Theme Group will report on progress in implementation of the UN-ISP as part of the UN Resident Coordinator's Annual Report.

Key Documents

- (CD#302) Letter from UNDG Chair: *Guidance Note on Operationalizing a Strengthened UN System response at Country Level*. (19 November 2003).
- (CD#402a) UNAIDS Five-Year Evaluation, UNAIDS, (8 October 2002).
- (CD#403b) *Letter from UNAIDS Executive Director, and Summary of PCB Decisions and Recommendations*, (15 January 2003).
- (CD#501) *UNDG Guidance Note on Joint Programming*. (19 December 2003).
- (CD#506) *Developing United Nations Implementation Support Plans for Country Responses to HIV/AIDS*. (November 2004).

Activities

Unit IV, Section 3.1-B “Advocating for the inclusion of HIV/AIDS in CCAs for low-prevalence countries”. Provides an opportunity to identify areas where specific agencies can make an impact, and can be used when preparing the ISP.

Unit IV, Section 3.2-B “Prioritization of issues for the UN-ISP.” Analyse the gaps and achievements in the current response based on the five strategic objectives, and prepare the feedback in plenary based upon the proposed reporting requirements.



Joint Programming in Action

Indonesia

In Indonesia, the response to HIV and AIDS is driven by the Government of Indonesia, civil society and affected communities. Development partners, including the UN system, provide support to country efforts. The UN Common Country Assessment (CCA) 2002–2005 identifies HIV/AIDS as a challenge to human development and the UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) articulates the fight against HIV/AIDS as one of its main outcomes.

To further coordinate the UN system support, the UN Theme Group on HIV/AIDS started the development of a UN Joint Action Programme (JAP) in May 2003. The agreed upon process of development of the JAP clearly illustrates the important team dynamics between the key triad of UN Resident Coordinator, UN Theme Group Chair and UNAIDS Country Coordinator. The document spells out the roles and responsibilities of each actor during the various stages. In the Indonesian example, the UNCT supervises, the UNTG coordinates while the UNAIDS Secretariat provides overall support to both the TG and Resident Coordinator throughout all stages.

One of the strengths of the Indonesian UN Joint Action Programme on HIV/AIDS is the fact it is based on several choices related to scope and focus.

1. The emphasis is on the relation between the **UN system and the government of Indonesia**.
2. The focus is on **national-level-policy support**, more so than on service delivery. In line with the UN's comparative advantage and mandate, the JAP is concerned with 'upstream' action, while recognizing the need for 'downstream' activities.
3. The JAP is **strategic**. More than an overview of current and planned UN activities, the JAP is an expression of strategic choices by the UN system.
4. The JAP is **incremental**. Each year, UN agencies' activities will better fit the UN joint strategy, and more UN activities will be jointly implemented.
5. The JAP does not mirror national HIV/AIDS objectives, but provides **crosscutting strategic support** to the National Strategy as a whole.

This joint planning exercise has resulted in a budget and work plan that outlines how the activities are being implemented. Activities are either:

- individual: implemented by one UN agency towards the joint overall goal (e.g., ILO supporting NAC to build links with private sector);
- collaborative: implemented by two or more UN agencies separately but in close collaboration and towards a shared specific objective (e.g., UNICEF and WHO providing complementary TA to Ministry of Health on national PMTCT guidelines);
- joint: two or more agencies jointly implementing or supporting one project or activity.

UN-ISP development

Checklist

- ✓ UN-ISP development is a joint programming exercise involving all concerned UN agencies.
- ✓ UN-ISP activities respond to nationally-defined needs and priorities.
- ✓ UN-ISP activities contribute to common agreed outcomes and/or outputs among the UN agencies as reflected (where relevant) in the Country Team's UNDAF Results Matrix.
- ✓ The UN Theme Group uses the UN-ISP to monitor and report (through the UN Resident Coordinator's annual report) on the UN system's collective support to the country's HIV/AIDS response.

4.3 UNAIDS Programme Acceleration Funds

“PAF should not be diluted into the general planning of projects by individual agencies, but stand out as a common tool to achieve higher levels of joint UN action in the AIDS field.”

— UN Theme Group Chair, China, 2001

To stimulate joint action by UN system organizations in support of national responses, catalytic interagency funds called Programme Acceleration Funds (PAF) are available to UN Theme Groups for joint programming on HIV/AIDS. The purpose of PAF is to enable UN Theme Groups to make a strategic contribution to an effective and efficient scaled-up national response.

They are therefore to be programmed by UN Theme Groups on HIV/AIDS such that they catalyse and leverage new resources and partnerships, generate innovative approaches, and generally strengthen programme planning and development, and monitoring and evaluation efforts.

Key points

- Programme Acceleration Funds are to be programmed jointly by UN Theme Groups.
- Programme Acceleration Funds should not be utilized to support activities that are part of the core mandate of a UN agency.
- As limited, catalytic funds, they are intended to leverage additional resources and support activities or approaches that represent a strategic contribution of the Joint UN Programme to scaled-up national responses.
- UN-ISP activities are therefore suitable for PAF funding.
- The process of developing a PAF proposal by the UN Theme Group is a prime example of a joint planning exercise by UN organizations around a specific issue.
- Not only do PAF enable UN Theme Groups to support national strategies, they also help to stimulate and enhance joint UN action.



Criteria for use of Programme Acceleration Funds 2004–2005

Activities funded by PAF are expected to be in line with one or more of the five cross-cutting functions of the Joint Programme as defined by the PCB. UNImplementation Support Plan activities are also expected to be oriented around the five functions and highlight the strategic contributions of the UN system. As such they may be suitable for PAF funding.

