
GLOBAL
PROGRAMME
ON AIDS

REPORT OF AN INFORMAL CONSULTATION ON
NATIONAL AIDS PROGRAMME REVIEWS

GENEVA
11-13 OCTOBER 1989



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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

National AIDS programme reviews are systematic assessments of the progress and efficiency of the planned activities of national AIDS programmes (NAPs). Such reviews enable past experiences to be taken into account in replanning for subsequent years.

To date, seven of the 83 countries in the world which are implementing a medium-term plan (MTP) have carried out a review. From these first reviews and from those designed and conducted by other health programmes, a considerable body of knowledge has been gained. It therefore seemed timely to hold a consultation on the role, the alternate approaches to and the use of NAP reviews.

An informal consultation was held in Geneva, from 11 to 13 October 1989, and reached a consensus on several critical issues. Among these, it recognized NAP managers and policy-makers as prime users of review findings, others being participating parties such as internal and external donors and governmental, intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations. The principle of single, multi-agency reviews was reiterated as a means of alleviating demands on programme management for many separate reviews. Reviews should provide an opportunity for countries to learn from each other's experience and should also provide WHO/GPA with direction for research and the development of interventions, thereby contributing to the refinement of the global strategy for the prevention and control of AIDS.

The magnitude of reviews, their design and frequency may vary from one country to another and, in a given country, from one period to another. Three different levels of review are envisaged. By far the most basic and common type of review, a grade 1 review, will be an annual internal review by the programme manager and key staff. A grade 2 review will be a limited review, with some participants from outside the programme, which concentrates on one or more specific programme areas. A grade 3 review will be comprehensive, encompassing a broad spectrum of programme areas and issues, and resulting in a major revision of the MTP. All reviews will include examination of management, financing, intervention strategies and programme sustainability and will lead to planning and budgeting for the next phase.

The consultation described the characteristics of the three review grades proposed. It also proposed a framework for the development of guidelines, focusing on such priority review areas as management, strategies, policy and finance.

Finally, the consultation endorsed a workplan to be followed by WHO/GPA in providing countries with the required methodologies, guidance and support in the planning, conduct and use of programme reviews.

2. INTRODUCTION

Since its inception in February 1987, the World Health Organization's Global Programme on AIDS (WHO/GPA) has extended its cooperation with countries from planning and implementation of NAPs to also include monitoring and coordination. As of October 1989, 122 countries in the world have national AIDS plans; and 83 of these countries have medium-term plans (MTPs) of 3-5 years. It is a part of all MTPs that a programme assessment or review be carried out near the end of the first year of operation in preparation for replanning for the subsequent years.

To date, seven countries have conducted a formal review of MTP activities, four more reviews are scheduled for 1989 and over 60 for 1990. Further, repeated reviews will be needed to guide future planning and budgeting and for the purpose of providing feedback to donors. It was therefore felt timely to assess the first experiences with NAP reviews in an attempt to improve the process and outcomes of future reviews. For this reason, an informal consultation was held in Geneva from 11 to 13 October 1989, with the participation of representatives of both national programmes and the international community. A list of participants is given in Annex 1.

The objectives of the consultation were as follows:

- to define the role of programme review in the broader context of programme assessment;
- to review experiences to date in programme reviews, including processes and outcomes;
- to recommend the key objectives, indicators and outcomes of programme reviews;
- to recommend methods of review, including the planning, conduct (including participation) and use of review findings considering country-specific needs.

The consultation took into consideration the experiences of other WHO programmes (Expanded Programme on Immunization [EPI], Diarrhoeal Diseases Control [CDD], and the Division of Strengthening of Health Services [SHS]) as well as those of NAP reviews already conducted.

The participants agreed on a Consensus Statement (see section 3.), which defines the general concepts of NAP reviews, the magnitude and grading of such reviews and the areas they should cover. The participants also agreed on a number of conclusions and recommendations.

3. NATIONAL AIDS PROGRAMME REVIEWS - A CONSENSUS STATEMENT

3.1 General concepts

Programme review is one element of the programme development cycle for NAPs, which also includes planning, implementation and evaluation (see Figure 1).

