



Executive Director

Reference: EXO/2023/501

Ms Anna Bækkel Kjær
Chargée d'affaires
Deputy Permanent Representative
of Denmark to the United Nations
in Geneva

Ambassador John Nkengasong
Ambassador-at-large
U.S. Global AIDS Coordinator
and Senior Bureau Official
for Global Health Security
and Diplomacy
U.S. Department of State
Washington, D.C.
USA

31 October 2023

Dear Ms Bækkel Kjær, Dear Ambassador Nkengasong,

On behalf of UNAIDS, I would like to convey our sincere appreciation to the Multilateral Organization Performance Assessment Network (MOPAN), and to the Governments of the United States of America and Denmark as the Institutional Leads for your recent assessment report of the UNAIDS Secretariat (2021-2022).

UNAIDS values professional, critical and constructive feedback, whether through this assessment, or through UNAIDS' own independent evaluation function. In addition, UNAIDS is committed to drawing on the findings of this assessment to advance its leadership and coordinating role, as highlighted in the Global AIDS Strategy (2021-2026), to "provide vision and strategic guidance, and unite the efforts of governments and civil society, communities, the private sector and other global, regional and national partners to drive transformative progress on HIV."

I wish to express special thanks to Ms Signe Refstrup Skov from the Government of Denmark and Ms Julia Martin and Ms Mamadi Yilla from the U.S. Government for their leadership and support during this process. I would also like to thank the MOPAN Secretariat, particularly Ms Suzanne Steensen and Ms Jolanda Profos, as well as the evaluation team led by Mr Simon Azariah and Mr Paul Janssen, for the close and professional collaboration.

UNAIDS
JOINT UNITED NATIONS
PROGRAMME ON HIV/AIDS

UNHCR
UNICEF
WFP
UNDP
UNFPA
UNODC
UN WOMEN
ILO
UNESCO
WHO
WORLD BANK

20 Avenue Appia
1211 Geneva 27
Switzerland

+41 22 791 4722 office
+41 22 791 4179 fax

unaids.org

.../2

I appreciate the flexibility and innovation demonstrated by MOPAN in adjusting the usual methodology to incorporate a forward-looking component, which takes into account the significant recent changes in UNAIDS – notably the development of a bold Global AIDS Strategy (2021-2026); a significant realignment of the Secretariat, so that UNAIDS is better aligned to support countries to deliver the Global AIDS Strategy; and a deepened organizational cultural transformation agenda, to ensure the Secretariat workplace is equal, safe and empowering for all of its staff.

The attached annex outlines UNAIDS' response to the findings of the MOPAN assessment, and on-going efforts and action-oriented steps and milestones towards addressing the key areas of improvement identified in the assessment report. Many of these areas are already in progress and a number of significant additional steps have been taken to address the issues identified for improvement. The Annex below provides a more detailed outline of the considerations, action points and future timelines.

We reiterate our commitment to continual improvement and excellence, and we count on the renewed commitment of all of MOPAN's members to support UNAIDS on this path, which is essential to ending AIDS and sustaining this progress beyond 2030.

Yours sincerely,



Winnie Byanyima

ANNEX: UNAIDS Management Response to the 2023 MOPAN Assessment of the UNAIDS Secretariat

Introduction

The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) is grateful for the work of the MOPAN Secretariat and the assessment team, as well as the time and perspectives of the various stakeholders who contributed to the 2023 MOPAN Assessment Report of the UNAIDS Secretariat (the assessment). UNAIDS is also appreciative of the inputs of MOPAN members and other member states and partners through subsequent meetings and consultations in the development of this management response.¹

The assessment provides important and constructive findings and considerations to examine, reinforce and strengthen the key functions and added value of UNAIDS, and advances a series of internal and external consultations to articulate a vision and shared commitment for the UNAIDS Secretariat and Joint Programme, towards 2030 and beyond.

As highlighted by the assessment, “The UNAIDS Joint Programme has been a trailblazer in terms of both UN joint programming and inclusive governance at global as well as national levels.”² Indeed, UNAIDS’ global mission and unique added value at country level is more important than ever. UNAIDS continues to guide and support global and country progress towards ending the AIDS epidemic as a public health threat by 2030 as part of the Sustainable Development Goals. Global progress towards this goal has been tremendous - HIV treatment averted 20.8 million AIDS-related deaths between 1996 and 2022, and a record 29.8 million of the 39 million people living with HIV globally were receiving life-saving treatment at the end 2022.³

Despite this progress, AIDS is far from over. While effective, affordable HIV treatment exists, 630 000 people died of AIDS-related causes in 2022, and an additional nine million people living with HIV are likely to die of AIDS-related causes if they do not receive treatment. UNAIDS data indicates that 1.3 million people were newly infected with HIV in 2022. In addition, stigma and discrimination, human rights violations and inequalities continue to pose significant barriers to access and uptake of services. UNAIDS continues to provide global leadership and support to countries, communities and partners to ensure life-saving HIV services reach all who need them, with respect and dignity, in every country and community.

