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**30<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board**  
**Geneva, Switzerland**  
**5-7 June 2012**

**UNAIDS technical support**

**Additional documents for this item:** *none*

**Action required at this meeting:** the Programme Coordinating Board is invited to *take note of and give its comments on* this report.

**Cost implications:** *none*

## I. Background

1. The UNAIDS Technical Support Strategy 2011 – 2015 (Annex I) was developed through a broad consultative process involving implementing countries, civil society, bilateral donors/development partners and UN agencies. The strategy was submitted at the 27<sup>th</sup> Programme Coordinating Board meeting in December 2010 as an annex to the progress report on *Implementation of the Second Independent Evaluation of UNAIDS (SIE)*<sup>1</sup>. It analyzes the successes and shortcomings of past technical support approaches and outlines strategic actions by UNAIDS, focusing on better coordination, transparency, quality, cost-efficiency, effectiveness and accountability of the supply of and demand for technical support. Furthermore, it concentrates on building sustainable ownership and capacities.
2. An update on the implementation of the Technical Support Strategy was presented at the 29<sup>th</sup> Programme Coordinating Board meeting on December 2011<sup>2</sup>. In this meeting, the Programme Coordinating Board affirmed the importance of UNAIDS technical support to countries and requested “*a time-limited consultative process to better define UNAIDS technical support based upon its coordination role, and areas of core competency and strengths,*” culminating in a report back to the 30th meeting of the Board in June 2012.
3. In response to the Programme Coordinating Board, UNAIDS in 2012 initiated a consultative process of key stakeholders—including government representatives, bilateral donors, civil society partners, the Global Fund and UN and non-UN technical support providers—on how to coordinate providing critical technical support to countries for the achievement of the 2011 Political Declaration targets. (See list of stakeholders consulted in Annex 2.)

## II. Consultation Process

4. A series of consultations were organized with various constituencies at the global, regional and country levels utilizing electronic media, face-to-face meetings and existing consultation platforms.<sup>3</sup>
5. The objectives of the consultations were to:
  - Review technical support frameworks (Technical Support Strategy, Division of Labour and UBRAF) and mechanisms (South-to-south Technical Support, role of Joint Programme/Teams, Technical Support Facilities, regional hubs and other Technical Support delivery mechanisms);
  - Assess emerging Technical Support needs in the changing context (impact of the financial crisis, support to implementing the 2011 Political Declaration, efficiency and effectiveness including the Investment Framework);
  - Review UNAIDS coordination role on capacity development and Technical Support and in assessing quality and impact of Technical Support;

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<sup>1</sup> See page 56 of the report link

[http://www.unaids.org/en/media/unaids/contentassets/documents/pcb/2010/pcb27\\_sie\\_progress\\_report\\_en.pdf](http://www.unaids.org/en/media/unaids/contentassets/documents/pcb/2010/pcb27_sie_progress_report_en.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> See progress report link

[http://www.unaids.org/en/media/unaids/contentassets/documents/pcb/2011/12/20111122\\_UNAIDS%20Technical%20Support%20.pdf](http://www.unaids.org/en/media/unaids/contentassets/documents/pcb/2011/12/20111122_UNAIDS%20Technical%20Support%20.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> Consultations were guided by “UNAIDS Coordination Role in Technical Support” and a corresponding “Template for UNAIDS Consultations on Technical Support”, with a set of questions (See Annex 3).

- Review technical support to and by civil society; and
- Focus on specific technical support and capacity development needs for countries in implementing Global Fund grants.

### **Global level Consultations**

6. A Geneva Missions briefing, with approximately 21 Mission representatives, was held to present and discuss key issues for consideration in the stakeholder consultations. Apart from feedback provided at the briefing, 3 Missions submitted written feedback to the UNAIDS Secretariat. These notes helped shape the consultations with stakeholders at the country and regional levels.
7. The Programme Coordinating Board NGO delegation facilitated a teleconference and electronic exchanges between the Asia and Europe representatives and the Secretariat, which helped shape the overall consultation process and provided significant insights and recommendations on UNAIDS technical support coordination, particularly as it relates to civil society.
8. Inputs from the Global Fund Secretariat were obtained through various meetings with relevant staff from the Grants Management and partnership teams.
9. UNAIDS established a core team of staff from Cosponsors and the Secretariat to manage the consultation process and to review stakeholder feedback. This group also facilitated the preparation of this paper to the Programme Coordinating Board.

### **Regional and country level Consultations**

10. Middle East and North Africa (MENA) Consultations  
In the MENA region, UNAIDS conducted a regional consultation process as part of the Technical Support strategy roll out, and for adapting the global Technical Support strategy to the MENA context and developing a Regional Technical Support and Capacity Development Strategy. This involved 21 countries, and included National AIDS Programme managers, UNAIDS Country Coordinators; civil society partners, 7 Cosponsors, 5 resources persons/consultants, 3 academic institutions and 4 Global Fund Country Portfolio Managers. The consultation process has resulted in identifying priorities for technical support, potential regional and national Technical Support partners and proposed mechanisms of providing and coordinating Technical Support and Capacity Development in the region. The report of the consultations and the regional strategy are available on request.
11. Caribbean Regional Consultations  
In the Caribbean, the UNAIDS Regional Support Team (RST) synthesized recent consultations on the Caribbean Regional Technical Support Strategy. These involved the Secretariat of the Pan Caribbean Partnership on HIV/AIDS, UNAIDS Cosponsors, CSOs including the Caribbean HIV/AIDS Alliance, Caribbean Vulnerable Communities, UNAIDS country offices and UNAIDS Caribbean RST. The National AIDS Programme Managers of Jamaica and Trinidad were consulted separately for their inputs. In addition, separate consultations took place in Jamaica with the Jamaican Community of Positive Women, Jamaican Red Cross, the University of the West Indies and government officials. The report of the consultations and the regional strategy are available on request.

12. Latin America Consultations

Regional perspectives were provided by the Network of AIDS Service Organisations in Latin America (LACCASO); the Youth Coalition for Education and Sexual Health (Coalición de jóvenes por la educación y salud sexual); the Youth Coalition for Sexual Health (Coalición de jóvenes por la salud sexual); the ICW Mexico Chapter; NACs in the region, including Mexico, and UN Cosponsors PAHO and UNICEF. In addition, inputs came from Ministries of Health, non-health sector Ministries, country networks of people living with HIV and other CSOs, CCMs members, PRs and SRs from 5 countries.

13. Asia and the Pacific Consultations

The Programme Coordinating Board NGO Asia representative led an informal review with civil society stakeholders in Bangkok comprising mostly regional networks/organisations of key affected populations. Two countries in Asia also provided feedback.

14. Eastern Europe and Central Asia Consultations

The Eurasian Harm Reduction Network (EHRN), the Eurasian Men's Health Coalition (ECOM) and the International HIV/AIDS Alliance in Ukraine provided responses on the key questions. The UCC for Kazakhstan also submitted a completed template based on the country perspective and experiences.

15. East and Southern Africa Consultations

The World AIDS Campaign Executive Director provided his views in response to the questionnaire. UNDP and UNICEF regional offices provided valuable feedback in consultation with country counterparts. The UCCs from South Africa, Angola, Botswana, Rwanda and Malawi also sent written feedback based on the needs and priorities in these countries.

16. West and Central Africa Consultations

The UCC of Ghana consulted with colleagues from the CCM, Joint Team on AIDS and CSOs, NAP+ and the UNAIDS country staff and consolidated the responses on the template. The UCCs and Joint Teams from Chad, Cameroon, Benin, Burundi, Nigeria, Togo and Guinée Bissau provided inputs based on their experience and work with country partners. Feedback was received from the UNODC regional office also.

### **III. Key Recommendations**

17. The consultations provided excellent insights into the current needs and priorities for technical support, including capacity development and gaps and areas for improved coordination of technical support. Regional variations in capacities and Technical Support needs exist, along with differences in the capacities, quality and availability of technical support. Although there is oversupply in some areas of technical support, many country partners are unable to access quality Technical Support, especially in emerging areas such as risk management, efficiency and effectiveness and Global Fund grant management. The consultation also highlighted the need to further strengthen the roles of civil society and communities—not only as recipients of technical support, but as key providers in establishing South-to-South technical support platforms. The consultation process has helped UNAIDS and partners better articulate emerging needs, and has also provided specific recommendations for

strengthening UNAIDS' role in technical support and capacity development. The key recommendations from the consultations are:

- i. Facilitate information sharing on technical support availability.
- ii. Provide greater clarity on coordination between the various UNAIDS Technical Support mechanisms.
- iii. Strengthen accountability on delivery of quality assured technical support.
- iv. Prioritize capacity-building of civil society.
- v. Reinforce UNAIDS coordination with the Global Fund.
- vi. Support countries towards sustainable financing and strategic investment of resources.

### **Facilitate information sharing on technical support availability**

18. In the consultations, issues were raised on how to increase access to information on the availability, provision and receipt of quality technical support, including bottlenecks that impede the access of civil society to need-based technical support. Suggestions for action included the development of an inventory or database that provides (or links to) transparent information on technical support providers, technical support provided, results achieved, and the quality of service delivery.
19. Regional partners from Eastern Europe and Central Asia requested clarity on where stakeholders can find information on providers and on sources for financing technical support in the region. This region, like others without a UNAIDS Technical Support Facility, requested the capacity-building of selected regional academic or training institutions and regional technical support providers (including civil society providers) for the management of flexible quality-assured technical support.

### **Coordination among the various UNAIDS Technical Support mechanisms**

20. With few exceptions, partners expressed understanding of UNAIDS mechanisms for the provision and coordination of Technical Support, such as UBRAF, Division of Labour (DoL), Interagency Technical Support forums, UN Joint Teams at the country and regional levels and Technical Support Facilities. However, they requested elaboration on specific actions of the Secretariat's coordination and accountability roles within the DoL. There was a call for more explicit mechanisms and modalities for coordination between the UNAIDS family and other technical support providers at the country level, including the coordination of support required for countries to achieve the 2015 Political Declaration Targets.

