



Self-Assessment Checklist: Key Populations

There are five 'key populations' that have a disproportionately high prevalence of HIV infection when viewed across countries globally: men who have sex with men (MSM), sex workers and their clients, people who use drugs, prisoners and transgender people. The development and implementation of focused HIV prevention, care, treatment and support interventions for these populations are critical in limiting HIV epidemics around the world.

HIV programmes that address key populations need to also address the meaningful involvement of people living with HIV (PLHIV), the diversity within these populations, and to consider the 'drivers of the epidemic' - the structural and social factors that increase people's vulnerability to HIV. These include stigma and discrimination, gender inequality and human rights violations as well as situational and behavioural factors such as homelessness, multiple concurrent partners, alcohol and drug use, poverty, unemployment etc.

In addition to taking into account the needs of key populations in a specific epidemic context, organisations should also consider that, in many high-prevalence countries, HIV prevalence is not evenly distributed across the 'broader population', and that there are sub-populations within general populations who experience heightened vulnerability to HIV and/or growing levels of prevalence. In order to address HIV effectively, programmes should take into account the full array of available data to help determine populations with specific needs and greater vulnerability. These may include, but are not limited to:

- women and girls;
- men and boys;
- children and young people;
- older people;
- mobile populations, and;
- populations in emergency situations.

Therefore, organisations are encouraged to conduct this self-assessment checklist and then cross-reference other Code modules that focus on the specific vulnerable populations listed above.



The Code identifies two key principles on key populations:

- We address the causes of vulnerability to HIV infection and the impacts of HIV.
- Our programmes are informed by evidence in order to respond to the needs of those most vulnerable to HIV and its consequences.

This self-assessment checklist will help you assess the degree to which your organisation is successfully implementing these principles. The questions are designed to be thinking points / guidelines to help you identify areas that are already at a 'good practice' level, and areas that need to be developed and strengthened.

author

This checklist was developed by the International HIV/AIDS Alliance.



Self-Assessment Checklist: Key Populations

Self-Assessment Instructions

The questions in this checklist will help your organisation assess whether it is effectively addressing key populations within your HIV programmes. It should be completed by a group of three to five staff members who are involved with HIV programming at your organisation.

There are 4 parts of this self-assessment guide:

Section A: Meaningful Involvement of People Living with HIV (MIPA)

Section B: Cross-Cutting Themes for Working with Key Populations

Section C: Direct Service Provision to Key Populations

Section D: Key Populations

All organisations using this self-assessment guide should answer all questions in Sections A and B. Organisations that provide direct services to key populations (for example, outreach work for sex workers and injecting drug users, provision of treatment to people living with HIV, etc.) should also answer questions in Section C. Section D includes focused questions for each key population. The sets of questions that you choose to answer will depend on which key populations your organisation is committed to supporting.

Remember, this is a learning process for your organisation, so the more questions you consider, the more you will learn about your programmes. Therefore you may choose to answer the questions relating to those populations that are indirectly relevant to your work as well as those directly relevant.

the Code

The Code of Good Practice for NGOs Responding to HIV/AIDS (the 'Code') was created by a broad consortium of NGOs to provide a shared vision of good practice to which NGOs can commit and be held accountable.

The Code outlines principles and practices that are informed by evidence and underscore successful NGO responses to HIV. It identifies a series of areas that are key to HIV programming and articulates fundamental principles that should be applied to HIV programmes in each of these areas.

These principles are aspirational, setting out examples of good practice that NGOs can work towards over time.

For more information on the Code, go to www.hivcode.org

Please indicate your answer to each question by marking the appropriate box.

- Y** Yes, we undertake this work/activity
- I** Insufficient, in preparation, or is not followed in practice
- N** No, we've not yet tackled this work/activity
- NR** Not relevant to our work

Please be honest in completing this checklist. It is expected that your scoring will vary between modules, depending on your area of expertise.

There is no formalized scoring process for this assessment. Instead, we suggest that you look at the questions that you answered 'no' or 'insufficient' to, and then select areas that are most relevant for your organisation to improve upon in the short-term.



Self-Assessment Checklist: Key Populations

Action Plan

We challenge you to use this tool to identify areas that your organisation needs to strengthen in order to reach a 'good practice' level, and then develop a brief Action Plan that highlights examples of HOW you will improve your work on key populations over the next year. You can use the Action Plan template provided at the end of this module or create your own.

