

Report of UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board to ECOSOC

Report prepared by the PCB Bureau

Additional documents for this item: N/A

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

- *Approve* the report of the PCB to ECOSOC, as included in the Annex, and
- *Request* the PCB Chair to transmit the report to the President of ECOSOC.

Cost implications for the implementation of the decisions: N/A

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1. In its resolution E/RES/2019/33,¹ the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) requested that the Programme Coordinating Board (PCB) of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) “discuss governance issues of the Joint Programme, as well as how the Joint Programme could be sustainably core funded, in accordance with all relevant United Nations principles, with a view to evaluating such issues, in order to have an effective, efficient and accountable Joint Programme, and to report to the Economic and Social Council by 2021”.
2. The PCB Bureau has prepared the “Report of the Programme Coordinating Board to ECOSOC”, available in the annex below, in response to the request by ECOSOC. The PCB’s report complements the 2021 report of the UNAIDS Executive Director to ECOSOC.
3. ECOSOC adopted the resolution E/RES/2019/33 at the management segment of its meeting on 24 July 2019. Following up on the ECOSOC request to the PCB, the PCB Bureau at its meeting on 30 August 2019² noted that the PCB was scheduled to receive several reports in 2019 and 2020 related to governance of the Joint Programme. These anticipated governance-related reports included the Management and Administrative Review of UNAIDS by the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU),³ findings from the independent evaluation of the 2016–2021 UNAIDS Unified Budget, Results and Accountability Framework (UBRAF), as well as the revised Operating Model of the Joint Programme⁴ and the Lessons Learned on the nomination process of UNAIDS Executive Director. The Bureau agreed that follow-up on the 2019 ECOSOC resolution would be driven by the PCB’s deliberations regarding the JIU’s management and administrative review.
4. At its 45th meeting, the PCB discussed the findings and recommendations of the JIU and established a Working Group to consider the recommendations that were directed to the PCB. Over the course of six months, the Working Group met five times, after which it provided a progress report⁵ at the 46th PCB meeting. The final report⁶ of the working

¹ Resolution adopted by the Economic and Social Council on 24 July 2019, E/RES/2019/33, New York. Available at <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N19/235/76/PDF/N1923576.pdf?OpenElement>.

² A summary of the PCB Bureau meeting is available here:

https://www.unaids.org/en/resources/documents/2019/PCB_Bureau_30-Aug-2019

³ The Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) is the only independent external oversight body of the United Nations system mandated to conduct evaluations, inspections and investigations system-wide. Its mandate is to look at cross-cutting issues and to act as an agent for change across the United Nations system. JIU works to secure management and administrative efficiency and to promote greater coordination both between UN agencies and with other internal and external oversight bodies. For the past 50 years, the Unit has been dedicated to assisting the legislative bodies of numerous United Nations organizations in meeting their governance responsibilities. JIU provides support in the context of these agencies’ oversight function regarding human, financial and other resources. In its reports and notes, the Unit identifies best practices, proposes benchmarks and facilitates information-sharing throughout the organizations of the UN system that have adopted its Statute. The Report of the Joint Inspection Unit on the Management and Administrative Review of UNAIDS is available at:

https://www.unaids.org/en/resources/documents/2019/PCB45_JIU_Report.

⁴ The evaluation published in September 2020 as “Independent Evaluation of the UN-system response to AIDS in 2016-2019”, available at

https://www.unaids.org/en/resources/documents/2020/PCB47_Independent_Evaluation_UN_Response_AIDS .

⁵ Agenda item 6: Progress report of the working group of the Programme Coordinating Board (PCB) to propose options to implement the recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) to the PCB, 46th meeting of the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board, 23–25 June 2020, Geneva. Available at https://www.unaids.org/en/resources/documents/2020/PCB46_Progress-report-WG-to-JIU.

⁶ Agenda item 11: Report of the PCB Working Group on the Joint Inspection Unit Management and Administration Review of the United Nations Joint Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), 46th meeting of the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board, 15–18 December 2020, Geneva. Available at https://www.unaids.org/en/resources/documents/2020/PCB47_JIU_WG_Report.

group was tabled at the 47th PCB meeting, where the PCB adopted a series of decisions aimed at strengthening the governance of the Joint Programme.

5. At its meeting on 15 January 2021,⁷ the PCB Bureau discussed the steps towards the development of the report requested by ECOSOC from the PCB on governance and core funding issues. The Bureau agreed that the report of the PCB Working Group on the JIU recommendations would provide a framework for the outline of the requested report. The Chair also recalled that the PCB had agreed, at its 47th PCB meeting, “to include in the upcoming PCB report to ECOSOC a recommendation that the Council requests the Secretary-General to submit a report, after consultation with the PCB, on the establishment of two four-year term limits and performance expectations for the position of UNAIDS Executive Director in line with the practices of the UN system as recommended by the JIU.”⁸
6. Following the Bureau’s discussion of ECOSOC Resolution E/RES/2019/33, the PCB Chair prepared an annotated outline of the report, in close consultation with all PCB Bureau members. The outline was subsequently shared with all PCB members for review. PCB members shared verbal input on the outline of this report at a briefing convened by the PCB Bureau on 18 February 2021. PCB members also provided written input on the outline.
7. The PCB Chair, in collaboration with the Bureau, developed the full report, presented in the Annex, on the basis of the outline and the comments received.
8. The PCB’s report to ECOSOC is being presented to the Special Session of the PCB 24–25 March 2021 for approval. Following approval of the report by the PCB, the PCB Chair will transmit the report to the President of ECOSOC on behalf of the PCB.

Proposed Decision Points

9. The Programme Coordinating Board is invited to:
 - *Approve* the report of the PCB to ECOSOC, as included in the Annex below, and
 - *Request* the PCB Chair to transmit the report to the President of ECOSOC.

⁷ A summary of the PCB Bureau meeting is available at https://www.unaids.org/en/resources/documents/2021/UNAIDS_PCB_Bureau_15012021.

⁸ Decision Points of the 47th meeting of the UNAIDS Programme Monitoring Board, 15-18 December 2020, Geneva. Available at https://www.unaids.org/en/resources/documents/2020/PCB47_Decisions.

