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19th Meeting of the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board
Lusaka, Zambia,
6–8 December 2006

Provisional agenda item 5:

Strengthening of global coordination on AIDS

Introduction

The Political Declaration of the High Level Meeting on HIV/AIDS in May 2006 includes the following:

“50. Call on the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS...to strengthen global coordination on HIV/AIDS, including through the thematic session of the Programme Coordinating Board;”

This request was then reflected in a decision of the Programme Coordinating Board taken at its 18th meeting in June 2006:

“7.5 Requests UNAIDS, in consultation with Programme Coordinating Board members, to elaborate options for strengthening global coordination on AIDS, including through the thematic meetings of the Programme Coordinating Board, and to report to the December 2006 thematic meeting of the Programme Coordinating Board;”

The AIDS response, including coordination functions (see below) at both global and country level, is influenced by the broader development context. The Millennium Development Goals, UN system reform and the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC) all need to be taken into account.

Country level coordination processes

The Political Declaration of 2006 reaffirms the goal of scaling-up to universal access, and this remains a primary objective for UNAIDS. In pursuit of Universal Access, the international community has already endorsed the principals of the “Three Ones”¹ and the division of labour proposed by the Global Task Team. In support of this the UN has started a process in many countries to now develop single HIV teams and to develop common workplans of support.

The Paris Declaration similarly outlines processes to strengthen country ownership and processes. The rapid increase in the number of development agencies and the increase in resource flows for HIV are vitally important; however they often prove difficult for countries to manage without high transaction costs. The recent country level consultations for Universal Access have consistently highlighted that more can be done to strengthen processes in-country, but also, that many problems are not amenable to easy solution and do require global support and resolution, such as, the relationship between National AIDS Coordinating Authorities and the Country Coordinating Mechanism for the Global Fund to fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria.

Global Level Coordination Functions

ECOSOC Resolution 1994/24 that established the *Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS* calls on the Joint Programme to fulfill a number of functions, inter alia:

- a) “provide global leadership in response to the epidemic”,

¹ The “Three Ones” call for all partners in a country to align their efforts around one agreed AIDS action framework; one national AIDS coordinating authority, with a broad-based multisectoral mandate; and one agreed AIDS country-level monitoring and evaluation system.

- b) “achieve and promote global consensus on policy and programmatic approaches”, and
- c) “advocate greater political commitment in responding to the epidemic at the global and country levels”.

Coordination at global level is the main mechanism for delivery of these mandates, whose primary purpose is to strengthen and support country-led processes. The added value of the global mechanism, in addition to regional or country mechanisms, is in the ability to engage the broadest possible base of actors in a coherent and harmonized approach to the AIDS response.

Global coordination functions face several challenges currently:

- A fragmented approach in terms of policies, processes and priorities from different organizations: though in the UN system these are reasonably coherent as part of the Joint Programme. This has meant that attempts at global priority setting are often skewed by diverse opinions, independent governance structures and the subsequent funding of different activities at the country and regional levels;
- The lack of uniform accountability mechanisms for many stakeholders to both country and global processes; and
- Resource mobilization and deployment is dependant on the stakeholder.

The Programme Coordinating Board already has a policy and coordination mandate, in the UN system, and as such it is expected to influence the policy setting of individual organizations and constituencies, whilst taking account of existing policy practices and mandates. Therefore, UN Member States at the High Level meeting explicitly identified the Programme Coordinating Board thematic meetings as an opportunity to convene, influence and harmonize the approaches of critical stakeholders in the global response to the AIDS epidemic.

The Programme Coordinating Board currently has representatives of 22 governments from all regions of the world, the ten UNAIDS Cosponsors, and five nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), including associations of people living with HIV. Governments, NGOs, other UN bodies and inter-governmental organizations can also attend Programme Coordinating Board meetings as observers.