Within the parameters outlined in these five functions, priority is given to catalytic activities that address the following issues:

- promoting the greater involvement of people living with HIV and AIDS;
- promoting the achievement of the “Three Ones” (see 3.2.1);
- addressing the growing feminization of the epidemic and the vulnerability of women to HIV;
- supporting national AIDS campaigns in the context of the World AIDS Campaign;
- providing strategic support to the “3 by 5” initiative; and
- targeting thematic and programme areas that represent important gaps in a country’s response, especially sensitive and neglected issues (e.g., sex work, injecting drug use, men who have sex with men).

Key documents

(CD#507) *Guidance Note for UNAIDS Programme Acceleration Funds—2004/2005*

Activity

Unit IV, Activity 3.5 A “Background Reading and Reflection: Resource Mobilization”.

Unit IV, Activity 3.5 B “Opportunities for Resource Mobilization”. Form research teams focusing on one type of funding mechanism (including PAF), and to address key questions regarding the Theme Group’s role in resource mobilization and utilization.

Leveraging Additional Resources using Programme Acceleration Funds

Nepal

The Nepalese PAF project to support the new National Strategy on HIV/AIDS provides a good example of strategic use of PAF. The PAF proposal was developed jointly by the UN Theme Group on HIV/AIDS, in line with the UN Country Team Strategy on HIV/AIDS, with a focus on strengthening national and decentralized programme structures and planning, with a view of leveraging new and already pledged resources.

The PAF funds were utilized to provide support to: 1) the costing of the national strategy; 2) building the capacity of the National AIDS Council and decentralized structures; 3) the development of management and work plans; 4) central management and implementation mechanisms; and 5) resource mobilization. The resulting operational plan received support from the United Kingdom Department for International Development (US\$ 20 million over five years), AusAid (US\$ 3 million) and USAID (US\$ 25 million).

This approach reflects how the Joint UN programme can contribute strategically to scaling up national responses to HIV and AIDS by building both human and institutional capacity. It furthermore provides a prime example of a joint planning exercise by UN agencies around a specific issue.

5. The UN Learning Strategy on HIV/AIDS

At the core of an effective United Nations system response to HIV/AIDS are the knowledge, skills and capacity of its staff. It goes without saying that the credibility of the UN system with governments, NGOs and others will be undermined if we cannot achieve internally what we are asking the rest of the world to do.

— Peter Piot, UNAIDS Executive Director, UN Learning Strategy on HIV/AIDS, 2004

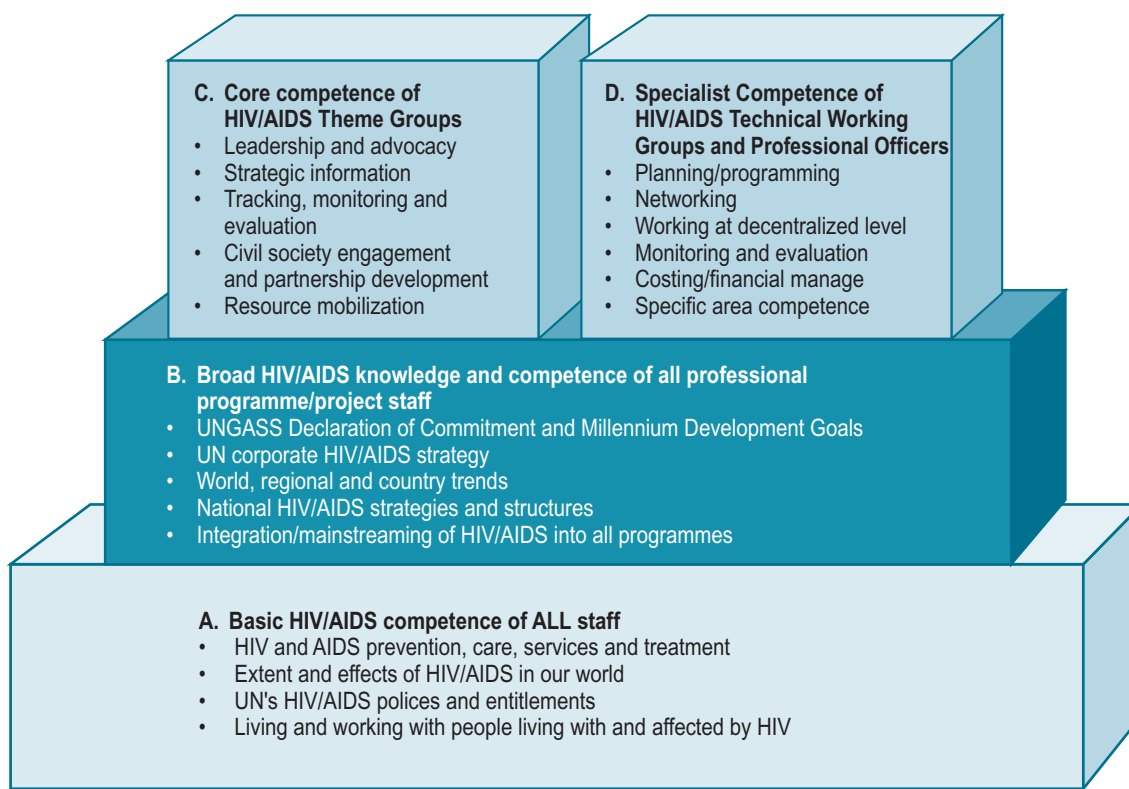
Expectations are high—from governments, civil society and in particular from those most affected by HIV/AIDS—of what the UN system, and the Joint UN Programme on HIV/AIDS in particular, can and should do in support of an effective national response. These expectations, however, often outstrip the UN system’s capacity to meet them. In response to this, the Committee of Cosponsoring Organizations of UNAIDS approved a *Learning Strategy* to help the UN system build its capacity through developing the competence of its staff on HIV/AIDS.

