

UNAIDS IEOAC MEETING

Date: 4 April 2023

Time: 13:00 – 17:30 (Geneva time)

Venue: Virtual

PARTICIPANTS

Committee Members: Mr Saad Bounjoua, Ms Agnieszka Golebiowska, Mr David Kanja (Chair), Ms Bushra Malik, Mr Ibrahim Pam, Ms H el ene Rossert (Vice Chair), & Mr Benoit de Schoutheete

Secretariat Support: Mr Morten Ussing, Director of Governance and Multilateral Affairs; Ms Samia Lounnas, Senior Governance Advisor, Mr Kodo Ngabane, Governance Officer and Ms Saliha Ozdemir, Governance Assistant

MEETING AGENDA

1. **Session 1: Update on 2023 internal audit and investigations work plans**
2. **Closed session with internal auditor**
3. **Wrap up session 1**
4. **Session 2: Update on implementation of the ERP system, including the unique elements of the UNAIDS system.**
5. **Wrap up session 2**
6. **Session 3: Update on the Global Staff Survey**
7. **Wrap up session 3**
8. **Discussion of the outline of the IEOAC annual report for 2023**
9. **Wrap up session**
10. **Wrap up with UNAIDS Senior Management**
11. **AOB**

SUMMARY

Session 1: Update on 2023 internal audit and investigations work plans

The Director of the World Health Organization (WHO) Office of Internal Oversight Services (IOS), presented the results of UNAIDS internal audits in 2022 and discussed internal audit plans for 2023. He was joined by the new WHO Head of Investigation. In 2022, WHO/IOS

audited the UNAIDS Regional Support Team (RST) in Latin America as well as the UNAIDS country offices (UCO) in Mali and India. WHO/IOS began an audit of the UNAIDS Technical Support Mechanism, to be finalized in 2023, and also undertook a review of the closure of the Eritrea country office. Audits of the Latin America RST and the India UCO determined that major improvements were required, while the UCO Mali audit generated recommendations for some improvements.

In 2023, WHO/IOS plans to undertake audits of the UNAIDS communications function, the RST in eastern Europe and central Asia and UNAIDS country offices in Uganda, Papua New Guinea/Fiji, and Togo/Benin. Other audit issues in 2023 include the performance of roll-out of the new Enterprise Resource Planning system and a compliance audit for staff health insurance.

WHO/IOS closed 15 investigations in 2022, often through referral back to UNAIDS. WHO/IOS is handling 36 open matters, including several pending from past years, and expect to handle 15 UNAIDS cases per year. The WHO/IOS head of investigation advised that handling UNAIDS investigations would require one to two dedicated full-time staff.

During the discussion, Committee members noted that more than half of pending investigations are three or more years old. The WHO/IOS Director reported that WHO/IOS was attempting to do a better job of reviewing cases at a preliminary stage to prevent development of a further backlog. Committee members also noted that the data provided on investigations was not sufficiently detailed to draw conclusions regarding trends in allegations, the nature or seriousness of pending allegations, or whether progress is being made in clearing long-pending cases. The WHO/IOS Director said a number of issues raised by the Committee would be addressed in the final report of WHO/IOS, to be released in mid-April 2023. Concerns were expressed by the Committee regarding the inadequacy of resources allocated for the investigations process.

The Committee held a closed session with Director of WHO/IOS.

The Committee provided the following advice on internal audits:

- **The Committee requests that it receives all internal audit reports in a timely manner, including disclosure regarding the full scope of audit coverage.**
- **An action plan is urgently needed to address long-pending audit recommendations.**
- **Given that audits in 2022 found substantial need for improvement, the IEOAC recommends greater clarity on measures UNAIDS is taking to ensure compliance with applicable rules and proper management practices.**
- **Internal audits should take into account performance issues as well as compliance issues.**
- **The UNAIDS Executive Director should interact regularly with WHO/IOS.**

The Committee provided the following advice on the investigations function:

- **An action plan is urgently needed to address long-pending investigations, as the considerable backlog in investigations poses a risk for UNAIDS.**
- **The IEOAC recommends the formulation of an urgent action plan to close the serious and growing capacity gap for the UNAIDS investigation's function.**
- **The IEOAC requests more detailed and disaggregated data on outstanding investigations on a regular basis (e.g. geographic distribution, nature and seriousness of allegations within risk categories, characteristics of complainants and targets of allegations).**

- **UNAIDS should clarify whether management has complied with any reporting requirements under local laws regarding the staff-related matter reported on the UNAIDS website.**