UNAIDS is committed to deliver its coordination function, galvanizing the necessary leadership and partnerships for countries to achieve and sustain progress of Sustainable Development Goal 3.3 – to end AIDS as a public health threat by 2030. UNAIDS is committed to ensuring that HIV prevention, treatment, care and support continues to expand to reach everyone in need, in line with UNAIDS’ vision of *zero new HIV infections, zero discrimination, and zero AIDS-related deaths*. This focus will help to ensure HIV incidence is decreasing and treatment gaps are closed.

¹ UNAIDS consultations on the ‘2023 MOPAN Assessment of the UNAIDS Secretariat’ included various meetings and updates, over the course of ten weeks, with representatives of programme countries in Geneva, the UNAIDS donor constituency in Geneva; the NGO delegation of the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board (PCB); and UNAIDS Cosponsoring Organisations. In August 2023, internal UNAIDS meetings took place with the UNAIDS Senior Leadership Team and the Cosponsor Global Coordinators. On that basis, on 8 August 2023 UNAIDS sent a letter to the MOPAN network with copy to the PCB Bureau, acknowledging receipt of the assessment report and initiating the consultation and reflection process in earnest. UNAIDS Cabinet also hosted an all staff meeting in August to discuss the report. On 1 September 2023, MOPAN briefed Permanent Missions, Cosponsors and NGOs in Geneva. Before the briefing, UNAIDS posted the assessment report on the UNAIDS website. UNAIDS is grateful for the flexibility of the MOPAN Secretariat in extending the deadline for the submission of the Management Response, which enabled the outcome of these consultations to be considered.

² “UNAIDS Secretariat Performance at a Glance”, MOPAN Assessment Brief, August 2023, p. 3.

³ [The Path that Ends AIDS: UNAIDS Global AIDS Update 2023](#).

The feedback provided through this assessment will support UNAIDS to focus our efforts to overcome challenges, strengthen our effectiveness in coordinating the Joint Programme and leading the global HIV response, as well as ensuring that gains are sustained to 2030 and beyond. UNAIDS is committed to using the assessment to inform our evolution, prioritization and focus on the implementation of the Global AIDS Strategy, the 2021 Political Declaration on HIV/AIDS, and UNAIDS Unified Budget, Results and Accountability Framework (UBRAF). The assessment is also contributing to our planning to conduct a mid-term review of the current Global AIDS Strategy and engage stakeholders to develop the next Global AIDS Strategy and the post-2030 vision for UNAIDS and the global HIV response.

The following sections focus on key findings of the assessment, with focus on forward-looking elements.

Positive Findings

The assessment reaffirms the consensus among global stakeholders on the continued need for the Joint UN Programme on HIV/AIDS – and thus the UNAIDS Secretariat – towards and beyond 2030. UNAIDS also notes with appreciation the assessment’s key finding that, “Even beyond 2030, social determinants of HIV vulnerability will remain, key populations will still be disproportionately affected, and a multisectoral response to HIV will continue to be appropriate and necessary.”⁴ UNAIDS welcomes these overarching positive findings as well as the additional strengths of the UNAIDS Secretariat highlighted in the assessment, including:

- The role of the Secretariat in leading “the development of the Global AIDS Strategy effectively and in leading the Joint Programme in the continued improvement of the UBRAF as a results framework for the UN contribution to the global response”.
- The ability of the Secretariat “to lead an HIV-relevant policy dialogue with member states and for advancing global guidance and norms”.
- The role of the Secretariat as “a key provider of strategic information. The data on the global AIDS epidemiology and response produced by the Secretariat’s strategic information unit support strategic planning effectively at country level”.
- The strengths and achievements of the UNAIDS Secretariat and Cosponsors in having “maintained a focus on the social determinants of HIV, including human rights, stigma and discrimination, gender, and other inequalities”.
- The contributions of the Secretariat in providing “leadership on global agreements around HIV, setting and monitoring global HIV targets. It has developed a joint UN system accountability framework (UBRAF) and has provided leadership on joint UN responses in priority countries, including technical support for HIV surveillance”.
- UNAIDS “country implementation support” function, which “successfully supports national governments and civil society partners through joint UN country teams, technical guidance, dedicated funding envelopes, and a Technical Support Mechanism”.
- The role of the Joint Programme as a “trailblazer in terms of both UN joint programming and inclusive governance at global as well as national levels”.
- The Secretariat’s successful establishment of “an independent, fully functional and quality-assured evaluation function, which allows it to generate more analytical data for programmatic decision making as well as evidence of the Joint Programme’s contributions to results”.