### **Accountability for delivery of quality assured technical support**

21. Consistent with the SIE recommendations, some partners called for clearer mechanisms for monitoring and quality assurance of Technical Support. Specific suggestions were provided for the UNAIDS Secretariat to regularly conduct technical analyses and provide feedback specific to each DoL area. It was advised that quantitative and qualitative indicators be used to link the technical support provided to specific outcome indicators as a way to measure the effectiveness and impact of the Technical Support. In addition, the Secretariat should establish mechanisms such as checklists, dashboards, client satisfaction surveys, documentation of lessons learned

and evaluation of Technical Support against the envisaged Terms of Reference, to ensure quality, effectiveness and efficiency in all 15 technical areas of the DoL.

### **Reinforced capacities of civil society**

22. Capacity-building of civil society organizations was a priority issue in all consultations. Overall there is a call for more systematic and frequent support to CSOs, as well as capacitating them to be real partners, leaders and providers of Technical Support, rather than just beneficiaries. Mentoring, twinning, networking and training are cited as successful methodologies to effectively build capacity of civil society. Specific thematic areas for strengthening CSO capacities include policy and programme design, long-term planning, monitoring and evaluation, leadership, community systems and resource mobilization, delivery of technical support and strengthening political advocacy and influencing.
23. At the country level, UN Joint Teams, headed by the UCC, have been requested to broker partnerships between government authorities and CSOs to help create systems and synergies that would allow NGOs access to public funds for essential public health services delivery, including HIV prevention among hard-to-reach populations.
24. It was recommended that the Secretariat and Cosponsors play a strong role in advocating for CSOs as technical support providers in, areas such as community systems strengthening, while also continuing to harmonize efforts to reinforce civil society's capacity to optimally perform in this function.

### **Strengthened UNAIDS coordination with the Global Fund**

25. A critical concern throughout the consultations was the cancellation of Round 11, the establishment of the Transitional Funding Mechanism and the suspension of any significant new funding from the Global Fund until 2014. It is felt that UNAIDS technical support should be revised to help countries protect critical services and build the capacity of Global Fund Principal Recipients (PRs) and Sub Recipients (SRs). A critical need is to help PRs and SRs make more effective use of the available resources, including the application of the Investment Framework for the effective allocation of resources under Phase 2 of the grants. Country partners also highlighted the need to strengthen risk management capacities and systems for improving programme efficiency and effectiveness. The consultations highlighted the need for strengthening capacities of countries in managing grants for longer-term sustainability (rather than the current "fire-fighting" type of short-term Technical Support being provided by key donors).

### **Access to sustainable financing and strategic investment of resources**

26. Countries are heavily reliant on external financing for AIDS, which threatens the sustainability of the AIDS response. The economic crisis has weakened commitments to sustaining current levels of international aid. It is therefore not surprising that the feedback reiterated concerns about the sustainability of HIV prevention, treatment, care and support, and called for support to develop innovative financing and new mechanisms for delivering Technical Support. The feedback also emphasised the need for establishing specific mechanisms for South-South cooperation. Further, with

the post-Busan shift from “aid” to “development” and a new focus on shared responsibility, stakeholders asked UNAIDS to advocate for and support countries in mobilizing domestic resources towards reducing dependence on external sources.

#### **IV. Next steps and way forward**

27. The current country and global momentum of working towards the ambitious 2015 Political Declaration targets—and the optimism that these targets are attainable through effective policies and programmes, research and scientific development—is juxtaposed against diminishing donor resources for the AIDS response, particularly from the Global Fund, as well as the need for progress towards shared responsibility and increased domestic financing. This situation requires new coordination efforts from UNAIDS and innovative approaches to Technical Support.
28. Based on the consultations and feedback from the stakeholders, UNAIDS proposes to prioritise the following actions in the coming months:

#### **Increasing country access to Technical Support resources**

29. The UNAIDS Secretariat has already begun the process for moving staff from Geneva to reinforce capacities in high-impact countries and among Regional Support Teams in a number of priority areas. This includes, for example, Investment Advisers (to support countries in prioritising investments; advising on economic impact, efficiency and effectiveness; and supporting Global Fund-related activities, Human Rights and Gender teams, and experts in strategic information, prevention and treatment, etc. This will enable UNAIDS Joint Teams at the country level better support NACs, CCMs, PRs and civil society partners in strengthening the national response.
30. UNAIDS will continue to provide ongoing technical guidance to countries through its country offices, as well as using web-based tools for sharing information on sources of AIDS-related technical assistance. Responding to requests from the consultations, UNAIDS will develop an online tool (similar to the Global Fund toolkit <http://toolkit.aidsprojects.com/#> and UNAIDS/WHO Round 11 toolkit <http://www.unaids.org/en/ourwork/programmebranch/programmeeffectivenessandcountrysupportdepartment/aideffectivenesscountrycapacitydivision/resourcekit/>). This will be made widely available to civil society and other country partners to link technical assistance based on emerging needs.
31. UNAIDS will also work across an array of Technical Support providers (including PEPFAR and the French 5% initiative) to continue to standardize Technical Support tools for the Global Fund to ensure consistency and to maximize the impact of Technical Support.
32. The Secretariat and Cosponsors will scale up investment in national and regional institutions with clear, systematic mechanisms to ensure the transfer of skills for long-term capacity building. This will include mentoring programs that emphasise the transfer of practices and lessons learned through South-South cooperation particularly in the areas of:
  - care and treatments programmes, including transfer of capacities for local production of antiretroviral drugs;

- scaling up HIV prevention interventions for most-at-risk populations (MARPS) in Africa, e.g., using from the experience of NACO in India;
- learning from the EMTCT and keeping mothers alive agenda;
- information-sharing and learning exchanges across regional Technical Support mechanisms funded by different partners, including those of civil society.

33. The UNAIDS Secretariat will work with civil society partners at the global and regional levels to identify critical technical support gaps, and convene partners to coordinate technical support for civil society to deliver high quality services. These CSO partners include the International Council of AIDS Service Organizations/Civil Society Action Team (ICASO/CSAT), the International HIV/AIDS Alliance, regional networks such as the African Council of AIDS Service Organizations (AFRICASO), Asia Pacific Council of AIDS Service Organizations (APCASO), networks of People Living with HIV including the Global Network of People Living with HIV/AIDS (GNP+), the International Community of Women Living with HIV/AIDS (ICW).

### **Application of the Investment Framework to support countries in programming Global Fund resources effectively**

34. Starting with the high-impact countries, UNAIDS will work closely with country partners, the Global Fund country teams, Portfolio Managers (FPMs) and other key donors to support their use of the Investment Framework to conduct a country-by-country analysis that will identify opportunities for optimizing investments. Based on initial analysis, there are a number of areas with the immediate potential for large improvements in efficiency and effectiveness, including re-programming around eMTCT, Voluntary Male Circumcision, HIV/TB co-infection and Procurement and Supply Management.
35. Maximizing efficiency, effectiveness and impact will also be achieved through strengthening the capacities of implementers of Global Fund grants, risk management and in the reprogramming of grants in priority countries. In addition, the UNAIDS Secretariat will continue to provide strategic guidance to the Global Fund Board and its Committees to prioritize current and future investments based on the Investment framework.

### **Strengthening national technical support/capacity development planning**

36. UN Joint Teams will accelerate country ownership and accountability of Technical Support by ensuring that countries have costed National Technical Support/Capacity Development Plans linked to evidence-based National Strategic Plans and aligned with 2015 country targets. The UCC will assist NACs in overseeing resource mobilization and coordinating support in implementing these plans. UNAIDS will also work closely with governments and civil society partners to promote South-to-South learning and exchange in identified priority areas.

### **Building on stakeholder consultations**

37. The consultations with stakeholders in countries and at the regional levels have enabled UNAIDS to better understand the specific needs of country partners in different regions, as well as to better calibrate the supply of Technical Support and capacity development mechanisms. UNAIDS will continue to refine the regional

adaptation of its Technical Support priorities and delivery based on these consultations, and will respond to the specific needs of each region. UNAIDS also proposes to consult periodically with country and regional stakeholders to review and continuously respond to the Technical Support and capacity development needs of partners.

