

# CALL FOR PROPOSALS

**Contractual partner to support for review of the Integrated HIV Behavioral and Serologic Surveillance (IHBSS) method and Protocol Development**



**World Health  
Organization**

Representative Office  
for the Philippines

## 1. Summary

The World Health Organization (WHO) Philippines is looking for an organization or individual who will be tasked to support for review of the Integrated HIV Behavioral and Serologic Surveillance (IHBSS) method and protocol development under an Agreement for Performance of Work (APW) contract.

## 2. Background

The HIV epidemic in the Philippines is concentrated among specific populations who are at higher risk. Therefore, there is a need to closely monitor magnitude and dynamics of the HIV epidemic among these key populations (KP). The Integrated HIV Behavioral and Serologic Surveillance (IHBSS), which started since 2005, conducted every 2-3 years, is the country's sole behavioral and serologic surveillance system. It was designed to establish trend in HIV and STI prevalence, determine behavioral factors among KP, and determine outcome of HIV and STI intervention programs in different localities. Key affected populations included in the 2018 IHBSS are males and transgender women who have sex with males, female sex workers (FSW), and People Deprived of Liberty (PDL). There was no separate sampling conducted for Transgender women as there were difficulties experience in conducting the survey in the previous round. Similarly, operational and safety considerations were the primary reasons for not conducting IHBSS among Person who Inject Drug (PWID) in 2018.

The recent findings of the 2018 IHBSS showed that the current venue-based sampling methodology, particularly among MSM & TGW missed a segment of the key population who do not visit cruising sites but are found in geosocial networking sites, workplaces, etc. The proportion of respondents who mainly use the online platform in finding sex partners from the two previous cycle of IHBSS increased by two folds (2015: 10%, 2018:23%). Moreover, difficulty in establishing trend of HIV prevalence, and inconsistencies on the demographic characteristics throughout the different cycles were observed in some IHBSS sites.

Furthermore, the COVID19 pandemic has led to change in dynamics of MSM & TGW. Public places, amenities, and establishments which were the common venues for geographic survey for IHBSS were either closed or admit limited number of patrons due to observance of social distancing. This had led MSM & TGW to adapt other ways of finding sex partners including the use of other cruising sites. Comparison of the two (2) online surveys for MSM & TGW conducted by the Epidemiology Bureau revealed that there was a decrease in the proportion of respondents who only cruise to find sex partners (2019: 37%, 2020:13%), while the proportion of respondents who solely uses the online platform to find partner seemingly remained the same (2019: 62%, 2020:62%), the proportion of respondents who have regular partners increased dramatically from 1% in 2019 to 25% in 2020.

These findings suggest enough justification to adapt a new methodology to effectively sample the key populations. As the country moves towards strengthening its HIV response through utilization of evidence-based information, enhancing the country's HIV surveillance system will be valuable at the national, regional and local levels. In order to help us attain this objective, the Epidemiology Bureau of the Department of Health is requesting technical assistance for developing the method for the next IHBSS among key populations (MSM, TGW, FSW, PWID).

By adapting a new method for IHBSS, this ensures better representation of the target key population. Key recommendations based from the result of several activities in this exercise may be identified that will enhance collection of behavioral and serologic data among the key populations in the country.

### **3. Timeline**

The implementation timeline for the project is 3 months from **10 August 2021 to 10 November 2021**.

### **4. Place of Assignment**

Manila, Philippines or can be conducted remotely.

### **5. Scope of Work**

The primary purpose of this TOR is to hire technical experts who will:

1. Guide in the development of recommended method for IHBSS;
2. Develop protocol for data collection;
3. Train and assist Department of Health (DOH)- Epidemiology Bureau (EB) staff in post data collection treatment and analysis of data; and

**Task 1:** Develop implementation plan in coordination with DOH-EB.

**Deliverable 1:** Inception report, GANTT chart of work plan

**Task 2:** Conduct review of the design and methodology of the past IHBSS.

**Deliverable 2:** Bibliographic listings of documents reviewed

**Task 3:** Conduct consultation among key populations (MSM, TGW, PWID & FSW) using several methods such as key informant interviews, focus group discussion and etc.

**Deliverable 3:** Documentation of key findings.

**Task 4:** Organize discussion, and consultative meeting with DOH and other stakeholders on the development of protocol for IHBSS.

**Deliverable 4:** Minutes and documentation of discussion during meeting.

**Task 5:** Present to DOH-EB and partners the identified set of recommendations based on

findings together with advantages and disadvantages associated with implementing the new IHBSS protocol.

**Deliverable 5.1:** Initial draft of IHBSS protocol with recommendations per Key population based on findings such as but not limited to: Sampling size, Sampling methodology, Data collection (tools and process), and Statistical adjustment.

