

## **Summary Assessment**

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### **Asia-Pacific Intergovernmental Meeting on HIV and AIDS** Bangkok 28-30 January 2015

#### **I. Introduction**

The Asia-Pacific Intergovernmental Meeting on HIV and AIDS was held in Bangkok, Thailand, from 28-30 January 2015.

A questionnaire assessing the relevance, effectiveness and quality of the meeting was distributed to each delegation of ESCAP members and associate members. Out of the 29 members and associate members in attendance, 24 submitted a questionnaire. The response rate is therefore 83% (N=24/29). The present assessment was prepared on the basis of these questionnaire responses.

In line with the secretariat's efforts to reduce the use of paper and move towards paper smart meetings, an online version of the questionnaire was offered alongside the traditional paper version.

The main purpose of this assessment is to support the secretariat's ongoing efforts to improve its servicing of the meeting.

#### **II. Attendance**

The meeting was attended by 47% (N=29/62) of all ESCAP members and associate members, with 129 individual participants. The meeting was also attended by 190 participants from other entities, including United Nations bodies, specialized agencies and related organizations, intergovernmental organizations, and non-governmental organizations.

A majority of delegations were headed by officials from the respective Capital (72%, N=21/29) – two of which (9%) at ministerial level – whereas the remaining 28% (N=8/29) were represented through their embassies in Bangkok.

### III. Methodology

For each statement below, an index between 100 and 0 is given, whereby, at a value of 100 all respondents strongly agree with the statement, and, at a value of 0, all respondents strongly disagree. The formula<sup>1</sup> we have used is based on the same principles as the United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP) Human Development Index<sup>2</sup> (HDI). This allows the calculation of a unit-free index between 0 and 1 from all received responses for each statement. This enables indices to be added together as well as compared among each other.

### IV. Relevance of the meeting

Respondents felt that the meeting was relevant to the needs of the region. As presented with the aggregate ratings in Table 1, there was very high agreement among respondents that the agenda of the meeting was relevant to the needs and priorities of the Asia-Pacific region in terms of achieving universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support (90). Respondents also agreed that the agenda of the meeting reflected the needs and priorities of their countries, but to a lesser extent (75).

**Table 1**

EVALUATED STATEMENT	INDEX (0-100)
The agenda of the meeting was relevant to the needs and priorities of the Asia-Pacific region in terms of achieving universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support.	90
The agenda of the meeting reflected the needs and priorities of my country/territory.	75

Comments on the relevance of the meeting to the needs and priorities of the Asia-Pacific region included (verbatim):

- All aspects were most relevant.
- Cross border collaboration addressing migrant and mobile populations.
- If it is possible, relevant law enforcement issues should be discussed in this meeting.
- Higher representation from Pacific Islands would be a strength.
- All key areas discussed here were relevant to our country yet we need to intensify regional discussions on legal and policy barriers and ways to expand domestic funding after 2015.

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<sup>1</sup> Index = actual value of all aggregated responses - minimum value of all aggregated responses / maximum value of all aggregated responses - minimum value of all aggregated responses

<sup>2</sup> More can be found at [http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/hdr\\_2013\\_en\\_technotes.pdf](http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/hdr_2013_en_technotes.pdf)

## V. Relevance of the background documents

Overall, as can be seen from Table 2, the relevance of the background documents was rated very positively. The respondents found that the background documents for the meeting were relevant to the needs and priorities of the Asian and Pacific region in terms of achieving universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support (85). They also indicated that the background documents were of high quality, concise and clearly stated the issues (83), and adequately addressed the gender dimensions of HIV and AIDS epidemic in the region (81).

**Table 2**

EVALUATED STATEMENT	INDEX (0-100)
The background documents for the meeting were relevant to the needs and priorities of the Asian and Pacific region in terms of achieving universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support.	85
The background documents for the meeting were of high quality, concise and clearly stated the issues.	83
The background documentation for the meeting addressed the gender dimensions of HIV and AIDS epidemic in the region.	81

Comments on the relevance of the background documents to the needs and priorities of the Asian and Pacific region included (verbatim):

- Materials were very good.
- Very informative and helpful in preparation for the meeting.
- The policy and legal barriers are similar in most of the countries but priorities are different due to differences in cultural backgrounds.

