



PROGRAMME COORDINATING BOARD

Seventeenth meeting
Geneva, 27-29 June 2005

Provisional agenda item 6.1:

Progress Report on the “Three Ones”

Executive summary

Since the PCB’s last meeting in December 2004, several events and actions have contributed to the significant progress made on implementation of the “Three Ones” principles. Highlights have included: the 9 March 2005 high-level meeting held in London “Making the Money Work”, which endorsed a set of “Three Ones” targets and actions and established a Global Task Team on Improving AIDS Coordination among Multilateral Institutions and International Donors; extensive advocacy at regional and country levels; intensified work with 12 focus countries through assessments and missions; and assessment of progress made by other countries on the “Three Ones” including identifying the main obstacles to implementation. This report provides details of these developments.

Action required at this meeting

The Programme Coordinating Board is requested to take note of the progress in implementation of the “Three Ones”.

Introduction

The Consultation on Harmonization of International AIDS Funding held in Washington, DC, on 25 April 2004, endorsed the “Three Ones” principles and requested UNAIDS to act as facilitator and mediator among all partners in country-led efforts to apply them. At the 16th meeting of the Programme Coordinating Board, in Montego Bay, Jamaica, on 14 and 15 December 2004, the UNAIDS Secretariat presented: (i) *Global Level Progress on the “Three Ones”*, a note describing what UNAIDS had done to follow up; and (ii) *“Three Ones” Action Plan*, outlining UNAIDS’ objectives and proposed actions over the year to the end of 2005.

This note updates the PCB, describing the actions taken since the last meeting. It also seeks direction, asking the PCB to endorse further actions by UNAIDS to promote and support application of the “Three Ones” principles.

Global Action

9 March High-Level Meeting

Since the PCB’s meeting in December 2004, the most significant global event pertaining to wider application of the “Three Ones” principles was the High-Level Meeting on the Global Response to AIDS held in London on 9 March 2005. Entitled “Making the Money Work,” it was co-hosted by UNAIDS and the Governments of France, the United Kingdom and the United States of America, and attended by leaders from donor and developing countries, civil society organizations, UN agencies and other international and multilateral institutions. The meeting focused on three subjects: (i) a financial framework for AIDS-specific fund raising for 2005–2007; (ii) measurable targets and indicators for further application of the “Three Ones”; and (iii) fostering greater coordination among multilateral institutions and international donors. Informing the discussion were two background papers and a progress report¹, prepared by the UNAIDS Secretariat.

The meeting resulted in a communiqué renewing commitment to promote and support application of the “Three Ones” through processes involving consultations among internal and external partners within each country. The communiqué acknowledged that national government leadership and civil society engagement would be critical to the success of these processes. In addition to issuing the communiqué, the meeting agreed on “Three Ones” targets as follows.

- One comprehensive national AIDS framework in each country developed through wide consultation and including a work plan and budget. This target is to be achieved in 15 countries by the end of 2005 and in 20 additional countries by the end of 2006.
- One national AIDS coordinating authority, recognized in law, with broad-based multisectoral support and full technical capacity for coordination, monitoring and evaluation, resource mobilization, financial tracking, and strategic information management. This target is to be achieved in 15 countries by the end of 2005.

¹ *The “Three Ones” in action: where we are and where we go from here.* Geneva, UNAIDS, 2005.

- One comprehensive national monitoring and evaluation framework, with a set of core indicators to harmonize monitoring and evaluation requirements. This target is to be achieved in 20 countries by the end of 2005.

UNAIDS was mandated by meeting participants to facilitate efforts to develop and provide technical support for implementation of one national monitoring and evaluation system for national AIDS responses with a set of standardized and multisectoral indicators endorsed by all key stakeholders by the end of 2005 or the earliest opportunity thereafter.

The communiqué also announced establishment of a Global Task Team to find ways of improving coordination among international donors and multilateral institutions to further strengthen the AIDS response in countries, and to make recommendations within 80 days. More than 55 governments and organizations have participated in the Global Task Team process, including 24 high-level representatives within the Global Task Team itself. Using the “Three Ones” and the principle of national ownership as the basis of its work, the Global Task Team has focused its efforts on the alignment of the support provided by multilateral organization and international donors to national AIDS coordinating authorities’ planning, financing, programming, procurement, and monitoring and evaluation efforts. Its recommendations, scheduled to be finalized on 3 June 2004, will be presented to the 17th meeting of the PCB.