Session 2: Update on implementation of the ERP system, including the unique elements of the UNAIDS system

The UNAIDS Senior Oversight and Compliance Officer, Finance and Accountability, reported on the status of the new Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system currently being developed by World Health Organization's Governance, Risk and Compliance department. Timelines for development of the three ERP modules (e.g. programme management; human resources, finance and supply chain; and travel/meetings/events) have slipped. The ERP system is being rolled out in waves, with testing of the programme management module set to occur within UNAIDS over the summer and staff training and actual roll-out to start in September or October. UNAIDS has been interviewed in connection with the external audit being undertaken of the WHO unit developing the new ERP system and used that conversation as an opportunity to provide a list of the Joint Programme's needs and desires for the new system.

The UNAIDS Director of Information Communication Technology noted that the system is being designed and implemented by WHO without customization, meaning that UNAIDS will need to adapt to the new ERP. UNAIDS is establishing a governance structure to manage the project and identifying UNAIDS counterparts to coordination with WHO on implementation. UNAIDS has not obtained access to the platform but hope to get access soon. The Director of Information Communications Technology expressed confidence that the new ERP would meet the Joint Programme's needs. The Senior Oversight and Compliance Officer noted that the primary risk to UNAIDS from the new ERP stemmed from the short time period in which considerable work will be compressed in order to roll out the new ERP. It was noted that the legacy ERP system will be retained through March 2024 and that a plan is already in place for finishing the financial report for 2023.

The Committee provided the following advice regarding implementation of the new ERP system:

- **The Committee is concerned regarding the lack of details and clarity at this more advanced stage regarding the status of ERP implementation, especially as it pertains to UNAIDS' specific needs.**
- **The Committee recalled its recommendations from 2022 that UNAIDS use every opportunity to ensure that its needs and desires are taken into account in WHO's development of the new ERP system.**
- **The Committee agreed to revisit the issue of ERP implementation at its May meeting and to formulate more detailed recommendations following a more detailed presentation.**

Session 3: Update on the Global Staff Survey

UNAIDS Director for Management reported on the results of the 2022 Global Staff Survey. Administered by an independent vendor, the survey generated responses for 67% of UNAIDS staff. Since the 2020 survey, several steps were taken to strengthen the survey, including reinforcement of the confidentiality of responses, sharper definitions of different levels of leadership, enhanced focus on harassment, abuse and staff well-being, and inclusion of a new section on change management and alignment.

In the 2022 survey, 80% of respondents report deriving a sense of personal satisfaction from their work and respondents also expressed great trust and faith in the leadership of their

immediate teams. Among the questions in the survey, 25 showed improvement of at least 5% compared to 2020, 39 are similar and 6 have declined by 5% or more. Areas requiring further attention include a decline in the staff engagement index by 9 percentage points. Only 32% feel that staffing decisions are made in a fair and transparent manner, and staff believe that gender, diversity, equity and inclusion would benefit from a greater commitment from the Cabinet. Fifty to 60 percent of staff believe they are treated equally based on gender, race, age or disability. The Director of Management noted that staff concerns and anxieties regarding the organizational alignment process may have affected some of the results from the 2022 survey. To obtain staff feedback during the two-year interval between global staff surveys, an annual pulse survey is planned, beginning in November 2023. In response to the 2022 survey, the Cabinet is prioritizing strengthening trust and open communications, scaling up towards a more diverse and inclusive working environment, and continuing to strive for a safer, more transparent UNAIDS, with zero tolerance for all forms of harassment.

The Committee provided the following advice regarding the results of the Global Staff Survey:

- **The Committee is deeply concerned regarding the large number of staff who report experiencing harassment or bullying and who report not being well treated based on race, gender and diversity.**
- **Taking into account the Global Staff Survey results, the Committee encourages the Cabinet to update and strengthen the measures it is taking to prevent harassment/bullying and to ensure equitable treatment of staff based on race, gender and diversity.**
- **The Committee requests that management present at the Committee's May 2023 meeting more detailed information regarding results of the Global Staff Survey and planned actions to address issues of concern arising from these survey results.**

Discussion of the outline of the IEOAC annual report for 2023

The Committee discussed the draft of the outline of the Committee's annual report for 2023, a copy of which was circulated prior to the meeting. The Chair noted that the outline would be adjusted based on results from the Committee's first meeting of 2023 and its face-to-face meeting planned in May 2023. A preliminary, draft full report will be prepared, based on the preliminary outline, for review and discussion at the May meeting. After the May meeting, Committee members will be asked to provide swift feedback on the updated report, to enable the report to be cleared, translated and posted prior to the June PCB meeting, where the Chair will present the findings of the Committee's work.

