



UNAIDS/PCB(25)/09.21  
22 September 2009

**25<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board**  
**Geneva, Switzerland**  
**8-10 December 2009**

**Thematic Segments of Programme Coordinating Board meetings**

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

**Action required at this meeting - The Programme Coordinating Board is invited to:** *none*

**Cost implications for decisions:** *none*

## INTRODUCTION

1. At its 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting in December 2008 the Programme Coordinating Board made the following decision:

*“3.11 - Requests the UNAIDS Secretariat to prepare a report for the 24th Programme Coordinating Board meeting focusing on the objectives of the thematic segment, including its preparation, format, structure and outcomes of thematic segments including the process for the selection of themes that builds upon the relevant decisions of the 21st Programme Coordinating Board;”*

2. The purpose of this document is to provide the information requested in the decision point and, in doing so, to inform the discussions of the Programme Coordinating Board around the chapter of the Second Independent Evaluation on *“How UNAIDS works”*, as this will be the section dealing with issues around the functioning of the Board.

## BACKGROUND

3. At its 20<sup>th</sup> meeting held in June 2007 the Programme Coordinating Board considered a series of recommendations on *“strengthening global coordination on AIDS and development of the Programme Coordinating Board”*<sup>1</sup> presented by the Chair and Vice Chair of the Board (Sweden and Thailand respectively). With respect to thematic segments the Board agreed the following:

*“10. Decides that:*

*a. Programme Coordinating Board meetings will consist of a decision making segment and a thematic segment;*

*b. Requests the UNAIDS Secretariat to elaborate a paper, for the next Programme Coordinating Board meeting, on the format and potential resource needs of the thematic segment, including the possibility of enabling the segment to become an effective venue for policy debate, engaging all relevant key players, including, occasionally, high level participation in a way that avoids duplication with existing high level events;*

*d. Key partners will be invited to participate in the thematic segment in a well structured and recognized way. A meaningful and relevant discussion on critical thematic policy matters has to include all relevant partners, such as the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, People living with HIV/AIDS, private sector, foundations, research and academia, etc;”*

4. These decisions were then followed at the 21<sup>st</sup> Programme Coordinating Board meeting with consideration of a series of issues related to Board thematic segments,

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<sup>1</sup> (UNAIDS/PCB(20)/07.7)

including objectives, identification of themes, participation and format which were presented by the Chair and Vice Chair under “*Issues related to future Programme Coordinating Board meetings*”<sup>2</sup>. The text from that document relating to the issue of thematic segments is contained in Annex 1 to this paper.

5. Since 2007 the Programme Coordinating Board Bureau has managed two rounds of calls for themes which resulted in the Board agreeing the following themes:
  - 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting - Diagnosis and treatment of tuberculosis (TB) among people living with HIV and how UNAIDS can work with TB communities
  - 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting - The Relationship between UNAIDS and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria: issues of relationships with the international technical support architecture and Public-Private Partnerships
  - 24th meeting - People on the move – forced displacement and migrant populations
  - 26th meeting – Linking Sexual and Reproductive Health services with HIV/AIDS interventions in practice
  - 27th meeting – Food and nutrition security and HIV: how to ensure that food and nutrition security are integral parts of HIV programming
6. To-date the objectives, format, and selection of themes have been managed as set out in Programme Coordinating Board document UNAIDS/PCB(21)/07.5. Therefore, this paper will concentrate on those areas that were either not fully defined in the document or which have developed since the document was considered by the Board: the preparation of, and outcomes arising from thematic segments.

## **PREPARATION OF THEMATIC SEGMENTS**

7. As each thematic segment has been concluded the Secretariat has followed an interactive process of assessment and implementation of improvements to meet lessons learned. Following decision 16.3 of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Programme Coordinating Board<sup>3</sup> meeting, efforts were made to make the preparatory process for the thematic segment at the 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting more inclusive:
  - a. Once the responsible team within the UNAIDS Secretariat was identified, initial consultations were organized with various constituencies including Cosponsors, the Global Fund and civil society;
  - b. A preliminary working group was formed to prepare a draft concept note based on the inputs received. The note was then shared more widely with Cosponsors, the Global Fund, civil society and Member States through

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<sup>2</sup> (UNAIDS/PCB(21)/07.5)

<sup>3</sup> “Requests the Programme Coordinating Board Bureau to initiate a process that seeks wider contributions to the development of the agenda and participation in the thematic segments of Programme Coordinating Board meetings;”

electronic means for further input as well as expressions of interest in joining the working group;.

