

## **UBRAF Working Group**

### **Note for the record - First Meeting**

**Date:** Friday, 18 June 2021, 1:00pm – 2:30pm (Geneva time)

#### **Follow-up points:**

- *Working Group members to send their detailed feedback on the Zero Draft UBRAF (especially the Theories of Change and the Results Framework)*
- *Secretariat to follow-up with Working Group members on the selection of the Chair of the UBRAF Working Group*
- *The Secretariat to share the Note for Record from the 18 June meeting and schedule the second call of the UBRAF Working Group during the third week of July 2021.*

#### **1. Welcome and short introduction**

- The Secretariat welcomed the Unified Budget Results and Accountability Framework (UBRAF) Working Group members appreciating their engagement and support for the new UBRAF development.
- The UBRAF will shape the work of the Joint Programme for the next 5 years and, especially to contribute to the implementation of the new Global AIDS Strategy and Political Declaration. We wish to find the right balance to focus on and measure what make the most difference with sufficient flexibility and effectiveness including reduced transaction costs.
- The agenda of the meeting was introduced and adopted.

#### **2. Introduction of members and Working Group's role**

- The Working Group members and the Secretariat support team introduced themselves during the call, noting that the Working Group is comprised of 18 members with an important geographic and gender balance among the membership. The Secretariat appreciated that the members bring a wide and solid set of relevant expertise that will be extremely useful and noted that the timeline for the new UBRAF development is tight.
- Recalling the agreement by the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board (PCB) during the PCB Special Session, held on 24 – 25 March 2021 and the establishment of this UBRAF Working Group by the UNAIDS Executive Director to guide the development of its new UNAIDS Unified Budget Results and Accountability Framework (UBRAF), the Working Group members will support the UBRAF development by providing advice, guidance and support to the results framework, the resource allocation and the accountability components of the new UBRAF, as per the established Terms of Reference (ToRs).
- More specifically, the scope of work will include:
  - a) To advise on, guide and support the development of the UBRAF result framework, resource allocation and accountability aspects, including monitoring and

evaluation, funding scenarios, and help ensure continuous and efficient integration of UN reform aspects.

- b) To advise on UBRAF key components and provide guidance and feedback along the development process.
- c) To advise on application and integration of the main shifts from the End Inequalities, End AIDS, Global AIDS Strategy 2021 -2026, that the new UBRAF will align to.

### **3. Nomination of chair**

- **Proposed responsibilities of the chair:** The Secretariat outlined the proposed responsibilities that the Chair of the Working Group would take on. This included: chairing the meetings and steering the process and discussions through the agenda items and presenting updates to the PCB on the outcomes of the consultations. This would be done with the support from the Secretariat including support by drafting the Note for Record for meetings, proposing meeting agendas, organizing meetings, sending out invitations, etc...
- It was clarified that holding this position would not restrain or otherwise have an impact on the Chair's ability to engage openly and freely in the discussions as it is intended to be a purely steering function and is not meant to be a neutral arbiter of the discussion. Therefore, the Chair can also engage in discussions and providing his or her feedback.
- **Nomination process:** The Secretariat noted that no expression of nominations for the position of the Chair of the UBRAF Working Group have been received to date. Therefore, the Secretariat will approach members of the Working Group in advance of the next call to solicit interest (see follow up point). The nomination of the Chair of the Working Group will be finalized at the next UBRAF Working Group meeting.

### **4. Summary of zero draft UBRAF and its components**

- The Secretariat presented an overview of the Zero Draft UBRAF to be presented to UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board (PCB) in June 2021, highlighting some of the key components and strategic shifts incorporated into the document (whose draft had been shared in advance).
- The UBRAF describes how the Joint programme will lead the global efforts to end AIDS as a public health threat, its contribution in 2022-2026 to achievement of the strategic priorities set out in the Strategy and serves as a tool for joint planning, monitoring, knowledge building and accountability. It will be composed of a high-level framework and its accompanying biennial and annual workplans which provide further information on how this will be operationalized at all levels.
- **Key components:**
  1. Joint Programme's vision, theory of change & result structure at outcome level
  2. Results framework with clear prioritization and emphasis on addressing structural drivers
  3. Optimizing and leveraging Joint Programme capacities
  4. Resource allocation process and funding scenarios
  5. Accountability, monitoring and reporting system

- **Theories of Change:** The draft UBRAF theories of change are composed of an overarching theory of change, and several 'nested' theories of change linked to the strategic priority areas.
  - The overarching theory of change highlights the general, causal pathways that are needed to get the response on track and presents a logical framework highlighting the conditions and actions needed for us to address the different barriers to a successful HIV response.
  - The nested theories of change highlight how the Joint Programme will contribute to each strategic priority area exploiting their independencies.
- **Draft Results Framework:** explicitly identifies the Joint Programme's capacities to tackle inequalities and strengths which will enable the action required to achieve the 10 results areas at output level and 3 outcomes aligned with the Global AIDS Strategy to support countries to progress towards ending AIDS.
- **Timeline:** The UBRAF and the Biennial Workplan and Budget for 2022-2023 are expected to be presented to the PCB during the Special Session to be scheduled for September or October 2021. The UBRAF indicators will be presented to the PCB in December 2021.

