



NGO
DELEGATION TO THE
UNAIDS PCB

52ND PCB MEETING

NGO Delegation's PCB Summary Bulletin

26 until 28 June 2023

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Introduction

[Cecilia Chung | North America delegate](#)

The 52nd Meeting of the PCB took place from 26th to 28th June 2023 in Geneva. This was the first meeting that NGO observers could attend in person since the onset of the COVID pandemic. The first day of the meeting consisted of standing business (ED report, COO Chair report and consideration of the report of the previous meeting); and ended with the follow-up of the thematic segment of the 51st PCB meeting titled, “HIV and Men, in all their diversity, how can we get our responses on track?”.

The second day focused on UBRAF reports, an update on human resource management issues, a statement made by the chair of the UNAIDS Secretariat Staff Association and the reports on independent oversight of the organisation.

The third day began with the adaptation of the decision points, followed by a full day of thematic segment, which was also the highlight of the meeting. It was the first time that the PCB listened to three panels of professionals with members from the transgender community. Some other observations include tensions between some member states, and it being the first PCB meeting for the new Deputy Executive Directors, Angeli Achrekar and Christine Stegling.

Report of the Executive Director

[Marta Clara Nakato | Africa delegate](#)

The Executive Director’s Report focused on the urgent need to address persistent barriers and missed opportunities in ending new HIV infections and AIDS related deaths by 2030.

The delegation noted with concerns that such a target may not be met given the lack of political leadership, financial commitment to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support and increased human rights violations particularly on women, LGBTIQ+ communities and other key and priority populations – further highlighting that courageous leadership was needed to drive such an ambition.

With the rise of the anti-rights, gender & LGBTIQ+ movements globally posing additional threats to community leadership in the HIV responses, having a strong UNAIDS to support member states in reaching the global targets, and to advocate and defend for rights of communities on the national, regional and global levels, is as critical as ever.

While the Secretariat continues to make improvements to expand trust, transparency and accountability with stakeholders during these challenging times, the delegation recognizes the unique role of UNAIDS and calls upon donors, member states, and all

stakeholders to protect its hard-earned, uphold stronger partnerships and strengthen political will in funding the joint program and fighting back against non-progressive Anti-rights, Gender and LGBTIQ+ movements.

Report by the Chair of the Committee of Cosponsoring Organisations (CCO)

[Aleksey Lakhov | Europe delegate](#)

The report highlighted efforts of the Cosponsors to accelerate progress on addressing HIV in the current context of multiple, intersecting crises, and to revitalise the Joint Programme. To this end, the CCO report focused on:

- the funding shortfall and its negative impact on the Joint Programme;
- priority setting within the UBRAF 2024-2025 (namely: advancing progress on HIV prevention; accelerating access to HIV treatment and new health technologies; promoting community-led responses, including community-led service provision and monitoring; ensuring equitable financing and sustaining the HIV response);
- stepping up the Joint Programme response to human rights and gender equality pushbacks to reach 95-95-95 and 10-10-10 targets.

The NGO Delegation acknowledged the report and thanked the Chair of the CCO, UNODC, for presenting it on World Drug Day. In fact, people who use drugs are mentioned in the report several times as one of the key populations whose rights are being violated all over the world. However, human rights not only of people who use drugs, but also of adolescent girls and young women, and LGBTIQ+ communities, are under threat from well-organised and well-funded opposition. This is why the NGO Delegation called for a coordinated response from the Joint Programme and emphasised that these communities under threat can not afford a disjointed coordination.

In conclusion, the Delegation stressed that one of the 2025 targets is about increasing the proportion of community-led HIV services and ensuring relevant networks and organisations are sustainably financed, participate in decision-making and generate data through community-led monitoring and research.

Follow-up to the thematic segment from the 51st Programme Coordinating Board Meeting

[Gastón Devisich | Latin America & The Caribbean delegate](#)

The report following up to the Thematic Segment of the 51st Thematic Segment picked up on the topic of “Men in all their diversities”, and its guiding question of “how to get our responses back on track?” This agenda item proved to be one of the biggest challenges of the 52nd PCB Meeting, requiring long hours at the drafting room in order for consensus to be reached among Member States, Co-Sponsoring Organisations and the NGO Delegation.

As “Men in all their diversities” was not already agreed upon language, PCB Members interpreted it differently, especially who it included and why, which led to confusion and diverse disputes. Some conservative Member States even questioned the concept regardless of it having been the title of the Segment and challenged once again the concept of “key and priority populations”, claiming that needs or programs are to be prioritised instead of people.

Ultimately, “sub-populations of men in diverse situations and conditions” came as an alternative supported by all parties. This coincided with the NGO Delegation’s stand backing men not being equal nor homogeneous and thus differently affected by HIV, being particular groups with intersecting vulnerabilities who continue to lag behind in accessing HIV services and requiring differentiated data to be addressed effectively.

Lastly, enabling social, legal and policy environments and addressing stigma and discrimination were met with consensus from PCB members. However, next steps should concentrate on including the eradication of criminalization and punitive laws against key populations among decision points for these kinds of topics, as it is known to drive discrimination and structural inequalities and something being brought up by the Delegation, CCOs and some Member States but has yet to make its way into consented moves forward.

Unified Budget, Results and Accountability Framework (UBRAF) 2022-2026 - Performance reporting 2022

[Xavier Biggs | Latin America & The Caribbean delegate](#)

The Unified Budget Reporting and Accountability Framework (UBRAF) agenda item, focused on the financial year January to December 2022 and January to March 2023. The report provided an update on the progress towards the various fast-track targets and made recommendations on the way forward.

