

UNAIDS PROGRAMME COORDINATING BOARD WORKING GROUP

THEMATIC SEGMENT:

Addressing inequalities in children and adolescents to end AIDS by 2030

MEETING SUMMARY: SECOND MEETING OF THE WORKING GROUP

DATE: Thursday 17 October 2024

MEETING AGENDA

- Welcome and introduction
- Presentation of the first draft of the background note
- Discussion on the first draft of the background note
- Presentation of and discussion of the draft agenda
- Next steps

SUMMARY

1. Welcome and introduction

Mr. Morten Ussing, Director of Governance, UNAIDS Secretariat, welcomed the PCB working group to its second meeting for the preparation of the thematic segment of the 55th PCB meeting (12 December 2024) on *Addressing inequalities in children and adolescents to end AIDS by 2030*.

Mr. Ussing recalled the agenda for the meeting and thanked the participants for their engagement in the working group. The Secretariat then reminded the members that a call for the submission of case studies and best practices had been sent out, and encouraged participants to submit case studies as well as share the call to other stakeholders.

Mr. Ussing said that the main expected outcome of the meeting was to compile the comments, inputs and suggestions on the current iteration of the draft background note and draft agenda. Participants were reminded that interventions made in writing were welcomed in order to ensure an accurate reflection.

2. Presentation of the first draft the background note for the thematic segment

Paula Munderi, Team Lead, Programme Innovation for Prevention Treatment & Pediatrics at the UNAIDS Secretariat introduced the draft background note. She thanked the members of the working group whose feedback had been instrumental.

Ms Munderi highlighted that the background note focused on the following questions:

- What are the inequalities, gaps and barriers to progress for children and adolescents?
- What works to close the gaps at national, regional and global levels to accelerate to meet the 2030 targets?
- How do we support countries to bring these interventions to the fore and scale for impact?

Ms Munderi called attention to the differentiated age bands in the draft background note as well as the examples of regional variations, which would constitute the first chapter. The next section of the background note would cover inequalities in social demographics as well as non-medical implementation and environment-related issues. The background note would then enumerate the gaps, needs and challenges, before addressing leadership and resources, including the financing of the response to the needs of children and adolescents.

Ms Munderi echoed the request made for working group members to submit case studies that would be good examples of best practices that could then be described in the background note. Following the section on the gaps, needs and challenges, the background note would describe a set of action-oriented recommendations.

Mr Ussing then opened the floor for discussions by the members of the working group.

3. Discussion on the draft Background Note

The PCB working group welcomed the annotated outline of the background note. Specific comments included the following:

Member States

- Congratulated the team for the work on the draft background note since the first meeting of the working group.
- Emphasized the support for strengthening the representation of adolescents and children at all levels where financial and programming decisions are made, noting the importance of making financial and strategic information accessible to them and building their capacity to participate.

Cosponsors

- Expressed appreciation for the work done on the draft background note.
- Proposed the use of a diagrammatic representation of the data across the different age bands to enable an ease of understanding throughout the background note.
- Emphasized the importance of explaining the nuances of a child-centered approach as opposed to an adult programme retrofitted for children.
- Highlighted the importance of calling greater attention to the inequalities that adolescent girls and women face in the context of HIV, as well as the evidence-

based addressing of structural barriers, such as economic empowerment programmes, including cash transfers.

- Stressed the need to showcase young women and girls' agency and leadership in influencing the HIV response and the need to support them in doing so.
- Noted that a people-first approach takes into account the fact that children grow, and this context requires interventions to thread across the different age bands as they move through them.

In response to the comments and observations made, the Secretariat noted the importance of the issues raised by the members of the PCB working group and would aim to reflect them as relevant in the background note. The Secretariat welcomed the members of the PCB working group to share further suggestions with concrete details in writing before the deadline.

4. Presentation of the draft agenda for the thematic segment

Ms Munderi presented the draft agenda of the thematic segment. She thanked colleagues for sending in name suggestions for the round tables, as well as providing input on the flow of the day.

The thematic segment would have the following order:

1. The opening including keynote addresses.
2. The session overview presented by the Joint Programme, as well as an update from the Global Alliance.
3. Round Table 1 would be on Addressing the remaining barriers to eliminating the vertical transmission of HIV, including speakers who would address: the innovations for preventing HIV acquisition during pregnancy and breastfeeding; ensuring antenatal care and HIV prevention, testing and treatment for marginalized women; and supporting pregnant and breastfeeding women to remain in treatment.
4. Round Table 2 would focus on Addressing inequalities in access to treatment and care services for children and adolescents, with speakers addressing: strategic approaches and data solutions to identifying children with HIV; organizing treatment of children and adolescents; family and community-centred care and support practices; and what are the factors that cause a gap in paediatrics treatment.
5. Round Table 3 on Resources, Policies and Health would cover: investments in ending AIDS in children; Health system and service delivery models adapted to the needs of children, adolescents or pregnant and breastfeeding women; and enabling laws, policies and practices.
6. The Conclusion and next steps would be led by the Deputy Executive Director of UNAIDS.

The Secretariat reiterated that further suggestions for speakers for each panel were welcome, noting the need for geographical and gender balance for each of the round tables. The deadline for sending speaker recommendations was set for October 23rd, 2024.

5. Discussion on the draft agenda

Member States

- Noted that it would be an interesting learning experience for other member states if there was a country example with paediatric HIV services embedded in government and fully resourced by government systems.
- Emphasized that a sustainable programme was necessary to ensure long term solutions.

Cosponsors

- Expressed appreciation for the draft agenda.
- Suggested having the keynote speakers highlight the importance of young people's leadership and agency in championing the HIV response. It was added that a speaker from Dreams Ambassadors or Global Fund for Boys Ambassador would further enrich the round table discussion.
- Proposed adding triple elimination to the second round table in addition to elimination of vertical transmission, and regarding terminology, suggested replacing Elimination of Mother To Child Transmission (EMTCT) with Elimination of Vertical Transmission (eVT).
- Sustainability of treatment was raised as an important topic, as a sustainable programme is necessary to ensure adequate healthcare for children.

Global Alliance

- Expressed appreciation for the work done on the draft agenda.
- Suggested alleviating the last round table session and spreading out the topics included into other round tables. Proposed an emphasis on how to fill the gaps in access to treatment, and agreed with the suggestion to add information on triple elimination (HIV, syphilis and HBV).

The Secretariat thanked the participants and encouraged to send comments in writing. Mr Ussing reminded the members that one of the five PCB Field Visits would be at the MAONO Africa Centre for Transformation Adolescent and Young People Programme in Dandora, Nairobi, and would serve to inform members and enrich the discussion at the thematic segment.

The Secretariat also informed participants that sustainability would be at the forefront of the discussions by PCB members, as it would be included in the agenda in the Follow-up to the 54th PCB thematic segment on 'Sustaining the gains of the HIV response to 2030 and beyond'.

6. Next steps

Mr. Ussing thanked the working group members for their comments and encouraged them to send written inputs both on the background note and agenda by Wednesday 23 October 2024 as well as any relevant documents to support the drafting of the background note.

The Secretariat reiterated that the call for submission of good practices had been sent out to the PCB members and all permanent missions and expressed hope that working group members would submit good practice illustrations and disseminate the call further to partners.

The Secretariat thanked the working group for their time and excellent input, and the Cosponsors and Secretariat colleagues for their preparations in anticipation for the Thematic Segment of the 55th PCB meeting.

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