Paris High-Level Forum

Before the 9 March meeting in London, a meeting of the OECD High-Level Forum in Paris (28 February–2 March) resulted in the *Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, Ownership, Harmonization, Alignment, Results and Mutual Accountability*. Informing the discussing leading up to the Declaration was a report by the UN Development Group, *UN Reform, Harmonization and Alignment to Achieve the Millennium Development Goals*. It described UNAIDS as a prime example of UN reform in action and the “Three Ones” principles as a framework to align country-level funding and action and thus suggested that the “Three Ones” could be applied to broader international efforts to increase harmonization and aid effectiveness.

Civil Society

The UNAIDS Secretariat’s progress report to the PCB in December stated that civil society engagement would be essential to the successful application of the “Three Ones”. In March 2005, the International HIV/AIDS Alliance and the International Council of AIDS Service Organizations (ICASO) published their *Discussion Paper: Civil Society and the “Three Ones”*² which observed that civil society involvement in developing and applying the “Three Ones” had, so far, been very limited.

The Alliance/ICASO discussion paper makes a number of constructive proposals for increasing civil society engagement in application of the “Three Ones” and in the development and implementation of national responses to AIDS.

² International HIV/AIDS Alliance and International Council of AIDS Service Organizations (2005). Discussion paper: Civil society and the “Three Ones.” Brighton and Toronto, International HIV/AIDS Alliance and International Council of AIDS Service Organizations. Available online at <http://www.aidsalliance.org/sw14296.asp>.

The communiqué issued by the 9 March meeting in London stated that, 'Guidelines should be developed to ensure the *full involvement of civil society and the private sector* in the country-level implementation of the "Three Ones". These should include the agreement of terms of reference and operating procedures for the coordinating authorities to ensure full participation of civil society.' The communiqué also pointed to the need for adequate resources to enable full civil society involvement.

In February 2005 UNAIDS launched an e-forum on the "Three Ones" and civil society engagement. The many individuals and representatives of civil society organizations who have participated in the e-forum have expressed particular concerns about the lack of participation by people living with HIV and of people from marginalized groups (e.g., injecting drug users, commercial sex workers and men who have sex with men) in applying the "Three Ones" in support of national AIDS responses. Furthermore, participants have identified the need for increased support for skills development and for strengthening expertise and capacity within civil society organizations. They have also noted the importance of strong leaders who have faith in civil society contributions to the national AIDS responses.

Regional action

Since the PCB's December meeting, UNAIDS and its partners have advocated for implementation of the "Three Ones" at a number of regional forums. For example, advocacy among the heads of state and ministers of the most affected continent took place at the Fourth Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the African Union in Abuja, Nigeria, on 30 and 31 January 2005. As a result, the Union agreed to urge all member states to intensify their efforts towards more effective and well-coordinated implementation of national programmes to improve access to HIV prevention and treatment, in accordance with the "Three Ones" principles, the "3 by 5" strategy and the Global Child Survival Partnership.

Meetings of the Regional Directors of the UNAIDS Cosponsors have provided additional platforms for promoting the "Three Ones" principles and achieving commitments to apply them. At one such meeting in Latin America and the Caribbean, for example, the Regional Directors endorsed the "Three Ones" as the unifying framework for regional and country-level activities.

Other regional actions include the following.

- Recently, the Horizontal Technical Cooperation Group on HIV/AIDS for the Latin American and Caribbean Region were guided by the "Three Ones" principles when they developed strategies and technical cooperation plans for implementation of Global Fund grants.
- At a World Bank regional consultation in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in February 2005, high-level officials from African governments, the UN and other partners identified problems, made recommendations on policy, human resources, practice and procedures to implement the "Three Ones".
- The Blair Commission for Africa Report launched 11 March 2005 calls for the articulation of high-level, time-bound and concrete actions to make the "Three Ones" a reality at country level.