Though most targets/milestones remain on track, there are growing concerns about the feasibility of realising the targets for Reducing New HIV infections as they continue to rise in at least three regions. The report also shared that though AIDS-related deaths continue to trend downward, the trend line slows as people living with HIV (PLHIV) are dying from comorbidities as the PLHIV population ages. However, this target is still within reach.

The intervention from the NGO Delegation focused primarily on calling on member states to provide disaggregated key population data to better inform a more targeted program design and encouraged UNAIDS to better partner with countries through the provision of technical assistance and capacity building towards delivering these outputs.

A second intervention focused on the need to scale up innovative interventions and differentiate HIV services across the continuum of prevention, treatment and care cascade and welcomed Member States stepping in to try and fully fund the UBRAF.

Workplan and Budget 2024-2025 (UBRAF)

[Midnight Poonkasetwattana | Asia & The Pacific delegate](#)

There was concern about the funding shortfall will impact the ambitious 2024-2025 work plan, as one of the strategic programmatic priorities is to fully resource and sustain efficient HIV responses and integrate them into systems for health, social protection, humanitarian settings and pandemic responses - which will affect the communities on the ground:

- Reaching the Global targets of 95-95-95, 10-10-10 and 30-60-80
- Coordination with other global funders, PEPFAR and the Global Fund

- Changes due to the realignment, such as closure of MENA Office, multi-country offices, and having HIV advisers within the UN Resident Coordinator office

Member States asked the Joint Programme to look at prioritising themes and activities according to the needs of the country and region. The NGO Delegation questioned the ability of the Joint Programme to uphold the human rights of people living with HIV, key and priority populations.

Update on strategic human resources management issues

[Myles Mwansa | Africa delegate](#)

The NGO Delegation was concerned about the MENA office closure in Cairo, the EECA regional support team being relocated from Moscow, Russian Federation to Bonn, Germany. Furthermore the delegation questioned the effectiveness of transferring an HIV adviser of the MENA regional office to the regional office in Bangkok. The NGO Delegation asked the Secretariat if there was a formal exit strategy, and whether there had been enough consultation with cosponsors, governments, staff and civil society leading up to this impactful decision? The EECA and MENA regions are showing an increase in annual HIV infections, and due to rife stigma and discrimination, and criminalisation of key populations, the HIV response might not be as timely due to the closure of offices and relocation of staff.

Member States asked UNAIDS to be more transparent in their processes of changing the way they work, sought prior notice from the Secretariat, and looked forward to seeing how the changes with the realignment will allow the Joint Programme to work more in coordination with each other amongst the co-sponsors, especially in countries where regional UNAIDS offices are not or no longer present.

Statement by the representative of the UNAIDS Secretariat Staff Association

[Christian Hui | North America delegate](#)

Given the immense impact of UNAIDS' budget shortfall and realignment process, the NGO Delegation is aware that the 700 UNAIDS staff have been placed under great pressure to perform with less support and resources. Many experienced staff were let go, and existing staff do not have a strong sense of job security. Staff spoke of a wish that management can improve on its duty-of-care to staff by acting more openly and transparently through

regular communication and collaborative decision-making processes, providing adequate training for new staff, and agreeing to allow the USSA to send its unabridged annual USSA Staff Survey so it can better gauge staff satisfaction. Dr. Byanyima acknowledged that the change management process has been difficult for all, especially the staff, and noted she and senior management would continue to address staff concerns.

Organisational Oversight Reports

Sonal Giani | Asia & The Pacific delegate

The session covered five reports on oversight activities and management responses within UNAIDS. Decisions included acknowledging these reports, approving the 2022 External Auditor's report, and amending the UNAIDS Independent External Oversight Advisory Committee's Terms of Reference to incorporate a Vice Chair role.

Member States welcomed the reports and the operation of the IEOAC. They urged UNAIDS Management to promptly address pending audit recommendations, ensure robust policy compliance, and allocate resources to support the Ethics Office.

The NGO Delegation acknowledged the reports, highlighting the necessity of strategic plans for Regional Support Teams and efficient office closure strategies. They recognized improved staff confidence in reporting misconduct and pushed for increased resources for the Ethics Office, currently managed by one person.

The Delegation suggested simplifying systems and procedures for better efficiency, considering reduced staff and UBRAF funding gaps. They raised concerns about broader UNAIDS challenges, notably serious financial issues.

Upon endorsing IEOAC's report and its revised terms, the NGO Delegation emphasised the need to evaluate the real-world effects of UNAIDS policies, particularly on those directly impacted by HIV/AIDS. They advocated for a sustained commitment to maintaining UNAIDS as a harassment-free organisation, underlining the importance of unity in combating HIV/AIDS.

Thematic Segment: Priority and key populations especially transgender people, and the path to 2025 targets: Reducing health inequities through tailored and systemic responses

[Cecilia Chung | North America delegate](#)

The thematic segment of the 52nd PCB was, “Priority and key populations especially transgender people, and the path to 2025 targets: Reducing health inequities through tailored and systemic responses.”. We invited three panels of experts and several speakers to give opening remarks. Our NGO delegate, Erika Castellanos, shared her personal story as part of the opening, followed by the remarks by Christine Stegling, Deputy Executive Director of UNAIDS. The segment consisted of three panels, and it is worth noting that this was also the first meeting since the onset of COVID that the PCB returned to full day in-person meeting and dedicated an entire day to the thematic segment. The first panel, which took place in late morning, discussed data inequity and inclusion. The second panel, which began after lunch, focused on stigma and discrimination. The NGO delegation was disappointed that our nomination of a speaker from Uganda was not included in the speakers list. It was followed by the last panel on sustainability. The day was surprisingly well attended by Member States. We were also pleased to see the representation of trans and nonbinary members on the panels. Although Winnie stated her intent to stay for the entire day, she only stayed for the first panel, and we did not see her until the closing of the day.