



## Request for Applications

### Introduction

The MEASURE Evaluation project is a cooperative agreement funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) implemented by Carolina Population Center of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC-CH) in partnership with The Futures Group International, ICF Macro, John Snow, Inc., Management Sciences for Health and Tulane University. MEASURE Evaluation aims to strengthen monitoring and evaluation systems and build capacity of individuals, organizations and systems to collect, analyze and use data to make decisions that will result in improved health programs and policies.

MEASURE Evaluation seeks an organization to implement the Priorities for Local AIDS Control Efforts (PLACE) protocol in all 17 provinces of Burundi.

### Background

Burundi has a generalized HIV epidemic with higher prevalence among key populations. Surveys conducted in 2011 indicated that the prevalence rate of HIV among sex workers is 19.8% [CI 95%: 17.5%-22.0%] and 2.4% among men who have sex with men (MSM) [CI 95%: 0.9%-3.9%]. The Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) report published in 2012 showed a decrease of HIV prevalence rate in the general population from about 3% in 2007 to 1.4% in 2010 (1% in men and 1.7% in women, 4.1% in urban areas and 1% in rural areas). However, the persistence of risky behaviors remains a reality and results indicate that the percentage of men who had two or more sexual partners over the last 12 months is 3.2% and only 14.5% report to have used a condom during last sexual intercourse.

In order to monitor and evaluate the prevention response for key populations outlined in the new HIV/AIDS Strategic Plan for 2012-2016, more information is required. Specific gaps in information include the size of key populations (including sex workers, men who have sex with men (MSM), and other groups with high rates of new sexual partnerships) and specific venues where these populations can be reached by programs. It is in this context that The Permanent Executive Secretariat of the National Council against HIV and its technical and financial partners (including USAID) plan to carry out a PLACE (Priorities for Local AIDS Control Efforts) study which will address the following objectives.

- ☐ To characterize and map high risk venues and events in Burundi where people meet new sexual partners and where outreach activities could reach people likely to acquire and transmit infection.
- ☐ To describe the characteristics of men and women who visit high risk venues and events in the capital city, cities and towns in provinces, and rural areas, estimate HIV prevalence for these

groups through HIV testing, and identify gaps in HIV prevention services (for example, HIV counseling and testing and condom availability) for these people.

- ☐ To describe the characteristics of sex workers clients of sex workers, and men who have sex with men
- ☐ To estimate the size of the sex worker and MSM populations in Burundi (supplemented with other available data and information)
- ☐ In conducting the surveys, to obtain information necessary to conduct a Modes of Transmission Analysis.

PLACE will be implemented in all 17 provinces of Burundi, beginning with Bujumbura. The aim is to present results for male and female venue patrons and sex workers in three categories of locations: Bujumbura Mairie, cities and towns in the provinces, and rural areas. Results for sex workers and MSM will also be presented

### **PLACE Methodology**

The general PLACE protocol can be found in English at <http://www.cpc.unc.edu/measure/tools/hiv-aids/place>, including example questionnaires. The protocol and questionnaires will be adapted to the setting in Burundi in collaboration with local stakeholders and the implementing organization.

PLACE is a rapid assessment tool to monitor and improve AIDS prevention program coverage in areas where HIV transmission is most likely to occur. PLACE is designed for local program managers who want to know where to target resources to prevent new infections. PLACE systematically identifies gaps in current prevention programs, enhances the local use of these findings to improve program delivery, and monitors program coverage over time using easy-to-understand indicators and coverage maps. Although PLACE findings may be used to inform several AIDS control activities, the focus is on monitoring behavior and program coverage. PLACE can also provide estimates of the size of populations key to the epidemic, including sex workers and men who have sex with men.

The approach taken in the PLACE method is to identify the public places (such as hotels, bars, and events) where people meet new sexual partners. These places are potential intervention venues where the individuals most likely to transmit HIV can be accessed. Venues and events are identified by informants in the community. Venues are then mapped and a knowledgeable person at each venue is interviewed. Next, venue patrons are interviewed about their sexual behaviors and exposure to HIV prevention at a sample of venues/events. Patrons are also tested for HIV at this time.

