

**Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific**
Asia-Pacific Intergovernmental Meeting on HIV and AIDSBangkok, 28-30 January 2015
Item 7 of the provisional agenda***Enhancing regional cooperation to achieve universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support in Asia and the Pacific beyond 2015****Regional cooperation to achieve universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support in Asia and the Pacific beyond 2015****Note by the secretariat***Summary*

The present document contains a proposed framework to support Governments in the Asian and Pacific region in the further implementation of General Assembly resolution 65/277 on the Political Declaration on HIV and AIDS: Intensifying Our Efforts to Eliminate HIV and AIDS, which had been adopted by the Heads of State and Government and representatives of States and Governments at a high-level meeting on the comprehensive review of the progress achieved in realizing the 2001 Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS and the 2006 Political Declaration on HIV/AIDS.

Section II of the present document contains an overview of region-specific and international commitments on HIV and AIDS, including Commission resolutions 66/10 and 67/9, as well as the Regional Framework to Support the Implementation of International and Region-specific Commitments, endorsed by the Asia-Pacific High-level Intergovernmental Meeting on the Assessment of Progress against Commitments in the Political Declaration on HIV/AIDS and the Millennium Development Goals, held in Bangkok from 6 to 8 February 2012. Section III contains an outline of the approach to addressing HIV and AIDS in the era beyond 2015.

The Meeting is invited to review and endorse the proposed regional framework for action on HIV and AIDS beyond 2015, as contained in section IV, which builds upon the Regional Framework endorsed by ESCAP members and associate members in 2012 and is focused on a series of actions to support implementation of the above-mentioned commitments with a view to achieving universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support in Asia and the Pacific.

* E/ESCAP/HIV/IGM.2/L.1.

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I. Introduction

1. An assessment¹ has been submitted for the consideration of the present Meeting with regard to the significant progress achieved by the region in the implementation of the commitments made in: (a) the 2011 Political Declaration on HIV and AIDS: Intensifying Our Efforts to Eliminate HIV and AIDS; (b) Commission resolutions 66/10 and 67/9; and (c) the Regional Framework to Support the Implementation of International and Region-specific Commitments, which is known as the “ESCAP road map to 2015”. The present document contains a proposed framework aimed at supporting Governments in the further implementation of regional and internationally agreed commitments to achieve universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support in Asia and the Pacific beyond 2015, building upon the implementation of the ESCAP road map.

2. In addition to reaffirming the commitments made in the previously mentioned Political Declaration, resolutions and ESCAP road map, the purpose of the present document is to propose a regional framework for action that could support Governments in accelerating and monitoring their national efforts towards achieving universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support. The proposed regional framework for action on HIV and AIDS beyond 2015 draws upon the ongoing discussions on the development agenda beyond 2015 and the recommendations contained in the final report of the Global Commission on HIV and the Law, and takes into account the achievements and lessons learned in the implementation of the ESCAP road map.

II. Overview of region-specific and international commitments on HIV and AIDS

3. The Commission, in its resolution 66/10 of 19 May 2010, stressed the need to intensify actions to achieve universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support, “noting with particular concern the continuing high prevalence of HIV among key populations, including sex workers, injecting drug users and men who have sex with men, as well as the extent of the legal and policy barriers that impede progress in developing and implementing effective ways of responding to HIV and related risks among them”. In paragraph 1 of that resolution, the Commission called upon members and associate members:

¹ E/ESCAP/HIV/IGM.2/1.

- (a) To accelerate the implementation of the Political Declaration on HIV/AIDS adopted by the General Assembly at its sixtieth session;²
- (b) To reinforce commitments to the Millennium Development Goal target of universal access to treatment for HIV and AIDS for those who need it, in terms of measurable, sustained advances towards a significantly higher level of coverage for treatment and effective prevention interventions needed to manage diverse epidemics, with services being equitable, accessible, affordable, comprehensive and responsive to individual needs, especially for women and girls, through evidence-based and gender-responsive national strategic plans, taking into account relevant recommendations from the Commission on AIDS in Asia and the Commission on AIDS in the Pacific;
- (c) To ground universal access in human rights and undertake measures to address stigma and discrimination, as well as policy and legal barriers to effective HIV responses, in particular with regard to key affected populations;
- (d) To ensure the sustainability of the AIDS response by maintaining a sufficient level of investment, both domestic and external, with the financial and human resources necessary to halt and reverse the spread of HIV in the countries in the region, including by linking HIV and AIDS with Millennium Development Goals and development plans.