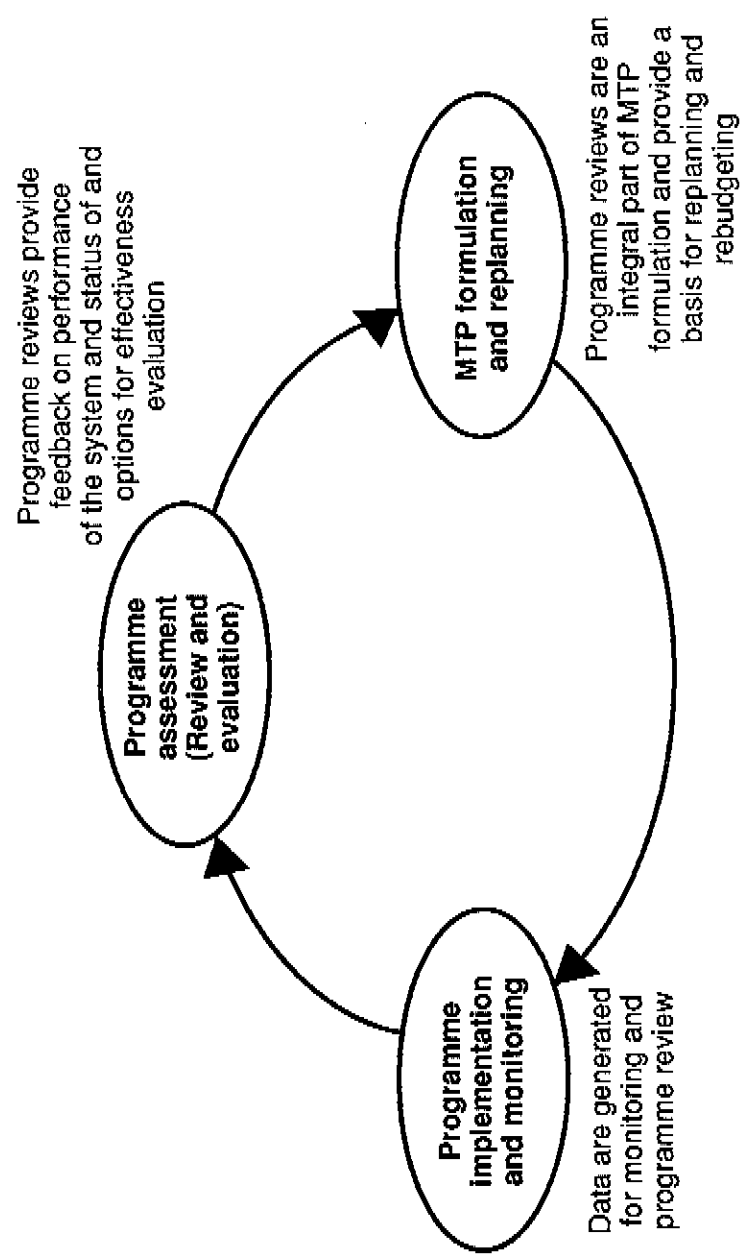
Programme review provides an opportunity for the systematic assessment of the progress and efficiency of all planned activities, in both the public and private sectors, regardless of whether the activities were envisaged in the MTP. It seeks to identify reasons for the NAP achievements and shortcomings, and makes recommendations for its improvement. It also assesses the relevance and adequacy of plans and activities, and assists NAP staff in reprogramming these where necessary. The review is therefore a management tool and is distinct from programme evaluation which focuses on issues of effectiveness and impact. It does, however, generate information which will contribute to programme evaluation as reflected in Figure 2.

Within the overall concept of programme assessment, both programme reviews and effectiveness/impact evaluation are intended to play a complementary role as shown in Figure 3. Altogether, these processes are aimed at measuring the performance of NAPs in terms of their progress, efficiency, effectiveness and impact and, drawing from these, in terms of adequacy and relevance (see section 5. Glossary).

It is envisaged that the prime users of programme reviews will be NAP managers and policy-makers. Other users will be participating parties including donor organizations, as well as governmental, intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations. Participating parties have agreed to the principle of single, multi-agency reviews, thus refraining from their own separate reviews or missions. As a result of this agreement, the reviews should attempt to provide the basic information required by interested parties. Reviews do not exclude, however, the exchange of information between governments, bilateral donors and nongovernmental organizations as may be specified and agreed to between these parties for specific bilateral projects.

Reviews should provide an opportunity for countries to learn from each other's experiences. Reviews should also feed information back to WHO/GPA, provide direction for research and the development of interventions relevant to national programmes, and contribute to the refinement of the Global AIDS Strategy.