**38. The Programme Coordinating Board is invited to take note of and give its comments on this report.**

[Annexes follow]

## Annex 1

### List of Participants: Consultations on UNAIDS Technical Support based on its Coordination Role

#### **Caribbean**

Synthesis of pre-planned regional consultations involving:

- The Secretariat of the Pan Caribbean Partnership on HIV/AIDS,
- CSOs including the Caribbean HIV/AIDS Alliance, Caribbean Vulnerable Communities,
- The University of the West Indies, HIV/AIDS Response Programme (HARP)
- UNAIDS Caribbean RST, UN Joint Teams on AIDS and UNAIDS country offices

#### ***Countries***

Jamaica

- National HIV/STI Program at the Ministry of Health
- Country Coordinating Mechanism representatives
- HIV/AIDS Grant Solicitation and Management Program
- Jamaican Network of Seropositives (JN+)
- Jamaican Community of Positive Women
- Jamaican Red Cross
- Jamaican for Justice
- Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ)

Trinidad

- Permanent Secretary, Office of the Prime Minister
- HIV/AIDS Coordinating Unit of the Ministry of Health
- Consultant firm “Williams, Mason, Roberts & Associates”

#### **Latin America**

Regional Institutions/Networks

- Network of AIDS Service Organisations in Latin America (LACCASO)
- UNICEF and PAHO Regional Offices

#### ***Countries***

Columbia

- UN Joint Team and UNAIDS Country Office

Ecuador

- Civil Society
- Country Coordinating Mechanism (CCM)
- Principal Recipient (PR)
- UN Joint Team

Guatemala

- UN Joint Team and UNAIDS Country Office

Honduras

- Representative of the Ministry of Labour

- Technical Secretariat at CONASIDA
- Director of the National Forum on AIDS, Representative of the Civil Society at CONASIDA
- LGTTBI civil society organization, Red Catrachas
- Principal Recipient (Global Fund)

#### Mexico

- National AIDS Program Manager
- International Community of Women Living with HIV, Mexico Chapter
- Coalicion de Jovenes por la Salud Sexual (Youth Coalition for Sexual Health)
- Coalicion de Jovenes por la Educacion Sexual (Youth Coalition for Education and Sexual Health)

#### Paraguay

- National AIDS Program
- UN Joint Team

#### Uruguay

- National Ministry of Health, OI/AIDS Programme
- Ministry of Defense
- REDLA+ Uruguay Chapter (Latin America Network of people Living with HIV Association)

### **Middle East and North Africa (MENA)**

Synthesis of pre-planned regional consultations involving:

- national AIDS programme managers,
- academic institutions
- civil society partners
- Global Fund Country Portfolio Managers
- resources persons/consultants
- UNAIDS Cosponsors and UNAIDSCountry Coordinators

### **Eastern and Southern Africa (ESA)**

Regional Institutions/Networks

- World AIDS Campaign
- Technical Support Facility (TSF) Southern Africa – staff and two consultants
- UNDP Regional Office
- UNICEF Regional Office

Countries

Angola, Botswana, Malawi, Rwanda and South Africa

- UN Joint Teams, UNAIDS Country Coordinators and country partners.

### **West and Central Africa**

Regional Institutions/Networks

- UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)
- Technical Support Facility (TSF) - West and Central Africa

Countries

Benin, Burundi, Chad, Cameroon, Guinea Bissau, Nigeria, Togo

- UN Joint Teams and UNAIDS Country Coordinators

Ghana

- Country Coordination Mechanism (CCM) National Association of People Living with HIV, UN Joint Team and UNAIDS Country Coordinator – consolidated response

**Eastern Europe and Central Asia**

- The Eurasian Harm Reduction Network (EHRN)
- The Eurasian Men's Health Coalition (ECOM)
- PCB NGO Delegation, Europe Representative

Countries

Ukraine

- International HIV/AIDS Alliance in Ukraine

Kazakhstan

- UN Joint Team and UNAIDS Country Coordinator

**Asia and the Pacific**

Regional Institutions/Networks

- PCB NGO Delegation, Asia Representative
- Regional Networks of Key Affected Populations in Bangkok

Countries

- Fiji and India – UNAIDS Country Offices

**Donor partners - global Level**

- UN Mission Representatives, Geneva
- The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria

## Annex 2

### UNAIDS TECHNICAL SUPPORT STRATEGY 2011-2015

**UNAIDS' Vision: Zero new infections. Zero discrimination. Zero AIDS-related deaths**

#### UNAIDS Global Commitments

- Achieve Universal Access to HIV Prevention, Treatment, Care and Support by 2015
- Halt the Spread of HIV and Contribute to the Achievement of the MDGs by 2015.

Achievement of global commitments and UNAIDS<sup>4</sup> vision relies on more effective country programmes, which in turn requires greater capacity in countries to plan and manage implementation of their national HIV responses. That capacity includes the ability to identify their specific needs for technical support, and to plan, manage and evaluate its quality and impact. This defines the demand side of the technical support marketplace. Simultaneously, technical support providers need to be led by country demand and to coordinate closely with other providers to maximize quality and impact and avoid inefficiencies. This defines the supply side of the marketplace. The Technical Support Strategy's goal and objectives are based on the principles of country-led approaches and responsive, well-coordinated support from providers in line with international commitments on harmonisation, alignment, the use of country systems and mutual accountability.

#### Goal of the Technical Support Strategy

- To increase the impact and sustainability of HIV country responses through the provision and use of quality technical support.

#### To be achieved through two objectives

1. Countries have capacities and systems to lead the identification, planning, and coordination of high quality HIV-related technical support towards implementation of an effective and sustainable national response
2. Technical Support from UN and other providers in country meets quality standards, is coordinated, efficient, demand driven, results oriented and mutually accountable

The term "technical support"(TS) refers to a spectrum ranging from short-term, one-off technical assistance to more substantial capacity development that enables countries to develop and run sustainable, effective programmes in the long term. The Strategy is founded on lessons learned in technical support over the last decade. It builds on achievements, reflects the changing economic and policy environment and shifts in the global health architecture, and recognises past and emerging challenges. It focuses on UNAIDS comparative strengths, both for orchestrating the UN response and for influencing non-UN providers of TS; and it emphasises the need for improved efficiencies, effectiveness and impact.

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<sup>4</sup> The term 'UNAIDS' refers throughout this document to UNAIDS Cosponsors (ILO, UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNODC, World Bank, WFP and WHO) and the Secretariat unless otherwise specified.

The Strategy outlines some key shifts to UNAIDS Technical Support provision. These include:

1. **Focus on strengthening national capacities** towards systematic, long term, needs based capacity and systems development and promotion of South-to-South Cooperation;
2. **Improved coordination and accountability of UNAIDS Secretariat and Cosponsors' Technical Support** through the implementation of UNAIDS Division of Labour, which draws on the comparative advantages of each of the organizations;
3. **Better deployment of UNAIDS resources and use of country presence** (including the UN Joint Teams on AIDS) to strengthen national ownership, transfer of skills and institutional development of partners;
4. **Rationalization of existing UNAIDS Technical Support Mechanisms** to ensure efficient, cost effective technical support delivery and harmonization of systems;
5. **Clear communication** to country partners about available Technical Support and the mechanisms for accessing it;
6. Strengthened UNAIDS leadership in **defining and setting standards for quality technical support** and an enhanced coordination and brokering role for technical support at country level;
7. **Enhanced collaboration with key financing mechanisms** (Global Fund, PEPFAR, and other bilateral partners) and non-UN TS providers to strengthen overall coordination, harmonization and alignment and ensure the use of mutual accountability mechanisms;
8. **Emphasis on scaling up implementation support** to country partners in making the money work;
9. **Strengthen the capacities and quality of national technical support providers**, including national civil society organisations to deliver quality support.

The Strategy responds to the changed global environment and priorities for technical support, findings and recommendations of the 2009 UNAIDS Second Independent Evaluation and is an integral part of UNAIDS Strategy 2011-2015.

## 1 THE RATIONALE FOR A NEW TECHNICAL SUPPORT STRATEGY

### Introduction

The UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board (PCB) 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting in December 2008 recommended that '*UNAIDS update its technical support and capacity development strategy through an inclusive process involving implementing countries and civil society*'. A Technical Support Strategy Working Group, established by UNAIDS in early 2009, with representation from all Cosponsors, assisted with the development of this strategy. UNAIDS conducted country surveys, studies and broad stakeholder consultations with country, regional and global partners, drew on the preparation process of the UNAIDS Partnership Strategy, Division of Labour (DoL), Unified Budget and Accountability Framework and Resource Mobilisation Strategy, and ensured its harmonisation with the UNAIDS Five Year Strategy.

In recent years, country stakeholders and the international community have gained substantial experience on the provision and use of technical support for strengthening national responses to HIV. Responding to developments in the global economy, the decreasing resource envelopes, a changing international health and AIDS architecture, and countries' and organisations' policies all continue to affect the need for support and calls for new thinking in the way it can be delivered. The time is therefore right for countries, technical partners and organisations to re-examine the demand for, and provision of, technical support. UNAIDS Technical Support Strategy seeks to effectively meet countries' needs and ensures that UNAIDS' response is relevant, efficient, effective, feasible, and focused on results. The Strategy provides a framework to assist countries to plan and manage their national response to HIV including strengthening country capacity to identify and manage technical support.

**Box 1: Definition of technical support and capacity development**

For the purposes of this strategy **Technical Support (TS)** refers to activities that contribute to a systematic, timely and demand-driven response to capacity needs at country level. Technical support, unlike shorter-term technical assistance, assists in strengthening individuals in their specific areas of expertise, makes organizations more effective and helps to improve the implementation of the national AIDS response. **Technical support includes both technical assistance and capacity development.**

**Capacity** is the ability of people, institutions and societies to perform functions, solve problems and set and achieve objectives (UNDP, cited in OECD 2006, below).

**Capacity development (CD):** The process by which partner countries are enabled to make better use of existing capacities and to further develop capacities at three levels: i) the individual level, ii) the level of organisations; and iii) the institutional and political level (OECD: Harmonising Donor Practices for Effective Aid Delivery vol2, 2006)

The strategy is driven by the importance of capacity development for countries' ability to lead their responses to their own epidemics. Central concepts which underpin the strategy include UNAIDS' role in influencing other technical-support providers to ensure high quality supply; the importance of countries taking the lead on the technical support demand side, and the need for the UNAIDS family (and those they influence) to respond to that lead rather than take a supply-driven approach. The strategy's central focus lies on technical support demand and is reflected in the concept of the technical-support marketplace.

**The changing environment**

Over the last decade, spending on AIDS has doubled every 2-3 years. The launch of the World Bank Multi-country AIDS Program (MAP) in 2000, the Global Fund in 2002 and the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) in 2003, along with increased bilateral and domestic spending on HIV, has contributed to this growth. While increased funding has enabled the scale up of essential HIV prevention, treatment, care and support services, absorbing these resources effectively has strained country systems and capacities, increasing demand for rapid, flexible, high quality technical support.