## 5. Discussion:

- **Current HIV/AIDS funding environment:** The Working Group discussed how the challenging HIV financing environment including recent funding cuts will be addressed in new UBRAF. It was noted that some of the funding cuts could be temporary, and this is a wider phenomenon not limited to HIV and the Joint Programme in a complex fiscal space environment. It is increasingly difficult to secure multiyear core agreements for HIV funding and this is where the jointness of the Joint Program is essential.
- **Resource mobilization and allocation:** The inequality lens in the new UBRAF constitutes the right platform to create synergies and coordinated and prioritized Joint Programme's action. The new UBRAF provides an opportunity for efficient and catalytic resource allocation and different funding scenarios to be included in the full UBRAF will help to inform the resource allocation. To mitigate this risk, it was recommended to be more specific on Strategic Priority 3 (leveraging of partnerships) and include commitment to this in the framework as well as to be clear on assumptions, funding scenarios and impact of not meeting funding targets. Some more thematic fundraising could be further explored. Multiyear flexible core funding agreement are essential. The Working Group showed interest in the analysis of funding gaps and resource allocation of the current UBRAF and asked if there was a standardized financial reporting format for the Joint Programme as well as Member States. The Secretariat will share the annual Joint Programme Performance Monitoring and financial reporting and other relevant resources with the Working Group.
- **Division of Labor (DOL):** It was recommended to update the Joint Programme's Division of Labor (last updated in 2018 and applicable for global, regional and country levels) to align it with the new Global AIDS Strategy. This is an opportunity to ensure the Joint programme remains 'fit for purpose' with expertise to deliver on commitments and especially the new focus on reducing inequalities as well as further clarify roles and responsibilities maintaining great complementarity among Cosponsors, better leveraging their strengths and all available capacities including less HIV specific ones which add

value for the HIV response. Collaboration with other key stakeholders such as for leveraging GFATM and PEPFAR investments should be more explicit.

- **COVID-19 recovery:** The Working Group emphasized the need for taking into account the COVID-19 pandemic, its impact on and the needs of national HIV responses to catch up and/or recover, in order to help with “building back better”. This is also an opportunity to solidify progress and surge leap forwards.
- **Theory of Change (TOC):** The Working Group indicated their support for the draft Theories of Change at high level, appreciated the inequalities lens and indicated that there was a strong and evidence-based theoretical base, as reflected in the causal pathways and that this would set the right base for resources commitments. It was suggested to building on the high-level theories of change provided in the Zero Draft to indicate more intricate causal pathways for change on how the Joint Programme will catalyze and contribute to the change at the regional and country level. Furthermore, information on the low-level cause- and pathways as well as how the Joint Programme will push further causal impact evaluation strategy would be useful for the Working Group.
- The Secretariat welcomed the initial feedback of members and looks forward to further discussion and feedback after the PCB. The need for finding the right balance between theoretic complexity/technicality, flexibility and simplicity of messages for clarity for the PCB especially on the Joint’s Programme focus and results was stressed. The Secretariat also noted that the theories of change were developed at high level but with the intention to also instill and use the theory of change thinking for sound more detailed biennial operational work planning.
- **Inequality lens:** The Working Group noted that many assumptions have been made about inequalities in the new UBRAF. As a second step, it was proposed to do more thinking about the actual determinants of inequality and if they are sufficiently addressed in the new UBRAF. Members also raised the importance of UNAIDS advocacy for countries to align with the new Global AIDS Strategy and evidence-informed approaches.
- **Indicators and accountability:** The Working Group welcome the planned better alignment of Global AIDS Monitoring (GAM) and UBRAF indicators as a very positive development as some mismatch in indicators in the past led to missed opportunities. In response to question on the country envelop, the Secretariat clarified that the intention is to build on the model with further innovative approaches. The importance of finding a more effective way to better track alignment between the Joint Programme’s country envelopes and the UBRAF indicators was stressed.

## **6. Next steps and Working Group modalities**

- **Format & Collaboration:** The Secretariat looks forward to the virtual collaboration with the UBRAF Working Group and support its work as needed. The background documents are available in the shared folder with key reference documents to be shared separately.
- The Secretariat also noted that the draft Note for Record (NFR) will be shared with all Working Group members, and once finalized, those would be posted online on the Transparency Portal’s new UBRAF Webpage.

- **Schedule of meetings:** Meetings anticipated to be on a monthly basis, with the next one proposed for third week of July 2021. The topics suggested for the next call include the Theory of Change, Results Framework and Division of Labor.

## **7. Closing remarks**

- The Secretariat thanked the Working Group members for their great engagement and already initial contribution for the development of the UBRAF through this first meeting and welcomed their feedback and comments on the UBRAF zero draft via email. The Secretariat will share the NFR of the call and invitation and proposed agenda for the next meeting.