Figure 1 The role of programme review in the NAP development cycle



WHO/89/114

Figure 2 Evaluation of programme effectiveness and impact

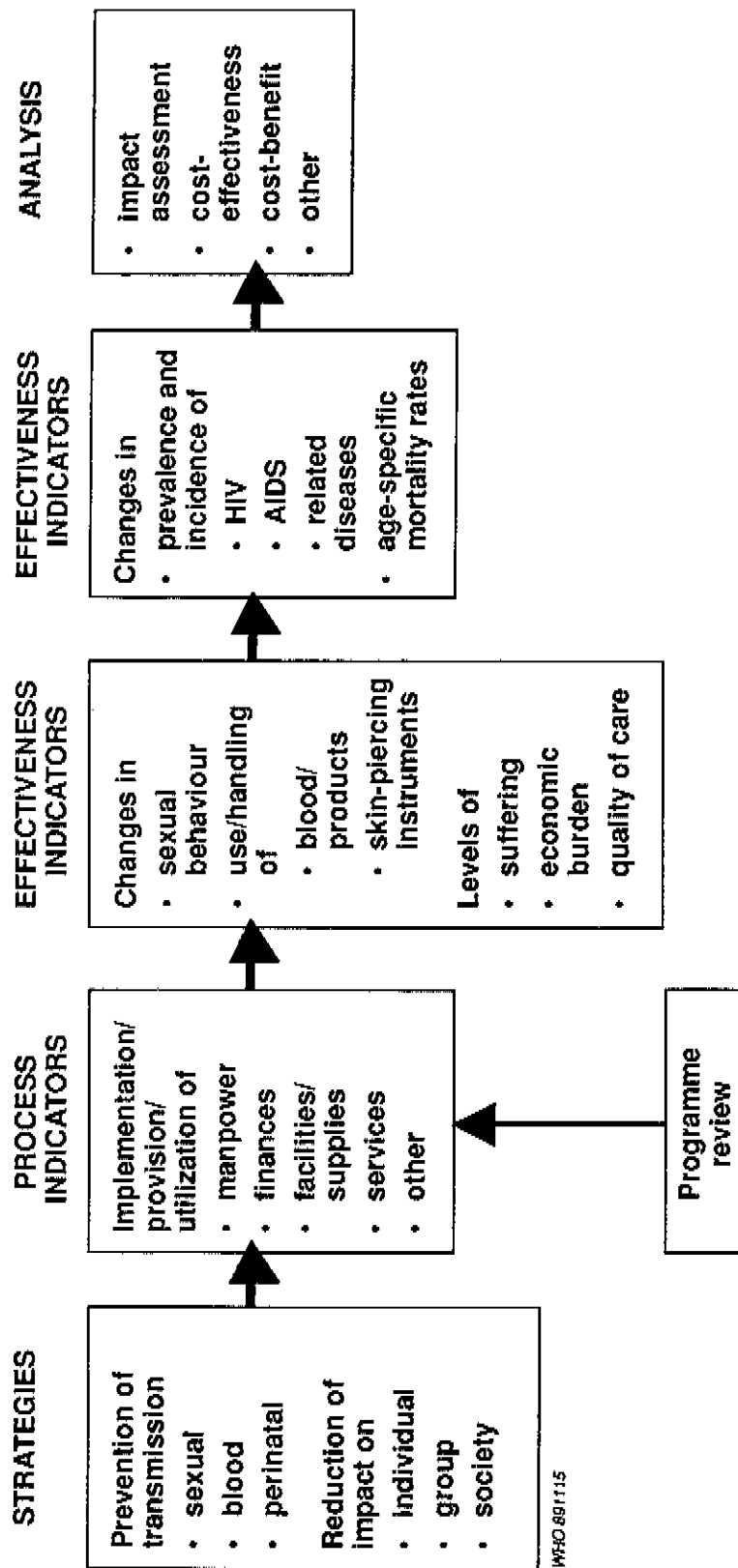
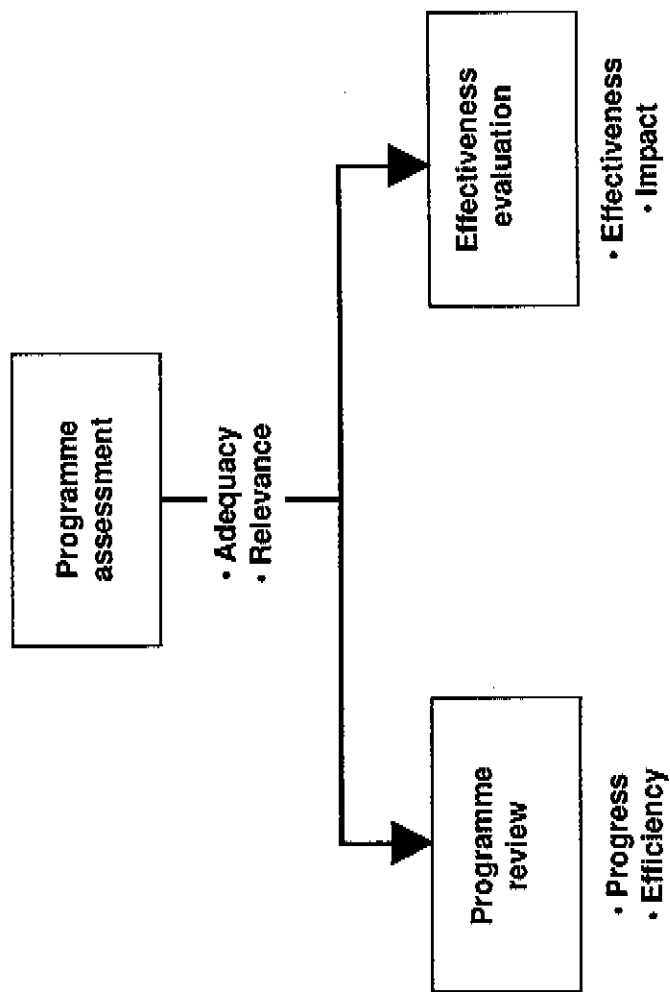


Figure 3 Programme assessment, review and effectiveness evaluation



Reviews should primarily be concerned with activities managed directly by NAPs. They should, in addition, consider such AIDS activities which fall within the framework of the NAP but are managed by other organizations.

The design, depth and frequency of reviews should ideally be formulated on the basis of information gathered through the management information system (MIS) of the AIDS programme. The objectives of reviews may include the following:

- to assess the adequacy and appropriateness of the structure of the NAP;
- to assess the progress and efficiency of AIDS prevention and control activities;
- to analyse the relevance and adequacy of the MTP and monitoring system; and
- to assess the adequacy of programme management information systems and of preparation for evaluating programme effectiveness and impact.

Based on the above, the review should:

- (1) recommend ways to improve the effectiveness of planning and implementing AIDS control activities; and
- (2) enhance both sustainability of programme achievements and institutionalization of programme infrastructures and financing.

3.2 The magnitude and grading of reviews

The magnitude of reviews, their design and frequency may vary from one country to another and, in a given country, from one period to another. Decisions about the level of review needed will be based largely on monitoring of process-oriented programme reports. Programme managers should provide these reports quarterly or trimesterly to the interested parties.

Three different levels of review are envisaged (see Table 1). By far the most basic and most common type of review (Grade 1) will be an annual internal review by the programme manager and key staff of the NAP and related programmes. One outcome of a Grade 1 review could be a decision to proceed with a more extensive Grade 2 or Grade 3 review. A Grade 2 review will be a limited review, with participants from outside the programme, aimed at dealing with problems in one or more specific programme areas. A Grade 3 review will be a comprehensive review and reprogramming exercise, expected to result in major revisions of the MTP. All three types of review will include examination of management, financing, intervention strategies, and programme sustainability.

Reviews are a necessary part of programme implementation and decisions as to when programme reviews should be undertaken and their grade should be made by the government in consultation with other participating parties. All reviews should result in a verbal briefing to interested parties and a written report with recommended actions and a plan for carrying them out.

The value of programme reviews will be demonstrated by the extent to which they are relevant to programme managers and used to serve their essential purpose, namely to guide the reprogramming of NAPs.

3.3 Areas covered by reviews

There are four main areas that should be covered by NAP reviews: management, strategies, financing and policies, and monitoring, which are considered below. Further details of the discussion on the first three of these areas are provided in Annex 2; monitoring is considered further in Annex 3.

