

## **TERMS OF REFERENCE (TOR)**

### **NATIONAL-LEVEL INTEGRATED BIOLOGICAL AND BEHAVIOURAL SURVEILLANCE (IBBS) SURVEYS AMONG MALE LABOUR MIGRANTS IN NEPAL, 2023**

SCI-NEP-ITT-CO-2023-004

#### **Background on Save the Children**

Save the Children is the leading global independent organisation for children. Save the Children believes every child deserves a future. Around the world, we work every day to give children a healthy start in life, the opportunity to learn and protection from harm. When crisis strikes, and children are most vulnerable, we are always among the first to respond and the last to leave. We ensure children's unique needs are met and their voices are heard. We deliver lasting results for millions of children, including those hardest to reach.

We do whatever it takes for children – every day and in times of crisis – transforming their lives and the future we share.

**Our vision:** A world in which every child attains the right to survival, protection, development and participation.

**Our mission:** To inspire breakthroughs in the way the world treats children, and to achieve immediate and lasting change in their lives.

**Our values:** Accountability, ambition, collaboration, creativity and integrity.

We are committed to ensuring our resources are used as efficiently as possible, in order to focus them on achieving maximum impact for children.

#### **Background information/context**

HIV in Nepal is characterized as a concentrated epidemic with 30,000 estimated populations living with HIV, and the adult HIV prevalence stands at 0.12% in 2021. Key populations remain the focus of the National HIV Strategic Plan (NHSP) 2021-2026 and these populations include female sex workers, transgender (TG) sex workers, male sex workers, clients of sex workers, transgender people, gay men and other men who have sex with men (MSM), people who inject drugs, prison population as well as migrants going to India. Additionally, strategy also recommends investment in areas of critical enablers like strategic information in order to generate evidence for better programming to accelerate the country's HIV response. Furthermore, the strategy also emphasizes improved gathering of strategic information through surveillance.

National Consolidated Guidelines on Strategic Information of HIV Response in Nepal, 2022-2026, recommends conducting national-level Integrated Biological and Behavioral Surveillance (IBBS) Survey among KPs at higher risk for HIV in the regular interval. IBBS surveys help in

assessing the key impact and outcome indicators such as uptake of programs/interventions, HIV-related risk behaviors, HIV and STI prevalence among the key populations. In addition, IBBS survey helps to monitor epidemic trends which support in evidence-informed planning of HIV response in Nepal. This planned survey will be conducted as per the designs and methods recommended by the National Consolidated Guidelines on Strategic Information of HIV Response in Nepal, 2022-2026. However, survey design including methodology might be changed as per the latest developments in the field.

Nepal has proven experience of conducting epidemic zones (Valley, Highway and Hills) specific IBBS surveys successfully among KPs for >18 years. Epidemic zones specific IBBS surveys have been successfully conducted in various rounds in Nepal. This is the first-time country is conducting national-level surveillance survey among male labour migrants (MLM) with an aim to generate both national and subnational (province) HIV estimates.

### **Survey Objectives**

The main objective of IBBS survey is to measure the prevalence of HIV, STIs (syphilis), Hepatitis C virus (HCV) and their associated risk behaviors among MLM in Nepal. The research organization is sought to conduct different activities from protocol, tools development, data collection/ analysis to dissemination of IBBS survey findings.

### **Location and official travel involved**

The national level IBBS Survey including formative assessment among MLM will be carried out through a research organization/agency for the maximum period of 7 months. The research organization will support different phases of the survey. The survey is planned to be implemented in at least 35 districts of Nepal covering all seven provinces of Nepal, but exact number of districts will be finalized after formative assessment and consultation workshop/meetings with the study team.

### **Services the Supplier will provide**

The following are the major services that research organization/ bidders will provide:

#### **a) Key tasks during the preparatory stage**

- Develop technical documents (protocols and tools including questionnaire (both in English and Nepali), consent form (both in English and Nepali), data collection forms and other required research tools for both formative assessment and IBBS survey.
- Finalize survey plan that includes the composition of the field survey team, work plan with timelines.
- Review and address comments provided by key stakeholders on technical documents. Make sure that all the technical documents (protocol) and tools (questionnaire for both biological and behavioral components, informed consent and other forms and formats etc.) are updated and finalized.
- Develop standard operating procedures (SOPs) for each step of the laboratory testing process, from specimen collection, labelling, handling to instrument performance validation. In addition, SOP must include detailed process for sample transportation, storage, testing and results from External Quality Assurance Scheme (EQAS).
- Develop tablet-based computers e-application using the approved data collection form.