4. The following year, the Commission further reinforced the call to intensify regional action to fight HIV and AIDS, when it adopted resolution 67/9 on the Asia-Pacific regional review of the progress achieved in realizing the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS and the Political Declaration on HIV/AIDS. It acknowledged the progress made during the previous decade by Governments in Asia and the Pacific in addressing the HIV epidemic, which resulted in a 20 per cent decline in new infections and a stabilization of the AIDS-related mortality rate. At the same time, it noted with concern the continuing barriers to access faced by key populations, particularly sex workers, injecting drug users, men who have sex with men and transgender populations, seeking HIV prevention, treatment, care and support. In paragraph 1 of that resolution, the Commission called upon members and associate members to further intensify the full range of actions to reach the unmet goals and targets of the 2001 Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS³ and the 2006 Political Declaration on HIV/AIDS² by:

- (a) Developing national strategic plans and establishing strategic and operational partnerships at the national and community levels between representatives of public health, law enforcement and civil society and key affected populations to scale up high-impact HIV prevention, treatment, care and support to achieve 80 per cent coverage for key affected populations with a view to achieving the universal access target;
- (b) Enhancing financial sustainability, national ownership and capacity, as well as committing a greater proportion of national resources in line with national priorities, to improve the programmatic effectiveness of responses to HIV;

² General Assembly resolution 60/262, annex.

³ General Assembly resolution S-26/2, annex.

- (c) Considering processes that encourage stakeholder consultation in promoting access to affordable medicines, diagnostics and vaccines, bearing in mind the relevant provisions in General Assembly resolution 60/262 (the Political Declaration on HIV/AIDS);
- (d) Initiating, as appropriate, in line with national priorities, a review of national laws, policies and practices to enable the full achievement of universal access targets with a view to eliminating all forms of discrimination against people at risk of infection or living with HIV, in particular key affected populations;
- (e) Increasing the effectiveness of national responses by prioritizing high-impact interventions for key affected populations, reducing service delivery costs, improving accountability mechanisms and ensuring that monitoring, evaluation and reporting frameworks are focused on impact, outcomes, cost-effectiveness and efficiency and are also well integrated into relevant planning processes, relating to both HIV-specific planning and more comprehensive development planning;
- (f) Continuing to develop their national strategies to address all forms of gender-based violence, including sexual violence, particularly against women and girls.

5. In June 2011, through its resolution 65/277 the General Assembly adopted the Political Declaration on HIV and AIDS: Intensifying Our Efforts to Eliminate HIV and AIDS. With the overall goal of achieving universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support by 2015, the Members States committed themselves to the following actions, among others:

- (a) Working towards reducing sexual transmission of HIV by 50 per cent by 2015;
- (b) Working towards reducing transmission of HIV among people who inject drugs by 50 per cent by 2015;
- (c) Working towards the elimination of mother-to-child transmission of HIV and substantially reducing AIDS-related maternal deaths by 2015;
- (d) Working towards having 15 million people living with HIV on antiretroviral treatment by 2015;
- (e) Working towards reducing tuberculosis deaths among people living with HIV by 50 per cent by 2015;
- (f) Working towards closing the global HIV and AIDS resource gap by 2015;
- (g) Committing to reach a significant level of annual global expenditure on HIV and AIDS, while recognizing that the overall target estimated by the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS is between \$22 billion and \$24 billion in low- and middle-income countries;
- (h) Pledging to eliminate gender inequalities and gender-based abuse and violence, increase the capacity of women and adolescent girls to protect themselves from the risk of HIV infection;
- (i) Committing to national HIV and AIDS strategies that promote and protect human rights, including programmes aimed at eliminating stigma and discrimination against people living with and affected by HIV, including their families, including by sensitizing the police and judges;

(j) Encouraging Member States to consider identifying and reviewing any remaining HIV-related restrictions on entry, stay and residence in order to eliminate them;

(k) Eliminating parallel systems for HIV-related services and information where feasible and strengthening linkages among national and global efforts concerned with human and national development.