As highlighted by the UN Secretary General in his 2023 report to the UN General Assembly, “Governments and communities, supported by UNAIDS, have pioneered ways of working

⁴ [“UNAIDS Secretariat Performance at a Glance”](#), MOPAN Assessment Brief, August 2023, p. 3.

and have built health and community systems that have turned the tide against AIDS and are crucial for overcoming other existing and future pandemics.”⁵

Areas for Improvement and Action Plan

The assessment identifies several important areas for improvement by the UNAIDS Secretariat and the Joint Programme. As highlighted by the assessment, “[a]lthough the Secretariat’s function of providing leadership and global advocacy for the HIV response is undisputed, leadership remains to be defined around a long-term vision for the UN response to HIV after the goal of “ending AIDS by 2030.” UNAIDS is committed to continue to evolve in order to respond effectively and efficiently to the global AIDS pandemic, and responds to the following areas identified by the assessment as key issues requiring attention:

- 1) Provide leadership for the longer-term HIV response to 2030 and beyond**
- 2) Ensure clarity of and focus on UNAIDS HIV mandate**
- 3) Strengthen relations with Cosponsors and the functioning of the Joint Programme**
- 4) Address challenges to fully resource the UBRAF**

Following careful consideration of the assessment and the subsequent consultations with key external stakeholders and UNAIDS Cosponsors, UNAIDS is prioritizing the following key actions to address the essential components for UNAIDS to continue to advance the global HIV response, drive HIV impact and sustain the gains that have been made.

The UNAIDS Secretariat has engaged its Cosponsors throughout the development of these key actions and timeline (see also Table 1: Summary of Key Actions and Timeline):

1) Provide leadership for the longer-term HIV response to 2030 and beyond

The assessment emphasized that beyond 2030, “a multisectoral response to HIV will continue to be appropriate and necessary.” There is strong support - from UNAIDS Cosponsors, donors, member states and communities - for UNAIDS to articulate a long-term vision for UNAIDS to lead the multisectoral response to HIV to 2030 and beyond.

Throughout its history, UNAIDS has monitored the evolution of the HIV pandemic and the global HIV response in a data-driven and consultative manner. UNAIDS is carefully attuned to evolving country needs and priorities and has regularly revised the Global AIDS Strategy, global HIV targets and the institutional structure of the Joint Programme and the Secretariat accordingly, within the parameters of its mandate established by the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).

Another critical consideration is that in UNAIDS consultations on the management response, civil society stressed that people living with HIV, and communities affected by HIV, want to be assured of a strong UNAIDS up to 2030 and beyond. This is considered essential to advancing and sustaining progress by countries and communities in the HIV response, especially for the most marginalized. In the continued absence of an HIV vaccine or functional cure, the Joint Programme has an essential and unique role to play in ensuring sustained access to life-saving HIV treatments and advancing the development of and access to new technologies. UNAIDS must guard against the danger of “being victims of our success” and the risk of potential backsliding “when victory is declared prematurely”.

A third consideration is that any institutional structural adjustments of the UNAIDS Secretariat and Joint Programme should ensure that “form follows function”. This was the

⁵ Ensuring an equitable response to end the AIDS pandemic and accelerate progress for global health and the Sustainable Development Goals: Report of the Secretary-General, [N2312989.pdf \(un.org\)](#), 8 May 2023, p. 16.

case in 2021, when following the adoption of the Global AIDS Strategy (2021-2026), the Secretariat undertook its most significant realignment since the establishment of the Joint Programme in 1996. This structural realignment of the Secretariat was needed to ensure the Joint Programme was best organized to support countries to ensure the successful delivery of the current Global AIDS Strategy. UNAIDS is committed to undertake further changes to the Secretariat and agree changes to the Joint Programme with the Cosponsors under the guidance of the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board (PCB), to ensure that UNAIDS is fit for purpose for the future.

UNAIDS is committed to advancing the following overarching actions, to ensure the effective role of the Secretariat, a strong Joint Programme and a sustainable global HIV response to 2030 and beyond:

- A. In 2024, UNAIDS Secretariat, together with Cosponsors and partners, will **conduct a mid-term review of the current Global AIDS Strategy (2021-2026), based on the 2023 Global AIDS Monitoring (GAM) data and other sources**, for consideration by the UNAIDS PCB in December 2024. This mid-term review would employ an inclusive, transparent and data-driven process and include consultations with internal and external partners. The review would be implemented in parallel with the prioritization of the UBRAF, to ensure effective and efficient use of UNAIDS' limited human and financial resources. The results of the review would also be used to inform the development of the next Global AIDS Strategy, through an inclusive consultative process, as well as the longer-term vision of UNAIDS and the global HIV response post-2030.
- B. Throughout 2024, UNAIDS Secretariat, together with Cosponsors, will **continue the process of charting and envisioning the global HIV response to 2030 and beyond**. This process will critically assess the needs for what is required to reach 2030 and to sustain the HIV response into the future. This visioning process would build on UNAIDS' work in support of ending AIDS as a public health threat by 2030. The UNAIDS Reference Group on Estimates, Modeling and Projections, which includes members from UNAIDS Cosponsors, has developed initial scenarios on the future trajectory of the HIV pandemic and planning is already underway for further consultations in 2024, including the engagement of other UNAIDS reference groups, advisory bodies and coalitions. The UNAIDS Secretariat, through a formal engagement process, has begun to articulate a vision to move from an emergency to a sustained response, noting however that urgent concerted efforts are still needed for a majority of countries to reach the 2025 targets.
- C. In 2023 and throughout 2024, UNAIDS Secretariat, together with Cosponsors, will **lead on the development, coordination and implementation of a sustainability agenda for the global HIV response, which encompasses political, programmatic and financial sustainability**. This agenda will be developed in close collaboration with UNAIDS Cosponsors, PEPFAR, the Global Fund, countries and communities, donors and other partners. This agenda will consider the growing financial and debt crises faced by low- and middle-income countries that are also highly affected by HIV. For example, currently 60% of the resources for the HIV response in low- and middle-income countries comes from domestic sources. UNAIDS has a critical role to ensure that political, programmatic and financial commitments for the HIV response are sustained, and not reversed.
- D. In late 2024/early 2025, UNAIDS Secretariat will **launch the consultative process to develop the next Global AIDS Strategy and 2030 HIV targets (2027-2031)**, for consideration and adoption by the PCB in December 2025. This process to develop