The Committee agreed to move forward with preparation of the preliminary, draft report based on the outline developed. The Chair will brief the PCB Bureau on the development of the report at its upcoming meeting on 25 April.

Wrap up with UNAIDS Senior Management

The Committee discussed its advice from the meeting with the UNAIDS Chief of Staff and the Director of Management. The Chief of Staff reported agreement with all of the Committee's conclusions and recommendations from the meeting. There was agreement that some mechanism should be developed to enable timely sharing of internal audit reports to the Committee. Management also agreed that efforts will be made to disaggregate information regarding investigations, although care will be needed to ensure that confidentiality can be maintained. Management also advised that interpretation of data on investigations is challenging, as a single complainant may occasionally be responsible for multiple allegations, potentially distorting the data and making it difficult to discern trends. Management also reported

that the 2022 Global Staff Survey showed improvement with respect to the prevalence of harassment and bullying, and there was agreement that a more detailed presentation in May 2023 could enable clearer understanding of trends in survey results.

AOB

In the absence of further business, the Chair adjourned the meeting.

ANNEX 1

Recommendations from the 1st IEOAC meeting of 2023 and agreed follow-up actions

Recommendation	Follow-up actions
Internal audit function	
The IEOAC requests that it receives all internal audit reports in a timely manner, including disclosure regarding the full scope of audits.	Secretariat to liaise with WHO/IOS to develop mechanism for timely and routine sharing of internal audits with IEOAC
An action plan is urgently needed to address long-pending audit recommendations	Secretariat to liaise with WHO/IOS to develop action plan to clear long-pending audit recommendations
Given that audits in 2022 found substantial need for improvement, the IOEAC recommends greater clarity on measures UNAIDS is taking to ensure compliance with applicable rules and proper management practices	Secretariat leadership to strengthen measures to ensure compliance
Internal audits should take into account performance as well as compliance issues	WHO/IOS to expand scope of audits to address performance issues
The UNAIDS Executive Director should interact regularly with WHO/IOS	The Executive Director, with support from Cabinet, to remain abreast of internal audit status and recommendations and to meet periodically with WHO/IOS
Investigations	
An action plan is urgently needed to address long-pending investigations, as the considerable backlog in investigations poses a risk to UNAIDS	Secretariat to liaise with WHO/IOS to develop action plan to clear long-pending audit recommendations
The IEOAC recommends the formulation of an urgent action plan to address the serious and growing capacity gap for the UNAIDS investigation function	Cabinet and senior leadership to develop action plan to close capacity gap for investigations
The IOEAC requests more detailed and disaggregate data on outstanding recommendations on a regular basis (e.g. geographic distribution, nature of allegations within risk categories, characteristics and targets of allegations)	Secretariat and WHO/IOS to liaise to develop more detailed and disaggregated data on investigations, taking care to avoid breaches of confidentiality
UNAIDS should clarify whether management has complied with reporting requirements under local laws regarding the staff-related matter reported on the UNAIDS website	Management to study responsibilities and mechanisms for reporting to local law enforcement authorities, consistent with organizational mandate and UN practice
Performance and financial reporting	
The IEOAC is concerned regarding the lack of details and clarity at this more advanced stage regarding the status of ERP development and implementation, especially as it pertains to UNAIDS' specific needs. The IEOAC will formulate more detailed recommendations on this topic at its May 2023 meeting.	IEOAC to revisit issue at its May 2023 meeting and develop more detailed recommendations.
Global Staff Survey	
The IEOAC is deeply concerned regarding the large number of staff who report experiencing harassment or bullying and who report not being well treated based on race, gender and diversity	
Taking into account the Staff Survey results, the IEOAC strongly encourages the Cabinet to update and strengthen the measures it is taking to prevent harassment/bullying and to ensure fair and equitable treatment of staff based on race, gender and diversity	Cabinet to reinforce measures to prevent harassment/bullying and to ensure fair and equitable treatment of staff based on race, gender and diversity

<p>The IEOAC requests that management present at the IOEAC's May meeting more detailed information regarding results of the Global Staff Survey and planned actions to address issues of concern from these survey results</p>	<p>Secretariat to present a more detailed analysis of Global Staff Survey results at the May 2023 IEOAC meeting</p>
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