6. At the Asia-Pacific High-level Intergovernmental Meeting on the Assessment of Progress against Commitments in the Political Declaration on HIV/AIDS and the Millennium Development Goals, which was held in Bangkok from 6 to 8 February 2012, countries in the Asia-Pacific region endorsed the Regional Framework to Support the Implementation of International and Region-specific Commitments⁴ on HIV and AIDS. That was the first intergovernmental meeting convened after the adoption of the Political Declaration on HIV and AIDS: Intensifying Our Efforts to Eliminate HIV and AIDS. The Regional Framework, or “ESCAP road map to 2015”, adds value to the measures taken at the national level by Governments, civil society organizations, key populations, the United Nations system, other intergovernmental organizations and development partners by focusing on multisectoral cooperation, inclusive intergovernmental reviews and regional cooperation modalities in line with the mandate of ESCAP. The ESCAP road map supports Governments in the region in accelerating and monitoring national efforts towards achieving universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support through regional cooperation, including the sharing of information, experiences and good practices in HIV and AIDS responses, through inclusion of the following elements:

(a) A review by the Commission at its sixty-eighth session of the outcome of the Asia-Pacific High-level Intergovernmental Meeting on the Assessment of Progress against the Commitments in the Political Declaration on HIV/AIDS and the Millennium Development Goals;

(b) The organization of national multisectoral consultations, as appropriate, on policy and legal barriers to universal access, in accordance with Commission resolution 67/9;

(c) The undertaking of participatory and inclusive national reviews, as appropriate, of the implementation of the 2011 Political Declaration and Commission resolutions 66/10 and 67/9;

(d) The preparation of a regional overview of the progress in meeting the commitments in the 2011 Political Declaration and Commission resolutions 66/10 and 67/9;

(e) The convening of an inclusive regional intergovernmental review meeting on national efforts and progress in addressing the HIV epidemic;

(f) Assessment by the Commission at its seventy-first session, in 2015, of the outcome of the inclusive regional intergovernmental review meeting, including the adoption of a regional input for the review by the General Assembly in 2015 of the progress made in achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

⁴ As contained in document E/ESCAP/HIV/IGM.1/3/Rev.1, sect. VI.

III. HIV and AIDS in the era beyond 2015

7. The report of the Secretary-General, entitled “Towards ending the AIDS epidemic: meeting the 2015 targets and planning for the post-2015 era”,⁵ highlighted that, while ending the AIDS epidemic within the coming years is within reach, success is not ensured. It noted that discrimination, criminalization and punitive approaches are limiting an effective HIV response for those in greatest need, especially key populations at higher risk of infection.

8. In 2013, the United Nations published a report highlighting a series of transformative shifts required for the achievement of sustainable development goals that will shape the era beyond 2015.⁶ Each of these transformative shifts described below will play a relevant role in ensuring universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support.

9. **Leave no one behind:** This transformative shift is aimed at ensuring that no person — regardless of ethnicity, gender, location of residence, disability, race or other status — is denied universal human rights and basic economic opportunities, and that excluded groups are reached by development strategies. People living with HIV and AIDS often face stigma and discrimination before the law and in their communities, a situation which curtails their opportunities for economic, social and cultural, and civil and political participation. Some countries in Asia and the Pacific criminalize HIV transmission and exposure, discouraging people living with HIV from getting tested and from participating in prevention and treatment programmes because of fear of prosecution and isolation. The stigma, discrimination and violence often experienced by key populations increase their vulnerability to HIV infection. Other groups, such as migrants and their families as well as prisoners, also face barriers to access health services. Leaving no one behind is contingent upon rights- and gender-based action on the social, political and economic determinants of HIV.

10. **Put sustainable development at the core:** This shift is aimed at integrating the social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainability that are imperative for sustainable development. It involves promoting social inclusion of people living with and affected by HIV and AIDS and key populations, particularly in a context of rising inequalities.

11. **Transform economies for jobs and inclusive growth:** Improving livelihoods through economic opportunities and transformation, with equal opportunities for everyone to grow and prosper, is the objective of this transformative shift. It includes access to good-quality health care, and education and skills, both of which are key in the treatment and prevention of HIV and AIDS.