- In Central Asia, a subregional HIV and AIDS project supported by World Bank, DFID and UNAIDS was launched in May 2005 and is guided by the "Three Ones" principles. A number of bilateral projects for the same group of countries are also guided by the principles and call for enhanced cooperation and coordination and cooperation facilitated by UNAIDS.
- A March 2005 Memorandum of Understanding between the Asian Development Bank and UNAIDS states that the "Three Ones" are among the principles guiding cooperative efforts aimed at strengthening and expanding the AIDS response in the region.
- The newly established UNAIDS Regional Support Teams are allocating a part of their budgets to support implementation of the "Three Ones" in countries. Recent UNAIDS Regional Management Meetings have been providing greater coherence between UNAIDS at headquarter, regional and country levels around "Three Ones" strategies and planning.

Country action

High-level missions

Since the PCB's meeting in December, the Executive Director of UNAIDS and high-level representatives from multilateral and bilateral partners have undertaken three special missions to promote application of the "Three Ones" and harmonization of partners' support for countries' AIDS responses:

- in January 2005, a joint mission to Kenya and Uganda with the World Bank, United Kingdom/DFID and Norway;
- in March, a joint mission to Mozambique with the World Bank, United Kingdom/DFID, Norway and Sweden;
- also in March, a joint mission to Swaziland with the Global Fund.

These missions included meetings with high-level political leaders, civil society representatives and other national and international partners. The missions looked for progress on implementation of the "Three Ones" and identified challenges (e.g., human resource capacity constraints and slow disbursement of funds) and opportunities for meeting those challenges.

Ongoing UNAIDS support

Meanwhile, the UNAIDS Secretariat has proceeded with implementation of the *Three Ones Action Plan* presented to the PCB in December. The first three of 12 planned "Three Ones" assessment and advocacy missions—to Kenya, Viet Nam and Zambia—were completed prior to the 9 March meeting in London. Since then, missions or country-level assessments in Ethiopia, Haiti, Indonesia, Malawi, Tanzania, and Ukraine have taken place. The remaining missions—to India, Mali and Mozambique—will take place within the next three months. The reports on the first three missions have been finalized and shared with partners in the countries. UN Theme Groups on HIV/AIDS and UNAIDS Secretariat staff are following up with support for implementation of the reports' recommendations. Summaries of available reports have been prepared for the PCB meeting.

The missions are one aspect of ongoing efforts by UNAIDS Cosponsors and the Secretariat to mobilize their country-level staff to promote and support the application of the “Three Ones” principles. UN Theme Groups on HIV/AIDS in countries from Nigeria to Moldova, Somalia to Honduras and Algeria to Cambodia have taken action towards a more consistent application of the principles by utilizing the UNAIDS Programme Acceleration Funds. Since June 2004, Programme Acceleration Funds have provided funding for 89 activities from 58 country proposals where there has been a direct link to one or more of the “Three Ones” principles.

In Russia, the UN Theme Group on HIV/AIDS has taken the lead in developing a two year project “Coordination in Action: Applying the ‘Three Ones’ Principles in the Russian Federation” in close collaboration with government ministries, agencies and working groups, national and international nongovernmental organizations and donors in a joint activity to improve coordination, planning and monitoring and evaluation of the national HIV/AIDS response in line with the “Three Ones”. The activity is funded by DFID and SIDA with additional funds mobilized by cosponsors and the Secretariat.

Assessing progress and identifying challenges

Integrated into the standard form used for UNAIDS’ 2004 annual country reports was a survey assessing countries’ progress on implementing the “Three Ones”. It found that many low- and middle-income countries have national frameworks and national coordinating authorities and, also, that many have working groups that are at least starting to develop national monitoring and evaluation systems. However, it also found that the existence of these structures did not necessarily indicate an effective multisectoral and participatory response to AIDS. Many countries are struggling to muster sufficient human capacity and establish adequate disbursement and monitoring and evaluation systems to make the money work. Results of the survey are described in detail in *The Three Ones in Action: where we are and where we go from here*, the progress report submitted to the 9 March meeting in London. Some key findings were as follows.

