

**UNAIDS PROGRAMME COORDINATING BOARD WORKING GROUP  
THEMATIC SEGMENT FOR THE 45<sup>th</sup> PCB MEETING**

***Reducing the impact of AIDS on children and youth***

At its 43<sup>rd</sup> meeting, the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board (PCB) agreed that the theme for its 45<sup>th</sup> meeting will be “*Reducing the impact of AIDS on children and youth*”. The Thematic Segment will take place on 12 December 2019.

The thematic segment provides an opportunity to:

- Analyse the impact of AIDS on children, adolescents and youth through the life course from childhood to adulthood by age range [0-4] [5-10] [11-14] [15-24].
- Identify countries and specific thematic areas where notable successes/progress in HIV-related outcomes for children, adolescents, and youth have been achieved and discuss the key factors that led to those successes.
- Identify the key priority actions that will allow countries, with different epidemiological contexts to scale-up of rights-based HIV prevention, treatment and care and programmes to protect HIV-related human rights by age group, location and population specificities.

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**MEETING SUMMARY: FIRST MEETING OF THE WORKING GROUP**

DATE: Wednesday 9 October 2019

**MEETING AGENDA**

1. Welcome and introduction;
2. Presentation of the first draft of the background note on “Reducing the impact of AIDS on children and youth”;
3. Discussion on the draft background note;
4. Presentation of draft agenda for the Thematic Segment;
5. Discussion on the draft agenda;
6. Way forward;
7. Any other business.

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**SUMMARY**

**1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION**

Mr. Morten Ussing, Chief of Governance and Multilateral Affairs, UNAIDS Secretariat, welcomed the PCB Working Group to its second meeting for the preparation of the Thematic Segment of the 45<sup>th</sup> PCB on *Reducing the impact of AIDS on children and youth*. He thanked the working group members on the comments sent on the draft outline and mentioned that the Secretariat has done its best to integrate the comments received.

The Secretariat said that the second meeting provided an opportunity for the working group members to provide comments on the first full draft of the thematic segment background note as well as the draft agenda. The Secretariat also invited working group members to suggest possible speakers for the different sessions.

## **2. PRESENTATION OF THE DRAFT BACKGROUND NOTE ON REDUCING THE IMPACT OF AIDS ON CHILDREN AND YOUTH**

Ms. Catherine Bilger, Senior Adviser, Fast Track Implementation Department, UNAIDS Secretariat introduced the draft Background Note.

Ms. Bilger thanked the working group for their comments on the draft outline and said that the Secretariat had tried to incorporate the comments as much as possible. Ms. Bilger explained that the structure of the document had been revised and a section with key messages added at the start. She said that the “start free stay free AIDS free” framework is used to present the data. She explained that the age groups 10-14, 15-19, 20-24 year olds had been merged into 10-24 to avoid repetition and overlaps. Ms. Bilger also explained that following the comments from the working group, prevention was now incorporated throughout. The draft also included discussion on maternal and infant services in addition to PMTCT, family approaches to testing, sensitisation of health workers on the specific needs of children and youth, and youth empowerment. In addition, more data, some in the form of graphics, was also added.

Ms Bilger added that some areas still needed further discussion, including how to highlight the move towards universal health coverage and how to emphasise the needs of different age groups. She mentioned that additional case studies, especially from outside Africa, were still needed.

## **3. DISCUSSION ON THE DRAFT BACKGROUND NOTE ON REDUCING THE IMPACT OF AIDS ON CHILDREN AND YOUTH**

The PCB working group welcomed the draft Background Note. Specific comments by included the following:

### **Member states**

- Emphasised that the differences within different ages within the 10 to 24 year olds should be further clarified.
- Suggested mentioning the important role of adults throughout the text and highlighting their different role for different age groups.
- Suggested highlighting comprehensive sexuality education as a tool of prevention.
- Also suggested adding more data on mortality rate for adolescent and teenage mothers living with HIV.
- Emphasised the need to address poverty as a key structural factor of the impact of AIDS on children and youth.
- Suggested including a discussion on new technologies, such as point-of-care and testing, as a game-changer, with focus on the transfer of technology in a manner that ensures sustainability.
- Emphasised the importance of including a discussion on orphans.