- Upload study tools in tablet-based computers e-application. Make sure all the skip patterns, responses, legal values etc. are well defined.
- Develop survey monitoring checklist and share with survey team.
- Develop all the technical documents including methodology as per the recommendations of National Consolidated Guidelines on Strategic Information of HIV response in Nepal 2022- 2026.
- Organize training for the field survey team using the reference of the IBBS Survey Training Curriculum developed by NCASC and other organizations (Biobehavioral Survey Guidelines from 'Global HIV Strategic Information Working Group'). Also review relevant surveillance survey guidelines released by the WHO and other international organizations and reporting requirements to finalize methodology including survey tools.

**b) Formative assessment**

- Develop formative assessment protocol and tools. Recruit team for conducting formative assessment.
- Implement field work for formative assessment.
- Manage and analyze mixed methods data of formative assessment and prepare formative research report submitted by research organization. Address comments provided by key stakeholders on formative assessment report and finalize dissemination content (summary, PPT etc.) of formative assessment.
- Make sure that recommendations of formative assessment are incorporated in the methodology of IBBS survey such as finalization of location survey site, sampling frame, movement plan etc.
- Prepare and share meeting notes of all major meetings, and technical consultations attended or involved during the period.

**c) IBBS survey fieldwork**

- Recruit survey team to conduct field work and experts to facilitate training and share it with SCI for approval. Compile training PPT and share with SCI and study team for review and approval.
- Organize training for field team to orient them about survey methodology, survey tools, ethical considerations, and lab procedures etc. Collect and compile all the content of the training and share with SCI.
- Collect biological and behavioral data from survey participants as per the approved protocol. HIV, Syphilis testing will be conducted among all enrolled survey participants whereas HCV testing will be performed among male labor migrants with behavior of injecting drug use for recreational purposes (history or currently injecting drug use behaviour).
- Conduct monitoring visits using standard checklist and prepare trip reports of the monitoring visits carried out during survey period.
- Closely monitor field work and share data collection status with SCI and study team.
- Regularly review collected data and provide feedback to field team by keeping the study team in the email loop.

- Conduct supervision and monitoring visits to the survey sites to ensure quality data collection as per the approved survey protocols. NCASC and other key partners will also conduct monitoring visits of fieldwork using a standard monitoring checklist. Maintain confidentiality of the information collected from the survey participants.
- Ensure implementation of fieldwork activities as per approved location, time plan and protocol.
- Finalize dataset with labels, codebook and share it with SCI and the study team.
- Attend key meetings invited by NCASC, SCI and other stakeholders for survey progress monitoring and present the progress.
- Prepare and share meeting notes of all major meetings, and technical consultations attended or involved during the period.
- Make sure that biological data are collected as per the recommended protocol and samples for EQAS are transported and stored in the central lab in Kathmandu. Coordinate with National Public Health Laboratory (NPHL) for EQAS testing and reporting and incorporating results within dataset.
- Monitor to maintain quality control of the entire survey work throughout the survey period.
- Prepare and share dataset in standard software format such as STATA, SPSS etc.

**d) Key tasks during data analysis and finalization of report and dissemination content**

- Produce national and sub-national (province) adjusted estimates.
- Prepare report and share it for language editing by keeping SCI official in an email loop. After language editing send final report for review and feedback of the study team and other stakeholders.
- Prepare final dissemination content such as fact sheet, press release and PPT. Research organization must share final dissemination content with the study team one week prior the dissemination date.

**Experience and skill set required**

The aforementioned work will be carried out by an experienced and qualified research organization/bidder. The research organization will be selected through a competitive and transparent process. Relevant experience criteria will include:

**Essential**

- Experience in conducting at least one population-based health related surveys / research in Nepal or international level.