ANNEX: REPORT OF THE UNAIDS PROGRAMME COORDINATING BOARD TO ECOSOC

Summary

1. This report responds to the request of the Social and Economic Council (ECOSOC), in resolution E/RES/2019/33, to the Programme Coordinating Board (PCB) of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) “to discuss governance issues of the Joint Programme, as well as how the Joint Programme could be sustainably core funded, in accordance with all relevant United Nations principles, with a view to evaluating such issues, in order to have an effective, efficient and accountable Joint Programme, and to report to the Economic and Social Council by 2021”. The PCB submits this report to ECOSOC as a complement to the UNAIDS Executive Director’s 2021 report to ECOSOC.
2. The PCB serves as the governance body for the Joint Programme. The PCB is composed of 22 United Nations (UN) Member States, 11 UNAIDS Cosponsors, and representatives of 5 nongovernmental organizations. The UNAIDS governance structure is unique in its level of inclusiveness, with Member States, Cosponsors and civil society, and specifically people living with and affected by HIV, represented on the PCB as members. This inclusive governance structure has repeatedly been recognized as a useful example of UN system coherence, effectiveness and reform, including in the context of the 2030 Agenda.⁹
3. The PCB continues to serve as the central agenda-setting forum for the global HIV response. The development of strategies and strategic approaches under the oversight of the PCB unites diverse countries and stakeholders in a shared effort to implement optimally effective, tailored, people-centred HIV responses in order to end AIDS as a public health threat by 2030, as called for in the Sustainable Development Goals.
4. During its 25 years in existence, UNAIDS governance has evolved in response to a changing HIV epidemic, the changing needs of the Joint Programme, as well a governance best practices in the UN system. Accountability of the Joint Programme has also evolved over time.
5. The PCB has taken steps to strengthen its oversight and accountability roles, including in response to two independent evaluations,^{10 11} the recommendations of the Global Review Panel on the future of the UNAIDS Joint Programme model¹² and, most recently, the recommendations of the UN Joint Inspection Unit¹³ (JIU). For example, in response to the JIU recommendations, the PCB added an annex to its Modus Operandi

⁹ The composition of the 2021 Programme Coordinating Board is available at https://www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/media_asset/PCB_Members_1January2021_en.pdf

¹⁰ Second Independent Evaluation of UNAIDS, 24th meeting of the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board, 22-24 June 2009, Geneva. Available at https://www.unaids.org/en/media/unaids/contentassets/dataimport/pub/informationnote/2009/20090407_24pcb_si_eprogressreport_fina_enl_en.pdf

¹¹ Five-year evaluation of UNAIDS, thirteenth meeting of the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board. 11–12 December, Lisbon. Available at https://www.unaids.org/en/media/unaids/contentassets/dataimport/governance/pcb03/pcb_13_02_02_en.pdf

¹² Global Review Panel final report, Fortieth meeting of the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board, 27–29 June 2017, Geneva. Available at

https://www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/media_asset/20170620_PCB40_GRP_FINAL_REPORT_CRP1_EN.pdf

¹³ Report of the Joint Inspection Unit on the Management and Administrative Review of UNAIDS, forty-fifth meeting of the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board, 10–12 December 2019, Geneva. Available at https://www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/media_asset/14112019_UNAIDS_PCB45_JIU_REP_2019_EN.pdf

in 2020 to clarify and strengthen its oversight and accountability functions, and to establish a new independent, external oversight advisory committee to aid the PCB and the Executive Director in optimizing accountability of the Joint Programme. The PCB has also acted to strengthen the evaluation and ethics reporting by the Joint Programme.

6. In accordance with the JIU's recommendations, the PCB seeks to further align its oversight and accountability with best practices in the UN system. As such, the PCB recommends to ECOSOC to request the UN Secretary-General to submit a report, after consultation with the PCB, on the establishment of two four-year term limits, as well as performance expectations for the position of UNAIDS Executive Director.
7. In March 2021, a new Global AIDS Strategy, titled "End inequalities. End AIDS, Global AIDS Strategy 2021–2026", is being presented to the PCB for consideration and adoption. The Strategy includes ambitious HIV targets to be reached by 2025 and it sets the direction for national, regional and global HIV responses in the coming years.
8. UNAIDS is also developing a new Budget, Results and Accountability Framework (UBRAF) under the guidance of the PCB. The UBRAF sets out the Joint Programme's role in implementing the Strategy, and identifies anticipated results and activities towards achieving the Joint Programme's strategic priorities. Both the Strategy and the UBRAF are fully aligned with the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and with reform of the UN Development System. Extensive reporting on impact, outcome and output indicators outlined in the UBRAF, drawing on the UNAIDS Global AIDS Monitoring System, enable the PCB to monitor and provide strategic direction regarding the Joint Programme's performance.
9. Core funding accounts for a consistently large share (79.9% in 2019) of the Joint Programme's overall funding and is a sign of donors' strong confidence in the impact of their investments. It also reflects their confidence in the PCB's oversight of the Joint Programme. However, since 2014, persistent underfunding of the UBRAF's PCB-approved funding level of US\$ 242 million has posed challenges for both the Joint Programme and the broader HIV response. UNAIDS continues to act to strengthen its resource mobilization efforts.

Introduction

10. The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS was established through ECOSOC Resolution 1994/24,¹⁴ of 26 July 1994, to undertake a joint and cosponsored UN programme to address the HIV pandemic. Based on co-ownership, collaboration, planning and execution and an equitable sharing of responsibility, UNAIDS at its outset had six cosponsoring UN organizations (the United Nations Development Programme [UNDP], the United Nations Children's Fund [UNICEF], the United Nations Population Fund [UNFPA], the World Health Organization, [WHO] the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization [UNESCO], and the World Bank). Subsequently, other UN organizations have joined as UNAIDS Cosponsors, namely the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in 1999, the International Labour Organization (ILO) in 2001, the World Food Programme (WFP) in 2003, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in 2004 and UN Women in 2012.

¹⁴ United Nations Economic and Social Council Resolution 1994/24: Joint and co-sponsored United Nations programme on human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS), New York. Available at https://data.unaids.org/pub/externaldocument/1994/ecosoc_resolutions_establishing_unaids_en.pdf

The Joint Programme is now composed of 11 UN organizations and the UNAIDS Secretariat.

11. As provided for in the original ECOSOC Resolution 1994/24 which established the Joint Programme, UNAIDS is guided by a Programme Coordinating Board, which serves as its governing body. Members of the PCB include representatives of 22 governments from all regions of the world, the 11 UNAIDS Cosponsors, and 5 nongovernmental organizations (NGOs).
12. The governance structure of UNAIDS is unique in its level of inclusiveness, with Member States, Cosponsors and civil society, and specifically people living with and affected by HIV, as PCB members. Its constituency structure and openness to granting observer status further enhances inclusiveness. The PCB's agenda includes a standing item on leadership which allows for high-level guest speakers to address the PCB on critical issues in the HIV response. The two-day PCB meetings are complemented by a day-long thematic session which fosters in-depth dialogue on key topics.
13. The Executive Director of UNAIDS reports to ECOSOC every two years on progress made in implementing a coordinated response to the HIV epidemic by the UN system. This is done via a report which transmitted to ECOSOC by the UN Secretary-General. ECOSOC then considers the report and adopts a Resolution on the Joint Programme.
14. In 2019, in its resolution E/RES/2019/33, ECOSOC requested the Executive Director of UNAIDS to submit a report, as usual, through the Secretary-General to ECOSOC by 2021.¹⁵ In addition, ECOSOC requested the PCB to "discuss governance issues of the Joint Programme, as well as how the Joint Programme could be sustainably core-funded, in accordance with all relevant United Nations principles, with a view to evaluating such issues, in order to have an effective, efficient and accountable Joint Programme, and to report to the Economic and Social Council by 2021".¹⁶
15. The present report responds to the request which ECOSOC directed at the PCB. It summarizes the process followed by the PCB in developing the response to ECOSOC's request. Developed by the PCB Bureau and approved by the PCB, the report provides a brief overview of the governance structure of the Joint Programme and reviews significant developments in UNAIDS' governance since the establishment of the PCB by the ECOSOC 25 years ago. The report is timely given recent PCB discussions and decisions on governance-related issues as part of the Board's response to external reviews and evaluations, including those of the JIU.