the next Global AIDS Strategy will be inclusive, transparent and data-driven, building on the groundwork laid in 2024 and the collaborative process used in 2020-2021 to co-create the current Global AIDS Strategy. This will also feed into the development of the next UBRAF (2027-2031), which will be more robust, streamlined and focused to deliver and sustain maximum impact.

- E. In 2025, building on work through 2024, UNAIDS Secretariat together with Cosponsors, will **outline a long-term vision for the Joint Programme's role in the global HIV response to 2030 and beyond, based on an evidence-based scenario planning and broad discussions with Cosponsors, partners and within the broader UN system.** These consultations will guide further discussions on the Division of Labour and adjustments to the institutional structure of the UNAIDS Secretariat and the Joint Programme within the broader UN system, with the aim of strengthening the Secretariat's role in coordinating UN action on HIV beyond 2030.

2) Ensure clarity of and focus on UNAIDS HIV mandate

The assessment noted that “Even though the Global AIDS Strategy 2021-2026 and the 2022-26 UBRAF are aligned with the SDGs, key informants from Cosponsors and large global partners expressed concern about mission drift by the Secretariat in its Joint Programme advocacy role.”

The creation of UNAIDS in 1996 reflected the recognition of the multisectoral response that is essential to addressing the HIV pandemic. At the core of the current Global AIDS Strategy is the appreciation that “many of the inequalities that facilitated the spread of the AIDS pandemic are getting worse and continue to fan the spread of HIV in many parts of the world.”⁶ UNAIDS has repeatedly demonstrated that the inequalities underpinning stigma, discrimination and HIV-related criminalization enhance people's vulnerability to acquire HIV and make people living with HIV more likely to die of AIDS-related illnesses. This is why the Global AIDS Strategy features the ambitious 10-10-10 and 30-80-60 targets.⁷ Since the adoption of the Global AIDS Strategy, the introduction of more regressive policies and laws in many parts of the world have served to increase HIV vulnerability and diminish people's abilities to access and effectively benefit from HIV services, threatening to reverse the gains in the HIV response.

The PCB approved the Joint Programme's 2024-2025 Work plan and Budget and requested the Joint Programme to provide the board with scenario planning for the 2024-25 budget, with a prioritized allocation of anticipated revenues against the approved work plan and ensuring prioritized implementation from 2024. This was based on the current annual fund projection for that biennium (US\$ 160 million), the baseline approved budget (US\$ 187 million) and the fully funded work plan (US\$ 210 million).

UNAIDS is committed to the following overarching actions to ensure clarity of and greater focus on the UNAIDS HIV mandate:

- A. In late 2023/early 2024, UNAIDS Secretariat, together with Cosponsors, will **laser-focus the next biennium planning and budgeting (2024-2025) on targeted, high-impact strategic priorities that focus on reducing new HIV infections, reducing stigma and discrimination and inequalities and closing treatment gaps to**

⁶ [Global AIDS Strategy 2021-2026 — End Inequalities. End AIDS. p. 4.](#)

⁷ The 10-10-10 targets state that by 2025, less than 10% of countries should have punitive legal and policy environments that deny or limit access to services, less than 10% of people living with HIV and key populations will experience stigma and discrimination, and less than 10% of women, girls, people living with HIV, and key populations will experience gender inequality and violence. The 30-80-60 targets specify that by 2025, communities will deliver 30% of testing and treatment services, 80% of HIV prevention services, and 60% of programmes will support the achievement of societal enablers.

deliver maximum impact. UNAIDS will ensure that the process of 2024-2025 UBRAF work planning and budgeting across the Secretariat and Joint Programme will be aligned with the following overarching strategic priorities:

1. Advance progress on HIV prevention;
2. Accelerate access to HIV treatment and new health technologies;
3. Promote community-led HIV responses, including community-led services and monitoring; and
4. Ensure equitable financing and sustaining the response to HIV.

