



USSA PCB Statement

- STATEMENT BY THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNAIDS SECRETARIAT STAFF ASSOCIATION (USSA)
- AGENDA ITEM 8 UNAIDS/PCB (56)/25.17
- 56 PCB MEETING, 24-26 JUNE 2025

Overview



- The USSA thanks the PCB for the opportunity to present issues affecting staff.
- The presentation is based on data from various sources including town halls and direct communication from staff.
- Thanks for allowing USSA to amend the statement in view of the recently shared organogram



Background of USSA

- Established in April 2005, the USSA represents all staff in the UNAIDS Secretariat.
- Its purposes include ensuring employment conditions conform to labour standards, safeguarding staff rights, and promoting welfare.
- The 2010 Agreement of Cooperation stipulates collaboration between UNAIDS management and the USSA.
- While the USSA looks out for all 659 UNAIDS staff, there are 350 dues paying members.





Status update on recommendations of last PCB meeting



USSA Recommendation

- A clear, comprehensive report on the conclusion of realignment and the People Strategy. What is the human resources plan? What shape will mobility take in the new UNAIDS?
- A biannual update on UNAIDS resource mobilization efforts.
- Implementation of support measures for staff to cope with large workloads.

Update

- Staff have not received a comprehensive report on realignment and the People Strategy and reiterate its request. This will also allow to see how the learnings from that was used to inform restructuring
- Staff are still waiting for regular updates on resource mobilization efforts and hope to see accountability enforced.
- Staff are highly stressed due to large workloads and apprehend this being compounded by ongoing restructuring.

USSA Recommendation

- Staff Health Insurance coverage that is accessible, reasonable and available all the time to staff globally.
- Ensuring a supportive and enabling environment for the Staff Association and ensuring it is adequately resourced.

Update

- Efforts are being made to improve health insurance coverage, including simplification of procedures, packages, and response time. We will continue working with management to improve Staff Health Insurance in the coming year.
- The USSA is resource starved with minimal financial support from management and needs adequate resources to continue safeguarding staff interests and protection against any retaliation

Relationship between management and USSA

- The USSA participates in numerous oversight and human resources-related bodies at UNAIDS, observer in the Senior Leadership Team, and as a member on the Recruitment Review Board and Duty-of-Care Working Groups.
- We also have regular monthly meetings with the Director of Management, Director Human Resources and Change Management.
- The USSA Chair was appointed as Co-Chair of the Restructuring Staff Consultation Group.
- Several recommendations on flexibilities in working arrangements were accepted following USSA conducted survey
- USSA however continue to be deprived of a standing speaking slot in Townhalls and renamed RMMs and had minimal meaningful consultation in the restructuring process.
- Invariably the turnaround time for comments on policies by USSA is inadequate to ensure proper consultation with staff.
- USSA role in upcoming implementation of restructuring decisions is unclear.

Issues of concern

Restructuring

Staff is highly concerned about lack of transparency and lack of meaningful staff engagement /consultation in the restructuring process

USSA was not consulted before its launch and was not shared the ToRs of the consultancy organization.

The process was highly centralized. The project team including the consultancy firm team, had no discussion with staff below the level of regional director and division heads. No one in the field including UCDs and technical staff was consulted in any way.

The restructuring process was a highly rushed one with very tight timelines allowing little time for staff and managers to react

Revised organogram remains top heavy and doesn't align with stated objectives of increasing junior level positions

During this period staff experienced unprecedented level of anxiety, stress and such a huge reduction in staff is making staff

Staff remains concerned about the future of UNAIDS given its financial situation and its ability to deliver on Global AIDS Strategy and respond to expectations from Governments and Communities

Staff is also deeply concerned at the sunseting discussions without considering the future of staff that has devoted their life to the mission of ending AIDS

Issues of concern

Workload and Mental Well-being:

- Staff are facing tremendous workloads and stress affecting their morale.
- Restructuring has further added to their stress

Memorandum of Understanding Revision:

- USSA Struggles to fully resource and proposed budgetary reductions.
- No funding received this year for face to face meeting due to financial constraints.
- USSA is concerned about the shrinking space available to raise issues of concern to staff like townhall, Regional Meetings, Review Board etc.

Proposed Recommendations

The USSA presents below a summary of outstanding issues that staff would like the PCB to take note of and Senior Management to address:

- PCB is requested to ensure UNAIDS has the capacity to walk the last mile and implement Global AIDS Strategy
- Request support of all stakeholders especially donors to continue supporting UNAIDS and the fight against AIDS
- Management is requested to ensure an inclusive and transparent process of implementing the restructuring addressing staff issues and making it least painful to staff
- Involve USSA meaningfully in review board and allow it space to raise staff voices.

Proposed Recommendations

- Ensure dignified exit of staff that are separating and timely release of their separation entitlements.
- Consider Individual situation and accommodate them as much as possible
- Mobilize additional resources to retain staff and report clearly on resource mobilization efforts.
- Any sunseting planning should be based on meaningful consultation of staff and USSA.
- Ensure the USSA is adequately resourced and its mandate and independence is protected while revising the Memorandum of Association.

Vote of thanks

Rather than pushing for sunseting of UNAIDS, let us focus our joint efforts towards reaching the finishing line together and celebrate victory together.

It is a global solidarity and unique model of UNAIDS joint program that brought this SDG together thus far, let us strengthen it until our mission is accomplished.

That will be true service of communities we serve.

So, as we slowly emerge from our “winter of discontent”, USSA is committed to continue being a credible, trusted, and respected institution once more. Credible and trusted by the staff it serves, credible and respected by UNAIDS management.

Thank you.