Table 1. Characteristics of the review grades proposed

<u>Characteristic</u>	<u>Grade</u>		
	1	2	3
Description	Internal review	Limited review with participants from outside the NAP	Comprehensive review with participants from NAP
Participants	NAP manager and key staff of NAP and related programmes	NAP manager, key staff and other participating parties as warranted	Broad involvement of participating parties, other governmental sectors and non-governmental organizations
Skills needed	Available within management team	Management, financial and others as may be needed by programme area to be reviewed	Management, financial and others as may be needed by programme area to be reviewed
Duration	Days	1-2 weeks	Several weeks
Output	Recommendations and action plan	Recommendations and action plan	Recommendations, action plan and possibly MTP rewrite
Frequency	Annual	As needed	As needed

3.3.1 Management

Management is the key factor determining the success or failure of NAPs. The purpose of reviewing a programme's management system (or mechanisms) is to provide the necessary guidance for strengthening the administrative infrastructure and for the monitoring and self-evaluation systems. Four major areas of concern should be addressed by a management review:

- internal administrative capabilities;
- personnel management;
- the effectiveness of programme coordination;
- logistic mechanisms and facilities.

In addition, special attention should be paid to mechanisms for addressing the ethical issues that arise in the course of AIDS programme design and implementation.

A matrix for reviewing priority management areas is given in Annex 2, section 1.

3.3.2 Strategies

A framework within which strategy-related indicators can be developed must conform to the idea that a programme review is an element of overall programme assessment, which first occurs at an early stage of programme development. The primary concerns are whether or not management structures for the implementation of strategies are in place and, to a lesser extent, which strategies have been implemented. An examination of the extent to which strategy implementation has been effective is not included. The framework must be adaptable to the needs of different users, including programme managers, policy-makers and donors. Finally, all information generated within the framework should be useful for reprogramming purposes. The collection of extraneous information should be avoided as far as possible.

A suggested matrix for use in programme reviews is presented in Annex 2, section 2.

3.3.3 Financing

The purpose of reviewing the financial component of NAPs is to examine country capabilities, strengths and weaknesses in working towards four priority financial objectives:

- obtain and use adequate resources;
- to account for the use of funds;
- to aim for programme sustainability;
- to use resources efficiently.

Indicators need to be developed to measure (1) country capability in carrying out activities in each of these areas, and (2) progress towards attainment of these objectives. Application of these indicators will vary depending on the level of the review. Annex 3, section 3 provides a suggested framework for this section of the review.

3.3.4 Monitoring

A management information system (MIS) should be established and maintained at country level to assist the monitoring of the NAP. The system should yield only that information which helps NAP managers to monitor programme implementation and to report

this to their governments and their funding agencies. A functioning MIS is important in helping NAP and government officials to determine the grade and frequency of programme reviews required.

A description of some of the priority elements and outputs of an MIS is included in Annex 3.

4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Conclusions

This consultation provided the first opportunity for persons with varied expertise, institutional affiliations and professional backgrounds to come together and discuss the purpose and process of NAP reviews.

The consultation recognized that the review process is distinct from effectiveness evaluation studies but that both are required for overall assessment and reprogramming.

The consultation also recognized the need for flexibility and suggested an array of options which could be applied to specific country settings.

In addition to drawing up the Consensus Statement (pp. 2-9), the consultation provided WHO/GPA with a framework for guidelines on priority areas of review (Annex 2). It also endorsed a workplan to be followed by WHO/GPA in providing countries with the desired methods and support (see Annex 4).

In addition, the following recommendations were formulated.

4.2 Recommendations

- (1) NAPs should incorporate programme reviews in their planning and budgeting cycle.
- (2) Guidelines for reviews and related training materials should be developed by WHO/GPA and subsequently field tested.
- (3) WHO/GPA, in association with NAPs, should continue to explore the linkage between the central programme review process and effectiveness evaluation studies and explore all opportunities to make maximum use of both sets of data for reprogramming.
- (4) There should be active information exchange between national programmes, WHO/GPA and the international community to ensure that the lessons learned from early programme development and the programme review process are shared.
- (5) WHO/GPA should help with the development of tools to support programmes in the area of finance.
- (6) WHO/GPA should aim to include a team member adequately trained in areas including accounting, financial planning and economic analysis in every review.
- (7) Over the next year WHO/GPA should ensure that 10 representative programme reviews will include a comprehensive financial component. This will require one or more financial specialists for each review.
- (8) In order to continue global cooperation in the development of NAP reviews, national and international cooperation should proceed according to the agreed workplan.

5. GLOSSARY

The definitions given here relate to the use of these terms in the context of national AIDS programmes.¹

- Adequacy:** Extent to which NAP objectives, strategies, and activities are proportionate to requirements, for example, whether programme needs are matched by resources.
- Consistency:** Extent to which harmony exists between NAP policies, objectives, targets, strategies and actions.
- Effectiveness:** Extent to which the results obtained are in accordance with the objectives and targets for reducing the dimensions of the problem, for example, the extent to which the NAP has contributed to the reduction of HIV transmission and its effects on individuals and communities.
- Efficiency:** Extent to which NAP activities are implemented as well as possible in relation to the resources devoted to them (in terms of financial and other resources, health processes, technology and time), for example whether activities are implemented with expected timeliness, quality and at optimal cost.
- Impact:** Extent to which the NAP has contributed to health and overall improvement in the population.
- Interested parties:** National, international and local organizations and groups potentially interested in technical or financial participation in NAP activities.
- Medium-term plan (MTP):** Statement of the NAP on national objectives, strategies, activities and budget aimed at prevention and control covering a period of years.
- National AIDS programme (NAP):** All country activities for AIDS prevention and control taken together, including the activities of government, nongovernmental organizations, private sector, international agencies and groups.
- Participating parties:** National, international and local organizations and groups already participating or otherwise committed to participation in NAP activities in either a technical or financial manner or both.
- Programme assessment:** A general and comprehensive term which encompasses consideration of all relevant information on the NAP needed for replanning (i.e. including information derived from programme reviews, monitoring and effectiveness evaluation and policy studies).
- Programme evaluation:** Systematic assessment of the effectiveness and impact of NAPs.
- Programme review:** The systematic assessment of the progress and efficiency of all planned activities of an NAP. This includes activities of the public and private sectors, regardless of whether the activities were envisaged in the MTP. It also includes assessment of the relevance and adequacy of programme plans and activities and assists NAP staff in their reprogramming.
- Progress:** Extent to which NAP activities are being carried out (toward objectives and targets) according to the planned schedule.
- Relevance:** Extent to which the NAP answers the needs and social and health policies and priorities it has been designed to meet.