The current global development environment is however expanding to include new stakeholders in the response to the AIDS epidemic. Private foundations, the research community and corporate sector have all emerged to be significant players. The private sector and the Global Fund to fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, also need to be accommodated within wider policy and operational coordination. Many stakeholders already have some form of relationship with the Joint Programme and the Programme Coordinating Board. It should also be stressed that inclusion of more stakeholders can not mean the creation of a global forum-type structure nor attendance by large numbers of participants that would become unmanageable and ineffective.

Key questions when considering greater global coordination include the following. How to ensure:

- a consistency of approach by all stakeholders² in terms of leadership, ownership (particularly at the country level), accountability and oversight based upon the “Three Ones”;
- a harmonized approach by all partners³ in the various governance structures they operate and are represented on;
- a mechanism that allows for appropriate and genuine representation;
- transparency in the agreement and delivery of global policies;
- a way to hold different actors i.e. bodies, organizations and/or individuals who have an interest in the response to the AIDS epidemic regardless of their status or governance structure, accountable to their agreements; and
- that the policy setting role of the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board is clearly seen in the global context and applicable across the range of enabling bodies and financial and technical support mechanisms.

Accountability, monitoring and governance – how to measure levels and effectiveness of coordination?

The Programme Coordinating Board will need to consider which targets or indicators should be put in place to ensure that the strengthened effort is measurable. Despite the existence of a number of policy setting bodies it may be argued that true policy is best seen at the point of implementation i.e. policies, expenditure and action at country level and its impact on the epidemic. It may be argued that this is also the only level where the global coordination effort may be measured; where the talk becomes a reality. Indicators will also need to be developed at the global level, concentrating on the effectiveness and efficacy of the strengthened coordination process.

Options for strengthened coordination

The Programme Coordinating Board has requested the presentation of options that include the use of the biennial thematic Board meeting. The following options are not meant to be exhaustive and comments and suggestions are welcome. Also, the list does not propose a “single” solution and Programme Coordinating Board members may wish to comment on a combination of options.

- a) A joint board meeting with The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria once a biennium: this would widen participation and involve other key actors not represented on the Programme Coordinating Board, and enhance synergy between the major multilateral funding source for AIDS and the UN system – a major provider of technical support and policy setting.

² “Stakeholders” refers to those bodies and organizations who have an interest in the “Three Ones” principles, either through their oversight or implementation.

³ Organizations, bodies and/or individuals who already have established governance and/or cooperation links with UNAIDS

- b) Use of the Programme Coordination Board for strengthened policy coordination: the thematic sessions could be strengthened by transforming the meeting into a policy forum of invited participants. The characteristics of the policy forum would include the following:
- the agenda would focus on a policy theme;
 - meeting would continue to be held biennially over 2 days;
 - participation would go beyond current members to include a wider representation of civil society, private sector, academic institutions, community-based organizations, foundations (e.g. Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the William J. Clinton Foundation), the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, donors e.g. the (United States of America) President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), and regional bodies. It will be important for numbers to be balanced to ensure that the meeting remains manageable and efficient and restricted to a maximum of 200;
 - the agenda would not include regular Programme Coordination Board business;
 - meeting should be held in Geneva to limit costs for the Secretariat.
- c) Global peer review function within the mandate of the Programme Coordinating Board: to act as an oversight function to support the implementation of the “3 Ones”, Global Task Team and other instruments designed to facilitate harmonization and alignment. The functions of the peer review would include:
- identifying best practice,
 - reviewing progress in implementation, and
 - addressing obstacles and constraints.
- d) Chairs and vice chairs of governing boards of UNAIDS Cosponsoring Organizations and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria to be invited to participate in the Programme Coordinating Board: could potentially resolve the issues of differing positions by members in different boards and would ensure a clearer strategic input into the programmes of the individual organizations with respect to their AIDS programmes.
- e) Regular meeting of the executive heads of the main multilateral (and possibly bilateral) organizations engaged in AIDS programmes.

The Programme Coordinating Board is requested to:

Identify those option(s) for strengthening global coordination that it deems feasible and appropriate, and to request the UNAIDS Secretariat to provide more detailed proposals for the implementation of such options, to be presented to the 20th meeting of the Programme Coordinating Board in June 2007.