- c. Separate working groups were formed for each of the four breakout sessions who subsequently took on the responsibility of working out the details e.g. key questions, potential speakers, detailed agenda, etc., of each session that were then shared electronically with the entire working group;
  - d. The overall working group discussed the detailed proposals of the breakout sessions via teleconference on several occasions. Through this process, extensive feedback was given and ultimately an agreement was reached on the key questions, format, agenda and list of invited speakers (chairs and rapporteurs) for all sessions; and
  - e. Logistical arrangements (including invitations to potential speakers) were made according to the decisions reached by the working group.
8. Feedback from working group participants and the Programme Coordinating Board Bureau will now be used to further refine the process for preparation of the next thematic segment for the 26<sup>th</sup> Board meeting.

#### **OUTCOMES OF THEMATIC SEGMENTS**

9. Discussions arising from thematic segments have been shown to be extremely rich and of benefit to delegates and UNAIDS when shaping programmes and policies. However, attempts to formalise decision points have caused concerns that delegations are being asked to commit to actions on which they do not feel sufficiently prepared. In considering this issue the Programme Coordinating Board Bureau agreed that draft decisions on the theme should not be prepared in advance of the respective meeting as this could undermine the discussion by channelling it towards pre-considered outcomes. Mindful also of the need for the results of the thematic segments to be taken up by UNAIDS the Bureau decided to introduce a generic decision point at the 24<sup>th</sup> Board meeting, which was duly adopted:

*“Takes note of the outcomes of the thematic segment on “...” as contained in the rapporteurs’ reports to the Board plenary and requests UNAIDS to include such outcomes in its future work and to report on progress to a future Programme Coordinating Board meeting in line with its general reporting on activities;”*

10. In proposing the use of such a decision the Bureau noted that this did not preclude the Board from adding additional decisions – on which there was consensus – as was the case at the 24<sup>th</sup> Programme Coordinating Board meeting.

## ANNEX 1

### Text taken from document UNAIDS/PCB(21)/07.5: “*Issues related to future Programme Coordinating Board meetings*”

#### A. Rationale

1. The General Assembly 2006 *Political Declaration on HIV/AIDS* recognized (operational paragraph 50<sup>4</sup>), the central role UNAIDS has to play in promoting global coordination on AIDS.
2. At the June 2007 PCB meeting, delegates expressed the view that, in order to perform this coordinating function, the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board should:
  - sharpen its substantive focus, allowing for more in-depth consideration of key issues affecting the global AIDS response; and
  - become more inclusive, creating the space for a broader range of actors to interact, exchange views and present experiences on matters of common interest.
4. The introduction of a thematic segment as a component of all PCB meetings was approved by the Board as a way to address the two above challenges.

#### B. Added value

5. Currently, policy debate on AIDS takes place in a number of venues. These include international and regional AIDS conferences; General Assembly meetings and various partnership fora such as convened by the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (Global Fund). Despite the existence of these mechanisms, PCB thematic segments hold the potential to add significant value to the global AIDS response. In particular, such segments would:
  - leverage the unique legitimacy and convening power of the UN system—building on its neutrality, inclusiveness and multilateralism—while going beyond the purely intergovernmental nature of typical UN processes so as to establish much needed dialogue between sectors and players; and
  - promote better integration of policy and operational considerations, building on the know-how and expertise developed through UNAIDS’ work, so as to facilitate more action-oriented discussions than would normally be the case for forums such as international conferences and General Assembly meetings.