¹ See also Glossary of terms used in the "Health for All" Series No. 1-8. Geneva, World Health Organization, 1984 (Health for all Series, No. 9).

ANNEX 1

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Annex 1

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SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS BY WORKING GROUPS
ON NAP REVIEWS IN THREE PRIORITY PROGRAMME AREAS:
MANAGEMENT, STRATEGIES, AND FINANCING AND POLICIES

Each of the three programme areas was considered by a working group.

1. MANAGEMENT

Purpose of the working group

Management is the key issue in determining the success or failure of national AIDS programmes (NAPs). The purpose of reviewing a programme's management system (or mechanism) is to provide the necessary criteria for strengthening the administrative infrastructure, and for institutionalizing monitoring and self-evaluation systems.

Priority concerns of the working group

The working group's discussion revolved around four major areas of concern to be addressed by a management review:

- the effectiveness of external programme coordination;
- internal administrative capabilities;
- personnel management;
- logistic mechanisms and facilities;

In addition, special attention should be paid to review mechanisms intended to address the ethical issues that arise in the course of AIDS programme design and implementation.

A matrix for reviewing priority management areas

For the purposes of this working group, a matrix (Figure 1) was designed and partially completed. This matrix presents the important categories and subcategories that should be included in a review of the management process. The column headings show a temporal check list for each category. Each country will need to consider which of these and other categories are most critical for review at a given time.

The categories of the matrix have been further divided into subcategories and predetermined indicators of success. Each indicator should be addressed along the temporal rows from left to right and a standard list of parameters should be used in order to assess the quality (i.e., adequacy, relevance), sustainability, effectiveness of resource utilization and efficiency of programme activities. In addition, more pragmatic parameters should be used, such as adequacy of funding levels, timeliness and availability of necessary support materials, i.e., fuel requisition forms, job descriptions, training materials, etc. In a one-year or 18-month review, it is suggested that reviewers should consider the priority categories shown in the matrix.

Review methodologies have already been devised and applied by other international agencies. In particular, UNDP has established a formal review methodology which is well suited to the evaluation of programme management systems and input-oriented programmes. It may be desirable to consider these established methodologies in any future review process.

The working group concluded that efforts should be made to consult programme management itself in the review of the successes and problems of programme implementation

Annex 2

Figure 1 MANAGEMENT REVIEW MATRIX

	Policy/ Objectives	Implementation	Monitoring/ Reporting
PERSONNEL			
<u>Staffing</u>	*	*	*
Recruitment (A)			
Responsibilities			
Delegation			
<u>Training</u>	*	*	
Management skills			
Technical skills			
Training skills			
FACILITIES			
<u>Accommodation (A)</u>			
<u>Support services</u>			
<u>Equipment/consumables</u>			
<u>Communication</u>			
LOGISTICS			
<u>Transport</u>			
<u>Supply/distribution/feedback (A)</u>			
<u>Quality control/feedback</u>			
ADMINISTRATIVE CAPABILITY (internal)			
<u>Mechanisms</u>			
Disbursement of funds	*	*	
Administration of decentralized staff	*	*	*
Monitoring of activities (A)	*	*	*
Establishment of self- evaluation capability	*	*	*
Programme implementation			*
<u>Communication/information/ distribution (A)</u>	*		
<u>Accountability</u>	*		
Internal reports			
External reports			
Feedback			

* Asterisks refer to a separate list of issues/questions that arose on this issue
(A) Priority categories for a 12-18 month review

Annex 2

Figure 1 MANAGEMENT REVIEW MATRIX (continued)

<u>Personnel administration</u>	*		*
<u>Administrative procedures</u>			
ADMINISTRATIVE CAPABILITY (external)			
<u>Other agencies</u>			
Nongovernmental organizations (A)	*	*	
Governmental/ parastatal agencies			
Media			
<u>International agencies/ assistance</u>	*		
United Nations			
Bilateral			
<u>Committees/subcommittees</u>			
<u>Research coordination</u>			
ASSESSMENT OF GOVERNMENT COMMITMENT			
MECHANISMS FOR ADDRESSING ETHICAL CONCERNS			

* Asterisks refer to a separate list of issues/questions that arose on this issue
(A) Priority categories for a 12-18-month review

Annex 2

and in the search for solutions to the problems - as it is often well aware of the advantages and constraints of external mechanisms and of NAPs. Programme management should also take part in an evaluation of the review process itself and in the feedback and application of the lessons learned.

2. STRATEGIES

Review plan for strategies

The working group considered approaches to developing a review of NAP activities and of progress towards attainment of objectives for the reduction of HIV transmission and HIV/AIDS impact. A framework for generating questions useful to reviewers is presented in Figure 2.

The framework within which strategy-related indicators can be developed must conform to the idea that a programme review is an element of overall programme assessment which occurs, for present purposes, at an early stage. The primary concerns are whether or not management structures for the implementation of strategies are in place and, to a lesser extent, which strategies have been implemented. The degree to which strategy implementation has been effective is not included. The framework must be adaptable to the needs of different users, including programme managers, policy-makers and donors. Finally, all information generated within the framework should be useful for reprogramming purposes, if necessary, and no extraneous information should be collected.

The framework should serve as a guide to the development of questions to be answered during a programme review. It should be seen as an aid to programme managers seeking to structure their review, not as a confining set of rigid guidelines dictating review content. All national programmes should be free to select whatever indicators are most pertinent to the time and situation.