There are five steps in PLACE:

1. Preparation and protocol adaptation in consultation with PLACE steering committee
2. Community informant surveys
3. Venue visits and mapping

4. Interviews and HIV testing of venue patrons, including sex workers and MSM
5. Feedback and data use

### **Scope of Work**

Each step is described below, including how it will be implemented in Burundi.

**Preparation and Protocol Adaptation in consultation with PLACE steering committee:** Activities include identification of a PLACE Steering Committee, protocol development , training study supervisors, and obtaining ethical clearance.

In Step 1, a steering committee is established to guide implementation of PLACE and make key decisions to ensure that results are useful to local programs. The steering committee will meet to discuss the PLACE strategy, including protocol, geographic approach, and accessing sex workers and MSM communities. After the meeting the protocol will be written up, questionnaires finalized and study documents submitted for ethical review in Burundi. MEASURE Evaluation will work with USAID and The Permanent Executive Secretariat of the National Council against HIV to identify members of the steering committee.

**Community Informant Surveys:** Brief (10-20 minute) community informant interviews of knowledgeable people in each province will be conducted to identify venues and events where people meet new sexual partners. Community informants will be asked specifically about places where sex workers and men who have sex with men go to meet partners or socialize.

Community informants are people knowledgeable about the movement and behavior of people in an area. Trained interviewers ask community informants to identify venues and events where people meet new sexual partners, including sex workers and MSM.

The implementation team should brainstorm a list of the types of people likely to be knowledgeable about venues. Setting a target number for each type of informant helps to ensure all types of venues will be named. The variety of different venue types can include youth venues, clandestine venues, small venues, popular venues, venues where men who have sex with men meet partners, and venues where sex workers solicit clients. Bar managers, taxi drivers, police, security guards, cleaning women, street cleaners, market sellers, sex workers, STI clinic patients, health workers, truckers, college students, and street sellers have proven to be knowledgeable informants. Networks of MSM must also be contacted as informants.

Interviewers will be trained in administering community informant interviews during a one-day training. Also during this first training day, interviewers will be trained in the PLACE method in general, ethical considerations of research, the importance of confidentiality during the study, and general interviewing techniques.

Each interview of a community informant takes between 10 and 20 minutes. The informant is asked to name venues and events where people meet new sex partners, and the interviewer then asks for the location and type of each place named.

At least 40 MSM must be included as community informants.

After all interviews are completed, a venue/event list is made in Excel, and the number of times each venue or event is named is recorded. Some venues will be named by only one informant while others will be named by many informants. The list must indicate which venues were named as places where sex workers and MSM meet sex partners, and which were named as venues where the general population meet sex partners.

	<b>Bujumbura Mairie</b>	<b>Cities and towns outside Buju</b>	<b>Rural areas outside Buju</b>
<b>Community informant interviews</b>	400 (including 40 MSM)	640 total (40 each province)	640 total (40 each province)

**Venue Visits and Mapping:** The venues and events named by community informants will be visited and mapped in each district. For each venue and event, information useful for planning prevention programs will be collected based on an interview with a venue informant (30 minutes), such as the owner or manager.

In Step 3, trained interviewers visit venues reported by community informants to verify the existence of the venues. At each venue, an interview is performed with a person knowledgeable about the venue (such as an employee or regular patron at a place of business) to obtain characteristics of the venue. These venue characteristics include number of patrons, whether people meet new sexual partners at the venue, whether sex occurs at the venue, and condom availability — information important for HIV/AIDS prevention efforts. GPS coordinates of each venue are also obtained so that the geographic distribution of venues within a PPA can be displayed on a map.

Each pair of interviewers visits their assigned venues, identifies a person knowledgeable about each venue, and then requests an interview. The knowledgeable person at a venue may not be a manager or owner of that venue. At places like taxi stands, street corners, or parks, these interviews are not conducted with people in a position of leadership over the location. In such situations, the interviewer pair chooses a person who is likely to be familiar with the venue, but is not a manager, owner, or in a position of leadership. For example, a food vendor who regularly sets up near a city park could be approached for an interview about the park. While not in a position of responsibility for the park, this

person is likely to know about the types of people that visit there. The field coordinator can be consulted by the interviewers for advice before going to the venue, if necessary.