Key Points

- The goals of the *Learning Strategy* are twofold: 1) to develop the knowledge and competence of UN staff so that they are able to best support national responses to HIV/AIDS; and 2) to ensure that all UN staff members are able to make informed decisions to protect themselves from HIV and to know where to turn to for the best possible care and treatment.
- The learning framework consists of building blocks of HIV and AIDS knowledge and competence and defines the expected minimum standards as well as desirable additional standards to be met by UN staff members at different levels.
- UNAIDS Secretariat supports the training of country facilitators who can be called upon to assist the UN Country Team to plan, organize, implement, evaluate and report on HIV/AIDS learning activities. The facilitators are agency staff at country level that has been nominated by the UN CT. An UNAIDS e-workspace has been devoted to the subsequent networking and exchanges of good practices and lessons learnt among UN Country Teams.
- The minimum standards expected of UN Theme Groups include competencies expected of all professional programme staff, plus additional competence related to the five cross-cutting functions, and strategies to effectively plan, implement, monitor and evaluate joint UN programmes.
- The UN Country Team is expected to implement the *Learning Strategy*. The UN Resident Coordinator, UN Theme Group Chair and UNAIDS Country Coordinators all have key roles and responsibilities in supporting implementation, along with facilitators for the *Learning Strategy* designated by the Country Team.



Building Blocks of the UN Learning Strategy on HIV/AIDS



Key Documents

- (CD#101) *The United Nations Learning Strategy on HIV/AIDS: building competence of the UN and its staff to respond to HIV/AIDS.* (UNAIDS, 2004)
- (CD#102a-d) *The Facilitators' Guide to Implementing the Learning Strategy*
- **Unit I:** *Getting Started (How to plan, implement and evaluate learning activities)*
 - **Unit II:** *A menu of learning approaches and examples of those approaches in practice*
 - **Unit III:** *HIV/AIDS in the Workplace (Activities)*
 - **Unit IV:** *Supporting National Responses (Activities)*
 - **CD-ROM Reference Library** *(all documents referred to throughout the Facilitators Guide)*
- (CD#302) *Letter from UNDG Chair: Guidance Note on Operationalizing a Strengthened UN System response at Country Level.* (19 November 2003).

Learning Strategy implementation

Checklist

- ✓ The UN Country Team has designated a HIV/AIDS Learning Advisory Group to lead the development, monitoring and evaluation of a HIV/AIDS country-learning plan
- ✓ The UN Country Team has conducted a needs assessment, and determined priority areas for learning
- ✓ The UN Country Team has developed and approved a HIV/AIDS learning plan and identified the necessary resources for implementation
- ✓ All UN staff are participating in regular inter-agency learning activities on HIV/AIDS
- ✓ The UNCT is evaluating all learning programmes, and continually improving their practices



Annex I: Strategic Functions of UNAIDS

As described in **section 2.1** of this Resource Guide, the changing financial, technical and political environment means that, more than ever before, the UN system must define what constitute **strategic contributions** on their part in support of the national response. The following five cross-cutting functions are now acknowledged as representing UNAIDS' strategic contributions.

1. **Leadership and advocacy** for effective action on the epidemic.
2. **Civil society engagement and partnership** development.
3. **Strategic information** required to guide efforts of partners.
4. **Tracking, monitoring and evaluation** of the epidemic and responses to it.
5. Financial, technical and political **resource mobilization**.

These are reflected in the *Decisions, Recommendations and Conclusions* adopted by the Thirteenth meeting of the UNAIDS PCB in Lisbon, December 2002 (CD#403b), and further outlined in the UNAIDS/CRD publication, *Directions for the Future: Unifying and Intensifying Country Support* (CD#404). The latter document translates the strategic functions into thirteen key results for the Joint Programme.

This annex presents those **key results** and offers a few examples of **current practices** for each of the strategic functions. *Note that the strategic functions are inter-dependent and mutually reinforcing, and that any one particular activity may often relate to two or more of the strategic functions.*

1. Leadership and advocacy for effective action on the epidemic

Strong commitment and leadership from a nation's highest political authorities and others who influence major policy decisions is a key aspect of developing a robust response to AIDS. This holds true for both national governments and the UN system at country level. Strong leadership is needed in both national AIDS coordinating bodies and UN Theme Groups if they are to effectively carry out their primary task of coordination.

Key results

- Strengthened National AIDS Coordinating Bodies.
- Regional and national leadership initiatives supported to strengthen country responses.
- Enhanced UN joint programming through the development and implementation of the UN-ISP and regional UN action plans.

Examples

Zambia: Mobilization of resources to strengthen the National AIDS Council.

UNAIDS advocated and financed a needs-assessment survey of National AIDS Council (NAC) which was conducted late 2002 by Deloitte and Touche (funds from the African Development Bank were used for this purpose). Their findings triggered pledges, and later in 2003, the development of implementation plans, administrative and financial frameworks, human resource management frameworks and M&E plans for NAC. Pledges



were made in June 2003 and there was general agreement that strengthening NAC was a priority for the majority of cooperating partners. UNAIDS has also successfully lobbied for funding for NAC from bilateral partners and has used the Expanded Theme Group meetings as a forum to advocate for increased overall levels of funding for HIV and AIDS programmes.

Lesotho: Advocacy for an Expanded Response

The UN Country Team through the Expanded Theme Group on HIV/AIDS has played a critical role in supporting an expanded multi-sectoral response to the AIDS epidemic. The results include the development and finalization of a manual *Turning a crisis into an Opportunity: Scaling up the Fight Against HIV/AIDS in Lesotho* which the government has adopted as an official working/reference document to guide the national response. The government has also decided to establish a broad-based National AIDS Commission (NAC) replacing the Lesotho AIDS Programme Coordinating Authority, and mainstreaming HIV/AIDS into all Government policies, programmes and budgets.