There are nine Key Questions highlighted in the checklist in red. These questions address fundamental issues that you need to consider first when assessing your organisation's advocacy activities. As you develop your Action Plan, keep these questions in mind and if you have answered 'no' to any of them, this would be a good starting point for improving your programmes!

How to save the Action Plan:

Complete the self-assessment module and Action Plan electronically, save the file and submit it to the Code Secretariat by email. The Secretariat will credit all NGOs that submit Action Plans as 'Implementing' NGOs and full signatories of the Code. After the period of six months, we will ask you to measure your progress against your Action Plan.



Checklist

Please indicate your answer by marking the appropriate box.

Y Yes, we undertake this work/activity

I Insufficient, in preparation, or being considered

N No, we've not yet tackled this work/activity

NR Not relevant to our work

A

Meaningful Involvement of People Living with HIV (MIPA)

The impact of HIV is felt most strongly and understood most profoundly by those living with HIV. The meaningful involvement of people living with HIV (PLHIV) in HIV programme design, implementation and evaluation empowers PLHIV to draw on their lived experiences and makes a powerful contribution to the HIV response. This in turn contributes to reducing stigma and discrimination and increasing the effectiveness and appropriateness of programmes and services.

- Y** **I** **N** **NR**

1. Does your organisation have an active GIPA (greater involvement of PLHIV) or MIPA programme/strategy that is developed and defined by and with PLHIV?
- Y** **I** **N** **NR**

2. Does your organisation have policies for employing and recruiting PLHIV in different roles and at different levels of the organisation (for example, as Board members, staff and/or volunteers)?
- Y** **I** **N** **NR**

3. Does your organisation have workplace policies and practices that recognise the health and related needs of PLHIV, and create an enabling environment that supports their involvement in the organisation?
- Y** **I** **N** **NR**

4. Does your organisation support PLHIV (including women and young people) to participate in decision-making or policy-making processes?
- Y** **I** **N** **NR**

5. Does your organisation support PLHIV to carry out real and meaningful roles in HIV programmes and services (for example, as counsellors, peer educators and/or outreach workers)?
- Y** **I** **N** **NR**

6. Does your organisation support capacity-building within PLHIV organisations and networks?
- Y** **I** **N** **NR**

7. Does your organisation advocate for and support PLHIV to be active spokespersons?
- Y** **I** **N** **NR**

8. Does your organisation ensure PLHIV that work with your organisation and their networks are supported to be accountable to their members, and are able to represent the views of their membership?

Actions needed to support Section A:



Checklist

B

Cross-Cutting Themes for Working with Key Populations

This section includes questions that relate to:

- organisational support for key populations;
- advocacy support for key populations, and;
- drivers of the epidemic – including stigma and discrimination, gender inequality and human rights violations.

B.1 Organisational support for key populations

<input type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> I <input type="radio"/> N <input type="radio"/> NR	1. Are your organisation's services and/or programmes based on evidence and a context-specific needs assessment?
<input type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> I <input type="radio"/> N <input type="radio"/> NR	2. Does your organisation regularly research which populations are particularly vulnerable to HIV infection in your local context?
<input type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> I <input type="radio"/> N <input type="radio"/> NR	3. Has your organisation identified the most vulnerable within each key population? For example, people with disabilities, migrants who do not speak the local language, female injecting drug users, street-based sex workers.
<input type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> I <input type="radio"/> N <input type="radio"/> NR	4. Does your organisation have a written strategic plan that describes its priorities for addressing key populations, when and how you will achieve them?
<input type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> I <input type="radio"/> N <input type="radio"/> NR	5. Does your organisation have a policy for the recruitment of people from key populations as Board members, staff and volunteers?
<input type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> I <input type="radio"/> N <input type="radio"/> NR	6. Do all staff members understand what is meant by 'key populations' and what might make these populations particularly vulnerable to HIV infection?
<input type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> I <input type="radio"/> N <input type="radio"/> NR	7. Have all staff members been trained on:
<input type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> I <input type="radio"/> N <input type="radio"/> NR	• the basics of HIV?
<input type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> I <input type="radio"/> N <input type="radio"/> NR	• human rights and rights-based programming?
<input type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> I <input type="radio"/> N <input type="radio"/> NR	• stigma and discrimination?
<input type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> I <input type="radio"/> N <input type="radio"/> NR	• advocacy planning and skills-building?