12. **Build peace and effective, open and accountable public institutions:** This transformative shift involves the establishment of accountable government and public institutions that respond to people’s needs, strengthen the rule of law and access to justice. One of the main objectives of building accountable institutions is protecting people’s right to freedom from fear, conflict and violence. While faced with numerous legal

⁵ A/68/825.

⁶ *A New Global Partnership: Eradicate Poverty and Transform Economies through Sustainable Development — The Report of the High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda* (New York, United Nations, 2013).

and policy barriers, as well as prejudice and marginalization, people living with HIV and AIDS and key populations often live in fear and are subject to verbal insults and physical assault.

13. **Forge a new global partnership:** An all-encompassing partnership that includes marginalized groups and civil society should be enhanced to undertake the challenges of the era in a spirit of solidarity, cooperation and mutual accountability. This type of global partnership is relevant: to the HIV and AIDS agenda in finding solutions so that intellectual property law does not hamper access to antiretroviral treatment; to exchange information on best practices and raise awareness of the need to remove legal and policy barriers; and to ensure sufficient funding to sustain the efforts in tackling the HIV and AIDS epidemic.

IV. **A proposed regional framework for action on HIV and AIDS beyond 2015**

14. In the context of the forthcoming discussions at the General Assembly on the development agenda beyond 2015, the recommendations contained in the final report of the Global Commission on HIV and the Law, and bearing in mind the lessons learned from the HIV and AIDS response in Asia and the Pacific, the present document contains a proposed regional framework for action on HIV and AIDS beyond 2015 that is focused on several thematic areas to advance the implementation of commitments made at the regional and global levels. These areas include the following:

(a) **Accelerating the removal of legal and policy barriers to achieve universal access,** building on the achievements in recent years in identifying the legal and policy barriers that hamper the effectiveness of AIDS responses in the Asia-Pacific region through national reviews and multi-stakeholder consultations and programmatic efforts aimed at eliminating stigma, discrimination and violence against people living with and affected by HIV, as well as key populations;

(b) **Effectively engaging communities in the AIDS response** for programme delivery, through local financing and task shifting for community-led implementation of HIV programmes that address structural, cultural and social barriers to effective AIDS responses within local communities; in addition, addressing the needs and concerns of youth should be an integral part of national reviews and multisectoral consultations in line with the commitment made in the 2011 Political Declaration. That Declaration called for promoting laws and policies that would ensure full realization of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for young people, particularly those living with HIV and those at higher risk of exposure to HIV, so as to eliminate the stigma, discrimination and violence they face as well as for expanding good-quality youth-friendly information, and sexual health education and counselling services. In this regard, the United Nations system stands ready to support the efforts of Governments of countries in the region, at their request;

(c) **Enhancing financial sustainability, national ownership and capacity,** as well as committing a greater proportion of national resources using the evidence of national HIV investment cases and sustainability plans to improve the programmatic effectiveness, targeting and quality of responses to HIV, including innovative domestic financing approaches and strategies;

(d) **Continuing regional mechanisms to sustain momentum and reporting on progress made in fulfilling regional and global commitments on HIV and AIDS**, through the implementation of a regional framework for action on HIV and AIDS beyond 2015, comprising a set of proposed activities that could feed into national efforts already under way to meet commitments made in the 2011 Declaration and Commission resolutions 66/10 and 67/9 (see figure).

Figure

Regional framework for action on HIV and AIDS beyond 2015

January 2015	Asia-Pacific Intergovernmental Meeting on HIV and AIDS		
May 2015	Consideration by the Commission at its seventy-first session, in 2015, of the outcome of the Asia-Pacific Intergovernmental Meeting on HIV and AIDS	Continuing national reviews and multisectoral consultations on legal and policy barriers	
June 2015 and after	National stakeholder consultations to promote access to affordable medicines, diagnostics and vaccines		Evidence-based national HIV investment cases and sustainability plans
	Regional input into high-level meeting on HIV/AIDS convened by the General Assembly (2016)		
	Regional review of progress made in implementing the regional framework for action on HIV and AIDS beyond 2015 (2018)		

A. Consideration by the Commission at its seventy-first session, in 2015, of the outcome of the Asia-Pacific Intergovernmental Meeting on HIV and AIDS

15. In accordance with established practice of the Commission, the report of the meeting will be submitted for consideration by the Commission at its seventy-first annual session in 2015.

