

GLOBAL REVIEW PANEL

REPORT OF THE MULTISTAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION



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INTRODUCTION

In a time of growing geopolitical complexity, shifting development priorities and unpredictability in the support of the multilateral system, as well as a significant shortage in funding of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), the Global Review Panel was convened by the Executive Director of UNAIDS, Michel Sidibé, and UNDP Administrator and UNDG Chair, Helen Clark, to provide recommendations for a sustainable and fit for purpose Joint Programme.

The work of the panel was characterized by its inclusiveness, transparency and expedience. Called for by the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board (PCB) in December 2016, the Global Review Panel delivered its final report and recommendations in fewer than five months. The panel was composed of experienced and technical members with a deep knowledge of the Joint Programme and the evolving development landscape, including PCB chairs, Member States and civil society.

On 28 April 2017, in response to decision 6.4(c) of the 39th PCB, the Joint Programme convened a multistakeholder consultation at the UNAIDS Headquarters in Geneva with the purpose of engaging with PCB Members on the Global Review Panel's final report. The consultation sought to generate feedback on the recommendations as well as guidance for the Joint Programme in its preparation for the 40th meeting of the PCB. The consultation was attended by a range of stakeholders, including representatives of 34 Member States, 11 Non-Governmental Organizations and 8 Cosponsors. The consultation was chaired by the Chair of the PCB, Mr Alexander Grant Ntrakwa, Deputy Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of Ghana in Geneva, and addressed by panel Co-Convenor Michel Sidibe, UNAIDS Executive Director, and panel Co-Chair Lennarth Hjelmåker, Special Ambassador for Global Health, Sweden. Several of the Global Review Panellists were in attendance.

Consultation participants welcomed the review process and the report, particularly its inclusiveness and country focus and its positioning of the Joint Programme as a frontrunner and pathfinder amidst broader reform of the United Nations Development System. The report was viewed as a vehicle to bring greater visibility to the role and contributions of the Joint Programme. Throughout the consultation, participants were forceful in their recognition of the value of the Joint Programme and the continued prioritization of the AIDS response, with many calls to ensure a fully funded Joint Programme. The Joint Programme's unique, multisectoral approach, which unites the expertise and capacity of a range of United Nations entities, was continually referred to as a model for work across the Sustainable Development Goals. In moving towards implementation, participants looked to the leadership of the UNAIDS Executive Director and encouraged him to be ambitious, to embrace the opportunity to effect meaningful change and to present an ambitious, concrete plan of action at the 40th meeting of the PCB.

OPENING SESSION

“The relevance of UNAIDS’ mandate is even more significant today than at its inception”

Deputy Permanent Representative Ntrakwa of Ghana opened the consultation, recalling the PCB decision point to convene the inclusive panel and the multistakeholder consultation. He commended the panel on delivering an action-oriented report in a highly compressed timeline. Mr Ntrakwa continued by recalling the ECOSOC resolution that established UNAIDS in 1996. He impressed upon participants that the UNAIDS mandate and approach was even more relevant now than at its inception. He recognized the Joint Programme's leadership role in providing the vision, strategy, evidence and policy direction for the global

response, while leveraging movements and partnerships to meet the holistic needs of people living with, at risk of and affected by HIV. He highlighted the significant contributions made by the Joint Programme to building more sustainable responses to AIDS.

“We must not be taken hostage by our own success”

In his opening remarks, the UNAIDS Executive Director reflected on the unprecedented gains made by the AIDS response, including in treatment expansion and progress towards elimination of new HIV infections among children, which demonstrated what could be achieved through global solidarity. He raised concerns however that the AIDS response was at a crossroads, where gains were fragile and intractable challenges remained in scaling up access to services, particularly for vulnerable populations. The greatest challenge however, he warned, was the threat of complacency and allowing the response to be taken hostage by its own success. The rebound of the epidemic is possible, with the additional risk of widespread drug resistance. In these times of uncertainty, and in response to the major funding gap at the Joint Programme, the EXD recognized that a new narrative was needed to impress upon decision makers and all stakeholders in the response, the value of the Joint Programme. As detailed by the EXD, in response to a 30% reduction in its funding, the Joint Programme had already undergone significant reform during its period of stabilization, including major reductions in spending and staff, reallocating staff to Fast-Track countries, closing and consolidating offices and reducing resource allocations to Cosponsors.