Checklist

<input type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> I <input type="radio"/> N <input type="radio"/> NR	• gender?
<input type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> I <input type="radio"/> N <input type="radio"/> NR	• specific needs of all relevant key populations?
<input type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> I <input type="radio"/> N <input type="radio"/> NR	8. Does your organisation consult and work in partnership with networks and/or civil society representatives of key populations?
<input type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> I <input type="radio"/> N <input type="radio"/> NR	9. Are representative members of relevant key populations involved in the design and improvement of your organisation's services and/or programmes?
<input type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> I <input type="radio"/> N <input type="radio"/> NR	10. Does your organisational environment foster non-discrimination and value the contribution of key populations?
<input type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> I <input type="radio"/> N <input type="radio"/> NR	11. Has your organisation built partnerships with governments, donors, the public sector and a full range of NGOs to coordinate responses for key populations?
<input type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> I <input type="radio"/> N <input type="radio"/> NR	12. Does your organisation provide and/or advocate for access to and availability of comprehensive HIV prevention, care and treatment interventions that meet the needs of relevant key populations?
<input type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> I <input type="radio"/> N <input type="radio"/> NR	13. Is data collected disaggregated by age and gender in order to monitor the impact of your organisation's work on males, females and transgendered people, and younger and older people?
<input type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> I <input type="radio"/> N <input type="radio"/> NR	14. Has your organisation incorporated key 'newly identified drivers of the epidemic' into your HIV programmes? For example, multiple concurrent sexual partners, transactional sex, sharing of injection equipment and intergenerational sex.

Actions needed to support Section B.1:



Checklist

B.2 Advocacy support for key populations

Y I N NR

15. Does your organisation carry out any advocacy activities?

Y I N NR

16. Are advocacy activities included in your organisational / strategic plan?

Y I N NR

17. Do all advocacy activities that relate to key populations meaningfully involve members of relevant key populations?

Y I N NR

18. Does your organisation participate in relevant local and national forums (including HIV and AIDS, human rights and civil society learning and planning committees)?

Y I N NR

19. Does your organisation work to reduce the barriers key populations face in accessing health and social care?

Y I N NR

20. Does your organisation monitor whether policies and laws that create an enabling environment for HIV prevention and care are enforced, and advocate for them to be enacted where necessary?

Y I N NR

21. Does your organisation monitor and work with law enforcement agencies to help ensure that law enforcement and policing activities do not impede the access of key populations to prevention, treatment and care services?

Y I N NR

22. Does your organisation help to ensure that changes in law and policy are accompanied by adequately funded “know your rights” and social mobilisation campaigns that involve key populations?

Y I N NR

23. Does your organisation monitor and evaluate your advocacy efforts?

Actions needed to support Section B.2:



Checklist

B.3 Stigma and discrimination

Y I N NR

24. Does your organisation advocate for legislative and policy environments that address stigma and discrimination against key populations?

Y I N NR

25. Does your organisation enhance community knowledge about the forms, causes and effects of HIV-related stigma and discrimination, including issues of gender, sexuality, age and behaviour?

Y I N NR

26. Does your organisation involve key populations in the design, delivery and evaluation of programmes designed to address stigma and discrimination against key populations?

Actions needed to support Section B.3:

B.4 Gender inequality

Y I N NR

27. Does your organisation contribute to efforts that:

- encourage leaders of society to speak out against stigma, discrimination, gender inequality and women's empowerment?

Y I N NR

- enact, publicise and enforce laws and policies that protect women and girls against sexual violence, disinheritance and gender discrimination of all kinds (including harmful traditional practices and sexual violence in and outside of marriage)?

Y I N NR

- ensure that women are adequately represented in policy-and decision-making on issues relating to HIV and AIDS?

Y I N NR

- ensure that laws and policies that directly protect against gender inequality and bias against people perceived to be at heightened risk for HIV (including sex workers and men who have sex with men, are enacted and enforced)?



Checklist

Y I N NR

28. Does your organisation build the capacity of women's organisations and gender equality organisations as key partners in the development of national HIV and AIDS strategies for key populations?

Y I N NR

29. Does your organisation support campaigns, community dialogue and/or policy and legislation work to change harmful gender norms and eliminate violence and exploitation of women and girls?

Y I N NR

30. Does your organisation have a recruitment policy and/or process that supports equal opportunities and pay for male and female Board members, staff and volunteers?

Actions needed to support Section B.4:

B.5 Human rights violations

Y I N NR

31. Does your organisation advocate for a legislative and policy environment that supports the human rights of key populations (for example, promoting gender equality and access to health education)?

Y I N NR

32. Is your organisation committed to the development and implementation of programmes and policies that are based on the human rights of key populations?