Process to develop the PCB report to ECOSOC

16. In the management segment of its meeting on 24 July 2019, ECOSOC adopted Resolution E/RES/2019/33, which requests that the PCB "discuss governance issues of the Joint Programme, as well as how the Joint Programme could be sustainably core-funded, in accordance with all relevant United Nations principles, with a view to evaluating such issues, in order to have an effective, efficient and accountable Joint Programme, and to report to the Economic and Social Council by 2021."

¹⁵ Paragraph 17 in Resolution adopted by the Economic and Social Council on 24 July 2019, E/RES/2019/33, New York. Available at <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N19/235/76/PDF/N1923576.pdf?OpenElement>.

¹⁶ Paragraph 12 in Resolution adopted by the Economic and Social Council on 24 July 2019, E/RES/2019/33, New York. Available at <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N19/235/76/PDF/N1923576.pdf?OpenElement>.

17. Following up on the ECOSOC request, the PCB Bureau, at its meeting on 30 August 2019,¹⁷ noted that the PCB was scheduled to receive several reports during 2019 and 2020 related to governance of the Joint Programme. These anticipated governance-related reports included the Management and Administrative Review of UNAIDS by the JIU,¹⁸ findings from the Independent Evaluation of the 2016–2021 UNAIDS Unified Budget, Results and Accountability Framework, as well as the revised Operating Model of the Joint Programme¹⁹ and the lessons learnt from the nomination process of the UNAIDS Executive Director.²⁰ It was agreed that follow-up on the 2019 ECOSOC resolution would be driven by the PCB’s deliberations regarding the JIU’s management and administrative review.
18. At its 45th meeting, in December 2019, the PCB discussed the findings and recommendations of the JIU and established a Working Group to consider the recommendations that were directed to the PCB. Over the course of six months, the Working Group met five times. It provided a progress report to the PCB at its 46th PCB meeting. The final report of the Working Group was tabled at the 47th PCB meeting, at which time the PCB adopted a series of decisions aimed at strengthening the governance of the Joint Programme.
19. At its meeting on 15 January 2021,²¹ the PCB Bureau discussed the steps towards the development of the report requested by ECOSOC from the PCB on governance and core funding issues. The Bureau agreed that the report of the PCB Working Group on the JIU Recommendations would provide a framework for the outline of the report requested by ECOSOC. The Chair also recalled that the PCB had agreed at its 47th PCB meeting “to include in the upcoming PCB report to ECOSOC a recommendation that the Council requests the Secretary-General to submit a report, after consultation with the PCB, on the establishment of two four-year term limits and performance expectations for the position of UNAIDS Executive Director in line with the practices of the UN system as recommended by the JIU.”²²
20. Following the Bureau’s discussion of ECOSOC Resolution E/RES/2019/33, the PCB Chair prepared an annotated outline of the report, in close consultation with all PCB Bureau members. The outline was subsequently shared with all PCB members for review. PCB members shared verbal input on the outline of this report at a briefing convened by the PCB Bureau on 18 February 2021. PCB members also provided written input on the outline. The PCB Chair, in collaboration with the Bureau, developed the report on the basis of the outline and the comments received. **The report was discussed at a PCB premeeting on 11 March 2021. The report was further discussed and approved by the PCB at a special session 24–25 March 2021.** [Please note: highlighted text is provisional until the approval of the PCB of the report]

¹⁷ A summary of the PCB Bureau meeting is available at https://www.unaids.org/en/resources/documents/2019/PCB_Bureau_30-Aug-2019.

¹⁸ Agenda item 7: Report of the Joint Inspection Unit on the Management and Administrative Review of UNAIDS. Forty-fifth meeting of the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board, 10–12 December 2019, Geneva. Available at https://www.unaids.org/en/resources/documents/2019/PCB45_JIU_Report

¹⁹ The evaluation was published in September 2020 as “Independent Evaluation of the UN-system response to AIDS in 2016–2019” and is available at https://www.unaids.org/en/resources/documents/2020/PCB47_Independent_Evaluation_UN_Response_AIDS.

²⁰ Agenda item 8: Lessons Learned on the nomination process of UNAIDS Executive Director. Forty-fifth meeting of the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board, 10–12 December 2019, Geneva. Available at https://www.unaids.org/en/resources/documents/2019/PCB45_Lessons-Learned-EXD-nomination-process.

²¹ Summary of the PCB Bureau meeting is available at https://www.unaids.org/en/resources/documents/2021/UNAIDS_PCB_Bureau_15012021.

²² Decisions Points. Forty-seventh meeting of the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board, 15–18 December 2020, Geneva. Available at https://www.unaids.org/en/resources/documents/2020/PCB47_Decisions.

Governance of the Joint United Nations Programme On HIV/AIDS

21. The Joint Programme's unique and inclusive model of governance has been widely recognized as an example of UN Development System reform and a useful model of multisectoral governance and action to drive progress towards the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The PCB's reliance on consensus decision-making has enabled the Board to serve as a respected high-level forum for setting the agenda for the global HIV response.
22. The Joint Programme has been recognized as an innovative partnership which, in many ways, was 20 years ahead of its time when it built the principle of leaving no-one behind into its structure and ways of working. The Global Review Panel on the future of the UNAIDS Joint Programme²³ noted that the hallmarks of the Joint Programme include:
 - a governance structure which welcomes those most affected by the HIV epidemic to the table of global policy debate;
 - principles of cosponsorship; and
 - a formal division of labour and a unified budget, results and accountability framework which guide the work of the 11 Cosponsors and the Secretariat.
23. In its report, the Global Review Panel also noted that "the conclusion drawn in the early 1990s regarding United Nations action on AIDS remains valid a quarter century later: no single United Nations agency can tackle the epidemic; a cooperative effort is essential. The joint programming model of UNAIDS itself has withstood the test of time; recent discussions on United Nations reform have called for action in areas that are inherent to UNAIDS: active coordination of United Nations entities, leveraging of evidence and strategic information in policy development and programming and multisectoral and multistakeholder approaches underpinned by the values of human rights, gender equality and sustainability."
24. The 54 Member States of ECOSOC have also recognized UNAIDS' governance as a model for the broader UN system for implementing the 2030 Agenda. In Resolution E/RES/2019/33,²⁴ ECOSOC Member States reaffirmed that the Joint Programme's "co-sponsor and governance model provides the United Nations system with a useful example of strategic coherence, reflecting national contexts and priorities, through its coordination, results-based focus, inclusive governance, and country-level impact, as set out in General Assembly resolution 71/243²⁵ of 21 December 2016 on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system."

The Programme Coordinating Board

25. In accordance with ECOSOC Resolution 1994/24, the PCB serves as the governance structure for the Joint Programme. As noted above, the Board comprises 22 Member States, the 11 UNAIDS Cosponsors and 5 NGOs.

²³ Agenda Item 3: Global Review Panel final report. Fortieth meeting of the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board, 27–29 June 2017, Geneva. Available at https://www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/media_asset/20170620_PCB40_GRP_FINAL_REPORT_CRP1_EN.pdf

²⁴ Resolution adopted by the Economic and Social Council on 24 July 2019, A/RES/2019/33, New York. Available at <https://undocs.org/pdf?symbol=en/E/RES/2019/33>.