Matrix for reviewing strategies

The matrix presented (Annex 3, Figure 2) has several salient features. The category of user is in the upper left corner (the example given is for programme managers). Other users can be accommodated by the same matrix, although the content of each cell, i.e., the specific information required for each phase of strategy development, may vary. The matrix is based on four GPA strategies: prevention of sexual transmission, prevention of transmission by blood and blood products (including intravenous drug use and injection), prevention of perinatal transmission, and reduction of the impact of HIV/AIDS on individuals, groups and societies. Again, the same column and row labels can be used for each of these objectives. The example below refers to the objective of reducing sexual transmission.

The rows of the matrix are meant to identify the most important components of these strategies. They include information, education and communication (IEC) programmes intended to reach both the general public and specific target audiences, necessary materials and commodities, HIV/AIDS testing and counselling services, target group case management, whether it be case management of sexually transmitted diseases, AIDS or other related conditions, and surveillance, research and evaluation. The inclusion of evaluation as an item of interest at the review stage reflects the belief that plans and structures for later evaluation must be developed at the earliest stages of a programme.

Annex 2

In fact, the working group recognized that in order for evaluation to be most effectively implemented, pertinent baseline data should be collected even prior to the first programme review. Ideally, the implementation of evaluation activities should already be under way when programme reviews take place. This will enable the reviews to verify progress made in collecting information relevant to evaluation and to suggest ways of improving this process.

The columns are intended to represent a more or less temporal progression of programme activities. Accordingly, indicators progress left to right from more process-oriented to more outcome-oriented, and tend to go from more descriptive to more quantitative. The matrix generally represents programme attempts to increase access to services. Indicators of utilization of these services are generally not examined during initial programme reviews. If the matrix were to be followed further to the right, indicators useful for programme evaluation would start to be developed. As stated above, however, evaluation is not the purpose of a programme review.

The first four columns refer to policy issues: whether the strategy component has been included in the MTP, whether a specific workplan for its implementation has been developed, whether an individual has been designated as responsible for its implementation, and whether resources, including funding, personnel and supplies have been allocated. Materials must be developed and commodities procured. Training must take place, and both materials and trained personnel must be widely deployed in order to provide access to the target populations. Programme activities at the more peripheral levels of the health system should begin at this point. Finally, the system must be dynamic. Monitoring systems must be established to make sure that, once established, structures are maintained and improved.

The matrix can be used to generate the questions that should be asked by a review team in any given area. It is recommended that no review should include in-depth questions in every area, or even review of every area at a less intensive level. However, the matrix can still serve a useful purpose by providing a flexible basis for generating appropriate questions for whatever topic and at whatever depth desired.

The cells of the matrix contain lists of questions (see below). Each list should consider the issues of relevance, adequacy, progress and efficiency, although few cells are likely to contain questions that cover all those issues.

As a practical matter, different sub-activities may require that a separate list be prepared for each. For example, it might be necessary to review different aspects of education programmes that addressed the general population through mass media from those that provided training to community leaders in support of a social mobilization programme. Similarly, a review of IEC activities directed at target groups involved in sexual transmission might look at prostitutes, their clients and/or attenders at sexually transmissible disease clinics.

The theoretical size of a comprehensive set of review questions for a national programme is quite large, because it could include separate lists of review questions for many "columns" of issues, for several sub-activities within each "row" topic, phrased appropriately for each type of review audience (programme managers, implementors, etc.) multiplied by the number of strategies (sexual transmission, perinatal transmission, etc.). However, no real review would even approach the theoretical size, because many of the cells of the matrix for a real programme would be empty or of no interest. Only a relatively few cells of the matrix would be reviewed at a single time.

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Ways to reduce intensity of review

To limit the investment of time and resources in a review, there are strategies for reducing the requirements. The most straightforward is to limit the aspects of the programme that are reviewed. This might be thought of as a "domain sampling" strategy, in which a programme selects only some of its activities for review. Thus if there are ten different IEC activities focused on high-risk target audiences, the programme might select one or two of the activities for review, and ignore the others. The activities representing the domain of IEC might be sampled randomly from the full set of IEC activities, but it would probably be preferable to sample them purposively. In purposive sampling, a specific project is chosen for a particular reason. Examples of criteria that might be used in choosing are: significance - the project or projects chosen are the biggest or most important; risk - activities are chosen that are feared to have problems; or representativeness - the chosen activities represent the full range of different activity types.

Another strategy for reducing the resource requirements for conducting a review is to change the basis on which judgements are developed. In a comprehensive review, it might be expected that all the questions generated from the matrix would be investigated in a systematic way, the resulting information or data compiled and presented, and an objective assessment made of the situation. In a "reduced" review, there might be greater reliance on expert judgement than on public review of evidence. In this model, one or more professionals experienced in the specific area of the activity, such as health communication, would perform a faster, more flexible review of the activity, probing about strengths and weaknesses until they were satisfied that they had an adequate sense of the project. They would then render their professional opinions and recommendations about the status of the activity, based on their subjective assessment of what they have learned.

A third way of limiting the resources required for a review may be appropriate where the scarce resource is the availability of time from highly skilled professionals. In such cases it may be efficient to request the people whose time is limited to specify the questions they want asked or the information they want collected, and to commission its collection by programme managers prior to the formal review.

As an example of the elaboration of a list of questions for one type of activity, the following list was developed. It represents a potential set of questions that programme managers might ask about an IEC programme addressing the topic of sexual transmission among the general population. The questions are organized according to the general column titles of the matrix.

Example of a set of questions for one activity for one objective

Questions for programme managers

General strategy area = sexual transmission

A. Activity = IEC for specific risk behaviour groups (eg., prostitutes or persons who share equipment for drug injection)

Issues related to policy

- (1) Was the IEC activity targeting the general population included in the MTP?
- (2) How adequate was the plan in the MTP?
 - (a) Was the audience well defined?

