

UNAIDS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REMARKS

WINNIE BYANYIMA

UNAIDS | 2022



STRUCTURED FUNDING DIALOGUE
3 NOVEMBER 2022, GENEVA, SWITZERLAND

Thank you Chair.

I am so pleased to spend time with you in person and virtually. Since we last met during the June PCB, we launched the *In Danger* Report in July, sounding the alarm about the state of the global AIDS response.

Thank you, to the Informal Task Team chaired by Julia Martin, and Mohamed Chakroun. They worked over the summer on developing options for the short term and long-term financial viability of the Joint Programme.

I have been calling attention to the pressing situation of the global AIDS response across all forums I've attended, most recently at the World Health Summit in Berlin.

The Global AIDS response is in danger. The fallout from the Covid crisis knocked the AIDS response back. Now the fallout from the war in Ukraine is putting countries' responses under even greater strain.

AIDS remains a deadly pandemic. 650 000 people died of AIDS related-illnesses last year. That is one person every minute. I insist that this means it's a crisis. Last year, there were 1.5 million new HIV infections—1 million above our 2020 target of 500 000. New HIV infections increased in 38 countries in 2021.

In Eastern Europe and Central Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East and North Africa new HIV infections are rising. In Asia and the Pacific, where we had seen new HIV infections falling, they are now rising.

As the leader of the global AIDS response UNAIDS is working tirelessly to reverse this trend, and get the response back on track.

We have much to be proud of. We are a unique example of working collectively. We are resilient, inclusive and multisectoral and we amplify the work of others on the ground.

The UBRAF monitoring results are clear. The effectiveness of Global Fund investments depends on the policy reforms that the Joint Programme is working to advance. In 2020–2021, UNAIDS supported more than 80% of applications to The Global Fund, guiding USD 5 billion in HIV funding. Our support to countries is on developing data-informed, science-based strategies tailored to the epidemic and developing the plans to implement them well. We also help fix bottlenecks during implementation for effective impact-making the money work.

Now the work of UNAIDS is needed more than ever to help countries to be ready for the next round of funding applications, in a difficult allocation environment.

All of this work and progress is at risk if we do not resolve the current funding crisis.

Despite the recognition of our critical role in making the money work on the ground and supporting the enabling social and legal environments, our financing remains precarious. In fact, the financial situation for the core UBRAF has worsened since I reported to you in June. The global financing situation for ODA has become more challenging with the war in Ukraine and developments in exchange markets are aggravating the situation. Despite the USA being our largest donor for the core UBRAF, 2/3 of the core income comes from the European countries and this is significantly impacted by currency fluctuations.

We are now expecting a very significant 2022 shortfall at the level of USD 35 million against our core UBRAF lower threshold of 187 million. This is counting on the United Kingdom to honour their pledge from the June PCB meeting.

UNAIDS has taken significant action to resolve this situation—we have instituted budget discipline, developed a new Resource Mobilisation Strategy and worked closely with the Informal Task Team to come up with actions and recommendations.

However, the size of the budget shortfall means that it cannot be addressed by stretching the budget or having any more efficiency gains.

The shortfall is forcing stark choices—dramatic reduction in country presence, further reductions to the Cosponsors are some of the scenarios that we are faced with.

These choices are devastating, and all scenarios contemplated will set the global AIDS response back even further.

This will have an alarming and lasting real-world impact.

- The most vulnerable people unable to access treatment dying, millions of new infections.
- Refugees and migrants will be denied urgent health care.
- Cruel laws kept in place that persecute gay people and make them afraid to get medical care; laws that will continue to be enforced punitively.
- Failure to achieve the end of mother to child transmission.
- Girls locked out of the school gates and left in danger.
- The voices of people living with HIV and their communities falling silent on the global agenda.

Our communities, donors and partners recognize the seriousness of the situation and are calling for action.

Two of our key partners, The Global Fund and PEPFAR have urged rapid action to fully fund the Joint Programme, noting that the leadership of UNAIDS is critical for the success of The Global Fund and PEPFAR investments.

In spite of the challenging geopolitical funding landscape, our loyal northern European major donors, Sweden, Netherlands, Switzerland, Denmark, Germany, Norway, Luxembourg, Belgium, all maintained or even increased their contributions in local currency, but the USD value of all of these came in significantly lower than in 2021 due to appreciation of the USD.

Our Cosponsors, communities, key populations and people living with HIV are all calling for UNAIDS to be fully funded so it can achieve its vital mission.

We know that the confidence is there for the Joint Programme to lead and deliver!

I am pleased that the Board has also taken ownership of the funding issue. Fully funding UNAIDS is our joint responsibility of Board Members.

Our ambition is to reach the USD 210 million level we defined as our needs, USD 187 million is the bare minimum. The Task Team on our financing set up by the PCB in June is proposing ways to put us back on more solid ground by 2023.

Thank you for your intense engagement in resource mobilization and the Task Team work.

We are calling on all Board Members or members of the Constituency to commit to or advocate for more funding, whether with their own government or organization, or with others. Every dollar counts.

We are seeking:

- An immediate investment of USD 35 million utilising End of Year Funding;
- Ongoing solidarity and financial commitment of the PCB Members and their constituencies to a sustained and growing core funding to deliver USD 210 million budget for UNAIDS, this is your commitment as Member States to the UN Funding Compact;
- A renegotiation of the relationship with The Global Fund.

I am looking forward to your ideas about this and look forward to our discussion.

Thank you for your work, thank you for upholding the spirit of working together during these difficult times.