²⁵ Resolution adopted by the UN General Assembly on 21 December 2016, A/RES/71/243, New York. Available at <https://undocs.org/pdf?symbol=en/A/RES/71/243>.

26. The PCB establishes broad policies and priorities for the Joint Programme, in alignment with UN General Assembly Resolution 47/199²⁶, which guides the operational activities of the UN Development system. To fulfil its mandate to review and decide upon the planning and execution of the Joint Programme, the PCB considers reports from the UNAIDS Executive Director and the Committee of Cosponsoring Organizations (CCO), as well as regular reports from the Joint Programme on issues such as strategy development and implementation, financial management, ethics reporting, evaluation, human resource management and risk management.
27. The PCB reviews and approves a plan of action and budget, prepared by the Executive Director and reviewed by the CCO, for each financial period. With respect to financial matters, the PCB reviews proposals from the Executive Director, approves financing arrangements for the Joint Programme, assesses the financial implications of longer-term plans of action, and reviews audited financial statements submitted by the Joint Programme. The PCB makes recommendations to the CCO regarding their activities in support of the Joint Programme, including the mainstreaming of HIV-related activities in the operations and mandates of individual Cosponsors. The PCB also reviews periodic reports which evaluate the progress of the Joint Programme towards achieving its goals.
28. The PCB serves as a pivotal forum for setting the agenda of the global HIV response. PCB decisions on policy and programmatic issues provide key guidance on HIV responses at country level and inspire global level commitments. Active engagement of PCB members and UN member states is critical in the process of development of AIDS strategies to ensure consensus and broad ownership. Strategies adopted by the PCB have inspired the 2001 Declaration on Commitment on HIV/AIDS, as well as Political Declarations by the General Assembly in 2006, 2011 and 2016. In March 2021, the PCB will consider for adoption a new Strategy to guide the broader global HIV response during 2021–2026, with the aim of catalyzing action to get the response back on-track to end AIDS as a public health threat by 2030, as called for in the SDGs.
29. To maximize its effectiveness as the Joint Programme’s governance body and for setting the agenda for the global HIV response, the PCB strives to ensure that its meetings are optimally planned and efficiently conducted. An especially notable feature of the PCB is its inclusion, since the beginning of the Joint Programme, of representatives of civil society. At its 47th meeting in December 2020, the PCB formally recognized “the value, contribution, effectiveness and impact of the NGO Delegation at the PCB as best practice, particularly in bringing to light urgent concerns faced by people living with HIV, key populations, women, young people and migrants, for immediate action and attention.”²⁷ The PCB has taken steps to facilitate robust and meaningful involvement of the NGO Delegation, including the establishment, at the 20th PCB meeting, of an independent communication and support facility to support NGO participation, including country-level voices, in the PCB’s policy dialogues. The inclusion of NGO representatives on the PCB helps ensure that the Board’s deliberations and decisions are informed by the perspectives of people living with HIV and the communities most heavily affected by the epidemic.
30. The first and second Independent Evaluations of UNAIDS expressly applauded the PCB’s practice of convening all-day thematic segments that advance and strengthen

²⁶ Resolution adopted by the UN General Assembly on 11 May 1993, A/RES/47/199, New York. Available at <https://undocs.org/pdf?symbol=en/A/RES/47/199>.

²⁷ Decisions Points from the forth-seventh meeting of the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board, 15–18 December 2020, Geneva. Available at https://www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/media_asset/Decisions_%28PCB47%29__EN.pdf.

the global HIV response by focusing on key priority issues in an open debate, with the pertinent decisions being taken at the following session of the PCB. The PCB's thematic segments have focused on a broad array of strategic issues, including access to medicines, HIV-related discrimination, community-led responses, HIV in emergency contexts, HIV and nutrition, HIV and tuberculosis, linkages between HIV and cervical cancer, social protection to address HIV-related social determinants, sustainable financing for the response, HIV and aging, and priority actions to rejuvenate HIV prevention. They have also focused on HIV-related challenges facing diverse populations such as children, adolescents and young people, women and people on the move).

31. The thematic segments play an important role in shaping the global AIDS agenda, including highlighting underprioritized issues or challenges. For example, the thematic session at the PCB's 43rd meeting in December 2018, which focused on mental health and HIV, led to the Global Fund and PEPFAR increasing their funding and programmatic support for integrated services to address mental health in the context of HIV. Fully leveraging these thematic sessions to shape the global AIDS agenda and promote needed actions is an important priority for the PCB.

PCB Bureau and intersessional working procedures

32. In response to the first and second Independent Evaluations of UNAIDS, the PCB has modernized and improved its governance proceedings. In one key step, the PCB, following the first Independent Evaluation, established the PCB Bureau at its 15th meeting,²⁸ to support the PCB's work between its formal meetings. The PCB Bureau includes representatives of Member States, Cosponsors and the NGO PCB delegation.
33. The PCB Bureau aims to maximize the effectiveness and efficiency of the PCB by coordinating the PCB's programme of work throughout the year. Responsibilities of the PCB Bureau include facilitating the smooth and efficient functioning of PCB sessions' and transparent decision-making at the PCB; preparing the PCB agenda, including recommendations regarding order of and time allocations for agenda items; providing guidance, as needed, on PCB documentation; and carrying out additional functions as directed by the PCB. In response to the Second Independent Evaluation of the Joint Programme, the PCB, at its 27th meeting,²⁹ requested the PCB Bureau to consider regulating the number and length of presentations at PCB meetings, to facilitate the smooth running and timing of these meetings.
34. To facilitate and strengthen intersessional work and to streamline the PCB's working methods, the PCB at its 29th meeting^{30 31} revised its modus operandi to establish and clarify procedures for intersessional work in the interests of effective governance of the

²⁸ Decisions, recommendations and conclusions from the fifteenth meeting of the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board, 23–24 June 2004, Geneva. Available at https://www.unaids.org/en/media/unaids/contentassets/dataimport/governance/pcb03/pcb_15_04_16_decisions_en.pdf.

²⁹ Decisions, recommendations and conclusions. Twenty-seventh meeting of the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board, 6–8 December 2010, Geneva. Available at https://www.unaids.org/en/media/unaids/contentassets/documents/pcb/2010/pcb27_decisions_en.pdf

³⁰ Decisions, recommendations and conclusions. Twenty-ninth meeting of the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board, 13–15 December 2011, Geneva. Available at https://www.unaids.org/en/media/unaids/contentassets/documents/pcb/2011/12/20111216_29PCB%20decisions%20final_en.pdf

³¹ Second Independent Evaluation of UNAIDS. Twenty-ninth meeting of the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board, 13–15 December 2011, Geneva. Available at https://unaids-test.unaids.org/sites/default/files/unaids/contentassets/documents/pcb/2011/12/20111122_PCB%2029%20SIE.pdf

Joint Programme. These included rules for prompt email communication of intersessional decisions to the full PCB, provisions governing a quorum for intersessional decisions, and periodic review by the PCB of the effectiveness and acceptability of rules for intersessional decisions. Although the PCB aims to minimize use of intersessional decision-making to allow for debate and full engagement, these adaptations have proven especially useful in facilitating the effective conduct of the PCB's work during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Committee of Cosponsoring Organizations

35. The inclusion of Cosponsors in the PCB maximizes coordination within the Joint Programme and helps ensure that the PCB's deliberations and decisions are informed by the perspective of the many sectors engaged in the global HIV response. Established by ECOSOC Resolution 1994/24, the CCO serves as a standing committee of the PCB. The Head of Agency of each Cosponsor has a seat on the CCO, with the chair rotating among Cosponsors. The CCO meets regularly and facilitates the input of Cosponsors in the Joint Programme's strategy, policies and operations. The CCO reports annually to the PCB.