Interviewers will be trained in the questionnaire to be used for interviewing a venue representative, as well as in using a GPS device to measure the latitude and longitude of each venue.

In Bujumbura Mairie, up to 400 venues and events will be visited to verify their existence, to interview a venue informant, and to measure coordinates. In the other 16 provinces, up to 100 will be visited. If more than 400 venues are named in Bujumbura Mairie and more than 100 in other provinces, MEASURE Evaluation will develop a strategy to sample which venues will be visited.

MSM community informants will be asked to name the places where MSM receive services including NGOs providing services to MSM. Venue visits will include visits to all organizations providing services to MSM. Part of the information obtained at each MSM venue will be the number of MSM that have received services from the organization. This information will be used to estimate the number of MSM in the country.

	<b>Bujumbura Mairie</b>	<b>Each province outside Bujumbura</b>
<b>Venue informant interviews</b>	Up to 400	Up to 100

**Interviews and HIV Testing of Venue Patrons:** A representative sample of men and women socializing at venues will be interviewed and offered an HIV test. Sex workers and MSM will also be interviewed and offered an HIV test. The interview will take 20 to 30 minutes and the testing and counseling will require extra time. Respondents are asked about their risk behaviors and exposure to prevention programs. They are asked about condom use. HIV testing is done at the venue. Participants receive their results at the venue and are linked to care. Confidentiality of results is essential. Ethical review of the protocol must be obtained.

In Step 4, men and women socializing at a sample of venues are interviewed and are asked whether they believe other people meet new sexual partners at the venue, if they themselves have ever met a new sexual partner at the venue, and other questions about their sociodemographic characteristics, sexual behaviors, and exposure to HIV/AIDS prevention programs. These men and women will be offered an HIV test and counseling. Sex workers and MSM will also be interviewed and offered an HIV test and counseling. This step is the only one in which self-reported information is gathered from respondents. The information obtained is used to verify information reported by venue representatives during Step 3 and to identify self-reported sexual behaviors of patrons, which provide important information for monitoring an intervention.

Individual interviews with 300 male and 300 female patrons in Bujumbura Mairie will be performed at approximately 40 venues. MEASURE Evaluation will select venues for individual interviews using a systematic fixed-interval sampling strategy with the probability of selection proportional to the size of

the venue. The size of a venue is defined by the number of people socializing at the venue during a busy time as reported by the venue representative. Prior to interval selection, venues eligible for individual interviews are sorted by geographic location, as indicated by geographic code, and size of venue.

Interviews with sex workers will be conducted at all venues named as places where these populations can be found until the target number of respondents is reached. 300 sex workers will be interviewed in Bujumbura Mairie and 300 total in cities and towns in the provinces outside the capital city (about 20 in each province).

Interviews with MSM require an adapted approach. In step 2, community informants will be asked to name venues where MSM socialize and in step 3 each of these venues will be visited for verification along with all other venues. MSM venues will be visited twice prior to Step 4. Information about the number of MSM visiting the venue will be collected during the first visit. During the second visit, a token such as a key chain will be distributed to MSM who are at the venue. The individual interviews in Step 4 will ask whether the person received the token. The proportion reporting that they previously received a token will be used as another method to estimate the size of the population. We expect that this population will be more difficult to reach. For this reason, we will use a network-based method for recruiting MSM in Step 4 whereby MSM recruit other MSM to participate in an interview and HIV test. Incentives, such as small gifts, will be given to MSM respondents to encourage participation and recruitment of other MSM. This component of the study will require 4 interviewers dedicated to interviewing MSM at venues or other locations and a vehicle that can be used as a private place to interview MSM and test for HIV. The MSM interviewers must be experienced in conducting rapid HIV tests. MSM interviews and testing will begin concurrent with community informant interviews and conclude when all other field work in Bujumbura Mairie concludes in order to allow sufficient time to interview as many MSM as possible in the capital city. MSM will also be interviewed in towns and cities in other provinces throughout the time other field work occurs. The 4 interviewers may be divided into separate teams while field work is completed in the provinces, in order to ensure consistency in the methodological approach to recruiting MSM in Bujumbura Mairie. The total target for MSM interviews is 300. This portion of the protocol is still under development.

