

TERMS OF REFERENCE (TOR) OF REQUEST FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (EOI) FOR THE CONDUCTION OF INTEGRATED BIOLOGICAL AND BEHAVIOURAL SURVEILLANCE (IBBS) SURVEYS AMONG KEY POPULATIONS AT HIGHER RISK IN NEPAL, 2014

1. Background

HIV in Nepal is characterized as concentrated epidemic. More than 80 percent HIV infections are transmitted through heterosexual transmission (NCASC, 2011)¹. People who injects drugs, men having sex with other men and female sex workers are the key high risk population groups spreading the epidemic. Male labour migrants (particularly to India, where labour migrants often visit female sex workers) and clients of female sex workers in Nepal are acting as bridging population groups that transfer infections from high risk groups to low risk general population. As the epidemic is maturing (about 23 years after the first HIV case reported in 1988), more and more infections are being recorded among low risk general men and women populations. However, the epidemic has never maintained through heterosexual transmission in the general population in Nepal, rather driven by the infections among high risk populations and their sexual partners.

Nepal's new National HIV/AIDS Strategy 2011-2016² has adopted strengthening of the Second Generation Surveillance (SGS) system as one of key principles of strengthening surveillance of HIV and STI in Nepal. One of the major components of SGS, and also strategic direction of the national strategy, is to conduct Integrated Biological and Behavioural Surveillance (IBBS) among key populations at higher risk of HIV in selected high risk areas in regular interval based on the national plan on HIV and STI surveillance. IBBS surveys have been successfully conducted in various rounds in Nepal for the last about a decade among key populations at higher risk to HIV as below:

Table 1: IBBS surveys conducted in Nepal (2000 – 2012)

Key populations at higher risk	Survey areas	Rounds	Survey years
Female Sex Workers (FSW)	Kathmandu Valley	4	2004, 2006, 2008, 2011
	Pokhara Valley	4	2004, 2006, 2008, 2011
	16 Terai Highway Districts	5	1999, 2003, 2006, 2009, 2012
	6 Terai Highway Districts	4	2004, 2006, 2009, 2012
People who Inject Drugs (PWID)	Kathmandu Valley	5	2002, 2005, 2007, 2009, 2011
	Pokhara Valley	5	2003, 2005, 2007, 2009, 2011
	East Terai Districts	5	2003, 2005, 2007, 2009, 2012
	West to Far West Terai Districts	4	2005, 2007, 2009, 2012
Truckers (Clients of FSW)	22 Highway Districts	4	1999, 2003, 2006, 2009
Men who have Sex with Men (MSM) and Transgender (TG)	Kathmandu Valley	4	2004, 2007, 2009, 2012
Male Labour Migrants (MLM)	Western to Mid & Far Western Districts	4	2006, 2008, 2010 ^a , 2012

^a in 2010, IBBS among MLM was conducted in Mid and Far Western Clusters only.

¹ NCASC (2012) National Estimates of HIV Infections in Nepal, 2012. November, 2012.

² NCASC (2011) National HIV/AIDS Strategy 2011-2016, December 2011.

In the year 2013/2014, based on the national plan on HIV and STI surveillance and financial support available from the Global Fund and pool fund partners (the Government of Nepal, the World Bank, DFID, AusAID and KfW), the following IBBS surveys are planned to conduct:

Table 2: IBBS surveys planned in 2013-2014

IBBS surveys	Survey populations	Survey areas
Survey 1	People who inject drugs (male and female)	Kathmandu valley
Survey 2	People who inject drugs (male and female)	Pokhara valley
Survey 3	People who inject drugs (male and female)	Eastern <i>Terai</i> highway districts
Survey 4	People who inject drugs (male and female)	Western <i>Terai</i> highway districts
Survey 5	Men who have sex with men and transgender people	Kathmandu valley
Survey 6	Men who have sex with men and transgender people	Eastern to western <i>Terai</i> districts
Survey 7	Female sex workers	Kathmandu valley
Survey 8	Truckers (clients of FSW)	22 <i>Terai</i> highway districts
Survey 9	Male labour migrants	Western to mid and far western districts

The surveys 1, 2, 3, 5 and 9 are supported by the Global Fund while the remaining surveys are financed from the pool fund partners

2. Survey populations

The survey populations and their definitions are as below:

Survey populations	Definitions of the survey populations
People who inject drugs (PWID)	The people who inject drugs in this survey are defined as: <i>“Those male and female aged 16 years or above who had been injecting drugs for at least three months prior to the date of survey”</i> .
Men who have sex with men (MSM) and transgender (TG) people	For the purposes of this survey, MSM and TG are divided into two sub-groups: (a) MSW and TG SW and (b) non-MSW and Non-SW TG. MSW are defined as: <i>“Those males aged 16 years or above who have had sexual relations, (either oral or anal) with another male in the 12 months preceding the survey in exchange for money or other commodities”</i> . Non-MSW are defined as: <i>“Those males aged 16 years or above who have had sexual relations (either oral or anal) with another male in the 12 months preceding the survey without receiving cash payment or other commodities”</i> . TG are defined as: <i>“those aged 16 years or above whose gender identity (self-identification as woman, man, neither or both) not matching one’s assigned sex (identification by others as male, female or intersex based on physical/genetic sex)”</i> .