To meet this demand, major funding agencies have provided financial and technical assistance, leading to the growth of a significant HIV technical support “industry”. At the same time, the international architecture has seen an increased focus on health system strengthening. While HIV has been formerly addressed as a global emergency, the growing international recognition that health system strengthening and the MDGs, particularly MDG 4, 5 and 6 cannot be achieved without tackling HIV, and the continued emphasis on Aid Effectiveness implies that different and longer-term technical support approaches will be required.

All of these provide a consistent policy environment for the Technical Support Strategy; all promote the same principles of ‘joined-up working’ under national leadership.

### **UNAIDS Technical Support to date**

UNAIDS Secretariat and Cosponsors are significant providers of HIV-related technical support, delivering an estimated 43% of all technical support to countries in 2008<sup>5</sup>. Recent reports and evaluations indicate that the growth of UNAIDS technical support, alongside that of other providers, has made valuable contributions to improving the quality of national strategic plans, the rapid scale-up of antiretroviral therapy programmes, expanding programmes for preventing mother-to-child transmission, and improving HIV surveillance and monitoring and evaluation systems.<sup>6</sup>

In addition, Joint UN Teams on AIDS have been established to help countries access coherent, effective and unified UN support for AIDS based on the Division of Labour.<sup>7</sup> Joint UN Teams on AIDS have been an important pathfinder for broader UN reform and harmonisation and alignment efforts. Better-coordinated UN support has reduced country transaction costs by providing a single access point to a range of UN and non-UN supplied services.

The quality and effectiveness of UN technical support has improved over recent years. The UNAIDS Second Independent Evaluation confirmed that the range of available UN technical support mechanisms has expanded UNAIDS capacity to respond to country requests<sup>8</sup>; on the whole, the technical support is considered timely, relevant and valued by country partners.

#### **Box 2: Summary of UNAIDS Second Independent Evaluation findings on technical support**

- UNAIDS capacity to respond to requests for technical support has expanded
- The Secretariat and Cosponsors have provided a wide range of quality technical support
- There is scope to further improve planning and coordination of technical support
- UNAIDS has strengthened the Three Ones and provided important

<sup>5</sup> survey conducted by UNAIDS in July-August 2009 among national partners including National AIDS Commissions, civil society, bilaterals, UN and international non-governmental organisations

<sup>6</sup> See list of reference documents at the end of the strategy.

<sup>7</sup> The Division of Labour identifies convening and partner agency roles and responsibilities, based on their comparative advantage, across multiple areas of their AIDS related work.

<sup>8</sup> See summary of UNAIDS Secretariat and Cosponsors Technical Support Mechanisms at the end of the document

technical support for M&E

- Technical support is on the whole timely, relevant and valued by national partners
- UNAIDS technical support is not systematically monitored or evaluated at country level

Recent years have seen a scaling up of civil society access to technical support to enable organisations to carry out their functions effectively. There has also been more focus on promoting civil society organizations as *providers* of technical support.

Similarly, there is now a greater emphasis on the multi-sectoral content of technical support. Early responses to HIV were predominantly medicalized. UNAIDS has enabled increased emphasis on and strengthened capacities across different sectors to ensure a multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder response. UN presence at the country level also places it in a unique position to focus on building long term national capacities across diverse sectors for a sustainable response.

Although UNAIDS has played an increasingly significant role as provider and broker of technical support, a number of challenges remain. For example,

- **Scale:** Despite dramatically scaled up funds for HIV, funding for technical support, including for the multilateral system, has not increased sufficiently to keep pace with country demand.
- **Short term results:** International support has focused on the delivery of technical inputs to deal with immediate needs, with mixed results. While some short term Technical Support is needed, a more strategic approach to building sustainable in-country capacity is long overdue. Weak capacity to articulate needs and manage technical support by countries and development partners (including the UN) continues to result in poor use of technical support and limited impact. In addition, unpredictable funding has hampered long term capacity development of country partners and systems.
- **Supply driven approaches:** Technical support can often be supply driven, controlled by many external providers, reducing country ownership and leading to weak coordination, fragmentation and high transaction costs.
- **Limited use of local and regional expertise:** Technical support has traditionally been provided mainly by international specialists. There is a need to use more national/local and regional expertise to contribute to sustainable capacity building and national stakeholders' ownership and control of the response.
- **Changing nature of demand:** While the UN has a significant role in developing normative and policy guidance at the global level, capacities within the UN to support countries in translating and adapting guidance and matching local demand, is varied. Further, technical support for performance based funding mechanisms has focused largely on management and implementation, accentuating disconnects between UNAIDS' core expertise and country demands.
- **Limited coordination and synergies:** Sometimes the existing UNAIDS technical support mechanisms compete to provide similar support, creating confusion and limiting impact. Efficiency gains are lost through poor coordination

across the different UN organisations at country level and varied presence or capacities of Cosponsors to deliver the agreed Division of Labour.

- **Access is still cumbersome:** The number of UNAIDS mechanisms in place and limited communication about available services has hampered the access of country partners, including civil society, to technical support. Furthermore, bureaucratic systems and lengthy procurement processes continue to lengthen UNAIDS response times to requests for technical support.
- **Limited influence on the wider TS market:** Lack of effective systems to monitor and report on the quality and effectiveness of technical support provided by UNAIDS and other partners has limited the UN's influence on the wider Technical Support market place.
- **Weak accountability and quality assurance mechanisms** also reduce the potential impact of support.
- **Limited demand for long term capacity development:** country requests are mostly limited to urgent short-term support that often do not address local capacity constraints.

While UNAIDS' capacity to respond to requests for technical support has expanded, the Secretariat and Cosponsors have struggled to keep pace with growing and changing country demand, and there is broad consensus among UNAIDS stakeholders that UN-provided technical support needs further strengthening and scaling up.

## 2 UNAIDS TECHNICAL SUPPORT STRATEGY

### UNAIDS Strategy 2011-2015

The Technical Support Strategy is harmonised with the UNAIDS Strategy, which sets out the Joint Programme's medium term priorities. It takes into account the changing context and priorities for technical support and emphasises the need for improved efficiencies, effectiveness and impact, both for UN and non UN providers. It recognises variations and differences in capacities across regions and contexts. The Strategy also responds to findings of the Second Independent Evaluation, which recommended that UNAIDS should be more focused, strategic, flexible and responsive, efficient and accountable.

The Technical Support Strategy is derived from UNAIDS vision of Zero New Infections, Zero AIDS-related Deaths and Zero Discrimination. The Technical Support Strategy supports the achievement of the three strategic directions of UNAIDS overall Strategy by prioritizing technical as well as programmatic support and capacity development in the areas of HIV prevention, treatment, care and support as well as human rights and gender equality.

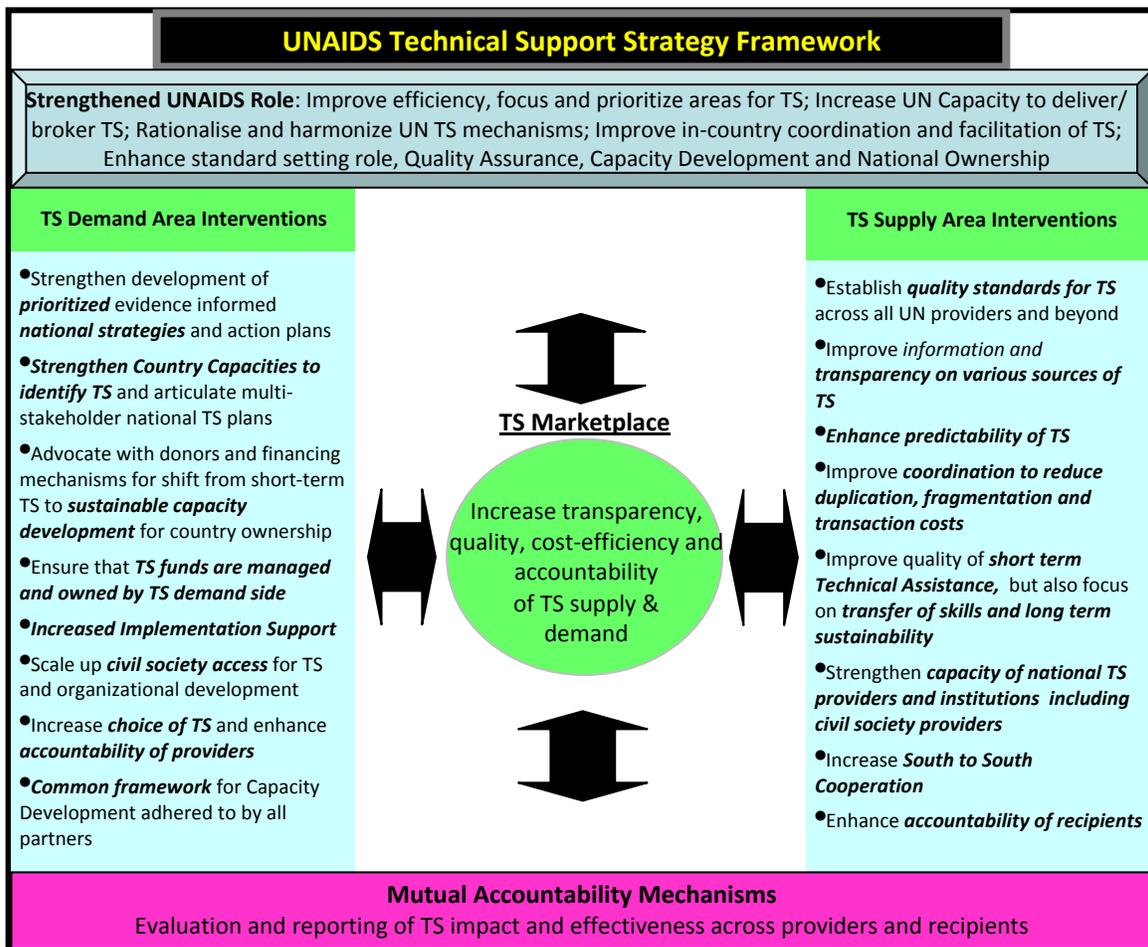
The three over-arching guiding themes of the UNAIDS Strategy underpin the Technical Support Strategy: increased focus on country ownership and sustainability of the HIV response; people at the heart of the response (which includes GIPA); and HIV synergies with broader MDG and human development efforts.