Mr Sidibe also expressed his appreciation for the expedited and robust process of the panel and its report, recognizing its value in helping to stabilize the Joint Programme and informing its repositioning in light of challenges and opportunities of the current context. The Executive Director closed by delineating three main messages derived from the Report:

- Report validates the fundamental idea of the unique Joint Programme and joint multisectoral working, and its achievements in reducing duplication, increasing efficiency and leveraging competencies of a range of UN organizations;
- Report calls on the Joint Programme to reinvigorate country-level joint work and collaborative action;
- Report calls on the Joint Programme to reinforce accountability and results for people.

“This is United Nations reform in reality”

In his opening remarks, panel Co-Chair Lennarth Hjelmåker provided an overview of the findings of the report and the consultation process undertaken by the panel. He impressed upon participants that the panel had been tasked to address *how* UNAIDS operates, not *what* its priority areas of work are, which are defined in the UNAIDS 2016–2021 Strategy. He emphasized the panel’s many positive findings in its review of the Joint Programme, stating that it was an indispensable part of the AIDS ecosystem—exercising political leadership, providing strategic information and supporting communities, countries and partners, including the Global Fund process. He was encouraged to see that some of the recommendations were already informing change at the Joint Programme, such as the revision of the Unified Budget, Reporting and Accountability Framework (UBRAF). He concluded by noting that the Report and its implementation marked United Nations reform in practice, and that it will play an important role in informing overall United Nations reform efforts.

“The last mile of the marathon is the most difficult”

Babatunde Osotimehin, UNFPA Executive Director, and Nazneen Damji, Policy Advisor, UN Women [reading a statement by the Executive Director], also addressed the consultation during the opening session. The leaders of two of the Joint Programme’s Cosponsoring organizations demonstrated their support for the report and commitment to working jointly to engage on the recommendations, identify opportunities for implementation and carve a path towards a stronger Joint Programme.

Mr Osotimehin began by recounting the many years of his career that had been dedicated to the HIV response, and thus valued the opportunity to address the consultation. He congratulated the panel for delivering a strong report in such a short time, and noted that this kind of efficiency was characteristic of the Joint Programme. He recognized that while incredible progress had been achieved in the HIV response, the final steps – “the last mile of the marathon” – towards ending the epidemic would be the most difficult. He highlighted challenges in preventing new HIV infections among adults, the continued marginalization and vulnerability of key populations, and the continued struggle to protect sexual and reproductive health and rights for all people. Mr Osotimehin closed by recognizing the central role of countries in the response, and welcoming the country focus of the report. The unique Joint Programme model, he concluded, and the coalition of actors at country level that it enables, would be critical to taking the recommendations of the report forward, as well as more broadly contributing to ending the AIDS epidemic.

Ms Damji welcomed the timely, robust process of the Global Review Panel. She recognized the remarkable progress in the response, particularly in increasing the number of people living with HIV accessing treatment, and more recently, the number of people achieving suppressed viral loads. Yet she was also cognizant of the continued risk that women and girls face, especially young women. She encouraged stakeholders, given the challenging financial context, to explore and utilize innovative approaches to resource mobilization. Ms Damji also reported a productive discussion on the GRP Report by the UNAIDS Executive Director and Cosponsor Heads of Agency at the recent CCO. She relayed that the CCO looked forward to further exploring the recommendations and engaging on next steps.