**Deliverable 5.2:** Minutes and documentation of discussion and agreements during meeting with DOH-EB and partners

**Task 6:** Train the DOH-EB staff on post data collection activities specifically post-data treatment data collection including application of weights, and analysis of data using recommended analysis tool.

**Deliverable 6:** Documentation of the training session.

**Task 7:** Submission of the final IHBSS protocol.

**Deliverable 7:** IHBSS protocol.

### **Roles and responsibilities**

In close collaboration with the DOH-EB and relevant partners, under the supervision and guidance of the HIV Technical Officer of WHO Country Office Philippines, the contractual partner shall perform the tasks. Roles and responsibilities of contractual partner, DOH-EB, and WHO are as followings;

#### **A. Contractual partner**

- Abide by all terms and conditions stipulated in this engagement
- Be responsible for timely provision of all outputs and conduct of activities that are necessary within the time schedule/ implementation schedule agreed upon
- Conduct planned activities in accordance with the Contract and Terms of Reference and with the skill and care expected of a competent provider of the services required.
- Coordinate closely with the DOH-EB and WHO regarding meetings and other activities related to the implementation of the project.
- Attend meetings and submit reports and other deliverables on the specified schedule in the inception report, contract, and those agreed upon during negotiation.
- Conduct capacity building activities related to post-data collection treatment and analysis.
- All outputs of the project developed by the Consultant for the DOH-EB shall become and remain the property of the DOH-EB.
- Comply with all laws enforced in the Philippines. The laws will have included all national, city, or other laws that affect the performance of the contract and are binding upon the Institution, The Institution shall indemnify and hold harmless to DOH-EB against any and all liabilities, damages, claims, fines, penalties, and expenses of whatever nature arising or resulting from violation of such laws by the Institution.

#### B. DOH-EB

- Be responsible for the timely provision of all information and decision making under its control necessary of the smooth implementation of all activities.
- Coordination with consultant.
- Schedule meetings and activities with consultant.
- Assign focal person/s who will work closely with the consultant.
- Assist the consultant in the conduct of KP consultation.
- Provide information materials and other technical inputs necessary to the conduct of the activities.
- Ensure accuracy of all data to be provided to the consultant.
- Provide comments on the drafted technical report/IHBSS protocol.
- Assume primary responsibility for the acceptance of consultant's deliverables for payment purposes.

#### C. WHO

- Coordination with consultant in the administrative process for the contract.
- Assist the consultant in the smooth implementation of all activities.
- Provide technical comments on the drafted technical report/IHBSS protocol and other deliverables.
- Assume responsibility for the acceptance of consultant's deliverables for payment purposes.

### 6. Qualifications

#### Education of staff involved:

- Essential: University degree in public health, social sciences, or any related field
- Desirable: Postgraduate degree in public health

#### Experience required:

##### Essential:

- Strong familiarity in HIV epidemiology particularly in a national behavioral and serologic surveillance, monitoring and evaluation.
- Experience in conducting online survey for both serologic, and behavioral component preferably using Respondent Driven Sampling.
- Good working track record with national and local government, NGO's and donor agencies.
- Profound knowledge and experience in designing Integrated Biological and Bio behavioral surveillance (IBBS) including sampling methodology.

#### Technical Skills and Knowledge:

- Extensive skills in research, data collection and analysis, and scientific and technical writing
- Sound knowledge in public health and HIV care and treatment
- Sound knowledge in planning, implementation and evaluation
- Sound knowledge in the culture of key population groups

- Ability to work harmoniously as a member of a team, adapt to diverse educational and cultural background and maintain a high standard of personal conduct

Language requirements:

- Written and spoken fluency in English is essential

Other requirements:

- Essential: No conflict of interest regarding the concerned companies which might bias judgement. In addition, the contractual partner must have no direct or indirect interest in the tobacco industry, alcohol industry, arms dealing or human trafficking.

## 7. Competencies

- Technical competence in research and public health
- Ability to engage and communicate with multiple stakeholders
- Skills to respect and promote individual and cultural difference
- Capability of working harmoniously with a positive attitude at work

## 8. Submission Requirements

Interested individuals and institutions should submit electronic copies of the following:

- Cover letter
- Proposal with financial details and proposed timeline
- Curriculum Vitae (for individuals)
- Company profile (for institutions)
- Example of previous works

Address all documents to:

**Dr Rabindra Abeyasinghe**

WHO Representative to the Philippines

Ground Floor, Building 3, Department of Health San Lazaro Compound

Rizal Avenue, Sta Cruz, Manila

Please submit the electronic copy of the documents with the title “**Contractual partner to review of the Integrated HIV Behavioral and Serologic Surveillance (IHBSS) method and protocol development**” to Mrs Ying Chen ([cheny@who.int](mailto:cheny@who.int)) copied to [wpphlwr@who.int](mailto:wpphlwr@who.int). Only shortlisted applicants will be contacted by WHO Philippines.

Deadline of submission of proposals is on **05 August 2021**.