The Technical Support Strategy has thus to be read within the context of UNAIDS Strategy 2011-2015.

### A Technical Support “Marketplace”

The Strategy focuses on both the demand and the supply side of technical support. On the demand side it deals with assisting countries to identify their needs for technical support and to manage it; and on the supply side it focuses on strengthening the provision of effective technical support. Implementing the Strategy will, in effect, help to stimulate the marketplace for technical support. It will increase the information available to users and suppliers and therefore the transparency of both demand and supply. By strengthening countries’ ability to identify, plan, implement and manage technical support, and by improving the way that supply is organised within and beyond the UN, UNAIDS will increase the effectiveness of the marketplace. Through the efficiencies gained by better coordination, reduced duplication, and more accurate targeting on countries’ needs, UNAIDS will improve the cost effectiveness of technical support.

This is illustrated in the diagram below, which shows how demand-side and supply-side interventions, combined with initiatives to strengthen UN effectiveness and under-pinned by a set of accountability mechanisms, will lead to greater impact at country level.



## Two Strategic Objectives

The **goal** of the Technical Support Strategy is to increase the impact and sustainability of HIV country responses through the provision and use of quality technical support.

The concept of the marketplace is reflected in two strategic objectives, the first related to demand and the second to supply:

- 1. Countries have capacities and systems to lead the identification, planning, and coordination of high quality HIV-related technical support towards implementation of an effective and sustainable national response**
- 2. Technical Support from UN and other providers in country meets quality standards, is coordinated, efficient, demand driven, results oriented and mutually accountable**

UNAIDS will draw on its comparative advantage, priority areas of the Outcome Framework, the Division of Labour areas which defines respective roles and responsibilities in technical support to achieve these objectives and against which success will be measured.

### **Achieving the Objectives by improving the Technical Support Marketplace: Context, Challenges and Commitments**

#### ***Objective 1. Countries have capacities and systems to lead the identification, planning, and coordination of high-quality HIV-related technical support towards implementation of an effective and sustainable national response***

Externally-driven technical support often bypasses domestic systems and capacities, reducing country ownership and coordination and limiting the accountability of both providers and recipients. An effective and sustainable response is more likely to be reached if recipients of technical support play a greater role in the identification and definition of their needs, and in the procurement and management of appropriate technical support. This demand side of the technical support marketplace depends crucially not only on the availability of transparent information, but also on the capacity of the users of technical support to clearly define their needs, specify and commission what they require, and to manage a wide variety of Technical Support suppliers.

UNAIDS will therefore work with its partners to strengthen country capacities and institutions to enable better identification of relevant technical support and proactive management and implementation of technical support plans to which donors should align. UNAIDS will further scale-up investing resources towards systematic, longer term, needs-based capacity development. Beyond its own resources, UNAIDS will encourage external partners and funding mechanisms to invest in technical support approaches that build sustainable national capacities particularly of government and civil society. UNAIDS will coordinate with key national and international providers of technical support and capacity development towards developing common tools and approaches for capacity development and to avoid duplication.

Technical Support is often externally driven as the funds are tied to specific Technical Support providers and technical areas, not necessarily based on country priorities.

UNAIDS will advocate that technical support funds are owned and managed by the country partners. At the same time UNAIDS will work with Technical Support recipients to increase their engagement, ownership and accountability for results. UNAIDS will encourage use of available in-country Technical Support resources (e.g. national budgets, Global Fund grant TS plan and budget) prior to the seeking use of additional external funding.

Responding to the reduced resources, shifting global priorities, it is essential to generate efficiencies and achieve highest impact with available resources. UNAIDS will thus strengthen implementation support to address current bottlenecks and support countries in reaching higher value for their money. As articulated in the UNAIDS Strategy, Technical Support will be prioritized for countries implementing effective national responses for HIV prevention, treatment, care and support as well as human rights and gender equality. This will include both technical guidance and support as well as programmatic support. UNAIDS key action areas for the development of capacities are focused at country level, backed up as necessary by support, tools and action at regional and global levels.

## **UNAIDS ACTION AT COUNTRY LEVEL**

### ***Improved situation analysis to inform NSP and TS and CD planning process***

- Enhance support to country partners and to strengthen capacity and systems to collect and apply strategic information for situation analysis, including support to conduct KYE/KYR and the Modes of Transmission Studies
- Support countries to map and strengthen capacities to develop, manage and implement NSP including multi-stakeholder TS and capacity development plans

### ***Strengthened capacities to develop costed National Strategic and operational plans as basis for a demand driven technical support***

- Strengthen country capacity to use strategic information to inform National Strategic Plan development
- Ensure countries receive increased support for strategic and operational planning through Cosponsors at country level (e.g. WHO's planning guide for the health sector response to HIV, the AIDS Strategy and Action Planning service, and other regional TS mechanisms)
- Provide support to ensure broader development linkages and achieve sustainability through mainstreaming HIV in national Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper and other national development plans and frameworks

### ***Strengthened capacities to develop a joint multi-stakeholder national Technical Support/ Capacity Development plans***

- Scale up support to country to enhance partner capacities in defining priority Technical Support areas and to manage Technical Support providers through multi-stakeholder technical support and capacity development plans. Technical Support/Capacity Development plans will clearly articulate capacity and systems development needs, based on capacity needs assessments, and prioritize investments for a sustainable response
- Scale up technical support for civil society to ensure they can actively participate in the development of National Strategic Plans and access relevant Technical Support

- Where necessary, help countries to convene stakeholders to develop country and regional specific long-term capacity development strategies

***Improved implementation of National Strategic Plans through better coordinated Technical Support***

- Strengthen management capacities (financial, human and other resources) of national partners to lead, manage and oversee programmes
- Support countries to analyze blockages to improving implementation and impact of national AIDS programmes, to ensure that Technical Support is appropriately deployed
- Support countries in development of mechanisms to oversee the implementation of Technical Support plans and coordinate partners in-country

***Improved country capacity to access financial resources***

- Provide technical support to country partners to strengthen their capacity in resource mobilization through funding mechanisms including the Global Fund, PEPFAR and other partners as appropriate. (see link below for the UNAIDS-Global Fund Memorandum of Understanding<sup>9</sup> and the UNAIDS-PEPFAR collaboration at the country level outlined at the end of the document).
- Work with country and development partners to develop and take advantage of incentives to use technical support, for example, the introduction of technical support funding as part of the Global Fund application process (see Box 5 on UNAIDS support to Global Fund processes)

**UNAIDS ACTION AT REGIONAL LEVEL**

- Adapt global capacity development guidance and tools for strategic and operational planning to regional and country needs and ensure its dissemination
- Assist countries in adapting tools for operational planning, costing and guidance (based on standardized unit costs for various components of the national response)
- Develop regional long-term capacity development strategies that support national needs and facilitate inter country expertise exchange within the regions
- Coordinate regional peer reviews of Technical Support provision and its quality

**GLOBAL LEVEL**

- Norms and standard-setting, tool development
- Policy and strategy development
- Establishment of the [www.aidsta.org](http://www.aidsta.org) to support countries access, report on quality and effectiveness of Technical Support received from different partners

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<sup>9</sup> See the Global Fund-UNAIDS Memorandum of Understanding  
[http://data.unaids.org/pub/Manual/2008/20080601\\_global\\_fund\\_mou\\_en.pdf](http://data.unaids.org/pub/Manual/2008/20080601_global_fund_mou_en.pdf)

### UNAIDS Support to Making the Global Fund Investments Work

UNAIDS and the Global Fund have entered into a MoU that highlights the specific roles and expectations of each other. UNAIDS presence at the country level is a critical resource for country partners in understanding the Global Fund policies and in translating them to country realities. UNAIDS provides critical insights and intelligence that reflects the expectations of the countries and ensures that these are reflected at global decision making processes. UNAIDS also provides Technical Support for effective implementation of Global Fund grants at the country level – this includes support to Country Coordinating Mechanisms (CCM) in their functioning, capacity building for effective oversight and governance. Direct support to Global Fund Principal and Sub- Recipients in implementation of grants and in unblocking technical and programmatic bottlenecks have been highly valued. While a majority of the Technical Support provided is still short term (eg. proposal development), aimed at meeting performance targets, UNAIDS strategy aims to strengthen longer term solutions and building sustainable capacities. UNAIDS will further enhance its technical support to the Global Fund and the Implementing partners through

- **Effective investment advice:** UNAIDS will provide analysis and intelligence based on country level realities, epidemic trends and in country priorities for ensuring that Global Fund investments are fine tuned to respond to the needs and are invested for maximum impact.
- **Improved efficiency:** UNAIDS will support the Global Fund Board and the Secretariat for improved efficiency through support at the country level for grant consolidation, increased synergies between the Global Fund investments with other large funding (eg. with PEPFAR) and reprogramming of grants (e.g. Significant efficiency gains and savings potentially achieved through a reprogramming of PMTCT grants in the 22 highest burden countries).
- **Increased implementation support at the country level:** UNAIDS has been playing a significant role in strengthening capacities of different constituencies in better participation at the CCMs and other decision making bodies. UNAIDS will scale up its implementation support across the grant life cycle to ensure increased efficiencies and higher impact through available resources (eg. strengthening CCM capacities to review appropriateness and effectiveness of Global Fund financed programmes on a regular basis and within the national context). UNAIDS will further strengthen its support on recurrent bottlenecks impeding effective implementation (eg. procurement and supply management).
- **Increased capacities, ownership and sustainability:** UNAIDS will further scale up organizational development support to country implementers particularly civil society partners for improved grant implementation. UNAIDS will strengthen focus on long term sustainability of the AIDS responses and strengthen the capacities and systems through the use of Global Fund grants. UNAIDS will also work with different national stakeholders to enhance their understanding and engagement on Global Fund processes and programmes at the country level.
- **Improved Accountability:** UNAIDS will work closely with the Global Fund Secretariat in strengthening capacities of country partners around accountability. This will include greater emphasis on building in country management capacities (including financial management) and establishment of systems for enhanced transparency and accountability. At regional level, the Joint Operational Plans will provide the accountability framework for the work with Global Fund and Partners.
- **Support the Reform agenda:** UNAIDS will work closely with the Global Fund Board, the Secretariat and country partners to ensure that the Global Fund reform results in an effective financing instrument that responds to country needs effectively and has maximum impact on the three diseases and transitions from an emergency to a sustainable response.