India: Mobilizing Leadership across the Political Divide

In July 2003, 1200 Indian Ministers, parliamentarians and mayors from all corners of the country convened to learn about HIV/AIDS and agree on actions that they could take. The convention—actively supported by UNAIDS and inaugurated by the then Prime Minister of India and the then leader of the opposition Sonia Gandhi—enabled Indian best practices to be discussed. The meeting also mobilized the political leaders to increase their personal actions, as reflected in their closing declaration entitled *Leadership in Combating HIV/AIDS*.

The Convention's impact is still being felt. Bangladesh and Pakistan are in the planning stages of similar events. Within India, the preparatory planning committees—composed of representatives from all political parties—have taken on a life of their own, and with support from UNAIDS, will now take the convention's declaration forward at district level with meetings of Zilla Parishad (district level governance bodies) and Panchayat (grass root level) members.

2. Civil society engagement and partnership development

A robust national AIDS response may begin with political leadership, but its effectiveness is dependent on the participation of the private sector and civil society, especially community-based organizations and networks of people living with HIV. Broad participation in the AIDS response not only increases its reach, it increases efficiency, transparency and sustainability.

Key results

- Partnership forums strengthened and expanded at country level by including civil society and the private sector.
- Civil society empowered for social dialogue, policy development and implementation.

Examples

Nepal: Empowering People Living With and/or Affected by HIV and AIDS.

A National Association of People Living with HIV and AIDS (NAP+N) was formally established (registered) in November 2003. This process was supported by the Theme Group through PAF. For the first time people living with HIV and AIDS came together and

established a formal network to express their needs, and use it as a platform for joint action. The coordinator of the network is now also a member of the Theme Group, the CCM and other coordinating bodies in Nepal. Moreover, the formal registration of the network enables it to mobilize resources for its activities.

Namibia: Getting down to business—mobilizing the Private Sector

The UNAIDS Secretariat, in collaboration with the UN Foundation and the World Economic Forum, created the Partnership Menus to identify *how* companies can become engaged in the fight against HIV/AIDS. The goals of the Partnership Menus are: leveraging of large/influential membership organizations; strengthening of mechanisms for private sector outreach; development of strategic information and capacity building of key partners.

In Namibia, representatives from the Theme Group were involved from the inception. The UCC and a TG representative attended the Orientation on Private Sector Mobilization in Bangkok in 2002 and discussed the tool with other country teams. Back in the country, a working group was set up involving the Theme Group, government, nongovernmental organizations, and representatives from the Namibia Chambers of Commerce and Industry (NCCI) in order to define a strategy for working with the private sector in Namibia and to develop the Partnership Menu.

The Partnership Menu created a forum where the different sectors collaborated to move an agenda forward with the private sector. The process for the development of the menu helped strengthen networks and mechanisms for partnership building in the country. The commitment of the actors strengthened and the project took on a broader level of engagement. It served as a catalyst for the establishment of the Namibia Business Coalition on HIV/AIDS (NABCOA). The Menu also helped business and organizations working with businesses identify strategic information and technical resources, such as technical experts, on-going projects/programmes, publications and websites. The Theme Group's interaction with and understanding of the private sector was strengthened as a result.

NABCOA was launched nationally in June 2003 by Namibia's Prime Minister Theo Ben Guirab and internationally at the World Economic Forum's Africa Summit in Durban by Namibian Deputy Minister of Health Richard Nchabi Kawmi. The coalition has over 50 members and its unique board includes not only the private sector, but also government, NGOs and organizations of people living with HIV and AIDS. The composition of the NABCOA Board of Directors represents an important multisectoral evolution in business coalition approaches that was engendered by the Partnership Menu development process.

Brazil: HIV/AIDS on air—advocacy through the media.

A Technical Working Group on Media was instituted in 2002, including communication focal points from UN Theme Group members. This group has met on a regular basis to discuss a specific project related to radio and young people (PAF-MEDIA) and other important topics related to UNAIDS and its activities in Brazil, such as mass media campaigns and the AIDS Awareness Day. The group has worked in a collaborative network so that all members have the right to voice opinions, resulting in a "collective building process".

3. Strategic information required to guide efforts of partners

The diverse experiences from national HIV/AIDS responses around the world are an under-utilized resource. Lessons learned during a prevention programme in one country can inform the development of a similar programme elsewhere. Too often, these lessons are not even shared within a country, much less internationally. UNAIDS has made the gathering and utilization of strategic information a priority task at country level.



Key results

- Country-specific best practices identified, documented, promoted and utilized.
- Strategic information generated through country progress reports and regional trend analyses.

Examples

Egypt: generating strategic information for policy and strategy

The UN Theme Group has taken a series of steps to improve the knowledge on the HIV/AIDS situation in Egypt that can assist in developing the national response. An Assessment of the HIV/AIDS Situation and Response was carried out which for the first time mapped the HIV/AIDS response in Egypt and presented data on the social and legal context of the epidemic. The Theme Group also provided technical support to a qualitative study on young people and HIV/AIDS which documented, again for the first time, the risk behaviour of young people as well as information on HIV/AIDS and attitudes towards people living with HIV and AIDS and vulnerable groups.

Technical and financial support was also provided—through PAF 2002-2003—to a qualitative study on young people and HIV/AIDS (led by UNFPA) which included information on HIV risk of street children. Technical and financial input, again through PAF, was provided to a cross-sectional survey on injecting drug users in Cairo (led by UNODC). Finally, UNAIDS assisted in the calculation of national HIV/AIDS estimates for 2003.

4. Tracking, monitoring and evaluation of the epidemic and actions responding to it

Tracking the growth of the AIDS epidemic and monitoring the progress of efforts to contain it are critical aspects to the development of a more effective national response. As the international community invests more resources in the HIV/AIDS fight of the developing world, even more emphasis is being placed on the monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness of HIV/AIDS programmes.