**Preferred**

- Experience in conducting large scale household or institutional based surveys / research by covering different provinces of Nepal will be an added advantage.
- Proven technical capacity for biological sample collection and testing.
- Research organization have team consisting of full-time staff with academic degrees (Public Health, Epidemiology, Statistics and Laboratory sciences) expertise in conducting complex surveys and advanced statistical analysis (further

documentary evidence will be requested if research organization/bidders shortlisted for further processing).

- Ability to produce quality work within deadlines.
- Proven experience in working with community based or community led organizations.

### **Expected Deliverables**

SCI expects the following deliverables to be provided:

<b><i>Deliverable number</i></b>	<b><i>Deliverable title</i></b>	<b><i>Description</i></b>	<b><i>Format and style</i></b>
1. Preparatory phase	a. Survey protocol b. Biological and behavioural data collection tool c. Tablet based data collection application. d. Survey monitoring checklist e. Training content (schedule, PPT etc.) f. informed consent	Deliverable 'a, b, d, e' should include all the methodology, tools to be used in survey. Deliverable 'a' must be written in English language whereas all the other deliverables must be in both English and Nepali language.	Word file, PPT, software readable e-recording in tablet-based computers.
2. Formative assessment phase	a. Assessment brief protocol b. Assessment tools c. Assessment report and dissemination content	Assessment report must include recommendations specific to the survey improvement such as in methodology, sample size, geography to cover, incentives to provide etc.  Deliverable 'a' and 'c' must be written in English language whereas deliverable 'b' must be in both English and Nepali languages.	Word file, PPT, software readable e-recording in tablet-based computers
3. IBBS survey field work phase	a. Field team details b. Monitoring visit reports c. Data collection status d. Codebook and Dataset in standard readable software	CV, contact details and responsibilities of each team member. Provide draft results on key indicators by August 2023	Word file and excel sheet, PPT, software readable dataset (.dta, .sav)

	(.dta and .sav versions). e. EQAS results		
4. Data analysis, Report and dissemination phase	a. Report b. Dissemination content (factsheet, press release, PPT)	Finalize and share report in the approved skeleton of report by study team. Prepare all the deliverables in English language and press release in Nepali language.	Word file, PPT

### **Timeline**

Estimated Commencement Date: 22 May 2023

Estimated End Date: 30 November 2023

<b><i>Deliverable number</i></b>	<b><i>Deliverable title</i></b>	<b><i>Submit to*</i></b>	<b><i>Delivery date</i></b>
1	Preparatory phase	Study Team	30 June 2023
2	Mapping field work phase	Study Team	30 July 2023
3	Data analysis and preliminary report	Study Team	30 August 2023
4	Complete data management and analysis	Study Team	30 October 2023
5	Final Report and dissemination phase	Study Team	30 November 2023

\*Study team details will be provided later. Keep Sr. SI Specialist in all email loop to monitor survey progress throughout the process.

### **Out of Scope**

Research organizations also need to be involved in several other survey related activities like coordination with government authorities and other key stakeholders for smooth execution of activities.

### **Status updates/reporting**

Research organization must submit survey bi-weekly progress update in various formats (word, excel, PPT etc.) either in in-person meeting or via email with study team.

**Acceptance**

*All the above deliverables (1 to 5) will be verified and accepted by Sr. SI Specialist within 2-weeks of delivery date as per the approved protocol and agreed formats.*

**General assumptions and dependencies**

*Research organization will work closely with key stakeholders such as NCASC, SCI, AHF Nepal, FHI360 and UN organizations and other communities at province and local levels to promote ownership of the process and ensure smooth execution of all the planned activities within the deadline.*

**Payment information**

*30% of the total cost payable of satisfactory completion of deliverable 1*

*40% of the total cost payable of satisfactory completion of deliverable 2*

*10% of the total cost payable of satisfactory completion of deliverable 3*

*10% of the total cost payable of satisfactory completion of deliverable 4 &*

*10% of the total cost payable of satisfactory completion of deliverable 5*

The Fees are inclusive of all costs, taxes, overheads and expenses, including travel, subsistence and accommodation.

**How to apply for the services**

*Please refer to the Invitation to Tender (ITT) Document for instructions on how and when to submit a bid.*