1) WHO, the World Bank and UNAIDS are Ex Officio Members of the Global Fund Board.

**Objective 2. Technical support from UN and other providers in-country meets quality standards, is coordinated, efficient, demand-driven, results oriented and mutually accountable**

Improving the efficiency and effectiveness of Technical Support Provision is a core component to achieve a more balanced and effective Technical Support Market. Influencing Technical Support supply looks at both, UNAIDS comparative advantages in Technical Support provision and required adoptions to needs, as well as UNAIDS role in coordinating and influencing other Technical Support providers.<sup>10</sup>

UNAIDS recognizes that it cannot be all things to all people. UNAIDS will prioritize and strengthen its own technical support resources and limit its involvement in areas where UN support does not have an obvious comparative advantage (and can often be readily provided by other partners at less cost). This means drawing on the comparative advantages of each Cosponsor as defined by the Division of Labour and different technical support mechanisms and using the synergies arising from joint UN action to enhance UN coordination and more effectively respond to country needs.

The wider Technical Support supply will be optimized by broadening the provider base, and establishing quality assurance and accountability mechanisms. UNAIDS will

**Scaling up Civil Society Technical Support**

Civil society organisations (CSOs) have demonstrated their role as vital partners in the AIDS response, as strong advocates, as implementers of AIDS programmes and as technical experts at country, regional and global level. Despite increased recognition of the need for scaling up technical support to civil society, numerous barriers prevent CSOs accessing quality technical assistance and capacity development support. For instance, TS Providers do not always understand their needs; asking for support can foster stigma; and support for CSOs is often poorly coordinated.

The Strategy explicitly includes civil society as beneficiaries of capacity development (objective 1) and as a resource for the provision of technical support nationally and internationally (objective 2). In both contexts, civil society will feature in UNAIDS' efforts to ensure that demand for technical support is well-defined and clearly articulated, and that its provision is effectively coordinated and managed. UNAIDS will work with civil society partners to define the priority needs, develop clear approaches to CS Technical Support and capacity development and strengthen existing coordination mechanisms for CS technical support.

strengthen its role in facilitating the provision of technical support through other organisations.

UNAIDS has a strong track record in influencing the ways that agencies and organisations within and outside government respond to HIV. It will develop quality standards and will use similar standard-setting, guidelines and negotiation to advocate for increased adherence

to quality standards, the Paris Declaration on harmonisation and alignment and the Accra Agenda for Action.

A larger pool of local Technical Support providers will be fostered by UNAIDS' investment focus on building national practitioners and institutions. Investments for use

<sup>10</sup> UNAIDS Second Independent Evaluation identified the need for "better coordination of technical support providers" and recommended UNAIDS should 'clarify the comparative advantages and respective roles of the UN, UNAIDS-related technical support mechanisms and other technical support providers in provision of short-term technical support and of longer-term capacity building support at country level'.

of non-traditional providers of technical support including civil society, community groups and the private sector will be scaled up. The promotion of South-to-South Cooperation aims at enhancing national providers, ensuring 'experiential learning' and a levelling of the market prices for Technical Support.

The Second Independent Evaluation of UNAIDS identifies the need to '*introduce systematic monitoring and evaluation of technical support provided by UNAIDS and UNAIDS-related technical support providers at country level*'. Over the medium term, UNAIDS will strengthen the reporting on accountability and results of its technical support at the country level. Challenges to holding providers accountable include current lack of agreed minimum standards for technical support, lack of recipient capacities to enforce standards, and poor lines of accountability around reporting. Lessons can be learned from Technical Support provided in the Monitoring and Evaluation Area. Through the Monitoring and Evaluation Reference Group (MERG) joint frameworks and tools across all key stakeholders, including Technical Support suppliers and recipients, have been established. UNAIDS will draw on MERG to use its approach in different Technical Support areas. While emphasis is usually placed on the accountability of providers, it is also critical that the principle of mutual accountability<sup>11</sup> applies – recipients must also be accountable for the technical support they receive and how they use it. While the actions below refer mainly to reforms on the accountability of suppliers, UNAIDS will also work jointly with recipients, increasing their engagement, ownership and accountability for results.

### **Improve the efficiency and effectiveness of UNAIDS Technical Support Provision**

#### *Focus on UNAIDS comparative strength*

- Focus on high impact technical support areas such as programme design, policy and normative guidance, standard setting, strategic information and needs identification
- Based on the UNAIDS Division of Labour, scale up provision and brokering of technical support, including development of sustainable capacities and systems, in identified priority areas to support achievement of results outlined under the UNAIDS Strategy
- Draw on its comprehensive in-country presence, capacities and neutrality to coordinate long term sustainable capacity development of national partners.
- Scale back involvement in non-strategic technical roles and where other partners have comparative advantage and can deliver more cost effectively
- Utilize UNAIDS' convener role to broker and facilitate non-UN Technical Support

#### *Improved Coordination and reduction of transaction costs*

- Improve UNAIDS TS coordination through the Division of Labour. Review areas of the Division of Labour where Cosponsors will provide direct technical support and strengthen arrangements for brokering relevant TS in areas where gaps exist.
- Continue to promote Joint UN Teams on AIDS at country level as single entry point for UN technical support<sup>12</sup> UNAIDS technical support plans at country level

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<sup>11</sup> See GIST established 'Principles of Technical Support' at [http://data.unaids.org/pub/Manual/2008/gist\\_technical\\_support\\_poster\\_en.pdf](http://data.unaids.org/pub/Manual/2008/gist_technical_support_poster_en.pdf)

<sup>12</sup> See UNAIDS Division of Labour 2010, Consolidated Guidance Note. Every Joint UN Team on AIDS functions as the entry point for appropriate technical assistance and partnership with government and local civil society groups. Several options exist how technical assistance can be managed. One option could be an entry via the UNAIDS Country

- will be strengthened as part of the Joint Programme of Work implemented by the Joint UN Teams on AIDS
- Rationalize existing technical support mechanisms to ensure efficient, cost effective Technical Support delivery and harmonization of systems (e.g. GIST has achieved the initial purpose for which it was established and is proposed to be disbanded)
  - UNAIDS engages with the Global Fund, bilateral donors, e.g. PEPFAR, and other partners at country, regional and global level to clarify policy issues, strengthen overall coordination, harmonization and mutual accountability frameworks to ensure that their investments better align with national strategic priorities.

*Better Technical Support Services, higher quality*

- Set minimum standards and guidance for effective country response based on the Division of Labour (i.e. the Interagency Task Teams currently provide some guidance, but could be systematic in provision of these standards).
- Rationalize UNAIDS Technical Support mechanisms to optimize Technical Support provision and adapt to current market needs. Review roles of ASAP, the WHO Knowledge Hubs and Collaborating Centres and UNAIDS Technical Support Facilities to ensure coherence and harmonization and avoid duplication.
- Increase technical support in priority areas at the country level through Joint UN Teams on AIDS.
- Continue to align Joint Programme of Work to country needs (rather than organizational mandates and historical relationships) and strengthen focus on clear measurable results.
- Strengthen communication on how the Division of Labour is operationalised at the country level.
- Scale up technical support for civil society and private sector at regional and national levels
- Ensure country and regional adaptation of norms, standards and tools.
- Facilitate greater use of UNAIDS' global network of partners and mechanism to promote learning across countries.
- Ensure Cosponsor staff capacity is adequate for taking on new roles in the Division of Labour and identified country priorities building on current staff training initiatives.

*UNAIDS Technical Support Accountability*

- Commission independent evaluations (every 3 years) to review the appropriateness, adequacy and effectiveness of technical support provision by UNAIDS and other national and international providers. Evaluation reports to be made available to the PCB, donors, providers and other policy making/ financing bodies. At country level, the national Technical Support Plan will be the basis for holding partners accountable.
- Information on UNAIDS provided technical support will be made available on [www.aidsta.org](http://www.aidsta.org) and enhance transparency and accountability.
- Regional Joint Operational Plans with the Global Fund will be used as one of the tools to monitor provision of specific Global Fund related Technical Support.

## **Strengthen the efficiency of the Technical Support Market**

### *Enhance market transparency*

- Map and assess the availability of Technical Support and Capacity Development supply and resources at global, regional and country levels.
- Improve free flow of information on Technical Support providers and tools via the web-based portal [www.aidsta.org](http://www.aidsta.org) which will promote direct access to the marketplace encourage transparency on technical support pricing and costing.
- Ensure that civil society and private sector have access to relevant Technical Support information and tools.
- Promote the GIST 'Principles of Technical Support' to ensure that providers, recipients and donors adhere to a minimum code of conduct in technical support transactions.