The total target number of patrons to be interviewed in the 16 provinces outside Bujumbura Mairie are 320 male patrons and 320 female, divided equally between the towns/cities and rural areas. Currently, we plan to return to 5 venues in cities/towns of each province and 5 venues in rural areas of each province, and interview 8 people at each venue (4 men and 4 women). (If fewer than 4 men and 4 women are anticipated to be at each venue in the provinces, the number of venues will be increased and a smaller number of target interviews will be made at each venue. This decision must be made prior to field work.)

	Bujumbura Mairie	Cities/towns outside Buju	Rural areas outside Buju
# of venues for interviews	40	160 (5 each province)	160 (5 each province)
# of patron interviews	Men : 300 Women : 300	Men : 320 Women : 320 (4 men, 4 women each venue)*	Men : 320 Women : 320 (4 men, 4 women each venue)*
# sex worker interviews	300	300 (~20 each province)	--
# MSM interviews	300		--

HIV testing and counselling will be offered to all participants in the survey at the time of the survey. Testing and counselling will take place at or near the venue. Testing and counselling staff must be trained and experienced. They must connect anyone testing positive to services.

Interviews and testing must be done during a busy time for the venue, usually at night. The field team must be available to work at night and on weekends in order to complete this portion of the survey.

Interviewers will be trained in the use of the patron, sex worker and MSM questionnaires prior to data collection. Training will take place during a 3 day period.

**Feedback and Data Use:** A workshop will be held to disseminate PLACE results and to write action plans in collaboration with stakeholders.

Results will be presented at a workshop to stakeholders. The presentation will include PowerPoint slides and a printed handout. The handout will include the executive summary of results with summary tables, and maps. During the presentation, stakeholders will discuss the results and how they can contribute to programs, developing action plans to facilitate the use of results. A full report will also be available to stakeholders electronically.

Maps can be made using ArcGIS software, Google Earth, or other geographic software such that venues can be displayed using different symbols and colors to illustrate risk and gaps in coverage. Maps may include venue types, venue sizes, condom availability, and HIV prevention program coverage.

## **Timeframe**

The period of performance for this sub-agreement will be from the date of signing and shall not extend beyond February 28, 2014.

## **Deliverables**

Final work plan to be negotiated with UNC within 30 days of agreement signing. Work plan includes organization of interviewing teams, target dates for field work, and final budget.

1. Ethical approval of PLACE activity in Burundi by a recognized IRB.
2. Fieldwork reports at the end of each step of the PLACE protocol (at end of community informant interviews, at end of venue and event visits, at end of patron, sex worker and MSM interviews/testing, at end of feedback workshop). Reports include numbers of interviews completed, dates of field work, and issues in the field.
3. A dataset of characteristics of community informants interviewed and identified from throughout Burundi, including 360 in Bujumbura Mairie, 40 MSM in Bujumbura Mairie, and 800 in the other 16 provinces. Data must be entered using Epi-Data and provided as Epi-Data files or entered using ACASI methods. Note that Epi-Data is free software. UNC can provide assistance in designing and using Epi Data for data entry.
4. List of venues and events where people meet new sexual partners based on community informant interviews provided according to specifications in an Excel file. The list must include venues and events for heterosexual people, for sex workers and for MSM. A separate list will be made for each province, for a total of 17 lists.
5. A dataset of the characteristics of reported venues and events. The data are from interviews with a knowledgeable person at the selected venues and events. The maximum number of venues and events visited for an interview is 400 in Bujumbura Mairie and 100 in each of the other 16 provinces. If more than those 2000 are found, a sample will be of venues and events will be taken. The data must include geographic coordinates (latitude and longitude) of each venue visited. The data should be provided as EPI-Data files or as ASCAI output files. The applicant can offer to conduct the interviews using ACASI methods or paper and pen. If the interviews are done using paper questionnaires, the data entry should be entered twice (double data entry). Data entry templates must be done in Epi-Data or similar data entry program using validity checks and range checks.
6. A dataset of a sample of patrons and sex workers interviewed and tested for HIV at a sample of venues and events and a dataset of all MSM interviewed and tested for HIV. Data can be collected using ACASI method or by paper questionnaires. These interviews must be conducted according to the protocol in terms of selection of respondents and time of day. The protocol will

be finalized at agreement signing. The data must include a file linked to the survey data with results of HIV testing of each interview respondent. The target sample sizes are:

- a. Male patrons: 900 total (300 Bujumbura Mairie, 300 cities/towns in provinces, 300 rural)
  - b. Female patrons: 900 total (300 Bujumbura Mairie, 300 cities/towns in provinces, 300 rural)
  - c. Sex workers: 600 total (300 in Bujumbura Mairie, 300 cities/towns in provinces)
  - d. Men who have sex with men: 300 in Bujumbura Mairie and other cities/towns in provinces
7. Evidence that confidentiality was maintained regarding responses of the respondent and HIV test results. The applicant must describe how persons tested were referred for follow-up according to national protocols and how confidentiality of test results was maintained.
  8. A report of results of indicators agreed upon with the finalization of the protocol. Most likely, the report will include frequency tables of sociodemographic characteristics of respondents, behavior, exposure to prevention programs and HIV prevalence; venue characteristics; maps of venues illustrating venue type and size, condom availability and other HIV prevention at venues.
  9. A report describing feedback of results to stakeholders in Burundi.
  10. A final report describing the findings and recommendations from stakeholders.
  11. Other deliverables as agreed at agreement signing.

### **Application requirements**

Organizations wishing to implement the PLACE stud in Burundi must submit an application that describes their technical, organizational and logistical capacity to do so. The proposal should be no more than 10 pages, 1.5 spaced with 1 inch margins and 11 point Arial font. Curriculum vitae, the budget, and budget narrativewill not count against page limits. The application should provide the following:

**Proposal Cover Sheet** that clearly identifies the proposal as responding to this RFA in its title and states the vendor's address, phone numbers, and URL. There should also be a contact person listed for purposes related to this procurement. The cover sheet must confirm that a person is available to meet with the study director during the weekend of February 22-23 (Saturday or Sunday) in Bujumbura. The cover sheet must provide an email address so that a specific time and place for the interview can be scheduled. All applicants meeting the minimum requirements will be interviewed in person by the study director.

**Technical proposal** that responds to each of the items listed above. The applicant should describe in detail their approach to surveys of most at risk populations (including sex workers and MSM), incorporating HIV testing into the survey, mapping , data use for HIV prevention, and how they achieve high data quality and maintain confidentiality. A majority of the interviews will be conducted at night and on the weekends. The proposal must describe the willingness of the applicant to find interviewers willing to travel and work evenings and weekends.

**Organizational description** that describes permanent staff and affiliated individuals that will implement the project. The applicant should name a project director to provide technical leadership and oversight. A curriculum vita (CV) of no more than 3 pages each for all technical staff should accompany the proposal.

**Description of any constraints** regarding implementing the work within nine months from the time of agreement signing.

**Budget and budget narrative.** The budget should show each line item clearly and must list salaries and level of effort per person. All travel and meeting expenses must be itemized in the budget. A budget narrative documenting assumptions, a description of line items and other documentation should accompany the budget.

## **Deadline**

**The deadline to submit proposals is March 4, 2013.** The completed proposal must be submitted electronically to [measure\\_rfp@unc.edu](mailto:measure_rfp@unc.edu).

## **Proposal Parameters**

The proposal should be no more than 10 pages, 1.5 spaced with 1 inch margins and 11 point Arial font. Curriculum vitae, the budget, and budget narrative will not count against page limits.

## **Proposal Review and Notification of Intent to Enter into a Sub-agreement**

Following receipt of the applications, the MEASURE Evaluation team will review the received application materials and will contact a sub-set of applicants for an in-person interview must meet with MEASURE Evaluation staff in Bujumbura on February 23 or 24, 2013. This meeting is mandatory. Following that, a final selection will be made and the process of developing a sub-agreement with the successful applicant will begin. All organizations not awarded the agreement will be informed.