

Outline of the report of the Executive Director

Additional documents for this item: N/A

Action required at this meeting—the Programme Coordinating Board is invited to:

- *Take note* of the report of the Executive Director;

Cost implications for the implementation of the decisions: *none*

Introduction

1. Welcome to the 58th meeting of the Programme Coordinating Board, convening in Geneva days after the UN General Assembly High-Level Meeting on AIDS in New York.
2. The new Political Declaration is a mandate confirming that the HIV response is not finished, and that Member States intend to deliver on the promise of ending AIDS by 2030.

The global context

3. The global HIV response was built on solidarity and international cooperation. It has saved millions of lives. Of the 40 million people living with HIV, 32.1 million are now on treatment, living long and healthy lives.
4. Today, that model is under strain. Multilateralism is at its weakest in a generation. We are living through the effects of a protracted “inequality-pandemic cycle”—HIV, Covid, Mpox, Ebola.
5. Among the compounding crises, two threats are poised to reverse our gains: the collapse in development financing, and the roll-back of human rights, gender equality and civic space.

Windows of opportunity

6. I see windows of opportunity. New tools. New financing routes. New regional energy. A new Global AIDS Strategy. And a new Political Declaration. A United Nations that is reforming itself through UN80 to rise to this moment, more focused, more united, and more accountable to the people who depend on it. And a Joint Programme that, amidst massive transition and uncertainty, is delivering in countries.
7. The first opportunity is the enormous potential of long-acting antiretrovirals. This breakthrough is real, even though access is not yet matching the science. UNAIDS is using everything at its disposal to close that gap.
8. The second opportunity is reimagining financing. This is a moment to use the Global Fund GC8 and the new United States Government agreements not only to sustain hard-won gains, but to rebuild national responses for the long term. That is exactly what UNAIDS is helping countries do.
9. Regional initiatives, such as the Accra Reset, led by President Mahama of Ghana, the African Union Roadmap, and the Alliance for the Elimination of HIV in the Americas are building health sovereignty. UNAIDS is closely involved in these initiatives and is working closely with partners, including Africa CDC, the Global Fund and the World Health Organization.
10. The third opportunity is rights. In a moment of organized pushback, the UN's role on human rights is indispensable. At the global level, UNAIDS is positioning coordinated UN leadership on human rights, gender equality and community leadership as essential to

sustaining the HIV response. In every region, we are showing up—even where it is hardest.

11. And the final opportunity is data. This is what allows countries to programme smartly, target resources where they matter most, and hold all of us accountable for results. The abrupt funding cuts disrupted the HIV response—including the data systems we rely on and the people who power them. UNAIDS has worked hand-in-hand with countries and communities to track the impact of the disruptions and to ensure that gaps in services, in financing, in coverage, are accurately captured and visible so they can be addressed.
12. This is where UNAIDS plays a critical multisectoral role—ensuring we have the epidemiological data to know the epidemic; the programmatic data to know what works, who is reached and who is left behind; data on policies and laws, to show where rights are upheld and where they are denied; and financing data so we know what investments are needed.

UNAIDS transformation

13. UNAIDS is on a journey—a transitional path. Phase 1 of this transition started even before UN80, responding to the changing financing context. The UN Secretary-General provided his UN80 steer in September 2025, with his report “Shifting paradigms”. With the direction and support of the Board, Phase 1 of UNAIDS’ change was aligned to the ambition of the Secretary-General’s “steer”.
14. The first phase of transition has now been successfully completed. It has been about realizing the “steer” of the Secretary-General, through a deliberate handover of responsibility of the Secretariat for technical and normative work in areas such as HIV testing and treatment, HIV prevention, children and HIV, young people, health systems and social protection, HIV financing and gender equality.
15. Of the 15 functions of the Secretariat at the start of this process, we are closing responsibility for 11, which will be the responsibility of Cosponsors going forward. This has involved closing positions in these technical and normative areas, alongside consolidating the Secretariat’s core functions; reducing the country footprint; compressing the management support structure; moving staff to lower-cost locations; and moving overall towards a more affordable model. We are working to adjust to the new configuration while preparing for the next stage of change.
16. Phase 1 has entailed one of the most far-reaching organizational changes in UNAIDS’ history, moving from 671 Secretariat staff to a projected 296 approved core budget positions by mid-2026. That amounts to a reduction of approximately 57%, with only 18 positions remaining in Geneva and our footprint now anchored in regions, countries and our hubs. We have refocused our country footprint from 85 to 54 countries, where the vast majority of people living with HIV are. We have a differentiated approach to cosponsorship now, with six “lead” Cosponsors and five affiliates.
17. With this level of change, there is a need to stabilize—allowing time to reorganize and adapt ways of working, and to rebuild effectiveness in a rapidly changing environment.

18. What I am most proud of is *how* we did this work—with dignity, fairness, transparency and kindness. Decisions were guided by clear criteria which were applied consistently and documented at every step. The process complied fully with staff regulations and rules, with due process and access to appeal. And we honoured specific commitments throughout—including our commitment to retain staff openly living with HIV, in line with the GIPA principle.

Interim report of the PCB Working Group

19. This brings us to Phase 2, which the PCB Working Group on the further transition and integration of UNAIDS is now defining. Through its consultations and deliberations, the Working Group has moved the discussion in a positive and constructive direction—from "sunsetting" to preserving the role of the UN to support the HIV response in a new and transformed manner. This aligns with the core of the Secretary-General's "steer" in the latest UN80 progress report (May 2026). Joint delivery that is fit for purpose—reshaped for the future and more affordable, without losing the UN's core promise to lead and leave no one behind.

20. I welcome the interim report of the Working Group and would like to draw attention to these important areas of agreement:

- The Working Group affirms that the UN mandate on HIV must continue—the effort to end AIDS as a public health threat remains unfinished.
- It underlines that continuation of the status quo is neither advisable nor feasible.
- It identifies several options and directions of travel which it will develop further in coming months.
- There is broad convergence on the need for a central entity/hub for leadership and multisectoral coordination of UN action on HIV.
- Core functions of the UN—Secretariat and Cosponsors—must be preserved.
- The Working Group acknowledges that programme countries have underlined the value of having a single point of entry for communications with, and support from, UN partners.
- The Working Group recognizes the critical role of communities and civil society in national HIV responses and the important work of the Joint Programme in supporting that role.
- The Working Group has also recognized the role of communities and civil society in shaping the global response through the governance of the Joint Programme. This role is grounded in the ECOSOC mandate, which provides civil society with a formal place alongside Member States and the UN.
- The Working Group will be addressing the need for a new financing model for delivering the HIV mandate. That model should provide sufficient financing for a central leadership and coordinating role, as well as for the complementary roles of Cosponsors towards delivering the UN's HIV mandate.

Overall, there is a focus on a realistic, time-lined and costed transition. We must let this independent Working Group do its work and we look forward to receiving the final report in October for consideration by this Board.

Conclusion

21. We will not end AIDS through institutions alone. We will end it through people—communities that refuse to be invisible, staff who live this mission, partners and Member States who stand with us, and leadership that is courageous in the face of uncertainty.

Proposed decision points

The Programme Coordinating Board is invited to:

22. *Take note* of the report of the Executive Director.

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