## **Improve Technical Support market providers**

### *Diversify technical support providers to increase Technical Support choice*

- Develop partnerships and investments to expand the pool of national providers, e.g. Academic institutions, local national statistics bureau, civil society and the private sector, research organizations.
- Proactively guide UN and development partner investments in supporting civil society capacities at regional and national level to enhance use of Civil Society as Technical Support providers.
- Develop a systematic plan for promoting South to South exchanges. Secretariat and Cosponsor Regional offices promote regional learning and exchange platforms.

### *Improve quality of Technical Support supply*

- In consultation with partners, establish mechanisms and advocate for use of minimum quality standards in priority areas (e.g. draw on MERG mechanism which developed standard national M&E frameworks).
- Ensure feedback mechanisms on the quality of technical support provided are widely available on [www.aidsta.org](http://www.aidsta.org). Develop this platform to enable users of technical support to share feedback, exchange information and promote peer support across countries.
- Prequalify providers for specific areas of technical support.

### *Influence Technical Support market through advocacy and brokering to strengthen demand side*

- Facilitate access to and broker technical support by non-UN providers. The UN Country Team is well placed to be the neutral facilitator and coordinator in supporting country partners in the identification of bottlenecks.
- Work closely with country partners and providers of technical support to ensure that short term technical support has a long term vision to improving country capacities.
- Advocate with donors and providers of technical support to systematically invest in longer-term skills transfer.

## **Improve accountability in Technical Support market**

- Develop and/or strengthen technical support accountability mechanisms at country, regional and global level building on existing structures. The monitoring

- and evaluation of the implementation of national technical support plan will be the basis for holding partners accountable.
- Work with Technical Support recipients to increase their engagement, ownership and accountability for results.

### **3 IMPLEMENTING AND FINANCING THE TECHNICAL SUPPORT STRATEGY**

The Implementation of UNAIDS Technical Support Strategy will be closely linked to the operationalization of UNAIDS Strategy 2011-2015. The Technical Support Strategy implementation is an integral part of the UBAF 2012-2015.

At country level, the strategy will guide the development of the annual plans of the Joint UN Teams on AIDS. This will ensure that the plans respond to the local context, capacities and priorities and enable effective operationalization of the Division of Labour. It also provides a single entry point for country partners to UN technical support. The Joint Teams will focus on building and 'empowering' national partners' capacities to lead and coordinate the different technical support providers. The Joint Teams will also help identify gaps in capacities in country (including capacity gaps within the UN) and develop strategies for long term capacity development of in-country stakeholders.

The work plans of the Joint UN Regional Team on AIDS which have been established in some regions will reflect the Technical Support Strategy and will support the operationalization of the country plans of the Joint Teams and facilitate cross country learning and promote regional collaboration. It will lead the development of a Joint Capacity Development Framework with key donors including PEPFAR and the Global Fund. The framework which will be based on country needs will ensure development of common tools and approaches in priority areas that are relevant across the region, enhance overall coordination, reduce potential duplication and maximize impact. Existing regional mechanisms such as the Joint Regional Operational Plans with the Global Fund will be used and expanded where needed to ensure participation and coordination of all relevant stakeholders.

While the UNAIDS Secretariat will play predominantly a coordination and facilitation role at global, regional and country level, UNAIDS Cosponsors and its relevant technical support mechanisms will lead in the provision of technical support in accordance with the Division of Labour.

At country level, monitoring of national technical support plans will be part of the ongoing annual country review process led by national stakeholders. Ongoing nationally led Annual reviews (e.g. Joint Annual Reviews of the National Operational Plan) will assess what technical support has been provided, its relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and impact. These reviews will also assess how well technical support is being coordinated amongst development partners and thus ensure mutual accountability in Technical Support planning and quality of provision.

Monitoring and evaluating the influence and impact of the Technical Support Strategy on the wider Technical Support Market will be done through an independent global report (proposed every 2-3 years). UNAIDS Secretariat will commission these Technical Support Market Status reports and ensure wide public distribution.

## Financing Technical Support

Technical support is a core role of UNAIDS. A significant part of UNAIDS resources – staff and financial – are devoted to providing or facilitating country partner access to quality technical support. This strategy aims to maximise the impact of these investments and improving the efficiency and effectiveness of Technical Support.

A three pronged approach to financing technical support is envisaged

1. *Financing UNAIDS Provision and Facilitation of Technical Support and Capacity Development:* UNAIDS will continue to invest a significant proportion of its own resources through the UBW/UBAF for scaling up technical support in priority areas and for building sustainable capacities for achieving the results outlined in the UNAIDS Strategy. While the UBAF will cover a significant proportion of the UNAIDS technical support role, it is anticipated that additional resources will be required to ensure that technical support and capacity development for country partners is scaled up. UNAIDS will develop clear plans with partners to mobilize additional resources to fill potential gaps in country level Technical Support.
2. *Financing Country Technical Support and Capacity Development:* Country partners have highlighted the need for predictable and reliable funding for accessing technical support and capacity development. Multi-stakeholder National Technical Support Plans will form the basis of costing technical support and capacity development resource needs. Based on the TS plans and identified resource gaps, UNAIDS will work with donors in mobilising required resources for technical support. The Global Fund Board decision to include Technical Support plans as part of Global Fund proposals is anticipated to help make available critical resources for scaling up Technical Support. UNAIDS will work further with the Global Fund, PEPFAR and other donors at global and country level to ensure that investments are scaled up for building systems and capacities for country ownership and leadership.
3. *Maximising Return on Investment:* UNAIDS estimates that better coordination and harmonisation of technical support will result in significant efficiency gains and savings which may be reinvested in the scale up of national AIDS responses. Also, UNAIDS will work closely with key donors including the Global Fund and PEPFAR in promoting reforms in the technical support marketplace (e.g. rationalise cost of technical support that is varied currently with little consistency on value for money) and in monitoring and reporting on the efficiency gains as part of the progress report on the implementation of the Strategy.

Implementation and operationalization of the Technical Support Strategy via the UBW/UBAF ensures clear accountability for outcome areas. UNAIDS Secretariat and Cosponsors will use the UBW/UBAF reporting to account for the implementation of their respective technical support roles.

## **Additional Background Materials for the Technical Support Strategy**

### **1: Key Documents relating to Technical Support**

- A Strategic Approach: HIV & AIDS and Education, IATT, 2009.
- Accelerating Action, a technical support guide to develop capacity and to benefit from global health financing, GTZ, 2007.
- Analysis of Technical Assistance to Civil Society Recipients of Global Fund Grants, AIDS Alliance in collaboration with Civil Society Action Team (CSAT), January 2010.
- Assessment Report, Prevention and mitigation of HIV/AIDS Labour and socio-economic impact in the world of work, International Labour Office, 2006.
- BACKUP Initiative Standards and Guidelines for Proposal Development and Review, GTZ, January 2008.
- Beyond Our Borders, a Guide to Twinning for HIV/AIDS Organizations, ICAD, 1999.
- Briefing notes on Technical Assistance at the 19th Global Fund Pre-Board Meeting, McKinsey, 2009.
- Cost of Providing Nutritional Support for: People living with HIV, Adults receiving TB Treatment, Orphans and Vulnerable Children and Pregnant Women, Centre for Global Health, WFP, UNAIDS, 2010.
- Co-trimoxazole prophylaxis for HIV-exposed and HIV-infected infants and children: Practical approaches to implementation and scale up WHO, UNICEF, 2009.
- Création d'un cadre stratégique et juridique national au Bénin, Programme International d'éducation sur le VIH/sida sur les lieux de travail, Share – Stratégies en entreprises en réponse au VIH/sida, Deuxième Rapport, OITSIDA, 2008.
- Demand for technical support, A five-country qualitative test survey, Roberto Garcia and Barbara Carasso, 2008.
- Étude sectorielle sur le diagnostic de la gouvernance politique et de la sécurité humaine en rapport avec la réponse nationale au VIH/SIDA au Mali, Rapport d'étape, UNDP, 2008.
- Étude sectorielle sur le diagnostic de la gouvernance politique et de la sécurité humaine en rapport avec la réponse nationale au VIH/SIDA au Mali, UNDP, 2008.
- Evidence-based guidance around children and AIDS (UNICEF) – Forthcoming.
- External Assessment Technical Support Facility for South East Asia and the Pacific, Michel Caraël, Tom Philip, Susan O'Leary, 2007.
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## 2: UNAIDS Cosponsors Global Technical Support Mechanism

### UNAIDS technical support mechanisms

***AIDS Strategy and Action Plan (ASAP)*** – A UNAIDS one stop shop hosted by the World Bank to assist countries with advice and technical support on strategic and action planning for HIV/AIDS. ASAP has developed tools and guidelines to help countries strengthen plans, facilitates peer review of AIDS plans, provides technical support and financing for developing strategies and action plans, and provides training in strategic planning for policy makers and practitioners

<http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/EXTHEALTHNUTRITIONANDPOPULATION/EXTHIVAIDS/0,,contentMDK:20974001~menuPK:2754898~pagePK:210058~piPK:210062~theSitePK:376471,00.html>

***Technical Support Facilities*** – UNAIDS has established “Technical Support Facilities” across the world covering over 80 countries. The Technical Support Facilities help to meet countries technical assistance needs using well suited technical assistance in the form of individuals and/or companies. Operating through small offices, the Technical Support Facilities have extensive databases with 350-400 quality-assured national and regional consultants.. The Facilities provide experienced, quality-assured consultants to design programmes and solve problems in the areas of strategic planning, communications, resource mobilization and tracking, monitoring and evaluation, management and thematic areas such as gender, injecting drug use, migration and others.