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<sup>4</sup> 50. Call upon the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, including its Co-sponsors, to assist national efforts to coordinate the AIDS response, as elaborated in the “Three Ones” principles and in line with the recommendations of the Global Task Team on Improving AIDS Coordination among Multilateral Institutions and International Donors; assist national and regional efforts to monitor coordination on HIV/AIDS, including through the thematic sessions of the Programme Coordinating Board;

6. This of course does not mean that PCB thematic segments should happen in isolation. On the contrary, all efforts should be made by the UNAIDS Secretariat and the Board constituencies to ensure that PCB thematic segments are linked, as much as possible, to the debates taking place in other relevant contexts.

### C. Objectives

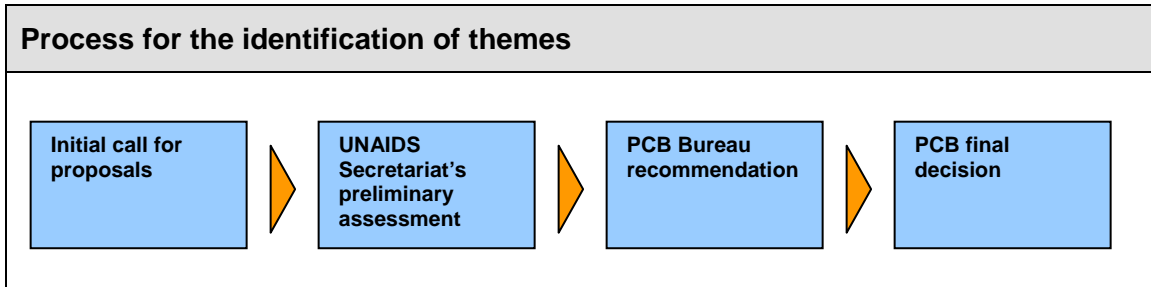
7. The thematic segment of PCB meetings should be positioned in such a way as to serve as a bridge between the decision-making process that takes place during regular PCB sessions and the broader policy debate on AIDS—particularly with respect to emerging issues and issues which have not yet been thoroughly discussed by the PCB. As such, thematic segments should pursue the following specific objectives.

Objectives of PCB thematic segments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Foster dialogue, facilitate shared learning and promote mutual accountability among different actors, thus strengthening global coordination on AIDS;</li><li>• Bring broad based, multi-stakeholder policy debates on key emerging themes to bear more directly on the operations of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS;</li><li>• Bring the vast expertise and know-how developed within the Joint Programme to bear more directly on the work of a wide range of actors in the AIDS response.</li></ul>

8. Under appropriate circumstances, some PCB thematic segments may result in an outcome document, possibly including recommendations for action. However, this should not be regarded as a key objective for these segments, since their main *raison d'être* should rather be the facilitation of dialogue. Similarly, the possibility of achieving consensus should not drive the selection of discussion topics, as the success of the thematic segment will depend largely on its ability to address a broad array of issues. Recommendations that the thematic segment may have for UNAIDS' action will have to be endorsed by the regular segment of the meeting.

### D. Identification of themes

9. In keeping with the current PCB agenda-setting process, the theme for PCB thematic segments should be decided by the Board upon recommendation of the PCB Bureau. This recommendation should be based on a call for proposals directed to all PCB constituencies and possibly other key actors to be selected by the PCB Bureau upon UNAIDS' recommendation. UNAIDS would assist the PCB Bureau in identifying relevant partners to be consulted and would prepare a preliminary assessment of the proposed themes for the Bureau's consideration (see box below).



10. The assessment of the proposed themes should be based on the criteria outlined below:

<b>Criteria for the identification of themes</b>	
• Broad relevance	The issue addressed by PCB thematic segments should be of relevance to the global AIDS response.
• Responsiveness	The identification of themes should be responsive to the interests, concerns and information needs of a broad range of actors in the global AIDS response.
• Focus	The selected themes should be sufficiently focused to allow for in-depth consideration in a relatively limited period of time (typically one day).
• Scope for action	The theme should address possible and necessary action to undertaken in the response to AIDS, rather than purely theoretical or academic issues.