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- (b) Were there concrete objectives? Were they based on an adequate knowledge of the audience?
- (c) Is there a coherent strategy for attaining the objectives?
- (3) Is there a formal workplan for carrying out the activity?
- (4) Are the resources available to the activity adequate?

Issues related to materials development and procurement

- (1) Is the content planned for or used in the messages relevant, sufficient and accurate?
- (2) Is there an explicit plan for pretesting and revising the messages?
- (3) Is there an adequate plan for distribution or dissemination of the messages?
- (4) Is the quantity of messages being developed and disseminated sufficient?
- (5) Are the necessary production facilities in place or being ordered?
- (6) Is adequate provision being made for the continuing availability of consumable supplies?

Issues related to logistics and distribution

- (1) Are the distribution channels relevant, appropriate and adequate? Are they ones to which the intended audience has access?
- (2) Is the coordination of required elements adequate (for example, physical availability of required products, or timely distribution of printed materials coordinated with associated broadcasts)?

Issues related to training

- (1) Is training in production techniques necessary and, if so, is it happening?
- (2) Is training of communicators (e.g., health care workers, community organizers, etc.) necessary? Is it planned or happening at an adequate level?

Issues related to implementation

- (1) What effort has been carried out to date?
- (2) Have adequate quantities moved through the distribution system to the end user?
- (3) What is the level of attainment of the outputs defined in the workplan?
- (4) What problems have been encountered?
- (5) What unexpected outcomes have emerged?

Issues related to monitoring

- (1) Does a plan for monitoring or message tracking exist? Has it been put into operation?
- (2) What evidence is there that:
 - (a) the coverage of the messages is adequate?
 - (b) the quality of the messages is adequate?
 - (c) messages are being replaced as the audience learns the content or becomes bored with the presentation?

3. FINANCING AND POLICIES

SUMMARY

Purpose

Programme managers are faced with managing a complex financing process. The purpose of the financial component of NAP reviews is fourfold:

- (1) to review the existence and capabilities of the financial management aspects of the programme (i.e., accounting systems, disbursement procedures);
- (2) to review the financial and economic planning and analysis component of the programme to assess how successfully it meets priority financial objectives (e.g., realistic costing of programme activities);
- (3) to promote the commitment to finance and economic issues in NAPs;
- (4) to develop and improve tools and systems for measuring, monitoring and planning for NAP costs including development of costing/budget guidelines. In addition, existing tools such as AIDSCOST¹ should be further refined and tested.

Key objectives

There are two priority objectives for the financial component of programme reviews:

- (1) to review the country's infrastructure for carrying out the financial functions of a NAP, including: planning/resource allocation, budgeting, financial management (e.g., accounting) and economic analysis;
- (2) to directly assess whether the country is carrying out each of the programme finance objectives (i.e., obtaining and using adequate resources, accounting for the use of funds, sustaining programme activities and using resources efficiently).

¹A WHO/GPA-generated lotus spreadsheet model for rapid assessment of the economics and financing of national AIDS programmes.

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Methods

The working group strongly emphasized the urgent need to develop and promote improved financial planning, monitoring and analysis. This must not wait for the review process and should continue in parallel with development of improved ways to review country financial mechanisms. There is a role for the GPA in helping with the development of tools to support programmes in the area of finance.

Finance and economics should be an integral part of every review, including participation of a team member adequately trained in areas such as accounting, financial planning and economic analysis.

It is recommended that over the next year, ten representative programme reviews should include a comprehensive financial review component and tools for future reviews.

Purposes

A fundamental lesson learned from previous reviews is that the financial aspects of NAPs have received inadequate attention. NAPs need the capability to produce financial information related to AIDS activities. The urgent need to develop and promote improved financial and economic planning, monitoring and analysis must not wait for the review process. These activities must continue in parallel with development of improved ways to review country financial management mechanisms.

Four priority financial objectives can be defined for programmes:

- (1) to obtain and use adequate resources;
- (2) to account for the use of funds;
- (3) to aim for programme sustainability;
- (4) to use resources efficiently.

The key purpose of the review is firstly to examine a programme's capability to carry out these objectives and secondly to examine the extent to which a programme has achieved them.

These objectives are in order of priority for reviews taking place over the next 12 months. It is expected that, as programmes develop their financial capabilities (perhaps over the next five years), objective (4) will become a higher priority for review.

Indicators need to be developed both to measure programme capability to meet these objectives and to directly assess whether it is making progress towards the attainment of each of these objectives. Application of these indicators will vary, depending on the level of the review. The indicators developed should be broad enough to reflect a review of the broad financial components of the programme. It should be clear that the review does not constitute a financial audit but an assessment of the financial infrastructure and performance.

Programme capability

It will be important for NAP reviews to consider whether the existing infrastructure adequately meets the needs of the four financial objectives. A matrix is presented (Figure 3) for developing indicators that may be used in this process.

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Figure 3
FINANCING REVIEW MATRIX

FUNCTIONS	INFRASTRUCTURE INDICATORS
1. Planning/resource allocation, staffing procedures, information, other 2. Budgeting 3. Financial management/ accounting 4. Economic analysis	

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Status of meeting financial objectives

The review team should examine whether the programme has attained the four financial objectives. The information requested for such a review is outlined below. The review team should attempt to obtain this information from the programme's financial system. If such a system does not exist, the team should attempt to collect and analyse this information itself.

The obtaining and use of adequate resources

The review team should examine whether the financial system has obtained adequate funding and has utilized funds received in a timely manner. Consideration should be given to the responsibility of donors in supporting the efficient flow of funds. The following information is needed:

- actual expenditures versus the budget for each programme strategy;
- pledges by donors versus actual payment.