<http://www.unaids.org/en/CountryResponses/TechnicalSupport/TSF/default.asp>

TSF Southern Africa : <http://www.tsfsouthernafrica.com/>

TSF Eastern Africa: <http://www.tsfeasternafrica.org/>

TSF Western & Central Africa: <http://www.tsfwca.org/>

TSF South East Asia & the Pacific: <http://www.tsfseap.org/>

TSF South Asia: <http://tsfsouthasia.org/>

ICTC (TSF Brazil): <http://www.cict-aids.org/>

***ILO Technical Support Network (TSN)*** - The ILOs’ TSN is a network with 8 sub-regional contact points, across all regions, providing technical assistance for HIV/AIDS and TB and the world of work. The TSN supports the scaling up of HIV/AIDS and TB workplace programmes and policies at all levels at the national level. It contributes to strengthening the ILOs’ support to its constituents- governments including the ministries of labour, and employers and workers organisations - in the field and also elevate the profile of the world of work in the multisectoral national response to HIV/AIDS. The network includes consultants with wide ranging expertise including Research, Resource mobilization, Results-based management, Gender, Marketing & Communications, Employment, Social Protection, Social dialogue and Monitoring & Evaluation. The TSN

is country owned and demand driven and aims to build the capacities of national/local institutions. <http://www.unaids.org/en/Partnerships/Private+sector/ILOPartnership.asp>

**UNDP Regional Services Centre** –UNDP has established six Regional Service Centres in Bangkok, Bratislava, Cairo, Dakar, Johannesburg and Panama City. Sub-Centres are also operating in the Pacific (Suva) and the Caribbean (Port of Spain). A main priority of regional service centres is to provide UNDP country offices with easy access to knowledge through high quality advisory services based on global applied research and UNDP lessons learned. The second priority is to build partnerships and to promote regional capacity building initiatives, which allow UNDP, governments and other development partners to identify, create and share knowledge relevant to solving urgent development challenges.

**HIV Knowledge Hubs** – There are eight WHO and GTZ supported Knowledge Hubs in Eastern Europe, Africa and the Middle East. They aim to support countries in making optimal use of their human, financial and institutional resources through the development of regional technical capacity to scale up comprehensive national HIV responses. Knowledge Hubs provide specifically targeted services which take into account the available resources and the capacities of organizations in the region. They aim to support the development of in-country education and training curricula, and to strengthen the capacity of affiliated institutions and academic faculties. <http://www.euro.who.int/en/what-we-do/health-topics/diseases-and-conditions/hivaids/partners/knowledge-hubs-and-collaborating-centres>

**WHO Collaborating Centres** - WHO Collaborating Centres are institutions such as research institutes, universities or academies, which are designated by the Director-General to carry out activities in support of the WHO's programmes. Currently there are over 900 WHO Collaborating Centres in 99 Member States working with WHO on areas such as nursing, occupational health, communicable diseases, nutrition, mental health, chronic diseases and health technologies. Approximately 35 of these centres work on HIV/AIDS. <http://apps.who.int/whocc/>

**UNAIDS Inter-Agency Task Team (IATT) on HIV and Young People** - The UNAIDS Inter-Agency Task Team (IATT) on HIV and Young People was created in 2001 to support an accelerated, harmonized and expanded global, regional and country-level response to increase young people's utilization of HIV prevention, treatment, and care services. Membership includes the UNAIDS Secretariat and UNAIDS co-sponsors (UNHCR, UNICEF, WHO, WFP, UNDP, UNFPA, UNODC, ILO, UNESCO, World Bank), along with a growing number of youth networks/associations, donors, civil society, and research institutions. The task team, which is convened by UNFPA, is one of four that have been created within UNAIDS to foster cooperation among the many agencies and partners responding to the AIDS pandemic in specific technical and sectoral areas. UNFPA's role is to facilitate policy discussions and coordination and to provide programmatic advice and strategic guidance, in addition to acting as the IATT secretariat. <http://www.unfpa.org/public/site/global/lang/en/iattyp>

**UNAIDS Inter-Agency Task Team (IATT) on Orphans and other Vulnerable Children**  
In 2001, the UNAIDS Committee of Cosponsoring Organizations (CCO) called for the creation of a partnership of researchers, program implementers, advocates and policy-makers to support a coordinated, accelerated and expanded response for the protection

of children affected by HIV and AIDS. The inter-agency task team (IATT) on Orphans and other Vulnerable Children, led by UNICEF, was charged with setting goals and targets for the response; identifying key strategies for scale up; agreeing on principles to guide programming; and setting expectations for inter-agency partners. In 2004, the Inter-agency partnership became known as "Children and HIV and AIDS," to reflect a broader understanding of how AIDS affects children. The work of the IATT is guided by recommendations from the Global Partners Forums (GPF). During 2006-2009 the IATT also worked closely with the Joint Learning Initiative on Children and HIV/AIDS (JLICA) which engaged practitioners, policymakers, and scholars in collaborative problem-solving, research, and analysis to address the needs of children living in the context of HIV/AIDS. Currently there are 3 working groups: 1) Monitoring and Evaluation, 2) Social Protection and 3) Communities and Resource Tracking. The IATT steering committee represents the overall IATT and coordinates the working groups' functions. The steering committee is made up of facilitators of the working groups and focal points from regions including regional IATT's.

<http://www.iattcaba.org/web/guest/home>

**UNAIDS Inter-Agency Task Team on the Prevention of HIV transmission to pregnant women, mothers and their children** was established in its initial form in 1998. Originally comprised of UN agencies, the group has grown to include 23 leading UN agencies, donors and service provision organizations working on PMTCT and paediatric AIDS. UNICEF and WHO co-convene the IATT which purpose is to help scale-up programmes that prevent HIV infection in women, mothers and their children, in line with UNGASS resolutions, as well as expand the UN comprehensive approach to PMTCT. This approach includes:

- 1) Primary prevention of infection in women of childbearing age;
- 2) Prevention of unintended pregnancies in women living with HIV;
- 3) Prevention of HIV transmission from an HIV infected woman to her infant; and
- 4) Provision of treatment, care and support to HIV-infected women, their children and families.

The IATT accomplishes this by assisting in the development of policy and operational guidance as well as providing technical assistance to national governments. It presently operates six technical working groups (primary prevention and prevention of unintended pregnancies; paediatric; early infant diagnosis and laboratory; monitoring & evaluation; infant feeding and scale-up); holds monthly steering group teleconferences and convenes an annual meeting to report on results, discuss strategic priority areas and set work plans.

**UN Global Implementation Support Team (GIST)** - The Global Implementation Support Team (GIST) was formed in July 2005 following the Global Task Team (GTT) recommendation that: "The multilateral system establish a joint UN system-Global Fund problem-solving team that supports efforts to address implementation bottlenecks at country level." The overarching purpose of the GIST is to "make the money work" by supporting country partners to make effective use of the increasing amounts of large funds being made available at the global level. Initially composed of seven partners (WHO, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNDP, the World Bank, the UNAIDS Secretariat and the Global Fund) the GIST membership was expanded in December 2006. Its membership includes the United States Government (PEPFAR), the German Government's

Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ), the International Council of AIDS Service Organisations (ICASO), the International HIV/AIDS Alliance, the International Coalition on AIDS and Development (ICAD) and the Brazilian International Centre for Technical Cooperation (ICTC). The Technical Support Strategy recommends to formally close GIST which has not been active for the last 12 month.

<http://www.unaids.org/en/CountryResponses/TechnicalSupport/gist.asp>

### **3: PEPFAR-UNAIDS collaboration at the country level: Developing capacity for a sustained, country-owned response to HIV**

There is a very high level of concordance between the vision and goals articulated in PEPFAR's Phase 2 strategy (2010-2014) and those outlined in UNAIDS Outcome Framework (2009-2011). Moreover, efforts to achieve Universal Access to HIV prevention, treatment and care services will make important contributions towards achieving MDGs 4, 5 & 6.

In addition to the similarity in vision and goals, there is also a very high level of potential synergy between PEPFAR and UNAIDS that can be realized by building on the strengths of both organizations at the country level. PEPFAR has significant levels of financial and technical resources that can be used to rapidly scale-up HIV prevention, treatment and care services and at the same time help develop national capacity for a sustainable response. UNAIDS has the mandate for providing normative, strategic and technical guidance and sharing best practices for responding to HIV. Moreover, it is seen as an "honest broker" and has developed privileged relationships with both governments and civil society. UNAIDS' convening power allows it to bring together a wide variety of domestic and international actors involved in the HIV response. By combining forces in a strategic manner, PEPFAR and UNAIDS can have a greater impact than either organization could achieve working alone.

The overarching goal of a strengthened PEPFAR-UNAIDS collaboration will be to work closely with country partners to promote country ownership and develop capacity for an effective and sustainable response to HIV. Potential areas for PEPFAR-UNAIDS collaboration in supporting national HIV responses include:

- Strengthening the collection, analysis and use of strategic information
- Developing country capacity for robust, harmonized strategic planning
- Assessment of technical support and capacity development needs
- Enhancing country stewardship and governance of the HIV response
- Strengthening country-led HIV/AIDS multi-stakeholder national partnerships
- Supporting development of PEPFAR Partnership Frameworks
- Jointly supporting Global Fund processes
- Establishing baseline measures for monitoring progress towards achieving the goal of "country ownership"

Expected outcomes of the enhanced PEPFAR-UNAIDS collaboration include:

- Countries will have improved understanding of HIV transmission patterns and epidemiology
- Countries will have the capacity to develop strong national strategic and operational plans that are fully appropriate to their epidemiologic profile
- Countries will have developed national technical support and capacity development plans
- Countries will be better able to lead and coordinate multi-stakeholder national partnerships
- Countries will be capable of working effectively with the Global Fund and leveraging additional financial resources from domestic and international sources
- Countries will have concrete financial sustainability plans
- Health systems and key national institutions will have increased capacity to support the national HIV response

- The HIV response will be fully integrated into broader health and development goals

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