	<p><i>More specifically, "they are effeminate men attracted to same-sex, who sometimes cross-dress and have receptive role during anal sex".</i></p> <p>TG SW are defined as: <i>"Those TG aged 16 years or above who have had sexual relations, (either oral or anal) with another male in the 12 months preceding the survey in exchange for money or other commodities".</i></p> <p>Non-SW TG are defined as: <i>"Those TG aged 16 years or above who have had sexual relations (either oral or anal) with another male in the 12 months preceding the survey without receiving cash payment or other commodities".</i></p> <p><i>Note: For this specific purpose of HIV and STI surveillance, the definitions of MSM and TG are based on their sexual activities. These definitions may not capture all the sexual orientations.</i></p>
Truckers (proxy of clients of FSW)	The truckers (proxy clients of FSW) in this survey are defined as: <i>"male truck drivers aged 18 years or above or their helpers aged 16 years and above intercepted at the Pathlaiya truck stop along the Mahendra Highway".</i>
Male labour migrants (MLM)	In this survey the Male Labour Migrants are defined as: <i>"All the returnee male returnee migrant aged 16–49 years, having stayed continuously or with interruption for at least 3 months in India as a migrant worker and having returned to Nepal within three years prior to the date of the survey".</i>

3. Objectives

Alike the key objectives of the surveillance studies to track the trends over time, the objectives of the IBBS surveys planned above are primarily to determine the trends of HIV and STI prevalence and to assess HIV and STI-related risk behavior among the key populations at higher risk in the selected study areas. For the first time, the IBBS surveys among MSM & TG and PWID will include screening of HBV and HCV, so to estimate the prevalence and associates risk behaviours.

More specifically, the surveys are aimed to collect information related to socio-demographic characteristics; alcohol and smoking, drug use and needle sharing behaviors; sexual behavior including knowledge and use of condoms; knowledge of transmission and prevention of HIV; knowledge and treatment of STI; access to available HIV and STI prevention, treatment, care and support services in selected survey areas; experience of stigma, discrimination and physical, sexual and other forms of violence; and exploring the association between the risk behaviours and HIV and other specified sexually transmitted infections.

4. Administrative requirements

- Legally registered in Nepal with at least one objective of conducting research and/or survey works in Nepal
- Research organizations are required to submit attested copies (from notary) of all necessary legal status such as organization registration/renew, audit report and tax clearance certificates.

5. Technical requirements

5.1. Survey team – updated brief CV (maximum 2 pages for each) with relevant information (full name and valid email & mobile contract, professional experience in survey or research related works, academic qualifications and relevant trainings if any, and latest publications if any) of the following seven staffs:

- i) Survey team leader - 1, research officer - 1, data analyst - 1, survey field coordinator - 1, clinician - 1, lab technician - 1 and counselor – 1
- ii) Present a brief TOR for each of these staff in the proposed IBBS surveys (in a table)

5.2. Experience of the survey team leader:

- i) As a team leader/senior research officer involved in: (a) population-based behavioural surveys and (b) biological surveys in the last five year period in Nepal and/or abroad
- ii) Please submit the Summary of the relevant experience or published papers, if any (two evidences for each behavioural and biological survey experience)

5.3. Experience of the lead research organization:

- i) As a lead organization on conducting: (a) population-based behavioural surveys and (b) biological surveys in the last five year period in Nepal and/or outside
- ii) Please submit the Summary of the relevant report or published papers affiliated with the proposed research agency if any (two evidences for each behavioural and biological survey experience)
- iii) Proven technical capacity of the laboratory and documented experience to conduct blood collection and HIV and Syphilis testing (satisfactory evidence is required)
- iv) Experience of doing similar IBBS surveys and key populations at higher risk to HIV/STI in the past, if any (provide a list of IBBS surveys conducted and certified by your organization head – this list will be verified).

6. Notes:

1. **The details of the proposal on (a) technical and (b) budget plan will be further requested upon pre-qualified bidders ONLY for the same.**
2. **National Centre for AIDS and STD Control (NCASC) hold all the rights to accept and/or reject bidding applications without notifying to bidders applied at any point before formal contract is signed with the successful bidder.**
3. **Please read the TOR carefully and ensure all administrative and technical information & evidences demanded in the TOR and EOI Application Forms are provided as mentioned.**

The interested research organizations are requested to submit their Expression Of Interest (EOI) to the following address:

The Director
National Centre for AIDS and STD Control
Teku, Kathmandu
Phone: +977-1-4261653 Fax: +977-1-4261406
Email: info@ncasc.gov.np