SESSION 1. FINANCING AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Discussion overview

- Joint Programme plays a critical leadership role in the AIDS response and its unique model offers lessons for engaging across the 2030 Agenda
- Panel convened in light of urgent financial situation, which is mainly due to larger pressures rather than due to lack of support for the Joint Programme – but there are areas that need to be strengthened
- Strong support for a strengthened and refined Joint Programme model, with emphasis on prioritization and differentiation given challenging financing environment
- Report and its recommendations mark a milestone in the implementation of QCPR and United Nations reform
- Recommendations welcome and participants look forward to more concrete, detailed proposals concerning their implementation at the 40th meeting of the PCB

“Now is the right time to progress on the agenda of transparency, accountability, results. This is why DFID is happy to recommit funding to AIDS and to UNAIDS.”

Daniel Graymore, Head of Global Funds Department, UK Department for International Development (DFID) and Global Review Panellist, provided an overview of the findings and recommendations of the panel, as well as the debates undertaken in arriving at the final recommendations, under Pillar 1 on Financing and Accountability. He commended UNAIDS in its forward-leaning approach and setting the pace in UN reform. He also welcomed the resonance between the panel and the findings of the DFID multilateral review, and the organizational commitment to transparency, accountability and results.

Box 1. Panel findings on financing and accountability: top challenges

- Static resource allocation across the Joint Programme
 - Accountability undermined by insufficient reporting on the results of the Cosponsors and the Secretariat and value-for-money of its collective work
 - Disconnect between strategic decisions of the PCB and financing of the Joint Programme
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Mr Graymore discussed the panel’s finding that while static resource allocation to Cosponsors provided predictability, such an approach did not necessarily respond to the evolving epidemic and needs of the response. The panel found that the Joint Programme needed to strengthen its ability to assess upcoming challenges, identify priorities and adapt accordingly, which would rely on a more dynamic, forecasting model of resource allocation. The panel agreed however that a certain level of predictability would be critical for planning and to support core capacity, from which emerged support for a minimum allocation to Cosponsors. Finances above and beyond the minimum allocation would be based on gaps in the response, Cosponsor capacity and results.

Secondly, the panel found that the PCB and other partners required stronger reporting on results achieved by the Joint Programme. The panel thus challenged the Joint Programme to provide reporting on individual (Cosponsor and Secretariat) and joint results, while better demonstrating value for money and the added value of joint working.

Finally, the panel observed disconnect between the strategic decisions and commitments of the PCB and resulting financing of the Joint Programme. Furthermore, while the Global Fund had undergone a successful replenishment, the UNAIDS budget had not been fully funded over the past three biennium. Yet until 2010, UNAIDS had been fully financed, raising the question of why funding had declined in recent years. The panel concluded that, rather than simply due to inadequacies in the resource mobilization mechanism, funding shortages may also be influenced by challenges in demonstrating the Joint Programme’s value for money and the collective and individual contributions of Cosponsors and the Secretariat to progress in the AIDS response

To address these three core challenges, the panel made five recommendations (Box 2).

Box 2. Panel summary recommendations: Financing and Accountability

1. Ensure that Board endorsement of UNAIDS 2016–2021 Strategy is matched by financial commitments to UNAIDS
 2. Ensure global AIDS response architecture is adequately funded, including symbiotic Joint Programme - Global Fund partnership
 3. Ensure the Secretariat is adequately resourced and establish dynamic and differentiated resource allocation to Cosponsors
 4. Present joint and individual Cosponsor/Secretariat results through a simplified and transparent reporting framework that improves accountability
 5. Strengthen public understanding of the JP, value-added and approach of working across mandates, sectors and partnerships
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During the session discussion on financing and accountability, participants expressed their concern about the significant gap between available financing and UNAIDS' operating budget – particularly given its unique and inclusive approaches fit for the SDG era, and the global commitment to ending the AIDS epidemic by 2030. They pressed partners to ensure that UNAIDS has the resources it needs to fulfil its role and lead the global response to end AIDS. Participants recognized the need to holistically fund the global AIDS architecture, in particular the Global Fund and UNAIDS to ensure both have the resources necessary to function. Yet there was also recognition that the challenging financial environment for many donors, coupled with the expanded sustainable development agenda, was forcing partners to make difficult funding decisions. Given the unpredictability of the donor environment, participants and panellists encouraged UNAIDS to explore the possibility of building on successful innovative financing mechanisms.