Accounting for resources

To review whether the programme is sufficiently able to account for resource use, a strategic overview of resources is needed. This would include information about:

- the use of resources for all AIDS activities including human, financial, capital and other resources (this information can best be made available by means of a report giving a financial overview);
- the level of satisfaction of all major contributors with the programme's reporting of resource use.

Aim for sustainability

To review whether there has been adequate planning for sustaining the programme over the long run, the following information is needed:

- the percentage of expenditure by source over time;
- the level of capital/start-up versus recurrent costs;
- the percentage of expenditure requiring foreign exchange.

Efficient use of resources

To measure whether resources are being used efficiently, the following information is useful:

- the percentage of expenditure by activity;
- the unit cost of selected activities.

Outcomes

There should be six priority outcomes from the review process:

- (1) to produce a broad overview of the status of each financial objective and NAP capabilities for attaining these objectives;

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- (2) to raise the level of awareness and commitment to financial issues in NAPs;
- (3) to make recommendations to improve the financial capability of NAPs;
- (4) to make recommendations to improve NAP efficiency and sustainability;
- (5) to develop improved finance mechanisms (i.e., costing guidelines, computer spreadsheets) leading to improved systems for measuring, monitoring and planning for NAP costs;
- (6) to provide information and reports relating to how AIDS resources are being utilized in country programmes.

Process

Finance should be an integral part of every review and the following are therefore minimum requirements:

1. A person with skills in areas such as accounting, finance and/or economic analysis should participate in all teams to: (a) review programmes; (b) contribute to recommendations provided by all programme review components; and (c) provide specific recommendations and tools for promoting improved financial planning and management.
2. A set of financial and economic indicators and criteria should be an integral part of each programme review.

Considering the immediate time and resource constraints faced by in-country programme managers and WHO/GPA, it is recommended that two levels of review proceed over the next year.

Level 1

A minimal level of financial review consisting of documenting the existing accounting, financial management and budgeting procedures. This would not require a financial specialist on every review but only in those countries which have substantial budgets or donor funds for AIDS.

Level 2

For (approximately) ten countries that are considered representative, a comprehensive financial review component which would require one or more financial specialists. These reviews would provide an opportunity to refine the methodology and, in subsequent years, to better understand country capabilities to implement recommendations.

ANNEX 3

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE WORKING GROUP ON MANAGEMENT
INFORMATION FOR NATIONAL AIDS PROGRAMMES

Management Information Systems (MISs) should be established and maintained to assist the monitoring of national AIDS programmes (NAPs). These systems should yield only that information which helps regional and national NAP managers to monitor programme implementation and to report this to their governments and other funding agencies. Initially, the information should relate to NAP workplan targets; as the system is developed, information about the activities of other agencies involved in AIDS control should also be presented. This implies a commitment - by all participating parties - to provide such information as required for monitoring. The mechanism of information collection will vary from country to country; where possible existing health information systems should be utilized, though some technical assistance and additional resources will be needed to ensure that this vital task is implemented efficiently. Ideally, information collection should be linked to existing NAP management mechanisms. MISs should report at intervals that best suit their existing planning and management cycles.

MIS output should include quantitative information on activities done (concentrating on selected key activities to indicate overall progress), services provided (with emphasis on coverage - such as percentage of donated blood tested), supplies procured and distributed (with emphasis on supply availability at point of use - such as proportion of service delivery points not running out of stock of key elements such as condoms, needles, and protective gloves - during the reporting interval) and monies received and spent. Managers will also require information about specific processes of programme implementation - such as integration of NAP activities within the health sector and in other sectors, community development, involvement of nongovernmental organizations, coordination of external financing, social and ethical issues. This should be presented in narrative form.

A functioning MIS is important in helping NAP and government officials to identify the intensity of programme reviews required. They should be able to use the MIS to indicate their requirements of programme reviews and specific areas for detailed study.

MIS output should include a financial statement with supporting narrative. While quarterly financial reporting has been in operation for some years, the figures are still incomplete. In most countries there is insufficient information available at national level to enable NAP managers to reconcile activities undertaken or supplies procured with expenditure. At present most programmes are only able to monitor local spending of NAP trust funds, though several of their activities will be funded from other sources. They have difficulties in assessing the value of funds and commodities from in-country and bilateral sources. Participating parties should endeavour to make this information available to programme managers - if not for the MIS, at least at the time of programme review. Programme managers may not have access to information on the status of purchase orders; interested parties should provide this information so that managers can assess the balance of funds available to their programmes at the time of the MIS report preparation.

There is an urgent need for timely information about the progress of NAPs. WHO/GPA should: (1) review current guidelines for programme monitoring in the light of implementation experiences; (2) review, retrieve and use information presently available from existing in-country systems; (3) initiate a programme of work with NAP managers to develop and implement MISs that are adapted to local conditions.

NATIONAL AIDS PROGRAMME REVIEWS

Workplan with suggested grading of reviews for the period 1990-1991

NAP reviews workplan, 1990-1991

Guidelines preparation	1989	1990				1991			
		Quarters				Quarters			
		1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
- Formulation of statement	■								
- Guidelines development		■	■						
- Testing/revision			■						
- Publication				■					
- Updating								■	
Training of core group of reviewers									
- Prepare training outline			■						
- Initial workshop				■					
- Further workshops							■		
Linkage with effectiveness evaluation									
- Progress review meetings	■	■		■		■		■	
- Guidelines development									
- Field projects									
Linkage with other health programme reviews									
- Consultation			■						
- Development of conceptual framework				■					
- Development of instruments testing				■	■	■	■		
Adaptation of programme development guidelines on review experience				■	■				
Report	■		■		■		■		■

Annex 4

Grading of reviews to be conducted in 1990-1991

Grade	No. of countries undertaking review								
	1989	1990				1991			
		Quarters							
		1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
1		22	19	29	16	32	18	20	11
2		0	0	21	18	10	13	7	7
3	11	2	7	4	10	13	8	3	0