Key results

- Country Response Information System established to track, monitor and evaluate country responses.
- Government-led participatory reviews of country responses conducted.
- Definition of resource gaps, costing and budgeting of plans, and strategic allocation of resources.

Key Documents

(CD#604) *Country Response Information System: Overview of the system and its plan of establishment.* UNAIDS, March 2003.

Examples

Zimbabwe: monitoring the response to the epidemic—District Response Information System

In 2001 the Zimbabwean National AIDS Council (NAC) embarked on a decentralized HIV/AIDS implementation programme involving 57 rural districts and 23 urban districts. The need for a response information system that complements the decentralized approach to fighting HIV/AIDS was realized from the very beginning of the response. Zimbabwe took an early interest in CRIS and decided to install the system at a sub national level—the District Response Information System (DRIS). This was done with support from the UN Theme Group.

The system will be based in the District AIDS Action Committee Offices and linked to the community sub-district offices and implementing agencies (nongovernmental organizations, Mission hospitals and other sector ministries) as well as the National Aids Commission Head and Provincial Offices. At the field level, each frontline worker and Village AIDS Action Committee will eventually collect village-level data on standard data collection tools, validating the data at a monthly meeting of all village frontline workers. The National AIDS Commission worked with UNAIDS, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the University of Zimbabwe to define a set of national indicators.

The DRIS will facilitate the monitoring of the epidemiological situation and the design of interventions. It is also expected that DRIS will facilitate access to timely and complete information on processes and outcomes which are needed to evaluate the response to the epidemic. The system is designed to eventually feed into the national Country Response Information System.

Ghana: minimizing transaction costs: through the joint programming review

In Ghana a joint review of the national response was carried out in the beginning of 2004. The joint review aimed at identifying achievements, gaps, challenges and opportunities in relation to the five strategic intervention areas identified in the national strategic framework for HIV/AIDS. The joint effort was to forestall separate and multiple reviews by different stakeholders and funding agencies and to ensure the collective acceptance and ownership of the outcome of the review.

The UN acting through UNAIDS made significant contributions to the process. The idea for the joint review was fine-tuned by the UN Theme Group on HIV/AIDS. Following this, the UN advocated and mobilized relevant stakeholders to support the joint review through the Expanded Theme Group and the Technical Working Groups. Furthermore, the UN facilitated setting up the steering committee and provided leadership in the design of the terms of reference, selection of consultants and roadmap for the joint review. Finally, the UN provided technical and financial support.

The joint review was successfully organized with active participation of partners and stakeholders. The outcome of the review is expected to provide the basis for revising the national strategic framework and influence future HIV/AIDS programming and policies.

The lessons learnt show that spending time and resources to clarify partners and stakeholders understanding and concerns on strategic issues can significantly enhance the national response. All partners recognized the need to institutionalize the joint review as an annual or bi-annual event.



5. Financial, technical and political resource mobilization

The international commitment to fight HIV/AIDS in low- and middle-income countries has increased rapidly in recent years, as evidenced by the advent of significant multilateral funding mechanisms such as the World Bank Multi-Country AIDS Programme and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. In order to facilitate access to, and effective utilization of, resources, UNAIDS is placing considerable emphasis on strengthening the capacities of countries to mobilize technical and financial support. UNAIDS staff and consultants are actively assisting countries in the drafting and submissions of grant proposals, especially in traditionally weak components such as strategic planning, costing, monitoring and evaluation and human resource development planning.

Key results

- HIV/AIDS integrated and mainstreamed into relevant development frameworks.
- Countries supported to leverage financial resources.
- Technical support to partners provided through regional Technical Support Facilities.

Examples

Myanmar: mobilizing the international community and civil society

The Joint Programme for HIV/AIDS: Myanmar 2003–2005 and the Fund for HIV/AIDS in Myanmar (FHAM) demonstrate how the UN can pull together to forge effective inter-agency and multi-stakeholder cooperation on HIV/AIDS even in difficult political circumstances. Development cooperation is made difficult by the limited willingness of donors to work in Myanmar due to the political situation. Meanwhile the spread of the epidemic has continued rapidly.

UNAIDS in Myanmar took the lead in developing the Joint Programme on HIV/AIDS in Myanmar which went beyond just planning the UN support for the national response. Developed jointly by the UN, the government and nongovernmental organizations, and involving extensive consultation with the political opposition, the Programme sets out a strategic framework and an operational plan for all parties to adhere to. The FHAM is the channel through which donors and international institutions can contribute to the Programme. To date, over US\$ 20 million has been pledged to the FHAM. UNAIDS and the Expanded Theme group provided oversight for the management and implementation of the fund.

Haiti: leveraging financial resources

In Haiti, UNAIDS was instrumental in providing support to Haiti in its successful first round Global Fund application. The areas of support included: timely information and policy guidance on procedures of the then newly established Global Fund; technical support in the drafting of the proposal; facilitation role for the inclusion of NGOs and coordination with donors. Since the approval of the proposal UNAIDS has, on behalf of the Country Coordinating Mechanism, played a role of facilitation, public relations and networking with the Global Fund Secretariat and provided support to Haiti in the implementation phase.

UNAIDS Secretariat in Haiti has also facilitated access to resources from the William J. Clinton Foundation, European Union, the Japanese Embassy, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and World AIDS Foundation.

Annex II: UN Theme Group on HIV/AIDS Generic Terms of Reference

Generic Terms of Reference (to be adapted to different country contexts)

The UN Theme Group on HIV/AIDS is a forum to plan, manage and monitor a coordinated UN response. It brings together the country representatives of Cosponsors and other concerned UN agencies. It is accountable for the UN system's collective performance in support of the country's response. The UN Theme Group is "UNAIDS" at country level.

Purpose

To ensure optimal joint action of UN agencies in support of an effective scaled-up country response.