### **PCB NGO Delegation**

- Suggested including a discussion on orphans living with HIV in the draft.
- Emphasised the importance of highlighting structural barriers, including legal and policy barriers and age of consent laws specifically, stigma and discrimination, that impact on access to services for adolescents and young people, noting that addressing structural barriers was a precondition of empowerment.

- Also emphasised that access to sexual and reproductive health and rights was a key issue affecting young people.
- Suggested looking at adolescent health more broadly, not only focusing on HIV.
- Suggested strengthening the focus on young key populations.
- Also suggested strengthening the focus on the challenges in PMTCT for adolescents and young women.
- Emphasised the importance of discussing access to paediatric ARV formulations.
- Said that the NGO delegation would send additional comments after having consulted with a broader civil society advisory group.

### **Cosponsors**

- Suggested that the gamechangers focus on the innovations and synergies with catalytic impact while also emphasising which well-known interventions need to be scaled up and improved.
- Emphasised the need to further discuss indirect impact of AIDS and explore integration and synergies between the AIDS response and other SDGs, in order to leverage more comprehensive outcomes with investments.
- Emphasised the importance of linking the background note to UHC discussions, including on how expanding packages of care for children and adolescents can help achieve better health outcomes.
- Highlighted the necessity to discuss the role of mothers and other caregivers in reducing the impact of AIDS on children.
- Said that it is important to note the differences within the 10 to 24 age group and to recognise that the actions taken with younger age groups will have impact on outcomes for older ones.
- Suggested strengthening the discussion on the underlying causes of poor retention in care as well as on how to address these through social protection and other interventions.
- Underlined the importance of addressing structural drivers and barriers to accessing prevention and their impact on wellbeing, drawing on the report from the STRIVE consortium.
- Emphasised the importance of discussing the integration of SRHR, including family planning and HIV prevention, especially in light of the ECHO trial.

## **4. PRESENTATION OF THE DRAFT AGENDA OF THE THEMATIC SEGMENT**

Ms. Bilger presented the draft agenda for the thematic day. She explained that it was proposed that the day would start with opening remarks from the new UNAIDS Executive Director, followed by a keynote speech from a representative of the youth community. The agenda would then have a session to present the current data and would then go into three roundtable discussions which would focus on the main recommendations and gamechangers covered in the background note.

Ms. Bilger said that the first roundtable would focus on understanding where new infant infections were coming from, finding children living with HIV, on access to antenatal care and to reaching the key populations. The second roundtable would focus on linking and retaining in care. The third would focus on communities and would include examples of peer support, efforts to empower adolescents and young people and programmes to address structural barriers.

The Secretariat called on the working group members to suggest possible speakers for the proposed sessions.

## 5. DISCUSSION ON THE DRAFT AGENDA OF THE THEMATIC SEGMENT

The working group members provided the following comments on the draft agenda.

### Member states

- Welcomed the proposal to have children and adolescent speakers and to have the voice of children and adolescents reflected throughout the agenda.
- Suggested that speakers should include also researchers who have done work in this area.

### PCB NGO Delegation

- Emphasised the importance of addressing structural barriers throughout the agenda, including as a precondition to youth empowerment.
- Underlined that it was important to have young people speak for themselves rather than have others speak for them.

### Cosponsors

- Suggested that the latest science should be presented during the thematic segment by leading researchers, especially to cover linkages of adolescent health to other SDGs.
- Emphasised the need to adequately cover the structural drivers and barriers and to discuss issues such as stigma and discrimination, age of consent laws and laws that discriminate against adolescent girls and young women.
- Suggested that there should be appropriate balance between treatment and prevention, especially in the way the first roundtable discussion is described.

## 6. WAY FORWARD

The Secretariat said that the working group participants had until Monday 14 October to send any written comments on the background note and the agenda.

The Secretariat also reminded the working group that the call for submissions of best practice case studies had been sent to all PCB members and permanent missions and asked the working group members to disseminate this call further to their networks and partners. The Secretariat recalled that the purpose of collecting case studies was to include practical examples into the background note and to inform the thematic discussions. The Secretariat also explained that all the case studies received would be compiled into a conference room paper which is published on the PCB website and which serves as a resource for UNAIDS more broadly beyond the thematic segment.

## 7. OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

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