Y I N NR

33. In case of human rights violations/discrimination, does your organisation's referral system have relevant information legal services?

Actions needed to support Section B.5:



Checklist

C

Direct Service Provision to Key Populations

This section will help you assess how comprehensive your organisation's advocacy strategy is.

<input type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> I <input type="radio"/> N <input type="radio"/> NR	1. Do you involve service users in the development and design of new services and literature?
<input type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> I <input type="radio"/> N <input type="radio"/> NR	2. Does your organisation provide Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials that are specifically tailored to key populations?
<input type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> I <input type="radio"/> N <input type="radio"/> NR	3. Can people without valid health insurance access your services?
<input type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> I <input type="radio"/> N <input type="radio"/> NR	4. Can people without identity documents access your services?
<input type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> I <input type="radio"/> N <input type="radio"/> NR	5. Can people under 18 years of age access your services?
<input type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> I <input type="radio"/> N <input type="radio"/> NR	6. Does your organisation ensure that service users maintain their anonymity?
<input type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> I <input type="radio"/> N <input type="radio"/> NR	7. Is your organisation part of a network of service providers working with vulnerable populations in your context?
<input type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> I <input type="radio"/> N <input type="radio"/> NR	8. Does your organisation have rules and guidelines for outreach workers and peer educators?
<input type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> I <input type="radio"/> N <input type="radio"/> NR	9. Does your organisation train your outreach and peer workers on:
<input type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> I <input type="radio"/> N <input type="radio"/> NR	• HIV and AIDS?
<input type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> I <input type="radio"/> N <input type="radio"/> NR	• human rights?
<input type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> I <input type="radio"/> N <input type="radio"/> NR	• stigma and discrimination?
<input type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> I <input type="radio"/> N <input type="radio"/> NR	• gender?
<input type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> I <input type="radio"/> N <input type="radio"/> NR	• sexual diversity?



Checklist

Y I N NR

• specific needs of the key populations that they are working with?

Y I N NR

10. Does your organisation have a system for burn-out prevention among outreach and peer workers?

Y I N NR

11. Are service user evaluations conducted?

Y I N NR

12. Are the results of the evaluation used to strengthen services and shared with service users?

Actions needed to support Section C:



Checklist

D

Key Populations

This section provides focused questions to help you assess how well your organisation is supporting specific key populations.

D.1 Men who have sex with men (MSM), including gay and bisexual men

Y I N NR

1. Have you already answered questions in Sections A and B on MIPA and cross-cutting issues?

Y I N NR

2. Has your organisation identified all-male environments in your context where men might be particularly vulnerable to HIV infection as a consequence of sex with other men?

For example, prisons and migrant labour accommodation.

Y I N NR

3. Does your organisation support efforts to ensure that MSM and their sexual partners have access to appropriate HIV prevention information and commodities?

Y I N NR

4. Does your organisation support efforts to amend laws that prohibit same-sex sexual acts between consenting adults?

Y I N NR

5. Does your organisation contribute to de-stigmatising MSM and actions to address homophobia?

Actions needed to support Section D.1:

D.2 Sex workers and their clients

Y I N NR

6. Have you already answered questions in Sections A and B on MIPA and cross-cutting issues?

Y I N NR

7. Are the services or programmes that your organisation offers designed to respond to the needs of male, female and transgender sex workers, and their clients?



Checklist

<input type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> I <input type="radio"/> N <input type="radio"/> NR	<p>8. Does your organisation work to overcome barriers to access to HIV prevention, care and treatment services for sex workers and their clients by working with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • policy-makers and legislators that define laws and policies concerning sex work? • decision-makers that define and design health care services? • health care institutions? • sex workers and sex work organisations? • sex work clients?
<input type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> I <input type="radio"/> N <input type="radio"/> NR	<p>9. Does your organisation offer services and/or programmes to sex workers without pressuring them to leave sex work?</p>
<input type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> I <input type="radio"/> N <input type="radio"/> NR	<p>10. Does your organisation recognise that selling sex under the age of 18 constitutes child exploitation?</p>

Actions needed to support Section D.2:

D.3 People who use drugs

<input type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> I <input type="radio"/> N <input type="radio"/> NR	<p>11. Have you already answered questions in Sections A and B on MIPA and cross-cutting issues?</p>
<input type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> I <input type="radio"/> N <input type="radio"/> NR	<p>12. Do all staff members consider the reduction of drug-related harms to be a more feasible option than efforts to eliminate drug use entirely?</p>
<input type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> I <input type="radio"/> N <input type="radio"/> NR	<p>13. Do your organisation's programmes reflect a harm reduction approach?</p>
<input type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> I <input type="radio"/> N <input type="radio"/> NR	<p>14. Do staff members understand the link between drug use and factors that increase vulnerability (for example, sex work, incarceration for drug possession, poverty)?</p>



Checklist

Y I N NR

15. Are your organisation's programmes for drug users based on evidence and input from drug users themselves (including male and female drug users and young people)?