Specific UN TG terms of reference may include:

- to advocate political commitment to a multisectoral, expanded response;
- to advocate and support national leadership and coordination of the response;
- to facilitate/ broker partnerships between government/nongovernmental organizations/civil society/bilaterals/private sector;
- to advocate and promote international best practice;
- to assist with the mobilization of technical, financial and institutional resources (including from UN system) for a scaled-up response; and
- to support the implementation of the *UN Learning Strategy on HIV/AIDS*.

The UN Resident Coordinator is responsible for ensuring the setting-up and effective functioning of a UN Theme Group on HIV/AIDS. The UN Resident Coordinator delegates the responsibility for effective Theme Group functioning to a Theme Group Chair, ideally for two years.

A Technical Working Group (TWG) supports the UN Theme Group in the development, implementation and monitoring of a joint UN strategy and UN Implementation Support Plan.



Annex III: Technical Working Group Generic Terms of Reference

Generic Terms of Reference (to be adapted to different country contexts)

Purpose:

The Technical Working Group's primary purpose is to provide coherent interagency technical inputs to the UN Theme Group for optimal support of the UN system to the national response.

Under the leadership and guidance of the UN Theme Group Chair and UNAIDS Country Coordinator, the UN Technical Working Group will:

1. Ensure a strong, coordinated and strategic UN system response in support of national needs and priorities through:

- development and implementation of a joint UN strategy and work plan in support of the national response to HIV/AIDS reflected in an annual UN Implementation Support Plan (UN-ISP);
- mainstreaming of HIV/AIDS into respective agency country programmes, including through the UNDAF; and
- supporting the implementation by the UN system of the *UN Learning Strategy on HIV/AIDS*.

2. Contribute to mobilizing resources—financial and technical—for a scaled-up national response by:

- facilitating timely access by national partners to the collective technical support within the UN system and outside, including through technical resource facilities;
- supporting the design and development of major grant proposals; and
- integrating HIV/AIDS into broad development instruments, especially PRSP.

3. Support an effective, nationally owned and nationally driven multisectoral response by:

- facilitating the application and adaptation of the "Three Ones" principles, especially through providing "space" for joint programming, policy dialogue and inclusive partnerships with national and international stakeholders;
- facilitating capacity strengthening of national entities and systems; and
- facilitating and participating in government-led participatory reviews.

4. Generate and disseminate strategic information on the situation and the response by:

- monitoring and reporting on the status of the UN-ISP through the UN RC annual report;
- monitoring and reporting on the overall national situation and response, including resource tracking and analysis of programme gaps;



- monitoring and reporting on the status and progress of the “Three Ones” principles;
and
- collation of lessons learnt and good practices on effective support to national responses, both within the UN system and outside, to inform policies and programmes.

Annex IV: UN Theme Group Chair Generic Terms of Reference

The Chair of the UN Theme Group on HIV/AIDS (UN TG) is designated from among UN Country Team members through a collegial process. The choice is made on the basis of proven commitment and capacity, and availability, ideally for a period of two years. The Chair is usually the country representative of one of the Cosponsoring organizations.

With authority delegated from the UN Resident Coordinator—who is ultimately responsible for the functioning and effectiveness of the UN Theme Group—the Theme Group Chair, with support from the UCC, provides leadership and guidance for strategic joint UN action through:

1. Ensuring the effective functioning of the UN Theme Group mechanism by:

- convening regular meetings of the UN Theme Group for appraisal and review of policies and strategies for UN support to country responses on HIV/AIDS;
- supporting and, when necessary, chairing Technical Working Group meetings for appraisal and review of relevant individual and joint programmes of the UN system agencies in support of country responses;
- providing day-to-day guidance and support to the UCC in the UCC's coordination and facilitation roles both within and beyond the UN system; and
- providing regular feedback to the UN RC on the Theme Group functioning, including an annual report on the Theme Group's achievements.

2. Mobilizing the resources of cosponsors and other UN agencies around a common UN strategy and joint UN action in support of national needs and priorities by:

- promoting the development by the UN TG of a joint UN strategy on HIV/AIDS and its application through a UN Implementation Support Plan (UN-ISP);
- overseeing the monitoring and reporting of UN TG members' activities against indicators based on the UN-ISP;
- ensuring the strategic use of UNAIDS Programme Acceleration Funds by the UN TG to support a scaled-up response; and
- facilitating and supporting the integration of HIV/AIDS programming into mainstream development programming processes, including CCA/UNDAF, PRSP.

3. Advocating and supporting effective action on the epidemic by:

- facilitating the development and application of a joint UN advocacy strategy and plan on behalf of and with the Theme Group;
- promoting technically and ethically sound policies and strategies;
- promoting and supporting mechanisms and action (e.g., partnership forums, CCMs) that enable civil society engagement and partnership development generally;
- promoting and supporting mechanisms and action in support of effective national leadership and coordination of the response (e.g., strengthening National AIDS Councils, development of monitoring and evaluation systems); and
- facilitating and supporting the mobilization of resources, both domestic and international, to meet national needs and priorities.



4. Promoting and supporting the *UN Learning Strategy on HIV/AIDS* by:

- facilitating the implementation of the *UN Learning Strategy on HIV/AIDS*, including the development and application of an HIV/AIDS in the UN workplace programme;
- supporting learning initiatives that build the capacity of UN staff to better support national responses.

5. Fulfilling representational functions for the Joint UN Programme

These overall roles and responsibilities are to be adapted where relevant to specific country contexts and should be included in the individual's annual work plan and be part of her or his institutional appraisal.

Annex V: UNAIDS Country Coordinator Generic Terms of Reference

The UNAIDS Country Coordinator (UCC) operates within the Resident Coordinator system to support the work of the UN Country Team. The primary role of the UCC is to support and facilitate a joint UN response to HIV/AIDS at country level. Working from a strong UN platform, the UCC serves to strengthen the links between the UN system, government, civil society, and people living with HIV and AIDS.