- **One agreed AIDS action framework:** of the 66 countries surveyed 82% have up-to-date national frameworks. The main weaknesses are absence of multisectoral scope; lack of participation by many key stakeholders in the development, review and update of the frameworks; and poor translation of strategic plans into actionable work plans and budgets.
- **One national Aids coordinating authority:** 95% of countries have national structures for coordination in place. The main weaknesses are absence of strong mandates, absence of human resource capacity and weak management capacity. Only two thirds of the authorities play key roles in mechanisms to channel donor support into countries and some of the authorities are excluded from participation in critical processes involved in planning and coordination of the national AIDS response. The authorities are facing critical challenges from competing coordinating structures (e.g. the Global Fund’s Country Coordinating Mechanisms) and this is bound to affect application of the “Three Ones” principles. It is important that all partners acknowledge the problem of several coordination structures and agree to draw on the positive experiences from coordination to play their parts in developing single, democratic, strong and accountable national AIDS coordinating authorities.

- **One agreed country-level monitoring and evaluation system:** 79% of the 66 countries surveyed have at least begun to develop harmonized monitoring and evaluation systems. However, only 60% of the countries have plans endorsed by all partners and few had monitoring and evaluation budgets or national databases in place. Human resource capacity is a key constraint, evidenced by the fact that only 25% of surveyed countries have trained personnel to develop and manage national databases.

In order to advance achievement of the "Three Ones" targets endorsed by the 9 March high-level meeting, UNAIDS is analyzing available information and consulting with partners to identify countries where increased support may lead to early achievement. The assessment and advocacy mission reports and the annual country reports are helping to guide this process and an upcoming consultative meeting is expected to advance development of an updated strategy and action plan.

At a PEPFAR/UNAIDS meeting in Washington DC held on 27-28 April 2005 agreement was reached to jointly do intensive "Three Ones" work in three countries. This is part of an effort to concretise strategies for enhanced United States government/UNAIDS country- and regional-level collaboration in the implementation of the "Three Ones".

The UNAIDS Secretariat has been honing its indicators for measuring "Three Ones" progress, beginning with development of the survey integrated into the standard format for the 2004 annual country reports. A "Three Ones" assessment tool with standard questions was developed for the 12 country assessment missions and "Three Ones" indicators are included in reporting on progress toward achievement of the UN General Assembly's *Declaration of Commitment* targets. The UNAIDS Secretariat is now working to consolidate a final set of indicators for measuring "Three Ones" progress.

Next steps

Follow-through on existing commitments

Full implementation of the "Three Ones" principles, including implementation of the Global Task Team's recommendations, is a formidable challenge for countries, bilateral donors, multilateral institutions and the UN system. Global agreements on harmonization will only result in more effective implementation if all partners make firm commitments at country level for their implementation.

Events over the past six months have reaffirmed and strengthened UNAIDS' role as an advocate, facilitator, technical adviser and monitor of the "Three Ones" at the country level. The action plan presented to the PCB in December 2004 continues to guide the actions of the UNAIDS Staff at global, regional and country level as it advances the "Three Ones" agenda. However, the wealth of information gathered on the "Three Ones" in recent months has also revealed obstacles that often stand in the way as the country-level partners translate the set of principles into practice.

Overcoming these obstacles will require UNAIDS—especially the UN Theme Groups on HIV/AIDS—to use existing programmes and projects (e.g., leadership, governance and poverty-reduction projects) to address not only technical issues but also human resource constraints, weaknesses in financial management and the structural

complexities of management systems. A resource base will be developed through mapping the competencies and resources available from the Cosponsors, bilateral donors and nongovernmental organizations, with the aim of making potential support easy to identify and access as partners work to overcome obstacles. Meanwhile, there is urgent need for investment in strengthening the management capacity of national AIDS coordinating authorities.

During the remaining months of 2005, UNAIDS Secretariat will complete its assessment and advocacy missions in the 12 focus countries identified in late 2004. The upcoming consultative meeting (described under the previous heading) will identify additional countries where rapid progress can be made toward achieving the “Three Ones” targets endorsed by the 9 March meeting. Achieving those targets will be a priority for the UNAIDS Secretariat. Improving monitoring of progress on the “Three Ones” at country-level will be incorporated into ongoing efforts—endorsed by the UNAIDS Committee of Cosponsoring Organizations earlier this year—to improve the results-based, country reporting system of the UNAIDS Secretariat³. UN Country Teams and UN Theme Groups on HIV/AIDS must also shape their UN Implementation Support Plans to become vehicles for “Three Ones” implementation.