Addressing HIV-related inequalities, including gender inequalities, protecting human rights and removing punitive laws and policies, and ending stigma and discrimination will remain critical and integral to all overarching priorities.⁸

- B. In 2024, UNAIDS Secretariat, together with Cosponsors, will **enhance advocacy and communications to highlight how Global Strategic Initiatives are mobilizing broader political focus across sectors and partnerships in the HIV response and document the links between structural barriers and inequalities that are undermining progress in the HIV response.** UNAIDS Global Strategic Initiatives will mobilize greater political focus, new partnerships and resources to leverage the Joint Programme's unique multisectoral approach for HIV outcomes, within and beyond the Joint Programme (Cosponsors, donors, programme countries, civil society, etc). This will include a renewed approach on how the Joint Programme can best address the 'push back' on human rights and gender equality that continue to undermine access to HIV services.
- C. In 2024, UNAIDS will **use the Evaluation Office function to examine the complimentary role of the UNAIDS Joint Programme in advancing HIV prevention and treatment outcomes at the country level,** notably requesting the Evaluation Office to examine how the multisectoral approach and role of UNAIDS Secretariat, together with the Cosponsors, is uniquely supporting countries in helping to advance the global HIV response and sustain its gains in the future.

3) Strengthen relations with Cosponsors and the functioning of the Joint Programme

As documented by the assessment and other recent reviews, the relationship between the Secretariat and the Cosponsors has become increasingly "strained". A significant factor driving this complexity is the reduced availability of core UBRAF funding, including for Cosponsors. Mobilized core resources continue to fall far short of the budget approved by the PCB. This shortfall is felt most acutely at the Global Centre level and the Cosponsor Global Coordinators, where difficult decisions have been made about prioritization and resource allocation.

UNAIDS notes with appreciation the assessment finding that relationships between the UNAIDS Secretariat and Cosponsors are stronger regionally and in-country.

The Joint Programme was created to galvanize UN multisectoral action behind a single strategy in support of countries and their HIV responses. The UNAIDS multisectoral response is needed now more than ever, in order to end AIDS as a public health threat by 2030 and sustain these gains into the future. Enhancing strong working relationships between the UNAIDS Secretariat and the Cosponsors at all levels is essential to the

⁸ This action continues the Joint Programme commitment to Recommendation 4 on the Joint Programme Capability Review, to give clear guidance and to consider what is achievable in contexts without a secretariat presence.

effective performance and impact of the Joint Programme, and will be even more important in the next phase leading up to 2030 and beyond.

UNAIDS recognizes that since 2015, the Joint Programme has only once achieved a fully funded core UBRAF allocation, approved by the PCB - US\$ 187 million in 2020. Closing the UBRAF resource gap requires a renewed, collective and joined up effort across the Joint Programme. This includes a renewed relationship and more effective ways of working between the Secretariat and the Cosponsors, as well as a renewed commitment by donor PCB members, individual high-income members of PCB donor constituencies and other potential donors, to increase their voluntary commitment to UNAIDS.

As the global HIV response evolves, so should the Joint Programme. The Secretariat notes that the assessment included considerations regarding the review of principles of cosponsorship that were considered by the PCB in 2020. Moving ahead, this issue will be a priority for action by the UNAIDS Committee of Cosponsoring Organizations (CCO) and the PCB.

UNAIDS is committed to advancing the following overarching actions to strengthen the relationship and ways of working between the Secretariat and Cosponsors at all levels:

- A. UNAIDS Secretariat, together with Cosponsors, will ***maintain and build on the positive examples of strengthening Secretariat and Cosponsor relations***, including the March 2023 Joint Programme retreat, which included the Global Coordinators and Deputy Executive Directors, the CCO which convenes principals twice a year, and collaborative and transparent models for mobilizing additional resources for the essential work of the Cosponsors. UNAIDS will also continue to strengthen Secretariat coordination of the Joint Programme and country implementation, which is appreciated by country-level stakeholders, including Cosponsor staff. Through the country envelopes, the Joint Teams on AIDS at country and regional levels will be strengthened so they can continue to effectively deliver the work of the Joint Programme and provide unique support to national HIV responses.
- B. In 2023, UNAIDS Secretariat has ***deployed stronger senior global leadership engagement from the Secretariat to strengthen the relationship with Cosponsors. This has included the establishment of the External Relations Department and will include developing Standard Operating Procedures for engagement with Cosponsors at all levels*** – globally, regionally, and country level and for engagement and collaboration between Principals, Deputy Executive Directors, between the Secretariat and the Cosponsors, and between technical leaders and staff across the Joint Programme. This engagement will enable the Joint Programme to respond to a highly dynamic environment and enable it to engage in course correction to keep the work of the Joint Programme focused, on track and optimally funded in an increasingly unstable global context.⁹
- C. In 2024, UNAIDS Secretariat will ***establish an externally-facilitated working group between the Secretariat and the Cosponsors to focus on improving inter-personal communication and discussions around planning, budgeting, the Division of Labour and resource mobilization for the future***. This will ensure the effective positioning of the Joint Programme to attract more targeted, earmarked resources to support its work and be clearer on how to deploy those resources to fully leverage individual and collective strengths of the Cosponsors.

⁹ This action further corresponds to and actions Recommendation 8 of the Joint Programme Capability Review.

As noted above, as the longer-term vision of the HIV response post-2030 is developed, UNAIDS will implement a review of the Joint Programme to adjust the model and operation of the Joint Programme, as required for the HIV response.