UNAIDS Executive Director

36. The Secretary-General appoints the Executive Director of the Joint Programme upon the recommendation of Cosponsors and following a search process which is undertaken by Cosponsors, in consultation with governments and other interested parties. The Executive Director reports to the PCB and serves ex officio as Secretary of the PCB, CCO, PCB subcommittees and conferences organized by UNAIDS. The Executive Director also reports to ECOSOC, via a biennial report which is submitted through the UN Secretary-General.

Evolving governance issues

37. This section summarizes key changes and improvements in governance of the Joint Programme and describes how the work of the Joint Programme and its governance have been adapted to align with good practices across the United Nations system.
38. Twenty-five years after the Joint Programme's founding, governance of UNAIDS remains aligned with the founding ECOSOC resolutions. Over these 25 years, the Joint Programme's governance has adapted as the HIV epidemic has evolved and as the needs of the Joint Programme have changed. Changes in the governance of the Joint Programme have aimed to enhance the PCB's impact, clarify oversight and accountability of the Joint Programme and strengthen ownership by the Cosponsors.
39. Following the First Independent Evaluation³² of the Joint Programme, the PCB at its 14th meeting asked the UNAIDS Secretariat to provide regular reporting on actions taken in response to PCB recommendations. At its 27th meeting, the PCB, in response to the Second Independent Evaluation,³³ asked the PCB Bureau to

³² Second Independent Evaluation of UNAIDS. Twenty-fourth meeting of the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board, 22–24 June 2009, Geneva. Available at https://www.unaids.org/en/media/unaids/contentassets/dataimport/pub/informationnote/2009/20090407_24pcb_si_eprogressreport_fina_enl_en.pdf

³³ Second Independent Evaluation of UNAIDS. Twenty-ninth meeting of the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board, 13–15 December 2011, Geneva. Available at https://www.unaids.org/en/media/unaids/contentassets/documents/pcb/2011/12/20111122_PCB%2029%20SIE.pdf

commission and consider reports from the Secretariat on implementation of PCB decisions.

40. In response to the Second Independent Evaluation of the Joint Programme, the PCB at its 24th meeting established a Working Group to review PCB working methods and to prepare proposals for consideration by the full PCB to implement the recommendations of the Second Independent Evaluation. After reviewing the findings and recommendations of this Working Group, the PCB took several steps to strengthen oversight and accountability of the Joint Programme, including measures enhance the strategic impact of resource allocations within the Joint Programme and to ensure that the footprint and competencies of UNAIDS staff align with epidemic priorities. At its 27th meeting, the PCB pledged to refocus its work in order to ensure that technical support provided by the Joint Programme align with epidemic priorities and that the Joint Programme is held accountable for achievement of concrete results, including by taking progress into account in allocating roles and resources within the Joint Programme.
41. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the PCB took steps to adapt its procedures to ensure continuity of governance and oversight work. In addition to holding its Board sessions virtually, the PCB has held premeeting sessions to support careful consideration and negotiation of agenda items and has utilized a secure platform to facilitate statement collection in advance. As a result of its innovative and forward-thinking approach, the PCB was the first UN governing body to hold its meeting as planned.
42. The PCB remains committed to continuing to review and strengthen areas of work.

Clarifying and strengthening oversight of the Joint Programme

43. In 2019, the JIU, the only independent external oversight body of the UN system that is mandated to conduct evaluations, inspections and investigations system-wide, issued its report³⁴ summarizing its findings, conclusions and recommendation following an “independent assessment of the regulatory frameworks and related practices concerning the management and administration of UNAIDS and its secretariat, highlighting areas of concern and in need of improvement.” The JIU report³⁵ focused on a range of organizational issues for the Joint Programme, including strategic and operational planning, human resources management and administrative services, as well as governance, oversight and accountability. The JIU issued three formal recommendations and seven informal recommendations for the PCB.
44. At its 45th session,³⁶ the PCB established, through the PCB Bureau, a geographically balanced, time-bound Working Group with a limited mandate to review relevant recommendations of the JIU. The Working Group held five meetings, all "virtual", to examine, analyse and develop implementation options for the ten JIU recommendations which had been directed to the PCB.

³⁴ Agenda item 7: Report of the Joint Inspection Unit on the Management and Administrative Review of UNAIDS. Forty-fifth meeting of the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board, 10–12 December 2019, Geneva. Available at https://www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/media_asset/14112019_UNAIDS_PCB45_JIU_REP_2019_EN.pdf

³⁵ *Ibidem*

³⁶ Decision Points. Forty-fifth meeting of the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board, 10–12 December 2019, Geneva. Available at https://www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/media_asset/12122019_UNAIDS_PCB45_Decisions_EN.pdf

45. In accordance with the PCB's mandate, the Working Group provided an interim report at the PCB's 46th meeting³⁷ and a final report at the PCB's 47th meeting³⁸ in December 2020, outlining recommendations on implementation options for the JIU's PCB-directed formal and informal recommendations. In formulating implementation options for the JIU's PCB-directed recommendations, the Working Group considered a broad range of information, including: JIU recommendations on best practices for strategy, governance, oversight and accountability; pertinent policies and practices of other UN entities; and the advice of PCB legal counsel regarding the PCB's latitude to take the actions recommended by the PCB, with particular attention to the scope of action permitted the PCB under the original ECOSOC resolutions establishing the Joint Programme. The PCB reviewed the Working Group's recommendations at its 47th meeting.

Recent steps to strengthen and clarify the PCB's oversight and accountability roles

46. In Decision Point 13.2 at the 47th PCB meeting,³⁹ the Board accepted the JIU's Formal Recommendation 3 that the PCB "revise its Modus Operandi to clarify its roles and responsibilities and embed oversight and accountability mechanisms in the oversight of UNAIDS and its secretariat." In accordance with the recommendation of the Working Group, the PCB determined that the optimal means for implementing this JIU recommendation would be through approval of an annex to the Modus Operandi, which clarifies the PCB's roles and responsibilities with respect to oversight and accountability of the Joint Programme. The new annex to the PCB Modus Operandi⁴⁰ addressed numerous areas of PCB oversight, including regular reporting from the Joint Programme, strategy development and implementation, financial management, ethics reporting, evaluation, human resources management and risk management.
47. The amended Modus Operandi also establishes an independent, external oversight advisory committee to aid the PCB in fulfilling its governance and oversight responsibilities, in line with JIU Formal Recommendation 5. In opting for a committee whose members are independent of the PCB, the PCB considered the practices and experiences of other UN entities which have independent oversight bodies in place, as well as JIU documentation of best practices on oversight committees in the UN system. The PCB directed that the independent, external oversight advisory committee review and recommend, as part of its first plan of work following establishment, further strengthening of risk management of the Joint Programme.
48. At its 47th meeting, the PCB approved terms of reference for a new, independent, external oversight advisory committee.⁴¹ This advisory committee will consist of no