11. Only one theme should be considered at each thematic segment, so as to ensure the focus and depth of the discussion. Additionally, in order to retain its ability to address emerging themes in a timely fashion, the PCB should identify topics from one session to the other. The UNAIDS Secretariat, on the basis of the PCB discussion and in consultation with the PCB Bureau, would then develop detailed agenda items and identify resource people as necessary.

## **E. Participation**

12. In the absence of formal decision-making, the distinction between Board members and observers will be suspended for the thematic segments of PCB meetings. Hence, for the duration of these segments, all registered delegates will be regarded simply as “participants” sharing an equal right to engage in the discussion. All procedural rules based on the distinction between Board members and observers (including seating arrangements, and speaking protocol) will be suspended for the duration of the thematic segment of the PCB meeting. The PCB Bureau may be requested by the Board to develop specific rules of procedure for the thematic segment, if and as necessary.



13. Participation in PCB thematic segments should be as broad as possible. However, the identification of key partners—as well as the appropriate level of seniority—will depend on the nature of the topic under consideration and therefore vary from session to session. At present, PCB meetings are open, not only to the regular Board constituencies, but also to all other interested parties upon written application for observer status (which in keeping with the PCB *modus operandi* paragraph 12 can be granted by the UNAIDS Executive Director in consultation with the Chairperson of the PCB). However, the variety of participants in the PCB has not always matched what would be expected for a thematic segment. In order to address this issue, UNAIDS will engage in proactive efforts to ensure the participation of all relevant actors, including:
- all regular Board constituencies (PCB members and observer states, PCB nongovernmental organizations, and UNAIDS cosponsoring organizations);
  - key partners already receiving invitations and often attending regular PCB sessions (such as the global foundations; members of the Global Fund Board, members of the UNAIDS' Cosponsors boards and broader civil society organizations, including organizations of people living with HIV); and
  - key partners that have not yet been very closely involved in PCB meetings (such as private sector and trade union representatives as well as representatives of the academic and research world).
15. For all of these actors, the relevance of the items on the agenda, the diversity of the participants attending, the quality of the analysis produced on selected topics and the opportunity to exchange perspectives will be key incentives to participation.
16. Non-invited organizations interested in participating in the meeting could submit a written application to the UNAIDS Executive Director who would, when appropriate, grant participant status in consultation with the Chairperson of the PCB. The number of registered participants will be taken into account when examining applications in view of the need to maintain discussions that are interactive and participatory.

#### **F. Format of sessions**

17. As a rule, thematic segments of PCB meetings should take place over at least one day, before or after the regular segment depending on the nature of the topic as well as logistical considerations.
18. An appropriate format for the segment will have to be identified on a case-by-case basis in light of the theme selected for the segment. A number of principles, however, could be put forward to guide the design of the sessions.

### Principles for the design of sessions

All PCB thematic sessions should be designed in such a way as to be:

- **Interactive**                      Based on an open, frank dialogue that is responsive to the issues at hand and supportive of shared learning.
- **Broadly owned**                Based on the active involvement of individuals from all sectors represented at the meeting as resource people, presenters or moderators.

19. In order to ensure that thematic segments are supplied with relevant information, UNAIDS could commission, when appropriate, dedicated research on the selected topic ahead of the session. Participants in the thematic sessions will be invited to present evidence-informed discussion papers as well.
20. Side events may be organized by UNAIDS in collaboration with other partners in order to support the main thematic discussion. These could include:
  - “stakeholders’ dialogue” events aimed at gathering a range of diverse perspectives around the same table;
  - “community of practice” events, aimed at facilitating an exchange of views among a relatively homogeneous group of actors; and
  - “country case studies” where voluntary national presentations could be given by donor as well as programme countries.
21. Within this context, and building on the need emphasized by several stakeholders for the closer involvement of the private sector, the possibility of holding a business forum on AIDS in conjunction with PCB meetings’ thematic segments could be explored.
22. UNAIDS may avail itself of the services of external consultants with specific expertise in the facilitation of participatory processes in order to strengthen the interactive character of the sessions. Web-based broadcasting could also be explored as a way to better document the proceedings and expand the reach of the discussions taking place during the meetings.

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