4) Address challenges to fully resource the UBRAF

UNAIDS believes that greater resource mobilization is possible by improving on the three lines of action listed above.

The Secretariat acknowledges that resource mobilization for the UBRAF has been a challenge since 2015. After multiple biennia in which core funding for the Joint Programme fell short of the amounts budgeted, the funding gap in the UBRAF became severe in 2022, with annual funding falling US\$ 58 million short of full funding, and US\$ 35 million short of the minimum base core funding.¹⁰ UNAIDS is not alone in facing this challenge – neither in the global HIV response, nor across the UN system. Recent UNAIDS data indicated that in 2022, international and domestic funding for the global HIV response continued to decline.¹¹ All PCB members recommitted to fully funding the UBRAF. In approving the 2024-2025 Work plan and Budget, the PCB agreed to keep the level of ambition and confirmed that the minimum funding level of the UBRAF was achievable if donors follow the recommendations set out by the PCB's Informal Multistakeholder Task Team.¹² UNAIDS is committed to work with the members of the PCB and the members of MOPAN to transform these commitments into a fully funded UBRAF.

The UNAIDS Resource Mobilization Strategy (2022-2026)¹³ acknowledges this challenging context and sets out key actions to address this context by:

- Transforming UNAIDS partnerships to maintain relevance and engagement with existing donors, cultivating new donors and acquiring new partnerships with foundations and philanthropies to support the UBRAF; a key feature of this transformation is the continued acquisition and integration of non-core funding (also known as earmarked funding) into the UBRAF.
- Continue to create an enabling environment by engaging UNAIDS senior leadership of the Secretariat and the senior leadership of UNAIDS Cosponsors in specific and targeted resource mobilization efforts for the Joint Programme.
- Further developing and articulating the added value of the Joint Programme to current and emerging donors, including specifically highlighting UNAIDS achievements across the Joint Programme.
- Engage in organizational development across the Joint Programme to acquire and manage funding to best deliver on the UBRAF and to simplify and streamline its procedures to manage and report on funding.

UNAIDS is committed to advancing the following overarching actions to address challenges in order to fully resource the UBRAF and Joint Programme:

- A. At the end of 2023, UNAIDS Secretariat, together with Cosponsors, will **report to the PCB on its June 2023 decision requesting integrated budget and scenario**

¹⁰ Report of the PCB Bureau on UNAIDS' funding situation based on the recommendations of the informal multistakeholder task team, December 2022.

¹¹ [The Path that Ends AIDS: UNAIDS Global AIDS Update 2023](#), p. 100.

¹² Informal Multistakeholder Task Team to provide recommendations to the Bureau on UNAIDS funding situation. https://www.unaids.org/en/resources/documents/2022/Report_Task_team_Options_Immediate_Funding

¹³ [Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS- Resource Mobilization Strategy \(2022-2026\)](#)

planning for the 2024-25 budget, with prioritized allocation of anticipated revenues against the approved work plan, based on the current annual fund projection for that biennium (US\$ 160 million), the baseline approved budget (US\$ 187 million) and the fully funded work plan (US\$ 210 million), ensuring prioritized implementation from 2024.

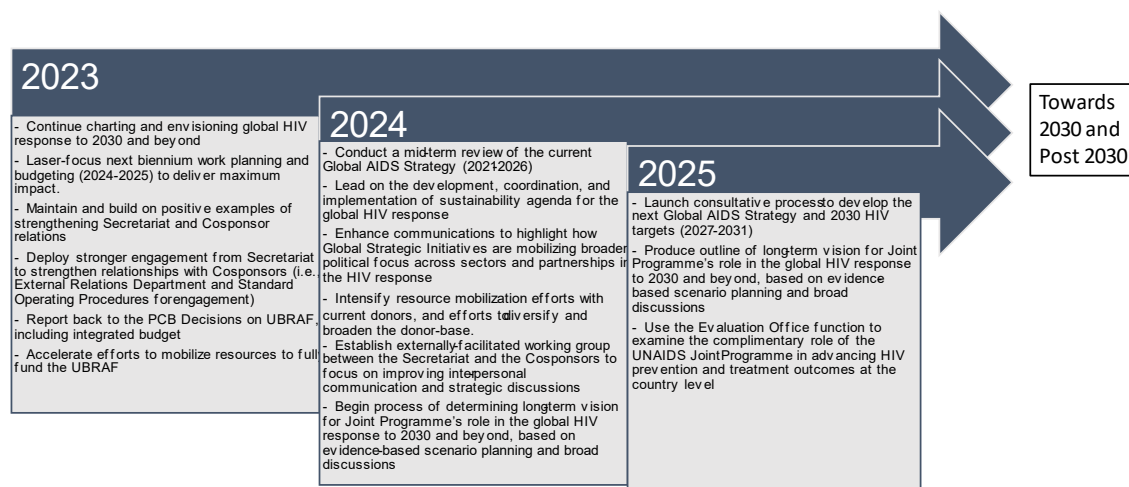
- B. In 2023 and beyond, UNAIDS Secretariat, together with Cosponsors, will **accelerate efforts to mobilize resources to fully fund the UBRAF, drawing on efforts from the Resource Mobilization Strategy**, in order to retain core funding levels from its existing donors and increase non-core funding, in line with a prioritized UBRAF. In making greater use of non-core or earmarked funding, the UNAIDS Secretariat and its Cosponsors will ensure all non-core or earmarked funding is consistent with UNAIDS' core mission and mandate and will continue to report on this annually to the PCB and its Independent External Oversight Advisory Committee.
- C. In 2024 and in line with the Resource Mobilization Strategy, UNAIDS Secretariat, together with Cosponsors, will **intensify resource mobilization efforts with current donors, as well as efforts to diversify and broaden the donor base**. UNAIDS will also continue to leverage its work with the resource mobilization teams of its Cosponsors to secure further funding for the UBRAF.

