

The UNAIDS PCB NGO Delegation

Communiqué

June 2009

What happened in the 24th meeting of the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board (PCB) in Geneva, Switzerland, June 22-24, 2009?

The [UNAIDS PCB NGO Delegation](http://www.unaidspcbngo.org), supported by a record number of civil society observers, influenced numerous important agenda items including: prevention among drug users, the gender-sensitivity of the AIDS response, people on the move and a new support facility for African Member States. Building on this year's NGO report, the NGO Delegation also focused on stigma and discrimination as a key barrier to achieving universal access and has succeeded in bringing this issue as an agenda item for a 2010 board meeting, as well as establishing non-discrimination as a core principle of UNAIDS. Below is an overview of the main outcomes of the meeting. The full list of agenda items, decision points and recommendations can be found on the website of the PCB NGO Delegation at www.unaidspcbngo.org.

Thank you to the civil society Observers, who supported and strengthened the meeting. You were a vital part of the work of the NGO Delegation and the outcomes of the meeting.

Thematic session: People on the Move

The first day of the PCB was dedicated to a thematic session on “People on the Move: forced displacement and migrant populations.” The NGO Delegates to the UNAIDS PCB took part in the working group that helped to plan the thematic session and civil society partners were included in all panels. The NGO Delegation worked to ensure that key affected populations, notably migrant sex workers, were addressed within the panel sessions. In addition to a keynote address by Mr. António Guterres, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, four panels took place during the day:

- Universal Access and HIV-related restrictions on entry, stay and residence
- Universal Access, mobility and labour
- Universal Access, forced displacement and humanitarian situations
- Universal Access, economic drivers and pull factors for mobility

The NGO Delegation proposed two decision points which the board accepted. The first calls for the inclusion of migrants and forcibly displaced persons in national and regional AIDS plans. This means that UNAIDS staff at all levels will be able to support the inclusion of people on the move in reaching universal access and are mandated to pay particular attention to overcoming HIV-related travel restrictions. The second decision calls on UNAIDS to support governments in abolishing mandatory testing, and making sure that national policies on testing conform to international standards including informed consent, pre and post test counselling, referral to treatment and care, and related human rights standards.

Report from the new Executive Director of UNAIDS

Michel Sidibe, presenting his vision through [his report](#) to the Board, reaffirmed UNAIDS' commitment to achieving universal access and to collaborating with civil society, including community groups representing key affected populations. He assured the board of his support to country programmes in promoting concrete actions to achieve gender equality and protect the rights of women and girls, to work towards greater collaboration between the Global Fund and UNAIDS, and to promote a rights-based approach to programming and policy-making. He pledged to increase results and their impacts; expand partnerships and make UNAIDS more efficient.

NGO Report

The NGO Delegation raised the need for greater attention to human rights in the AIDS response, overcoming stigma and discrimination and the need for more accurate, appropriate indicators that include key affected populations in achieving universal access. The decision point that was passed by the board agrees to include stigma and discrimination as a substantive agenda item in 2010. As well, the decision was taken to include the principle of non-discrimination as one of six guiding principles of all PCB recommendations and conclusions. The [full report](#), as well as the complete survey results that formed the background for the report, can be found on the NGO Delegation's website.

Unified Budget and Workplan

UNAIDS work is guided by a budget and workplan that is developed every two years. In this meeting, the board approved the unified budget and workplan (UBW) for 2010-2011 with a proposed distribution of resources as follows: US\$ 161.0 million to be shared among 10 Cosponsors; US\$ 182.4 million for the UNAIDS Secretariat; US\$ 136.4 million for interagency activities and US\$ 5.0 million as a contingency fund. Two members of the NGO Delegation participated in the interim subcommittee on the UBW this year. The experience was deemed useful by all participants and the NGO Delegation requested that civil society involvement in budget planning continue. In the next PCB meeting (December 2009) the Board will decide if it will form a standing subcommittee for the UBW.

The NGO Delegation also requested (and the board approved) that UNAIDS prepare a report on the anticipated impact that the financial crisis will have on countries' abilities to meet their universal access targets for the next meeting.

HIV Prevention among injecting drug users

The Board reviewed a [progress report](#) on efforts toward HIV prevention amongst injecting drug users. There had been some concern that the term harm reduction and the evidence-based measures it includes, such as needle and syringe programs and opiate substitution, would be under threat in light of this year's Commission on Narcotic Drugs, which avoided the term harm reduction. To the contrary, the Board affirmed the terminology and commitment to harm reduction efforts in relation to HIV. The Board's eleven decisions addressed issues such as the need for national governments to reaffirm their commitment to harm reduction and harmonize national laws governing HIV and drug use from a public health and human rights perspective, as well as the need for UNAIDS and Cosponsors to

strengthen their work with donors and governments on greater resource mobilization and to support national authorities in aligning policies. The Board requested UNAIDS to increase assistance to civil society in harm reduction advocacy. The decisions paid attention to different sub-groups of drug users, both injecting and non-injecting, as well as spouses and partners of people who use drugs. The NGO Delegation's call for increased focus on Hepatitis B and C co-infection was also passed.

Cooperation with the Global Fund to fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria and the PCB: Support mechanisms for African States

The Board supported the piloting of a communications focal point for African Member States to strengthen their participation in the PCB and Global Fund board meetings. The NGO Delegation was successful in including a condition to uphold the core principle of effective and meaningful participation of civil society in the decision point.

Gender-sensitivity of AIDS responses

The board took note of the most recent version of the inter-agency [gender action framework](#) for women and girls and welcomed the [interagency framework on men who have sex with men and transgender populations](#). The NGO Delegation noted the weaknesses around the framework on women and girls and proposed the formation of an advisory working group, made up of experts on women and HIV, with representation of women's organizations and women living with HIV, to work with the Executive Director in developing, implementing, and monitoring an operational plan for this framework. This was agreed to by the board, with the request that UNAIDS begin operationalization by October 2009.

Reminder: What is the PCB again?

The [Programme Coordinating Board](#) (PCB) is the governing body of UNAIDS. It is made up of 22 voting Member States, the 10 Cosponsors that make up the UNAIDS program, and a NGO Delegation (consisting of one delegate and one alternate from each of 5 regions).

How can I learn more?

Please visit our new website for more information about the UNAIDS PCB NGO Delegation:

www.unaidspcbngo.org