³⁷ Agenda item 6: Progress report of the Working Group of the Programme Coordinating Board to implement the recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit to the PCB. Forty-sixth meeting of the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board, 22–25 June 2020, Geneva. Available at

https://www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/media_asset/PCB46_JIU_WG_Report_EN%20.pdf

³⁸ Agenda item 11: Report of the Working Group on the Joint Inspection Unit Management and Administrative Review of the United Nations Joint Programme on HIV/AIDS. Forty-seventh meeting of the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board, 15–18 December 2020, Geneva. Available at

https://www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/media_asset/PCB47_Report_%20JIU_WG_EN.pdf

³⁹ Decision Points. Forty-seventh meeting of the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board, 15–18 December 2020, Geneva. Available at

https://www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/media_asset/Decisions_%28PCB47%29__EN.pdf

⁴⁰ See Annex 2, Report of the Working Group on the Joint Inspection Unit Management and Administrative Review of the United Nations Joint Programme on HIV/AIDS. Forty-seventh meeting of the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board, 15–18 December 2020, Geneva. Available at:

https://www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/media_asset/PCB47_Report_%20JIU_WG_EN.pdf

⁴¹ See Annex 3, Report of the Working Group on the Joint Inspection Unit Management and Administrative Review of the United Nations Joint Programme on HIV/AIDS. Forty-seventh meeting of the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board, 15–18 December 2020, Geneva. Available at:

https://www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/media_asset/PCB47_Report_%20JIU_WG_EN.pdf

fewer than five and no more than seven members, who will broadly mirror the representation of the PCB, taking into account factors such as geographic regions, gender, levels of national economic development and inclusion of civil society. The terms of reference include provisions intended to ensure the genuine independence of the oversight advisory committee and to avoid conflicts of interest. The independent, external oversight advisory committee will have full and unrestricted access to the information it needs to provide advice and guidance on oversight and accountability. The committee will report to the PCB and the Executive Director on the operational implications for the Joint Programme of the issues and trends which the committee identifies through its work.

Selection and oversight of the Executive Director position

49. The UN Secretary-General is responsible for selecting and directly supervising the performance of the UNAIDS Executive Director. The PCB plays a key role in the process of selecting the Executive Director. For the selection of the current Executive Director, in 2019, the PCB established a search committee, composed of Member States, Cosponsors and NGO PCB representatives, and identified key competencies and experiences which the new Executive Director should possess. The search committee identified a shortlist of five candidates, and PCB members and observers provided input into the selection process at its 44th meeting.^{42 43} Taking into account the input of the PCB, the CCO interviewed the short-listed candidates and conveyed its recommendation for the new Executive Director to the UN Secretary-General, who announced the appointment of Ms Winnie Byanyima on 14 August 2019.
50. In examining implementation options for the JIU's recommendations, the PCB also deliberated on performance expectations for the UNAIDS Executive Director. The PCB acknowledged that the Secretary-General "holds the oversight responsibility for the Executive Director position whereas the PCB is responsible for the oversight of the UNAIDS Joint Programme." The new annex to the PCB's Modus Operandi clarifies, that in cases where allegations against the Executive Director or other issues regarding the performance of the Executive Director constitute a governance issue, the PCB's appropriate course is to raise these issues with ECOSOC.
51. With respect to the Executive Director position, the JIU recommended that the "PCB should engage with the United Nations Secretary-General to consider establishing a term limit for the position of Executive Director for more certainty in succession planning and a compact to provide transparency with regard to performance expectations". As part of its work examining implementation options for the JIU's PCB-directed recommendations, the Working Group reviewed the policies and practices of other UN bodies and found that most of them limit executive heads to no more than two terms of four to five years per term.
52. The Working Group agreed that UNAIDS should align its practices with those within the broader UN system with respect to term limits of its executive head, but determined that the PCB does not have the legal authority to petition the Secretary-General directly to establish term limits or to clarify performance expectations for the Executive Director. At

⁴² See paragraphs 25 to 28, Report of the forty-fourth UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board meeting, 10–12 December 2019, Geneva. Available at https://www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/media_asset/05112019_UNAIDS_PCB45_Report-44thPCB_EN.pdf

⁴³ Decision Points. Forty-fourth meeting of the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board, 25–27 June 2019, Geneva. Available at https://www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/media_asset/UNAIDS_PCB44_Decisions_EN.pdf

its 47th meeting in December 2020,⁴⁴ the PCB agreed to include in its report to ECOSOC a “recommendation that the Council requests the Secretary-General to submit a report, after consultation with the PCB, on the establishment of two four-year term limits and performance expectations for the position of UNAIDS Executive Director in line with the best practices of the UN system as recommended by the JIU.”

Enhancing key functions of oversight and accountability

53. The PCB has taken steps to strengthen the independent and ongoing evaluation of the Joint Programme. The Board approved a UNAIDS Evaluation Policy at its 44th meeting in June 2019 and, at its 45th meeting in December 2019, approved an Evaluation Plan for 2020–2021, which includes annual reporting on implementation by the UNAIDS Evaluation Office.
54. The first annual report by the UNAIDS Evaluation Office was reviewed by the PCB at its 47th meeting in December 2020. It summarized the results of six evaluations of all or parts of the Joint Programme, outlined the establishment and early work of an Expert Advisory Committee on evaluation, and noted evaluations planned for 2021. At its 47th meeting, the PCB asked the UNAIDS Executive Director to ensure that the evaluation function remains adequately resourced and staff in accordance with the approved Evaluation Policy.
55. The Joint Programme, through the Executive Director and the PCB, is in the process of establishing an independent Ethics Office. This Office will report independently under a standing PCB agenda item on organizational oversight, in accordance with recommendations of the JIU. The new independent, external oversight advisory committee will review the reports of the independent ethics office and provide recommendations to the PCB, as appropriate, on needed follow-up action on ethical matters.

Monitoring the performance of the Joint Programme

56. A key feature of the PCB’s oversight and accountability functions is its regular monitoring of the Joint Programme’s performance against indicators set forth in the agreed results framework—originally, the UNAIDS Unified Budget and Workplan and, in recent years, the UNAIDS Budget, Results and Accountability Framework (UBRAF). Since the beginning of the Joint Programme, the granularity and clarity of performance reporting has improved, with particular efforts made to enable the PCB to link investments with specific results and impact. Performance monitoring reports to the PCB enable clarity regarding the collective achievements of the Joint Programme as a whole, as well as the specific contributions of individual Cosponsors, towards the strategic results and indicators linked to the 2016–2021 UNAIDS Strategy. Country case studies and additional evaluation studies further enable the PCB to monitor the Joint Programme’s performance, and regional results summaries document how the work of the Joint Programme has supported progress in responding to HIV in different regions of the world.

Strengthening and sustaining Cosponsor ownership of the Joint Programme

57. The active engagement of Cosponsors is one of the defining features of the UNAIDS Joint Programme. Cosponsorship of the Joint Programme is limited to UN agencies.