The UCC supports the efficient functioning of the UN Theme Group on HIV/AIDS mechanism (including the Technical Working Groups and other relevant forums) to ensure coordination and communication within the UN and between the UN, government and all other development partners.

The UCC will support the UN Country Team in five cross-cutting functions: 1) leadership and advocacy for effective action on the epidemic; 2) strategic information required to guide the efforts of partners; 3) tracking, monitoring and evaluation of the epidemic and actions responding to it; 4) civil society engagement and partnership development; and 5) financial, technical and political resource mobilization.

Specifically, the UCC will support the UN Country Team to provide:

1) Leadership and Advocacy for effective action on the epidemic

- a) Advocate for integration and mainstreaming of HIV/AIDS, especially through UNDAF and PRSP processes, and other major development instruments.
- b) Advocate for the emergence and affirmation of national coordinating entities (e.g., National AIDS Councils).
- c) Provide leadership and guidance on policy and strategy to support a scaled-up national response.
- d) Advocate with all national and international partners—government, civil society, bilateral and multilateral—for an expanded response to AIDS on issues relevant to the national situation.
- e) Facilitate the development and application of a Joint UN advocacy strategy and plan.

2) Strategic information required to guide the efforts of partners

- a) Ensure the collation, dissemination and use of strategic information across the range of issues and themes needed to guide public policy, support the UN's advocacy efforts, and inform technically and ethically sound policies and programmes.
- b) Support the establishment and consolidation of mechanisms (Country Response Information Systems) to track the national response, including national programme efforts, financing and results.
- c) Facilitate the application by the UN Country Team of the *UN Learning Strategy on HIV/AIDS*, including HIV in the UN workplace programmes.



3) Tracking, monitoring and evaluation of the epidemic and response

- a) Promote the development and consolidation of M&E systems in general; facilitate coordination of Cosponsor activities for M&E systems development (e.g., GAMET).
- b) Support the development of a joint UN strategy on HIV/AIDS and monitoring of a UN implementation support plan based on the UNDAF Results Matrix.
- c) Encourage periodic monitoring and reporting of activities of Cosponsors and other UN agencies at UN Theme Group level according to an agreed set of indicators based on a UN-ISP.
- d) Facilitate strategic management of the response, including government-led participatory reviews.
- e) Facilitate tracking of resources allocated to HIV/AIDS-related activities and identification and monitoring of resource gaps.

4) Civil society engagement and partnership development

- a) Promote increased participation of all sectors of society, national and international partners, in the planning, implementation and evaluation of AIDS activities through mechanisms such as national partnership forums.
- b) Mobilize support for civil society organizations and nongovernmental organizations, in particular those representing people living with HIV and AIDS, to contribute to national policy and programme development.
- c) Support national leadership for an expanded response, inclusive of civil society, people living with HIV and AIDS, and the private sector.
- d) Broker strategic partnerships between national and international programme partners.

5) Financial, technical and political resource mobilization

- a) Identify and monitor capacity gaps; mobilize technical, financial and institutional resources to respond to needs.
- b) Facilitate national leadership of coordinated efforts to mobilize resources, domestic and international, including from development banks, funds and foundations.
- c) Promote participatory processes for strategic allocation and utilisation of resources, supportive of national priorities and national capacity building.

The UCC is a member of the full UN Country Team and participates in all UN country Team meetings, except on those occasions when the Resident Coordinator decides that the senior management group (i.e., accredited representatives of the UN system organizations) needs to meet alone. The UCC is recruited by the UNAIDS Secretariat based on a competency framework which emphasizes leadership qualities, interpersonal, facilitation, analysis, presentation and writing skills. In accordance with WHO procedures, the Performance Evaluation Report of the UCC is completed by the UNAIDS Secretariat, based on the inputs from the UN Theme Group Chair and the Resident Coordinator.

Annex VI: Tool for a Theme Group Self-Assessment

Throughout this guide we have provided some guidelines for assessing progress towards implementing the roles and responsibilities of the Theme Group. Another possibility that exists for more formal or detailed self-assessments: The Self-Assessment Framework that is included in the *Facilitators' Guide to Implementation of the UN Learning Strategy on HIV/AIDS*.

The self-assessment framework that is included in the *Facilitators' Guide* is intended for use by UN teams to look at their key competencies. The tool features ten key practices, each with five levels ranging from “Low” to “High”. Some of the areas are related to HIV/AIDS in the UN workplace, others to supporting national responses to HIV/AIDS while a few are broader and encompass both areas.

UN teams are encouraged to assess themselves using the criteria for each of those practices as a guide, assessing present competence while setting targets for future improvement of specific competencies.

Who is it for?

The Assessment Framework for the *UN Learning Strategy on HIV/AIDS* has been designed to be used by any group that wishes to assess itself in relation to the competencies defined in the learning strategy. The 'groups' include:

- the UN Country Team;
- the UN HIV/AIDS Theme Group;
- the HIV/AIDS Technical Working Group;
- agency-specific groups, such as programme and project staff or operations/administrative staff;
- groups of general staff members at agency level or across agencies; and
- any other UN group that may benefit from assessing its HIV/AIDS practices.

It may be useful for each agency to assess itself independently and to eventually allow comparison of the strengths and areas of growth for each of the agencies at country level.

For the purpose of a separate self-assessment we would recommend the following steps.

1. Identify the right mix of people representing the UN group.
2. Hold a group discussion to complete the self-assessment of current levels of competence.
3. Identify three practices to improve which will have the greatest impact for the least resources.
4. Capture requests for help and offers of good practices to share.

For more information refer to **Section 5 of Unit 1** of the *Facilitators' Guide*.