Concerns were raised about accountability and conflict of interest if a mechanism was pursued in which Global Fund resources were channelled to the Joint Programme. There were requests for the preparation of more detailed options in ensuring predictable and sustainable financing for the Joint Programme, accompanied by a risk analysis for each option.

There was wide support for the recommendation to establish a dynamic and differentiated resource allocation approach to Cosponsors, and ensure adequate resources for the Secretariat – with the understanding that Secretariat funding should not be static either, but flexible and adapted to the needs of the response.

There was general support for focusing resource allocation on Fast-Track countries, recognizing that the difficult funding environment demanded prioritization. Yet many pressed UNAIDS to ensure their critical political leadership, advocacy and coordination roles would be maintained in middle-income countries and non-Fast-Track countries to accelerate progress and avoid a resurgence of the epidemic, especially among key populations.

Participants welcomed the recommendation for improved, simplified reporting with clear accountability lines, and proposed the potential to complement technical information with illustrative examples of successes and remaining challenges. Several participants referred to a recent dialogue with PCB members on Joint Programme results as a valuable method of clearly communicating contributions of and the challenges facing Cosponsors, while enabling a more granular understanding of the work of each Cosponsor and how collaboration with the Secretariat achieves joint results.

In response to the panel recommendation on expanding appreciation of the role of the Joint Programme, participants pressed the Joint Programme to ensure a focused communication campaign, targeted at decision makers as well as Cosponsors to ensure continued internal commitment to and mainstreaming of the AIDS response. Participants encouraged UNAIDS and the PCB to galvanize champions at the local level, as communities have the potential to be among the most effective advocates for the work of the Joint Programme. The panel Co-Chair challenged participants to each embrace their role as advocates for the Joint Programme in their respective organizations.

Co-Chair Lennarth Hjelmaker closed the session by reiterating the close engagement of the CCO throughout the process, demonstrating fruitful collaboration and clear commitment to reinvigorating joint working.

SESSION 2. JOINT WORKING

Discussion overview

- Strong support for enabling joint working at country level to lead on taking AIDS further out of isolation and integrating with other health and development efforts
- Implementation of recommendations should be undertaken in a manner that reinforces country ownership of the AIDS response
- Recommendations must be reviewed in terms of their cost implications and value added

“The Joint Programme must ensure that country leadership and a commitment to delivering results at country level remain its priority”

Nduku Kilonzo, Director of the National Aids Control Council of Kenya and a Global Review Panellist, introduced the findings and recommendations under the second pillar of joint working. Ms Kilonzo began by highlighting the major strengths of the Joint Programme, including its role in generating strategic information, advocacy and convening. She emphasized Cosponsors’ role in translating policy ambition into results, and stressed that at country level, HIV is often the issue where the United Nations voice is the most unified.

Box 3. Panel findings on joint working: top challenges

- Need for collective clarity on roles, responsibilities, results and gaps across the global response to end AIDS
 - Evolving epidemic and environment demanding engagement of new actors, particularly partners critical to taking AIDS further out of isolation
 - Budget shortfalls forcing difficult decisions
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Ms Kilonzo reviewed several challenges (Box 3) facing the Joint Programme that the panel had identified in its review. These included a lack of clarity among stakeholders on designated roles and responsibilities of the Secretariat and Cosponsors, as well as dissonance between what Cosponsors were asked and expected to do with what they were capacitated to do at country level. She discussed the additional challenge that while the PCB was a model for multistakeholder engagement, certain constituencies remained underrepresented. While it wasn’t feasible to change the formal composition of the PCB, the panel encouraged the Joint Programme to explore other options for broader engagement in PCB deliberations. At the global level, the panel recommended to establish a multistakeholder forum for deep reviews of the UNAIDS 2016–2021 Strategy, informed by independent scientific monitoring.