Requested direction from the PCB

The UNAIDS Secretariat sees a need for intensified work in the following areas.

- 1. Civil society engagement:** intensified country-level engagement of civil society is urgently required to ensure the “Three Ones” are viewed as facilitating wider participation rather than as centralizing authority. The statement on civil society in the communiqué of the 9 March meeting provides a direction forward. The UNAIDS Secretariat proposes to help facilitate the development of agreed guidelines on the full involvement of civil society and the private sector in the country-level implementation of the “Three Ones” and proposes, too, that UN Theme Groups on HIV/AIDS be clearly tasked with facilitating and monitoring implementation of the guidelines at country level. To strengthen civil society engagement, capacity building is needed, e.g., by increasing civil society groups’ knowledge of how other partners operate in their countries and of their countries’ national AIDS frameworks, authorities, monitoring and evaluation systems and other mechanisms work, as suggested by the Alliance/ ICASO discussion paper. A package of capacity building tools—including tools that facilitate collaborative planning—should be developed to enable effective participation of civil society in the “Three Ones” at country level.
- 2. Strategic management and capacity building:** the identification of countries poised for progress must be coupled with additional UNAIDS technical support⁴ if the “Three Ones” targets set on 9 March are to be achieved. Although the UNAIDS Secretariat and Cosponsors are not positioned to provide the greater part of technical support required to achieve the “Three Ones”, they are well

³ Based on the paper “Intensifying joint action at country level” endorsed by the UNAIDS Committee of Cosponsoring Organizations at its 2 April 2005 meeting.

⁴ In this report, the term “technical support” encompasses both short-term technical assistance and longer-term capacity building assistance.

positioned to promote an increase in capacity building, horizontal cooperation, south-south cooperation and policy dialogue between countries, and to ensure that UNAIDS Technical Support Facilities support “Three Ones” implementation. One example is a planned workshop on building management and coordination capacity for government and civil society representatives to be hosted by the Brazil-UNAIDS International Centre for Technical Cooperation on HIV/AIDS. It is likely that the Global Task Team will recommend strengthened mechanisms for the financing of technical support to national AIDS programmes, and UNAIDS should play a leading role in the scale-up of its provision.

3. Work particular to each of the “Three Ones”

- **One agreed AIDS action framework:** intensified UNAIDS support is required for development of a new generation of national AIDS action frameworks that are costed, evidence-based, clearly define implementation arrangements (who does what, when and where) and are harmonized with poverty reduction strategies, medium-term expenditure frameworks and other development instruments. Development of these frameworks should be done through participatory planning and review processes that include national assessments of needs for technical support and capacity building.
- **One national AIDS coordinating authority:** intensified UNAIDS support is required for building the authorities’ management and coordination capacities. It is clear that existing coordinating and partnership structures in many countries do not adequately enable problem-solving among partners in a rapid and effective manner. UNAIDS, in close collaboration with a few interested national AIDS coordinating authorities, should develop a new, operational partnership mechanism that stimulates rapid problem-solving and information-sharing. UNAIDS should also take steps to make political mapping and stakeholder analyses more widely used tools to help identify and remove obstacles and harmonize the support.
- **One monitoring and evaluation system:** as requested at the 9 March high-level meeting, UNAIDS should continue to facilitate efforts to develop and provide technical support for implementation of one national monitoring and evaluation system for national AIDS responses, with a set of standardized and multisectoral indicators endorsed by all key stakeholders by the end of 2005 or the earliest opportunity thereafter. UNAIDS should also develop tools for use by national AIDS coordinating authorities that hold individual partners accountable for alignment to the AIDS action framework; encourage partners to systematically share information with the national monitoring and evaluation system; and streamline external partners’ provision of technical support to monitoring and evaluation systems.

The UNAIDS Secretariat asks the Programme Coordinating Board to take note of the progress made by UNAIDS on implementation of the “Three Ones”.