The Secretariat notes that UNAIDS has strong fiscal management while working in a challenging economic environment. Over the past several years and during the period of the assessment, the Secretariat has introduced significantly stronger internal controls and compliance systems. These are complemented by regular reporting to the PCB on the use of the budget, the reserve and operational funds, with the establishment of an oversight committee of the PCB to monitor these areas closely and advise on their further strengthening. Mitigation steps have been taken across the Joint Programme to operate within the available revenue.

Table 1: Summary of Key Actions and Timeline

Line of Action	Key Action Point	Expected Timeline
1) Provide leadership for the longer-term HIV response to 2030 and beyond	Conduct a mid-term review of the current Global AIDS Strategy (2021-2026), based on the 2023 Global AIDS Monitoring (GAM) data and other sources	By December 2024
	Continue the process for charting and envisioning the global HIV response to 2030 and beyond	Throughout 2024, by June 2025
	Lead on the development, coordination, and implementation of sustainability agenda for the global HIV response - political, programmatic and financial	Throughout 2024, by December 2024
	Launch the consultative process to develop the next Global AIDS Strategy and 2030 HIV targets (2027-2031)	Late 2024/early 2025
	Outline a long-term vision for Joint Programme's role in the global HIV response to 2030 and beyond, based on evidence-based scenario planning and broad discussions	By June 2025
2) Ensure clarity of and focus on the UNAIDS HIV mandate	Laser-focus next biennium planning and budgeting (2024-2025) on targeted, high-impact strategic priorities that focus on reducing new HIV infections, reducing stigma and discrimination and inequalities and closing treatment gaps to deliver maximum impact.	Late 2023/early 2024
	Enhance communications to highlight how Global Strategic Initiatives are mobilizing broader political focus across sectors and partnerships in the HIV response and document the links between structural barriers and inequalities that are undermining progress in the HIV response.	In 2024
	Use the Evaluation Office function to examine the complimentary role of the UNAIDS Joint Programme in advancing HIV prevention and treatment outcomes at the country level	In 2024-2025
3) Strengthen relations with cosponsors and the functioning of the Joint Programme	Maintain and build on the positive examples of strengthening Secretariat and Cosponsor relations	In 2023, and beyond
	Deploy stronger engagement from Secretariat to strengthen relationship with Cosponsors, including, establishing External Relations Department and Standard Operating Procedures for engagement	In 2023, and beyond
	Establish an externally-facilitated working group between the Secretariat and the Cosponsors to focus on improving inter-personal communication and discussions around planning, budgeting, the Division of Labour, and resource mobilization for the future	In 2024
4) Address challenges to fully resource the UBRAF	Report back to the PCB Decisions on UBRAF, including integrated budget	By December 2023
	Accelerate efforts to mobilize resources to fully fund the UBRAF, drawing from efforts from the resource mobilization strategy	In 2023 and beyond.
	Intensify resource mobilization efforts with current donors, and efforts to diversify and broaden the donor-base.	In 2024

Table 2: Illustrative Timeline (2023-2025) - Selected Key Actions in UNAIDS MOPAN Management Response



Continue to prevent sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment (PSEAH)

The Secretariat agrees with the MOPAN finding that important progress has been made to introduce “strengthened policies and procedures around sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment” and that efforts must continue in this area. The Secretariat is deeply committed to continuing to change, take stock, learn and improve – ensuring it has an institutional culture aligned to UN values, as well as the systems and practices in place to uphold the highest standards of safeguarding, to protect UNAIDS’ workforce and those we serve.

Since the Executive Director took office in 2019, the Secretariat has spared no effort in making UNAIDS a safe, equal and empowering workplace, with zero tolerance for sexual exploitation, abuse, harassment and other forms of misconduct. The Secretariat has made progress in strengthening its safeguarding oversight, improving policies and systems and transforming organizational culture. On the latter, the Secretariat views prevention of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment as connected to broader work to prevent and address racial and other forms of discrimination, bullying and abuse of authority.