⁴⁴ Decision Points. Forty-seventh meeting of the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board, 15–18 December 2020, Geneva. Available at https://www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/media_asset/Decisions_%28PCB47%29__EN.pdf

The CCO gathers Cosponsor Heads of Agencies; facilitates the input of Cosponsors into the strategy, policies and operations of the Joint Programme; ensures that relevant PCB decisions are discussed by the Cosponsors' respective boards; and ensure that pertinent objectives in UNAIDS global-level frameworks are incorporated in Cosponsors' results frameworks. The Secretariat and the Cosponsors also actively collaborate, as relevant, with other UN entities and intergovernmental organizations at global, regional and country levels on specific issues in the context of HIV.

58. UNAIDS Cosponsors commit to a set of principles, including a pledge to use their comparative advantages to advance the Joint Programme's work, to mainstream HIV in their organizational agendas and work, and to allocate dedicated resources to support HIV-related activities. Taking account of the marked changes that have occurred in the HIV epidemic and response since the original set of Cosponsor principles were drafted, the Cosponsors took steps to implement the JIU's recommendation to reassess "the relevance and validity" of the guiding principles for cosponsorship.
59. The updated guiding principles developed by Cosponsors include editorial changes to align the wording with current Joint Programme terminology and with changes in funding allocations and operating procedures within the Joint Programme. The revised guiding principles reaffirm the commitment of Cosponsors to bring a comparative advantage to the work of the Joint Programme, to engage at a senior level with the Joint Programme through the CCO, and to participate in agreed UNAIDS results frameworks. The governing body of each Cosponsor must expressly consider how the organization is addressing HIV within its mandate and policies. Under the revised guiding principles, each Cosponsor agrees to have a strategy and framework that advances the goals of the Joint Programme, and designates its own resources to fund HIV-related issues (including through dedicated staff), has resources and capacity at regional and country levels to implement HIV-related activities, actively participates in the Joint UN Team on HIV/AIDS in countries where it has a presence, and implements a clear, well-disseminated, stand-alone or integrated HIV workplace policy. At its 47th meeting,⁴⁵ the PCB encouraged implementation of the revised guiding principles, "with the focus on efficiency, effectiveness and use of evidence-based approaches".
60. Following the Second Independent Evaluation, the PCB took steps at its 26th meeting⁴⁶ to revitalize the role of the CCO in the Joint Programme. The PCB mandated two CCO meetings per year. Acknowledging the enhanced de facto role of the UNAIDS Global Coordinator of each Cosponsor, the PCB recommended greater investments by Global Coordinators and the Secretariat in preparing the CCO agenda and ensuring that the deliberations of Cosponsor Heads of Agencies are focused on progress towards implementation of the UNAIDS strategy. The PCB enhanced the role of the CCO in consideration of additional Cosponsors for the Joint Programme and in agreeing to benchmarks for performance monitoring.
61. Regular reporting by Cosponsors ensures their ongoing input into and ownership of the work of the Joint Programme. The CCO Chair attends PCB meetings to deliver an oral report on the CCO's work, in accordance with PCB recommendations following the Second Independent Evaluation. As previously noted, the CCO plays a central role in

⁴⁵ Decision Points. Forty-seventh meeting of the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board, 15–18 December 2020, Geneva. Available at

https://www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/media_asset/Decisions_%28PCB47%29__EN.pdf

⁴⁶ Decision Points. Twenty-sixth meeting of the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board, 22–24 December 2010, Geneva. Available at

https://www.unaids.org/en/media/unaids/contentassets/dataimport/pub/agenda/2010/26pcb_decision_points_en.pdf

the selection of the UNAIDS Executive Director, by interviewing short-listed candidates and making a recommendation to the Secretary-General.

62. The PCB has taken numerous steps to strengthen linkages with the governing boards of Cosponsors. Following the First Independent Evaluation, the PCB agreed at its 15th meeting, in May 2004, that the PCB Chair would routinely relay PCB recommendations to the governing board chairs of Cosponsors, in order to encourage these governing boards to discuss and act on relevant decisions. In response to the Second Independent Evaluation, the PCB directed, at its 26th meeting,⁴⁷ that Cosponsor Global Coordinators and the UNAIDS Secretariat focus the deliberations of CCO Heads of Agencies on key PCB decisions that need to be discussed with Cosponsors' governing boards. At its 26th meeting, the PCB pledged to work with the Executive Director and Cosponsors to ensure, where possible, that the regular agenda of Cosponsors' governing boards include discussions of key PCB decisions. In recent years, the PCB has worked to improve and sharpen its Decision Points, with the aim of providing greater clarity and guidance to Cosponsors' governing boards. At its 47th meeting,⁴⁸ the PCB acknowledged the importance of communicating to Cosponsor governing boards decisions that are relevant to their participation in the Joint Programme.
63. In response to the recommendations of the Global Review Panel, the PCB approved an Action Plan that updates the Joint Programme's Operating Model. A key aim of the updated model is to incentivize joint work and to maximize the full participation of Cosponsors in the work of the Joint Programme. A refined Division of Labour has clarified roles and responsibilities within the Joint Programme. Country envelopes of focused, catalytic funding are now used to support results-focused, high-impact work by Cosponsors at country level.

Ensuring sustainable core funding for the Joint Programme

64. Flexible core funding accounts for a high level of the Joint Programme's total funding (79.9% in 2019), a reflection of the confidence that donors have in the value of investing in the UNAIDS' work. Further buttressing the confidence of UNAIDS' funders in the accountability of the Joint Programme are the many efforts undertaken by the PCB to adapt and improve its oversight and accountability functions. The Joint Programme's funding profile is closely aligned with the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review and the Secretary-General's reform agenda for the UN Development System, with the percentage of flexible core funding comparing favourably with the percentages reported by UNAIDS Cosponsors.
65. Persistent underfunding of the UBRAF since 2014 has made the work of the Joint Programme more challenging and has slowed global progress towards the 2030 target of ending AIDS as a public health threat. Underfunding of the UBRAF has coincided with a flattening of overall investments in the global HIV response. This underscores the urgent need for innovative approaches and a renewal of global solidarity to mobilize the resources needed to achieve global AIDS targets.