Y I N NR

16. Are your organisation's outreach and peers workers trained on:

- HIV risks, transmission, adherence, treatment?

Y I N NR

- human rights principles?

Y I N NR

- vein problems, overdose, first aid?

Y I N NR

- hepatitis risks, transmission, adherence, treatment?

Y I N NR

- tuberculosis risks, transmission, adherence, treatment?

Y I N NR

- communication skills, motivational interviews?

Y I N NR

- gender issues, including violence towards and sexual exploitation of women and children?

Actions needed to support Section D.3:

D.4 Prisoners

Y I N NR

17. Have you already answered questions in Sections A and B on MIPA and cross-cutting issues?

Y I N NR

18. Do staff members at your organisation have a good understanding of the factors that can make prisoners vulnerable to HIV infection?

For example use of illicit drugs, unsafe injecting practices, unprotected sex, violence, rape, tattooing with contaminated equipment, and apathy or deliberate evasion of responsibility by prison authorities to provide HIV testing, care and treatment.

Y I N NR

19. Does your organisation promote the provision of HIV prevention, care and treatment services for prisoners?



Checklist

Y I N NR

20. Does your organisation address stigma and discrimination against key populations within the prison context that might result in increased vulnerability to HIV infection?

For example discrimination against people living with HIV, MSM, injecting drug users, older or young inmates, inmates with disabilities, or inmates who do not speak the main language used in the prison.

Actions needed to support Section D.4:

D.5 Transgender people

Y I N NR

21. Have you already answered questions in Sections A and B on MIPA and cross-cutting issues?

Y I N NR

22. Do staff members at your organisation understand what is meant by transgender people?

Y I N NR

23. Has your organisation made contact with transgender people in your context?

Y I N NR

24. Have transgender people been consulted to identify their specific needs that your organisation can address through its services, programmes and / or policies?

Y I N NR

25. Has your organisation actively encouraged the involvement of transgender people in HIV programmes for transgender people as Board members, staff, outreach workers or volunteers?

Actions needed to support Section D.5:



Action Plan: Key Populations

In completing this self-assessment checklist, you are likely to have identified some areas that are in need of improvement and some that are already at a 'good practice' level.

Please complete the Action Plan table on the next page and highlight examples of how you

will improve your organisation's work on Key Populations over the next six months, thinking first about the Key Questions below. If you answer 'no' to any of these questions, it would be important for you to start here in improving your work!

Key Questions

1. Are your organisation's services and/or programmes based on evidence and a context-specific needs assessment?
2. Does your organisation regularly research which populations are particularly vulnerable to HIV infection in your local context?
3. Does your organisation have a written strategic plan that describes its priorities for addressing key populations, when and how you will achieve them?
4. Do all staff members understand what is meant by 'key populations' and what might make these populations particularly vulnerable to HIV infection?
5. Have all staff members been trained on:
 - the basics of HIV?
 - human rights and rights based programming?
 - stigma and discrimination?
 - advocacy planning and skills building?
 - gender and vulnerability?
 - specific needs of all relevant key populations?
6. Are representative members of relevant key populations involved in the design and improvement of your organisation's services and /or programmes?
7. Does your organisational environment foster non-discrimination, and value the contribution of key populations?
8. Has your organisation built partnerships with governments, donors, the public sector and a full range of NGOs to coordinate responses for key populations?
9. Does your organisation provide and/or advocate for access to and availability of comprehensive HIV prevention, care and treatment interventions that meet the needs of relevant key populations?

Please remember to save your completed action plan and email it to **info@hivcode.org** or send it to **PO Box 372, 1211 Geneva 19, Switzerland.**

Name of Organisation	Contact Person	Email Address
Signed		Date



Action Plan: Key Populations

Expected Outcomes
(What do we want to achieve?)

Key Activities
(What do we need to do?)

Action Points
(How do we do it?)

Resources
(What kind of support do we need to do it?)

Timeframe
(When will we do it?)