## VI. Effectiveness of the meeting

The effectiveness of the meeting was rated positively, as shown in Table 3. In particular, respondents felt that the meeting provided a regional platform to review national progress and to exchange experiences in meeting the commitments made in the 2011 Political Declaration on HIV and AIDS, and in ESCAP resolutions 66/10 and 67/9 (88). The respondents also indicated that the meeting effectively reviewed and promoted dialogue on financing national AIDS responses (83), that the meeting provided a forum to effectively discuss and enhance regional cooperation to achieve universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support beyond 2015 (81), and that it effectively assessed the outcomes of the national reviews and multisectoral consultations on policy and legal barriers to universal access to HIV services (79).

**Table 3**

EVALUATED STATEMENT	INDEX (0-100)
The meeting provided a regional platform to review national progress and to exchange experiences in meeting the commitments made in the 2011 Political Declaration on HIV and AIDS, and in ESCAP resolutions 66/10 and 67/9.	88
The meeting effectively assessed the outcomes of the national reviews and multisectoral consultations on policy and legal barriers to universal access to HIV services.	79
The meeting effectively reviewed and promoted dialogue on financing national AIDS responses.	83
The meeting provided a forum to effectively discuss and enhance regional cooperation to achieve universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support beyond 2015.	81

Comments on the effectiveness of the meeting in achieving the above-states objectives included (verbatim):

- ‘Investing for results: How Asia Pacific countries can investing for ending AIDS’ report is a good document to be used for advocacy.
- Commitment on multi-sectoral cooperation and consultation an policy and legal barriers need to be translated into action.

## **VII. Efficiency of the meeting**

The efficiency of the meeting was rated very positively, as shown in Table 4. In particular, respondents felt that the servicing by the secretariat was highly efficient (89), and that the communications from the secretariat to the member States on the preparations for the meeting were effective (86). The adequacy of the time available for discussion of applicable agenda items during the meeting was also rated positively (82).

**Table 4**

EVALUATED STATEMENT	INDEX (0-100)
The time available for discussion of applicable agenda items during the meeting was adequate.	82
The servicing by the secretariat was efficient.	89
The communications from the secretariat to the member States on the preparations for the meeting were effective.	86

Comments on the efficiency of the organizational and servicing aspects of the meeting included (verbatim):

- Good opportunity to assist non-English speaking delegates to exchange opinions.
- It is too cold in the conference room.
- Perhaps a side event/meeting to share experiences on regional activities could have been beneficial.
- I would like to express my appreciation for the efficient arrangement of this important meeting, which allowed it to be effective and meaningful.

### **VIII. Highlights of the meeting and aspects that could have been enhanced**

According to respondents, the most successful aspects of the meeting included (verbatim):

- Adoption of the report of the meeting.
- Discussion on HIV financing.
- Format of the meeting, i. e. keeping a balance on plenaries and side events.
- Most successful event was the one on Sex Workers and Violence.
- Panel discussions.
- Sharing our experiences in a very pleasant environment, where all views expressed were appreciated.
- Side events were very informative and gave us more insights into for the realities of the key population.
- Successful adoption of the draft road map.
- The regional platform to share and engage in dialogue with both government and CSO representatives.
- All countries were satisfied with the content of the meeting report.
- Opportunity provided to CSOs to raise critical issues and the need for further involvement, which is critical to stronger partnerships.
- Opportunity to share regional experiences and foster understanding and regional cooperation.
- It was noted that this year is a transition period from MDGs (Millennium Development Goals) to SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals), however, in doing so socio-cultural and religious norms need to be respected.

There were also some suggestions on aspects that could have been enhanced (verbatim):

- Better and innovative ways to increase interaction between government and NGOs
- Hotel arrangement was poor. Last day could have ended earlier
- Promotion of best practices
- Regional cooperation should be enhanced
- Working on enhancing the financing of AIDS response
- Explore new areas of cooperation to eliminate HIV and AIDS from the region and implement UN Political Declaration on HIV and AIDS.

## **IX. Conclusion**

Overall, in conclusion, responding delegations felt that the Asia-Pacific Intergovernmental Meeting on HIV and AIDS was very successful.

To summarize the main trends highlighted above, the meeting was overwhelmingly seen as relevant to the needs and priorities of the Asia-Pacific region in terms of achieving universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support. There was also high agreement among respondents that the meeting provided an adequate regional platform to review national progress and to exchange experiences in meeting the commitments made in the 2011 Political Declaration on HIV and AIDS, and in ESCAP resolutions 66/10 and 67/9 (88). The efficiency of the meeting was also highlighted, in particular the servicing of the meeting by the secretariat.