Engagement with new kinds of partners was also identified as a priority beyond the PCB, including at country level to address evolving epidemics within the 2030 Agenda. There were opportunities, for example, to close gaps in the response by working more closely with organizations focused on migrants, refugees and human rights. Finally, Ms Kilonzo reflected on how the funding shortfall had created significant pressure to prioritize and focus Joint Programme work and had reduced its presence in many countries.

In presenting the panel recommendations (Box 4), Ms Kilonzo encouraged the Joint Programme to recommit to joint working while ensuring that country leadership and a commitment to delivering results at country level remained its priority. In terms of updating the Division of Labour and tailoring the Joint Programme at country level, Ms Kilonzo pressed the Joint Programme to undertake continuous review of what needs to be done in each country, the expertise and capacity required to address each country's unique epidemic and who is capable of meeting those needs. The Panel offered several concrete options to strengthen joint working at country level, including improving opportunities for short-term staff exchanges throughout the Joint Programme, co-locating the UNAIDS Secretariat office with the Resident Coordinator office, and strengthening cooperation between regional Joint Teams and regional political institutions.

Box 4. Panel summary recommendations: joint working

6. Recommit to principles and practices of joint working to deliver on UNAIDS 2016–2021 Strategy
 7. Enhance multistakeholder debate through an inclusive forum on deep reviews of UNAIDS 2016–2021 Strategy
 8. Refine roles and responsibilities to ensure Joint Programme seamlessly delivers against 2016 Political Declaration, UNAIDS 2016–2021 Strategy and the 2030 Agenda
 9. Identify the optimal configuration of the United Nations response, country by country
 10. Tailor Joint Programme footprint at country level based on “country compacts”
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During the floor discussion, participants were supportive of the country focus of the panel's recommendations on joint working. They encouraged the Joint Programme to be bold in refining and reinvigorating joint working at global and country levels, including by exploring the notion of the country compact. In response to the panel recommendations on incentives and sanctions, several participants encouraged the Joint Programme to focus on positive reinforcement to encourage joint working and to avoid any restrictions to Cosponsors' ability to fulfil their roles.

Participants welcomed the report's support for taking AIDS further out of isolation, and equipping the Joint Programme to lead this effort at the country level. Several participants were supportive of such solutions as locating UNAIDS staff within the Resident Coordinators office as well as integrating HIV into the Resident Coordinators' mandate. Some participants wanted to see recommendations go even further in terms of incentivizing joint working to integrate the AIDS response into broader health and sustainable development efforts, including through integrated service delivery.

While participants saw the value of establishing a multistakeholder forum, many raised concerns about the additional costs, given the challenging financial environment. They urged the Joint Programme to ensure that limited resources were allocated in the most effective way and provide further clarity on how recommendations would be undertaken amidst reductions in resources allocations for Cosponsors.

Participants debated the value and potential conflicts of interest in expanding observer status for non-state actors, particularly the private sector. While some saw their participation as promising, particularly in terms

of resource mobilization, others were concerned that private sector engagement may dilute the influence of civil society and Member States in PCB deliberations.

SESSION 3. GOVERNANCE

Discussion overview

- UNAIDS' governance mechanisms are well-positioned to convene more strategic, multistakeholder review of the status of the epidemic and response
- Implementation of the recommendations should focus on reinforcing existing structures
- Member States play a critical role in encouraging coherence across the UNAIDS and Cosponsor boards

“As the Joint Programme is the global authority on AIDS, its governance structures must devote more time to reviewing progress in the global response”

Jeffrey Acaba, Education and Advocacy Lead, Asia Pacific Network of Young Key Populations and a Global Review Panellist, introduced the findings and recommendations under pillar 3 on governance. The panel recognized UNAIDS' innovative and inclusive governance mechanisms, but found that they were not fully utilized. As the UNAIDS 2016–2021 Strategy and 2016 Political Declaration set the global AIDS agenda and milestones for 2020 and 2030, the panel urged the PCB to reinforce its role as the global authority in the response by encouraging it to devote more time to reviewing progress and investments across the broader response. As an input to the review, the panel suggested the development of a scorecard of Member States' financial commitments to the UNAIDS Joint Programme, both core and non-core, and the wider AIDS response. The panel also urged the Joint Programme to improve coherence across the UNAIDS and Cosponsor boards, as a critical factor in actively guiding mainstreaming of the AIDS response and reinforcing commitment among Cosponsors.