How the Joint Programme is funded

⁴⁷ Decision Points. Twenty-sixth meeting of the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board, 22–24 December 2010, Geneva. Available at https://www.unaids.org/en/media/unaids/contentassets/dataimport/pub/agenda/2010/26pcb_decision_points_en.pdf

⁴⁸ https://www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/media_asset/Decisions_%28PCB47%29__EN.pdf

66. UNAIDS relies on voluntary contributions from donors and development partners, including governments, bilateral aid agencies and foundations. In 2019, voluntary contributions to the Joint Programme amounted to US\$ 228.1 million, including US\$ 217.3 million contributed by 27 governments, US\$ 3.7 million contributed by Cosponsors, and US\$ 2.3 million received from intergovernmental organizations, other UN organizations, other institutions and the private sector. Among the voluntary contributions in 2019, US\$ 184.1 million represented core funding, while US\$ 43.9 million consisted of noncore resources.
67. Core funding supports the core functions of the Secretariat, as well as catalytic funding to the Cosponsors. All core funding for the Joint Programme is intended to be catalytic by stimulating political leadership, mobilizing essential resources, collecting and using strategic information and evidence-based programming, and achieving concrete results for people. Since 2015, the core funding share of total UNAIDS funding has fluctuated, albeit at a high level, ranging from 75.9% in 2017 to 88.9% in 2015 and 85.9% in 2018. In addition to the core funding Cosponsors receive through the UBRAF, they allocate additional resources within their own organizational budgets to support HIV-related activities and programmes.
68. Noncore funding is typically earmarked for specific activities or projects. Noncore funding represented 11.1% of total funding in 2015, 21.4% in 2016, 24.1% in 2017, 14.1% in 2018, 20.1% in 2019 and 22.3% (projected) in 2020.
69. Twenty-five governments contributed core funding to UNAIDS in 2019. However, UNAIDS remains heavily dependent on a small group of funders for the bulk of its resources. In 2019, six governments (United States of America, Sweden, Netherlands, United Kingdom, Norway and Switzerland) accounted for US\$ 145.1 million, or 78.8%, of the Joint Programme's core funding. Those six governments contributed 75.7% of total UNAIDS funding in 2019.

Persistent underfunding of the UBRAF

70. Since 2014, contributions to the Joint Programme have fallen short of amounts budgeted in the UBRAF. Persistent underfunding of the UBRAF's PCB-approved level of US\$ 242 million has posed challenges for both the Joint Programme and the broader HIV response. Underfunding of the UBRAF has occurred at a time when overall funding for the HIV response in low- and middle-income countries has flattened. Total AIDS resources increased by 20% from 2010 to 2015, but by only 3% from 2015 and 2019. The COVID-19 pandemic, which has generated major new funding needs while also damaging national economies and constraining fiscal space, is likely to make mobilizing sufficient resources for the global HIV response even more challenging in the intermediate term.
71. UBRAF funding shortfalls have contributed to slowing progress in the global HIV response. In recent years, as underfunding of the UBRAF has challenged the Joint Programme's ability to lead and catalyze a robust global response, the rate of decline in new HIV infections has slowed. Similarly, AIDS-related deaths decreased by 21% in 2010–2014, when the UBRAF was fully funded, but by only 17% in 2015–2019. Antiretroviral treatment coverage among pregnant women living with HIV rose from 45% in 2010 to 80% in 2014, but increased very slowly subsequently, reaching 85% in 2019. With gains in the response slowing after 2015, the world did not achieve ambitious Fast-Track targets set forth in the 2016 Political Declaration on Ending AIDS.
72. Funding gaps have led to important refinements and adaptations in the Joint Programme's working approach. The initial funding reduction for the UBRAF in 2014 led

to the convening of the Global Review Panel on the future of the UNAIDS Joint Programme model, which in turn led UNAIDS to implement a new Operating Model that is designed to maximize the Joint Programme's effectiveness in the face of resource constraints. The Joint Programme's footprint evolved, with UNAIDS' presence better tailored to country priorities and contexts, including an enhanced presence in high-burden Fast-Track countries. The UNAIDS Division of Labour was revised to better leverage the comparative advantages of Cosponsors and the Secretariat, and core funding to Cosponsors was reduced, although the new Operating Model enabled Cosponsors to obtain catalytic funding through country envelopes for the first time.

73. Funding dialogues planned in 2021 in the context of the development of the new UBRAF will offer opportunities to engage with stakeholders around resource requirements and allocation, accountability mechanisms, funding scenarios, and other enablers to multiyear core and noncore agreements.
74. The PCB appreciates the Joint Programme's work in the context of funding reductions and the continuation of strong ambition in the Strategy, but also recognizes that underfunding negatively affects the Joint Programme's ability to effectively support countries to achieve their HIV-related targets and commitments.
75. To strengthen resource mobilization efforts, UNAIDS presented a Strategic Resource Mobilization Plan to the PCB in December 2017.⁴⁹ The plan focuses on three broad pillars: sustain, strengthen and engage government donor funding; expand private sector funding; and leverage other partnerships and innovative financing.
76. The PCB continues to oversee enhancements to the accountability, transparency, efficiency and effectiveness in the Joint Programme funding as called for in the 2020 Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review, including in the development of the new UBRAF. The consistently high proportion of core funding among total funding of the Joint Programme demonstrates that donors are confident that they can have sufficient oversight and accountability for their investments, via the Joint Programme's reporting to the PCB. Going forward, it will be critical to continue to incentivize donors to ensure an adequate and predictable level of core and noncore funding on a multiyear basis to ensure that the UNAIDS Joint Programme is able to continue its support to countries to end the AIDS epidemic.

Alignment of UNAIDS funding with UN Reform and the 2030 Agenda

77. The Joint Programme's Strategy and the UBRAF, which carries the Strategy forward, are fully aligned with and explicitly linked with the 2030 Agenda. As the Global Review Panel concluded, the Joint Programme's multisectoral model is "an innovative partnership" which "embodies the approaches demanded by the 2030 Agenda". Consistent with the 2030 Agenda, the UNAIDS Strategy and UBRAF prioritize concrete actions to reach those who are furthest behind first.
78. Beyond alignment with the SDG agenda, the Global Review Panel found that UNAIDS already had extensive experience in advancing and had already achieved key Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review 2016 requirements. Further alignment has been achieved since 2018 through the implementation of the UNAIDS Action Plan and the UNAIDS Refined Operating Model, including integrated results, resources and

⁴⁹ Agenda item 4: Report on progress in the implementation of the UNAIDS Joint Programme Action Plan. Forty-first meeting of the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board, 12–14 December 2017, Geneva. Available at https://www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/media_asset/20171208_UNAIDS_PCB41_UBRAF-RM-Plan_17-21rev1_EN.pdf

monitoring framework; an updated Division of Labour; flexible, timely, coherent and coordinated support to countries and a focus on the most vulnerable people; and fostering national capacities through inclusive partnerships for results.

79. As recommended by the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review, the Action Plan mandated specific actions to improve the transparency and accountability of interagency pooled funding mechanisms, including improvement of reporting of results under the UBRAF. Consistent with the 2016 Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review, the Joint Programme, through implementation of the Action Plan, invested in well-designed, pooled funding to complement agency-specific funding; strengthened joint UN work at country level; and established country envelopes to support catalytic efforts to support and accelerate national HIV responses. UNAIDS is also compliant with International Aid Transparency Initiative and its Results and Transparency Portal, including an improved Performance Monitoring Portal which has enhanced public transparency and accountability on the Joint Programme's work, resources and results at all levels.

Recommendations

80. The Economic and Social Council may consider the following actions:
- *Take note* of the report of the Programme Coordinating Board to ECOSOC;
 - *Agree with* the PCB recommendation to request the Secretary-General to submit a report, after consultation with the PCB, on the establishment of two four-year term limits and performance expectations for the position of UNAIDS Executive Director, in line with the practices of the UN system and as recommended by the JIU;
 - *Express appreciation* for the PCB's initiative to continue to update the Board's oversight role within its mandate and with the evolution of the HIV epidemic and the work of the Joint Programme, in line with the best practices of the UN system; and
 - *Request* that any PCB reports to ECOSOC be examined together with the report of the Executive Director of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS submitted under the same agenda item.