Through the implementation of the *Management Action Plan for a healthy, equitable and enabling workplace for all UNAIDS staff*, endorsed by the PCB in June 2019, the Secretariat has:

- Put in place a dedicated three-person HR Legal and Policy team to advise and support staff and managers, lead prevention and awareness efforts, and do robust consequence management and disciplinary procedures;
- Strengthened the Ethics Office, in conformity with the standards recommended by the UN Joint Inspection Unit, and with the Office presenting its annual report directly to the PCB;
- Established dedicated internal leadership on culture transformation, internal communications and staff mental health and wellbeing;

- Established an expanded Memorandum of Understanding with the WHO Office of Internal Oversight Services, incorporating service levels and time targets for the completion of investigations; and
- Deepened the culture transformation agenda in the Management Action Plan.

UNAIDS will continue to apply and share best practices on PSEAH issues within and beyond the organization and leverage synergies in the UN system, proactively pushing and influencing the UN system to ensure zero tolerance for sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment.

Going forward, UNAIDS is committed to advancing the following overarching actions to further prevent sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment:

- A. In 2023 and beyond, UNAIDS will ***continue to drive the ongoing change agenda*** in a comprehensive, effective, inclusive and sustained manner, with accountability for senior leadership and managers as a key component. This includes deploying dedicated senior leadership and oversight, notably through the designation of the Deputy Executive Director, Policy, Advocacy and Knowledge, as the senior lead for safeguarding in the UNAIDS Cabinet.
- B. In 2024 and beyond, UNAIDS will ***continue the work to ensure awareness, capacity and compliance with the new Policy on Preventing and Addressing Sexual Misconduct***, which is applicable to all UNAIDS staff members, personnel and collaborators, noting that particular emphasis is paid to reaching members of the workforce and partners at the country level. This will include actively socializing the strengthened policies and reporting procedures (e.g., #RESPECT campaign, training and refreshers on the UN PSEAH and Ethics@UNAIDS courses) with staff, noting that completion of these courses is required from all service providers, partners and collaborators before a contract is awarded. This will ensure a common understanding of prohibited conduct in relation to sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment, as well as knowledge of available support services.
- C. In 2023-2024, UNAIDS will complete ***an ongoing external expert review of UNAIDS' institutional setup for safeguarding, culture transformation, mental health and wellbeing and ethics***, and consider recommendations for optimizing capacities and structures, and further action, including management practices and developing a Safeguarding Action Plan.
- D. In 2024 and beyond, UNAIDS will ***strengthen compliance by screening all service providers, partners and collaborators through the UN ClearCheck*** screening database. This aims to prevent the hiring and re-hiring of individuals whose working relationship with an organization of the UN system ended because of a determination that they had perpetrated sexual exploitation, abuse or harassment.

Other MOPAN assessment considerations

When formulating the Management Response, the UNAIDS Secretariat carefully reviewed every consideration within its mandate. UNAIDS notes that a couple of specific considerations in the assessment entail potential risks that merit further reflection. This is particularly important for those considerations that may risk undermining UNAIDS' ability to advance the Global AIDS Strategy through a comprehensive multisectoral HIV response. For example, in the current political climate, the consideration that "ECOSOC and the UNAIDS PCB may want to consider going back to the drawing board in order to confirm the continued relevance of a UN system response to HIV post 2030 and to revisit its architecture

and modus operandi,” could serve to undermine UNAIDS, UN joint programming and the PCB’s unique model for inclusive governance in the UN system.

Similarly, UNAIDS considers that caution is needed to address the assessment consideration about “sunsetting elements of the Secretariat towards 2030 (“end of AIDS as a public health threat”) while sustaining critical functions.” UNAIDS is committed to engage in a scenario planning that would optimize core UNAIDS functions in order to strengthen the role and performance of the Secretariat and the Joint Programme to 2030 and beyond.

UNAIDS remains carefully attuned to evolving country needs and priorities. As described above, UNAIDS will continue to adjust the Global AIDS Strategy, targets, UBRAF and the institutional structure of the Joint Programme and the Secretariat, within the parameters of its mandate established by ECOSOC. UNAIDS remains open to explore further enhancements in a manner that minimizes political risks and maximizes support for the Joint Programme and the countries and communities we serve.

Conclusion

UNAIDS looks forward to using the MOPAN Assessment Report as an important contribution to the continued evolution of the Joint Programme and to ensure we continue to deliver our highest impact in support of countries and for the people we serve. UNAIDS is committed to building on our recognized strengths and continuing to make improvements. We are excited to chart the next chapter of the global HIV response with a diverse coalition of stakeholders – one where we enhance UNAIDS’ role to ensure the world reaches the ambitious goals for 2025 and 2030 and sustains these gains post-2030.

UNAIDS will continue to seek the advice and support of MOPAN’s members as it takes forward the implementation of the actions in its response to the assessment, in collaboration with the PCB, members states, communities, partners and in particular with UNAIDS Cosponsors. We also look forward to securing sustained and growing solidarity and donor confidence to achieve a fully funded UBRAF, as committed to by the PCB.

UNAIDS remains committed to continued improvement and excellence. We count on the renewed commitment of MOPAN’s members and partners to support UNAIDS on this path, which is essential to ending AIDS as a public health threat by 2030 and sustaining this progress in the future.