B. Organization of national reviews and multisectoral consultations, and creation of multisectoral and participatory coordination mechanisms to oversee and guide the implementation of recommendations arising from the process, to address legal and policy barriers to universal access to effective HIV services, 2015 and after

16. In line with the 2011 Political Declaration and Commission resolution 67/9, which call for reviews, as appropriate, of national laws, policies and practices to enable the full achievement of universal access targets with a view to eliminating all forms of discrimination against people at risk of infection with HIV, and the ESCAP road map to 2015, ESCAP members and associate members may wish to consider initiating, and, where already started, continuing, the national review and multisectoral consultation processes to examine legal and policy barriers to universal access to HIV

prevention, treatment, care and support, with a view to ending stigma and discrimination against people living with HIV and key populations.

17. In countries which have already held at least one national review and/or multisectoral consultation, the Meeting may wish to consider taking action to implement the recommendations arising from the process, including, where relevant, a multisectoral and participatory coordination mechanism to oversee and guide the implementation of the recommendations. The involvement of representatives of key populations, including young key populations, contributes to the success of such national reviews and multisectoral consultations and efforts to implement legal, policy and programmatic recommendations.

C. Organization of national stakeholder consultations to promote access to affordable medicines, diagnostics and vaccines

18. Ensuring access to essential medicines for addressing HIV and AIDS, including ensuring their affordability, is critical for maintaining the sustainability of the AIDS response in the region. This involves actions to utilize the existing flexibilities within trade and intellectual property provisions, and taking steps to streamline supply and distribution systems. The Meeting may wish to consider the possibility of undertaking national stakeholder consultations to discuss experiences, achievements and challenges in securing access to affordable medicines under the World Trade Organization's Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) and other trade-related agreements. The purpose would be to identify actions that would enable countries to fully utilize flexibilities in the TRIPS agreement and other relevant legal provisions, and to strike a balance between fostering pharmaceutical innovation through intellectual property protection and ensuring the right of all to access lifesaving medications. The United Nations system should support Governments, at their request, in implementing such actions at the national level.

D. Development of evidence-based national HIV investment cases and sustainability plans in order to own and sustain the AIDS response

19. HIV investment cases and sustainability plans provide a tool for countries to allocate and mobilize the resources needed to fund strategic, rights-based, sustainable AIDS responses. The process of developing evidence-based national HIV investment cases and sustainability plans provides countries with an opportunity to explore innovative strategies and approaches to own and sustain the national AIDS response. Several countries in the Asia-Pacific region have developed strategic investment cases and sustainability plans, while others are in the process of doing so. All countries in the region would benefit from developing investment cases and sustainability plans to inform strategic decision-making towards sustainable AIDS financing. The United Nations system would provide support, at the request of member States, in this regard.

E. Global high-level meeting on HIV and AIDS to be convened by the General Assembly

20. The outcome of the Asia-Pacific Intergovernmental Meeting on HIV and AIDS could be presented as a regional input for a global meeting on HIV and AIDS that is expected to be convened by the General Assembly in 2016.

F. Undertaking a regional review of progress made in implementing the regional framework for action on HIV and AIDS beyond 2015

21. As the 2011 Political Declaration mandates the regional commissions to conduct periodic inclusive reviews of national efforts and progress to combat HIV, a regional review of the progress made in implementing the regional framework for action on HIV and AIDS beyond 2015 would be held in 2018 — after the global meeting on HIV and AIDS that would be convened by the General Assembly in 2016 — which would also take into account the outcomes of the global meeting.

V. Conclusion

22. ESCAP members and associate members have shown leadership and vision in implementing the commitments contained in the 2011 Political Declaration on HIV on AIDS and Commission resolutions 66/10 and 67/9, including through the implementation of the ESCAP road map to 2015. Considerable advances have taken place in the region in reducing the prevalence of HIV and in increasing domestic financing for the AIDS response. However, renewed commitment is required to address the legal, policy and financial barriers to universal access HIV services, particularly among key populations. The Meeting may, therefore, wish to consider and endorse the regional framework for action beyond 2015 proposed in the present document to support and accelerate implementation of the commitments contained in the 2011 Political Declaration on HIV and AIDS, and in Commission resolutions 66/10 and 67/9.