Criteria	Low 1	2
Identify and address vulnerability	We know that HIV and AIDS touches our world and have to accept that we may be vulnerable as individuals	We recognize that we in the UN are affected by HIV and AIDS and that we need to discuss our vulnerability fully and openly
Acknowledgment and Recognition of HIV and AIDS	We recognize HIV and AIDS as a societal issue and have yet to accept it as an issue for our workplace	Some of us started discussing “difficult” topics related to HIV and AIDS (e.g., sex, sexuality, drugs, trust and death)
Inclusion	We make no efforts to involve those effected by the epidemic in our discussions on HIV/AIDS	We seek to work and learn with people affected by the HIV/AIDS epidemic (people living with HIV and AIDS, youth, women)
Prevention of HIV transmission in the UN workplace	We rely on externally provided messages and services to carry out our prevention campaign	Information and Education Campaigns on HIV and AIDS only target and/or reach part of the staff
Care and Treatment	We are aware of the general issues and have yet to put together the relevant information	We know about UN policies and have information on services available, yet many may not access care of treatment for fear of stigma and discrimination
UN Theme Group on HIV/AIDS Functioning	The guiding principles for Theme Group operations have yet to be applied consistently.	As a Theme Group, we meet on a regular basis and our main purpose is to share information about our respective agencies work plans on HIV and AIDS
Adapting the UN’s support to National Responses	We are in the process of adapting our individual agency’s response and have yet to do so as a UN Country Team / Theme Group	We – in our respective agencies – have earmarked resources although these remain confined to supplementing agencies’ regular or core programme activities
Learning and transfer	We —at the agency level— learn to respond to HIV/AIDS from our actions	We share learning on HIV and AIDS between agencies; we adopt good practices from one another
Enhancing the UN CT capacity to support the national response through learning	We have yet to acknowledge the need for implementing a learning approach that will enhance the UN system’s capacity to support the national response	We acknowledged the need to enhance our capacity to support the national response and yet have to define our priority learning needs
Measuring Change	We are changing because we believe it is the right thing to do but do not measure the impact.	We begin consciously to self measure.

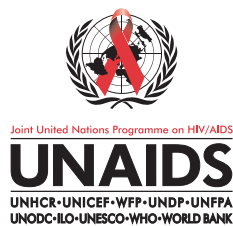
Minimum "3" Standard	4	5 High
We have identified and discussed our areas of vulnerability and risk, both individually and as a UN family	We have a clear approach to address risk and vulnerability and we have assessed the impact of the approach	As UN staff, we address our vulnerability to HIV and include other groups in our activities including families
We recognize that HIV and AIDS affects us as a community and we discuss it amongst ourselves through established mechanisms	We acknowledge collectively our concerns and challenges on dealing with HIV and AIDS. We seek others for mutual support and learning	We demonstrate our collective strength in dealing with the challenges posed by HIV and AIDS and are planning for the future
We address issues of stigma and discrimination and do not tolerate discrimination based on one's HIV status	We consciously include and support people living with and affected by HIV and value each staff member's contribution	UN staff living with or affected by HIV participate in a meaningful way to the organization's goals
We – staff and families – know the basic facts about HIV and AIDS, how to protect ourselves and take measures accordingly	We promote safer behaviours through skills building on prevention, the provision of condoms, and know where to turn for information and counselling	We take specific actions to protect ourselves individually and collectively from HIV, including voluntary confidential counselling and testing as needed
Those of us who are covered under the HIV care and treatment policies take advantage of services as needed	We explore innovative initiatives so that care and treatment policies are inclusive of all staff irrespective of contractual status.	HIV and AIDS care and treatment are, affordable and available to all UN staff—irrespective of contractual status—and families/partners that need them.
As Theme Group members, we use the Theme Group as a forum for common UN policy decisions and strategic reflection on UN support to the national response	We articulated and regularly update a common UN strategy and joint UN work plan, in support of the national response	We hold ourselves accountable against the joint UN implementation support plan and report accordingly on progress through the TG chair and UN RC
The Theme Group is a forum for common UN policy decisions and strategic reflection on UN support to the national response	We – as a UN Theme Group – have developed a common strategy reflected in a UN Implementation Support Plan and/or UNDAF specific outcome	We are implementing our UN-ISP and remain alert to the opportunities and needs for adaptation.
We plan learning activities in our individual agencies to increase our competence to respond to HIV and AIDS	We develop and implement a joint UN learning plan to increase our competency to respond to HIV and AIDS	We continuously learn how we can respond better to HIV and AIDS and share it with others who may benefit
We carried out an assessment of the competency needs and gaps for optimal support to national response and identified its learning needs priorities	Our interagency learning plan addresses the priority needs and gaps and is matched with top-level commitment	We are implementing our learning plan, monitoring and reviewing its effectiveness and continued relevance
We occasionally measure our own group's change and set targets for improvement.	We measure our change continuously and can demonstrate measurable improvement.	We invite others ideas about how to measure change and share learning and results.

The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) brings together ten UN agencies in a common effort to fight the epidemic: the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the World Food Programme (WFP), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the World Health Organization (WHO), and the World Bank.

UNAIDS, as a cosponsored programme, unites the responses to the epidemic of its ten cosponsoring organizations and supplements these efforts with special initiatives. Its purpose is to lead and assist an expansion of the international response to HIV/AIDS on all fronts. UNAIDS works with a broad range of partners – governmental and nongovernmental, business, scientific and lay – to share knowledge, skills and best practices across boundaries.

United Nations organizations are increasingly being challenged to demonstrate their relevance as well as their ability to work together and make best use of their collective resources. More than ever, therefore, the spotlight is on the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) and its contribution to the AIDS effort at the country level, and on the performance of UN Theme Groups on HIV/AIDS.

This new Resource Package pulls together a number of elements—global and country frameworks, planning and management tools and instruments, good practices—that hold the key to enhancing the contribution of UN Theme Groups on HIV/AIDS in support of effective national responses.



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