Box 5. Panel findings on governance: top challenges

- Policy deliberations within the governance of the UNAIDS Joint Programme are not sufficiently linked to the delivery of the UNAIDS 2016–2021 Strategy in the context of the SDGs
 - AIDS and health architecture at country level remains fragmented, leading to duplication and inefficiencies
 - Inconsistencies across UNAIDS and Cosponsor boards on AIDS
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At the national level, the panel also found opportunities to strengthen governance platforms, including by harmonizing donor reporting mechanisms. Finally, Mr Acaba emphasized the critical role of civil society, including networks of people living with HIV and affected communities, in national and global governance – stressing the uniqueness of the PCB in this regard as well as an element of the response that was consistently reinforced by the deliberations and final report of the panel. He encouraged the Joint Programme to reinforce support to civil society to ensure it was able to fulfil its critical engagement and monitoring roles in the PCB and other Cosponsor boards.

To address these three core challenges, the panel made four recommendations (Box 6).

Box 6. Panel summary recommendations: governance

11. Enhance oversight by PCB of global efforts to Fast-Track and end AIDS
 12. Work towards multistakeholder, multisectoral platforms at country level to monitor and review the response
 13. Reinvigorate strategic policy focus and coherence of CCO
 14. Pursue greater policy coherence across the boards of UNAIDS and its Cosponsors and ensure greater commitment to the AIDS response
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Generally participants welcomed recommendations to enhance the strategic debate and review role of the PCB and CCO. In terms of the recommendation on country level platforms, Member States encouraged the Joint Programme to focus on strengthening existing structures, rather than creating new ones.

A number of participants were concerned that the establishment of a scorecard to track and report on financial contributions to the AIDS response may in practice be too complex to achieve a comprehensive picture, particularly in terms of reporting on domestic funding and in-kind support. Ultimately, participants found that a scorecard risked being counterproductive to mobilizing additional resources, and that it may be more appropriate for civil society or other independent entities to take forward.

Finally, Member States recognized their own role in encouraging coherence across the UNAIDS and Cosponsor boards, including by encouraging commitment to and visibility of the AIDS response in Cosponsor board discussions.

CLOSING

In closing the consultation, Mr Ntrakwa expressed his appreciation to the Global Review Panel for having met the challenge posed by the PCB to establish an inclusive, consultative process and deliver its recommendations within a short timeframe. Mr Ntrakwa further recognized that the report would provide critical inputs to broader United Nations reform efforts.

Mr Ntrakwa summarized several points of consensus reached over the course of the day's discussion, including on: 1) the value of the Joint Programme, and that the world would continue to rely on it to fulfil its critical functions; 2) the importance of recognizing the Joint Programme's position in the broader health ecosystem, and taking a holistic approach to financing the entire system; 3) establishing a minimum allocation to Cosponsors to support their continued engagement in the Joint Programme and capacity to mobilize additional funds, and; 4) building on and reinforcing UNAIDS' leadership in multistakeholder engagement, while minimizing conflicts of interest, which was a priority of broader United Nations reform.

Finally, Mr Ntrakwa recognized that while the panel had led the process to that point, leadership would now be passed to the Executive Director to produce a proposal for a robust and sustainable Joint Programme model.

Mr Sidibe thanked participants for a rich, strategic discussion on the Joint Programme that the world needs. He committed to developing a concrete, operational plan of action for the next PCB, and to delivering a UBRAP developed in the most transparent manner to date. He reaffirmed the conclusion of the consultation Chair, Mr Ntrakwa, that the panel report would be highly valuable in informing and influencing the general reform process of the United Nations and would forward the report to the Deputy Secretary General as a matter of priority.

